

Walkers

By

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(Partially based on Gunnhildur Helga Katrínardóttir's
unofficial short film script "Hesteyrar-Krita".)

Snipe Hunters

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INT. THEATRE: TERRY.

Blank screen.

Credits.

TERRY

In many ways one can say that the legends that people tell about a particular place, like the clothes that were worn by that particular place. It's what gives an area character and history. We take for example Þingvellir and imagine:

Letters read: Terry Gunnell. Ph.D.

TERRY is sitting in a theater.

TERRY

A tourist comes to Iceland, hasn't met anybody on the way, hasn't bought any leaflets, is suddenly dropped into Þingvellir.

- - Þingvellir in summertime, wide angle.

TERRY

They'll see this place of being a beautiful area of landscape, a geological wonder. But then you take an Icelander who's has grown up in Iceland.

- - Þingvellir, semi-wide angle.

TERRY

And take them to the same place, and that that exactly same setting is a is a very different place for ... it's now a place that has got history, background.

- - Þingvellir, tourists walk accross the Drekkingsarhylur bridge.

TERRY

Here is where women were drowned.

- - Þingvellir, a runs through a small canyon.

(CONTINUED)

TERRY

Here is where Flosi jumped over.

- - Þingvellir, the Icelandic flag blows in the wind in front of a large wall of rock.

TERRY

Here is where Christianity was accepted.

- - Þingvellir, a waterfall flows behind old lava.

TERRY

The knowledge of roughly how old the lava is.

- - Þingvellir, more old lava.

TERRY

Paces where Þingmeetings used to take place. So that place is really the heart of the nation in many many ways. So in in in that sense the stories gave information about, first of all, the history, the things that took place there. That there were generations that lived in that area before, the stories told you how you got from place A to place B. Who are your neighbors, who are your enemies, they told you which places are supernaturally powerful and which places aren't.

Fade to black.

ROLL CREDITS.

Shots of Icelandic landscape appears along with the film makers and actors.

Letters read: A documentary based on three ghost stories from Iceland.

DAY. EXT. HÖFÐABREKKA HOUSE.

Fade in. Close up of a turf house, green plants peak through the stones, covered in tiny raindrops. Camera dollies to the left and a young couple appears behind the turf house. The house is very large and well kept compared to 17th century houses.

(CONTINUED)

Letters read: Höfðabrekku-Jóka.

KATRÍN ELDRI

It all started before I was even born, probably around 1650, that the daughter of Jórunn and Vigfús, who lived at Höfðabrekka, fell in love with a worker man.

ÓLÖF (20, 17th century women's clothing) and WORKMAN (20, 17th century men's clothing) kiss behind the Höfðabrekka farm house. They hear steps and stop kissing immediately, stepping a way from each other. JÓKA (40, 17th century women's clothing) and VIGFÚS (45, 17th century men's clothing) walk around the corner, VIGFÚS is talking to JÓKA, she seems indifferent and is focused on ÓLÖF and the WORKMAN. ÓLÖF looks embarrassed and leaves. VIGFÚS continues on, walking past the couple, but JÓKA stops and looks at ÓLÖF leave. JÓKA is suspicious and displeased. VIGFÚS realizes his wife is not listening and looks back, feeling ignored. WORKMAN picks up a rake and leaves. JÓKA watches as he goes, very displeased.

INT. THEATRE: JÚLÍANA.

Letters read: Júlíana Magnúsdóttir. Ph.D.

JÚLÍANA sitting in a theater.

JÚLÍANA

Yes, there is a considerable difference between the traditional Icelandic version of ghosts and, I think, more global idea of ghosts.

The European ghost is, sort of, transparent. And ... it's just a spirit and not really having any corporal images. While the Icelandic ghosts are very corporal beings, actually, they would actually lose a limb or two if they would try to go through a wall, unlike the English version.

You can actually see this corporal state of the Icelandic "draugur" from various things, like you have to feed the ghost, sometimes, especially the family ghost. You have to feed them proper dinner, like you would give the rest of the

(MORE)

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JÚLÍANA (cont'd)
people living in your household.
Some of them need new clothing, new
shoes. The walking between
farmsteads and stuff like that. And
if you wanna get rid of an
Icelandic ghost, at least the
traditional one, you might want
have to bury up the corpse and cut
the head off and put it next to the
ass of the body, basically, don't
know the polite way to explain it.
And stuff like that so ... it tends
to be our strong emphasis of this
corporal state.

EVENING. EXT. BEACH OF MEÐALLAND.

Blank screen.

Fade in. Two people are walking on a black sand, leaving
footsteps behind. Fade to black.

KATRÍN ELDRI
Now, just a couple of hour horse
ride away, another young couple was
also about to have somewhat of a
dilemma.

Fade in: A landscape of Meðalland's black beach, 1650. The
beach is covered by small sandy hills. Small patches of long
green grass sit on top of each sandy hill. In the distance
tall rocky mountains meet the skyline.

