

1 EXT. WOODS. EVENING.

A man is seen running through the woods in full camo hunting gear; gripping his shotgun for dear life. He is visibly terrified, out of breath, distraught, and lost. He stops for a moment to check his surroundings and figure out his next move. Rustles in the leaves intensify his paranoia as he has to make a swift decision. He runs left, taking quick glances behind him to make sure whatever is chasing him is not in pursuit. He stops, double checks the area around him, and takes a quick sigh of relief. Out of breath, he sits by a nearby tree and places his gun in front of him. He takes his cellphone out in a desperate attempt to make a call for help. No service. He whispers curses to himself and continues to frantically check his surroundings. He drops his head and begins to pray for a way out. A large shadow overtakes him. He raises his shotgun and lets off a shot.

JUMP TO: BIRDS FLYING INTO THE DISTANCE OVER THE TREELINE AS
THE SUN SETS; A BLOOD-CURLING SCREAM FOLLOWS THE SOUND OF
GUNFIRE

2 INT. SANDERS HOUSE. EVENING.

Inside a beautiful, modern home, we find a couple busy getting ready for a night out. The wife (elegant, mid-30's, well-dressed) is busy getting ready; putting on her fancy dress, jewelry, and shoes. Her husband, already dressed, waits impatiently for her to finish getting dressed. He calls her name to see if she is almost done because they have reserved date night plans.

JACE

Babe, are you ready yet? We've got to go?

LOREN

Coming!

She hurries down the hallway towards her youngest son's room. She knocks on the door politely and slowly cracks the door open to find her son (joyful, vibrant, happy-go-lucky) sitting on the bed playing the video game with his cousins.

3 INT. BEDROOM #1 - EVENING

The room is dark except for the glow of the TV. JALEN, SAINT, and HENDRIX are fully locked into an intense video game match. LOREN appears in the doorway.

LOREN

Why y'all got this room pitch black?

JALEN

Mom, we locked in! It's ranked!

She flips the light on.

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LOREN
Pause the game. Now.

They reluctantly pause. The boys loudly groan.

LOREN (CONT'D)
Don't start with that attitude, Jalen.

She turns to Saint & Hendrix.

LOREN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Hey Saint. Hey Hendrix.

SAINT & HENDRIX
Hey Teetee.

LOREN
Alright, me and your uncle about to leave. Quick rules. No running. No wrestling. And don't go digging in my cabinets because I hid the snacks.

Saint slowly looks at Hendrix.

HENDRIX
Why you looking at me?

Property of Joshua M. Rudd & Paisley Calhoun
SAINT
Cause that be your big back!

Jalen laughs.

LOREN
And do not open that door for anybody.
I'm serious.

BOYS
(slightly annoyed but compliant)
Yes ma'am.

LOREN
Hendrix, keep these two outta trouble.

SAINT
But he be the main one!

LOREN
Mmhm. Sure.

She opens her arms.

LOREN (CONT'D)
Bring it in. Love y'all.

The boys group hug her.

LOREN exits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Beat.

SAINT
Ugh! Teetee be doing too much!

HENDRIX
I mean...

SAINT
That was one time.

CUT TO: LOREN WALKING DOWN THE HALLWAY.

4 INT. BEDROOM #2. EVENING

As she makes her way out, Loren stops at the frame of the next nearest bedroom to find her teenager mindlessly scrolling social media in the bed.

LOREN
Symone, come downstairs and watch your sister and her friends.

She quickly heads off before hearing her eldest daughter's response.

SYMONE
(under her breath with an attitude)
Ugh...I can't wait to leave this house. I won't have to deal with this.

LOREN
(mumbling)
What was that?!

SYMONE
(calling out)
Nothing!

We get a glimpse of Symone's messages making other plans to sneak her boyfriend in as soon as her parents aren't around. We see the excitement and anticipation written all over her face, clearly up to no good.

5 INT. SANDERS HOUSE. EVENING.

We follow Loren down the stairs as she rushes down to meet her husband and lay out the ground rules for her younger daughter (sparky, energetic, quirky) and her friends. The girls are busy rehearsing yet another one of those viral TikTok dances while Jace paces waiting on his wife. She reaches the bottom of the stairs and meets her husband's gaze.

