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FADE IN ON:

EXT. OVERGROWN FIELD -DAY

An old trailer home sits in an overgrown field, surrounded by overgrown grass. A small patch of a 'front yard' is trimmed neatly and decorated with cheap lawn ornaments.

A rusty pick up truck RATTLES its way up a dirt road. It pulls up alongside the trailer and GRINDS to a halt.

BOBBY WATERS (30) climbs from the truck, carrying a paper bag filled with groceries. His denim jeans are faded and thread bare at spots. His t-shirt is stained and drenched in sweat.

He steps to the trailer and climbs three cinder block stairs to the door.

INT. TRAILER.

The door swings closed behind him as he casually looks around. The trailer, sparsely furnished with old furniture, has a welcoming feel to it.

BOBBY
Darlene? Honey, I'm home.

He puts the shopping bag on a small counter next to a refrigerator and pulls cans and boxes of groceries from it.

BOBBY
Larry Corben's retiring next week
and Mister Benson said I could take
his hours at the shop.

He places the cans in a small overhead cabinet.

BOBBY
It won't start for another three
weeks, but at least I'll be working
full time. That'll be good, right?

He closes the cabinet and moves his head around, listening.

Crickets CHIRP in the background.

BOBBY
Darlene?

He walks past a small kitchen table, to the back of the trailer and pushes an accordion door to the side.

BOBBY
Darlene? You in bed?

The small bedroom is trashed. Clothes are scattered about. The bed is turned over. The curtains are pulled down.

He looks around, shocked.

He picks up a photo from the floor. It's a wedding photo of him and DARLENE, smiling very happily.

Sloppily written on it is: *BRING YOUR DARTS TO THE BOAT. J.*

Bobby looks at the photo, horrified.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD

Bobby's truck races along a dirt road, kicking up dust behind it. It bounces with each hole it hits. The sun hangs low in the background, covering everything in a reddish hue.

The truck comes to a grinding halt at the road's end, next to an old, rusty jeep.

He jumps from the truck and hurries down a dirt path, toward a lazy river.

KEVIN (O.S.)
Bobby...

Bobby spins around and sees KEVIN (30), standing nearby. He wears a dirty pair of jeans and no shirt. His hair is long and unkempt. He has several days growth on his face.

A small caliber pistol is nestled in his pant waist.

A three quarter axe hangs casually from his hand.

KEVIN
I was afraid you weren't gonna make it, bro. Sun's going down.

BOBBY
What the fuck's going on, Kevin?
Where's Darlene?

KEVIN
Don't worry about her, man. You bring your darts?

BOBBY
Darts? What the fuck? Where's Darlene?

KEVIN

I said, *don't worry about her.*
Didn't I? You got your darts?

BOBBY

No. They're at Larry's.

KEVIN

Well, that's no good--

BOBBY

Where's Darlene!

Bobby steps to Kevin, who raises the axe, ready to swing.

Bobby stops.

KEVIN

(long pause)

Go to the boat. That's where she
is.

Bobby continues down the dirt path, overgrown with brush and trees. Kevin follows at a safe distance.

The two approach the river where an old houseboat is tied to a half rotted dock, several feet from the shore.

KEVIN

Should'a bought your darts, man.
Gonna be needing them, y'know?

BOBBY

What is it with you and my darts?
Just tell me where Darlene is.

Kevin stops walking.

KEVIN

She's right there.

Bobby approaches the boat. He sees a long wooden pole, hanging over the side of the boat, toward the river. A lot of rope and rigging is hooked up it.

Dangling from the end of pole, over the water, is DARLENE. She is gagged and hog-tied, squirming.

BOBBY

What the fuck?

Bobby hurries toward her when--

BANG!

Bobby spins around and sees Bobby holding his pistol up in the air. Smoke rises from the barrel.

BOBBY
What the fuck are you doing?

KEVIN
Last Saturday. You remember last Saturday, man?

BOBBY
Saturday? What--?

KEVIN
Saturday! Saturday night at McCormick's! The dart competition, man? You remember that?

Bobby looks at him, confused.

KEVIN
You lost, man. You lost the tournament!

Kevin walks toward a large tree.

On the tree hangs a dart board. Three darts stick from it.

KEVIN
I lost money on you 'cause you lost that tournament. You're supposed to be the best and I bet on you and I lost!

He steps a few feet away from the dart board and to a tree trunk several lengths of rope are tied to it.

