

DEAD BY DAWN

by

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FADE IN

INT. FOREST - DAY

A large man with long dark hair and massive five o'clock shadow, races through the trees and underbrush. Thorny vines rip through his lime green jumpsuit.

He pants and sweats, constantly looks back over his shoulder. A thin thorny branch whacks him in the face leaving a bloody mark across his cheek.

Dogs BARK in the distant background.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

A flat with country style furnishings and various knitting and sewing supplies lying about.

An OLD WOMAN sits in a rocking chair. Her knitting needles click fast and furious on the piece she's making.

From the kitchen...

A CLICK - the sound of a door closing.

She turns to look over her shoulder, at the back door. It's closed. She stares at it curiously for a few seconds, then turns her attention back to knitting.

A shadow rushes up behind her. She gasps and turns her head just in time for the man from the woods to grab her chin, and quickly slice her throat with a knife.

She chokes and gags on her own blood, flowing down her neck, then flops forward in the chair, dead.

The killer eyes her for several seconds, watching the blood seep down the front of her robe and drip onto her slippers.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

A hand made quilt covers the four post bed. An adult potty chair sits in one corner. On a small table is a smiling photo of the old woman and an old man.

The man in the lime green jumpsuit rifles through a closet, pulls out some male clothing.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Huge, Victorian style, nestled amongst a thick expanse of trees. Heavy frost covers the ground and vegetation.

The morning sun peeks over the top of the trees, glints off of a classic VW Beetle and a snow plow truck.

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MORNING

ALEX (17), lanky, in boxer underwear and spiked blonde hair, heads toward the staircase. He yawns, one hand scratching his head and the other his crotch.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

A big puffy sofa and ottomans, a coffee table. End tables hold ornate, Tiffany style lamps.

DANIEL, (25), overweight and ugly, baggy clothes, frantically searches under the sofa and tables.

ALEX

Hey.

Daniel nods to Alex, as he descends the last few steps.

DANIEL

You're gonna be late again.

Alex scoffs, mumbles to himself.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Dark cabinets and counter tops. A small table sits in a breakfast nook, a chandelier hung over it.

Alex reaches for the refrigerator door and notices a piece of paper stuck under a magnet - "Windsor hotel" and a phone number.

He grabs a bagel, a bottle of juice and goes for a toaster on the counter.

LIVING ROOM

Daniel continues to search.

Alex steps out of the kitchen doorway, food and drink in hand.

Daniel purposely bumps into him, then keeps on walking into the kitchen.

O.S. Loud banging noises - things being tossed about.

Alex shakes his head.

ALEX

(mumbles)

Moron.

He takes a bite of the bagel and starts up the stairs.

FROM THE KITCHEN DOORWAY

Daniel yells at Alex, on the stairs.

DANIEL

Hey, have you seen my cap?

Alex takes a slow sip of his juice, shoots Daniel a patronizing glance. His eyes wander to the foyer, where many hats and caps sit on a hat tree.

ALEX

Maybe you should check the hat tree.

Daniel purses his lips, lowers his head as if he's embarrassed.

FOYER

Daniel grabs a coat and opens the door. He steps outside, then his arm pokes back in to quickly grab his hat.

Alex shakes his head, then bounds up the stairs.

OUTSIDE

The ground crunches beneath Daniel's booted feet. He heads across the yard toward the snow plow and hops inside.

MONTAGE

A windmill spins at mach speed.

Trees whip around and a light snow falls.

Traffic lights sway to and fro in the wind.

PEOPLE scurry along cold and windy sidewalks.

Daniel sits inside his snow plow sipping on hot chocolate and watching the snowfall slowly increase.

A school bell rings. Kids pile out of the school, then load onto busses.

INT. FOYER - AFTERNOON

Alex steps in dressed in a heavy coat and school backpack. A gust of wind and snow flakes follow him.

Through the foyer into the --

LIVING ROOM

Alex tosses his jacket across the back of the puffy sofa and his backpack on one of the cushions. The light on the answering machine blinks, so he presses the button.

ANSWERING MACHINE

You have four messages. Message one...

DERRICK (ON ANSWERING MACHINE)

Hey man, it's Derrick. They're gone, huh? So, I was thinkin'... we could hang out, call a couple of people... whatever. Call me back.

ANSWERING MACHINE

Message two...

SHELL (ON ANSWERING MACHINE)

Hi, it's Shell. Derrick said I should find out what time we can come over. So call me okay? Bye.

ANSWERING MACHINE

Message three...

GARRETT (ON ANSWERING MACHINE)

Wooo Wooo! Party! This is Garrett, man. Call me back fuck nuts.

Alex smirks and shakes his head.

ANSWERING MACHINE

Message four...

FATHER (ON ANSWERING MACHINE)

Hi Alex, Daniel, we're here. Number's on the fridge, if you need to reach us. Try to leave the place in one piece, huh?

ANSWERING MACHINE

End of messages.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

At the fridge, Alex finds a single can of beer, pops the top and takes a swig.

The cordless phone on the counter rings.

ALEX

Hello.

GARRETT (ON PHONE)

Hey, man. What's up?

ALEX

My dick.

Garrett laughs.

GARRETT

You get my message?

ALEX

Yeah, I got it... fuck nuts.

GARRETT

What? Oh.

(laughs)

So we hanging out there tonight or what?

ALEX

Or what. You know Daniel. He squeals like a stuck pig.

GARRETT

Shit... All right. My parents are home, but you can come over here, play some video games or something.

ALEX

Yeah, maybe. I'll call you later, all right? Yeah. Bye.

INT. ALEX'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Typical teenage boy's room. Dirty clothes hang on every available object. The walls are covered with posters of comic heroes and rock bands.

A computer, some books, and various games litter the desk.

Alex kicks the door closed behind him, takes another swig of beer. He tosses the bookbag on the bed and heads for the computer. It boots up as he chug-a-lugs the rest of the beer.

OUTSIDE

The wind gains speed. Snow falls at a mild but steady pace.

## ON THE BED

Alex is propped up, with a couple of pillows behind him. He wears headphones, music blaring, eyes closed as he thrashes his head around.

He reaches for the underside of a bedside table, feels around and pulls out a hidden key, stuck by a piece of tape.

Inside the table drawer are rolling papers, marijuana and a small tray to do the deed on. He pauses a second, sets the dope down on the bed and goes to lock his door.

Back on the bed, he rolls up the joint, still thrashing his head to the song and mouthing the lyrics.

Alex glances at the window, steps over to peer outside. The snow falls heavier. He grins and rubs his hands together triumphantly.

After putting the dope back in its hiding place, he takes off his headphones and leaves for the --

## HALLWAY

He bellows...

ALEX

Hey! It's snowin' outside. Don't you need to hop on your little tractor?

A moment later...

O.S. Stomping from one of the rooms down the hall.

The door opens. It's Daniel, with boots flopped open, untied. His coat, too short for his arms, is grimy.

DANIEL

I got eyes, just like you. And it's a plow... not a tractor.

ALEX

Ohhh... excuse the shit outta me.

Alex takes the stairs at a trot.

Daniel tromps behind him.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alex plops down on the sofa, grabs a car magazine and flips through it. Daniel goes for the front door.

ALEX

How long you gonna be gone?

Daniel turns, narrows his eyes.

DANIEL

I don't know. Why?

ALEX

So if your mommy calls I can tell her.

Daniel opens the door, pauses.

DANIEL

I dunno. Few hours, I guess.

When the door closes, Alex goes for the phone and dials.

ALEX

Hey, it's me. He's out plowing. You guys can come over... All right... cool. Bye.

INT. ALEX'S FAMILY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A large room located at the far end of the house. There's a fireplace, with a couple of decorative swords hung above it, overstuffed furniture, a big screen TV, and a hi-fi stereo.

Music blares from the speakers.

Alex glances out of a window, smiles, then races to the --

FOYER

GARRETT (17), toothpick-thin, bangs that completely cover his eyes, stands at the door. He grins and shivers. A cigarette in his mouth drops ashes on the two pizza boxes he's holding.

Alex looks beyond Garrett to see MARK, a handsome boy with sleek black hair and an angel's face.

EDDIE, a muscular, football player type, and DERRICK, dark skinned, doe eyed African American.

They approach across the lawn, and behind them, a car full of cute teen girls pulls up.

SHELL is a beautiful, curvaceous blonde.

CHLOE, is a petite but shapely Asian, with dark goth makeup.

PAM a tomboy, with mousey brown hair, no makeup and a no worries hair style chomps on a piece of gum then blows a huge bubble. It pops in her face as she closes the car door.

Alex's lips tighten. He glares at Garrett.

Garrett waves to Chloe and grins. She waves back.

ALEX

What the fuck? When the whale comes back and sees all of you here...

GARRETT

So? We'll stick some pizza in his blow hole and he'll go away.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

A country lane with no houses or businesses in sight.

The murderer in stolen clothes walks along. He stares straight ahead, seems impervious to the cold and the snowflakes on his face and hair.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAY

The teens are gathered inside. Alex enters with some Cokes. Disappointed, Mark and Eddie stare him down.

MARK

(to Alex)

Hey, where's the beer?

EDDIE

Yeah, Garrett said there was beer.

Garrett snags a piece of pizza, stuffs half of it in his mouth. He nods, mouth bulging.

GARRETT

There is. Trust me, there's always beer.

ALEX

Yeah... and my old man always knows when some's missing.

GARRETT

So blame it on your brother.

A piece of pizza flies out of Garrett's mouth, plops onto the coffee table.

CHLOE

Sick... don't talk with food in your mouth. God, you're so nasty.

ALEX

Step brother.

GARRETT

(to Chloe)

Yeah, you love me. You know you do.

Chloe rolls her eyes, grabs a soda.

## OUTSIDE

A DARK FIGURE watches the teens through a slightly parted curtain. Labored breathing fogs the glass.

The teens smile and chat. Chloe and Shell dirty dance with each other, while the guys look on. The two girls kiss deeply - tongue play for all to see.

Garrett and Eddie high five.

Pam grimaces and rubs her own lips.

Chloe pushes Shell away teasingly and wipes her mouth. They both giggle.

## INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Garrett steps inside and feels around for a light switch. The light flickers then comes on steady.

Partially remodeled, hammers, nail guns, plaster and hand tools lie about. A hatchet sits in a chopping block at the back wall.

Garrett looks around for a moment, then spies a small refrigerator poorly hidden under an old blanket.

GARRETT

Bamm.

He opens the fridge, grabs a case of beer.

The light flickers off for several seconds at a time.

He stumbles, nearly falls as he makes his way through the darkness.

GARRETT

Shit.

## INT. SNOWPLOW - DAY

Daniel drives through the city streets, peering at all the passers by. The snow isn't deep enough for plowing yet.

He listens to an old rock song, bobs his head side to side in rhythm with the music. The song ends.

NEWSCASTER (OR RADIO)

This is a special bulletin. All citizens are urged to be on the alert. Albert Kane, sentenced to Mount St. Claire mental facility following a killing spree which left more than thirty dead, escaped at approximately one o'clock this afternoon. He is considered armed and highly dangerous.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Garrett returns with the beer and a triumphant grin on his face.

The room explodes in whoops of joy as the other kids race forward to grab a can.

Derrick's eyes boggle. He smooths his hair. On his hand is a class ring with a blue stone in it.

DERRICK

You think you got enough?

GARRETT

Hell no, man. You should see how much they got stashed down there.

The group pops the tops on the beer and chows down on the pizza. There's a lot of laughing, and cross chatter.

From the sofa, Alex surveys the goings on. He glances often at the doorway of the family room.

O.S. A knock on the door. Repeated doorbell ringing.

Shell sits on Mark's lap.

SHELL

That's gotta be Alisa.

She turns to Alex, stares at him, expectant.

ALEX

What? Your legs broken?

Shell purses her lips, cocks her head at him.

Alex grumbles, but heads for the door.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

The laughing and chatting of the other teens is loud, even as far as the foyer.

Alex peeks through a window.

REVEREND PHILLIPS, (50), horribly wrinkled black suit with a white collar, scraggly facial hair, repeatedly knocks on the door and rings the bell.

He turns toward Alex, in the window.

Alex opens the door a few inches, eyeballs him.

REVEREND PHILLIPS

Hello. I'm Reverend Phillips.

Alex just looks at him like "yeah, so?".

REVEREND PHILLIPS

Your mother has some boxes to donate for our rummage sale. If you'll just tell her...

ALEX

Oh... yeah. They're not here though. Her and my dad, they took off for the weekend.

O.S. Laughing and chatting from the family room.

Reverend Phillips narrows his eyes at Alex. Alex glances over his shoulder.

ALEX

Sorry. You'll have to come back later.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Reverend Phillips grinds his teeth, then adopts a fake, forced smile.

REVEREND PHILLIPS

Afraid I can't do that. You see,  
our sale - it starts in the  
morning.

Alex cracks the door more. Wind and snowflakes fly by.

An old, black bronco sits in the driveway.

O.S. One of the girls cackles.

Reverend Phillips leans side to side, trying to see past Alex.

ALEX

Look, I don't even know where the  
stuff is. So if you just come back  
on Monday...

Alex tries to close the door, but the freaky preacher pushes against it.

REVEREND PHILLIPS

We can't procrastinate with the  
Lord's work, son.

Alex pushes harder, raises his voice.

ALEX

I can't help you, I said!

Reverend Phillips' eyes flash with rage. He shoves the door open, grabs Alex's shirt and yanks on it. His fingernail scrapes against Alex's neck, leaving a bloody scratch.

He pulls Alex's face close and clenches his teeth.

Alex tries to pry his hand off, stares at the lunatic in shock.

REVEREND PHILLIPS

What you got in there, huh? Drugs?  
Whores? God sees! He knows  
everything!

ALEX

What are you doing?! Take your  
fucking hands off me!

Alex shoves Reverend Phillips as hard as he can, out the door. He manages to close and lock it, then steps back, stares at the door in awe.

He runs a hand over the scratch on his neck and pulls back bloody fingers.

ALEX

Jesus... shit! Religious freaks.

O.S. Pounding on glass.

Alex turns to the window to see the preacher staring inside.

He shakes his fist, pounds on the window and yells.

REVEREND PHILLIPS

He knows!

Alex quickly closes the curtains. The pounding stops. He shakes his head, starts back toward the --

FAMILY ROOM

Alex plops down hard on the sofa. His face is pale and his breathing rapid. He clamps a hand over the scratch on his neck.

SHELL

What is it, Alex?

Alex shakes his head, takes a deep ragged breath.

ALEX

Some fucking freaky, hippie, Bible  
thumper.

Garrett laughs.

GARRETT  
Freaky hippie Bible thumper?

EDDIE  
Shit, you shoulda invited him in.  
Maybe he had some weed.

The teens chuckle.

ALEX  
I'm serious. He wiggled out on me...  
started talking about God and what  
a hell spawn I am. Shit.

When he pulls his hand off of his neck, the other kids notice the scratch on his neck.

DERRICK  
Whoa. He fucking did that?

Alex nods.

Garrett moves in closer to take a look at he scratch.

GARRETT  
What the hell?

EDDIE  
You should call the cops or  
something.

Alex raises one eyebrow at Eddie.

ALEX  
Uhh... yeah. Let's do that. Maybe  
we'll offer them a beer when they  
get here.

The teens look at each other, uneasy.

ALEX  
Just forget it. He's not coming  
back anyway.

OUTSIDE

The snow falls harder. The wind gains speed.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - EARLY EVENING

The doorbell rings.

PAM

Finally.

Pam shoots across the room, followed by Shell.

Alex yells to them.

ALEX

Hey! You might wanna do a freak  
check before you open the door!

Eddie smirks then leans over as far as he can on the sofa. He watches Pam's butt wiggle, nudges Derrick with his elbow.

EDDIE

Ummm... I like 'em like that.

DERRICK

Yeah. Nice ass. Too bad you're  
never gonna get any.

Eddie scoffs.

O.S. The sound of multiple squealing girls.

Pam and Shell return from the foyer with two more girls.

MIRANDA is a shapely, dark haired Latino, with a slight accent.

ALISA is a petite, light skinned African American, with obsessively neat hair and clothes.

ALEX

(to Derrick)

A couple of people, huh? Man... I  
am so freakin' dead.

Derrick tips his head sideways, shrugs one shoulder, as if to say "no big deal".

Alisa heads straight to Derrick and french kisses him.

Shell walks over and speaks in Alex's ear.

SHELL

Surprise.

Miranda smiles at Alex, eyeballs him from head to toe. Alex looks away - anywhere but Miranda's eyes. He rubs the scratch on his neck again.

MIRANDA

We almost didn't make it. It's really starting to come down out there.

She notices the mark on Alex's neck.

MIRANDA

What happened to you?

Alex looks at her like he can barely stand to hear her speak.

ALEX

Cut myself shaving.

Miranda looks at him like, "yeah right" and helps herself to a piece of pizza.

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW

A dark figure watches the kids through the panes. Labored breathing fogs the glass.

The lights are off. A horror movie plays on the big screen TV.

Shell and Mark make out across the room. His hands slip under her shirt but she pushes them down.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Shell and Mark whisper.

SHELL

Stop.

MARK

Come on baby.

She pushes his hand down again, more forcefully.

SHELL

No, Mark. I mean it. There's other people here.

He glances at the other teens.

MARK

So? They're not worried about us.  
They're watching the stupid movie.

Shell turns to see that no one's paying attention to them. They start kissing, but this time Shell allows Mark's hands to wander as they please, inside her shirt.

Miranda is curled up on the sofa. She moves closer to Alex and grins.

He scoots away, stands suddenly.

Alisa tips her head, urging Miranda to follow him.

Miranda stares after Alex for a few seconds.

KITCHEN

Alex pulls a big bag of chips from the pantry. He turns to find Miranda in front of him, grinning, twirling her hair.

MIRANDA

If I didn't know better, I'd think you weren't happy to see me.

Alex fidgets.

ALEX

Yeah? I wonder why.

Miranda rubs his arm.

MIRANDA

Oh come on. Really, Alex... grow up.

Alex scoffs.

ALEX

Sorry. I'm too young for you - too immature. That's what you said, right?

Miranda crosses her arms over her chest. She sighs and eyeballs Alex.

MIRANDA

It wasn't my idea to come. I knew you wouldn't want me here. I just thought... maybe we should talk. You know?

Alex cocks his head sideways at her, leans against the kitchen counter with one hand.

ALEX

So talk. I'm listening.

MIRANDA

I know it doesn't seem like a big deal. It's only one year right? It's just some of my friends... they were giving me shit about you.

Alex nods, looks at her as if to say "yeah, go on".

MIRANDA

Well... maybe I was wrong. That's all, I guess. I'm sorry, you know... I screwed up.

Miranda steps closer to Alex. She reaches for his hand.

He moves it away then glances around the room, trying to seem disinterested.

ALEX

You think?

He tries to step around Miranda. She moves in his path, trails a finger down his sleeve, past his wrist.

Alex watches her finger move in small circles on the back of his hand. He tips his head sideways, sizing her up.

ALEX

I don't know...

He sighs deeply.

ALEX

Maybe I'll think about giving you another chance... we'll see.

Miranda backs away, hands on her hips. Alex grins, sly and seductive.

MIRANDA

Oh wow. Lucky me!

Miranda giggles and leaves the kitchen. Alex smiles, stares after her for a few moments.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As Miranda sits down, Alex enters the room. He whistles at Derrick, then tosses him the bag of chips.

Garrett sits on the sofa, finishing the pizza, with Chloe on the floor near him.

They all watch the movie, faces tense with anticipation.

OMINOUS MUSIC promises a fright to come...

The CHARACTER ON THE TV screams.

O.S. A loud bump from inside the house.

Alisa gasps and Derrick giggles at her.

ALISA

What was that?

ALEX

Damn. Daniel...

Garrett stirs, looks down at the empty pizza boxes.

GARRETT

Shit. We got no pizza left.

Beer cans litter the tables and floor. Alex looks petrified.

ALEX

Quick, hide the cans.

