

Lament's Embrace

By

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ACT I

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

A phone is sat on a bedside table. The alarm set on NOAH'S phone goes off and he calmly opens his eyes, whilst remaining on his back in bed. In one clean motion, NOAH thrusts himself out of bed and cuts into his morning routine.

NOAH starts by stretching in his bedroom, before cutting into push-ups, then sit-ups, and finally squats. NOAH proceeds to brush his teeth in the mirror, with a notable image representing facial expressions and their meanings stuck to the corner of said mirror, before practicing these portrayed expressions.

CUTS BETWEEN AND WITHIN SCENES TO REPRESENT THE PASSING OF TIME BETWEEN AND DURING EACH ACTION

Upon finishing, a neutral yet slightly pessimistic expression takes over as NOAH turns from the mirror. NOAH now prepares himself toast before sitting down, placing a headset over his head in front of his computer and checking his emails. As he scrolls through, NOAH glances over opened pages regarding deaths and a house fire that were left on his computer screen, sighs and then begins his job as a telemarketer.

NOAH KENNEDY
(Deep breath, presses button on computer)
Good morning, my name is Noah, how can I help you today?

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

We get a view from the window of NOAH'S house. He tries to relax himself by reading a historical book yet seems to be slightly uncomfortable/not enjoying it as much as expected, lightly tapping on the side of the book as he reads. NOAH prepares himself a simple dinner of scrambled eggs and eats in silence, alone. NOAH then throws himself into bed and spends the night tossing and turning.

RAPID CUTS CONTINUE, ESPECIALLY RELATING TO THE SCENE OF NOAH SLEEPING, TO REPRESENT THE PASSAGE OF TIME

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

NOAH wakes with a start to his usual alarm. NOAH'S morning routine from the first scene is repeated, with him seeming increasingly irritated with each passing action's difficulty.

NOAH makes mistakes such as dropping a piece of toast during these shots and proceeds to seem frustrated yet internally saddened by each occurrence. During his attempt to work as a telemarketer, NOAH encounters a difficult customer that gives him a rough time and has to remove his glasses and headset for a moment to rub his face and take a breather.

NOAH KENNEDY

I understand, sir, but I can't-
 (slight pause)

Yes. ... Yes, I know, it must be very
 frustrating - but I'm really not
 allowed to-
 (sighs, removes glasses and rubs
 face before trying again)

Alright, I'll connect you to my
 manager, please hold.

CUT to NOAH then trying to continue reading his book, yet finds it increasingly difficult as time passes, with him regularly changing position and tapping the book with greater and greater strength and with lower delays between taps. NOAH eventually gives up and slams the book shut, marking a cut to the next scene.

ALL OF THE ABOVE SCENES WILL BE CUT BETWEEN EACH OTHER AT A MUCH HARSHER RATE AND TIMING THAN THE SCENES BEFORE IT, AIMING TO SHOWCASE THE PASSAGE OF TIME WHILST ALSO INDICATING THE REPETITIVE NATURE OF THE EVENTS. READING THE BOOK WILL BE CUT TO ALMOST JARRINGLY IN ORDER TO JOLT THE AUDIENCE AND CREATE A MILD SENSE OF UNEASE.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - EVENING

NOAH sits back at his computer and pulls up a saved news article tab on his computer (from many other similar saved tabs) regarding 3 deaths in a house fire. He reads through the page and appears to be in immense emotional duress, though muted. He taps at his fingers while reading.

CUTS BETWEEN NOAH AND THE WEBSITE WILL BE OCCURRING FREQUENTLY, WITH DIFFERENT ZOOM LEVELS USED TO HONE IN ON SPECIFIC PARTS OF THE COMPUTER USING WHEN NECESSARY. HARSH CUT TO HIM LYING IN BED.

NOAH finds himself unable to sleep, thinking about the fire.

