

Camp Whitepine

Morgan Evans

Setting

A summer camp in the middle of the woods.

Time

Just about now. Maybe a few years ago, maybe a few years in the future.

Dramatis Personae

Marie - A softball player, a leader, a rough and tumble adventurer who is not afraid to take charge.

Ellen - A down to earth intellectual who is snarky nonetheless.

Sean - Boy next door who is technically savvy.

Jon - An insecure jokester who always does his best.

Phil - A good natured adult who is portly and bumbling.

Crazy Steve - A wide brimmed hat wearing adult with a good head on his shoulders.
Good with kids.

Book Boy - He is a boy. He has a book.

Intercom - Staticy

Chalk Child - Has chalk

Chatty Cathy - A coward more than anything.

Loquacious Luke - He can run.

Candle Kid - Owns candle (multiple)

Act 1
Scene 1

Setting

EXT. Quarry, sunset.

A limestone quarry, deep and cluttered with the machines that rent the earth, rusting. Birdcalls can be heard along with wind through pines. Five young campers make their way into the chasm, picking their way down a wooded ridge.

LOQUACIOUS LUKE

S'not gonna work.

CHATTY CATHY

You don't know!

LOQUACIOUS LUKE

Yeah I do! My sister says magic isn't real! And she knows because shes a scientist.

CHATTY CATHY

Scientists don't know about magic!

LOQUACIOUS LUKE

Yeah huh! Shes a science teacher which means she knows everything about magic.

CANDLE KID struggles to carry their armload of candles

CANDLE KID

We gotta do it. I used all my camp store money on these and my moms would be pissed if I wasted it.

Book boy is reading from a leatherbound book almost as wide as he is. Runes and diagrams can be seen on its yellowed pages.

BOOK BOY

Are you scared, Luke? Chicken?

LOQUACIOUS LUKE

Nuh uh! I just think you're all being stupid.

CHATTY CATHY

Prove it!

LOQUACIOUS LUKE

Okay! This is all fake so I'll say the spell-

BOOK BOY

You don't get to say the spell! I found it so I get to do it!

LOQUACIOUS LUKE

Ugh! Fine! But don't get mad at me if we get in trouble for missing curfew for nothing.

The kids continue to argue as they are consumed by the mouth of a cave. After a moment, chanting begins.

KIDS

Drackth'kath, drool nol, tin tik tik, tin tik tik. Sackth'poth, trishh-no, tik tik tak, tik tik tak.

Psychedelic lights stream out of the maw before abruptly ceasing. Silence. Then, without warning, a black shape streaks out into the dusklight. Fade to black.

Scene 2

EXT. Forest Gully, midnight.

The shape flashes past once again, MARIE now sprinting after it with a baseball bat. She scrambles down a steep gully, losing the shape in the underbrush. Stopping on a dime, she gives a grunt of frustration and recalibrates for only a moment before heading down another path. Soon, she slams into the door of a small cabin, wrenching it open and breathlessly shutting it behind her.

INT. Cabin in the woods.

Small, with two bunks, lit by an LED lantern. Notes pepper the walls. Red string might be involved.

ELLEN clutches a leatherbound book to her chest, it's almost identical to BOOK BOY's. She thrusts a taser at MARIE before recognizing her.

Unfazed, JON taps a marshmallow skewer to a golf club.

MARIE

No, what? Where did you get- Nevermind.

She confiscates the improvised weapon. JON considers resisting before pouting.

ELLEN opens the book.

ELLEN

So?!

MARIE

Taller than me by a couple feet. Long ears, big red eyes, leathery wings, foot talons, I think?

ELLEN

Arms or no arms?

MARIE

Arms, definitely arms. Was grabbing branches to get away, half flapping half jumping from tree to tree.

JON

Told you you couldn't catch it. Marie, you can't just chase-

ELLEN doesn't hear him, is too engrossed in the book

ELLEN

Okay, so it's definitely a mothman.

MARIE

Excellent, good work Ellen. We good to go?

ELLEN

We should be once-

They all jump as SEAN enters. ELLEN shakes off her surprise

ELLEN

Sean gets here.

He pants and gives a thumbs up.

SEAN

Plan's good.

JON

I really don't know if we can call this one a plan.

Deftly, he steps around MARIE and grabs his marshmallow-golf club.

JON (CONT.)