On one hill, letters read: The Hairy Man.

Camera dollies to the left and the two people walk from
behind a sandy hill. Letters disappear as the camera dollies
away from the hill.

A WOMAN (20, blond, wearing 17th century women's clothing)
and a YOUNG MAN (20, blond, wearing 17th century men's
clothing) walk by, side by side, in between the sandy hills
and towards the shore. The YOUNG MAN seems shy, looking
down, but the WOMAN's head is turned towards the MAN.

They move closer to each other and the WOMAN touches the
YOUNG MAN's fingers gently. Even though their hands are a
bit dirty their fingernails are very clean with no dirt
underneath.

(CONTINUED)

The MAN looks at the WOMAN and they both smile without talking. They continue walking in silence while gazing deeply into each others eyes. All of a sudden the YOUNG MAN trips on something and falls down. The WOMAN is startled and takes a step back from where is the YOUNG MAN fell.

The YOUNG MAN is flat on his stomach. He looks up and then back towards his feet, seeing a person lying in the sand. He raises himself up and crawls in front of the body. The body is lying on its stomach. The YOUNG MAN turns it over and sees the HAIRY MAN's face (dead, 35, wearing only underwear, hairy in the face, the skin has started to decompose but only a little, has long nails). The YOUNG MAN quickly raises himself up and steps away from the body and backs away.

The WOMAN grabs the YOUNG MAN's arm, they look at each other and, without words, decide they should move the body.

The WOMAN takes the HAIRY MAN's hand. The HAIRY MAN's fingernails are long and have sand underneath.

YOUNG MAN takes his foot. They start dragging him away from the sea.

INT. THEATRE: TERRY

TERRY

Folk legend's a story that people have passed on between them over a number of years, and often over an area of territory as well. We talk sometimes about migratory legends which have gone between countries and lived for, even, thousands of years within the oral tradition.

But if we think about the sea shore around Iceland, and it's the same with any country with sea shores, any island. The sea shore is a meeting place between the world that we know and that we can walk on, an area that we can drown in, immediately first of all, it is something that you can't control: You can't control the waves.

It's also a place that provides you with food and takes you to other areas. It's also a place where things come in from outside. The sea shore is an encounter with forces that you can't control.

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- - Sea hits the shore in the distance. A typical Icelandic landscape.

TERRY

The rules for people living by the sea are that if you do find a drowned body, it is your duty to get it to a church yard. As you would expect them to do if you yourself had drowned - It was the feeling of that time. Because that person is ... still they have died, but still they haven't been buried, they haven't been given a Christian funeral, they haven't been accepted into the next world. So they are there in a position of what we call "liminality between two worlds". Which is gonna be troubling for their soul; it means that they're not at rest. And it's troubling for those people living in the area too, because that body troubles the surroundings.

The big trouble for Icelanders is is that while they knew that they had to get the body to to a church yard, and it wasn't the nicest of things to encounter. It's often a half rotten body that they're dealing with, which nobody in their right mind would want to come anywhere near, anywhere close to but they still feel they have to do something about it. The trouble for Icelanders is that many of these bodies were actually wearing clothes that Icelanders could make use of. There were good boots, there were buttons that they didn't have themselves. So immediately, they are in their sheep skin shoes which were wet, looking at a very good pair of boots - what are you gonna do, how lucky do you feel, do you dare take the boots and wear them yourself and then maybe let the body float back out to sea or what, afterward. You know also that the trouble is that whatever you take off the body, they're gonna want it back because it's part of

(MORE)

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TERRY (cont'd)
them. A little bit like if they
lose fingers or part of their body;
they want to be complete. And the
clothes are a part of this. And
that is the moral problem that
faces most Icelanders when they
come across a dead body on the
beach, is: how lucky do I feel,
what do I do with this, do I really
have to do something about it?

MORNING. INT. BARN.

Blank screen.

KRITA
(calls out in the distance)
Jón? Jón minn? Jón?

JÓN
Já?

Letters on a wooden plank appear, an animal is standing
behind it.

JÓN
(inaudible arguments,
escalating)

KRITA
(inaudible arguments,
escalating)

KATRÍN ELDRI
Here is a story that took place
decades later. In the East, a
teenage boy witnessed some odd
happenings at a farm he worked at.

Letters read: Hesteyrar-Krita.

Camera pans upwards and a young calf appears. It's cleaning
itself and waiting to be fed.

A TEENAGE BOY is shoveling hay, feeding the calf.

KATRÍN ELDRI
This all started as domestic
disputes of the boy's employer,
Jón, and his wife, Katrín. They had
two children and were expecting a
third.

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The TEENAGE BOY hears JÓN's and KRITA's ARGUMENT coming from outside and walks towards the opening, hiding behind the door (eavesdropping).

The TEENAGE BOY sees KRISTÍN (pregnant, pale with black circles under her eyes) walking away. JÓN stands close to the opening of the farm house. The door CREAKS from the TEENAGE BOY's movement and JÓN looks towards the door. The TEENAGE BOY has left.

