

Old Gods of Appalachia  
Season 1: Barlo

Episode 8  
Afterbirth

FADE IN

**INT. AVERY CABIN, BEDROOM- DAWN, 1907**

**CAROL ANNE (26)** SITS UP IN BED, RED-FACED AND DRENCHED IN SWEAT, EXHAUSTED. THE SOUND OF A SCREAMING INFANT IS HEARD IN THE BACKGROUND.

**MARCY**

Congratulations, Carol Annie,  
you've got yourself a strong  
little girl.

**MARCY WALKER (21)**, HANDS HER SISTER A SCREAMING BUNDLE. **CAROL ANNE** CRIES TEARS OF JOY AS SHE CLUTCHES HER DAUGHTER TO HER BREAST. MARCY STANDS BACK TO GIVE MOTHER AND CHILD THEIR FIRST MOMENT TOGETHER.

**CAROL ANNE**

Hello, little one. Oh, you're just  
so beautiful.

**MARCY**

Alright mama, just one more push,  
and you'll be all done, okay?  
Ellie, you mind takin' the baby  
for a moment?

**ELLIE (15)** STEPS TO THE BEDSIDE AND GENTLY TAKES THE BABY. CAROL ANNE GIVES HER BABY ONE FINAL LONG LOOK.

**MARCY** TAKES HER PLACE AT THE FOOT OF THE BED, BETWEEN CAROL ANNE'S LEGS. **CAROL ANNE** BRACES HERSELF.

**MARCY**

Alright, now, *push!*

**CAROL ANNE** GRUNTS AS SHE STRAINS TO PUSH ONE LAST TIME. A WET SQUELCHING SOUND IS HEARD. SHE RELAXES AGAINST THE PILLOWS.

**MARCY**

Well done, sister!

**CAROL ANNE**

Lord, Marcia, don't ever let me do that again.

ALL THREE SISTERS LAUGH SOFTLY TOGETHER. **ELLIE** GIVES CAROL ANNE BACK THE BABY.

**ELLIE**

She really is a beautiful little girl, Carol. You and Pinky picked out a name yet?

**CAROL ANNE**

Sarah. Her name is Sarah.

**MARCY**

(*wrapping the afterbirth in a bloody linen rag*) I'm gonna go ahead and start the workin's of protection. That old oak out on the corner of your property should be a good place for it.

**ELLIE**

No rest for the wicked, I guess.  
I'll start on mine as well.

**MARCY** NODS TO HER SISTERS AS SHE LEAVES THE ROOM.

**CAROL ANNE**

Mama been teachin' you more of her  
workin's?

**ELLIE** CHUCKLES AS SHE PULLS OUT BOTTLE AFTER BOTTLE OF HERB AND  
TINCTURE FROM HER BAG.

**ELLIE**

Mama ain't taught me a thing in  
years. I moved out with Marcia a  
few years back. We started our own  
parlor house, didn't you know  
that?

**CAROL ANNE**

*(nodding tiredly)* right, right. I  
remember now. *(struggling into a  
more comfortable position to nurse  
baby Sarah)* Anything I need to do  
for your charms?

**ELLIE**

Not a thing, big sister. You just  
sit back and enjoy that baby girl  
right there. I'll take care of the  
rest, ya hear?

DISSOLVE TO:

FADE IN

**INT. AVERY CABIN, KITCHEN- NEAR-DUSK, 1917**

**THE NIGHT BEFORE SARAH AVERY RAN**

**CAROL ANNE (36)** STANDS AT THE KITCHEN SINK, SCRUBBING POTS AND PANS. SHE HAS BEEN CRYING. THE HOUSE IS EMPTY EXCEPT FOR HER. SHE SCRUBS MORE AND MORE AGGRESSIVELY AT A TOUGH SPOT ON HER CAST IRON DUTCH OVEN.

**CAROL ANNE**

Come on, *Out*, damn spot!

HER HAND SLIPS AND THE POT CLASHES AGAINST THE WASH BASIN. CAROL ANNE BRACES HERSELF AGAINST THE BASIN'S EDGE AND CLOSES HER EYES. SHE TAKES A DEEP, SHAKY BREATH.

