

DEMONSEED

(Draft 8 - Shooting Draft)

Screenwriter: Jina Johnson  
Director: Didi Beck  
Producer: Mekdese Haile  
Producer: Tori Ichikowitz  
Cinematographer: Allysa Lisbon  
Production Designer: Mikaela Mosley  
Editor: Sophie Becker

jjohnson@afi.edu  
202.607.5462

1 FADE IN: 1

1 INT. BROTHEL - HALLWAY/EDEN'S BEDROOM - BEFORE DAYBREAK 1

In the eerily dark quarters, A LOW GROWL emerges-- like something's tracking the place.

**SUPER: Macon, Georgia - 1921**

Eden, 10; the face of a tiny brown angel, sleeps on her BLANKET against the wall, surrounded by CLEANING SUPPLIES. Her eyes flutter oddly, mid-dream. OLD JAZZ MUSIC from the 1920s PLAYS...

DREAM SEQUENCE --

A FRENETIC MASH-UP OF IMAGES FROM:

2 INT. BROTHEL - OUTSIDE ROOM 4 - DAY 2

A close-up of a DOOR LABEL - ROOM 4. (Repeated from scene 6)

3 INT. BROTHEL - PARLOR - DAY 3

A LOUD SWISH SOUND as MONEY is stuffed into MISS CAMILLE'S BUSOM. (repeated from scene 7)

4 INT. BROTHEL - ROOM 4 - DAY 4

THE SHERIFF stands in the door frame. Taps a liquor bottle against it - CLINK CLINK (repeated from scene 10)

5 INT. BROTHEL - HALLWAY/EDEN'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING 5

The CLOCK STRIKES 5. A WOMAN IN AN ALL BLACK, victorian gown and headdress steps out of the shadows towards Eden; her head bowed. Face obscured.

She lifts a gnarled, brown finger to the mouth we can't see.

WOMAN IN BLACK

SHH...

She whips out a SWITCHBLADE; SLICES it right at us --

DREAM SEQUENCE ENDS --

Eden wakes up in a panic. She reaches in her SACHEL for a JAR that reads, "FREEDUM JAR," across the top.

Inside - COINS (1/4 of jar), and a SWITCHBLADE.

Still shaken from the nightmare, Eden pulls out the BLADE; clutches it and the CROSS around her neck. Shuts her eyes tight. Rocks.

EDEN

(like a mantra)

Dear God, protect me from evil.  
Watch over me, lord. Protect me  
from evil. Protect me from evil.

Calmed down, she reopens her eyes. Pockets the blade. Starts to get up until-

A LOW GROWL emerges from the hallway shadows. The CLOCK STRIKES 5- just like in her dream.

Unnerved, Eden curls into a little ball against the wall. Clutches the jar to her chest.

6 INT. BROTHEL - HALLWAY - DAY 6

Eden carries a MOP AND BUCKET down the hall past A PROSTITUTE'S LEGS rubbing up against the LEGS OF HER JOHN as they canoodle in the hallway, unashamed. She's unmoved.

7 INT. BROTHEL - ROOM 4 - DAY 7

MUFFLED MOANS leak through the walls as Eden sprinkles SOAP FLAKES into a BUCKET. You'd think she couldn't hear them.

She sits her bucket down in the messy room. Looks up at -- **The ROOM 4 DOOR SIGN- reminiscent of her dream.** Eden stares. Fingers the cross around her neck, uncomfortably.

A HAND grabs her shoulder. Shocked, she turns to find--

ROLLO, doubled over with laughter. He got her! A prank.

ROLLO

You should see your face!

Eden grabs a handful of SOAP FLAKES from her bucket and tosses them at him; a surprise.

EDEN

You should see yours.

She sticks out her tongue. He wipes himself off.

ROLLO

Well, that's why you gon' be here forever. Cuz you play too much.

EDEN

Me? How much money you got in your freedom jar?

ROLLO

More than yours.  
(then; relents)  
How much you got in yours?

In the middle of the room, TWO DIFFERENT HANDS push their JARS together, side by side. Rollo's jar is nearly empty. Eden looks on with judgment.

EDEN

What happened?

ROLLO

(confessing)  
Candy apples and catfish at the state fair? I mean...

EDEN

You keep eatin' your money, we ain't never gon' get nowhere.