MORNING. EXT. BEACH.

Blank screen.

KATRÍN ELDRI

From what I hear, that lazy husband
wouldn't get the sea weed she
begged for. Without consideration
for her pregnancy, he told her to
go get it herself. ... And so she
did.

The TEENAGE BOY walks out of the barn, hearing someone CALLING in the distance. He walk towards the sea and sees JÓN standing on the beach. He sees a white figure moving frantically in the sea. The TEENAGE BOY wonders what's wrong and suddenly realizes it's KRITA. He runs towards JÓN down to the rocky beach.

KRITA screams for help but JÓN stands still, eyes gazing straight forward.

JÓN turns around and walks away. The TEENAGE BOY comes running towards him but JÓN stopps him (puts his right hand on the TEENAGE BOY's chest).

JÓN passes the TEENAGE BOY, who stares in terror out to the sea. The TEENAGE BOY climbs on top off a big rock by the ocean and sees ripped seaweed lying on a rock. He no longer sees KRITA.

SOLVEIG (8, wearing 19th century girl's clothing) is standing outside the barn, waiting for her father, JÓN. JÓN takes her hand and leads her away without looking back.

INT. THEATRE: JÚLÍANA.

JÚLÍANA is sitting in a theatre. Soft piano music plays, (Jóka's song).

(CONTINUED)

JÚLÍANA

There is a reason, I think, why we have this corporal state, it has to do with some kind of pre-Christian ideas of the body sort of living on in the grave after being buried. And you can see this of course in many of the old burial mounts where people are buried with their swords or some things they're supposed to be able to use in their afterlife. And of course you have the Catholic times where the dead were believed to live on, sort of sleep in their graves and actually rise up in their physical state on Judgment Day. It's very old in Icelandic tradition at least.

DAY. EXT. HILL AT HÖFÐABREKKA.

ÓLÖF and WORKMAN are lying in the grass behind a small hill. ÓLÖF is pregnant but not showing. They seem happy and in love.

KATRÍN ELDRI

Continuing with my story, the story of Höfðabrekku-Jóka.

Jórunn did find out about her daughter's affair with the worker man. And she was not pleased.

WORKMAN lays his hand over ÓLÖF'S stomach and smiles. But when she found out that her daughter was pregnant she got extremely angry and started feeling great hatred towards the father of the unborn child.

JÓKA appears on top of the hill. WORKMAN and ÓLÖF hear her walking and quickly stand up. As soon as WORKMAN is on his feet JÓKA slaps him hard so he falls back down again. WORKMAN is surprised and hurt. He stands up and runs away, out of frame. JÓKA and ÓLÖF stand still.

INT. THEATRE: JÚLÍANA.

JÚLÍANA is sitting in a theatre.

JÚLÍANA

(speech continues in next scene)

I think there's an element missing from the 19th century version of the Höfðabrekku-Jóka stories. They sort of side step how she dies which I find very interesting because usually there's a lot of emphasis on that element in the traditional Icelandic ghost stories.

EVENING. EXT. GRAVEYARD.

ÓLÖF (3-5 months pregnant) and WORKMAN are at the opposite ends of the screen, looking down towards the camera. They are looking into an open grave. ÓLÖF is holding her belly but her apron is blowing in the heavy wind.

The couple is surrounded by wooden crosses.

JÚLÍANA

(continuing)

It's just she gets very angry and then suddenly you get to the burial and she's suddenly buried. And in some cases it's not even worth noted: How did she die? And I think there's only one version saying something like "she died out of anger", whatever that means. I'm not really sure how you die out of anger.

WORKMAN looks down into the grave, confused, and JÓKA (now a ghost) appears behind him, holding a wooden cross and walks towards him at a fast pace. WORKMAN turns around as she prepares to hit him with the cross, but he sees it just in time to duck. The cross hits the ground. WORKMAN runs away and JÓKA follows. ÓLÖF is left alone by the grave and looks at JÓKA chase WORKMAN into the distance.

KATRÍN ELDRI

They called her ghost Jóka, and her attacks on the worker man would continue as she got no rest while her daughter's lover lived.

INT. THEATRE: SIGRÚN LILJA.

Letters read: Sigrún Lilja Einarsdóttir. Ph.D.

SIGRÚN sitting in a theater.

SIGRÚN

Well, in order to understand the origins of ghost stories like Höfðabrekku-Jóka, you have to understand the situations that people lived with during the centuries. If you picture Mýrdalur, for example.

- - A spring runs down through a smooth green area.

- - A black desert in the daylight. Grassy hill sits in the foreground and its straws dance in the wind. Thousands of small rivers run through the large black desert. In the distance the Westman Islands rise from the mist.

SIGRÚN

It is very hard to imagine how it was to live there before we had ... before modern transport and technology for example.

- - Calm water meets small black rocks.

- - Two angles of glaciers crawling downhill. Lake in the foreground.