They all jump to action, scramble to get rid of the evidence. Cans are shoved under the sofa and under its cushions.

Garrett takes one last gulp and tosses his can into a large plant.

They've barely had time to sit back down when Daniel tromps into the room. He stares at the group, then at Alex, shakes his head.

DANIEL

Mom's not gonna like this.

GARRETT

C'mon man.

DERRICK

Yeah, can't you be cool for once?

ALEX

What are you doing here anyway?  
Aren't you supposed to be out  
plowing?

DANIEL

I am. I mean I gotta work late,  
cause of the snow. I got no food in  
the truck.

Alex stands, reaches deep in his pocket, pulls out a ten dollar bill. He holds it out to Daniel.

ALEX

I was gonna save you some pizza  
but...

He glances at Garrett, who looks at the floor, and scratches the back of his neck.

ALEX

Here. Why don't you go get a burger?

Daniel stares down at the money, shakes his head.

DANIEL

I don't feel like a burger.

ALEX

Well, a taco or something then... whatever.

Daniel snatches the money, turns and stares at the TV. A glazed look covers his face.

Most of the group stare at Daniel in disgust, occasionally giggle at him. Some point and make goofy faces behind his back.

Alex looks uncomfortable. Miranda turns to him, rolls her eyes and shakes her head.

Pam pops a large and rather loud gum bubble. The sound snaps Daniel out of his fugue. He turns to the window to see clumps of snow falling outside.

He tromps to the door. The moment he closes it, the room erupts in laughter.

Alex forces a laugh too.

ALISA

Ewww, Alex. He's so nasty. How can you stand living in the same house with him?

MIRANDA

Don't be such a shit.

ALEX

Easy. I just ignore him.

CHLOE

Well, he makes my skin crawl....  
seriously.

EDDIE

Yeah. He's a little special.

Alex shoots Eddie a "shut up" glance, stares down at the floor for a moment.

They all stare at the TV screen - nothing much happening on the horror movie.

ALEX

Well, this is boring as shit.

He heads for the stairs.

INT. ALEX'S FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Mark and Shell are still huddled in the corner.

Other couples make out on the floor or the sofa.

Alex steps in, licks the paper on a joint and twists the ends. He holds it out to Garrett.

GARRETT

(to the joint)

Ah... welcome to the party, Mary  
Jane.

DERRICK

Yeah, that's what I'm talking  
about.

He lights the joint, takes a long drag and holds the smoke in before passing it to Derrick.

They all gather around the sofa, pass the joint between them. The room is filled with smoke and there's rampant coughing.

O.S. A loud bump echoes through the house.

VICTIMS are randomly slaughtered on the TV movie. Screams and loud breathing erupt from the surround sound speakers.

Several seconds tick by. The kids glance at each other off and on, apprehensively.

O.S. Another loud bump.

PAM  
What the hell was that?

EDDIE  
Why? You scared? Bwak... bwak...  
bwak.

Eddie reaches over, grabs Pam's knee to tickle her.

Pam squeals, cracks a grin, then pushes his hand away.

PAM  
(to Eddie)  
Oh shut up.

Pam and the other girls stare at Alex expectantly.

He sighs.

ALEX  
Feel free to look around if you  
want. It's a big house though.

Pam glares at Alex, then turns to Eddie with a pleading look on her face.

EDDIE  
I think Pam's a wittle afwaid.

He giggles and Pam whacks him in the arm. He grabs his arm feigning pain.

O.S. A loud thump

CHLOE  
Shit... enough already.

GARRETT  
Probably a branch hitting against  
the house or something. Chill.

Miranda twirls her hair, eyes dart around the room.

MIRANDA

This is stupid.

She stomps over and turns the TV volume all the way down.

DERRICK

Hey... I was watching that.

MIRANDA

Yeah. You were.

Derrick huffs.

Mark and Shell make their way to the other teens. Mark leans over the back of the sofa, takes the joint from Garrett and takes a deep drag.

MARK

Mwaahhhh... a bunch of kids... all  
alone... mwaaahhh.

He laughs, takes one more quick drag.

Shell grabs her purse from the coffee table, plops down on the floor. She fishes out a compact to freshen her makeup.

Mark elbows Alex in the shoulder. His voice is squeaky from trying to hold the smoke in.

MARK

Hey... tell 'em the story.

ALEX

Why?

MARK

Because it's wicked.

ALEX

No it's not. It's just stupid.

O.S. A louder thump.

Shell nearly jumps out of her skin. The other girls gasp.

SHELL

Shit. I hate this house.

Mark and Derrick laugh at the girls.

They all pass the joint once more.

Mark elbows Alex again.

MARK  
(to Alex)  
Hey.

ALEX  
What? Man, get off me.

MARK  
Come on.  
(to the other teens)  
It's a wicked story.

Alex sighs.

ALEX  
It's total bull shit.

MARK  
So. It's still sick.

Shell glances at Mark.

SHELL  
What are you babbling about?

Alex just shakes his head at her.

ALEX  
(to Mark)  
You aren't gonna shut the fuck up,  
are you?

Mark shrugs, grins.

The other teens eye Alex expectantly, and he just rolls his eyes and sighs.

ALEX  
After my mom died, we lived in an  
apartment, just me and Dad.

Couple of years later, Dad meets the bitch, they get married, and fuckin' yada yada.

Alex takes a sip of beer.

ALEX

Anyway, they come across this place, super cheap...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Different furnishings, very 70's.

A MAN (35), shirtless, sits on the sofa, stares at his open briefcase, on the coffee table in front of him.

When he lifts his hand to take a puff of his cigar, his fingers are covered in blood. He whistles "Pop Goes the Weasel".

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

The man stands before a mirror, shaving. He cuts himself but doesn't flinch as blood trickles down his cheek.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Inside the briefcase is a pink slip - a lay off notice from work, and a stack of checks stamped "NSF".

On the floor is a man's dress shirt covered in blood. The man, now wearing a fresh shirt, closes and picks up the briefcase.

He makes his way to the door, still whistling, then casually steps over a bloody butcher knife and the stabbed bodies of a WOMAN, TWO LITTLE GIRLS, and a PRE-TEEN BOY.

INT. HOUSE - PRESENT DAY

ALEX

A few months later I find out the other owner hacked up his whole family...

ALISA

Oh Alex... that's bull shit.

MIRANDA

Yeah. Utter shit.

Alex glances at Mark.

ALEX

(to Mark)

What did I tell 'ya?

(to the other teens)

They say it's haunted.

Alisa giggles, but at the same time looks uneasy.

SHELL

So... is it?

Alex scoffs.

ALEX

I've never seen any ghosts.

MARK

Dude, they're ghosts... you're not supposed to see them.

SHELL

Mark, you're about as sharp as a potato.

MARK

What?

Shell rolls her eyes and shakes her head.

SHELL

Forget it.

Derrick looks on intently, a serious expression on his face.

DERRICK

Hey... I know this story. Psycho  
pops just disappeared, huh?

He glances at the other teens.

DERRICK

Cops never found him.

ALEX

Yep.

He takes a last swig of beer, crushes the can.

ALISA

Nice, Alex. Lovely.

DERRICK

Shit... that was like twenty years  
ago though.

Alex sighs, leans back with his hands clasped behind his  
head.

O.S. An even louder thump.

The girls gasp. The guys look around suspiciously.

Alisa pokes Derrick with her elbow.

ALISA

Jesus... just go see what that is,  
please.

DERRICK

Me? Shit... Why I gotta go? Like he  
said, it's a big house.

ALISA

Just follow the noise.

Derrick clenches his teeth together, leers at Alisa.

Alisa shoves him, trying to urge him off of the sofa.

ALISA

It's only a story, Derrick Eugene.  
Now just go and see what the noise  
is.

Derrick rolls his eyes.

DERRICK

You know I hate it when you call me  
that.

Alisa curls her lip at him teasingly, then pecks him on the  
cheek.

DERRICK

Besides, it isn't that stupid ass  
story.

ALISA

Then Stop being such a pussy and  
go.

DERRICK

What... by myself?

EDDIE

Bwok... bwok.. Bwok...

DERRICK

Yeah... piss off Eddie.

Derrick walks off mumbling to himself. He steps into the --

HALLWAY

O.S. The voices and laughter of the other kids recede.

Derrick's pace slows. His shoulders slump.

At the end of the dark hall he turns, gazes longingly back at  
the family room.

When he turns back around, a pair of eyes peers out at him,  
from a cracked door nearby.

In a few moments, Derrick peers inside a couple of unused bedrooms and bathrooms. He moves down the hall, opens a door and flips on a light.

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT

There's a chute leading there, from the upper floor, and a large rolling basket.

As if it were possessed, the basket rolls around a bit.

Derrick watches it until it stops rolling - a few seconds. He pulls the door in close to him, his body half in and half out of the room.

He pauses, takes a deep breath, eyes closed. He flings the door open, heads for the chute.

A BANG, then a big RAT scurries out and down to the floor near his feet.

DERRICK reels back, stumbles against the rolling laundry cart.

DERRICK

What the fu--

A shadow passes by, in his peripheral vision. He twirls around. Nothing.

He takes a few shaky breaths, tries to compose himself. Then he begins inching toward the door. His feet shuffle against the floor.

There seems to be more shuffling. He stops. The shuffling stops. He grins, laughs at himself. Again he starts walking toward the door.

This time he's sure there's footsteps in the room, other than his own. Breathing shaky and labored, he stops. The shuffling does not. He gasps, makes a run for the door.

A nail gun rushes toward his face - eyes widen, a strangled yelp...

A CLICK, a METALLIC SOUND and a loud POP...

A thick nail buries deep between Dave's eyes. His face contorts. Blood runs from the wound.

A couple more CLICKS and metallic pops...

Dave falls to a heap on the floor. Arms reach down, grab Dave by the legs.

FAMILY ROOM - SAME

The horror movie plays silently on the TV screen. Alex and Miranda chat quietly on one side of the sofa.

Garrett plays a noisy slap and tickle with Chloe nearby.

Alisa lays on the floor, thumbs through a magazine. She looks at her watch.

ALISA

Derrick's sure taking his sweet  
friggin' time.