JACE
Are you ready to go?

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CONTINUED:

LOREN

Yes! Alright girls, let's talk really quick before we go.

The girls gather around her at the bottom of the staircase.

LOREN (CONT'D)

Skye, you already know what to do. My main rule for everyone is-

Nori interjects.

NORI

Okay Ms. Sanders! I see you! You look good! Clock it!

Both her & Loren do the "clock it" hand sign. Loren gathers her composure back into mom mode.

LOREN

Thank you sweetie. Anyways, just do not get too loud and don't answer the door. Skye, I don't care if you hear a cat meow at the door. It's a no.

SKYE

Ma, relax. We just gone be doing our TikToks anyways.

Jace is growing slightly impatient, but keeps it cool.

JACE

Honey, we have reservations...

LOREN

Right! Okay girls, give me a hug.

They crowd around her for a group hug as she gives them a tight & loving squeeze.

LOREN (CONT'D)

Love y'all! We'll be back in the morning!

The girls wave them off.

LEILANI

Have fun!

NORI

Don't stay up too late! Be good!

SKYE

Alright, let's go y'all. Back to our dance.

The girls go back to rehearsing their dance as Jace & Loren head out the door.

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CUT TO: JACE & LOREN EXITING THE DOOR AND HEADED TOWARDS THE
CAR

6 INT. CAR/DRIVEWAY. EVENING.

The couple settle in their seats as they buckle up and prepare to leave the kids for the night. There is a noticeable tone shift now that they are no longer in front of the kids; they appear a bit more distant & not as high-spirited as moments prior. Jace turns to Loren.

JACE
How you feeling?

LOREN
I don't know Jace, I'm just ready to go.

JACE
Not the kind of response I was hoping for. What's up?

LOREN
It's like...all of a sudden you want to take me out after I presented those papers last week. Why now, Jace?

Property of Joshua M. Rudd & Paisley Calhoun

JACE
Oh my God Loren, I'm trying my hardest. I want my family. I want you. I want us. You said I haven't been attentive or giving my time, and now I'm trying to change that. What more can I do?

LOREN
Not letting it get this far. Jace, you have been the love of my life since college. Since a little girl, I've always dreamed of a happy and healthy family and I'm not seeing that at all. When we had Skye, you've always acted like you had a point to prove to yourself and your family...that you will be more successful in life than your brother instead of dedicating that time to your family. Jace, we have a beautiful family and a teenager that truly needs dedicated time. You have a son that would like for you to show up to a STEM competition at least more than once. Jace, I'm tired of trying to keep it all together. I need you. I needed you.

JACE
Loren...I'm sorry. I am, I mean that. I promise you I'm going to do better.

(MORE)

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JACE (CONT'D)

This staycation is just the start.

LOREN

Jace, you've been saying the same thing over and over. There's excuse after excuse absence after absence. I-

Before she can continue, a sudden thud at the window catches them by surprise. An elderly woman (frantic, fearful, disheveled) is at the window of their vehicle screaming and banging on the door.

MS. JANIE

DON'T GO! DON'T GO! IT COMES AFTER NINE! IT COMES AFTER NINE, I'M TELLING YOU!

A nurse runs up; struggling to pull her away and back into their home. The couple steps out of the car to confront her.

JACE

What's your problem?!

MS. JANIE

You don't understand. You have children, don't you? Don't leave those kids home alone, I'm begging you! It comes after the innocent!

The couple stand puzzled at Ms. Janie's erratic behavior. Her nurse tugs gently at her arm to urge her back home.

NURSE

Sorry y'all, she gets confused sometimes. Ms. Janie, come on let's get you back home. You need to take your medicine-

Ms. Janie snatches her arm away and stares them down. She slowly approaches.

MS. JANIE

You listen to me. Call me crazy if you want, but you must not know what lives out here in these woods. There's evil amongst us in these mountains. Those kids don't need to be left alone.

JACE

Lady, I'm gonna give you five seconds to step off my property before I call the police.

The nurse tugs her arm to lead her away.

MS. JANIE

God have mercy on their souls... you
(MORE)

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MS. JANIE (CONT'D)
oughta be ashamed of what you're
doing.

