

THE DEVIL PREFERS LIVESTOCK

Season 1 - Episode 3:

"The Return"

This is a teaser excerpt of Episode 3, "The Return." The full script and additional materials are available to industry professionals upon request. For access, please contact: edward@jamisonlawgroup.com

COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

INT. RURAL VIETNAMESE HOUSE - NIGHT

A dim hallway. Eleven-year-old 7 stands barefoot, clutching a thin blanket. She hears muffled cries, her older sister's voice.

She creeps to a cracked bedroom door.

7's POV: Her sister's face fills the frame, eyes wide, tears streaming, staring straight at 7 through the gap. Their father's shadowed form is above her, head and shoulders moving. The bed creaks. The sister's lips part, but no sound escapes.

7 recoils, hand over her mouth, breath catching in her throat. The horror is silent, total.

She backs away, trembling.

EXT. VILLAGE ROAD - BEFORE DAWN

7, barefoot, slips out the back door. She runs down the dirt road, never looking back. The sky is black, then blue.

SERIES OF SHOTS - PASSAGE OF SEVEN YEARS

- 7, younger and ragged, curled up on a market stall bench as rain pours down.
- She scavenges for food in alleyways, ignored by passersby.
- Nights spent under bridges, arms wrapped around her knees.
- A calendar on a shop wall: years pass, numbers tick by: one, two, three, up to seven.
- At fourteen, a man in a cheap suit (Triad recruiter) corners her in a market alley. He grabs her arm, whispering promises and threats.
- 7, now older, is led into a brothel; neon lights flicker, shadows move behind stained curtains.
- She sits on a thin mattress, blank-eyed, as the door closes.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY (SEVEN YEARS LATER)

A teenage girl, hardened and changed, walks down the same road she once fled. Villagers whisper, eyes wide:

- "She was gone for seven years."
- "She's not the same."
- "Bay... Seven."

The camera lingers on her face: older, wary, a survivor.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

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[Excerpt continues with a flashback sequence from much later in Episode 3:]

FLASHBACK - INT. CHEAP SAIGON HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - CIRCA 2008

A young Western man (mid-30s, tired, hopeful) sits on the edge of a sagging bed. Hong, visibly pregnant, packs a small bag, avoiding his eyes.

A sudden, violent knock at the door. The man stands, confused.

WESTERN MAN

Who is that? Are you expecting someone?

Hong shakes her head, feigning confusion.

The door bursts open. Three uniformed Vietnamese police storm in, shouting. One shoves the man against the wall while another rips open his suitcase, pulling out a large bag of white powder.

POLICE OFFICER (in English, cold)

Drugs. Big problem.

The man's face drains of color.

WESTERN MAN

What? That's not mine! Hong, tell them!

As he pleads, a third officer flips open the man's laptop, scrolling quickly. He stops, eyes narrowing.

POLICE OFFICER #2 (in English, showing the screen)

Look what we have here. Naked children. Very bad.

The man, now in handcuffs, shakes his head violently.

WESTERN MAN (desperate)

No! I never. Hong, please! This is a setup!

Hong stands back, eyes wide, but her hands are steady. One officer gives her a subtle nod.

The man is dragged away, his cries echoing down the hallway.

INT. VIETNAMESE COURTROOM - DAY

The man stands behind old, rusted steel bars in a courtroom cage, desperate and disheveled. The judge reads the sentence: 30 YEARS IN PRISON. Hong sits at the back, her face a mask, no tears.

INT. VIETNAMESE PRISON - VISITATION AREA - DAY

The man, now gaunt and broken, sits on a wooden bench behind thick steel bars. Hong, post-pregnancy, stands on the other side, clutching her purse.

WESTERN MAN (voice cracking)

Please, Hong. You know I didn't do this. Please help me. I love you. Don't leave me here.

Hong wipes her eyes, but her voice is cold, almost distant.

HONG

I can't help you. The police said you did bad things. I couldn't afford the baby. I gave it away to a family.

The man breaks down, sobbing, clutching the bars.

WESTERN MAN

No... please... don't leave me here. Please, Hong.

Hong steps back, turns, and walks away, leaving the man wailing behind the bars.

END FLASHBACK

END OF TEASER