

COMPLEX CITY

Written by

Michael Harrold

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1422 N. Kingsley Dr. #107, LA, CA, 90027
310-601-0910
Michael_Harrold22@gmail.com

A BLOOD RED HOURGLASS ON A GLASSY BLACK ABDOMEN

FEMALE VOICE

Is it a black widow?

Pulling back...

A HUGE BLACK WIDOW sits on a web in a cupboard below a sink.

It is expertly tucked away in a hard to reach spot. Except for the Cellular LIGHT spotlighting it, one would never know.

MALE VOICE

Not sure. Definitely black. And
fucking huge. I thought they were
supposed to be smaller?

The hand holding the Cell Phone gets dangerously close.

The voices belong to BRIAN and ADRIENNE. More on them later.

The Spider's many EYES notice the movement. The eight mighty legs begin a rapid march.

ADRIENNE

Did you check for red markings?

RIGHT at the hand! Brian must not be using his eyes.

And he does not notice the spider about to make contact.

BRIAN

Let me take another look.

The Spider steps onto the outstretched hand.

BRIAN

Oh Jesus.

ADRIENNE

What?

BRIAN

(drops to a whisper)
It's on my hand.

Adrienne SHRIEKS! Brian has to hold his hand still.

BRIAN

Calm down!

Spider makes a slow trek over the slightly trembling hand.

It pauses in the center.

Intense moments passes.

ADRIENNE
(whispering)
Is it gone?

BRIAN
Uh... no.

ADRIENNE
Can you kill it?

BRIAN
Not at the moment.

ADRIENNE
Why? You know where it is?

BRIAN
---Because... It knows where I am.

The two fall into deathly silence.

If a Spider could show SMUG, this would be it. She's the queen in the castle.

CUT TO:

SUPER: TWO WEEKS EARLIER

INT. DARK APARTMENT - NIGHT

GODFREDO, a 30ish Latino man frantically packs a SUITCASE with a TV on in the background, volume turned down low.

He looks very anxious as he grabs underwear, shirts, jeans.

A SUDDEN SOUND causes Godfredo to jump from fright!

DISTANT VOICE (O.S.)
(pleading)
Agua. Agua. Agua por pavor.

He's surprised by the Voice, coming from his neighbor's wall.

GODFREDO
Mr. Guzman?

The Distant Voice, MR. GUZMAN, doesn't respond. Godfredo goes back to packing. He adds bathroom essentials to the bag.

MR. GUZMAN
Agua. Agua. Agua por pavor...

Godfredo's heart skips a beat. The moment has sinister written all over it. He bangs on the wall.

GODFREDO

Do you need assistance Mr. Guzman?

A long silent beat.

Godfredo adds personal possessions to the suitcase; photos, keepsakes, legal documents.

He crams everything down to make space for something big.

MR. GUZMAN

Agua. Agua. Agua por pavor.

Godfredo's heart can't take the broken sounding voice.

GODFREDO

It's three in the morning. Can you use the fucking tap?!

He SHOVES a pound of WEED into the suitcase. It barely fits.

MR. GUZMAN

Agua. Agua. Agua.

Highly irritated, he grabs a WATER BOTTLE and his suitcase.

Godfredo SLAMS the door on his way out.

CUT TO:

EXT. EAST HOLLYWOOD - MORNING

A view from a restaurant parking lot, past all the palm trees and different layers of living is the iconic HOLLYWOOD SIGN.

In the parking lot, a HOMELESS CRACKHEAD awkwardly staggers into the dumpster pen, squats out of view and works on releasing his bowels accompanied by painful sounding GRUNTS.

Welcome to East Hollywood.

EXT. ROSEWOOD MANOR - DAY

An envious-to-look-at BMW SUV cruises a trashy part of town. It parks in front of ROSEWOOD MANOR, a large, sorta shitty apartment building in the heart of East Hollywood.

A very tired ANNA, a 20ish punk rock chick up before her usual bedtime approaches the BMW. The window rolls down.

ANNA
Morning Marty.

MARTY grins at her. A 60ish Jewish man with a conservative outfit and way too much energy for the time of day.

MARTY
Whatcha got for me baby?

Something about the way he talks makes him seem fairly harmless. Anna hands over an envelope filled with checks.

MARTY
That everyone?

ANNA
Waiting for a few more.

Marty glances at his dilapidated building.

MARTY
What? You've got to be fucking kidding me? It's already the third. Go bang on doors! Get em out of bed. Give out pay or quits. Don't let the weirdos get the best of you. Get those winnings!

ANNA
You got it boss.

MARTY
Need anything from me?