It's like, two ideas stuck together. Not your best work, Marie.

MARIE

If you have something better, pitch it... No? Alright, come up with the next one then.

ELLEN

It sounds like a mothman; attracted to light, big and furry, bug eyes. Book says he's class one, we don't need silver or anything, just the classics.

She points to MARIE's bat with her taser.

JON

You googled half of that. Besides, he's an omen of disaster, Ellen! What if we don't kill this one? He might be able to warn us about future monsters! We've known about this one for like, a few hours, tops. He could be chill!

SEAN (CROSSTALK)

You just wanna kiss mothman-

ELLEN (CROSSTALK)

I used common sense, which, if you had-

MARIE

Guys!

They shut up, all eyes turning to MARIE.

Better safe than sorry. We can't let a camper get hurt again, right?

The group looks amongst themselves and takes a beat. Then take on a quiet, begrudging resolve.

JON

Yeah...

Fade to black.

Scene 3

Setting

EXT. A moonlit open field in front of a log built dining hall. An American flag shudders in the night wind.

MARIE, JON, ELLEN, and SEAN stand together, clutching their weapons. SEAN wards off the darkness with his phone flashlight. With MARIE's signal, SEAN taps something on his phone and the dining-hall floodlights hum to life. They are silent, until

JON

Welp, looks like it didn't work, guess we should head-

Sharp insectoid clicks and chitters drown him out. Two long shadows, ears, creep over the campers. It is watching them, sizing them up.

It's hard for them to not shrink back but MARIE charges before they can falter. Her bat connects, smash cut to black.

Scene 4

Setting

EXT. Camp, early morning. Reviery plays out of tinny speakers, echoing out over a placid lake. Then a foggy forest harboring a chapel. Next, campers tents just beginning to show signs of movement. Finally, the dining hall.

INT. Dining hall. A large room filled with many young campers.

ELLEN and JON sit at the camp counselor's table in unflattering orange staff-tees. They are exhausted as they pick at their eggs.

MARIE arrives, her tray clattering down before her. She pours an almost endless stream of sugar into her paper cup of coffee. JON and ELLEN watch, transfixed, without comment. Eventually she decides it's enough.

ELLEN

So... we saved camp whitepine again.

MARIE and JON, *weakly*

Hooray.

SEAN arrives, a scratch across his cheek, carrying the book from last night. He sits.

SEAN

Alright so last night when I was figuring out how to set up the lights I- anyway I had an idea, more like a theory-

JON

Oh goodie.

SEAN

Okay, don't be a bitch for half a sec-

ELLEN

Sean!

SEAN

You're right, you're right, sorry women. Don't be a douche-canoe for half a second-

MARIE

How is that better?

SEAN

Okay but just, listen for a second, okay? I know this sounds weird but I think we have the user manual.

They are nonplussed.

MARIE

Give us a little more here, Sean.

SEAN

Okay so these things have been showing up for, what, a month? Ellen finds the book, I think that book, our book, is the instruction manual. Telling us what to do with them.

What if someone else has the book that tells them how to make the monsters? The- the- assembly line, typa thing... I guess...

ELLEN

Well, that makes as much sense as any of our other theories.

JON

Okay say he's right, what does that do for us? We've torn this camp apart. They aren't coming from the caves, the woods, the lake, hell- even Wally's Funland! Where's the other dang book?

A beat.

SEAN

Wally's Funland was a good day tho...

The loudspeakers crackle to life.

INTERCOM

Attention campers, last night someone destroyed the dining hall floodlights.

The gang flinches.

INTERCOM (CONT.)

This is more than a prank, this is vandalism. If the culprits don't turn themselves in by evening campfire, everyone's gonna have mulching duty. See y'all at morning assembly.

Groans and shouts of indignation erupt from the dining hall. There is a beat before the chatter resumes.

ELLEN

Punishing everyone for the actions of a few is literally unconstitutional. I mean that without hyperbole, like it literally says that, in a literary sense. Literally. Lit-er-ally. Literally?

JON

Wordsoup?

ELLEN

Yeah it got wordsouped.

SEAN

Think Jon's boyfriend is gonna turn himself in?

JON

Oh so I'm the asshole because I didn't wanna kill mothman?!

MARIE

You know you would date moth-

PHIL walks over in a highlighter yellow leader shirt.

