

ENDWELL

"Pilot"

Written by

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TEASE

EXT. ENDWELL, NEW JERSEY - DAY

To call Endwell a small town would be an understatement. The main street has one stoplight, and as many shuttered storefronts as open ones. Everyone knows everyone, and folks born here are pretty much guaranteed to die here as well.

Nestled deep in the Pine Barrens of New Jersey, it's about as close to nowhere as you can get.

WHITING STATE PARK AERIAL - DAY

Endwell's main and only attraction, Whiting State Park, is a sprawling, formidable expanse of forest dotted with small lakes, winding hiking trails, and the occasional creepy dilapidated cabin - a remnant of the area's past.

GEORGIA (V.O.)

Welcome to Whiting State Park. The largest expanse of forest in the state of New Jersey, it's home to some of the Pinelands most unique species of flora and fauna...

The camera soars over the forest before making a sharp dive towards the trees.

GEORGIA (V.O.)

And, well... something else.

We CRASH down through the tree-line and find ourselves at -

EXT. LEEDS CABIN - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

SUPER: "Endwell, New Jersey - 1735"

A small cabin sits alone in the woods. Dark and eerie. The only light comes from the hearth inside.

GEORGIA (V.O.)

On a dark and stormy night in 1735, a woman known only as "Mother Leeds" gave birth to an evil that walks among us to this very day. The Prince of the Pine Barrens himself... The Jersey Devil.

The front door SLAMS open, and a MAN storms out in a rage. He's clearly drunk, and clearly dangerous.

A WOMAN runs after him, sobbing and grabbing at his sleeve. In one swift motion he yanks his arm away and delivers a sharp backhand.

The woman falls to the ground. The man walks away.

Next to the house, he passes a small makeshift cemetery. Twelve headstones over twelve graves.

INT. LEEDS CABIN - CONT.

The woman enters the cabin. It's claustrophobic - somehow even smaller on the inside than it looked from the outside.

We finally get a good look at her.

She is MOTHER LEEDS (Early 30's, the first hint of a baby bump showing. Eerily beautiful and visibly exhausted beyond anything a good night's sleep could fix).

GEORGIA (V.O.)

Mother Leeds was rumored to be a witch...

Drying bundles of herbs hang over the kitchen table. Wax drips down the side of a dark candle with strange carvings.

The floor is littered with broken glass. With some effort, Mother Leeds crouches down and begins to clean it up.

GEORGIA (V.O.)

... And when she found out that she was expecting her thirteenth child to her no-good, deadbeat, drunk of a husband, she cursed the baby.

She doubles over - struck by a sudden, agonizing cramp - and accidentally slices her palm on a shard of glass.

Filled with equal parts rage and despair, she begins to mouth a silent chant over her bleeding hand.

GEORGIA (V.O.)

Declaring that if she were to bear this child, then it would be the Devil - just like its father.

Mother Leeds clenches her fist and squeezes her eyes shut.

A surge of POWER rushes through her, and her eyes flash PURE BLACK before returning to their normal icy blue.

She hikes up her skirt and rakes three bloody fingers across her stomach. Thunder rumbles, and on a crack of lightning we...

FLASH TO:

Mother Leeds in her bed, extremely pregnant and in labor, surrounded by a MIDWIFE and three other WOMEN.

The fireplace crackles as a storm rages on outside.

GEORGIA (V.O.)

And sure enough, when the baby was born he transformed into a monster right before her eyes.

POV: Mother Leeds

The midwife is between Mother Leeds' legs. She prepares to grab the baby but suddenly recoils, a look of pure terror on her face. She SCREAMS.

From this POV we're still unable to see past Mother Leeds' stomach and knees, but everyone in the room stares in horror at the baby that has presumably just emerged.

Horror turns to panic as the onlookers scramble backwards, and a DARK WINGED FIGURE clumsily takes flight.

Although mostly obscured by a thick black fog that clings to it like a cloak, one thing is clear: this baby is not human.

It hovers, small and awkward - still finding its bearing - before being hit by a sudden and excruciating growth spurt. The sickening sound of bones rapidly BREAKING and RESETTING is drowned out by the creature's ear-splitting SHRIEK.

Snapping out of her stupor, the midwife grabs a fireplace poker and swings at the creature, now the size of a teenager (if teenagers had bat wings, giant horns, and hooves...)

The poker connects with a THWACK and a SIZZLE. The creature is sent flying into the wall with a SCREAM.

The creature quickly rights itself and takes flight, circling the room in a panic - like a wild bird trapped in a house.

Finally, it flies into the lit fireplace and up the chimney.

GEORGIA (V.O.)

Ever since, the Jersey Devil is said to be the cause of all sorts of tragedies - fires, droughts, natural disasters, and some things much more sinister...

The camera follows as we soar up and into the dark sky.

EXT. WHITING STATE PARK AERIAL - NIGHT

Storm clouds begin to clear, and the creature glides over the forest against a brilliant full moon.

GEORGIA (V.O.)

To this day, he can be spotted all across the Pinelands, lurking in the shadows. Disaster following in his wake...

The creature makes a sudden, terrifying dive into the forest. The camera follows through the trees and we're back in -

EXT. WHITING STATE PARK - PRESENT DAY

The sky is blue, the sun is shining, it's a beautiful day.

We land on a walking trail just inside of Whiting State Park, where a FAMILY OF FOUR is taking a tour led by...

Park Ranger GEORGIA HAYES, (26 - Cool, confident, swoon-worthy Ruby Rose type on the outside; sharp, sarcastic Ellen Page type on the inside. She loves nature, she drinks whiskey neat, and she will definitely come change your tire if you get stuck with a flat.)

GEORGIA

And it's said that he still makes his home right here, in these very woods...

The group hangs on Georgia's every word as she walks backwards. She's loving it.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

(shrugging)

That is, if you believe in that kind of thing.

It's obvious that she does not.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

Anyway, back to my favorite part of the tour. Over here to your right you'll see one of the most common species of Pine tree in this forest, the Pitch Pine - also known as the *pinus rigida*. Yikes! What a name, right?

She looks back at her tour group, an All American family of four - Mother, Father, tween girl and a young boy. Probably not the right audience for that one...

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

Er... Fun fact! Did you know that over 45% of the state of New Jersey is covered in forest? That's a lot of trees!

The sound of TWIGS BREAKING behind them causes the whole family to jump. Georgia is amused by this.

We see the briefest FLASH of a shadowy figure race by. No one seems to notice.

Suddenly, an INHUMAN SHRIEK comes from deep in the forest. Georgia looks around, more confused than shaken.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

Um, a little farther down this path you'll see a-

Another SHRIEK comes from the forest, much louder and closer, accompanied by what sounds like the faint BEATING OF WINGS.

Georgia rounds a corner and stops walking. She very slowly turns around to see...

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

Holy shit...

The group looks past her to see what she's seeing. The tween girl stares in horror. The Mother screams.

A DEAD MAN is pinned to a tree by a large wooden spike several feet off the ground. He has a massive, bloody hole right around where his liver should be.

Blood drips from his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth.

END OF TEASE