

OWA PITCH

BY CALEB DILLON

DEAD BY DAYLIGHT™

THE MOVIE



NOT
OFFICIAL
IN ANY WAY

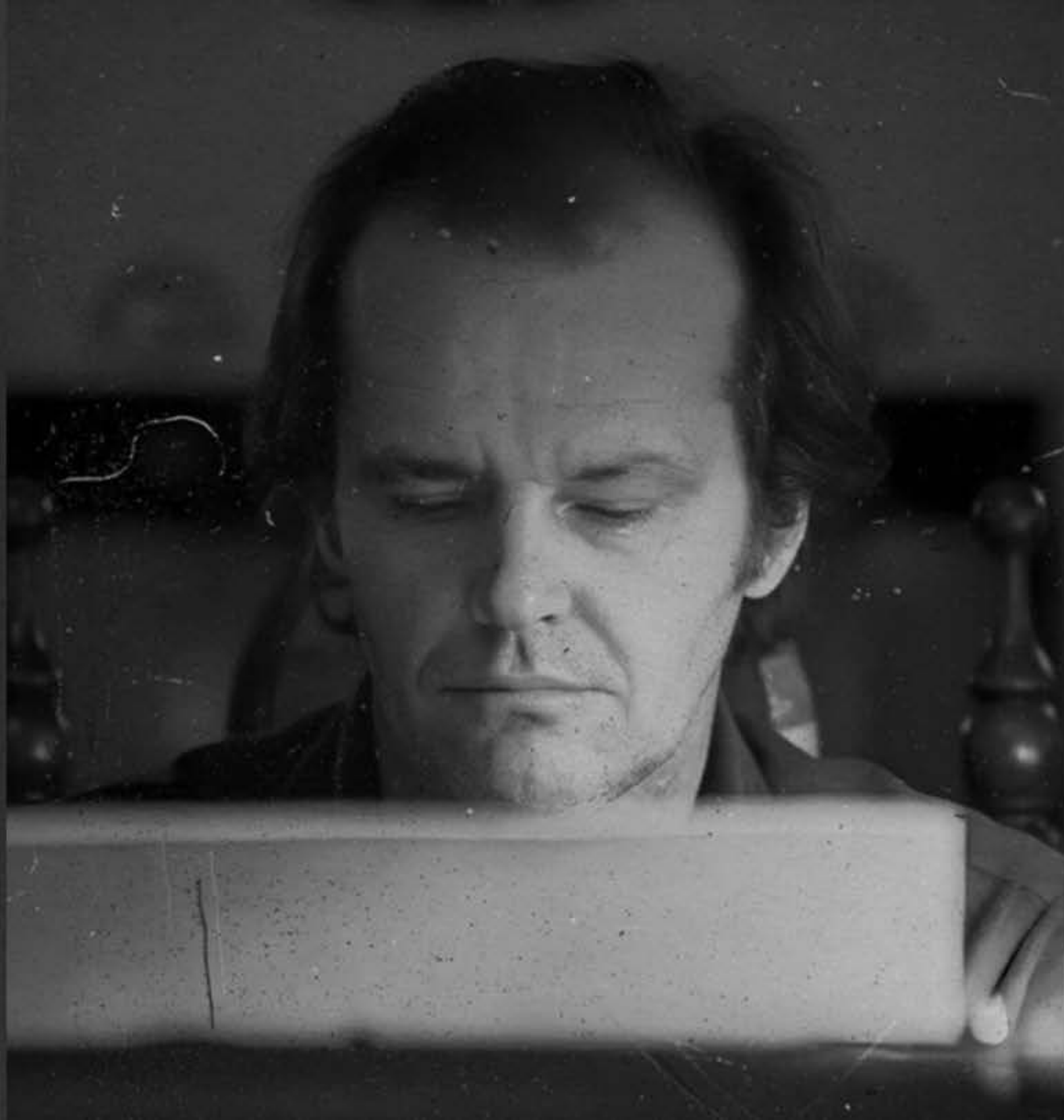
WTF EVEN IS THIS?