SIGRÚN

And, because nowadays, death has become somewhat institutionalized, whereas before, when someone died in your household, you had to be the one taking care of the body. You had to prepare the body for burial, you in many cases you had to build your own ... build the coffin, and also there was this rule that you had to keep the body, for example, in your barn for a couple of weeks, just to make sure that the person is definitely dead. And that made death so much more tangible, before than it is today. Now we have an ambulance that takes away the body and there is some institution that deals with that. So this closeness with death has in

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SIGRÚN (cont'd)
a way inspired many tales about
people who are not resting in their
death.

- - Glacier crawling downhill.
- - Ducks are flying over a little pond.

DAY. EXT. GRAVEYARD.

WORKMAN and MAGNÚS (70, in priest clothing) stand above JÓKA's grave and talk, a broken cross lies next to the grave. WORKMAN is worried, constantly looking over his shoulder, and MAGNÚS looks concerned on behalf of WORKMAN.

KATRÍN ELDRI
Every day, the worker man needed to
be alert so JÓka wouldn't sneak up
on him and end his life. He asked
the local priest, Magnús, what to
do.

DAY. EXT. BEACH NEAR REYNISDRANGAR.

A black beach. The tide is coming in and the waves hit the shore. Reynisdranger rocks stand up from the water in the far distance. Even further, the Westman Islands rise from the mist.

KATRÍN ELDRI
Magnús suggested that he should go
to the Westman Islands for no less
than 20 years - preferably, even
more; as JÓka could not cross the
sea in between the islands and the
mainland.

MAGNÚS and WORKMAN walk into frame. They stop, MAGNÚS points to the ocean and puts his hand on WORKMAN's shoulder. They gaze at the islands.

DAY EXT. BEACH. / INT. THEATRE: JÚLÍANA.

- - JÓKA is standing on a black beach, looking towards the ocean.

JÚLÍANA
You can actually see this idea of
corporal state of the Icelandic
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JÚLÍANA (cont'd)
ghost in the story of Höfðabrekku
Jóka because she can't really cross
sea.

- - JÓKA is walking on a black beach. The Westman Islands
are visible in the distance. She stops and looks at them.

JÚLÍANA
She has to get some sort of
transportation to get to Westman
Islands, of course. And that's a
common theme in the Icelandic ghost
stories, that the ghosts need some
sort of a transportation to cross a
river or the sea.

- - JÓKA is standing on a black beach, looking towards the
ocean.

JÚLÍANA
They can't beam themselves between
places like you would maybe see in
other societies or other countries.

- - JÓKA tries to cross the sea but as she gets her feet in
the water she feels ill and backs away.

JÚLÍANA is sitting in a theatre.

JÚLÍANA
Even the ghosts who went to
Canada, went to West-Iceland, (what
do you call it?) - immigrated to
Canada. There were some families
that had these family ghosts, they
were actually a few, and they
needed to take the ship as well,
basically. And then some stories
say they had to take the boat back
because they hated Canada.
(giggles)

INT. THEATRE: SIGRÚN LILJA.

SIGRÚN is sitting in a theatre.

SIGRÚN
Geographically, we have these wide
areas in the South, like in
Mýrdalur, where we have of course,
the black deserts and lots and lots
of space.

(CONTINUED)

- - A black desert in the evening. Stones have been nicely piled up and Reynisdrangar are seen in the background.
- - A black desert in the night. The waves hit the shore in the fog, bathed in the red midnight sun.
- - Jökulsárlón's small ice lies in the water with black mountains and glaciers in the back.

SIGRÚN

Therefor, ghosts are mainly based in the wilderness. They are not particularly present at people's homes. Höfðabrekku-Jóka is a very atypical ghost story from this area. And probably the best known because of its uniqueness.

- - JÓKA is standing on a black beach, looking towards the ocean.

SIGRÚN

She is atypical in that way that she mingled with people. Most of the ghosts in the south, for example in Mýrdalur, they are usually harassing people out in the wilderness.

- - The sun shines onto the typical Icelandic mossy wilderness. Black mountains rise on the other side of the fjord.

SIGRÚN

So Jóka, she mingled with people, she came to one farm where the wife of the farmer, she was, she said, "Oh, I want to make coffee, but I cannot do that", because she had this baby boy who was crying. So Jóka said "okay, if you want to make coffee then I will take the child." And also, she had this habbit in Höfðabrekka, to distribute some food to the people. But the problem was that the food was always mixed with mud.

- - Shadows of a being moves on the surface of wet mud. The mud rises, indicating something stirs underneath. Someone rises up from the mud, the mud slowly moves down it's body.
- - Legs walk in the wet mud. It's deep and hard to walk in.

(CONTINUED)

- - The being rises from the mud, prepares to stand up.

SIGRÚN

And there comes this relation with her being partly dead, partly alive, but tied to her soil that was formed on the year that she died, being not alive but not dead, somewhere in a limbo, somewhere in between, like a zombie who is intelligent, or something. Even though I don't want to talk about this in that relation, that comes from elsewhere.