HARSH CUT TO NOAH LYING IN BED, STARING BLANKLY AT THE CEILING, WITH CUTS BETWEEN THE CEILING ITSELF AND NOAH'S INCREASINGLY AFFECTED EXPRESSIONS. AS WE GET CLOSE TO HIS EYES, FIRE BECOMED VISIBLE IN THEIR REFLECTION.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

NOAH is nowhere to be seen during the morning, with the usual morning routine-related shots still occurring from the same angle and distance, yet without NOAH present.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MIDDAY

We cut to NOAH driving down a country road. He spots a stranger walking alongside the trail, pulls up and offers a lift.

NOAH KENNEDY

Heya, you need a lift anywhere? It's a long stretch of road until you reach the next town or anything.

VICTIM #1

Oh, uh... Any chance you might be going near Winslow?

NOAH KENNEDY

Luckily enough, I'm planning to go right through it. Hop on in.

VICTIM #1

Ah, perfect.

(enters NOAH's car)

Thanks for this man, you're a life saver.

NOAH KENNEDY

Oh no don't worry about it, I had someone offer me a lift once when I still had a long walk ahead of me - I won't forget the relief.

(starts driving onwards)

So, what's bringing you down to Winslow then?

VICTIM #1

Meeting up with some friends I haven't seen in a long time.

NOAH KENNEDY

(looks at victim through rear-view mirror)

Yeah?

VICTIM #1

Yeah, I've been travelling a lot

recently - the last year and a half.
Been on a journey to rediscover
myself, you know?

NOAH KENNEDY

I know the feeling, sometimes I still
feel like I'm a stranger in my own
skin

(chuckles)

Maybe I could use some time out
myself.

VICTIM #1

Do it man, seriously, it's given me
the perspective I need to put some
shit behind me.

(pauses for a moment and looks
outside the window)

Where are we anyway? This doesn't look
like any kind of main road.

NOAH KENNEDY

Oh yeah, sorry, I usually take this
route as there's never any traffic on
it. Adds a few minutes but its got
some refreshing scenery.

VICTIM #1

(Looks outside the window at
nearby forests and lack of
civilisation, a slight look of
worry comes across his face)

NOAH KENNEDY

We're still a little while out of
Winslow, you don't mind if I stop off
to take a leak do you?

VICTIM #1

No, not at all.

NOAH KENNEDY

Thanks.

EXT. FOREST - MIDDAY/AFTERNOON

WE FOLLOW A GROUND SHOT OF THE CAR TURNING INTO A NEARBY FOREST.

NOAH exits the car and walks into the forest by himself

NOAH KENNEDY
I'll only be a minute.

THE FIRST VICTIM pulls out his phone and starts scrolling through it.

NOAH emerges from the forest with a ball-peen hammer in hand and walks towards THE FIRST VICTIM'S car door, whilst they are unaware. The door is rapidly torn open, startling THE FIRST VICTIM and NOAH strikes them over the head with the hammer.

ABOVE SCENE FILMED ENTIRELY FROM BESIDE THE FIRST VICTIM, WITH CLOSE-UPS FOR PHONE USE. NOAH WILL BE SILHOUETTED FROM THE WINDOW AS VIEWED FROM THE CAR'S INTERIOR. CUT TO BLACK AFTER THE STRIKE.

THE FIRST VICTIM regains some small level of consciousness to them being dragged deeper into the forest.

ABOVE SCENE WILL INCLUDE POV SHOTS AND INDUCED BLURRINESS TO ALLOW THE AUDIENCE TO PLACE THEMSELVES IN THE VICTIM'S SHOES. THESE EFFECTS CLEAR AS WE TRANSITION BACK TO VIEWING FROM NOAH'S PERSPECTIVE.

VICTIM #1
(weak and with random,
interrupting, sharp breaths -
desperate and pleading, on the
verge of tears)
Please... You don't have to do this...
I won't tell anyone... Just let me
go...

NOAH KENNEDY
(stops dragging THE FIRST VICTIM
and grabs the hammer from his
trousers)
Please forgive me.

NOAH starts repeatedly striking at THE FIRST VICTIM numerous times and in various places across the upper half of the body and head. NOAH gains in momentum as he starts, then slows down toward the end and finishes with one final, strong strike.

