

Wolf at the Door

written by

Lee Thorneycroft

HARD CUT IN:

EXT. THE GROVE - DAY

JAMES/THE MONSTER appears before us, standing tall and brooding at the far end of a woodland trail.

JAMES stands where the monster once stood, trying to catch his breath.

Several seconds go by... James/The monster then steps forward with menace and with a large silver knife in his hand.

Our point of view shifts with each step he takes, cutting between the fragile figure of James and the brooding presence of the monster.

The monster arrives at James' feet. James' eyes lock onto the monster's. The monster casts a grin at James, staring at him for a few moments.

Then, the monster reaches out his hand towards James' head - or towards the CAMERA to be precise.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. JAMES' MIND PRISON, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

James snaps awake from the nightmare, looking lost and uncoordinated for a moment. He pushes himself up into a sitting position.

The room is eerily silent. It appears well lit by orange light bulbs which create a soothing contrast to the pitch black exterior of the house, which consist of long, winding streets of moonlit roads and illuminated street lamps.

Suddenly, a DARK FIGURE moves passed the window.

James sits up so straight that the arches in his back snap. He begins to breath heavily. He tracks the supposed movement of the figure with his eyes as he turns his head from the window and towards the direction of the front door behind the room.

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

James jolts again. Then...

... There's a knock on the living room door. James is frozen in fear - It couldn't be the cold caller... Could it? How would he get in?

The living room door opens. For a second, no one is there. Then, ALT JAMES sticks his head in at an awkward 45 degree angle so that his body isn't visible.

ALT JAMES

You're not going to get that are you?

This version of James speaks with a clear RP BRITISH ACCENT.

JAMES
 (agitated)
 Why wouldn't I? He's been banging
 on the door for the past week.

This James speaks in a SCOTTISH ACCENT.

ALT JAMES
 (shakes his head in
 disagreement)
 Here be dragons James. Or should I
 say wolves.

Alt James opens the door fully and lets himself in. We hear his footsteps as he walks towards him.

ALT JAMES
 Now why would you want to let a
 wolf into your home?

JAMES
 Because he's pissing me off, why do
 you think?!

Alt James arrives at James' feet.

ALT JAMES
 James, you've really got to have
 better judgement, especially in
 situations like this.

James shakes his head - this James character isn't his favourite conversationist.

ALT JAMES
 Remember what happened the last
 time you ignored perfectly rational
 advice?

JAMES
 No mate. Don't really care to be
 honest with you.

ALT JAMES
 Well, let's just say the tables
 turned on a certain someone and
 that certain someone ended up
 getting stuck here... With me as a
 host.

JAMES
 Unfortunately for me.

ALT JAMES
 It's your own fault James, that's
 all I'm saying.

James doesn't know what to say. He clears his throat.

JAMES

You know I met him, don't you?

ALT JAMES

Who?

JAMES

The monster. The wolf at the door.

ALT JAMES

Remind me.

JAMES

You should know, you were there.

ALT JAMES

I really don't think I was.

James shrugs it off and continues...

JAMES

On the trail, just by the clearing.
The day I ignored my mates advice,
like you said, that's when I saw
him... Standing in the sunlight,
stood in a haze.

James eyes shift away from Alt James and instead roll away and gaze out of the window into the deep black night.

JAMES

You know it's funny - I always used
to see him in the corner of my eye.
Long, long before this happened...
He'd come to me in my dreams at
first - just every odd night or
so... Then, once every three nights
turned into once every other night,
then every night, then... Then
every waking day... So...

By the depression in James' vocals, there was originally going to be more to this monologue.

ALT JAMES

And the moment before it all
happened?

JAMES

What do you mean?

ALT JAMES

You saw him then didn't you?

James looks inwards into himself - the classic thousand yard stare in all its glory...

JAMES

Yes.

WE TRANSITION TO A SCENE FROM THE GROVE where an unknown person is walking through a grove towards the monster who stands at the end of a trail. James' voice is heard as this happens...

JAMES (V.O)

I was walking down a trail in broad daylight, passing through a clearing with the wind at my back and the sun in my eyes... I almost felt like I was being guided there, against my will. That's when I saw him, standing in a haze...

IN THE HERE AND NOW:

James swallows hard upon reflection of the event.

ALT JAMES

Does it scare you?

JAMES

Course it fucking does... No rest for the wicked, eh?

ALT JAMES

I wouldn't know.

JAMES

Anyway, it wasn't long after that when he knocked at my door. The rest is history.

ALT JAMES

Well that wasn't you... It couldn't have been you.

JAMES

How would you know?

ALT JAMES

Because you're not a monster.

The two lock eyes for a moment, as if to stare into each other's souls - In a way, that's exactly what they're doing.

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

James jolts at the sound, jumping out of his skin. Alt James smiles and says, sarcastically:

ALT JAMES

Is that the monster?

James hesitates for a moment on the sofa. Then, he gets up and paces towards the door...

