

WHAT LIES IN THE DARK

Written by

Najee Brooks

INT. MALLORY HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A statuesque lady, MARIA MALLORY, 38, wipes a table down. She hums a pretty song.

DOUGLAS MALLORY, 10, runs into the kitchen with his brother, WILLIAM MALLORY JR., 11.

They giggle as William runs to catch Douglas.

Douglas knocks over a pitcher of flowers.

Both brothers freeze.

Maria, oblivious, hums.

DOUGLAS
Ma, I-I'm sorry. It was an
accident.

Douglas rubs his arm.

WILLIAM
Yeah, we'll clean it up.

William snaps his fingers.

Maria stops humming. She walks over to Douglas.

Her hair hangs over her face like a black veil. Through it a smile spreads from cheek to cheek.

MARIA
You're such a naughty boy, Douglas.
I've told you to stop running in
the house.

DOUGLAS
Ma--

She grabs his arm and drags him to a door.

Douglas fights her grip.

She holds strong.

She hums her song again as she scrapes her nails against the door in slow strokes.

WILLIAM
We're sorry, ma.

They scream and cry, but their mom hums louder.

She swings the door open to a pitch-black void. She tosses Douglas down the stairs.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

He smashes against the floor.

When he gains his bearings. He looks up as his mother slams the door shut.

Douglas sobs in the dark.

EXT. DOUGLAS'S HOUSE - DAY (PRESENT)

Rays of the sun shine on a small white house and lush garden. Azaleas, Begonias, and Camellias paint the yard.

INT. DOUGLAS'S HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

His house is full of antique furniture. The wood floors glimmer. Almost every light is on. The curtains are open.

Douglas, 28, sits at a desk covered with papers. He sifts through them

Law degrees line the wall above the desk.

A framed photo of young Douglas and William sits on a shelf. Another photo of a large man, WILLIAM MALLORY SR., with a trout in his hand.

A phone RINGS. He picks it up.

DOUGLAS

Yes?

ALYSSA (V.O.)

Hello, Douglas.

DOUGLAS

Oh, Alyssa. What's wrong?

He leans back in his chair and studies a piece of paper.

ALYSSA (V.O.)

Nothing.

DOUGLAS

Uh huh.

He marks words on the paper with his pencil.

ALYSSA (V.O.)
If it's not a good time--

DOUGLAS
No, no. What were you saying?

ALYSSA (V.O.)
Look, Douglas-- You have to take a break sometimes from your work. I can tell you're not paying attention to me already.

DOUGLAS
Not an option. Who else'll put those savages away?

ALYSSA (V.O.)
They're people, too. Only God--

DOUGLAS
God is for people who can't get a grip on reality.

ALYSSA (V.O.)
I believe in God. Am I weak?

DOUGLAS
I didn't mean it like--

ALYSSA (V.O.)
We need another break. We've barely seen each other this month. Plus, I can't sleep with the lights on. You said that you'd work on that

DOUGLAS
Wait, Alyss--

ALYSSA (V.O.)
Goodbye, Douglas.

The dial tone RINGS from the other side.

Douglas slams his telephone down. He rubs his temples and closes his eyes.

EXT. DOUGLAS'S HOUSE - DAY

Birds CHIRP. Tree leaves RUSTLES in the wind.

It's calm until his laptop CHIMES with an alert that reads:
WARNING THUNDERSTORM AND POSSIBLE BLACKOUT.

Douglas rolls his eyes and whispers.

DOUGLAS

Great.

He looks out his window to his neighbors' home.

EXT. PATTERSON'S HOUSE - DAY

A home identical to Douglas's house, except it has a porch and in the yard stands a lofty tree.

Douglas knocks on their door.

DOUGLAS

Hey, Zach? Derrick? It's me,
Douglas. Hello? Are you using your
generator? Can I stay over tonight?

He checks through their window. The house is dark. He recoils, his face is a bit pale.

INT. DOUGLAS'S HOUSE - STUDIES - NIGHT

He paces as he reads another file.

DOUGLAS

James Reynold, two attempted
murders. Sick bastard.

Thunder CLAPS and rocks the house. Gray clouds darken the room as rain hits his window.

Doug watches the storm. The rain pours down and makes it impossible to see through the window.

Douglas takes a deep breath and runs out of the room.

BEDROOM

Douglas rummages through his dresser's drawers. He throws clothes on the floor. Sweat races down his cheeks.

DOUGLAS

Damn it.

Light flashes through the window. Thunder ROARS. The lights flutter.

Douglas freezes, studies his lights.

Douglas pulls out a flashlight. He smiles. He tries it. The batteries are dead. He grimaces and tosses it on his bed.

He pulls open his night table. He pulls out two small almost burned down candles and a disposable lighter.

He sighs. He lights the candles.

Car doors slam shut. Douglas's eyes light up

DOUGLAS
Zach and Derrick?

The lights flicker and turn off. The candles dimly light the room. Douglas quivers, his mouth agape.