- - An open muddy grave.

- - A woman, covered with mud is looking down. Her muddy hair covers her face.

- - Someone is walking in the mud. They take heavy steps away from the camera, their legs covered with dirt.

- - JÓKA is standing on a black beach, looking towards the ocean.

SIGRÚN

And also the fact that people should not mess with creatures that they do not, that were somehow alien to them. And that's a lesson, you don't mess with ghosts like Höfðabrekku-Jóka, you just leave them be.

INT. THEATRE: TERRY.

TERRY is sitting in a theatre.

TERRY

What will happen to any legend of this kind, that's told, is that over time as it's passed on between people, even within one year, ten years, twenty years, a century, those stories are gonna change. You're going to encounter various versions of it. As soon as something's happened, the event is gone and all that we're left with are the memories that are told by people. "Which is the truth when we

(MORE)

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TERRY (cont'd)
come down to it?" - is the big
question. So, as time goes on
you're going to have different
people telling stories in a
different way and the story will
usually adapt.

DAY. EXT. MEADOW OF LUPINES.

WOMAN is sitting with GOSSIPING FARMER. They are surrounded
by purple lupines.

WOMAN
It was so dark that we could
distinguish him from the dark sand.

EVENING. EXT. BEACH OF MEDALLAND.

FLASHBACK: WOMAN and YOUNG MAN walk by, side by side, on a
beach surrounded by small sandy hills. All of a sudden the
YOUNG MAN trips on something and falls down. The WOMAN is
startled and backs away in terror.

DAY. EXT. MEADOW OF LUPINES.

WOMAN leans towards GOSSIPING FARMER and whispers in his
ear.

WOMAN
His nails were terribly long and
his face was so grim and hairy.

EVENING. EXT. BEACH OF MEDALLAND.

FLASHBACK: WOMAN's hands pull HAIRY MAN's hands, that are
hairier than before. HAIRY MAN is turned around. He is a
little hairy on his chest and has a black beard.

DAY. EXT. MEADOW OF LUPINES.

WOMAN and GOSSIPING FARMER are still talking.

WOMAN
... I'll never forget that face.

(CONTINUED)

KATRÍN ELDRI

Its seemed as if the young woman
who found the hairy man was having
troubles dealing with what had
happened.

DAY. EXT. FOREST OF BIRCH.

GOSSIPING FARMER walks into frame with PRIEST. They stop.

GOSSIPING FARMER

I heard ...

EVENING. EXT. BEACH OF MEDALLAND.

FLASHBACK: WOMAN and YOUNG MAN walk by, side by side, on a
beach surrounded by small sandy hills. All of a sudden the
YOUNG MAN trips on something and falls down. The WOMAN is
startled and backs away in uncontrollable terror.

GOSSIPING FARMER

... he was covered in dark hair. He
didn't have nails, but, claws that
could easily rip through human
skin.

HAIRY MAN is hairy like an animal, he is turned around and
his face and chest is covered in what seems to be fur.

HAIRY MAN's hand is covered in hair and his nails are long
and dirty.

DAY. EXT. FOREST OF BIRCH.

GOSSIPING FARMER takes the PRIEST's arm, comforting him. The
PRIEST looks worried.

GOSSIPING FARMER

It will be a relief, when you put
that casket in the ground.

GOSSIPING FARMER and PRIEST walk out of frame.

KATRÍN ELDRI

The story was indeed adapting.

INT. THEATRE: JÚLÍANA.

JÚLÍANA is sitting in a theatre.

JÚLÍANA

You can see other elements of the physical state of Höfðabrekku-Jóka, of course, like this element of being disappearing into the ground where she's walking down her shoes and her legs, basically, and getting shorter each time.

- - A pink ericaceae lies in the pale moss. Mountain in the background.

- - The rough surface of a glacier in the midground. JÓKA's legs are shown walking down a hill in the foreground.

JÚLÍANA

That's basically because she had to walk so much like other Icelandic ghost. It has a lot to do with walking, it's difficult to be an Icelandic ghost because you had to walk physically between places, and of course that takes its toll of any decent ghost.

- - A black soand desert with a glacier and black mountains in the background.

- - A black beach by the sea.

- - Two mountains meet and three sunrays shine accross the frame.

- - Ericaceae lies in the pale green moss. In the background a white glacier creeps down a mountain. Two legs walk past in the forwground.

- - A tall waterfall falls down a steep top of a mountain.

- - Seven geese walk accress the frame in a typical Icelandic mossy landscape.

JÚLÍANA

And yes, there's so many different things where you can actually see this physical state of the Icelandic ghost, also from all the references to wrestling with the ghost as well. So when you get

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JÚLÍANA (cont'd)
attacked by an Icelandic ghost you
might have to wrestle physically
with the ghost. And of course then,
as you see in many legends as well,
the Icelandic ghost can actually
kill you, so it's not like a
picture on the wall like the
European version, so it's quite a
harmful being. Basically.