As the nurse drags her back home, Jace & Loren look at each other confused as to what just happened. They step back in the car and try to wrap their minds around what Ms. Janie's cryptic words meant. Loren wastes no time and calls Symone.

LOREN
Hey Symone. Please make sure you're
actually watching the youngins'.
There's some crazy old white lady
across the street. I think she's on
that stuff.

SYMONE (O.S)
Yeah, aight.

Before Loren can get another word out, Symone hangs up abruptly. Loren is visibly irritated, but the gears are turning. She faces Jace.

LOREN
I think that's a sign we need to stay
home tonight. That lady might try
something.

Property of Joshua M. Rudd & Paisley Calhoun

JACE
Loren, it'll be fine. I promise.

LOREN
Jace, I-

JACE
Listen, we're just gonna go about our
day and pretend that never happened.
When's the last time we had a kid free
night?

Loren gives in and sits back. Something stares at the house in the distance.

7 INT. SANDERS HOUSE. NIGHT

Music pumps through the house. The girls rehearse their dance in the living room. The boys quietly sneak out a backdoor. Symone sits on her bed Indian-style in front of her crystals assortment, candles lit. She is quietly meditating and performing an energy protection ritual. One of the crystals shifts in the opposite direction. This catches Symone by surprise and disrupts the process.

CUT TO: THE GIRLS STILL REHEARSING THEIR DANCE

8 INT. SANDERS HOUSE. NIGHT

A knock at the door disturbs the girl's practice.

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LEILANI
Who's that?

SKYE
It's probably mama. Maybe she forgot something.

As she approaches the door, Nori stops her.

NORI
Didn't your mom say don't open the door for nobody?

SKYE
Girl, relax.

Skye opens the door & looks around. No one is there.

SKYE (CONT'D)
Hello?

The silence of the night is deafening. Tension rises. The boys jump from the side of the house with a loud "BOO"! Skye & the other girls scream as the boys scatter in.

LEILANI
Y'all always play too much!
As the kids loudly argue in the living room, Symone comes to the front to figure out what's going on.

SYMONE
Y'all already doing too much! Leave this door alone before I call Mom on y'all!

Symone shuts the door.

CUT TO: FRONT DOOR, A SHADOWY FIGURE IN DIRTY CLOTHING STANDS AT THE FRONT DOOR, MOTIONLESS.

JUMP TO: LIVING ROOM WHERE THE KIDS & SYMONE CONTINUE TO ARGUE. LIGHTS OUT. THEN SUDDENLY FLICK BACK ON.

9 INT/EXT. SANDERS HOUSE. NIGHT

They all look around at each other confused. Loud, banging knocks at the door scare them. A familiar voice from outside the home raises suspicion.

MR. PARKER
(frantic, shaken, & disturbed)
Help me! Help me! Please! I need help!

Terror strikes each of them as the knocks & screams continue. BANG! BANG! BANG!

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MR. PARKER (CONT'D)

(now crying)

Please! I just need help! Don't let it
get me! Skye, let me in!

SKYE

Is that Mr. Parker?

She motions towards the door to open it, Symone grabs her
shoulder and pulls her back.

SYMONE

Stop. We don't need to let anyone in.

SKYE

I know what our teacher sounds like!
He said he needs our help!

SYMONE

Skye, just listen to me-

SKYE

You think you know everything! STOP!

As Skye's friends and the boys look on terrified and
confused, Skye & Symone continue to bicker back and forth. In
the midst of the chaos, we hear the door creak open. Everyone
turns their attention. We see Jalen, starry-eyed and
gleefully innocent, open the door.

JALEN

Sanders household! How can we help
you, sir?

Mr. Parker stands in the door frame with his back turned
towards them, standing completely still. Silent. Head held
downward. Shrouded in the darkness. Sobbing.

MR. PARKER

(tearful)

Please let me on in now...

Symone slowly approaches Jalen, attempting to pull him back
in.

SYMONE

Jalen...close the door.

JALEN

But why?

SYMONE

Just trust me on this-

MR. PARKER

(tearful, voice distorted)

Come on now...let me in.

