

WITCH OF THE TREES

written by

Marnie Mitchell-Lister

COPYRIGHT 2009

contact: jrsygrl65@aol.com

FADE IN:

EXT. MICCOSUKEE RESERVOIR - NIGHT (1985)

A full moon illuminates a narrow, two lane road that winds through a sea of dead trees. Their skeletons jut out of the water. A lifeless, drowned forest.

A Camaro speeds through.

INT. CAMARO

Heavy metal blasts from the stereo. The driver, DOUG, typical teen burnout, passes a joint to his clone, MARK.

MARK

You gonna slow down douche bag?
That's Witches Curve.

The headlights reflect off a yellow caution sign ahead.

DOUG

You believe that kid's story?

Doug laughs at Mark who can't hide his nerves as they pass the "winding road" caution sign. To torture Mark further, Doug accelerates.

DOUG

How did it go? In day she sleeps,
full moon she creeps? The witch of
the trees. Blah, blah, blah,
something she'll keep?

MARK

Your soul she'll keep.

As Doug navigates the curves, an object comes into view in the road ahead. He squints.

DOUG

What the fuck is that?

Suddenly it becomes clear. A huge dead tree lay across the road. Doug slams the brakes. The car spins.

Mark and Doug scream, grabbing on to whatever they can.

EXT. CAMARO

The Camaro rolls twice, lands on its roof, slides a few yards then crashes into a tree.

The scene is early quiet until...

Moans come from the passenger side. Mark, bloody and mangled, stares blankly at Doug's lifeless body.

A sound comes from the dead woods. Mark slowly turns his head. Twigs crack and break as something approaches.

He watches as a thick tree root slithers closer to the car. Panic sets in as he tries to move but can't.

The root enters the broken window and wraps around Mark.

He screams helplessly as it pulls his broken body out of the car and drags him into the darkness.

EXT. MICCOSUKEE FOREST - NIGHT **(2009)**

Screams echo. Branches crack as hands part a bush like curtains, creating a view to the other side.

On the other side, in a clearing about ten yards away, a troop of rambunctious BOY SCOUTS run around a camp fire.

On this side, JOSH NELSON (19), handsome hippie, removes his hands in frustration. The branches snap back into place.

JOSH

You gotta be kidding me.

SIERRA (O.S.)

Good. Can we leave now?

He looks over at SIERRA REYNOLDS (19), pretty and way too pristine looking to be comfortable in the woods.

JOSH

Where do you suggest we go Sierra?
Your parent's house? My parent's
house? My car's too small. . .

SIERRA

Fine.

She pouts. He smiles and puts his arms around her.

She tries to reciprocate but can't get her arms around the backpack he carries.

JOSH

The important thing is that we're together? Right?

Josh leans in, they kiss. From the Scout side of the bush a chorus of KUMBAYA begins. Kisses turn to giggles.

JOSH

I can't handle that. I know where we can go.

He grabs Sierra by the hand. She reluctantly follows.

A few yards ahead, the forest floor turns to black pavement.

Sierra stops. She looks down at the cracked road below her feet. Josh coaxes her along.

They walk along the abandoned road, reservoir filled with dead trees on both sides, toward a fence marked "NO TRESSPASSING".

Just beyond the fence, entangled in vine, bits of yellow from a "winding road" sign glow, lit by the full moon.

EXT. BOY SCOUT CAMP

The campfire crackles as the boys wrap up KUMBAYA. One of the scout leaders, JACK MILLER (40), stands up.

JACK

Alright men. Time to turn in.

The boys protest. LUKE MILLER (9), approaches his dad.

LUKE

We really gotta go to bed?

JACK

If you guys wanna fish in the morning you do.

Luke scuffs away in defeat.

Jack picks up a stick and playfully pokes Luke in the butt, he turns around.

JACK

Don't let the witch get ya.

Luke angrily pushes the stick away.

LUKE

That's a stupid story Dad.

Another scout, JOEY MORGAN(9), stands close by, waiting for Luke.

Luke approaches, shakes his head "no".

Totally bummed, the boys trudge back to their tent.

JOEY

This sucks. I go to bed later when I'm at home.

LUKE

I know. My Dad can be totally lame sometimes.

JOEY

Hey, what was that your Dad said about a witch?

LUKE

It's a stupid story he used to tell me when I was a kid about some crazy lady who wanted to save this forest.

Joey's eyes are fixed on Luke. He waits for more.

Aggravated, Luke continues.

LUKE (cont.)

She strapped herself to a tree but they flooded it anyway. Now she kills people . . . told you it was stupid.

The two boys enter the tent.

INT. TENT

A dim lantern glows.

An empty pint of Jack Daniels is kicked over by a flurry of activity taking place inside the sleeping bag.

GRUNTS and GROANS and . . . finished.

Josh pops his head out, Sierra underneath him, both out of breath, both smiling.

SIERRA

Okay. Camping is kinda fun.

He kisses her then unzips the sleeping bag. He reaches for his boxers, slips them on then his boots.

JOSH

I gotta piss. I'll be right back.

EXT. TENT

Josh walks out. The tent is set up on the old, abandoned road behind the "NO TRESSPASSING" fence.

Light from the full moon filters though the trees. He shivers then walks toward the water's edge.

Josh whistles as he pees. Twigs crack as something approaches. He stops and listens.

Suddenly a root grabs a hold of his leg and pulls him down. It begins to drag him away, fast.

He desperately grabs at passing branches but he's pulled too hard and can't hold on.

His face scrapes the ground, mouth filling with dirt muffling his screams. Then, splash.

INT. TENT

A flashlight under Luke's chin shines on his face.

Joey, tucked in his sleeping bag, listens intently.

LUKE

In day she sleeps - Full moon she
creeps - The witch of the trees -
Your soul she'll keep.

EXT. TENT

Sierra stands outside the tent, nervously looking for Josh.

Branches crack, she strains to see through the darkness.

She cautiously inches forward, doesn't see a thick root slithering toward her.

It grabs her leg, she falls hard. It pulls her.

LUKE (V.O.)

When her root grabs hold - It's
your life she craves - She'll pull
you down to her watery grave.

Her finger tips bleed as she desperately claws the road.

She screams as she's dragged along the pavement then into the dark woods. Then, splash.

INT. UNDER WATER

The root pulls Sierra's limp body through the murky water toward a cluster of dead tree trunks then pushes her body against one of them.

Her body is absorbed.

LUKE (V.O.)

The witch of the trees helps the
forest survive - With a collection
of souls, of those once alive.

The trunk glows, casting an eerie outline of Sierra, now suspended inside.

Surrounding trunks glow to reveal others, including Josh and Mark.

The root retracts to the largest trunk, inside is a woman. With dead eyes she looks at her collection and smiles wickedly.

Satisfied, she closes her eyes. The trunks go dark.

FADE OUT