CUT TO:

**EXT. AVERY CABIN, FRONT PORCH- CONTINUOUS**

**CAROL ANNE** WALKS ONTO THE PORCH, WIPING HER HANDS ON HER APRON. SHE SITS IN A ROCKING CHAIR, HEAD IN HER HANDS.

CAROL ANNE

Damn you, Pinky Avery, for leaving  
me like this... (sighs) Come on,

(cont'd)

Carol Walker, pull yourself  
together.

**CAROL ANNE** LOOKS UP, TRYING TO GET A HOLD OF HERSELF. SHE LOOKS ACROSS THE DARKENING YARD AND SEES A MAN STANDING ON THE OUTER EDGE OF HER PROPERTY, MAYBE 15 FEET FROM THE PORCH.

**IGNATIUS COMBS** is a short, skinny man dressed in black boots and slacks, a white button up shirt and a long, strange black overcoat. A wide-brimmed hat is pulled low. He has thin, cracked lips and pale skin flushed from the exertion of the walk up to the house.

**CAROL ANNE**

(to herself, humorless) Well  
shitfire. I guess Old Man  
Trouble's finally come a-knockin'.

**IGNATIUS** STANDS STOCK STILL, LIKE HE IS TRYING TO STAND HOW HE THINKS A MAN IS SUPPOSED TO STAND. HIS WEIRD OVERCOAT FLAPS AND TWITCHES DESPITE THERE NOT BEING A BREEZE.

**CAROL ANNE** STANDS BEHIND THE PORCH RAIL, EYEING THE MAN CRITICALLY.

**CAROL ANNE**

Can I help you with somethin',  
mister?

**IGNATIUS**

(voice like a mouthful of wasps)

Mizzzzzz Averyyy?

A MOMENT. NO RESPONSE. **CAROL ANNE** CAN SENSE SOMETHING WRONG ABOUT THE MAN.

**IGNATIUS**

Mizzz Avery. My name is Ignatius  
Combzzz. I am with B&L Mineral  
Resourcezz. I am here to offer you  
our condolences on the death of  
your Huzband Pinkerton.

You are Carol Avery, are you not?

AGAIN, SHE HOLDS HER TONGUE. HER MAMA HAD TAUGHT HER YOU NEVER GIVE NOTHING AWAY, ESPECIALLY YOUR NAME. AN AMUSED LOOK CROSSES HER FACE AT THE SOUND OF HER HUSBAND'S FULL FIRST NAME.

IGNATIUS PULLS A YELLOW PAPER FROM HIS COAT AND CONSULTS IT AS HE SPEAKS.

## **IGNATIUS**

Mizz Avery, are you aware you are entitled to a substantial payout for your huzzband's passing? That he died in a rezzcue attempt in an effort to protect Company asssetzz, and B&L are very grateful for hizz sacrifice. Edgar Avery, it seems was also a resident here wazz he not? And it seems he was the actual deed holder as well. Unfortunately, his beneficiaries are no longer living and he has never redirected his will to anyone we could reach...

**IGNATIUS** TIPS HIS HAT BACK TO BETTER READ THE PAPER. CAROL ANNE'S ENTIRE FOCUS IS NOW DIRECTED NOT TO HIS WORDS, BUT TO THE MAN'S FACE. IT MAKES HER WANT TO VOMIT.

THINGS ARE MOVING UNDER HIS SKIN. LONG SEGMENTED SHAPES PRESS FROM BENEATH HIS CHEEKBONES AND CHIN, BULGE HIS LIPS, FLARE HIS NOSTRILS. HIS EYES ARE A DULL GREEN WITH BURST BLOOD VESSELS STAINING THE WHITES. HE LOOKS LIKE HE IS STRUGGLING TO STAY UPRIGHT, LIKE IF HE BLINKED OR BREATHED WRONG, HE'D JUST DEFLATE, AND WHATEVER WAS MOVING UNDER HIS SKIN WOULD COME POURING OUT.



**IGNATIUS**

*(His speech begins to distort more and more- devolving into a kind of droning buzz)*

Mizz Avery - if you would invite us in, I would be glad to sign over the check so that you and your daughter could live more comfortablyzz. Alternatively, B&L would be happy to relocate you zomeplace much zafer azz a thank you for your huzbands years of zervizzzzzzz...