Dead By Daylight: it's a tough adaptation to crack. It needs to be respectful of the lore but be welcoming to mainstream horror fans. It should incorporate game mechanics but still be optimized as a feature film. And most importantly, it needs to be fun.

As a screenwriter and lover of the game, I know Dead By Daylight can grab viewers by the throat, blending intense horror with a rich mystery. This pitch is written by a gamer for gamers; the sort of movie I'd watch surrounded by an audience in a packed theatre. It just needs the right way in.

Here's my vision:

-Caleb Dillon





LOGLINE

When the troubled sister of a small-town sheriff goes missing on the derelict estate of an old iron baron, he soon learns that the staggering number of missing persons around his town is more sinister than he could have imagined; a cabal of supernatural killers have been enlisted by a malevolent Entity that forces any foolish enough to wander into its domain to compete in an endless series of macabre, murderous Trials.

FILM CROSS

An immortal killer versus...



Unlikely survivors...



Killed over and over again...





SCRIPT SYNOPSIS

In the small town of Wetherfield, Washington, we meet DANIEL WRIGHT, a local sheriff. His younger sister SADIE has been trapped in a cycle of drug abuse since their parents were killed in a car accident a year ago. When Sadie goes missing, he goes looking for her at the old MacMillan place, a derelict iron mine where kids go to party and summon the spirit of The Trapper, a hunter said to haunt the estate.

When they step onto the grounds, Daniel and his Uncle Marcos are pulled into another dimension, a dark copy of the MacMillan estate, where each night The Trapper hunts lost survivors in a macabre game of death. Reunited with Sadie but stuck in an endless death loop, they and the other survivors only hope of escape is to cheat the game, trap the Trapper, and barter with a supernatural entity in hopes of finding a way back home.

KEY CHARACTERS



Daniel Wright

30s, male, strong willed, driven, and family motivated

Daniel is the Sheriff of the small town of Wetherfield, Washington, a posting unwanted by anyone due to the sheer number of missing persons. Daniel cares about people and splits his time between his duties and his sister Sadie. What little spare time he has he spends restoring old engine with Uncle Marcos.



Sadie Wright

20s, female, guilt-stricken, grateful to her brother

Sadie felt responsible for the loss of her parents, and has been wracked with guilt for the past year. Her only comfort other than narcotics is her brother, Daniel. When she goes up to the old MacMillan estate, hoping to get away for a few hours, she gets more than she bargained for, and ends up in a purgatory to mirror her darkest thoughts.

Marcos Wright

50s, male, a paternal figure to Daniel and Sadie with a love of vintage cars

Daniel and Sadie's uncle on their father's side, Marcos is the only family they have left and when their parents were killed, he buried his grief in his work restoring old classic cars, and when that failed, the bottom of a bottle. But family is his first priority and when Daniel goes looking for Sadie, he's right there with Daniel, his toolbox in hand.



The Killer/Evan MacMillan

The only surviving heir of the MacMillan estate tragedy, after the iron mines were closed, Evan stayed behind in the property, using bear traps to deter locals from coming near his family home. But there is a darkness in those mines that mirrors a darkness in Evan. Now he is a servant to the supernatural power known only as The Entity, forced to do it's bidding to quiet the voices in his head.



KEY CHARACTERS

TEASER



We open on a scrap metal junkyard. An old MECHANIC in overalls steps into frame, an open beer in his hand. The junkyard is abandoned. A sign reads, "You need it, you find it." The attendant is missing. Our mechanic is all alone.

The junkyard is seemingly endless, full of jagged edges and hooked shrapnel. The Mechanic scrounges the yard for a specific car part. As night falls, automated lights click on. The Mechanic finds the part needed just as the lights begin to go out, one by one. A BLACK FOG rolls in. The Mechanic hears something, the tinning of a BELL, as the final light goes off.

Unnerved, the Mechanic arms himself. He is suddenly stabbed by an invisible apparition, a WRAITH. He RUNS, but the junkyard is a maze in the dark. Finally he sees the exit. Winded, the Mechanic shambles towards the junkyard's entrance.



The exit gate is locked. The Mechanic fumbles with the controls when suddenly he is stabbed from behind and hoisted onto a metal HOOK. Looking up, the Mechanic sees BLACK FOG swirling and spindly legs in the fog, wrapping around him. Over his SCREAM, we SMASH TO TITLES.

