

CLEARWATER

INT. RADIO STATION - DAY

A small, rural radio station. The male ANNOUNCER sits at a desk inside a cramped sound booth, a cigarette burns in an ashtray at his side.

He turns a few knobs and adjusts his mic in preparation for the afternoon broadcast.

A young, female SECRETARY gingerly opens the door to the booth while simultaneously rapping it with her knuckle. Her face is pale, her demeanor sober.

She holds up a piece of paper. They look at each other for a moment - silence.

The announcer takes a deep drag of his cigarette.

He clears his throat.

OVER BLACK:

TITLE CARD: CLEARWATER

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Waves melodically lop onto the rocky shore. The fog rolls into the bight, encapsulating everything in its wake.

SUPER: Clearwater, Newfoundland - 1975

EXT. WHARF - DAY

A FATHER and SON are tending to their fishing nets. An old transistor radio sits atop a flake.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Good afternoon, residents of
Clearwater and surrounding area.
We've just received some breaking
news at the station -- local
authorities have confirmed that a
body has been discovered on the
beach near South Black Bight in the
early hours of this morning...

INT. HAIR SALON - DAY

Two middle-aged WOMEN in rollers sit under the hood dryers in a quaint hair salon. They are completely enthralled by the radio.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The RCMP is currently at the scene and the investigation is underway. There has been no comment on whether or not this incident is related to the recent death of Clearwater resident, Leslie Vincent, nor have they made the identity of the deceased public pending notification of next of kin...

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

An elderly WOMAN sits at her kitchen table having tea and toast.

An antique radio sits next to the sugar dish. It's fuzzy - cutting in and out.

She gives it a whack. It's now crystal clear.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

They are advising residents to remain calm and to rest assured that there is no immediate threat to the general public -- but if you see or hear any suspicious or unusual activity to report it promptly to the local branch of the RCMP.

The elderly woman gets up from her chair and peeks out through the small window in her door. Fog has draped the town in a blanket of thick white.

Her frail hand inches toward the deadbolt -- click.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

A MAN, 30s, speeds down a winding stretch of lonely highway. He's rough but handsome. The type of guy that women love and mothers loathe. A cigarette dangles from his lips.

The radio blares obnoxious country music. A set of rosary beads hanging from the rear view mirror dance in the twilight.

He passes a broken-down car on the shoulder of the road. He slows, checking out the scene. He pulls over just ahead of the abandoned car.

He turns down the music and checks his mirror.

A YOUNG WOMAN, 20s, appears from the side of the car. She's blonde, curvaceous -- a pair of short shorts barely conceal her behind.

He lowers his sunglasses and watches her for a moment in the mirror. He smiles, then picks his teeth.

MAN

Well, Happy Birthday to me.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The woman's efforts to open the hood are proving futile. The man approaches with a tool box in tow. She finally lifts the hood only to have it slam shut again, almost catching her fingers.

WOMAN

God damn it!

She slams her fist down onto the hood.

MAN

Looks like you're having a little trouble there, Darlin'.

WOMAN

Ya think?

MAN

I can take a look if you like. I'm no mechanic by any means, but I get by.

WOMAN

Be my guest.

He hands her a rag. As she wipes her hands, he gives her a brazen once-over with his eyes.

She hands the rag back and folds her arms over her chest.

WOMAN

Thanks.

MAN

You're welcome to go sit in my truck if you're cold.

He pops open the hood and props it.

WOMAN

I'm fine.

MAN

Suit yourself.

WOMAN

You think this is going to take long? My husband is expecting me. He worries.

MAN

Husband?

WOMAN

Yes, my husband. We live just down the road from here.

MAN

That's how it's gonna be, is it?

WOMAN

Excuse me?

MAN

We just met and you're lying to me already.

WOMAN

Lying? About what?

MAN

For starters, no ring. And you're definitely one of those broads that would have a big, flashy designer one.

WOMAN

Is that so?

MAN

And, I've never laid eyes on you before. If you were from around here, I have a feeling we'd have crossed paths before today.

WOMAN

You know every single person in
this town?

MAN

Darlin', I know what they're all
having for supper.

He pulls a fried spark plug from under the hood.

MAN

I think we found your problem. This
little sucker's burnt up like a
mouse in a church fire.

WOMAN

So, what does that mean? Do you
have a spare?

MAN

I sure do.

WOMAN

Oh, thank God.

MAN

Trouble is, it's in the shed out
behind my cabin.

WOMAN

And where's that?

MAN

Nice little spot down by Three
Island Pond. It's about twenty-five
minutes from here -- twenty if we
take a little shortcut I know.

WOMAN

We? I'm not going to your cabin
with you. I don't even know you.

MAN

Sure you do. I'm the guy who's
gonna get you out of this mess.

The woman looks up and down the deserted highway. The sun is
just about to set over the hills.

WOMAN

Can't I just wait here?

MAN

I mean, you could. You might get a little lonesome. But then again, there's been a few bears spotted round here lately, they might offer to keep you company if you ask em' real nice.

The woman thinks for a moment.

WOMAN

Twenty minutes?

MAN

Give or take.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

The woman stares straight ahead as they drive -- her hands on her lap. He glances at her. She doesn't return the gesture.

MAN

Cold?

WOMAN

A little.

MAN

You should have said something. I can't read your mind, ya know.

He turns on the heat.

He reaches toward her. She slithers away. He grins.

MAN

Don't flatter yourself.

He opens the glove box and removes a pack of cigarettes. He takes out two and lights them.

He hands one to her. To his surprise, she takes it.

WOMAN

Thanks.