ANNA
Keys to your car.

MARTY
When you give me the keys to your yacht - you've got a deal. See you in the morning, baby.

Anna waves as Marty drives out into the empty streets, drinking a diet cola to help replenish his peppy energy.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - MOMENTS LATER

A brooding, mysterious, APARTMENT COMPLEX is Marty's next stop. He parks in a loading zone.

The building is next to COOKIES, a cheap, family-style chain with a large parking lot and a view of the Hollywood sign.

Marty waits for the Homeless Crackhead pulling up his pants to stumble past before he gets out of the car.

He's on his CELL.

MARTY

Godfredo? Marty. It's 5:45. You're messing up my schedule. Call me.

INT. WEEPING WILLOW 1ST FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

The dimly lit halls have antique light fixtures and cheap, cheesy, dingy oil paintings scattered through out.

Marty approaches #107. It has a "Manager" sign. He KNOCKS.

MARTY

Godfredo? You in there? What the hell? Don't make me use my shotgun.

No answer. Knocks again.

MARTY

You're going to have to come down to the office on your own time if I don't collect your winnings from you now.

Nothing. Just early morning silence. Marty gives up, leaves.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - MOMENTS LATER

Marty drives away and a Garbage Truck replaces his vehicle.

INT. CROWDED ONE BEDROOM - NIGHT

BRIAN, a good looking child of the eighties, multi-tasks on his LAPTOP, CELL PHONE, and TABLET, trying to do too much.

He is squished into a 5' by 5' cube that is his living space.

Part of a cattle call renting scam for struggling actors. There are three other cubicles, each with suitcases.

On the laptop, he updates his resume. On the tablet, he has a job posting open. And on the Cell, he talks to his MOM.

BRIAN

Small salary. Rent's included. That's worth it right there. I'd get a lot of free time. Which I need.

MOM (CELL)

If you're having trouble you could always move back home.

Brian emails his resume to the job listing.

BRIAN

I'm here to find out what happened. I won't leave until I do.

MOM

Your dad still thinks you're on vacation in Tokyo.

BRIAN

Fine. Don't tell him I'm here.

MOM

I'll stall him for a while longer, but soon you'll have to tell him yourself. You won't be able to keep lying.

BRIAN

Don't tell him. Give me another week. Ten days. If I find something then it makes it easier to tell him. If not, well. I'll deal with that then.

MOM

Things like this aren't meant to be discovered easily.

Brian notices its getting late and scrambles into action.

BRIAN

Then dad shouldn't be so secretive. If I find him, I'll come home. But I have a feeling I could be here for a while.

He's out the door.

EXT. EAST LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Now this is a shitty neighborhood. Brian carefully watches everyone in his field of vision as he walks to the corner.

MOM

Is the neighborhood safe?

BRIAN

Nicer than where I live now.

Said as he passes a bum passed out on the curb.

MOM

Oh Brian. You make me worry so much.

BRIAN

There's nothing to worry about, mom.

He's on a busy, commercial street. A PUBLIC BUS is at a stop waiting for passengers to load and it's almost done its job.

BRIAN

Gotta go.

He hangs up and makes a mad dash for the bus.

INT. DARK APARTMENT - DAY

Marty enters the unkempt apartment followed by a WORK CREW.

The place is exactly as Godfredo left it when he fled, messy.

Marty grabs a BANKER'S BOX stuffed with paperwork.

MARTY

All right boys, let's get to work.
Throw it all out. We've got a new
manager starting. You have two days.

The Crew swarms the abandoned living space, ready to gut it.

By the time they're done, it's just another empty apartment.

EXT. COOKIES RESTAURANT - DAY

A different bus on a different day pulls away from the stop in front of the East Hollywood Cookies. Brian looks around.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - MOMENTS LATER

It's a very short walk to Weeping Willow.

Brian looks at the creepy building. He's intimidated by its facade. It's a slow-crumbling, dark, art-deco construction slightly misshaped from decades of earthquakes.

A gallery of the desert, a cactus garden flourishes up front.

Marty waits for him in front of a robust prickly pear.

MARTY

Brian. Glad you didn't chicken out!

BRIAN

Pass up free rent in LA. Never.

MARTY

I knew you were a man who loved a good bargain. Come on. I'll give you the tour. You will meet Francisco later.

Marty uses a MASTER KEY to open the gated front door.

INT. WEEPING WILLOW 1ST FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Brian looks around the hallway. At the entrance are a mailbox station and a table with chairs.

MARTY

Fifty units total. Six floors and a basement. Rooftop. Most tenants have been here for a while. No vacancies. Definitely no parking. You'll have to get a permit for your car.