WETHERFIELD, WA



We meet brow-beaten lawman DANIEL WRIGHT (30s). He stops at an abandoned flophouse. Picking his way through a tangled copse of drug abusers, he finds his younger sister, SADIE WRIGHT (20s). He takes her home and lies her on his couch, a bucket nearby... a familiar ritual.

In a MONTAGE we see Daniel tending to Sadie as she comes down from a strict diet of benzos and opioids. She is angry and distraught. Days later, when she is finally cohesive enough to speak, she is grateful. We learn these siblings lost their parents in a tragic accident a year ago, and now they are all each other has left. Sadie often turns to drugs to cope with the loss.

Back at the police station, Daniel takes a statement from a distraught mother whose daughter has gone missing. He adds another flier to the wall. Wetherfield is notable for one reason - there are more missing persons per capita than any other town in the USA. The bulletin board in the Police Station is littered with hundreds of such fliers, his department too small to handle the caseload.

On the weekends, Daniel hangs out with his uncle, MARCOS WRIGHT (50s), a tough as-leather curmudgeon and the closest thing to a father figure he has left, and he and Daniel like to restore old cars. We see them fixing an engine together. Marcos is a damn good mechanic.

SADIE IS LOST



Back at home, Sadie has gone missing. Daniel goes looking for her. Asking around, he comes across urban Graffiti artist NEA KARLSSON (20s) and learns Sadie was spotted near the old MacMillan place in the nearby town of Weeks, WA. The MacMillan estate was a private coal venture but closed down after an "accident" killed hundreds of miners decades ago; the town shuttered, and now, even animals seem to avoid it.

Kids like to go into the nearby woods to explore the creepy ruins and get high. Sadie likely thought it would be an easy score. But the woods around the estate are dangerous, full of old bear traps and unmarked shafts. So Daniel goes looking for her at the old MacMillan estate. He luckily avoids an unsprung bear trap that almost snags him.



What's left of the estate is a derelict series of buildings, dangerous and empty. He finds no sign of Sadie, but HEARS SOMETHING creeping around. Drawing his gun, he goes looking for whoever or whatever it is. Carefully searching, he is STARTLED when he comes across a terrified teen, HANNAH WATTS (17). Fearing she is a victim of trauma, he has to give up looking for Sadie and take Hannah back to the station.

TERRIFIED TEEN



Hannah is absolutely terrified, jumping at the slightest sound. She is unable to speak but is clutching an old journal, written by BENEDICT BAKER. Leafing through, the pages are full of strange conspiracies about an 'Entity' Baker was searching at the MacMillan estate. Daniel is a skeptic; doesn't believe in the supernatural, but reading the journal, Daniel wonders if the missing person's problem goes deeper than he thought.

Daniel goes looking for Marcos, hoping Sadie might have turned up, finally finding him DOWN A HATCH inside his emergency bunker. Marcos is a doomsday prepper, and the hatch is his safe haven, a backup plan for when the world goes to shit or aliens invade. Marcos does believe in the supernatural. Marcos gets a call; Hannah is coherent enough to speak.



Back at the station, Hannah won't stop babbling about THE TRAPPER. Daniel pieces together that she and other teens were reading from the Baker journal, a Bloody-Mary-like ritual meant to summon the ghost of EVAN MACMILLAN, the last surviving heir of the MacMillan line, who allegedly lives in the ruins of the estate. But instead, they were attacked by a large man in a grinning mask that local teens call The Trapper. Fearing his sister was captured by a sociopath, he gears up. Armed and ready for anything, he and Marcos head to the old MacMillan place, this time prepared to venture even deeper into the estate.

MAGMILLAN PLACE



Daniel and Marcos search: a coal tower, a storehouse, the ironworks. No sign of Sadie. They find a staircase leading down, a BASEMENT with four hooks and strange symbols on the walls, a ceremonial room for a sacrificial ritual. BLACK FOG begins to fill the room. They rush upstairs to escape the fog.