Eddie sits up, leans forward in mock horror.

EDDIE

Maybe he found out what was making  
the noise...  
(gasps)  
and it ate him!

Alisa throws the magazine at Eddie. He ducks and laughs.

Pam stands at a window, watches the snow fall against the backdrop of night. She repeatedly chomps the gum and makes loud POPPING bubbles.

PAM

It's really getting thick.

She turns away from the window.

PAM

(to Miranda)  
Maybe we should head out.

ALEX

Don't worry, neither rain nor sleet  
nor dark of night keeps the 'Plow  
Man' from behind the wheel...

Miranda giggles.

Garrett looks up, removes his hands from Chloe's front pants  
pocket.

GARRETT

If you're lucky he'll freeze out  
there. In the morning there'll be  
nothing but a giant smelly  
Danielsicle.

He laughs.

CHLOE

Let up on him already. He can't be  
that bad.

ALEX

Sure he can.

Eddie cranks the TV volume back up. They all turn their  
attention back to the screen.

O.S. Loud, hollow THUMPING. Sounds like footsteps upstairs.

A few of the teens gasp. Alisa leaps to her feet.

ALISA

God, this is getting on my nerves.

She clicks the TV off.

Garrett lounges on the sofa, his head in Chloe's lap.

GARRETT

What a bunch of whiners. It's an  
old house. Old houses make noises.

Alisa stares at Garrett for a moment, concern covering her  
face.

ALISA

Whatever. I'm going to look for  
Derrick, and then I'm leaving.

She flounces out of the room.

Alex sighs, calls out after her.

ALEX

He's screwing with us. Hiding  
somewhere, probably waiting to jump  
out so he can have a good laugh.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Alisa opens doors, peers inside several rooms, growing more  
agitated as she goes.

She opens one at the end of the hall, peeks in and then  
roughly closes it. She stands with her hands on her hips,  
yells.

ALISA

Derrick! Come on. This isn't funny.  
It's fucking irritating!

INT. FAMILY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Alisa enters, her face a grumpy mask. She throws her arms up  
and huffs.

ALEX

No luck?

ALISA

No. Maybe if you'd get up off your  
asses and help me.

They all huff and grumble, but rise from their seated  
positions anyway.

Pam grabs a sofa pillow and hugs it close to her.

PAM

I'm stayin' here.

She looks at Eddie, her eyes pleading.

Eddie glances at Alex and Garrett like "can't leave my woman here alone". He shrugs and plops down on the sofa next to Pam.

INT. HALL - MOMENTS LATER

All present but Eddie and Pam.

ALEX

Some of us can take the upstairs  
and the rest of us can look down  
here.

ALISA

I'm going with you and Miranda.

ALEX

Why?

(sighs, rolls his eyes)

I'm telling you there's nothing to  
be afraid of.

Alisa shakes her head.

ALISA

You know what happens when people  
split up.

ALEX

What do you mean - what happens?

ALISA

I don't know. Friggin' creepy old  
house. I just think... you know...  
maybe Derrick won't be the only one  
missing.

Alex's jaw drops. He stares at her like she's a moron.

ALEX

Ughhh... scary movies and a bunch  
of girls... bad combination.

He nods to Garrett.

ALEX

Why don't you guys check upstairs?

Garrett winks, gives Chloe a squeeze.

GARRETT

Yeah... good idea.

They all disperse.

INT. WORK OUT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Weight benches, various exercise equipment and a jacuzzi.

Shell pulls the doors closed behind her and Mark. Their voices echo in the room.

MARK

Whew, it's steamy in here.

Mark kisses her on the neck and nibbles her earlobe. Shell raises her shoulder to ward him off.

MARK

Let's get wet.

SHELL

We're supposed to be looking for Derrick, remember?

Mark takes a quick look around.

MARK

Yeah well, he's not here so we did our job. Come on. Let's skinny dip.

Shell feigns shock.

SHELL

I think you wanna get caught.

(grins)

Pervert.

Mark giggles.

SHELL

I bet there's a suit hanging in there.

She points to a small room off to the side.

MARK

Yeah, but have you seen the size of his step mom's ass? It'll probably fall right off of you.

Shell shoots him a sultry grin.

SHELL

And... your point is?

Mark grins, reaches out to pinch her breast, but Shell wards him off with her arm, and turns quickly.

She sprints across to the small room, ducks in, then tosses out a pair of trunks.

SHELL

Here.

Mark snags them in mid-air.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - SAME

Garrett pushes a giggling Chloe inside a bedroom, shuts the door behind them.

DOWNSTAIRS - SAME

Miranda clutches Alex's hand, with Alisa close behind. They check in the --

LAUNDRY ROOM

All seems normal but as Mark shuts the door a tiny rivulet of blood runs, unseen, down a corner of the laundry chute.

INT. WORK OUT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mark, now dressed in the trunks, slips into the jacuzzi.

INT. BATHROOM

Shell removes her clothes.

IN THE JACUZZI

Mark ducks his head under the water.

O.S. A door clicks closed.

Mark pokes his head out of the water, moves over to the side of the jacuzzi. He flips his wet hair from in front of his face, and looks up through bleary eyes...

A dumbbell slides through the air above him and crashes against his skull.

Blood gushes from the wound and mingles with the water. The dumbbell crashes into his skull once more.

The sound of splashing and Mark's body is hurriedly dragged away.

INT. BATHROOM - SAME

Shell holds the untied straps of her swimsuit top, hears the commotion, cocks her ear toward the door.

SHELL

What are you doing? I swear if I  
come out there and you're still  
butt naked...

She reaches for the knob.

INT. WORK OUT ROOM

Shell scans the area - no sign of Mark. She steps forward, smiling.

SHELL

Come on. Let's have a look, stud.

She takes a further step toward the jacuzzi. Her gaze sweeps the water. A red swirl of blood mars the surface. The smile dies on her lips.

She stumbles back. A door lock clicks and Shell gasps.

Lights flicker off and on. She starts to cry and whimper as she backs toward the door.

SHELL

Mark! Mark!

Quick FOOTSTEPS behind her.

She whips around, opens her mouth to scream but the dumbbell slams into the side of her head. Blood runs from a gash at her temple.

She's dazed, eyes roll around as she tries to focus. She falls hard to the floor.

The killer removes her bikini top. A gloved hand runs roughly across her breasts, winds the bikini straps around her neck.

With a fierce yank, the killer lifts her upper body off the floor, winds the straps around her neck and chokes her.

She chokes, fights for air, until she's blue and her eyes bulge from their sockets.

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Distinctly adult, tidy, with an antique wardrobe closet, a floral bench at the foot of the bed, satin pillows and bedding.

Garrett and Chloe make out on the bed. He unbuttons her jeans, slips his hand inside. She moans.

The lights flicker and then go out. Chloe gasps.

GARRETT

Fuck. What now?

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

In total darkness, Alex, Alisa and Miranda feel around, open cabinets, drawers and doors.

ALEX

I know they're here somewhere.  
Check over there.

ALISA

Where? What... like I can see you  
pointing?

(mumbles)

Stupid.

ALEX

Just relax okay. I'll find 'em.

MIRANDA

Well, hurry up.

Alisa calls out.

ASHLEY

Derrick Eugene... this is stupid!  
Come on. Hide and seek is over.

Alex finds some candles and flashlights in a drawer, makes his way over to the gas stove, lights the candles.

He hands one to Alisa, just as she reaches to opens the last unchecked pantry door. He sighs, looks around the dim room.

ALEX

This is getting really fucking old.

Miranda blows out a ragged breath, leans against the counter, near the sink.

MIRANDA

I say we forget about him.

(raises her voice)

Let's just leave his ass here... in  
the dark... alone.

Alisa crosses her arms over her chest, makes her way over to Miranda.

O.S. - loud, howling wind.

They all stare out the window.

ALISA

Holy shit...

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Chloe feels her way to the window, pulls back the curtain.

OUTSIDE

A single security light, near the end of the driveway, flickers. The snow is thick on the ground, trees, driveway and their cars.

CHLOE

Oh man. Baby, look at this.

Garrett stumbles on his way to the window, lets out a low angry growl. He peers outside, throws his hands up.

GARRETT

Great. Fucking lovely.

Chloe heads for the door, but Garrett grabs her arm.

A pillar candle sits on the dresser. He lights it with his cigarette lighter, pulls Chloe close, kisses her.

She allows the kiss for a moment, then pulls away.

CHLOE

We should go back downstairs.

GARRETT

Why? The lights will probably come back on in a minute.

He trails kisses down the side of her neck. She pushes him away again.

GARRETT

Relax. It's not like we're going anywhere in this shit.

CHLOE

Which is exactly why I need to call my mom. I snuck out to begin with. Fuck... she's gonna freak.

GARRETT

Five minutes. Come on. What difference is it gonna make?

He ushers Chloe toward the bed, gently pushing her backwards, kissing her the whole way.

They plop down. Chloe laughs, low and hoarse.

CHLOE

Five minutes, huh? That's all it takes?

Garrett raises his eyebrows, smirks.

GARRETT

Oh, you think that's funny?

He bites her neck. She squeals with delight. He trails kisses down her chest, lifts her shirt over her head. They fondle each other, kissing passionately.

O.S. Feet shuffle against carpet. A door creaks.

Chloe gasps.

CHLOE

Who's there? Garrett...

She pushes him up and a few inches off of her, stares at the door.

Garrett glances in that direction, yells.

GARRETT

Go away!

He stares at the door for a moment, rises and grumbles on his way over.

GARRETT

Shit, and fuckin' damn.

He locks the door, starts back towards Chloe. She pats the bed and giggles.

CHLOE

Tick tick tick... five minutes.

The candle flame whips around then extinguishes.

O.S. A loud THUD.

Silence.

Chloe springs upright. Her eyes dart around the darkened room. She rises slowly, starts across the room.

CHLOE

Garrett?

Silence.

CHLOE

Shit. Garrett?

Chloe's arms wave back and forth in front of her, completely blind in the darkness. She starts to panic. Her breathing quickens.

CHLOE

Stop screwing around.

Her foot hits something. She stumbles, kneels down, feels around on the floor. Breathing fast and shallow, voice trembling.