NOAH distances himself from the man and rests against a nearby tree, bloody faced. The reality of the situation begins to set in and he appears to start panicking. He starts tapping against his finger. NOAH rubs blood off of his face and continues to sit and stare at the body for a moment,

continuously tapping.

TAPPING WILL BE SHOWN IN A SHORT CLOSE-UP SHOT, WITH THE BACKGROUND BLURRED OUT.

NOAH sighs and proceeds to start standing up. We cut to NOAH grabbing a shovel that was also left out in the forest and we then cut to him finalising the burial of THE FIRST VICTIM. NOAH places a flower atop the mound of dug-up earth before standing in front of it.

ABOVE SHOTS WILL BE RELATIVELY SHORT AND CUT BETWEEN EACHOTHER IN A SIMILAR WAY TO THE MORNING ROUTINE TO INDICATE THE PASSAGE OF TIME. FOCUS WILL BE ENTIRELY PLACED ON EITHER NOAH OR THE ACT OF HIM BURYING WITH CLOSE-UPS ON EXPRESSIONS AND ACTIONS. UPON FINISHING THE BURIAL, THE SHOT CUTS TO A WIDE VIEW OF NUMEROUS GRAVES SURROUNDING NOAH, EACH WITH THEIR OWN FLOWER.

NOAH KENNEDY
I 'm sorry.

ACT II

EXT. NOAH'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

NOAH frantically scrubs at the back seat that the victim sat at, likely trying to remove any signs that the person was ever sat there.

WE VIEW NOAH SCRUBBING FROM BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CAR.

HARSH CUT.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MIDDAY

NOAH is sat in his car, patiently waiting for another hitchhiker to arrive - yet to no avail. He sighs and then starts the car and begins driving.

HARSH CUT.

EXT. SMALL VILLAGE AND BURNED DOWN HOUSE - AFTERNOON

NOAH arrives at a small town, parking his car, getting out, and beginning to walk. We follow NOAH walking through some new countryside locations before being shown a burned down house. NOAH arrives at this location, enters the area and kneels at a shoddily-made wooden cross. He stays there for a moment and begins to remember his brother

EXT. FOREST (PAST) - AFTERNOON

NOAH is calling out to his brother while lost in a forest. The sound of his own voice fades as he yells out repeatedly. The yells stop until NOAH is left frantically pacing through the forest, breathing heavily - all noises drowned out in a wave of white noise.

THE CAMERA WILL BE HALF-CIRCLING NOAH AS HE PACES, FROM A LOW ANGLE AND CLOSE DISTANCE. RAPID CUTS BETWEEN THIS POINT AND A LOW FOCAL RANGE TO PORTRAY THE FEELINGS OF PANIC HE'S EXPERIENCING.

NOAH's shoulders are grabbed from hands that appear beyond the camera.

NOAH'S BROTHER
Hey! Noah! I'm right here, it's
alright - calm down!
(lightly shaking at his shoulders)

All attempts thus far fail to work and NOAH remains in a state of panic

CAMERA ANGLES REMAIN LOW, BROTHER IS HARDLY SHOWN/NEVER IN FOCUS DURING THIS PANIC. AS NOAH CALMS, THE CAMERA BEGINS TO RISE TO HEAD HEIGHT WITH EACH CUT AND INCLUDE THE BROTHER IN CLEARER DETAIL - AS IF DIRECTING AN AVERAGE CONVERSATION.

NOAH'S BROTHER

Noah, everything's okay now - just focus on your breathing. Slow it down, deep breaths.

(pause, he reaches for NOAH's hand and holds it)

Look, take your hand - focus on your hand. Feel the skin between your fingers, feel how warm they are - focus on that.

NOAH KENNEDY

(Nods, begins to calm down)

NOAH'S BROTHER

There you go, see? You just need to take a step back sometimes and focus on the little things.

The memory fades

CUT

EXT. SMALL VILLAGE AND BURNED DOWN HOUSE - AFTERNOON

We return to NOAH kneeling at the cross as he begins to talk to his brother.

NOAH KENNEDY

I can't keep doing this, I need your help - I can't stop thinking about it all. Everything. I can still see the fire.

(pause, emotions build, he stands)

Why did you leave me?!

