

Devil's Hollow

by

Brian Lee Johnson

**EXT. FOREST - NIGHT**

A sea of stars dot the night sky. A fat half-full moon peaks over the tops of the trees. Below, the beam of a flashlight frantically darts through the forest.

**EXT. FOREST TRAIL - NIGHT**

BILLY, (30's), a plain looking man with a bloody gash on the left side of his head CRASHES through the forest at a break neck speed. He leaps over a fallen log -- stumbles -- barely recovers but continues.

BILLY

Megan? Megan!?

Dirt and blood stains mar Billy's t-shirt. His breathing is labored, strained; but it doesn't slow his pace.

**EXT. OLD FARMSTEAD - NIGHT**

The moonlight above illuminates a lonely, dilapidated house in the middle of a large clearing. A sea of tall grass surrounds it, broken by the occasional scrub oak. The windows are cloudy, coated in decades of dust and dirt. The paint is cracked in places, peeling in others. This house has seen better decades.

Billy BURSTS out of the tree line that surrounds the farmstead. He looks around, sees the house; heads toward it.

BILLY

MEGAN!?

He nears the front door.

MEGAN (O.S.)

Billy!

BILLY

Megan? Megan...I'm here! I'm here!

**INT. OLD FARM HOUSE - NIGHT**

WHOOSH! Billy flings the front door open and enters. It's dimly lit. Everything is either hidden in shadows or half swallowed in the darkness.

Billy scans the small entryway in front of him. As he does low, inaudible WHISPERS drift through the darkened house. Billy's eyes dart back and forth, searching for the source of the whispers.

MEGAN (O.S.)

Billy!?

BILLY

Megan! I'm here. I'm coming!

MEGAN (O.S.)

Hurry!

Billy rushes past what looks like a kitchen. There are human body parts on an island cutting board in the center of it. Billy doesn't notice them. He continues into--

### THE LIVING ROOM

Dark and foreboding. Once again he hears WHISPERS, chanting in some indiscernible language. Billy pauses for a split second, then clenches his jaw and continues into the living room proper where he sees MEGAN, (20's), beautiful.

She's tied to a chair with her hands bound behind her and her feet lashed to the chair legs. She struggles against her bonds but it's useless.

MEGAN

Get me out of here!

Billy kneels in front of her; looks over her bonds.

MEGAN

Untie me, untie me. Please just  
fucking untie me!

Billy reaches for her feet. His fingers just touch the rope. The strange WHISPERS emanate from every corner of the living room. They're demonic sounding, and still in the strange language from before. Billy freezes -- looks up at Megan.

Tears slide down her face. She stares at something behind Billy.

MEGAN

(a whisper)  
...he's here.

Billy turns. Behind him looms PILLOWCASE, massive, dressed in dirty overalls and a threadbare long sleeved shirt. He wears a stained, worn-out pillowcase on his head with two eye holes cut in it and holds a BRUSH AX in his gloved hands.

Pillowcase towers over Billy, half shrouded in shadow, which only adds to his already impressive presence. Billy doesn't move. He stares up at Pillowcase, unable to speak. Pillowcase raises the brush ax.

Megan SCREAMS. Pillowcase swings the brush ax at Billy's head--

**BLACKOUT:**

**OVER BLACK**

Radio STATIC. The radio tunes into a news report.

REPORTER (V.O.)

Authorities now estimate that the total number of people who have gone missing in the area known as Devil's Hollow in the last fifty years is a staggering one hundred and eighty seven.

**EXT. COUNTY ROAD - DAY**

A Chevy Suburban, loaded with camping gear on its roof, snakes its way along the empty highway.

REPORTER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And although there's still no sign of foul play, rumors are flying that Megan Jones--investigative reporter for Channel 6 evening news--and her cameraman have fallen victim to the local legend known as, Pillowcase...

Eventually the Suburban pulls off the road in front of a run down barn. The radio shuts off when the Suburban does.

