

The 13th

Written by

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EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

A solitary 1973 Ford F-Series TRUCK rumbles down the highway. Old headlights pierce the haze.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

An intermittent THUMPING. A MAN, 50s, stares ahead into the night. His lips move, but no sound comes out. This is DADDY. In the passenger seat, ABIGAIL, 13, pale with red hair, holds her hands firmly in her lap. Her pinky finger twitches. THUMP, THUMP in quick succession - her fist clenches.

Quiet. DADDY's lips open and close. He glances in the rear view.

DADDY

Get us our snack now, Abigail.

Abigail reaches to her feet into a PAPER BAG. She draws out a chunk of CHEESE covered in RED WAX, a small loaf of BREAD, and a small KNIFE.

DADDY (cont'd)

You always pack us real fancy.

Abigail takes the KNIFE, pierces the center of the wax, and pulls the knife down through the round.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The Ford moves past a DEAD DEER in the road, it's head smashed in.

INT. TRUCK - Night

Abigail prepares the meal.

DADDY

This time is your time Abby. There's gotta be a first and this one's yours.

Abigail is quiet.

I tell you what. You do a good job at it, I'll let you drive the truck home. I know you been wantin' to get behind the wheel.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

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DADDY (cont'd)
 Growin' up, you get responsibilities,
 but you also get privileges.

Abigail hands Daddy a slice of bread and some cheese. He glances at it, clutches it and takes a bite.

Mmmm. You always do a good packing.
 What kind is this?

ABIGAIL
 Gouda.

DADDY
 Gouda. It is good-ah.

Laughs.

So you'll do your job, you'll drive us home. That'll be nice. You don't have to be nervous. You've watched me. You know how it goes. You've seen it, what, well I guess twelve times now. You know how it goes. You're gonna do a bang-up job.

Both of them gaze ahead into the night.
 (Shaking his head)
 Good-ah. I'll be damned. Delicious.

Thumping. Abigail grinds her jaw. As the truck flies on in the night, the thumping grows. In the truck bed, a burlap sack containing a body, kicking, kicking, kicking.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

The truck pulls into a clearing. Dark forest all around. A STUMP sits in the middle of the clearing. At one edge, a METAL PLATE juts out of the ground, with dozens of red "Xs" marked in neat rows, looking older the farther back they go. Someones been making Xs for a long time.

Daddy keys off the truck. Silence. Then the sounds of the night slowly rise.

DADDY
 All right. Time to go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He gets out of the truck, reaches into the truck bed and clutches a SHOVEL, CAN OF PAINT, ROPE, TAPE, and SCISSORS. The burlap sack breathes.

Abigail slowly crawls out of the passenger side. She walks around the back of the truck as she watches Daddy walk the equipment over to the stump. Watches him. Quickly glances down at the burlap bag. Breathing. Looks again at Daddy, who's placing items carefully on the stump. Abigail looks again at the sack. Slowly, she reaches her arm out to touch. She places her hand on a leg. A whimper.

ABIGAIL

You're OK. You're OK. It'll be over
in just a little bit. It'll be over.

DADDY

What the hell are you doing?

He's standing right behind her.

ABIGAIL

Nothing Daddy.

DADDY

What the hell is this? We don't do
that. We don't talk. That's not what
this is. You know better than that.
You're gonna fuck it all up.

ABIGAIL

No Daddy.

DADDY

You're gonna fuck it all up, and then
it'll be over, Abby. You wanna fuck
it up like that? Or do you wanna do
our job?

ABIGAIL

I don't want to fuck it up Daddy.

DADDY

You wanna ruin ths?

ABIGAIL

I don't want to fuck it up!

DADDY

All right then. We don't talk, we
don't touch. Say it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL
We don't talk, we don't touch.

DADDY
That's right.

Abigail stares at the ground.

Now don't get all morose. I love you,
Abby. I'm just trying to do what's
best.

ABIGAIL
I know.

DADDY
I love you.

ABIGAIL
I love you too Daddy.

DADDY
All right then.

He grabs the end of the burlap sack, and yanks it off the truck bed. It lands with a thump. Whimpering, kicking, faster breathing as he drags the sack to the clearing. Abigail follows. At the center of the clearing, Daddy opens a BUCK KNIFE and cuts open the top of the sack. He pulls the top down to reveal a GIRL, 15, mouth taped, eyes straining. She looks around, sees the tools and a long, deep hole - a grave. She screams into the tape, and starts to kick and crawl away from the hole.

DADDY (cont'd)
It's important to keep her still when
you put her down. I used to use rope,
but tape is easier to undo.

Daddy seizes the girl and puts her up against a tree. He tosses the tape to Abigail.

Now wrap it round.

Abigail wraps the tape around the GIRL, binding her to the tree.

That's good, now. A few times, to
keep her tight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Abigail finishes, drops the tape.

All right now. You know what's next.

Abigail picks up the shovel. Daddy moves around behind her. The GIRL stares at Abigail, shaking her head, no, no, please.

It's gotta be strong and sure. That's the most merciful, and we don't want suffering and clumsiness. Strong and sure.

Abigail stares at the girl, her face hard. She grips the shovel, tests the weight.

I always been so proud of you. You're a good girl, you're smart and strong. When my daddy took me my first time, I was such a baby - I upchucked right over there. You didn't whine or hide or anything, you just watched, like you knew you needed to learn it. The first time you came, I knew you'd carry on the work. I always been proud of you.

Abigail and the Girl stare at each other.

Strong and sure. That's the way. No suffering.

Abigail stares. Her face grows harder. She lifts the shovel over her shoulder. Aggression plays out all over her face.

She swings. A horrendous THUD, and then black.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT.

Abigail is driving the truck.

ABIGAIL

I'm gonna tell you the truth. The first time I saw it, I didn't think I could ever do it. It looked so awful.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL (cont'd)

But now that it's all over, it feels kind of...good, and powerful. I was scared. That's the truth. I didn't want to fuck it up. (Giggles) I guess I did it pretty good.

EXT. Clearing - Night - FLASHBACK

Abigail struggles to drag the body to the grave.

ABIGAIL (V.O.)

Dragging that weight was way harder though. And burying it.

Abigail shovels dirt.

ABIGAIL (V.O.) (cont'd)

I was sweating so hard!

Abigail picks up the paint can and the brush.

But when I finished? When I put the mark on? I have to say. I was proud. Happy that I'd done it. I think I was good at it. I think I learned it the right way.

Abigail makes a red "X" next to a dozen other red "Xs."

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Abigail looks over into the passenger seat.

ABIGAIL

I think I did a good job.

The GIRL looks back at Abigail. She nods slightly. They both look ahead into the night.