ROLLO

You right. But why you wanna leave so bad? What's more than here?

EDEN

Don't know. Just wanna see.  
(then - pensive;  
confiding)  
But mostly, it's because i been feelin' like something's com...

MISS CAMILLE (O.S.)

(interrupts)  
Ahem...

They turn to find MISS CAMILLE, a buxom ice queen, 50s, glaring at them from the doorway. They stand at attention.

She looks at the soap flakes on the floor around the dirty room; then at Eden.

MISS CAMILLE (CONT'D)  
 One would think, someone with no  
 mama to keep 'em, might look more  
 kindly on the work they do for  
 those who are willing to take on  
 the burden.

Eden shrinks. Rollo steps up as Miss Camille enters the room.

ROLLO  
 Miss Camille, it wasn't...

MISS CAMILLE  
 Rollo, go sweep the parlor. I want  
 it so clean I can see my face in  
 it.

ROLLO  
 Yes, ma'am.

Miss Camille hurls commands as Rollo heads toward the doorway.

MISS CAMILLE  
 And tell your mama, get that John  
 outta here. Sheriff and the boys be  
 here soon.  
 (to Eden)  
 Eden, tend to this room. I wanna...

EDEN  
 See your face in...

Miss Camille shifts a bit and **EDEN SEES - THE WOMAN IN BLACK standing behind her in the doorway; head bowed.** Her head starts to lift just as...

Rollo steps in front of Eden, obscuring the view. Nudges her.

EDEN (CONT'D)  
 (back to reality)  
 Yes, ma'am.

Miss Camille leaves, contented by their deference. The Woman in black isn't there anymore.

As Rollo heads off, Eden stops him.

EDEN (CONT'D)  
 Hey Rollo...you ever had  
 dreams...come true?

ROLLO

If I did, we'd be sitting on a  
mountain of catfish and candy  
apples with no chores to do.

They chuckle as he walks away.

OFF EDEN: looking up at that Room 4 sign, one last time.

She starts cleaning up.

8

INT. BROTHEL - PARLOR - NIGHT

8

The TINY BELL atop the front door DINGS as it opens.  
(\*Repeated in scene 8)

Eden passes PROSTITUTE 2 BENEATH JOHN 2 ON A COUCH in the  
parlor as she walks HER BUCKET back down the hall.

A drunk SHERIFF MORMONT, 50s and white in the worst way,  
stumbles through the door, his BADGE hanging limply off his  
disheveled shirt. He catches sight of Eden as he passes.

MISS CAMILLE (O.S.)

Morning, Sheriff.

HE GRUNTS. Wobbles over to the counter. Miss Camille leans  
over, chest first.

MISS CAMILLE (CONT'D)

Come on in.

Sheriff Mormont hands her a small WAD OF BILLS.

SHERIFF

For me and the boys.

Miss Camille puts the money in the till/register. She kisses  
the Sheriff's hand in deference. Coy. In control.

Rollo cleans in the corner; business as usual.

MISS CAMILLE

(yells to)

Cassandra!

SHERIFF

Nah. Something fresh.

MISS CAMILLE

How 'bout Abilene, then? You've  
never...

SHERIFF

Fresher.

He stands taller. Hands her another WAD OF BILLS. She looks, but doesn't take. Rollo's cleaning slows. He's listening now.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

(off her hesitancy)

You gon' fix me or not, girl? We got other places we can keep open 'round these parts...

Beaten and knows it, Miss Camille stuffs the money into her busom--- just like in Eden's dream.

Suddenly, THE FRONT DOOR OPENS ON ITS OWN...you could call it the wind, but it isn't. Rollo pauses his sweeping. Miss Camille looks over, *annoyed by the intrusion.*

*A LOW DRONE SOUND creeps up as THE WOMAN IN BLACK enters the parlor, unseen to all.*

Rollo feels a chill he can't explain. Miss Camille hands the Sheriff a KEY.

MISS CAMILLE

Room 4...'Case it's locked.

Rollo, stops cleaning, understanding everything, but still tentative.

ROLLO

(blurts without thinking)

Room 4 being cleaned today, ma'am. Nobody in there but Ede...

Miss Camille's look slices Rollo in half. He shrinks.

MISS CAMILLE

(then to Sheriff)

Upstairs on the right.