**CAROL ANNE** LETS HIM SWEAT. SHE SEES HIS STRUGGLING BUT DOES NOTHING. SHE ARCHES AN EYEBROW AND CROSSES HER ARMS.

**IGNATIUS' S** BREATHING IS BECOMING MORE RAPID A LABORED. THE SQUIRMING BENEATH HIS SKIN IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE PRONOUNCED.

**IGNATIUS**

Mizzz Avery, pleazzze let us come in and help in thizz trying time.

**CAROL ANNE**

Us? *(laughs)* You got a mouse in your pocket, sonny boy?

**IGNATIUS**

Mizzz Avery, if you could just...

**CAROL ANNE**

Send the check in the mail if you  
have one to send.

SHE TURNS HER BACK TO GO INTO THE HOUSE

**IGNATIUS**

That izzz not an option. There are  
protocolzz in situationzz like  
theeeeezzzzz.

**CAROL ANNE** WHIPS AROUND, FINALLY ANGRY. SHE STOMPS OFF THE PORCH  
TOWARD IGNATIUS.

**CAROL ANNE**

My husband is dead! The closest  
thing I ever knowed to a daddy is  
dead. And your money ain't gonna  
bring them back!

**IGNATIUS**

Mizzz Avery... Pleazzz, we have resourcezzz you do not. Do not make this any more difficult than it has to be - let us make this eazzy for you.

**CAROL ANNE**

Get off my land, you weird little vulture.

**IGNATIUS** COMBS SIGHS RESIGNEDLY AND HOLDS UP HIS YELLOW SHEET OF PAPER COVERED WITH TINY PRINT.

**IGNATIUS**

You aren't lisztening Missez Avery. When Pinkerton's Uncle Edgar passed, his assets were liquidated so a cash payment could be made to his beneficiaries - but none of them, including Ms Sheila Walker, can be found living. So this land wazz sold. We purchazzed it, so I'm afraid you have no llleverage in this situationn...

**IGNATIUS** RAISES HIS HAND IN A CASUAL WAVE.

**CAROL ANNE** FEELS ALL SENSE OF SAFETY VANISH. SHE BACKS UP,  
RETREATING BACK TO THE SAFETY OF THE PORCH.

THE NARROW BRANCH OF GOSHUN CREEK THAT BLOCKED THE LITTLE MAN'S  
PATH STOPS FLOWING. AT HIS GESTURE, IT PARTS LIKE THE RED SEA,  
AND HE STEPS ACROSS TOWARDS HER. HIS STRANGE SWELLING, SHIFTING  
FACE NEVER CHANGES EXPRESSION DESPITE THE SWARMING UNDER HIS  
SKIN.

**CAROL ANNE**

*(screaming) Sarah? Sarahhh!!!*

**CAROL ANNE** STUMBLES TO HER KNEES AS SHE TRIES TO TURN AND RUN  
BACK INTO THE CABIN. THERE IS A BLUR OF MOTION NEAR THE CORNER  
OF THE HOUSE, WHICH SHOOTS TOWARD HER.

CUT TO BLACK

FADE IN

**EXT. AVERY CABIN, FRONT YARD- JUST PAST DUSK**

**CAROL ANNE** IS UNCONSCIOUS, PROPPED IN A SITTING POSITION AT THE  
BASE OF THE TREE IN THE CORNER OF THE FRONT YARD. JUST ABOVE HER  
HEAD IS A CARVING- PA+CA. A CUT JUST ABOVE HER HAIRLINE HAS  
PAINTED THE SIDE OF HER FACE IN BLOOD.

SHE GROANS AND WINCES AS SHE COMES TO. SHE FEELS THE STONG HEMP  
ROPE AROUND HER NECK. SHE FEELS WEAK AND MUDDLEHEADED.

SOMETHING IS IN THE HOUSE. SHE CAN HEAR FURNITURE BREAKING,  
ANIMALS GROWLING AND ROARING.

**IGNATIUS COMBS** IS RIGHT IN HER FACE, THE SKIN ON HIS OWN A  
NIGHTMARE OF UNNATURAL MOVEMENT AND STRETCHED AND STRAINED  
TISSUE. SHE CAN COUNT THE SEGMENTS OF THE WORM THAT SQUIRMED  
UNDER HIS LEFT EYE.

**IGNATIUS**

Thizz wasn't nearly as hard as she  
said it would be. I could do this  
all day, couldn't I?