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CONTINUED:

SYMONE

Jalen!

JALEN

Okay, come in!

Mr. Parker turns around, rushes in and collapses on the floor in a terrifying panic.

MR. PARKER

Close that door! It's out there!
Something's out there!

Jalen slams the door shut. The kids & Symone all crowd around Mr. Parker as he curls into a fetal position, rocking on the floor. Something has seriously spooked him.

LEILANI

Mr. Parker, you good?

MR. PARKER

I'm okay... I'm okay...

SKYE

Where you been? We didn't see you at school all week.

Property of Joshua M. Rudd & Paisley Calhoun

MR. PARKER

I'm sorry kids...I went out there in them woods and I saw something. I need to use your phone.

SAINT

What was it?

MR. PARKER

Bad things...terrible things. Where is the phone?

Symone looks on very suspiciously and steps forward to cut the shenanigans.

SYMONE

Why here?

MR. PARKER

What?

SKYE

Symone, can you chill?

SYMONE

Shut up! Now back to you, sir? Why our home?

MR. PARKER

I..I just knew there were good folks in here that could help me.

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SYMONE

You called my sister by name without knowing this was our house. How did you know this was our home?

Mr. Parker looks deeply troubled by her intense questioning. Skye steps in.

SKYE

He's our teacher, duh!

Symone faces her sister.

SYMONE

So your teacher just knows where you live and he's never been over here? Can you think for once Skye?

NORI

She's got a point. That doesn't make sense.

Saint & Hendrix nod their heads in agreement.

SKYE

Girl, be quiet! Whose side are you on?

Symone turns back towards Mr. Parker.

SYMONE

Why did you have to be invited in?

SKYE

Because he's not rude like you! Obviously.

MR. PARKER

Well m'am, I'm a gentleman. My mama raised me to never go in nobody house without asking.

SYMONE

Even when your life is in danger, allegedly.

MR. PARKER

That's right young lady. Can I use your phone and bathroom please?

JALEN

Yup, it's right there!

MR. PARKER

Thank you young man!

Mr. Parker exits to head towards the bathroom. Symone huddles the kids up; her suspicion is noticeable.

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SYMONE

Something is off about Mr. Parker. I feel it.

SKYE

Symone, what are you even talking about? That's my teacher! You always have something to say!

NORI

Look, y'all gone have to chill out with this sister beef. Skye, your sister's right. Also, since when does Mr. Parker have a mole on his face?

LEILANI

Why you all up in his face?

NORI

Not the point. Focus!

SYMONE

Anyway... See what I mean. Something ain't right. You know what... my stone turned when I was meditating and connecting with nature.

Property of Joshua M. Rudd & Paisley Calhoun
We see Mr. Parker standing nearby in the shadows overhearing their conversation.

SYMONE (CONT'D)

That ritual tells me if we are protected before bed. I usually do this every night and tonight my stone turned. Wait Skye didn't you and mom take a picture with him during the field day event ya'll had?

SKYE

Um yeah.... but you're not going to notice a difference. I don't like how y'all coming for my teacher like that. Y'all are crazy.

Skye holds the phone to Symone to prove her case. She carefully zooms in on the image. She takes the phone out of her hand for a closer look. The kids look over her shoulder as she investigates. The image reveals he doesn't have a mole. Symone's suspicions turn into terror.

SYMONE

Y'all...I don't know who this man in our house is.

HENDRIX

You want me to go sock 'em out? My daddy just taught me how to do a left hook.

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CONTINUED:

SAINT

You get him with the left and imma
stomp him out.

The boys playfully imitate boxing moves, not taking the situation serious at all. The girls, except for Skye, gather around Symone. A strange creaking noise followed by lights flickering catches their attention and brings everything to a stop. They turn to see Mr. Parker standing in a doorway; head cocked to the side and shrouded in shadows. Creepy, suspenseful music intensifies.

SKYE

Mr. Parker, you good?

We see a demented smile form on his face.

MR. PARKER

(voice distorted)

Oh, I feel alive darling!

He emits a blood-curdling, high pitched shriek that scares all of them and sends everyone running. Symone corrals the kids into her bedroom and places a protective stone on the door to prevent the creature posing as Mr. Parker from entering.