She takes a long, satisfying drag.

MAN

That first puff is always the best.

He turns his obnoxious country music back on. She immediately turns it down.

WOMAN

Say, that road up ahead, where does it go?

She points to a turnoff ahead that seems to disappear into the hills.

MAN

Well, that's the only way out of this place. Turn left at the end and it takes you to St. John's.

WOMAN

And if you turn right?

MAN

Everywhere else.

WOMAN

Good to know.

MAN

Where are you heading?

WOMAN

I'm not sure yet.

The man rummages though an old tobacco tin on the console. He produces a quarter and hands it to her.

WOMAN

What's this for?

MAN

For when you get to the end of the road. Heads - St. John's, tails - anywhere else.

She takes the quarter.

MAN

What are you running from anyways?

WOMAN

What makes you think I'm running?

MAN

Just a hunch.

The woman plays with the quarter, rolling it on her knuckles.

MAN

So, what is it -- abusive boyfriend? Naw, that's too cliche for a girl like you. Wait, I got it -- you're a fugitive of the law! I got a real life Bonnie Parker sitting right next to me.

WOMAN

I guess that makes you Clyde then?

She looks at him with unwavering eyes. He's a little taken aback by this newfound poise.

MAN

I guess it does. Maybe we ought to run away together. How do you feel about Mexico?

WOMAN

As my mother used to say, 'wherever you go, you have to take yourself with you'.

The man scoffs.

MAN

No offense, but that makes absolutely no sense. Sounds like your mother was a bit of a kook.

WOMAN

Perhaps. I think what she meant was that there are some things you can't outrun. At least that's what I got out of it.

MAN

Sure you can. You just gotta make sure you're faster than the thing that's chasing you.

He cuts the wheel hard. The woman slides to the side, bracing her hand against the roof.

The truck turns onto a dirt road.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

The truck slowly disappears down the dirt road.

The red tail lights get fainter and fainter until they are finally swallowed by the blackness of the night.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

The truck pulls up alongside a modest hunting shack. The man gets out and opens the door for the woman. She hesitantly slips out.

MAN

I'm gonna run back to the shed and
see if I can track down that plug.
You can wait inside, door's open.

He touches her shoulder, his hand lingers a beat longer than it should. She doesn't flinch.

MAN

Make yourself at home.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

The door opens. Moonlight beams in through the side windows, creating a criss-cross of faint light twinkling with dust.

She steps inside. The floor instantly releases a creaky moan.

The isolated cabin is minimalist. There's a small cot in the corner, a wood stove, a bare-bones kitchenette, and a threadbare, hand-me-down loveseat.

The far wall is adorned with various knives, blades, and axes. A cluster of rabbit skins hang adjacent on a rusty hook. A bear trap sits in the corner.

WOMAN

Cozy.

She tentatively navigates the confined quarters, surveying.

She drags her finger along the wood stove, leaving a trail of shiny black in the thick soot.

She notices a padlocked metal door. She lifts the lock and gives it a gentle tug -- solid. Perhaps it's for guns? Meat?

She walks over to the rabbit pelts and strokes the velvety fur.

She glides her hand along the blade of an axe.

WOMAN
Shit!

A bead of blood bubbles from her finger.

She makes her way to the kitchenette, rummaging around the dark countertop in search of something to stop the bleeding.

A beer bottle falls onto the floor and smashes.

WOMAN
Damn it.

She finally finds a kerosene lantern and some matches. She strikes a match and lights the wick.

The lantern blossoms into a soft, orange glow.

As light fills the space, we see the outline of a man's face materialize in the window above the sink.

WOMAN
Jesus Christ!

MAN
(muffled through the glass)
Sorry. I thought you saw me there.

He holds up a spark plug.

INT. CAR - DAY

A YOUNG MAN, 20s, drives down a long stretch of road. He fiddles with the radio, trying to get it in tune.

YOUNG MAN
Oh for Pete's sake.

He notices someone up ahead walking on the shoulder.

He turns the radio down and pulls over. He leans over and rolls down the passenger window.

YOUNG MAN
Hey, you o.k.? You need a ride?

The woman turns and places her hands on the open window. She has a bandage on her finger. A set of rosary beads dangle from her neck and into the car.

WOMAN
Depends. Where ya going?

YOUNG MAN
Heading into St. John's. Got a job at the new plant. Today's my first day.

WOMAN
Congratulations.

MAN
Thanks. Couldn't have come at a better time.

The woman notices a baby seat in the backseat of the car.

MAN
I could use the company. Might help with the first day jitters.

WOMAN
You know what, I think I'm good. Such a beautiful day for a walk, be a shame to waste it.

MAN
You sure? You're kind of in the middle of nowhere.

WOMAN
Yeah, I'm sure. Thanks, though.

MAN
Well, you have yourself a great day, Ma'am.

WOMAN
You too. And don't be nervous about your first day, you're gonna knock em' dead.

She taps her hand on the car. He drives off.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The car drives off. The woman continues walking.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Good morning, residents of
Clearwater and surrounding area.
RCMP are investigating the death of
thirty-five year old, Gordon
Carberry. Carberry's body was found
by a local hunter early this
morning about a mile from his cabin
on Three Island Pond. Authorities
are hesitant to comment on whether
this incident is in any way related
to the deaths of two other
Clearwater men in the past week.
They are advising residents to
report any unusual or suspicious
activity, but to remain calm, as
there is no immediate threat to the
general public.

As the woman walks into the distance, she stops.

She pulls a quarter from her pocket, flips it onto the back
of her hand and checks the result.

She continues down the road.