DAY. EXT. BEACH.

WORKMAN (39) steps onto the sea shore.

KATRÍN ELDRI
After 19 years had passed, Jóka's
legs had disintegrated from all the
walking around.

JÓKA (has no legs from knees down and is now a half rotten
body) stands nearby, waiting for a chance to get close to
WORKMAN.

KATRÍN ELDRI
She only had two bloody stumps,
when the young man came ashore.

And as soon as he stepped foot on
the land Jóka grabbed the
opportunity and crushed him to
death.

MAGNÚS (90) is out and about but hears an odd noise. He
turns around and sees JÓKA attacking WORKMAN from afar. He
starts running towards them.

KATRÍN ELDRI
Magnús, the priest, was walking on
the beach a bit further up the
shore, but seeing this, he rushed
over.

But it was too late. Jóka had
already crushed her enemy to death.

WORKMAN takes his last breaths and his struggles stop.
MAGNÚS comes running and starts making crossmarks with his
hand, directing them towards JÓKA. She does not seem to like
that and starts crawling off WORKMAN's body.

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KATRÍN ELDRI

Magnús read his verses to quell the ghost, but she was strong.

DAY. EXT. SOMEWHERE IN MÝRDALUR.

- - The sunset paints the black deserts of the South with red colours.

KATRÍN ELDRI

Some say they passed Mýrdalsjökull and they went even further into the wasteland.

- - A small spring runs through a swamp.

- - Cotton grass is blowing in the wind.

- - A sunny and beautiful view down a green valley. A river runs through it, out into the sea.

- - A steep gray mountain.

MAGNÚS continues to read his verses. JÓKA is crawling backwards, angry and scared.

DAY. EXT. KATRÍN'S FIELD.

KATRÍN YNGRI (5-10) is sitting in a grassy hill at the bottom of a mountain, playing with sheep jaws and sea shells.

KATRÍN ELDRI

I was just a little girl back then. But I had never been so scared in my life. And never have I been so scared since then.

A SCREAM is heard and KATRÍN YNGRI looks to the left, she is very startled.

DAY. EXT. SOMEWHERE IN MÝRDALUR.

MAGNÚS looks down the steep hill JÓKA had fallen down, seeing no signs of her. He smiles, looks up and praises the lord.

The End. Slowly fade to black.

INT. JÚLÍANA

JÚLÍANA

A lot of Icelandic ghost stories have something to do about, they are actually underlining some sort of moral values. And one suspects they are actually told to enforce some kind of unwritten rules of society, and in some sense I think this has to do with problems that the law system is not covering in a way. It's amoral justice for crimes not being punished for, by the law of society, the official laws, basically. You see this in Hesteryrar-Krita, and other legends that deal with women's plight of course, because they are not, they have very bad kind of like, the laws are not looking very well after the interest of women until relatively late. So, they sort of are second rate according to the laws. So a lot of the problems are dealt with properly by the official law system. And then of course you have the narrative traditions which are enforcing some kind of justice for crimes committed against women.

NIGHT. INT. BEDROOM.

GASPING in the dark.

The TEENAGE BOY wakes up in the middle of the night. He hears crying noises coming from the other room where JÓN and his family sleep and rushes to their room.

KATRÍN ELDRI

Krita was the kind of ghost who would occasionally visit people in their dreams. As she did with her son shortly after she drowned. However, I do not know what brought her to do that awful thing she did to her own child.

JÓN is standing over a bed where his YOUNG SON (6 years old) lies, he takes YOUNG SON in his arms and his body is lifeless. JÓN grieves and the TEENAGE BOY notices blue marks on the child's throat, as if he had been strangled.

INT. JÚLÍANA

JÚLÍANA

Well, I think it's interesting that she becomes this anti-mom, its so interesting because of course in her life, her real life, the motherhood, she's personifying the motherhood of course, she's pregnant and she has these children and her husband sort of kills that and she becomes the anti-motherhood of course. I think it's pretty logical sort of like turbutwisted element which you sometimes see in legends. Yeah, I think it's understandable at least in tradition that she comes back like the anti-thing she used to be. And of course that's the motherhood version. So she becomes anti-mom.

AFTERNOON. EXT. BOAT.

JÓN and the TEENAGE BOY are out fishing with another man. They are on a break from fishing and are having some coffee when the boat starts to rock. It rocks violently, the men grap a hold wherever they can and coffee spills all over. They try to see what's causing the rocking because the sea is completely still. Something is pulling the fishing nets.

A white hand works suddenly graps a hold on the right side of the boat where JÓN is desperately clinging to it. He sees KRITA's face and in terror he reaches for some instrument and swings it towards KRITA who quickly lets go of the boat.