10 INT. BEDROOM #2. NIGHT.

The group of kids sit around holding onto each other tightly; crying, shocked, and confused. Symone steps in the center of them to be the voice of reason.

SYMONE

Y'all...I need everyone to stay calm.

LEILANI

(tearful; frightened)

What is that thing?!

SYMONE

I've only heard stories of them online, but never knew they were actually real. This "thing" looks like a person, but it feeds off the innocent. It lies. It tricks. And it comes to take.

SKYE

(tearful; afraid)

What does it want to take?

SYMONE

Our souls. Our skin...

JALEN

Is it a skinwal-

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Symone covers his mouth and shushes him.

SYMONE

Saying its name only gives it more
power. Keep quiet. I got an idea.

Symone goes over to her dresser and pulls a bag of salt & another bag of herbs. She crushes it in a medicine mixing bowl while reciting a prayer. She comes back over to the children.

SYMONE (CONT'D)

Open your hands and hold this tightly.

She pours the herb and salt mixture into each of their hands.

SYMONE (CONT'D)

This should banish it. Follow my lead
and stay quiet.

The kids nod. The plan is set. Symone puts some of her stones and a knife in her pocket as she gradually opens the door to lead the kids in their plan to take down this monster.

11 INT. SANDERS HOUSE. NIGHT

The house is dimly lit. Still. Silent. The group makes their way through the dark house to find the creature. It's nowhere in sight. The sheer terror is evident on their faces as they quietly tiptoe through the dark home. Tension rises. We see a hand creeping around a corner wall behind them.

MR. PARKER (O.S.)

(hushed whisper)

Skye. Nori. Leilani. Saint. Hendrix.
Jalen.

The children look around confused.

SKYE

Who said that?!

SYMONE

Don't listen to it. We have to keep
mov-

Before she can finish her sentence, the creature appears before her. It strikes her forcefully, knocking her unconscious. The kids all charge at it in a desperate attempt to fight back by throwing the salt/herb mixture at it. It laughs. Skye grabs Jalen and falls back.

MR. PARKER

(maniacal laughter)

Silly children.

The creature begins chanting a spell in a strange language. It causes the group to fall to their knees before it in a

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trance-like state, frozen in motion. Skye and Jalen flee to a bedroom to hide. The creature creepily smiles and slowly pursues them.

12 INT. BEDROOM #3. NIGHT

Skye and Jalen rush into their parents' bedroom and slam the door shut. She motions for him to hide under the bed with her. Jalen begins sobbing in fear and regret.

JALEN
(crying)
It's all my fault.

SKYE
(whisper)
Shhhh! It'll hear us. It's gonna be
okay. Big Sis will get us out of this.

The door slowly cracks open. The creature steps in, the camera follows its footsteps into the room. It stops right in front of the part of the bed where the kids are hiding. Skye & Jalen shiver in fear.

MR. PARKER
(voice distorted)
Skye, where are you darling? You know
you were always my favorite. Why don't
you come out and play with me?

The fear on their faces intensifies as they try to force themselves to stay quiet. The creature's feet turn directly towards them.

MR. PARKER (CONT'D)
(voice distorted)
Fine. I think Jalen will come play
with me instead.

Jalen is dragged from under the bed. Skye screams. The creature runs out of the room and slams the door behind. Skye remains under the bed crying.

13 INT/EXT. SANDERS HOUSE. NIGHT.

The creature walks into the living room with Jalen in hand; crying, kicking, and screaming. Symone finally comes to and confronts the creature.

SYMONE
I know exactly what you are, you sick
ugly thing.

MR. PARKER
(voice distorted)
And what can you do about it, you
dirty little witch?

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SYMONE
I think you know.

MR. PARKER
(voice distorted)
I'd like to see you try. Your own
blood doesn't even love you.

SYMONE
Watch this. Jalen.

Jalen pauses his crying for just a moment.

SYMONE (CONT'D)
Do the shark thing.

Jalen nods and bites the creature with full force. It lets out a deafening scream as it drops him and Jalen rushes back over to Symone. She comforts him as the creature writhes in pain. The creature, full of rage, turns its attention towards Symone as she draws her knife. An intense fist fight breaks out as Symone and the creature exchange blows. She pauses only long enough to warn Jalen.