The world above has changed. It was daylight when they went in, and it is night now. The fog makes it difficult to see. Daniel hears a girl SCREAMING. Thinking it's Sadie, he runs towards her, but finds MEG (20s), a weatherworn athlete, her leg caught in a bear trap. He helps Meg escape, but she staggers away. Daniel turns to see THE TRAPPER, a burly man with a grinning bone-white mask bearing down on him. Daniel empties his clip, but it barely slows him. The Trapper attacks Daniel.

Marcos comes to his rescue but is knocked aside like a paper doll. He watches as Marcos is hoisted onto a metal HOOK. At the far end of the compound, an ALARM goes off, and Daniel catches a glimpse of Sadie. He yells, but she doesn't hear him above the alarm. Marcos attempts to pull himself off the hook to no avail, begging Daniel to save himself. But Daniel isn't about to give up on Marcos. He hoists him off the hook. They shamble towards the exit gate. Feet from the gate, the Trapper catches up to them, and the last thing Daniel sees is a bloody cleaver aimed at his head.

CAMPFIRE TALES



Daniel wakes up at a CAMPFIRE, surrounded by unfamiliar faces; other survivors, like DWIGHT (20s, American), JAKE (20s, Latin), CLAUDETTE (40s, black), and Meg. Marcos is there. The others tend their wounds. Daniel, surprised he is not dead, asks: "What the hell is going on?" The survivors explain that they have wandered into an alternate dimension, a cosmic copy of our own reality. Each night, these survivors are forced to compete in a terrifying bloodsport, chased by a supernatural killer. These 'Trials,' as they call them, are like a game with an audience of one... the Entity. The same 'Entity' Benedict Baker mentioned in his journal.

Looking around, they are deep in some ancient forest, but Sadie is nowhere to be seen. The others warn him to stay near the campfire. At the edge of the firelight, a nightmarish cabal of KILLERS are present, hovering like hungry lions, their eyes glittering. The survivors explain that these Killers used to be human, but the Entity tortured them until the last of their humanity was gone. Now they exist simply to feed the Entity. The Entity likes to watch people suffer; it feeds on emotions: fear, adrenalin, and the HOPE of escape. The campfire is a limbo, a place to regain strength and hope before the next Trial begins. Even death is no escape. The game goes on until your hope is gone; if you fall into despair, the Entity has no further need for you. and casts you out. But Daniel refuses to believe them. He and Marcos go looking for Sadie. Running for their lives through the trees, the Black Fog envelops them.

LIGHT IN THE DARK



When the fog clears, they aren't in the woods at all. Instead, they're at AUTOHAVEN WRECKERS from the start of the film. From the look of the license plates, they aren't even anywhere near Washington State. What they don't yet realize is they have entered another Trial. As darkness descends, Marcos sets to repair an old GENERATOR to activate some area lights.

Getting a light on, Daniel is overjoyed when Sadie is revealed, strung up on a jagged hook. He rushes to her side, but she warns him to stop, sensing something he doesn't. Then, we hear a familiar tinning of a BELL. Daniel is stalked by an invisible apparition, the WRAITH. He is caught in a desperate game of cat and mouse in an endless maze of rusted-out cars.

Daniel bumps into Dwight. He explains the only way to escape is to get as many lights on as possible; Daniel doesn't understand. Instead he grabs Sadie and gets her down. Their reunion is short as the Wraith attacks them.

Marcos hotwires a car. Everyone except Dwight gets in. They attempt to crash through the gate, but they are hauled into the air by a MAGNETIC CRANE. Thirty feet up, they have to jump. Daniel falls and breaks his leg. Sadie crawls out of the car, but can't bring herself to jump. She is knocked from the car's roof by the invisible Wraith and falls off. Daniel screams as the car is released right on top of him, with Marcos still inside, killing them both.





MIDPOINT

Waking up at a campfire again, Daniel and Marcos are reunited with Sadie. But the moment is tempered by the sobering reality that no matter what they do, there is no escape. They are trapped here, doomed to die forever.

Sadie relates how, with each death, she feels weaker, a bit of her soul consumed by darkness. She is terrified there will eventually be nothing left to take. She is losing HOPE.