KEVIN
You always say you're the best! You can beat everyone! You talk how you can hit cork from fifteen feet away. Man, that night, you couldn't hit shit!

BOBBY
What does this have to do with Darlene being tied up over the water there?

Darlene struggles with her ropes, her face riddled with fear.

KEVIN

I bet my paycheck on you, man. I
bet my whole two weeks fucking
paycheck on you and you lost!

He puts his foot up on the tree stump, next to the ropes.

BOBBY

What does this have to do with--?

KEVIN

This has everything to do with
Darlene! Everything, man!

He raises his axe and chops into one of the ropes.

Darlene falls about a foot, jerking to a halt. She lets out
a MUFFLED SCREAM.

Her toes dip in the water. She brings her knees up, pulling
her feet out.

BOBBY

Jesus!

KEVIN

When Abbey heard I lost my paycheck
on you, she left me! She packed
her shit up and moved back to her
sister.

Bobby and Darlene look at each other. Tear run down her
cheeks.

BOBBY

You can't blame me 'cause Abbey
left you, Kevin. I didn't make you
bet on me. That was your doing.

Kevin rests the axe on his shoulder.

KEVIN

Ain't true. You kept going on an
on about how you were gonna beat
Stevie Cortland's ass. You were
unbeatable! And you lost. You
lost!

Bobby looks at him, bewildered.

BOBBY

So, what do you want? Money? You
want me to pay you the money you
lost? Is that it?

KEVIN

No... no. It won't be that easy.

He points to the dart board.

KEVIN

You gotta hit cork.

BOBBY

What?

KEVIN

You heard me. You gotta hit the center of my target. You do that, she can go free.

Bobby looks back at Darlene, squirming.

KEVIN

Each time you don't, though, I cut another rope.

BOBBY

What?

KEVIN

There's six more ropes keeping your wife outta the water. You got six chances to do it--

BOBBY

Six?

KEVIN

Shouldn't be so hard for such a fuckin' dart champion like you, right?

BOBBY

You're shitting me!

KEVIN

I ain't. Now you better get started, before the sun goes down.

BOBBY

But I don't have my darts--

KEVIN

(screaming)

I told you to bring them, didn't I? Now let's get started before it gets dark.

Bobby keeps an eye on Darlene as he makes his way to the dart board. He pulls the darts from it. They're cheap and rusty.

BOBBY

How'm I supposed to use these?

Kevin shrugs his shoulder.

Bobby steps away from the board, toward a large flat stone in the ground. A faded spray painted line splits it in half.

BOBBY

What if I pay you your money back
and what you would'a made--

KEVIN

Only about twenty minutes of
sunlight left and we ain't calling
this game on account'a darkness.

Bobby looks at his wife, helplessly.

He holds a dart in one hand and raises it up. He rolls it in his hand, getting a feel for it.

He pumps the dart in his hand and throws--

Hitting the outside of the target.

Kevin swings his axe--

CHOP!

Darlene falls another foot, stopping with a jerk. Her screams are muffled by her gag. She kicks her legs frantically as the water is now up to her calves.

BOBBY

Whoa! Whoa! Hold it!

Kevin looks at him, raising the axe.

BOBBY

You aren't gonna give me any
practice throws?

KEVIN

You got five more practice throws
'fore her head goes under the
water.

The two stare at each other. Sweat rolls down Bobby's face. Kevin takes a pack of cigarettes from his pants pocket and raises it to his mouth.

He pulls one out with his teeth and puts the pack away.

Bobby readies for his next throw as Kevin lights up.

KEVIN

They're supposed to be opening up a
Walmart on twenty-six, I hear--

Bobby lowers his dart hand and looks at Kevin with contempt.

KEVIN

I'm thinking of going for a job
there.

Kevin lights up with a Zippo. He puts it away.

Bobby readies his throw and--

Misses by two inches.

KEVIN

Getting better.

The axe comes down on another rope--

CHOP!

And Darlene falls more in the water. She thrashes as the
water is just above her knees.

BOBBY

(to himself)
Oh God.

He and Kevin watch Darlene kicking about.

KEVIN

Let's go, man. I ain't waiting all
night.

Bobby takes steps toward his wife.

KEVIN (O.S.)

Don't even think it, man...

CLICK!

Bobby stops. Kevin holds his pistol out at him.

KEVIN

You try anything stupid and I'll
shoot you and then her... Now get
back to the line.

Bobby slowly makes his way to the line. He looks at the last dart in his hand.