SYMONE (CONT'D)
Jalen! Run! Go get help!

The fight continues as Jalen rushes outside to go alert their neighbors or someone that can help. But...Jalen remembers he's scared of the dark and hides on the side of the house as the fight spills to outside.

14 INT. BEDROOM #3. NIGHT.

Skye is still under the bed crying, confused, broken, breathing heavy. We hear the sounds of the fight in the background.

SKYE
(whisper)
What do I do?! What do I do?! What do
I do?!

It finally clicks. She crawls from under the bed and frantically goes through the drawers until she finally finds her father's gun. She doesn't know the first thing about how to use it, but her desperation is all over her face. She rushes out of the door to find the creature and save her family.

15 INT./EXT. SANDERS HOUSE. NIGHT.

Skye walks through the home with the gun in hand, shaking. No sounds from before are to be heard. She looks around. The creature or Symone are nowhere to be found. She sees her friends kneeled down, still stuck in the trance and the front door wide open. She walks outside to find Symone knocked out on the ground. She continues to scan her surroundings before

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checking on her sister. She notices her baby brother on the side of the house. He looks terrified.

SKYE
Jalen! What are you doing?

Jalen doesn't respond. He only points in her direction. We see the creature standing directly behind Skye.

MR. PARKER
(voice distorted)
Skye. You always were my favorite.

Skye whips around and attempts to fire the gun. She misses and the creature snatches it out of her hand, tossing it aside. She falls to the ground and crawls to her sister, tears in her eyes and fear intensifying. The creature stands over them.

MR. PARKER (CONT'D)
(voice distorted)
You don't need to be afraid, darling.
I'm not gonna hurt ya.

Skye shivers in fear.

SKYE
Get away from me! You're not Mr. Parker!

MR. PARKER
(voice distorted)
Skye, you can trust me. Children know who they can trust, and you know better than the rest of them don't ya?

Symone gradually starts regaining consciousness, she slowly grips her knife. Skye leans up against her.

MR. PARKER (CONT'D)
I thought you liked me? Why don't you come play with me?

The creature grabs her leg in an attempt to drag her away. She screams and fights back fiercely, holding onto her sister. Symone is finally awake.

SYMONE
Skye, roll!

Skye rolls on her side as Symone stabs the creature forcing it to let her go and cry out in pain. Symone hugs her sister tightly and motions for Jalen to come to them. The three siblings embrace each other as the creature stumbles around hurt.

SYMONE (CONT'D)
Are y'all okay?

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The younger siblings nod, tears in their eyes as they grip their older sister tightly. The creature faces them, angry and snarling.

SYMONE (CONT'D)
I got one more idea.

She pulls a stone from her pocket and cuts her hand with her knife. She grips it in her fist and motions her siblings grab her wrists.

SYMONE (CONT'D)
Hold tight and repeat after me!

The creature sprints towards them.

SYMONE (CONT'D)
By blood. By bone. By name. In this house, you hold no name!

The creature pauses in its tracks and wrenches.

SYMONE, JALEN, & SKYE
By blood. By bone. By name. In this house, you hold no name!

The creature continues screaming out in pain. The spell is working. The siblings get louder.

SYMONE, JALEN, & SKYE (CONT'D)
By blood. By bone. By name. In this house, you hold no name!

The creature shrieks in agonizing pain.

SYMONE, JALEN, & SKYE (CONT'D)
Return to the dark. Return to the woods. Return to what claims you. You are not welcome here!

The painful shrieks continue.

SYMONE, JALEN, & SKYE (CONT'D)
Return to the dark. Return to the woods. Return to what claims you. You are not welcome here!

The creature flees into the woods shrieking in pain. The siblings fall to the ground in tears of joy. They hold each other tightly, rocking back & forth. They pick themselves up and head back into the house. They find their friends broken out of the trance, dazed and confused. They all gather around Symone, thanking her and crying tears of joy now that the day is saved. The door of the house remains open. In the distance, we see the creature seething in anger; waiting for its revenge.

Roll credits.