NOAH kicks the cross and walks away, camera lingers on the broken pieces of wood.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MIDDAY

We see NOAH driving, breathing heavily and tapping at the wheel of the car.

HARSH CUT

EXT. FOREST - MIDDAY/AFTERNOON

NOAH drags another victim through the forest and raises his hammer - his breathing at an erratic rate as he builds up his internal emotions.

START FAR FROM NOAH BUT BRING THE CAMERA IN CLOSER WITH EACH CUT UNTIL WE FOCUS ON HIS FACE WHILE EMOTIONS REACH A BOILING POINT.

NOAH KENNEDY
(Yells angrily)

NOAH begins to stomp the victim to death instead of using his hammer.

CAMERA RETURNS TO A FURTHER DISTANCE FOR THE STOMPING.

HARSH CUT

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - EVENING

We see a close-up of NOAH's shoes, blood lightly spread around them.

HARSH CUT

ACT III

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MIDDAY

NOAH is sat in his car, staring blankly off into the distance. NOAH then jumps into action as he spots a hitchhiker ahead and starts the car.

NOAH pulls up beside THE SURVIVOR

NOAH KENNEDY

Hey-

THE SURVIVOR stares back at NOAH with concern.

HARSH CUT

NOAH is now driving with THE SURVIVOR in the car down the country roads. His usual demeanor is gone, without any attempts at starting a dialogue. NOAH focuses all his attention on the road.

THE SURVIVOR looks out the window with mild concern. They pull out their phone and open up a map, scrolling through the area to compare where they are with where they need to be. THE SURVIVOR glances with suspicion from their phone to NOAH, though he doesn't notice.

OVER THE SHOULDER FOR SHOWING PHONE SCROLLING, VARYING ZOOM LEVELS. LOW CLOSE UP FOR THE EXPRESSIONS ON THE SURVIVOR.

NOAH begins to turn towards the forest.

THE SURVIVOR

Hey, I think we're going the wrong way?

NOAH KENNEDY

(blankly)

Sorry, yeah, I need to take a leak.
I'll be back in a second.

NOAH gets out of the car and THE SURVIVOR begins to reach a breaking point for their concerns. As soon as NOAH disappears behind the trees, THE SURVIVOR leaves the car and begins to hurriedly move away, leaving the car door open.

THE SURVIVOR steps onto a twig, generating a large snapping sound and pauses for a moment. NOAH hears the snap, freezes for a moment - then begins to run after THE SURVIVOR without grabbing his hammer.

The two engage in a chase through the forest, building up intensity until THE SURVIVOR trips and falls. NOAH immediately uses this as a chance to attack and attempts to strangle THE SURVIVOR. THE SURVIVOR grabs a nearby stick and hits NOAH over the head with it, gaining an opportunity to start moving away. NOAH quickly recovers and begins to choke THE SURVIVOR from behind.

NOAH hears another twig break. He looks up from what he's doing to see his brother stood in front of a tree - a pained expression written over his face. NOAH stares for a moment, his erratic breathing beginning to break - much like when he was in the forest previously in the flashback.

NOAH lets go of THE SURVIVOR, who coughs and begins to hurriedly limp away - looking back once to ensure they're not being followed. We cast back to the tree to see nobody is there. NOAH recoils into a nearby tree himself.

NOAH KENNEDY
(emotional)
Thank you...

NOAH curls himself up against the tree, holding his knees and tensing/shaking with emotion. NOAH yells into his arms.

HARSH CUT

We see NOAH's hammer, left behind a tree.

HARSH CUT

CORE CREDITS PLAY FOR A FEW SECONDS.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MIDDAY

Lens flare coats the face of someone stood beside a country road. They look exhausted and take in the scenery for a moment. We hear a car pull up beside them, they turn.

CLOSE UP ON THE PERSON WITH LENS FLARE COATING MOST OF THEIR FEATURES. SLIGHT LOW ANGLE. HARSH CUT SHOT-REVERSE-SHOT.

NOAH is in his car, parked next to this person.

NOAH KENNEDY
Need a lift?

THE END.