CHLOE

Garrett?

A lighter - Garrett's lighter, strikes then goes out, strikes then goes out, several times.

In the intermittent flashes, Garrett lies with a long chisel shoved all the way through one temple, jutting out the opposite eye socket.

O.S. A low, hoarse chuckle.

Chloe's screams mingle with the chuckling. She stumbles back, screams again.

A swooshing sound - a loud THUD followed by CHOKING and GURGLING.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

O.S. Screams and a loud POP.

Miranda and Alisa gasp, glance at Alex.

ALEX

Eddie and Pam assing around.

Alisa looks toward the kitchen door for a few seconds, glances back at Alex, her brows furrowed, then darts out.

Alex groans.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

In the darkness a shadowy figure walks down the hallway, toward the stairs - a silhouette of a hatchet, dripping wet onto the floor, in the shadow's hand.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Alisa, Alex and Miranda's candles/flashlights illuminate Pam and Eddie on the sofa.

The two are in a tickling match and Eddie is winning. Pam screams with each poke and goose.

Alisa rolls her eyes. She and Miranda glance at each other.

ALISA

Fuck... you guys.

She places her candle on the tray next to the other one.

MIRANDA

You scared the shit out of us.

Eddie crushes a beer can on his knee, belches, looks like a deer caught in headlights. He eyeballs the flashlights and candles, then holds out his hand.

Alex just leers at him.

EDDIE

What?

ALEX

What... what do you think? The power's out. We hear somebody screaming her head off.

Pam shrugs, bobs her head sarcastically from side to side. She pops another gum bubble.

PAM

Well, sorry. Did you find Mark?

ALISA

No. But when I do I'm gonna kill him.

MIRANDA

Have you guys looked outside lately?

EDDIE

Why? Somebody call the cops? We ain't that rowdy yet.

PAM

Dumb ass. The closest house is a couple of miles down the road.

Eddie pokes Pam again. She squeals.

Alex runs a hand through his hair, waits, glaring at Pam and Eddie until they stop the poke and tickle.

Eddie glances up, notices Alex's perturbed expression. Alex hands him a flashlight.

EDDIE

Okay, okay. What is it?

ALEX

We're snowed in.

Eddie furrows his brows, goes to a window, peeks outside.

The security light shines on heavy snow and buried cars.

EDDIE

Fuck... I'm gonna call my Dad. The  
Bronco can make it through that.

He picks up the cordless phone, chews on the inside of his  
cheek.

EDDIE

It's not working.

ALEX

Maybe that's because it's a  
cordless. All of them are. No power  
- no phone.

Eddie slams the phone down, paces. He glances at Pam, rubs  
his hands together, eyes darting around the room.

EDDIE

Well, this sucks ass.

Alex and Miranda shoot each other a "what's his problem"  
look.

Pam grabs Eddie's forearms, looks into his eyes.

PAM

Just breathe. We're okay Eddie.

She turns to the other teens.

PAM

He doesn't like feeling closed in.

Alisa scoffs and adopts a big fake grin.

ALISA

Wonderful! No power, closed up in  
this creepy ass house, and now  
Eddie's gonna trip out on us. Are  
we having fun yet, because I'm  
gonna tell ya', I think this is  
severely messed up.

Eddie's eyes dart around even more. He sprints from the room.

Pam follows.

INT. FOYER - SECONDS LATER

Eddie opens the front door, takes a few deep breaths. The heavy snow piles in, covers his feet. He doesn't notice.

Pam ducks behind him when the wind whips through the door.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Eddie steps outside.

It's growing darker by the minute. The snow is thick, blankets everything in sight.

Eddie sinks in the snow, up to his knees. He looks down, then up again, stares out at his car, heavily covered in snow.

Trees sway violently in the wind. Snow blows by at mach speed.

FROM THE DOORWAY

Pam reaches out and grabs the back of his shirt, tugs on it.

Alex, Alisa and Miranda enter the foyer, stare at Eddie like he's nuts.

Alex spots a vehicle - a black Bronco just like the preacher's, sitting at the end of the driveway.

PAM

Come back inside, Eddie. You're gonna freeze.

He looks at Pam, eyes wide, shakes his head.

EDDIE

I'm going to the fucking car, Pam. You know I can't stay in there.

PAM

Have you looked at the car?

Eddie glances at the cars again. He turns back to Pam, a distressed look on his face.

PAM

Come on. Come back in before I  
freeze to death.

She crosses her arms in front of her, lips quivering, teeth chattering.

EDDIE

Shit. Shit.

He tromps back inside. He shakes and his lips are blue.

Alex moves to the door. When he looks outside, the Bronco is gone. He looks around the yard, down the driveway. Confusion covers his face as he shuts the door.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Pam brushes the snow off of Eddie.

Miranda and Alex struggle against the heavy snow, finally manage to close the door.

ALEX

Dude, what's wrong with you?

Eddie shrugs, still shivering. His voice is anxious and hostile.

EDDIE

Nothing's wrong with me. I just  
wanna get outta here.

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - SAME

Chloe lies on the floor, motionless, gurgling on blood and gasping for air. More blood pools around her, from Garrett, and mingles together with her own.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Alex stares Eddie down, places the second of the flashlights on the coffee table.

He mumbles under his breath.

ALEX

Fucking claustrophobic.

EDDIE

No I ain't. I just don't like being closed in.

ALEX

Okay man. That is what the word means you know.

Alex gives him a "you're weird" look.

Miranda's face turns to a look of revelation.

MIRANDA

Hey... you know Chloe has a cell phone.

Eddie's eyes widen, excited.

EDDIE

Friggin' 'eh. Go drag her ass down here then.

They make their way into the--

FAMILY ROOM

Miranda and Alisa plop down on the sofa.

Alisa puts her feet up on the coffee table, spreads her arms out wide.

ALISA

There's a whole floor up there - nice big open space.

Pam covers her mouth to stifle a giggle. Eddie curls his lip at them, then grabs Pam by the hand.

A moment after Pam and Eddie leave, Alisa holds up a leather purse.

ALISA

Wait! This is Chloe's.

Alex looks toward the doorway as if he's going to call the couple back, then changes his mind.

ALEX

Let 'em go. Eddie needs something to do anyway.

He turns his attention back to Alisa.

ALEX

Well... dig it out.

Alisa fumbles around inside the purse then pulls out a cell phone, holds it up, grins triumphantly.

ALISA

Yeah baby.

She holds the phone in her hand. It beeps to life. The keys glow in the dark. It beeps a couple more times.

She dials three numbers. Her face falls.

ALISA

Damn it. I can not believe this stupid shit.

MIRANDA

What?

Alisa holds the phone out.

ALISA

Nothing. Dead air. It must be the damn storm.

INT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Eddie leads Pam up the stairs to the second floor.

PAM

You think your Dad can drop me  
home?

EDDIE

Yeah, and everybody else. This  
storm keeps up, we'll be stuck in  
here for a week.

PAM

When are his parents supposed to be  
back anyway?

They reach the top of the staircase.

EDDIE

I don't know. Couple of days I  
thi...

Eddie spots a thin streak of bright red on the carpet,  
extending down the length of the --

HALLWAY

EDDIE

What the fuck?

Pam spots it too. Drawing closer, it looks like a cluster of  
droplets.

They glance at each other, follow the streak until it ends at  
the --

BEDROOM DOOR

It's ajar a few inches. Eddie pauses. The knob has more of  
the red fluid on it.

O.S. Gurgling sound

He pushes the door open.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A few steps inside, the flashlight shines on Chloe, lying on the floor, surrounded by a huge puddle of blood. She's not dead yet, still gurgling.

Pam screams.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - SAME

O.S. Pam's scream

Alisa's brows furrow. She rolls her eyes.

ALISA

God. Does she think that's cute or something?

Miranda scoffs.

MIRANDA

Sounds like he's killing her.

Alex kneels at the fireplace, tosses wood inside and lights it. He glances toward the stairs and grins, turns to Miranda.

ALEX

I guess you're not ticklish, huh?

Miranda pauses, stares at him with sultry eyes. She tosses her hair over her shoulder.

MIRANDA

Maybe.

Alisa rolls her eyes, yells.

ALISA

Derrick! Derrick Eugene! I swear to God if you don't come out right now you won't be gettin' any for a month!

She waits a moment.

Silence.

She lets out a growl sound, plops down hard on the sofa.

ALISA

Mark and Shell have cell phones too  
you know.

Alex looks at her like she's dumb, shakes his head.

ALEX

(mumbles)  
Stupid.

ALISA

What? What did you just say to me?

ALEX

I said that's stupid. Theirs are  
gonna pick up a signal when Chloe's  
doesn't?

ALISA

I don't fucking know, all right  
Alex!

Miranda steps in between them.

MIRANDA

Just stop it okay! This isn't  
helping anybody.

INT. BEDROOM - SAME

Pam tries to scream again.

Eddie grabs her, covers her mouth. He shines the light around  
the room, in all the corners and at the closet door.

The light illuminates Garrett's body, lifeless, with the  
chisel sticking through his head.

Pam's screams are muffled though Eddie's hand. Tears stream  
down her face. She pulls away from him, kneels over Chloe's  
body.

Eddie walks backwards, horrified.

The lights flicker and come on for a couple of seconds.

The blood sprays on the floor outline the shape of a hatchet, but the hatchet is missing. There are blood stains and spray patterns on the wallpaper and carpet.

Chloe's neck has a huge gash. She stares into Pam's eyes, her lips move but are unable to speak. The gurgling grows louder. She spits up blood, all over Pam's clothes.

Pam cries, deep racking sobs. She grabs Chloe's hand.

The lights flicker off and on.

PAM  
Oh God, Chloe.

Chloe's lips move. She gurgles the loudest yet, then her eyes roll back.

PAM  
Chloe? Chloe? Oh God.

Pam sobs even harder. The lights go out again.

Darkness - no light from Eddie's flashlight.

Pam gasps, turns to look over her shoulder. Eddie is gone.

O.S. Footsteps retreat down the hallway. A low, husky laugh.

PAM  
Eddie?