But Daniel isn't ready to give up. Desperate, Daniel turns to the journal of Benedict Baker for answers. Benedict was investigating what happened at the MacMillan estate before his last entry and he was convinced the Entity, The Trapper, and the MacMillan estate were all linked in some way. Daniel will investigate to unravel the truth of what happened on the MacMillan estate. But to do that, he'll have to return to where it all began. So Daniel's plan is to engage in these 'Trials' and learn everything he can until a way out presents itself. "So, let's play this fuckin' game."

ENDLESS DEATH



In a MONTAGE, Marcos and Daniel learn the twisted rules of this macabre game. Four players are pitted against the Trapper. When five generators are activated, an exit gate can be opened, which allows the survivors to escape. Questions about why things work this way always come back to the same answer: because the Entity wills it so.

So they fight for their lives, dying night by night, an endless death loop. But their deaths serve a purpose, every Trial allows them to search the MacMillan estate, looking for anything that might be useful; they consult ledgers, logbooks, and photos of the families that used to call the estate home. Everything points to iron baron ARCHIE MACMILLAN, former family patriarch, trapping his reprobate workers in the mineshaft and burying them alive, which must have summoned the Entity in the first place.



And by night, they are also getting to know their teammates. Meg is athletic, and soon Daniel and Marcos get in shape. Jake is a survivalist, an expert at spotting those bear traps the Trapper leaves around. Dwight's time in the corporate world makes him a natural at organizing teams, but it's hard to strategize when a Killer is hoisting you up on a metal hook. Claudette is a botanist and concocts poultices for their aches and 'herbal remedies' for their stress. But when Sadie partakes, Daniel gets upset at her blatant drug abuse. Sadie wonders aloud if the game is purgatory for her past misdeeds.

HIDDEN TRUTHS



Back at the fire, Claudette extracts a putrid serum from the pustula of the hollow shell of an alien cocoon. "Might be useful someday," she muses. Sadie opens up to Claudette, and we get our first FLASHBACK to the accident that killed Sadie and Daniel's parents: their parents in the front of a sedan, Sadie in the back. An argument ensues, and Sadie's dad reaches back to grab Sadie; he loses control, and the car goes over the side of an elevated bridge. Only Sadie survived. She blames herself; maternal Claudette comforts her.

Meanwhile, Daniel gets a closer look at the sacrificial chamber in the basement; some sort of ritual was performed here long ago, an OFFERING. Back at the campfire, Daniel notices when survivors burn various trinkets: bits of animal bone woven into jewelry, food they make from whatever they can scrounge, flowers, and sometimes their hopes and dreams are written on sealed envelopes. SACRIFICE has meaning here; something starts to click into place for Daniel.



During another Trial, Daniel gets all the way to Archie MacMillan's office, but the door is locked and before he can get inside, he gets killed. Over and over again. The Trapper always seems to know when Daniel is trying to get to the office. He convinces Meg to lead The Trapper away, baiting him long enough so that he can get inside the office. Meg agrees and with his uncle's help, Daniel finally gets into Archie MacMillan's office. Inside, they discover...

ALL IS REVEALED



... the long dried-up corpse of Archie MacMillan, family patriarch, his face twisted into a rictus grin, clutching an old family photo of him and his son EVAN MACMILLAN together on a hunting trip, using BEAR TRAPS. It appears that Archie loved his son very much. Daniel also finds the missing pages from Benedict Baker's journal; apparently, Benedict left them here.

In an extended FLASHBACK, the pages clarify that Evan MacMillan unearthed a cocoon in the mines, cosmic and alien. Immediately after, Evan was separated from a group of miners during a cave-in. When they finally dug Evan out, he was different, talking to voices that no one else could hear. The killings began soon after. The MacMillan 'accident' wasn't an accident at all. Evan killed the workers, and Archie burned the bodies in the furnace.

Archie covered it up for as long as he could. Eventually, Evan buried the remaining miners alive in a mine shaft, using explosives to seal them inside forever. But Evan survived. And when his father found out, he couldn't take it anymore, locked himself in his office, and killed himself.

These pages prove Evan MacMillan, aka, The Trapper, was a victim long before he was a monster. There was something dark in Evan that the Entity brought out; the killings are him re-enacting his crimes over and over again. The kill room in the basement was how Evan communed with the Entity.