PARKER, (25) the quintessential 'All American Boy', exits the drivers side of the Suburban. FINGER, (25), a very good looking, border-line slacker type exits the passenger side. Both Parker and Finger wear t-shirts that read: **MYTH OR REALITY.**

STEVE, (28), a handsome party boy, exits out the rear side door, along with NEAVA, (24), curves that could kill. They're followed by HALEY, (22), a petite, sassy bombshell.

Parker and finger move to the front of the suburban. They look up at the barn; smile.

PARKER

...wow.

FINGER

Definitely gives off "Murder Barn" vibes.

Neava joins them at the front of the Suburban.

NEAVA

What would you do without me?

FINGER

Probably just film the opening next to some sign on the side of the road. All sad and pathetic like.

PARKER

That was one episode.

FINGER

Our worst episode.

PARKER

It was your idea.

FINGER

I'm just the talent. Why the hell would you ever listen to me?

Neava laughs.

NEAVA

(to Parker)

Keys?

Parker tosses the keys to her. Neava leaves Parker and Finger as a heated discussion about the first episode begins, and heads toward the rear of the Suburban. Steve and Haley join her--

#### **AT THE BACK OF THE SUBURBAN**

Neava opens the rear door. Steve pulls a camera case out of the back and sets it on the tailgate. Haley stares at Parker as he and Finger talk amongst themselves, obviously still arguing about whose fault the first episode was. Abruptly she smacks her arm, rubs it.

HALEY

I think the mosquitoes have it out for me.

(to Neava)

Why did I agree to this?

NEAVA

Because we needed an audio tech and you needed the work.

(glances at Parker)

Among other things.

Haley doesn't notice Neava's gaze shift to Parker, she's too busy investigating her insect bite.

HALEY (CONT'D)

Aside from the bugs...and nature,  
don't you see the flaw in this plan?

Haley gives Neava an expectant look; gets no response.

HALEY (CONT'D)

Oh come on, a group of twenty  
something's camping and drinking in  
the same woods some psychotic killer  
might be running around in? It's the  
cliché opening to every Slasher  
movie from the eighties.

NEAVA

Haley, sweetie...it's just a myth.

HALEY

Really? So what happened to that  
reporter and her camera guy?

Steve pulls an audio equipment bag out of the back, hands it  
to Haley.

STEVE

That's why we're headed out there.  
See if we can find out what really  
happened.

Steve pulls a high end digital camera out of a camera case.  
Sets it down on the tailgate next to the case.

HALEY

Shouldn't we let the police go  
looking for them?

Haley unzips the audio bag, pulls a field mixer and some  
head phones out of it.

STEVE

They already did. Didn't find  
anything.

Steve pulls a tripod out of the back of the Suburban, grabs  
the camera and heads for the barn where he passes Parker and  
Finger--

#### **AT THE FRONT OF THE SUBURBAN**

Finger nods at Steve as he passes, then glances at Haley  
fiddling with her audio gear.

FINGER

You think the new girl has a  
boyfriend?

PARKER

Haley? I don't know. Why, you think you have a shot with her?

FINGER

Of course I have a shot with her.

PARKER

How do you figure that?

FINGER

You know I have a certain way with the ladies.

Parker thinks for a beat.

PARKER

...duct tape and rohypnol?

FINGER

--don't hate.

Finger walks away. Parker smiles. Finger heads over to where Steve is setting up--

#### **IN FRONT OF THE BARN**

Steve sets the tripod down; attaches the camera to it. Finger moves up next to him.

FINGER

Did you talk to Neava yet?

Steve stops what he's doing, glances at Neava talking to Haley at the back end of the suburban.

STEVE

Not yet. I'm waiting for the perfect moment.

Finger is silent; waits for more from Steve. Off that--

STEVE

I know everyone thinks I'm an irresponsible idiot who never left the frat house.

(glances at Neava again)

That's why it has to be perfect.

Finger nods.

FINGER

Oh. So, you wanna show Neava that you've finally grown up and you're a responsible man now.

STEVE

Exactly.

FINGER

Gotcha. And I support you, buddy.