INT. FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ALISA  
I gotta pee.

Alex looks up at her with a "who gives a shit" look.

ALEX  
You know where it is.

ALISA  
Well, I'm not going by myself.

MIRANDA

Come on Alisa. Honest, there's no boogie man.

Alex grins.

Miranda puts her arms around Alex. He grins and pecks her on the cheek.

Alisa lets out a frustrated yelp, flings herself from the sofa. She grabs a flashlight from the coffee table and exits.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Pam whimpers and feels her way out of the bedroom in the dark. Between sobs she whispers...

PAM

Eddie, where are you?

A low husky chuckle.

Pam gasps, ducks inside a --

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

And locks the door behind her. A small beam of light radiates from under a bed. Pam kneels down, spots the flashlight and retrieves it.

PAM

(between sobs)

Eddie, come on. I'm scared.

She aims the light at the window. Large clumps of snow fall outside.

PAM

Eddie. Damn it!

She shines it on the bed, around the floor, then on the door of a bathroom. Pam steps inside.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Eddie hangs by a belt on the shower curtain rod. His body sways. His eyes are red and protruding. One of his shoes has fallen to the floor.

Pam's mouth flies open. Her gum falls out. She runs from the bathroom screaming. She fumbles with the lock at the --

BEDROOM DOOR

For several seconds, crying and whimpering the whole time.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

In the dark shadows, a door clicks closed. A large figure crosses the kitchen. In the figure's hand is a long butcher knife.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Pam runs down the hallway. She looks over her shoulder. The flashlight bounces erratically in her hand. She falls with a thump...

The sound of tumbling down steps, bones cracking.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - SAME

Alex and Miranda make out on the sofa.

O.S. Pam's screams and the repeated thuds from her tumbling down the stairs.

Alex and Miranda stop kissing. They look toward the doorway, then back at each other.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS

Pam hits the floor. Her screams are silenced.

The flashlight shines on her dead eyes.

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alisa, alarmed by the screams, turns to go check it out. The door slams shut before she can step out.

She lets out a yelp of fear.

...but the sound is muffled when a hand snakes out and clamps around her mouth. Her eyes bug out in fear.

Strong arms twirl her around, yank the flashlight from her hands, and march her toward the laundry chute.

The killer cackles.

Alisa struggles, as she is forced closer to the chute.

The flashlight shines on the opening of the chute and the stream of blood now dark and drying.

Near the chute now, a hand falls, visible in the opening. The flashlight beam glints off a thick gold class ring with a blue stone in it.

Alisa screams, muted against the killer's hand. She fights frantically.

A knife glints in the flashlight beam, rushes down into her body several times.

She struggles, but the more she fights, the deeper the knife thrusts.

Her thrashing ceases. She is dragged a few feet.

Footsteps retreat. The door closes.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Miranda stands from the sofa, paces a few feet in front of the fireplace.

MIRANDA

Jesus... the dark and the noises,  
Pam's squealing.

(sighs)

Your little story didn't help much  
either.

Miranda rubs her arms as if she's cold. She scans the room,  
glances behind her. She twirls her hair faster than usual.

Alex notices her distress, stands and grabs her hand.

ALEX

Let's go see if anybody found  
shithead yet.

MONTAGE

Eddie swings from the shower curtain rod.

Derrick lies dead in the laundry chute.

Alisa sits sprawled on the floor, just below the chute,  
multiple stab wounds, blood pooling around her. Her hands are  
positioned to hold the flashlight at her gashed throat.

The water in the jacuzzi whirls and bubbles, swirling red  
with Mark's blood.

Pam lies at the bottom of the stairs, blood on her clothes,  
body mangled and twisted.

INT. BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS - NIGHT

Alex stops dead still. He stares for a moment, then  
approaches Pam's twisted body. The flashlight shines on her  
face.

Miranda shrieks. Alex lets go of her hand, kneels down and  
grabs Pam's wrist to check for a pulse.

Miranda's hand is now formed in a fist, covering her lips.  
She trembles. Tears mingled with mascara stream down her  
cheeks.

Alex closes his eyes, swallows hard. He looks up at Miranda  
and shakes his head.

MIRANDA

Oh my God!

Alex grabs Miranda's hand and drags her away.

ALEX

Shit. Fuck!

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY

Alex yells.

ALEX

Alisa!

They get to the bathroom, peer in. It's empty. They both call out...

ALEX/MIRANDA

Alisa!

Quickly they move from room to room searching. They reach the laundry room.

Miranda is crying. Alex flings the door open, shines the light in.

Miranda screams bloody murder. Alex gasps, in shock when they see Alisa. Almost immediately, they spot Derrick, stuffed in the chute.

The nails are nearly flush with the skin of his forehead. A small stream of blood drains from a couple of the wounds and down his nose. His eyes seem to stare right through them.

Miranda stumbles backward, runs out of the room, a hand over her mouth.

Alex catches up, gives her a hush signal and takes her by the hand.

MIRANDA

(whispering)

Oh God... Alex, we have to get outta here.

ALEX

(whispering)

I know. Soon as we find everybody.

Miranda shivers and snuffles.

Alex points down a long hallway.

ALEX

Just stay close to me. Keep quiet.

INT. WORK OUT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

They cautiously step inside. It's dark and eerily quiet. Alex leads the way. Miranda holds back for a second then follows.

MIRANDA

Damn it Alex, they're not here.  
Let's go.

Alex shines the flashlight toward the jacuzzi. The dumbbell lies nearby.

With Miranda close and clinging to his arm he moves toward the bathroom. He reaches for the doorknob.

Miranda hangs back, tugs on his arm. They whisper.

MIRANDA

I'm scared. Let's go.

ALEX

Go where? We've got no phone, can't  
drive outta here. It's a white  
out... we're fucked okay!

Miranda whimpers, opens her mouth to speak but Alex lifts his hand to silence her. He opens the bathroom door, shines the light inside. It's empty. He lets out a relieved sigh.

He shines the light around the workout room once more. His eyes linger on a supply cabinet. A dark trail of liquid seeps through the doors.

Alex, with Miranda following close behind, cautiously heads toward it. He kneels down.

He hands Miranda the flashlight. She stands to one side, holds the light, shaking in her hand, for Alex to see. Her eyes dart to the door of the work out room.

The cabinet door is stuck. Alex yanks on it, time and again until it opens.

Shell's face is briefly illuminated in the flashlight beam. Her lips are purple and her tongue protrudes from her mouth.

Alex steps back quickly.

Shell's body tumbles out, knocks Miranda down and falls across her legs.

Miranda screams repeatedly, drops the light.

ALEX

Fuck... fuck... no.

Alex throws Shell's corpse off Miranda and pulls her to her feet. He takes the flashlight, shines it again on Shell's body, then aims the beam back in the cabinet.

Mark's body is stuffed inside, his head covered in blood.

Miranda sways, almost faints, then drops to her knees. She holds both sides of her head, rocks back and forth.

MIRANDA

Oh God! Oh God! What's happening!

Alex kneels down, covers her mouth.

ALEX

Shhh... Do you want them to find us too?

Miranda's eyes grow wide. She shakes her head emphatically.

Alex nods at her.

ALEX

That's right. So let's just calm down, keep our heads on straight.

Miranda pushes his hand away from her mouth. She whispers loud and frantic.

MIRANDA

Keep our heads on?

ALEX

Look, I just meant...

MIRANDA

How can you tell me to calm down?!  
Jesus!

She scurries backward, stares at Alex.

Alex crawls over to her, takes her face in his hands, stares into her eyes.

ALEX

Shh... Listen to me - we're gonna  
be okay.

Miranda pauses, swallows hard. In a few seconds, she throws her arms around Alex and sobs.

He holds her for a few moments, his eyes darting all around the room.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

Alex holds Miranda's hand. They step around Pam's body and head up the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

They open doors, shine the light inside the rooms until they come upon the one Garrett and Chloe are in.

Miranda's hair twirling is out of control once again. At the sight of Garrett and Chloe, she screams without restraint.

She turns to run from the room. Alex runs after her, grabs her hard and shakes her.

MIRANDA

Let me go!

ALEX

Where? You can't walk outta here.  
We're miles from anything.

MIRANDA

I'll take my chances!

ALEX

The cars are buried!

MIRANDA

I don't care! I don't care! I'm not  
gonna wait here to die with the  
rest of you!

Miranda jerks away from him she runs --

THROUGH THE DARK HOUSE ...

She stumbles here and there, unsure of where furniture and  
walls are. Finally, she reaches the front door.

OUTSIDE

Miranda runs. The wind and falling snow create a blinding  
effect. The only light is from the security light near the  
end of the driveway.

Alex chases after her. He calls out as they run.

ALEX

Miranda! Stop! Please! Stop!

Off to the side of the driveway sits Daniel's snow plow. It  
leans sideways in the soft earth.

Miranda stops, out of breath. She approaches the plow.

Alex catches up with her. He shines the light on the ground.  
A thick trail of blood in the snow leads up to the plow.

MIRANDA

Oh God! Alex... Oh God! Daniel!

She screams.

Alex slaps her hard across the face.

Miranda gasps, stares at him with wide, confused eyes. She  
sobs.

Alex grabs her, pulls her to him and strokes her hair.

ALEX

Shh... shhh. I'm sorry.

He forces her to look at his face.

ALEX

Just stick close to me. We'll be  
all right. Shhh... okay.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Alex grabs a sword hung over the fireplace. He shows it to  
Miranda, looks at her as if to say, "this will do the trick".

Her eyes dart around. She nods her head in agreement.

INT. BASEMENT STAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

ALEX

Thick, hardwood door.

MIRANDA

And a big lock... or three?

They make their way down.

The flashlight flickers intermittently. Alex bangs it against  
the heel of his hand. It grows brighter and then dim.

The heavy basement door is ajar a few inches. It creaks when  
Alex pushes it fully open. A slight gasp escapes Miranda, at  
the sound of the squeaky door.

Alex shines the light inside.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

It's dark. Alex bolts a large, sliding, barrel type lock on  
the door.

They head for the back wall, sit down on the concrete floor.  
Alex lies the sword down, pulls Miranda in close and wraps  
his arm around her shoulder.