INT. SIGRÚN LILJA

SIGRÚN

Well in these folktales and in folklore in general, it represents a certain image of a nation. I think, folklore tales are very much descriptive for the nation's soul. And they tell a certain story, they represent certain kind of mindsets, for example the common population for example. And they also represent this struggle between commoners and those higher in society. That is this contrast that

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SIGRÚN (cont'd)
you can see all over these stories
for example like the stories of
hidden people and also in some of
the ghost stories as well. This
constant struggle of power and who
is in charge and they also
represent some kind of rebellion,
against the authorities, that's
also one of the things that's very
important in this perspective.

MORNING. INT. BARN.

The TEENAGE BOY walks into the barn. He walk towards the
calf but sees it lying motionless on the floor, dead. The
TEENAGE BOY backs away slowly.

INT. THEATRE: TERRY.

TERRY is sitting in a theatre.

TERRY
The foreign bodies are objects,
very often, they are described as
being worm eaten, half rotten,
freighting, shocking, so they
aren't just dead, they're also
foreigners which makes it extra
difficult, and their lacking
status, and you couldn't even talk
to them if you did dream about
them. Language is a very important
point for these stories. You'd get
... when they do turn into ghosts
later on as tends to happen, even
when they've been buried, they come
back and they want their boots or
they want their buttons, they want
the things that they own back. When
they come chasing after the person
that either didn't bury them or did
bury them but took things off them
or did carry out everything and got
them buried, they still come back.
The trouble is that when they do
talk to people, they talk in a
foreign language. And the Icelandic
can't deal with this, they don't
know the language, they didn't know
how to deal with the dead body.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TERRY (cont'd)

They call on the priest, the priest comes out, tries to speak Latin to the body who can't understand and goes "HA?". And there are several stories about Danish, Dutch bodies where the priest is desperately trying to tell them to go somewhere or do something, and they sit and look at him, and have no idea what to do. So you can't even get the ghost to to relax and calm itself through language. So there's a big language difference going on here between the two.

They're other problem which is a particularly Icelandic thing is that while they were well aware of the fact that it was an Icелander or maybe a person from the Faroe Islands who would want to be in their local grave yard. A foreigner to their mind would want to be in their own graveyard, not in a local graveyard, the local graveyard is the of a forefathers of the families, the village, who used to live there. So immediately the foreigner doesn't belong there, he's an outsider in an Icelandic graveyard, where people spoke Icelandic innitially.

- - WOMAN and YOUNG MAN are standing on a black beach and drag HAIRY MAN's body.

TERRY

To that too is another problem for them. Logically, this person must want to go somewhere else, "but how am I gonna get them home?". So immediately simply coming across a body of this kind is a huge moral question in all sorts of ways of you're facing, you'd rather not have had to encounter on that day, you've may have had a bad day already, and it gets even worse day when you bump into a drowned body. And you've got an obligation to either pick it up or drag it or move it to a churchyard. And it

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TERRY (cont'd)
smells of course, often at the same
time.

EVENING. EXT. HILL.

PRIEST (wearing a black cloak) is sitting with GIRL (, blond, wearing 18th century clothes). She looks sympathetic and listens to her friend, the PRIEST, talk.

PRIEST
It started when we were singing. It
was like ... something came over
us.

DAY. EXT. GRAVE YARD.

CHURCHGOERS (most are pale and blond, dressed in formal 18th century clothes) stand in the grave yard. The WOMAN and the MAN are amongst them. WOMAN is holding a little book with the lyrics. The PRIEST stands in front of the grave. He nods to the CHURCHGOERS to let them know they can start singing their hymn.

CHURCHGOERS sing "Um dauðans óvissan tíma".

CHURCHGOERS
(with hesitation which grows
as the song continues)
Allt eins og blómstrið eina // upp
vex á sléttri grund, // fagurt með
frjóvgun hreina ...

The WOMAN brings the book closer to read and looks confused. She starts mouthing Icelandic swear words.

CHURCHGOERS
(swearwords can be heard, song
slowly fades out in confusion)
Fyrst um dags morgunstund. // Á
snögggu augabragði // af skorið
verður fljótt ...

WOMAN
(confused)
Andskotinn, andskotinn, andskotinn.

CHURCHGOERS stop singing in midsong, as if they have forgotten the harmony. They wait respectfully for the PRIEST's blessing.

EVENING. EXT. HILL.

PRIEST is sitting with GIRL and continues with his story.
Dog is BARKING angrily in the distance.

PRIEST
And then I tried to bless the
departed.

DAY. EXT. GRAVE YARD.

The PRIEST takes a little dirt in his hand and is about to throw it onto the coffin. His hand stays in the air above the grave for some time, he cannot bless the departed. His lip start trembling and his hand starts holding tighter and tighter onto the dirt which is dripping between his fingers. The PRIEST is not ready to give up. He starts mouthing swear words but immediately stops himself. The dirt is still dripping from his palm. He puts his hand down and lets the dirt fall down next to him.

EVENING. EXT. HILL.

PRIEST is sitting with GIRL and continues with his story.