PHIL

Well if it isn't my favorite counselors! How we do- oh, gosh, Sean, you okay? Your face got all-

SEAN

Yeah um, fell out of the bed last night there was a- spring thing going on.

PHIL

Yeowch! Well be sure to hit the first aid tent, we don't want that to get infected do we?

SEAN

I'll be sure to... swing on by, Phil.

The counselors cringe at the awkwardness, Phil oblivious above them.

PHIL

You better! Camp Whitepine can't lose its best volleyball coach, eh? Oh!

He smacks his forehead, maybe too hard.

PHIL (cont.)

Duh, Phil, that's why I came over here. Could you four do the leatherworking workshop with Sweatpea this afternoon?

MARIE

Awe, Phil, I wish we could; Already signed up to do the ridge hike. Would've loved to do the leather thing though.

PHIL

Well I could just have a word with-

MARIE

No, no, it's really fine. We wouldn't wanna disappoint Crazy Steve, right?

PHIL

Well, I guess not. Alright, I better go grab more coffee. See you crazy kids later!

PHIL is off. The counselors chime in with a chorus of

JON (CROSSTALK)

Bye Philly cheese steak!

SEAN (CROSSTALK)

Bye Phil.

MARIE (CROSSTALK)

Uh huh, yeah.

ELLEN (CROSSTALK)

Bye Phil.

They watch as he leaves. As soon as he is out of earshot, JON lunges across the table at MARIE.

JON

What are you doing?! Leatherworking is the easiest thing in the world! You just give the kids some awls, kids love awls! Plus, I don't wanna be out in the woods with Steve.

MARIE

Steve is literally a sweetheart-

JON

He's no Sweetpea-

MARIE

Besides, you can blame Sean for our little detour.

SEAN points questioningly at himself.

MARIE

Yeah, you. Remember listing all those places we checked? That's why I signed us up for the ridge hike; the one place we haven't checked-

ELLEN

The quarry...

MARIE

Bingo. Now all we gotta do-

JON

Is sneak away from Steve.

ELLEN

And a dozen campers.

JON

Well we know who isn't on distraction duty.

He looks at SEAN, who blushes.

ELLEN

Yeah, cutting your face on the bunk is pretty weak sauce man.

SEAN

Yeah? What would you have said?

ELLEN

If I was you?

She begins listing on her fingers.

ELLEN (CONT.)

Fell on sharp rock during volleyball, fishing accident, sharp edge of canoe, camper with first pocket knife. You work waterfront bud, its like the most dangerous-

SEAN

Okay, Okay! Jeez.

He glances at JON, one last time.

Scene 5

Setting

EXT. Ridge, afternoon. About a baker's dozen of campers roughhouse as they walk, led by CRAZY STEVE and flanked by JON and ELLEN. SEAN and MARIE bring up the rear.

CRAZY STEVE

Alright, and sing with me! OH WHAT A beautiful MOOOORNING! Oh WHAT a beautiful DAY!

The campers attempt to sing along to varying degrees of success. Most of them are just screaming while the others lose the words in their mouths.

JON leans over to ELLEN and speaks in hushed tones

JON

Do we even need to distract him? He seems to be doing fine on his own.

ELLEN

Dude, look closer. He may be singing, but he's watching these kids like a hawk. What we need to do...

JON

Ohhhh, I get you. You wanna...?

ELLEN

Be my guest.

Jon is unmistakably pleased. He hustles up to CRAZY STEVE.

JON

So, Steve-

CRAZY STEVE

Oh please, call me Crazy. Steve was my father.

JON goodnaturedly forces laughter. When he next speaks, he is half talking to CRAZY STEVE and half projecting back to the campers.

JON

Crazy Steve, what was the worst hike you've ever been on.

CRAZY STEVE'S eyes glimmer, he understands what JON is doing, but can't help himself. As he begins speaking, the kids behind them stop singing and roughhousing, paying more and more attention as CRAZY STEVE tells his tale.

CRAZY STEVE

Well, Jon, that would've had to have been Philmont, back when I was a scout. Now you know all about that trail, out in the southwest. All our food and tents and whatnot are on our backs, so we need to cover 20 miles or more a day so we don't run outta supplies.

As CRAZY STEVE begins working himself up, MARIE and SEAN silently nod to one another. MARIE begins walking slower, falling further and further behind. CRAZY STEVE's voice becomes fainter and fainter until the group finally slips around a bend, out of sight. MARIE hefts her pack higher onto her shoulders and begins to slide down the steep ridge, heading down to the quarry.

