

It's a calm afternoon, the temperature is warm, and the seasons are just beginning to shift from summer to autumn. Eric Masters is riding out in a jeep to the local campsites in Clearwater, Idaho. Since it's getting colder out, there have been several people coming into the park. He makes sure each one of the sites is clear of any kind of trouble, not like he expects there to be anything, the worst he had seen were a few college students getting drunk and having a party. Less than an hour ago, reports were coming in of screaming and yelling from further in the trail. Being the only ranger with this kind of experience, Headquarters requested that Masters check it out. Once he reached said location, he hopped out of his jeep and gather what he needed, including his firearm, flashlight, and radio. The forest around him was silent, there were no sounds of animals or sounds of nature, just an eerie silence. The sun started to set and the day began to turn to night, so Masters turned on the lights to his jeep before grabbing his radio.

"Eric Masters to Home, do you copy?" Master says into his radio.

"I hear you, Masters." A feminine voice came over the radio, Sunny Lawrence. She was always on the receiving end of the line.

"I am approaching the location of the screams," Master says as he drives forward, parks his jeep, and steps out of it.

"It's probably some kids trying to scare hikers" Sunny replied.

"I don't know Sunny, they seemed pretty scared to me."

"Just be careful, you're on your own out there."

"Roger that." Eric took his hand off the radio.

He approaches the steps up to the campsite thinking this would be a routine check-up and report back to base, he continues forward, trying to get his flashlight to turn on. He smacked it a few times, it was as old as his career. He walked up the stairs as he fiddled with his flashlight. Once the light finally came to life, he hears a large splashing sound in the distance stopping him in his tracks. Masters shines his light ahead and sees a red stream of blood running down the wooden stairs. His skin was now a pale white not know what to expect ahead of him. He pulled out his firearm, a small caliber pistol, and held it in his hands. He slowly climbed the steps; feeling his senses going numb. His heart was ready to jump out of his chest and run, he wanted to do the same.

In all his years of working as a Ranger, he never had to deal with a murder or a dead body, his veterans considered him lucky. However tonight his luck was about to change; As he walked up

the stairs, the air became colder, but he could feel the temperature rise as a drop of sweat fell down his brow. He tried to keep his eyes straight ahead, but they could only focus on the ground beneath him as he walked up, the blood getting thicker as he reaches the top. What felt like forever, in actuality it was only a couple of minutes. He took a firm stance and pointed the gun up as he came into view of everything. The campsite was destroyed; tents were ripped apart, tables flipped, and marks followed the surface. He proceeded to walk further scanning over everything.

As he got closer to the middle of the campsite, he breathes in a heavy stench, it smelled like death and decay. He was so distracted he never noticed it until now. He follows the blood to its source, a female dead body displayed in the center of the chaos, her face told the story of what happened to her. Masters examines her as he covers his face to try and block out the awful smell. When he looked over her, he noticed a hole in the center of her chest, it was torn open, and her heart was missing. Masters recoiled in horror, not believing what his eyes could see. '*An animal attack?*' He thought, however nothing in the likes could do this kind of damage. Let alone leave a corpse behind with only its heart missing. He took another look around as his sense began to return slowly. Just as they reached their peak, he could hear something being torn apart. He pointed his gun and flashlight up and moved forward, behind a large tent, where the source of the sound was coming from. As he turned the corner, the smell got even worse than before, which he didn't think was possible. It got so bad it burned his eyes. He held the light up and saw another dead body, a male this time, hovering over the corpse was a figure, he presumes, was eating it from the sounds of loud chewing. Shaking and gasping for air, Masters slowly moves around as quietly as he can to get a better angle at the suspect, trying not to draw attention to himself quite yet. Masters points his gun at the suspect.

"H-hold it right there..." He said, his voice weak and trembling.

The figure stops eating, it looks up into the light, revealing a naked ram's skull and horns, a row of sharp teeth lining its mouth as blood and intestines fall from it. Fur seems to line every inch of its skin, leaving parts of it bare. The eyeless sockets of its skull were void with darkness. It stood up straight, and as its body began to change from a crouching position in front of Masters, there stood a figure twice his size at 10 feet tall. Masters takes a hesitant step back. *Run...* He told his legs, but his body was not following suit to what his brain commands. *Please...* He pleaded again, trying to will his body to move.

*"Daddy...?"* A twisted female voice broke the silence, Masters freezes in place, He looked up at the creature, his facial expression turning gray. *"Mommy...? Help me... Daddy..."* The voice came again, the creature tilted its head. *"Help me..."* The voice came from the beast itself. Masters looks up at the creature. A low growl rumbles from its chest. Masters raised his gun at the creature, and without thinking, he fires five shots into its chest. The bullets sank into the fur as the skin absorbs the blows done to it as if nothing happened. For a second, they seem to watch each other, then in the next moment, the creature lets out a high pitch screech. Master's body comes alive, and he turns tail to run, dropping his weapon in the process.

The creature lets out another screech and chases after Masters. Masters begins to run down the stairs fumbling in his pockets for his keys, slipping on the blood that he forgot was on the stairs, in his panic to get away. He tumbles down the stairs, when he hits the bottom he opens a gash on his leg, his car keys and flashlight flying out of his hands. He rushes to retrieve them both, holding the wound, limping the rest of the way to his jeep, and trying to pry the door open. He looks behind him to see the slight silhouette of the creature in the dark as the flashlight lights it up. Its hands began to change into a form of claws as it gets ready to attack, it draws closer and closer. Masters moves at the last second before the creature could hit him, the creature's attack hits the jeep, getting its claws stuck inside of the truck for a minute. Masters runs in the direction of the trail, 20 miles back to Headquarters. Masters hides behind a tree. He tries to radio back to Headquarters.

"Eric... Master to Sunny, do you copy?" Masters is out of breath.

"I copy Masters, is everything alright? We haven't heard from you in a while."

"I have something chasing me... I don't know what it is..." He said terrified as he watches the darkness around him.

"Repeat. You said you have something chasing you?" Sunny responds

"Yes!" Master says in a quiet but stern voice. "I don't know what it is... It has a skull, and it was eating the bodies of the young campers and..."

"You said it was eating the campers?"

"Yes!" Masters said again with conviction.

*"Mommy...?"* The sound arose again but this time it was in a twisted male voice, Masters freezes. He reached into his pocket for something in his wallet. He holds it close to his chest, saying a silent prayer. For a moment it was silent, Masters took in a deep breath,

and he relaxed. “*Daddy...?*” He looked up to see the creature in front of him face-to-face. “*Help... me...*” and with a quick jolt, the creature slices through Masters’ chest. The bones cracking beneath the skin. “*Daddy...?*” Came from the creature once again as it proceeds to tear through Masters’s chest. The radio cuts in and out as Sunny asks for a response from Masters, as his blood soaks the picture of his wife and child in his hand. The life fading from his body.