STEVE

Thank you.

A silent beat.

FINGER

...but this better not fuck up your  
bachelor party.

Steve gives Finger a look.

STEVE

No way.

#### **AT THE BACK OF THE SUBURBAN**

Neava and Haley watch as a luxury sedan pulls off the side of the road and slowly comes to a stop behind the Suburban.

PHIL, (30's), a sleazy gap model look-alike, exits the driver's side talking heatedly into a cell phone.

PHIL

...no. That's not what I asked  
for...

He wanders off behind the Sedan as ASHLEY (23), stop-traffic gorgeous exits the passenger side of the car. Neava heads over to Haley.

NEAVA

You made it.

ASHLEY

Sorry I'm late...  
(glances at Phil)  
...it's been a morning.

NEAVA

You're only a few minutes late.

Ashley glances back at Phil again.

NEAVA

Oh...are you late 'cause you guys  
talked?

Ashley looks panicked for a beat; but recovers.



ASHLEY

No. Not yet. He just got handed a huge client at work and they told him if he messes it up he's fired.  
(shakes her head)  
I don't want to add to his stress.

Neava gives her a sympathetic look.

NEAVA

Ashley, he's gonna find out. You can't keep this from him much longer.

Ashley makes a concerned face; looks at the ground.

ASHLEY

I know.  
(looks up at Neava)  
It's not gonna ruin the show is it?

Neava gives a soothing smile.

NEAVA

Don't worry about that. We'll make it work.

Ashley looks relieved.

ASHLEY

Thank you.

Phil walks up. Looks at Ashley and nods to the phone in his hand.

PHIL

Sorry about that. So, what are you two talking about?

NEAVA

Nothin'. I was just about to mic her up.

Neava heads back to the rear of the Suburban. Phil and Ashley follow.

#### **AT THE FRONT OF THE SUBURBAN**

Finger joins Parker; looks over at Phil and Ashley who have joined the others at the rear of the Suburban.

FINGER (CONT'D)

Explain to me one more time why Phil's here?

PARKER

He wouldn't let Ashley come out here by herself.

FINGER

I got that part...what I want to know is why you caved and let him tag along?

PARKER

Had to.

FINGER

Really?

Parker shrugs.

FINGER (CONT'D)

You know he's gonna ruin this episode, right? All he ever does is fight with Ashley.

Parker considers, then exhales.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Finger, our numbers are falling...fast. The only reason we're still operating is because of her.

(he nods to Ashley)

Her TikTok followers alone brought in over half the views on the last episode. If she goes, so do her fans. The fans that bring in advertisers. Our biggest source of income. So if keeping this show going means I have to let Ashley's overly jealous boyfriend tag along, then that's exactly what I'm gonna do.

Finger shakes his head.

FINGER

What happened to you, Parker? Where's that maverick independent director I once knew? The guy who wanted to make his reality show his way and not let anyone or anything dictate otherwise?

PARKER

He has employees that need their paychecks....and school loans I'm still paying off.

A silent beat.

FINGER

Sellout.

PARKER

Not everybody's parents could pay  
for their college degree, dip-shit.  
One of us has to be the practical  
one.

FINGER

Whatever helps you sleep at night.

Parker shakes his head and heads toward Haley--

**AT THE BACK OF THE SUBURBAN**

Neava, Haley and Steve stand to one side of Phil and Ashley.  
Neava pulls a clipboard out of the Suburban; it has a  
notepad and a script clipped to it. Haley checks her field  
mixer and cables, and doesn't notice Parker approaching her.

PARKER

Hey.

Haley looks up from her mixer.

HALEY

Oh, hi.

Parker smiles at her, then looks at Ashley

PARKER

Why don't you go and join Finger,  
I'll be over in a bit.

Ashley nods, heads toward the Barn. Parker turns his  
attention back to Haley.

PARKER

Thanks for doing this on short  
notice. I really appreciate it.

HALEY

(awkward smile)  
Oh it's not a problem.

Neava watches them talk; smiles.

PARKER

Got any questions?