HE FLEXES HIS HANDS AND SWINGS HIS ARMS LIKE HE IS TRYING TO  
BREAK IN HIS STRANGE OVERCOAT.

**IGNATIUS**

Nothing to you monkeezz at all -  
nothing so hard.

AN INVISIBLE FORCE STARTS PULLING ON THE ROPE AROUND **CAROL**  
**ANNE'S** NECK AND SHE BEGINS RISING INTO THE AIR. SHE GRAPPLES AT  
IT AS HER AIRWAY IS SUDDENLY CONSTRICTED AND HER BODY SEEKS  
BREATH THAT WILL NOT COME.

**IGNATIUS**

Thizz is what they do with  
witchezz in this place, yezz? Not  
so much of a witch you are. And  
I'd heard all you Walker women  
were supposed to be so powerful.  
We'll choke you and choke you  
until you are soft and blue and  
very good to eat.

**CAROLE ANNE'S** VISION BEGINS TO FADE, HER SKIN INDEED TURNING  
BLUE.

**IGNATIUS COMBS'S** SKIN IS DOING THE SAME. HE BREATHES IN DEEP AND  
SIGHS IN PLEASURE.

**IGNATIUS**

Oh, there we are. There's not much  
of you, but some.

TWO MASSIVE THINGS BLINK INTO EXISTENCE. ONE EMERGES FROM THE  
HOUSE COVERED IN FEATHERS FROM CAROL ANNE'S GOOD DOWN COMFORTER,  
THE OTHER DIGGING UP THE YARD. THEY ARE MASSIVE CREATURES, THEIR  
SKIN THE SAME SHADE OF BLUE AS HER DYING FACE.

**IGNATIUS**

If only we had more time, or you were more... filling. But I zuppose we must be merciful... or at least efficient. Goodbye, Mizz Avery...

**CAROL ANNE'S** BODY LIFTS INTO THE AIR, LETTING THE NOOSE SLACKEN FOR A SECOND, AND THEN THE FORCE LETS HER FALL.

THE ROPE SNAPS TAUGHT AND BREAKS HER NECK CLEANLY.

[DEEP RUMBLE OF FORCE, LIKE THE PRESHOCKS OF AN EARTHQUAKE.]

**CAROL ANNE'S** BODY SLUMPS INTO THE SHAPE AND STATE ANNIE MESSER WILL LATER DISCOVER HER IN, AND A WAVE OF PURE, BLINDING FORCE RADIATES FROM HER LIKE A SONIC BOOM.

[MULTIPLE DEAFENING EXPLOSIONS FROM THE EARTH.]

THE GROUND BENEATH CAROL ANNE ERUPTS IN FIRE AND WIND, THE SOIL BECOMING A TARRY SLURRY.

BOTH EXPLOSIONS CONVERG ON **IGNATIUS COMBS**, BLASTING HIS SKULL INTO A SMALL OCEAN OF ICHOR AND PUS.

BLIND WHITE WORMS THAT SCREAM WITH CHILDREN'S VOICES FLY FROM HIS FACE. FINGER-LENGTH SCARLET WASPS WITH FACES OF EYELESS RATS BURST FROM HIS GUT.

THIS PRIMORDIAL CHUM OF VENOM AND BURNED BILE SPLATTERED THE YARD, WITH QUANTITIES SO GREAT IT FILLS THE TRACKS AND HOLES OF THE BEAST WITH A HAZY MUSTARD BROWN SEWAGE SWIMMING WITH THE WORMS. THE WASPS WILT INTO ASH, UNPREPARED TO LIVE OUTSIDE OF THEIR HOST'S BODY. THE SCREAMING WHITE WORMS SPLATTER INTO THE RUINED AVERY LIVING SPACE THROUGH THE SHATTERED WINDOWS. THEY BEGIN SLOWLY AND BLINDLY TRYING TO FIND EACH OTHER AS IF TO KNIT THE RUPTURED LITTLE MAN BACK TOGETHER BUT FIND THEMSELVES STUCK LIKE FLYPAPER TO THE CURSED MUD THAT ERUPTED FROM THE EARTH.

**CAROL ANNE'S** BODY SWINGS IN ITS DEATHSONG, BREATHLESS AND COOLING, AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF HER RUINED AND TAINTED HOME.

END