He backs into a lamp. It crashes into the floor.

Douglas jump. He takes deep breaths. He sets the candles down on a table. He tries to stuff his lighter into his pocket, but it falls.

Thick fog coats the floor. Douglas kicks through it. The clouds disperse. More gather around his feet.

DOUGLAS
The hell.

OBAWY, a gaunt, lofty figure lurks behind him. Condensation flows from its mouth onto Douglas's neck.

Its hand caresses Douglas's hair gently.

Douglas pivots around. Nothing is there. He grasps his heart and backs into a wall.

He stumbles over a table before he bolts down the hall.

KITCHEN

Douglas runs into a counter. Pots CLANK.

He grabs a knife.

The HUM of his mother's song resonates through the house.

DOUGLAS
Ma?

He taps along the counter to guide himself. He opens a drawer and pulls out another flashlight and flicks it on.

Obawy, nude, sways side to side. Its skin is like ash.

It has no genitals. Its body resembles a feminine form. Its limbs hang at its sides. Its nails are like blades.

Its sable hair drapes over its face. Fangs glisten beneath its hair.

Douglas drops the flashlight and tries to run away.

Obawy wraps its hands around Douglas's neck and lifts him.

OBAWY

You're such a naughty boy, Douglas.

It throws him down. His face smacks against the floor.

Obawy stomps his back. It pins him down.

Douglas lifts his head. Blood gushes from his mouth and nose.

DOUGLAS

Let me go.

Obawy hauls Douglas out of the kitchen.

HALL

Blood trails behind them.

Douglas, dizzy, kicks at Obawy's hand.

DOUGLAS

Where are you taking me?

Obawy hums louder.

DOUGLAS

Answer me.

It continues its song.

At the end of the hall, a door opens up to a room of nothingness. Void of light.

Douglas panics. He kicks at Obawy's hand. He plants his nails in the floor. They pop off.

Obawy wanders into the darkness.

Douglas nudges the vice grip off his ankles. He takes off.

Obawy springs up and plunges down on Douglas.

He wriggles away and runs down the hall.

LIVING ROOM

Douglas trips over furniture, inches from his front door.
Obawy reappears from behind a wall and swipes at Douglas.
He jumps back. Obawy's nails slice his skin. Blood spurts.

DOUGLAS
What are you?

He CRIES.

INT. PATTERSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ZACHARY "ZACH" PATTERSON, 26, stares out a window at Douglas's house. A generator is plugged in near the door. The lights are on

His brother, DERRICK PATTERSON, 29, plays a guitar.

ZACH
Did you hear that?

DERRICK
What?

ZACH
A scream. From Douglas's house.

INT. DOUGLAS'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Obawy slams Douglas through the coffee table.

EXT. PATTERSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Derrick looks out the window with his brother.

ZACH
Hear that?

DERRICK
Yeah, what the hell--

Zach grabs his raincoat and a flashlight.

ZACH
He probably can't see.

INT. DOUGLAS'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Douglas rams Obawy into the wall.

Obawy, now shorter than Douglas, pierces him with his nails.

Blood spurts from Douglas's mouth. He swings Obawy to the ground.

There's a KNOCK on the door.

Douglas rushes to the door. He opens it to see Zach. Douglas leaps out of his house.

ZACH

What the hell is going on?

Douglas looks back. The fog and Obawy are gone.

His wounds are gone. His clothes are intact.

He scratches his head.

DOUGLAS

Nothing.

INT. PATTERSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Zach hands Douglas a cup. He flops next to him on the couch.

Derrick plays his guitar. He mumbles bits of a song. He writes down some notes in a pad on a coffee table.

ZACH

How long were you in the dark?

DOUGLAS

Twenty minutes, maybe?

Derrick stands.

DERRICK

Anyone need a drink?

ZACH

I'm fine.

DOUGLAS

No, thanks.

Derrick exits to the kitchen.

A pamphlet sticks out of a folder on the coffee table. Douglas pulls it out and reads it. Douglas turns to Zach.

DOUGLAS
A therapist?

ZACH
Yeah, Derrick's.

Douglas studies the pamphlet.

ZACH
She helped him a while back.

INT. VEGA'S OFFICE - DAY

A sign reads: WHAT'S SAID TO VEGA, STAYS WITH VEGA.

Douglas lounges on a plush white sofa in a dimly lit room. Tears flow down his face.

Across from him is JANICE VEGA, 36, petite.

She jots down notes on a clipboard.

JANICE
Ready when you are, Mr. Mallory.

Douglas CRACKS his knuckles. He keeps his head down.

DOUGLAS
I don't know where to start.

JANICE
How about your childhood?

DOUGLAS
Well, it started off good--

EXT. VEGA'S OFFICE - DAY

Obawy skulks outside. He spies through the door's window.

INT. VEGA'S OFFICE - DAY

Douglas sniffs. Tears race down his face.

EXT. VEGA'S OFFICE - DAY

Obawy grits his teeth. He turns to dust and floats away into the air.

THE END