CRAZY STEVE (FADING)

Now its hot as all heck, we're all sweating. At night we're throwing rocks at the groundhogs trying to steal our food and snakes trying to warm up by our campfire. Kids, don't throw rocks at snakes. Groundhogs? That's fine. Snakes are useful animals, ya know. But it's around the third day and I start noticing my pack weighs a ton. Every day I think, dang, this thing is getting heavier! So finally we take a break on the top of this mesa, we can see for miles, and I'm putting on a fresh pair of socks. I go to re-pack, reach in the bottom of the bag, and what do I find? Well I start pulling out rocks the size of my head! Turns out everytime we stopped on the trail my buddies were loading me up with quartz!

Now I'm stomping mad, but I still have another five days with these bozos, ya know?

Scene 6

Setting

EXT. The Quarry. Early afternoon. The birdcalls are quieter and the wind louder.

MARIE begins to pick her way down into the quarry, sometimes scrabbling down slopes, sometimes needing to jump off ledges. As she moves she is constantly alert. She is half moving, half exploring. Eventually, something catches her eye. Even in the noon light she can spot artificial lights flickering under an overhang. A flashlight beam slips out for just a moment before disappearing back inside.

MARIE

Bingo.

Now intently focused, she moves in. She stays low. Reaching the edge of the overhang, she pulls against the wall and peeks around the edge.

INT. A square cavern inset into the side of the mountain. Candles, flashlights, and lanterns provide uneven lighting.

The children from the beginning are preparing another ritual.

BOOK BOY

Okay so we need another two circles like... one of those chart things from english class?

CHATTY CATHY

Like a venn diagram?

BOOK BOY

Yeah!!! And then make some spirals coming out of those, yeah yeah big ones. Then a cat mouth in the middle of it.

LOQUACIOUS LUKE and CHATTY CATHY draw wide concentric circles on the floor in thick crayola chalk. CANDLE KID is placing new candles at points of intersection. The other two watch from boulders, their excitement mirroring the childish seriousness and anticipation in the movements of their friends.

MARIE considers intervening but controls herself, settling back to watch.

MARIE

Just kids...?

The children finish, CHALK BOY sitting back and admiring his work. CANDLE KID is already looking over the shoulder of BOOK BOY.

BOOK BOY

Alright guys!

All five children hurry over, gathering behind the book. After a moment, they begin to chant.

KIDS

Drackth'kath, drool nol, tin tik tik, tin tik tik. Sackth'poth, trishh-no, tik tik tak, tik tik tak.

Candlelight flickers in their eyes. The KIDS and MARIE watch as the summoning circles begin to glow with shifting iridescent hues. The floor seems to bulge downwards. A fluidic mirage filing the false space. A mist begins to collect from seemingly nowhere, obscuring the floor. Only the runes and candles shine through. But something is pulling upward through the mist. A gnarled, seven fingered hand, dripping with dew, rises from the circle, testing the air. The children interrupt their chant with giggles of delight or juvenile disgust.

MARIE

Oh, nope, nope, nope, nope.

MARIE runs around the corner.

MARIE

No no no, nope, nuh uh.

MARIE runs in. In a practiced softball slide, she skids into 'home,' her heels scuffing the delicate chalk circle. With an otherworldly snap, the colors, the hand, the lights, all disappear, leaving her in a cave with five kids and a rapidly disappearing mist. She looks around, making sure it's all normal, before rounding on the kids with hands on her hips.

MARIE

Now *what* do you think you are doing?

The kids' faces immediately change, ranging from shame, disappointment, bashfulness, and ooh-you're-in-trouble delight.

BOOK BOY

Um, we were...

The kids share a look. Then CHATTY CATHY bolts, the other kids scattering immediately after. Some giggling, some terrified screams.

MARIE sighs, exasperated. She's fast, but not fast enough to catch five scared kids. She picks a target, running down BOOK BOY. Without much effort, she grabs his arm.

BOOK BOY

Lemme go!

She cocks an eyebrow at him and he stops squirming, cowed.

MARIE

Just answer my questions and we'll forget this happened, okay?

He thinks about it and then nods, pouting.

MARIE

The book, where'd ya get it?