She leans in, resting her head against his chest. For several moments, all is quiet, except for the sound of their breathing.

Alex keeps the flashlight trained on the door.

O.S. Shuffling sound

MIRANDA

Shit... somebody's out there!

Alex stares at the door, eyes wide.

There's a soft knock. Alex and Miranda glance at each other.

A fearful whisper comes from the other side of the door...

DANIEL (O.S.)

Alex? You in there?

Alex and Miranda share a relieved look, and head for the door. Alex opens it wide.

MIRANDA

Oh Jesus. Shit. Daniel, we thought you were dead.

Daniel stands wild-eyed and disheveled, a candle flickering in his hand.

DANIEL

Why you hidin' down here?

MIRANDA

There's a fucking psycho loose in this house.

Daniel snorts.

DANIEL

There ain't nobody here, 'cept us.

Alex glances at Miranda, shakes his head.

ALEX

Never mind. Let's find Eddie and get outta here.

Miranda's voice shakes. The nervous hair twirling starts again.

MIRANDA

No, Alex. I wanna leave. We can send the police back to look for Eddie.

ALEX

Go with Daniel, then. I'm not leaving without Eddie.

Miranda gazes up at Daniel, a crooked grin on his face. Daniel looks her up and down. She cowers next to Alex.

MIRANDA

Let's just hurry all right?

Alex grabs the sword and they leave the basement.

STAIRCASE LEADING UPSTAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

Alex and Miranda stop at Pam's body. Behind them, Daniel stares down at the corpse.

DANIEL

What happened to her?

Alex glances back at Daniel.

ALEX

She fell down the stairs.

DANIEL

But she's got blood on her.

Alex and Miranda glance at each other, apprehensive.

ALEX

It's not just her.

Daniel shakes his head back and forth, confused.

ALEX

Some fucking wacko...

Alex pauses, turns to Miranda, a look of revelation on his face.

ALEX

Oh shit.

FLASHBACK:

INT. LIVING ROOM

Reverend Phillips stands at the window, yells and pounds on the glass.

END FLASHBACK

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

ALEX

Oh my God... that freak that was here earlier.

Miranda just stares at him, confused.

ALEX

Before you got here. This weird preacher guy. Something was fucking bad wrong with him.

MIRANDA

And you're just now telling me?

ALEX

I really didn't think about it. It doesn't matter anyway, okay. Daniel, we have to find my friend Eddie. You remember Eddie huh?

Daniel keeps his eyes trained on Pam's body, brows furrowed in confusion. He nods his head.

Miranda glances down at Pam again. She grimaces.

MIRANDA

Shouldn't we move her or something?  
I mean we can't just leave her  
there.

Alex grabs her hand, squeezes it.

ALEX

We'll take care of her okay,  
but first let's find Eddie.

Alex and Miranda move quietly up the stairs.

Daniel stands for several seconds longer, staring at Pam's  
body.

Alex whispers to him from the middle of the staircase.

ALEX

Come on.

Daniel tromps loudly up the stairs behind them.

Alex turns around and gives him a signal to be quiet.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - EARLY EVENING

The three of them check the bedrooms, flashlight in hand.  
They cautiously open one door then another.

Daniel goes for the bedroom where Chloe and Garret lay dead.

ALEX

No Daniel. Not in there.

Daniel stops, turns back toward them.

On the opposite side of the hallway, Alex opens the last  
remaining door. A reflection in the bureau mirror - someone  
in the adjoining bathroom.

Alex strains to see without entering the room.

ALEX

Eddie? Are you in here?

Behind Miranda, Daniel coughs loudly.

Miranda turns and stares at him, her eyes incredulous.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alex enters first, with Miranda behind until Daniel gets too close, then she hurries toward Alex.

Alex angles toward the bathroom, motions for Miranda to halt. With his back pressed against the wall he takes a deep breath, then turns quickly into the --

BATHROOM

Alex releases a horrified grunt and stumbles. He drops the sword, falls on his rear and scoots backwards.

Daniel calmly walks into the bathroom doorway.

He looks at the scene dispassionately, giggles.

DANIEL

He wasn't much fun.

He turns to leer at Alex and then Miranda, who stands a few feet away, in the bedroom. The candle casts eerie shadows across Daniel's face.

DANIEL

Alisa... now she was fun...  
squealed like a little piggy.

Alex gapes in horror. He crab walks further away from Daniel.

FROM THE BEDROOM

Miranda stares in disbelief, confusion. Stunned, she stands frozen. Understanding dawns on her and her face twists in terror. She runs for the door.

BATHROOM

Alex screams, rushes toward Daniel. He shoves Daniel hard, into the bath tub, past Eddie's body.

Eddie flops around like a pinata.

Alex snags the sword from the bathroom floor, where he'd dropped it. He turns and runs from the room.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Alex catches up with Miranda.

In an instant footsteps sound behind them - Daniel in pursuit.

Daniel reaches out, snags Miranda's shirt. She shrieks and pulls away. Daniel stumbles.

Alex, with Miranda keeping step hit the landing running. They take the stairs in a rush, two at a time.

At the bottom of the stairs Miranda falls, straddling Pam's body. She screams.

Alex yanks her up and to the--

BASEMENT

Alex slams the door closed behind them and latches it.

A moment later...

O.S. a knock on the door.

Miranda covers her mouth to stifle a whimper of fear.

O.S. There's another knock and another - growing harder each time.

The door begins to shake at the hinges. Suddenly the knocking stops.

O.S. Something rubbing against the door, as if it's being stroked.

Alex grips the sword tight, raises it in front of him.

Miranda grabs his forearm, a pleading look on her face. She shakes her head at him.

He pulls away, steps over to the door and presses his ear against it.

Silence.

O.S. Footsteps retreating back up the stairs

ALEX

Okay... he's gone. All we gotta do is hang out here 'til somebody shows up.

Miranda scoffs, shakes her head in disbelief.

MIRANDA

And how long do you think that will be, Alex? They're all in the same boat we are - snowed in.

She rubs her eyes hard, pulls her knees into her chest and sits with her head in her hands.

MIRANDA

And what do you think would happen to them?

Alex looks defeated, leans back against the wall and thumps his head on it a couple of times.

He glances down at the sword in his hand.

O.S. A loud chopping noise.

DANIEL (O.S.)

You and your friends. . .

WHACK!

DANIEL (O.S.)

...always laughing at me.

WHACK!

Miranda screams.

DANIEL (O.S.)  
You think I'm stupid... useless.

WHACK!

OUTSIDE THE DOOR

Daniel presses his cheek against it, listening. He cackles.

DANIEL  
They'll never even know it was me.  
Just some wacked out serial killer.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUED

Miranda and Alex look at each other, completely confused.

MIRANDA  
(hoarse whisper)  
What's he talking about?

ALEX  
(hoarse whisper)  
I don't know. He's insane.

OUTSIDE THE DOOR

Daniel can hear them, his ear still pressed against the door.

DANIEL  
Insane? No. Well, maybe... just a  
little.

Daniel lowers the hatchet, turns his back to the door and leans against it. A far away look comes across his face.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Today... it was just your day to  
die. Doesn't matter really if it  
was me or not. I already knew it  
was time, but then... I saw him,  
just standing there...  
(snickers)

At first I couldn't believe my luck  
- escaped murderer and he just  
happens to find his way here.

He's silent for a few moments, as if he's pondering his words  
very carefully.

DANIEL

That guy in the truck though, that  
wasn't me.

FLASHBACK

EXT. END OF THE DRIVEWAY - DAY

The black bronco sits idling. The door is open and the body  
of the hippie preacher is slumped over. A seat belt holds him  
inside the vehicle. Dead eyes are half opened, as if he's  
stoned. His throat has been sliced open.

At the front of the vehicle, the escaped maniac stares at the  
body. The bloody knife in his hand has left a trail of blood  
from the driver's seat to the front of the truck.

Suddenly, from behind, Daniel stands with the hatchet at his  
side. He raises it and strikes the escapee in the back of the  
head, knocking him out.

Daniel stares down at his body for a moment. He picks up the  
knife and puts it in his pocket, handle first. Then he hoists  
the large man onto his shoulders.

It's a heavy load to bear. Daniels feet sink deep into the  
snow and his knees threaten to buckle under the weight.

END FLASHBACK

INT. OUTSIDE THE BASEMENT DOOR - CONTINUED

ALEX (O.S.)

You're sick, Daniel! You need help!

Daniel just laughs at him.

DANIEL

Oh don't worry. They'll find him soon enough. Give him a proper burial and all that shit.

FLASHBACK

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Daniel pushes the black bronco, preacher's body still inside, down a small ravine in the forest. He calmly watches as it slams into a tree.

END FLASHBACK

INT. OUTSIDE THE BASEMENT DOOR - CONTINUED

DANIEL

I even thought about letting him do the dirty work, but then... then I'd be missing the best part - watching you all die. No. Better to do it myself and let him take the blame.

(snickers)

Hell... I'll even be a hero.

FLASHBACK

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Daniel sneaks in through a back door of the house. It's dark. He can hear voices and see shadows from upstairs, but no one is downstairs to see what he's doing.

Snow piles in as he struggles to close and lock the door with one arm, balancing the mental escapee on the other shoulder. He nearly drops him.

Daniel strains and grunts, making his way to the pantry and then shoves the escapee inside. Footsteps sound on the stairs. He thinks for a moment.

In a couple of flicks of the wrist, he withdraws the knife from his pocket and then shoves it deep into the escapee's heart.

The serial killer opens his eyes wide for a brief moment, heaves one raspy breath, then dies.

INT. HOUSE - OUTSIDE THE BASEMENT DOOR

DANIEL

The only survivor, and the one who  
stopped a serial killer. Too sweet.

Daniel can hear Alex and Miranda whispering from inside the basement. He can't make out what they're saying, but the whispers are fast and frantic. Soft sobbing intermingles with the hushed voices.

Daniel takes a deep breath, grunts. . .

The hatchet in his hand hits the door with a powerful thud.

DANIEL

Not laughing at me now, are you?  
Tell me again, Alex... how fucking  
retarded am I?