Rollo resumes cleaning, panicked.

The Sheriff takes a swig from his LIQUOR BOTTLE - taps it against the counter -- **CLINK CLINK**. THE SOUND REVERBERATES TO...

THE CLINK hits this room like a THUNDERSTORM IN EDEN'S EARS. She braces against the wall, *in the now spotless room*, almost overtaken. Then, HER EYES TURN STARK WHITE.

FLASH TO:

Her VISIONS - a frenetic, mash up of images and sounds:

\* (int. Parlor) - The BELL RINGS atop the door (\*repeated FROM scene 7)

\* (int. Room 4) The Sheriff taps the door frame CLINK CLINK (\* From scene from scene 10, below)

\* (int. Room 4) Rollo's panicked face (\*From scene 12, below)

END OF VISIONS:

Eden doubles over, coming to her senses in the room. She scampers to her feet, panicked by what she just saw.

EDEN  
(to herself)  
Rollo...

She races around the room, compiling her THINGS.

10

INT. BROTHEL - ROOM 4 - NIGHT

10

Eden grabs the mop and heads toward the door. Gets wobbly for an unknown reason. She braces herself against the wall.

FLASH TO:

Frenetic images of what's about to happen in that room. Eden's premonitions of --

\* The Woman in Black **behind the Sheriff.**

\* Eden with her back against the door. She looks over as THE LOCK TURNS.

\* The door CREEEAKS open.

VISION SEQUENCE ENDED:

**The sheriff pushes the door open, DRAWING EDEN BACK INTO THE PRESENT; WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW -- He's the real danger.**

**He leans against the doorframe with all the confidence of a would-be predator.**

Eden backs away, holding the mop towards him. He seems to like it.

**THE SHERIFF TAPS HIS BOTTLE against the doorframe - CLINK CLINK-- (just like in Eden's dream).**



He shifts, then EDEN SEES: BEHIND HIM, IN THE HALL --

The woman in black holds a finger to her lips; just like in Eden's dream.

WOMAN IN BLACK

Shhh...

She and Eden lock eyes (or what would be her eyes if we could see them), as the sheriff heads deeper inside. The woman walks behind him.

Eden backs up; cowering from both of them. THE WOMAN IN BLACK places a HAND OVER HER HEART...Eden does the same -- Her BRONZE CROSS glows beneath her hand.

Across from her, Eden notices the Woman in black remove her hand to reveal -- A DIRTY, BRONZE CROSS, just like hers. They lock eyes. A new understanding between them.

The Woman in black LIFTS HER RIGHT HAND; as if pledging allegiance.

Eden notices her own right hand lift, out of her control.

It scares her as it lowers alongside The Woman in black's.

The sheriff takes a step toward Eden. Her LEFT ARM raises in stop motion. Behind the sneering sheriff, the woman in black's hand holds the same 'stop' position.

The Woman in black mimes a slice motion across her neck and nods at Eden -- i.e., "You Know what to do."

Her hand raises in the air --

Eden understands - gathers courage; retrieves the BLADE from her pocket...

She looks down, HER EYES TURN WHITE. SHE LOOKS BACK UP AT THE SHERIFF.

SHERIFF

What in the devil?

OFF HER WHITE-EYED SNEER as Eden raises the hand holding the blade.

Eden SLICES THE KNIFE right at us...just like the Woman in Black did in her dream.

11 INT. BROTHEL - PARLOR - NIGHT 11

A MAN'S SCREAM permeates the air --Rollo, already heading upstairs, grips his broom tighter, darting off toward...

12 INT. ROOM 4 - DAY 12

OFF ROLLO'S PANICKED FACE, standing in the doorway --

Eden holds a SWITCHBLADE, dripping BLACK BLOOD. Pull back to reveal her standing over A SLAIN BODY, MOSTLY OBSCURED BY SHADOWS in the room -- THE SHERIFF'S CORPSE IN A POOL OF BLACK BLOOD.

She stares at it, WHITE-EYED.

ROLLO

Eden...

She turns her head slowly toward Rollo, EYES STILL WHITE and unstable; the LOW GROWL still palpable.

Rollo gathers his courage. Steps over the threshold.

Rollo extends his hand.

Eden drops the knife. Places her hand in his. She looks up. Her eyes are brown again now.

The two take off running.

FADE OUT