BOOK BOY

Found it by the river rock bridge. I know I should've brought it to lost and found, but- is it yours?

MARIE

No. Gimme.

She snatches the book from his hand, thumbing through it briefly before returning her attention to the boy.

MARIE

When'd you get it?

BOOK BOY

Ummm... after family weekend.

MARIE

So three days ago. How many of those you do?

She jabs her head at the ritual site.

BOOK BOY

Well, we were gonna give it back but... then Paulie said we should try one of the spells so... We did one and... this was gonna be our second one but I promise that we didn't think it would work, we were just having fun and-and-

He is starting to cry, blubbering, his nose running.

MARIE

Hey, hey, hey,

She gets down on his level.

I get it, you were just having fun, okay? What you did was dangerous, but you're sorry for it, right?

He nods, drying his nose with a sleeve.

And you're not gonna do it again?

Again, he nods. MARIE narrows her eyes at him, half joking. She already knows the next answer.

And you aren't lying to me, right?

He vigorously shakes his head no, startled out of his tears.

Alright. We're all good here then.

She releases his arm and gives him a reassuring pat on the back.

Go catch up with your friends, huh?

After a moment of hesitation, he bolts. MARIE stands and stares after the boy.

Just kids...

Scene 6

Setting

INT. The Cabin in the Woods. A night like pitch where stars blaze.

JON eats golden marshmallows from the end of his golfclub-marshmallow-roaster. SEAN and ELLEN are cross legged on the floor, pouring over the new book. MARIE sits in the rafters, looking at the ceiling while absent mindedly tossing a softball from hand to mitt.

JON (through a mouth of marshmallow)

Fo, wu juft, founff it? Fom wandom kidf haff iff? [So, you just found it? Some random kids had it?]

MARIE

Yep. He wasn't lying to me. And besides, think of the earlier stuff we beat down.

ELLEN

Horrifying

SEAN

Literally scarring.

MARIE

Mothman was child's play compared to them.

ELLEN

Literally.

She and SEAN highfive, not looking up from the book.

MARIE

Someone else must've had it and... lost it somehow by the river. Then those poor kids got a hold of it.

Almost silently

How'd they lose it...

ELLEN

I get how they picked it up so fast. I didn't expect this book to be so...

SEAN

Userfriendly?

ELLEN

Exactly! It's so straightforward, even has a pronunciation guide and everything, see?

She flips to an earlier page and holds it up.

JON (through another bite of marshmallow)

Ifs in engwish? [It's in english?]

SEAN

Yea, only wish you could speak it.

JON

Heyfh! [Hey!]

He swallows

JON (CONT.)

Y'all are always picking on me!

ELLEN (Absentmindedly, she's still reading)

Eh, you know what they say, you bully people you like. It's a sign of affection.

SEAN blushes but manages to hide it.

SEAN

So, what are we going to do?

Out of habit, they all look to MARIE. She is still somewhere else, the only sound in the cabin is the slap of her ball against the leather of her mitt.

JON

We wait?

Surprised, they all look to him.

JON

What? We test Sean's theory, right? We have both books now. If he's right and we keep both books safe, no more monsters! Huh?

MARIE

Jon's right.

SEAN (mumbling)

That's a first.

JON kicks him, SEAN smiles.

MARIE

We lock the books in this cabin. No one knows about this place but us, should be safe enough. If we don't see any monsters... we might've won?

SEAN

Couldn't we just burn them, or something?

ELLEN

What if we're wrong? I don't wanna lose our only advantage.

SEAN

Fair point.

JON

So we're doing it?! We're doing my plan?!

MARIE swings herself down, landing gracefully. She is grounded again.

MARIE

We're doing Jon's plan.

JON raises his hand for a highfive and SEAN obliges.

MARIE

Let's just lock this place up and get some sleep. I have a... bad feeling.

They look between each other, smiling, resolved, but still wary. ELLEN and SEAN stack the books against the wall. For the first time all summer, they have a plan and they are winning. Collecting their stuff, they file out of the

cabin. ELLEN is the last out. She looks up at the stars, searching for something, but doesn't find it. With a sigh she flicks on her flashlight and follows the others into the darkness.

Back in the cabin, a trembling finger reaches out from under the bed. Then another. It is the hand from the portal. Suddenly, with ferocity, it grabs both books and drags them into the darkness under the bed. Fade to black.