Before he can open the door more than an inch, alt James cuts in, pushing the door closed with brute force.

ALT JAMES
James, listen to me!

His tone has now changed from sympathetic guardian to disciplinary step-parent.

JAMES
Get out of the way mate!

ALT JAMES
If you let him in, I can't protect you anymore, do you hear me?!

JAMES
I don't need your protection.

ALT JAMES
You will, trust me! And believe me when I say, that thing at the door isn't a man - he's a wolf!

Pause.

JAMES
Then I'll kill him.

Alt James allows James to leave the room, casting a look of genuine concern as he goes.

EXT/INT. THE DOOR - CONTINUOUS

James opens the front door, only to see THE FIGURE standing and staring directly into his eyeline. We remain fixed on James and only see the back of the caller's head.

JAMES
Right, will you please fuck off mate! All you've been doing for the past week is banging on this fucking door! Every time I go to lie down, every time I go to take a shit, all I can hear is you...
(James knocks on the door four times to imitate)
...on this fucking door! Now piss off!!

James closes the door in the man's face and we remain fixed on this same angle. The man doesn't budge an inch, he just stares at the door.

He knocks another four times.
James opens the door again, looking majorly pissed off!

...And we finally see the face of the caller:

He appears as a pale, bearded man who casts the impression of a hobo. He just stares at James for a good long while with eyes that appear unusually placed - as if he were under the influence of some drug and, frankly, 'not all there'.

JAMES

What are you doing?!

James scours the street with his eyes, trying to spot anyone else behind him.

The man remains silent - now James' demeanour begins to change from anger to fear.

JAMES

Are you alone or what?

James doesn't know what to say. He stands awkwardly as if feeling uncomfortable standing on his own feet. He turns around and calls out...

JAMES

James?

Alt James isn't there.

He turns back to the man. The man casts a creepy smile at James, exposing the outlines of his rooting teeth.

James has had enough - he shuts the door in the man's face.

He stands by the door, looking terrified by the encounter. He calls out again:

JAMES

James?

There's no reply - And as James peers into the living room at the far end of the hallway, there's not a soul in sight.

James takes a deep breath and opens the front door again...

The man is gone!

James sticks his head out onto the street, scouring the area for clues. Where did he go?...

JAMES

(to himself)

Where the fuck has he gone?

James reaches into his pocket and pulls out the house keys.

EXT. JAMES' MIND PRISON - CONTINUOUS

James steps outside the house, shuts the door behind him and locks it shut.

He gazes out onto the street - it all looks eerily quiet. There's not a soul in sight. James steps forward, listening to the sounds of rustling leaves and faint wind.

Then, he takes a turn and walks down the alley at the side of his house - The street light behind him casting a glare that fills the breadth of the screen.

James examines the garden out back... Nothing. No one in sight. He exhales deeply - something isn't right here.

He turns back and begins walking to the front door - We follow James from behind, tracking his footsteps.

He sticks the key in and the door opens...

INT. JAMES' MIND PRISON, HALLWAY AND STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

The door opens and James enters the house... But HOLY SHIT, guess who's inside!!
The caller himself is sitting on the stairs!...

James doesn't notice at first, and he locks the door behind him. BIG MISTAKE!

James turns around and freezes in terror... The man is right there on the stairs! His heart sinks.

The man appears huddled up against the wall on stairway with his head in his knees and knees up against his chest. He's also quivering in fear.

James swallows hard, then begins to approach the man that terrified him only minutes ago. He ascends the stairs... CREAKKKK - That sound only adds to the intensity.

The man reveals his face to James as he arrives at his feet.

JAMES

What the hell do you want?

The man isn't even looking at him. He stares off in the distance as he speaks.

WOLF AT THE DOOR

(quivering, quietly)

Help me.

JAMES

What?

James leans in closer.

WOLF AT THE DOOR

Help me.

James sees the man's fragile physique - his pale, aged skin and unwashed hair. Most frighteningly though, is his 'off-kilter' stare. It's as if he's not actually 'seeing' anything he's looking at - rather, it's like he's looking INWARDS into himself.

James doesn't know how to handle this. He almost reaches out to touch him but stops himself.

JAMES

What the hell happened to you?...
You with anyone?

The man looks at James and starts to smile with a sinister grin. Despite this, he's still quivering.

WOLF AT THE DOOR

They're in here with us... They're
in here with us right now.

JAMES

Who is?

WOLF AT THE DOOR

They manufactured me... They
strapped me to the chair. They took
everything - my organs... They took
my organs!

JAMES

Who did?

WOLF AT THE DOOR

They hide - they hide behind the
stars. Even now... we fall through
the void... they won't ever stop...

JAMES

Look, I don't understand what
you're saying mate. All I
understand is you seriously need
help, alright.

WOLF AT THE DOOR

You don't know where you are do
you?...

James looks at him in fear - is he a mad man or what?

WOLF AT THE DOOR

You're being pulled into a black
sun... Nothing can escape it,
nothing...