RIGHT BY EVAN



Armed with this new knowledge, Daniel attempts to reason with The Trapper, now revealed to be Evan MacMillan, telling him over and over again that "Evan, it wasn't your fault." But this isn't *Good Will Hunting*, and The Trapper kills Daniel over and over, each time resulting in a new spectacular death. Marcos convinces Daniel that if they can't reason with Evan, at least they can give him death's release. They try burning him alive in the hot iron works, electrocuting him with a generator, and drilling him with a pneumatic mining tool, but nothing works. Evan is seemingly indestructible.

Finally they decide to try Evan's own plan against him, leading him down one of the iron shafts, and burying him inside. This way, at least, they feel they can give Evan peace. Daniel acts as bait, leads The Trapper deep into an iron mine, as Marcos blows the explosives. The plan seems to work and The Trapper disappears under a thousand pounds of iron ore. Daniel returns to the others and together, they walk through the exit gates of the compound, hopefully for the last time.

But their victory is short lived. They walk all day through the wood, only to find themselves back at the campfire as night descends, Black Fog surrounding them and The Trapper visible at the edge of the firelight. Daniel desperately pleads with Evan to let them go, but his pleas go unanswered.

BURIED GRIEF



Sadie finds a sense of kinship to Evan; she believes she is a monster, and wonders if she deserves her fate, But Daniel blames himself; he wasn't there for her, lost in his own grief, he didn't know how to take care of them both. Meanwhile, Marcos buried his grief at the bottom of a bottle.

In an EXTENDED FLASHBACK, we now get the entire picture of the crash. Sadie's parents were taking her to a drug treatment facility, and she threatened to jump out of the moving car. As her father reached back to hold her in place he lost control of the vehicle and it crashed.

Sadie believes her parents covered up her crimes, just like Archie did for his son Evan, and in both cases, the parents died. Daniel assures her it wasn't her fault. Sadie loves her brother and knows he did the best he could. Sadie wonders if a larger sacrifice would sate The Entity, once and for all.

On their next Trial, Sadie is so low she doesn't even try to get away from The Trapper, she goes willingly. Daniel watches as Sadie is hooked. Then something different happens. BLACK FOG swirls around Sadie, and spindly legs wrap around her. Sadie disappears. At the bonfire, she doesn't return.

This is the LOW POINT OF THE FILM.

SACRIFICES



Daniel is lost without Sadie, blaming himself for her death. Worse, he's angry. And Trial after Trial he vents his rage at The Trapper, dying time after time as a result. When his rage finally subsides, he contemplates Sadie's final words... "... a larger sacrifice would sate the Entity." Daniel thinks of the ritual room beneath the MacMillan estate, a plan forming.

"Killing Evan isn't enough. We have to sacrifice him." Marcos knows that Daniel is losing hope, but he reminds him that they've tried that approach and it never worked. Daniel explains that it's not about killing, it's about the ritual. And Daniel hopes that, if successful, maybe the Entity will return Sadie to them; a life for a life.

Though there is doubt, Daniel reminds the other survivors they are just as familiar with these Trials as the Killer is, they've died a hundred times. "The Entity feeds on fear. Isn't it time for the Trapper to be scared for once?"

But for this to work, they need to lure Evan down into the basement, into the ritual room, and then use the four hooks to hold him in place long enough for the Entity to accept the sacrifice. That won't be easy, and it'll mean all of them working together. But all the survivors are on board.. Everyone is tired of playing this game. When they ask if Daniel has a plan, he turns to...

DESPERATE PLAN



Dwight orchestrates how everyone can work together. Meg's job is to lure The Trapper on a chase, then down to the basement. Jake has to gather bear traps and chains from the ironworks and get them to the basement. Claudette will be a spotter from a tower. She points out that the Trial only allows four players at a time; there are six of them. Daniel grins. "We're gonna cheat."

During a Trial, Marcos and Daniel hide in Archie's office, barricading themselves inside and trying their best to keep quiet. They have to essentially stay in the Trial overnight so that the four other survivors will be invited to the trial (for a total of six), cheating the game.