PRIEST
But three days later, after the
funeral I heard a terrifying knock
on the church door.

GIRL listens intensively.

NIGHT. EXT. CHURCH.

A church beneath a hill. Although it's nighttime, the midnight sun lights up the sky.

NIGHT. INT. CHURCH.

PRIEST opens the door. The HAIRY MAN is standing in front of the door holding a wooden piece of plank in his hands, most likely from his own coffin. The PRIEST is scared and slams the door shut, just in time so the HAIRY MAN can't come in.

EVENING. EXT. HILL.

PRIEST is telling his story, although he seems more interested in convincing himself of what had happened rather than GIRL.

PRIEST

(unsure)

But I could tell it was the man I
had buried.

It was him. It was him.

Dogs BARK in the distance. PRIEST nods and gazes into the distance.

INT. JÚLÍANA

JÚLÍANA

I would like to comment as well,
with Hesteyrar-Krita and the
pregnant women which are found in
so many stories within the
Icelandic culture. There is some
additional element which I think is
interesting, a psychological
element about these stories; it has
to do with the pregnancy of the
woman, and of course this idea of
being dead without status in a way.
Because in Catholic time, woman
when they were pregnant, because
the child they were actually
carrying, was not yet a part of the
Christian society, the woman was
sort of contaminated when she was
in this pregnant state, this
liminal place and so she had to be
reincorporated into the Christian
church after she had given birth so
there was this special ceremony or
ritual a few weeks after she had
given birth, when she was
reincorporated into the church
again. And it's interesting, of
course, after the reformation it
wasn't like that any longer because
then the child was not
automatically non-christian any
longer, not even the mother, but
the ceremony kept on. So they had
this little ritual, but it changed
a little and it's meaning. But it

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JÚLÍANA (cont'd)
was still there. You'd have to
"leiða konu í kirkju", you'd have
to "lead the woman into the church"
again, so there was a special
ceremony for that even in the 19th
century, which was actually very
strongly criticized by feminists in
the early 20th century and late
19th century. But from some kind of
psychological perspective I think
maybe the idea of woman being sort
of contaminated or in this
pre-Christian liminal state, sort of
kept on living the of course mind
of the people, and sort of got
incorporated into the folk belief
to some extent, and that actually
might also be the reason why the
pregnant women become so prominent
in the folk believe tradition as
ghosts. So while you're still
pregnant then you're sort of dead
without status. Like other people
that sort of lack the ritual, the
final ritual.

NIGHT. EXT. OUTSIDE HESTEYRI HOUSE.

Hesteyri's grass is wet from the midnight rain. A typical
19th century turf house with primitive farming equipment can
be seen in the midnight sun.

NIGHT. INT. BEDROOM.

The TEENAGE BOY is in bed, but not sleeping. He hears weird
noises coming from the other room, like someone is fighting
for his breath.

KATRÍN ELDRI
After killing her husband's calf,
their son, and attempting to kill
him in the water, she saw no other
option than to kill him in his
dreams.

The TEENAGE BOY goes to the other room to see what is
happening and sees JÓN choking in his sleep. He runs to
JÓN's bed and roughly shakes him to wake him up. JÓN wakes
up after a bit of a struggle.

JÓN rubs his throat which is red.

MORNING. EXT. OUTSIDE HESTEYRI HOUSE.

JÓN (holding a suitcase), SOLVEIG and TEENAGE BOY walk out of Hesteyri house. The TEENAGE BOY watches as JÓN and SOLVEIG walk away.

KATRÍN ELDRI

Jón, fearing for his life, didn't dare to stay at Hesteyri any longer. He took his daughter and left his farm.

The TEENAGE BOY graps his small suitcase and closes the door of the house. He takes a quick look at JÓN and SOLVEIG in the distance and walks away in the other direction.

KATRÍN ELDRI

Although Jón and his daughter left the East and started their new life in the South, the teenage boy decided to stay and started working at a nearby farm.

Seasons went by and summer came again.

- - Icelandic wilderness, plain desert with sea on one side and mountains on the other.

- - Ice floats in a lake with black mountains in the background.

- - A green bush blows in the wind next to a stream of water.

- - Cotton grass is blowing, the sun shines at the other side of the mountains.

AFTERNOON. EXT. BEACH 2.

TEENAGE BOY and BOATMAN are tying up their boat, returning from fishing. BOATMAN sees something strange on the other side of the rocky shore.

KATRÍN ELDRI

The two men saw a body close by. Not knowing whether that person was dead or alive, they ran to it's aid.

(CONTINUED)

KRITA's corpse has washed to shore and they run towards it. The TEENAGE BOY turns it around and then backs slowly away from the white corpse which has a big cut across it's stomach.

KATRÍN ELDRI

Only to discover that Krita's body
had finally washed ashore.

The TEENAGE BOY is surprised by how little the body is decomposed. He is frightened and blinks his eyes.

Letters read: Walkers. Afturgöngur.

The End.

Credits roll.