JAMES

Well I'm not being funny mate, but if that's the case, you wouldn't have been banging on my door, would you?

WOLF AT THE DOOR

It's not real. The house, the street - it's all fake.

James can't take anymore.

JAMES

Right. Let's get you up, shall we? Get you back in the asylum where you belong.

He goes to grab the man's arm but the man grabs his arm first!

WOLF AT THE DOOR

Do you know what I did to them? Do you know what I did?

JAMES

Get off me!

WOLF AT THE DOOR

They're all dead! I killed every last one of them!

Now the man's quivering in fear starts to morph into quivering in anger...

James rips his arm away and stands, taking a step back from him - now he's the one that's afraid.

WOLF AT THE DOOR

Guess what I did to them?!

The man starts to get up off the floor and his limbs begin to straighten out.

WOLF AT THE DOOR

(shouting)

I ripped the fucking eyes out of their sockets and broke their fucking necks!...

James runs back down the stairs.

WOLF AT THE DOOR

(shouting)

Just think what I'm going to do to you!

James reaches the front door and tries to open it. SHIT, it's locked! He looks back to see the man starting to walk down the stairs towards him.

James struggles to put the key into the lock! It should be such an easy task but, alas, in these dire circumstances it's anything but easy!

The man nearly arrives at James' feet. We see his hand outstretch towards James' keys. Then...

SNATCH!

The keys are ripped out of his hand. Panicked, James turns back to see the man gone. Just like that - he's gone like the wind!

The LIGHTS in the house then GO OUT! Fuck!

James lets out a heavy breath. Stumbling in the dark, he reaches into his pocket again and pulls out his phone. He turns on the TORCH.

He scours the house with the light, trying to spot the man lurking in the dark. First, he checks downstairs, passing the light into the living room and the hallway. Nothing there.

He then dials '999' and puts the phone to his ear... There's not even a sound on the other end.

JAMES

Shit.

He turns back to the front door and gives it a yank - futile but worth a shot, at least.

JAMES

Fucking typical.

Then, he notices a light switch on the wall.

JAMES

And let me guess...

James flicks the switch but nothing happens - the lights remain off.

JAMES

The fucking lights don't work but the torch does. Shitty horror movie logic right there.

James begins climbing further up the stairs, moving the light up each step as he approaches the top floor.

JAMES

Not even gonna try and break the windows.

INT. JAMES' MIND PRISON, UPPER FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

James reaches the upper floor, emerging onto a long stretch of hallway with rooms dotted all along.

The air is so cold that a ghost could well be present.

James nervously reaches for one of the door handles and pushes the door open... No one is in this room.

James does the same again... No one is in this room.

James begins to pick up the pace as he moves further down the hallway.... This room is empty - And the next room - And the next...

James arrives at the end of the hall and... SHIT, behind him, standing at the other end, is the man himself.

The floor creaks. James freezes. He turns back around and sees the man's brooding presence standing in the dark.

AS WITH THE CLIMAX OF THE GROVE, James is once again trapped in the midst of a long stretch of a narrow pathway. He closes up, not knowing whether to run or stay put.

The man looks at James with menace for a few moments.

WOLF AT THE DOOR

Arhhhhhhhhhhhh!!

The man charges at James who, understandably and monumentally, SHITS HIS PANTS! And rightly so!

James throws himself into the nearest room and rams his back up against the door.

The man pounds on it with all he has!

BANG. BANG. BANG.

WOLF AT THE DOOR

Open the fucking door!!

For a brief moment, James is nearly thrown away by the force of the banging. He quickly reassumes his position and presses his back harder into the wood frame.

WHILE THIS IS HAPPENING, CLIPS FROM THE GROVE ARE SHOWN:

We see James with his hands pressed against his head, while sitting on the floor by the bed in his room... Only there is heavy thudding on the door rather than gentle knocking.

IN THE HERE AND NOW:

James looks to the window, contemplating his choices. Does he stay there and wait for the man to bust through... Or does he run?

James is nearly pushed away yet again - He's running out of time!

JAMES
(desperate)
Please.

Then, he thrusts himself forward and pelts towards the window...

The man busts through the door and it flies open...

TIME THEN SLOWS DOWN TENFOLD.....

We witness James move in the direction of the window while the wolf chases after him.

We see the struggle on James' face to run forward at speed. It's almost like a nightmare in which you can only run so fast, despite great danger chasing after you...

We see the menace and the malevolence on the wolf's face as he tries to catch his prey...

It soon becomes apparent though that the wolf can run faster than James!

He reaches out his hand towards James' back, moving in closer and closer... Five feet become four...

... Four feet become three...

... Three feet become two...

... Two feet become one...

Until...

The wolf's hands clench on James!

And with that we -

CUT TO BLACK.

AS THE CREDITS ROLL, THE FAINT SOUNDS OF A GROWLING AND HUNGRY WOLF CAN BE HEARD.