It's rusty. The tip is badly bent, almost like a barb.

He raises his hand and gently pumps it and--

KEVIN

Frankie's gonna be selling his fishing boat, you hear?

Bobby lowers his dart hand and shifts his weight.

KEVIN

I forgot what he's asking for it but it's way too much--

BOBBY

Will you shut up?

KEVIN

What?

BOBBY

I'm trying to concentrate on this, here, and you keep talking.

KEVIN

Just tryin' to have a little friendly conversation. That's all.

BOBBY

Friendly conversations you have with friends. Not with people trying to kill your wife.

KEVIN

(beat)

Fine. Just trying to ease the--you know--ease the tension. You know?

BOBBY

Shut the hell up.

KEVIN

Fine.

Bobby readies himself and throws.

CORK!

BOBBY

Cork!

The two rush over to the board.

KEVIN
It ain't! It ain't cork!

Kevin points to the dart.

It rests just outside of cork, touching the board's wire frame.

BOBBY
No!

KEVIN
Sorry man.

Kevin steps to the trunk. Bobby follows him. Kevin spins around, raising the axe to him.

KEVIN
That's close enough, bro.

The two look at each other.

KEVIN
You got a game to finish.

Bobby slowly walks to the board and pulls the darts from it.

CHOP!

Darlene sinks into the water up to her thighs. She thrashes about, whipping up the water.

BOBBY
Darlene! Darlene! I'll get you out of this! I promise!

KEVIN
Let's go, man. You got all pissy at me for talkin' and here you go talking to your wife.

Bobby steps up to the line and throws.

Misses.

KEVIN
This is, like, how you were playing last Saturday, man. This ain't good, know what I mean?

CHOP!

Nothing happens.

Darlene doesn't drop further in.

Silence.

The two look at each other.

KEVIN
You stay there.

He examines the ropes, following them.

KEVIN
(smiling)
Oh, I see. I cut the wrong rope.
I should'a cut that one next.

BOBBY
So what's that mean?

KEVIN
I'll let it go. But if I cut the
next one, she falls twice as much.

BOBBY
Kevin, man. Let's stop this.
We'll keep it between us. Let me
untie Darlene. Nobody gotta know.

KEVIN
No! We're gonna finish this!

He steps back to the stump.

BOBBY
Why?

KEVIN
'Cause I lost Abbey 'cause of you!
I loved her and, 'cause of you, she
left me.

BOBBY
It wasn't my fault!

KEVIN
It's all your fault! I believed
you, man! I was counting on you to
win so I could have some money and
do something nice with Abbey.

BOBBY
I didn't tell you to bet on me!

KEVIN

Rationalize it all you want, man,
but it's all your fault! I lost my
wife 'cause of you. And now you're
gonna lose yours! Now throw!

Bobby stares at him, fear and anger written on his face.

KEVIN

Throw it, man. Or I'll just cut
the next damn rope!

Bobby looks at his two remaining darts. One is the barbed
one. The other looks comparatively good.

He throws the good dart. It bounces off the board and lands
in the dirt.

KEVIN

(chuckling)

Oh man! You must wanna drown your
wife! Shit!

As Kevin raises the axe, Bobby throws the barbed dart, using
all his might.

The axe hits the next rope.

Darlene falls further into the water.

Kevin SCREAMS as he spins around, panicky.

Darlene splashes frantically about, struggling to keep her
face above water.

Bobby rushes Kevin, knocking him over. Kevin rolls to the
ground, losing both the axe and the gun in the overgrown
grass.

KEVIN

Motherfucker! I'm gonna kill you!

Bobby runs toward the water and jumps in. He swims
frantically to Darlene.

Kevin stands up. The dart is buried deep in his cheek, under
his eye. He pulls on the dart, pulling his skin with it.

Bobby swims up to Darlene, still struggling.

BOBBY

I got you, baby. I'm here.

He feels around the ropes and finds a large knot.

BOBBY

I'm gonna untie you! I'm gonna untie you.

Her muffled SCREAMS are heard through her gag.

Kevin pulls the dart from his face with a SCREAM, ripping skin with it.

KEVIN

I'm gonna get you so badly, Bobby Waters. I swear to God, I'm gonna get you.

He covers the wound with one hand as he searches the grass. Blood trickles from between his fingers.

Bobby struggles with the knots as Darlene squirms.

BOBBY

Stop squirming around, Darlene!