INSIDE THE BASEMENT

Wood splinters. Alex jumps. Miranda screams and covers her ears.

MIRANDA

Just leave us alone you sick fuck!

The chopping continues relentlessly. The tip of a hatchet peeks through the wood, around the lock. The hole gets bigger, with each blow.

Alex runs toward the door, sword ready. He screams and shoves the sword through the hole.

O.S. A loud groan.

Alex pulls the sword back through the hole. It's covered and dripping with blood. His brows furrow, his breathing labored.

He stumbles back, bumps into Miranda.

The chopping starts again.

Miranda screams repeatedly.

Alex clinches his teeth together, screams with rage and fear and lunges for the hole in the door again.

Again, the sword is covered in blood.

O.S. Something slides down the door and then a thud.

Silence.

Miranda looks at the blood dripping from the sword. She closes her eyes, cries softly, and slides down to the floor in a heap.

Alex waits for several seconds, stares at the hole in the door. He approaches, leans down to peer through the hole - nothing but the empty stairway.

He slowly slides the lock, then opens the door. Miranda stands, wobbly and delirious, makes her way next to Alex.

They both stare down at Daniel's body, stabbed twice through the lower part of his stomach.

His chest is still, no rise and fall from breathing.

Alex shakes his head, brows furrowed. He turns to Miranda.

ALEX

I never shoulda done that - made  
fun of him all the time... all the  
time. Jesus...

He shoves Daniel's body a couple of times with his foot.

No response.

Alex lets out a shaky breath, tosses the sword to the floor, inside the basement. The handle of it breaks off and rolls across the concrete.

Miranda turns her head up to the ceiling, closes her eyes and mouths a prayer.

Alex hands her the flashlight, grabs her free hand. They step over Daniel's body.

Miranda pauses before they head up the stairs, out of the basement. She pulls her hand away from Alex.

MIRANDA

Wait. I know this sounds crazy...

She runs a hand over her face roughly, wiping away tears.

MIRANDA

Are you sure he's dead?

ALEX

What?

MIRANDA

You know how it is... you gotta make sure the killer's dead.

Alex stares at her like she's nuts.

ALEX

This isn't some stupid horror movie Miranda. That's my brother laying there.

MIRANDA

Step brother.

ALEX

He's not breathing okay. He's dead and I killed him.

Alex stares at her in awe, shakes his head.

Miranda huffs, heads up the stairs. She mumbles.

MIRANDA

We just need to find a phone. There has to be a regular, not fucking cordless one somewhere in this house.

Alex's eyes linger on Daniel for a few seconds, before he tromps up the stairs behind Miranda.

MONTAGE

Alex and Miranda search the house.

They dig in dresser drawers.

They search in closets.

INT. ATTIC - MOMENTS LATER

Old toys, furniture and boxes litter the floor. The ceiling and corners are thick with cobwebs.

Alex kneels down, shines the light on one of the boxes. The label reads "rummage sale". He scoffs and shakes his head.

Miranda rips open a dusty box, while Alex shines the light inside.

They dig through it - old clothes, stuffed animals, pots and pans, etc. They do the same with several more boxes. Finally, Alex finds a regular phone.

Miranda squeals and kisses him hard on the cheek.

MIRANDA

I think I love you.

They smile and celebrate for a few seconds.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Alex plugs the phone in, puts the receiver to his ear. He frowns, looks over his shoulder at Miranda.

She holds the flashlight for him to dial.

MIRANDA

Oh no... no, no, no. Please don't  
tell me the lines are down.

Alex jiggles the phone cord, presses the button a few times.  
A wide grin spreads across his face.

ALEX

Got it.

Miranda jumps up and down as Alex dials.

OPERATOR (ON PHONE)

Nine, one, one. What is your  
emergency?

Alex fills the operator in. . .

OUTSIDE

The snow falls heavy in a torrential wind - trees swaying and  
snapping.

INT. BASEMENT STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

Daniel lies on the floor motionless. Blood seeps from his  
stomach wounds, through his clothes, and mingles with the  
puddle of it he's lying in.

Suddenly Daniel's thumb twitches. His hand forms a fist.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Alex hangs up the phone, turns to Miranda who stares at him  
expectantly.

ALEX

They're sending an ambulance and  
the police but it may take a while.  
The roads aren't all clear.

MIRANDA

Yeah... I guess your step brother  
was a little too busy tonight.

She scoffs, runs a hand roughly through her hair.

MIRANDA

Alex... you have to call your dad.

Alex's eyes narrow, his brows furrowed. He sighs.

ALEX

I know... oh God... What am I gonna tell them?

Alex, grim, nods and points toward the refrigerator.

ALEX

Get me the number, would you? On the door of the fridge.

Miranda takes a couple of steps forward.

O.S. Feet shuffling.

Miranda whirls around, gasps. Her eyes widen.

Alex cocks his head, listens.

A dark blur swings through the air. A piece of wood from the basement door crashes against the back of Alex's neck.

He falls to the floor, unconscious.

Miranda shrieks, looks down at Alex, then at Daniel - the piece of wood clenched in his hand.

A maniacal smile stretches across Daniel's face. His clothes are soaked with blood.

He holds the piece of wood up over his head, moves toward Miranda.

She holds the flashlight tight in her hand. Tears fall down her cheeks. She swings the flashlight at Daniel, walking backwards.

He advances slowly, ducks out of the way and giggles.

MIRANDA

No! God! What do you want from me?  
Please... don't! Just leave me  
alone!

Daniel lunges at Miranda teasingly.

She jumps and gasps. Her back is now pressed in the corner of the wall and the counter top.

Miranda's eyes wander over to the pantry door. A pool of blood leaks through the crack of the door. It seems to quickly spread across the floor.

Daniel laughs. Miranda screams and sobs.

MIRANDA

No! What did I do? I never laughed  
at you... never! I told them to  
stop.

Daniel stops. He cocks his head sideways, looks confused.

MIRANDA

Yes. Remember? You were listening.  
It was me that took up for you.  
Me...

Miranda forces a smile.

MIRANDA

I would never make fun of you. You  
didn't deserve that. They were  
awful to you.

Daniel's eyes soften. He takes a step toward her. She raises her trembling hand and touches his face, strokes his cheek.

Daniel closes his eyes, enjoying her touch. He sniffs her hand and then licks it.

Miranda draws her hand back, horrified, drops the flashlight from her other hand, onto the counter top. It rolls around, casts intermittent light on them.

Daniel's expression hardens again. He drops the board from his hand, grabs her wrist. He presses himself against her.

With his other hand he opens and fumbles in a drawer of silverware, grabs a huge butcher knife. He draws it back, ready to strike.

Miranda screams and pleads.

From behind, Alex silently grabs the piece of wood from the floor, slams it into the back of Daniel's head.

Daniel looks stunned. A trickle of blood runs from his ear. He turns around, stumbles a few steps and drops the knife. He grabs his head with both hands, whimpers.

Miranda picks up the knife, starts toward Daniel's back, a look of determined hatred on her face.

Daniel lunges, grabs Alex around the throat. Alex coughs, struggles for air as Daniel squeezes tighter and tighter.

There's a wet, slicing sound.

Daniel blinks his eyes several times. Blood drips from the corner of his mouth. He falls to the floor to reveal that Miranda was behind him. The knife juts from his back.

Alex coughs, his hand at his throat, stumbles over to the counter to retrieve the flashlight. He shines it on Daniel.

Daniel lies face down. His legs twitch violently. He gurgles on his own blood, takes one deep, struggling breath, then lies motionless.

Miranda kneels over Daniel, stares at Alex for a second, tears rolling down her cheeks.

She removes the knife, then plunges it into Daniel's back... again and again.

She drops the knife, runs to Alex, and sobs.

A few moments later, Alex goes to a cabinet, withdraws a table cloth.

Miranda twirls her hair vigorously. She pulls her hand away and it's full of hair - fallen out from all the twirling. She stares at the hair in her hand for a moment, horrified.

She comes out of her stupor as Alex starts to cover Daniel.

MIRANDA

Wait.

Alex looks at her, confused, glances down at Daniel's body.

MIRANDA

Is he dead? I mean... are you sure  
he's dead this time?

Alex lays down the flashlight, turns Daniel over with some effort.

Miranda steps closer.

Alex places a hand above Daniel's nose and mouth. He pauses, stares at all the blood on Daniel's clothes. He leans over, listens for a heart beat.

He nods to Miranda, then covers Daniel with the table cloth. The edges of the cloth soak up his blood.

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING

The snow melts from the early morning sun. Crime scene tape marks off the entrance to the house. Police cars and a coroner's office van sit in the driveway, lights but no sirens.

Alex sits on the front steps of the house, a blanket wrapped around him. He watches, eyes not blinking, as body bag after body bag are loaded into the van by POLICEMEN.

AT THE CORONER'S VAN

The last body bag to roll by holds Daniel. The top of it is still unzipped, revealing his face.

ON THE STEPS

O.S. Female mumbling.

Alex hangs his head for a few moments. When the coroner van doors close, he turns his gaze back to Miranda.

Alex can see her taking, but she's too far away for him to hear.

Miranda sits on a fallen tree, twirls her hair, a blanket wrapped around her.

A POLICEMAN, not in uniform but in a suit, with a badge on his coat, questions her.

Alex stares at them for several moments.

FEMALE OFFICER (O.C.)

Son? Alex, did you hear me?

Alex blinks a couple of times, lifts his gaze to the FEMALE OFFICER, who stands in front of him.

ALEX

What?

FEMALE OFFICER

The phone numbers and addresses for your friends?

He turns his gaze back to Miranda, mumbles.

ALEX

Yeah. The address book by my computer.

FEMALE OFFICER

You two got real lucky you know.

Alex doesn't look at her.

ALEX

Yeah... lucky.

ON THE FALLEN TREE

Miranda stares down at her hands, shaking, covered with blood and her own hair.

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE VAN

Body bags cover the floor, piled three deep.

The sound of breathing and the low rumble of the engine fill the vehicle.

Daniel's body bag, now closed, rises and falls a few times, at the area over his nose and mouth.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The coroner's van pulls away.

FADE OUT