That night, Marcos and Jake have what may be their last heart-to-heart; if they're cheating, there is no guarantee that this Entity won't cheat as well. But if there is even a small chance of saving Sadie and going home. Daniel feels like it's worth it. Marcos tells him his parents would be proud of everything he's done, and Daniel tells Marcos how much he loves him. "Like a father."

TRAP THE TRAPPER



The final trial begins: Dwight coordinates, Meg runs, and Claudette spots. Meanwhile, Jake gathers traps and chains while Daniel and Marcos maneuver a heavy-ass generator to the basement. Kicking it down the stairs it takes quite the beating, but if there is one thing Marcos and Daniel are good at, it's restoring old engines. They work fast.

Meanwhile, Meg steps in a beartrap that Jake missed. Dwight distracts the Trapper long enough for Claudette to help Meg get free, but he gets hooked by the Trapper. Claudette and Meg split up; harder to follow two. The Trapper goes after Meg. In the basement, Jake attaches the bear traps to the chains, but the outcome is still unclear. The chains are fed over the hooks, attached to a winch powered by the generator. Meg does all she can to slow The Trapper down, but she is caught and hooked as well. Meg tries to pull herself off the hook, a Herculean feat.

Down in the basement, Marcos starts the generator, and a loud BACKFIRE draws the Trapper towards them, ready or not. When the Trapper arrives, Jake tosses a bear trap onto him, and the generator drags him by chains toward the hooks. They do this three more times. The Trapper groans against the chains, held like a bucking bronco, and for a moment, it looks like the plan will work...

FINAL SACRIFICE



The Trapper strains against the chains, his flesh rending. The generator is about to throw a rod when Claudette appears with a syringe full of the putrid serum, a potent poison, which she pumps into The Trapper.

DRUGGED, he teeters on his feet, and the chains drag him up to the hooks. He starts to pull himself off the hook when Meg, who did free herself, appears and does an athletic flying dropkick, pinning him.

Everyone cheers when Black Fog pours into the room, and spindly alien arms drag the Trapper off to another dimension, only his cleaver and mask left behind on the ground.

The survivors gather above. Marcos opens the exit gates. Still no sign of Sadie. But then, when all hopes seems lost, a HATCH opens on the ground nearby and Sadie climbs up, practically glowing in the bright morning light. Reunited as a family, everything in the world seems right again. The Fog burns away and the world seems health and happy.

The Survivors walk through the gate, hopefully for the last time. Last to exit, Marcos opts to take a trophy with him, The Trapper's mask. But as he goes to step through the gates, black metal barricades appear from out of the ground separating him from the others; a tithe to pay.

SAFE AT LAST?



Daniel tries to break through the black metal barricade, holding Marcos hand through the gaps. But Black Fog rises up, and black tentacles pull Marcos back into the fog, lost to them. If they go back now, they'll be trapped again. Sadie hugs Daniel, and in her eyes, we notice a strange ORANGE GLOW, the same color as the putrid serum. Is this Sadie?

With no way back to Marcos, the Survivors wander into the gnarly woods, hopefully headed for home once and for all.

In the CODA, we find Marcos cowering in the corner of the ritual room, trying to drown out the voices in his head. But nothing will quiet them until he puts on the the Trappers Mask, and the voices instantly quiet. Offscreen, he hears voices, new survivors. Marcos Wright, aka, the new Trapper, picks up the dropped cleaver, and lopes off, his transformation into the next Killer complete. The game continues...

In a POST CREDITS SCENE, we are back at the MacMillan estate, where a group of teenagers approach carrying a case of beer and blankets. But our perspective is from the coal tower, where an alien egg sac splits open and black spindly legs pop out; a new set of Trials begins.



ABOUT ME

I am an writer/director creating in the indie space. My work has been recognized by The Nicholl's Fellowship (top 10%), the ISA, and Screen Craft. I have several scripts currently featured on the Coverfly Redlist.

I attended UCLA and will graduate with an MFA in Screenwriting from UNCSA, in spring 2025. Currently in post production on short film 'Good Behavior' as well as an independent feature film which premieres this year.

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THANK YOU!

