

THE ETERNAL SHADOW

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OVER BLACK

BARISTA (V.O.)
Charlie? Charlie?

The black undulates creepily. Slowly it coalesces into a steaming cup of black coffee...

EXT. CITY - DAY

...PULL OUT to reveal it's on the counter of an outdoor coffee stand. **CHARLIE**, a lanky guy who would be handsome if not for his unkempt facial hair, grabs the drink.

CHARLIE
Thanks.

Charlie drops a few coins in the tip jar and funnels into the sea of monochrome **COMMUTERS**, noses buried in their phones as they bump shoulders with the other soulless passersby.

Gloomy, bleak, and utterly normal.

The only respite from the banality is a **YOUNG MOTHER** carrying her **BABY GIRL**. The mother blows raspberries in her baby's tummy as she wails with delight, looking at Charlie--

BABY GIRL
Daddy!

Charlie's eyes light up - intrigued but torn.

CHARLIE
Mona? No, it can't be...

Suddenly, the mother and child violently tremble and turn black, elongating unnaturally into **THREE HIDEOUS DEMONS**.

DEMON #1
Hi, Charlie.

Charlie drops his coffee cup and runs. The demons, black shadows, move like smoke, their yellow eyes piercing.

DEMON #2
Ooh, this fleshbag is quick.

The tallest demon WHIPS its arm and THWACKS Charlie's legs. He trips and skids on the asphalt, but pops up and continues.

INT. CONVENIENT STORE - CONTINUOUS

Charlie dives into the open door and ducks behind a snack shelf. The **CASHIER** looks utterly unamused.

CASHIER
You buy or get out!

Charlie puts his finger to his lips and watches the entrance through the theft-prevention mirror mounted above him.

He sees his pursuers pause out front, then race off. Charlie breathes a sigh of relief, until...

WHAM! Chip bags BURST and rain food down on him. REVEAL a demon behind the aisle - its forearm morphed into a CLAW.

DEMON #3
I got 'em!

As the other demons enter, Charlie heaves dislodged SODA CANS at them - WHACK! CLANG! - and bolts from the store.

EXT. CITY - ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Sandwiched between dingy apartment buildings. Charlie checks over his shoulder as he sprints toward...

A CONSTRUCTION WALL that blocks his path. He tries to climb it but pathetically slides down. He punches it, frustrated.

Suddenly, a CRUNCH behind him.

Charlie whips around - no one. But as he makes to leave-- WHAM! Demons drop in front of him. Terrified, he backs away.

CHARLIE
Leave me alone! Please? Just let me go!

But the unrelenting demons lumber toward him.

DEMON #1
Oh you sad, weak *fleshbag*. You just don't get it...

The demon elongates its face within a fraction of Charlie's. It smiles wickedly and salivates.

DEMON #1 (CONT'D)
...We're never letting you go.

The demons slowly rise into the air, then POUNCE! Charlie shields his face.

CHARLIE

Nooooo! Please, no! Please--

MALE RESIDENT (O.S.)

Hey! People are trying to sleep here!

Charlie unshields his eyes...the demons have VANISHED.

A **MALE RESIDENT** hangs his head out an apartment window above. Charlie BREATHES HEAVY as he checks around him.

MALE RESIDENT (CONT'D)

Hey, buddy. You okay?

Exhausted, Charlie slumps on the ground - clearly not.

SMASH TO TITLE