Kevin stands up, clutching the axe in one hand. He looks at the last rope in the stump and--

CHOP!

Darlene sinks completely under. The rope follows her in. Bobby dives after her.

The water is filled with plants and algae. Small fish swim away from the two as they struggle with each other.

Bobby grabs the ropes behind Darlene's head and pulls her up. The two break surface next to the boat. Bobby quickly ungags her. She lets out a blood-curdling SCREAM.

BOBBY

I got you, baby. I got you.

KEVIN (O.S.)

And I got you!

Kevin stands on the boat's deck, just above the two. His face bleeds profusely from his wound.

He swings the axe down, just missing Kevin's head.

The axe punches a hole in the boat's side.

KEVIN

Two of you ain't getting away from me. No sir.

Bobby swims around the boat, pulling Darlene behind him.

KEVIN

Where the fuck you two going? I
ain't done with you!

He swings the axe again, missing.

DARLENE

Somebody help!

Kevin follows them from the deck.

KEVIN

Scream all you want, Darlene!
Nobody around here for miles but
the three of us!

Bobby pulls Darlene to the shore and grabs a fallen tree
branch, the size of a baseball bat.

KEVIN

Man, what are you gonna do with
that little stick? Roast some
marshmallows?

Kevin walks along the rickety dock. The rotted wood GROANS
and CRACKS with each step he takes.

KEVIN

Man, you're too funny!

Bobby and Kevin meet at the end of the dock.

BOBBY

I'm gonna fucking kill you.

He swings the tree branch. Kevin casually takes half a step
back, avoiding the blow.

Bobby follows him, ready to swing again.

Kevin feigns a swing, causing Bobby to jump back.

KEVIN

(chuckling)

What's the matter, bro? You wanna
get me? Then get me.

Bobby inches toward him, ready to swing. Kevin baits him by
sticking his face out and pulling it back.

The dock below them CREAKS with each step they take.

Darlene squirms her way to land.

KEVIN

You know you can't hit me. Just
like you can't--

Bobby swings his branch. Kevin swings his axe.

CRACK!

Bobby's club shatters in a thousand pieces.

KEVIN

Can't believe I bet on shit like
you.

Grinning, Kevin raises his axe.

Bobby rushes him. He grabs Kevin's arms and the two go back.
Their feet trip over each other.

Kevin falls over backward with Bobby on top of him. The two--

CRASH--

Through the dock, into the water. Wood splinters everywhere.

Bobby stands in five feet of water. He grabs Kevin by the
hair and punches him in the face.

And punches.

And punches.

And punches.

Kevin doesn't respond.

Bobby hits him a few more times and lets go of him. He
notices the water turning red around Kevin's head.

Kevin's eyes seem lifeless and unfocussed.

Bobby nudges him, turning him over.

A shard of wood, from the dock, is embedded in his head. A
second, much larger piece, is embedded in his back.

Kevin slowly sinks into the murky water.

EXT.MCCORMICKS GRILL -NIGHT

HONKY TONK MUSIC blasts from this roadside bar. Cars, trucks and motorcycles are parked haphazardly around the building.

INT. MCCORMICKS GRILL

The joint is crowded with blue collared locals. LAUGHTER is heard and the people AD LIB chatter.

Bobby and Darlene sit at a table against a far wall. There are beers and food on the table.

BOBBY

And Mister Benson was really impressed with me when I was able to fix the steel press. Bringing in a technician would'a cost him, like three thousand dollars.

DARLENE

That's great...

She takes his hand in her hers.

DARLENE

I only wish you didn't have to work all those hours.

BOBBY

I keep working these hours and in a month or two, we'll be able to move the trailer to Oasis Gardens--

DARLENE

Oasis Gardens? We could be living next to Momma that way--

CLYDE (30) steps up to the two. He's a brawny-looking guy.

CLYDE

Hey Bobby. Hey Darlene.

DARLENE

Hey Clyde.

BOBBY

Clyde.

CLYDE

Bobby, we're about to start a game over there--

He point to some guys a short distance away, throwing darts at a board.

CLYDE
You interested.

Bobby looks at Clyde. Then Darlene. Then Clyde, again.

BOBBY
No thanks, Clyde.

CLYDE
Sure? Could really use a fourth.

BOBBY
Nah. I just don't feel like playing. Thanks away.

CLYDE
No problems. You guys have a good one.

He walks off as Bobby holds tightly onto Darlene's hand.

FADE TO BACK.