BRIAN

No problem. I'll take care of it.

MARTY

It's an old building. From the 20s. People didn't know we'd all be driving way back when so I said fuck it, I'm not giving the weirdos a parking lot.

Marty lets Brian peek around before he herds him onwards. They get to #107. He unlocks the door.

MARTY

This is the manager's unit. I need an on site manager for all my buildings. First in line for dealing with the freaks. Hollywood's full of them.

He swings open the door as he talks.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A small, but nice looking STUDIO STYLE apartment. Empty.

Brian looks impressed. Lots of potential.

MARTY

Last manager left town suddenly. Some kind of family emergency. Collected most of his winnings for last month, then... poof. He was gone.

BRIAN

Winnings?

MARTY

Rents. Most important part of the job. And renting out the vacants. Money first. Then safety and security.

He's only sort of kidding. Brian takes a look in the kitchen. Size of a walk-in closet. Small fridge. Two burner stove.

MARTY

The kitchen isn't too bad. I've got buildings where they're half the size. Need help moving? I can get Francisco to get the boys together...

He's reaching for his Cell before he gets an answer.

BRIAN

It's okay. I don't have much to move.

MARTY

Francisco? Where you at?

INT. FRANCISCO'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

FRANCISCO, a middle aged Latino enjoying the good life as a supervisor, juggles a coffee, donut, wheel, and phone.

FRANCISCO

In the Valley boss.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT

Brian steps up to a window.

BRIAN

It's okay. Really.

Marty shushes him with a wag of his finger.

MARTY

Can you get a few of the boys together and help Brian move his crap?

FRANCISCO (CELL)

Sorry Boss. Boys are all busy.

Brian opens the blinds to inspect the view.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

He's going to have the best view of a Cookies' parking lot in all of LA. The Hollywood Sign still way off in the distance.

A woman in a WHITE DRESSING GOWN wanders the parking lot. Looks lost. Could be crying. Hard to tell.

Brian closes the blinds.

INT. FRANCISCO'S TRUCK

Francisco nearly drops his donut. He juggles the sweets and clasps the phone to his ear with his cheek.

MARTY (CELL)

What's so damn important? Get a couple of them over here.

FRANCISCO

Can't do it. They're all in Koreatown helping with the big roach problem.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT

Brian checks outside again. Dressing Gown is gone.

MARTY

What? This is Los Angeles, we all got cockroach problems. Even the roaches have roach problems.

(lowers his phone)

Can't help you move today.

BRIAN

I really don't own all that much. I can handle it.

MARTY

You're not a weirdo, are you?

(to Francisco)

Get over here sometime soon and meet the new kid, bye baby.

He hangs up.

BRIAN

What do you think is weird?

MARTY

You better be kidding. No late night calls from the police and you can be as weird as you want to be.

But said with a "business professional" look.

They hear ANGRY SHOUTING coming from the parking lot.

MARTY

Building's got some opera to it. The neighborhood is a bit shit. But we keep you safe. Keep the doors locked at night. Patrol your building. You tell your tenants - don't let anyone in or out that doesn't live here.

Brian looks like he is unsure about what he got himself into.

MARTY

Come on. I'll show you the rest.

INT. WEEPING WILLOW BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Marty leads the way. The basement lights are a harsh, bright neon. He points out features as he walks.

MARTY

Two rents down here that the city don't need to know about. Understand?

They pass two unmarked doors with heavy metal frames.

BRIAN

Area fifty-one and fifty-two?

MARTY

Unofficially, yes. Renovated storage spaces a few years back. City don't need to know. Got it?

BRIAN

Got it. They know the old manager left?

MARTY

They will when you go knock on some doors and introduce yourself. Most just want to go about their business. I'll get the office to mail out a "welcome to the building" letter.

He opens another door farther down the hall.

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The laundry room has two beat up washers and two beat up dryers. The washers are operating. A giant water heater is in the corner. A big power station is in another.

Someone's dirty laundry is on display, haphazardly thrown in a wet pile on a folding counter.

Brian stares at a pile of damp PANTIES.

MARTY

Two washers. Dollar apiece. Same for the dryers. They're old but they work well. This is an old building so utilities are included. Make sure to lock up this room at night.

A LOCK BOX is next to the water heater. Marty points at it.

MARTY

Winnings go in here. Weirdos put in maintenance requests. Check it daily. Any requests, don't deal with it. I pay people to clean up messes. I pay people to collect checks and keep her fat. Guess which one you are?

BRIAN

I get the checks. The fattening ones.

MARTY

Smart boy. Good. Email your requests over to the office. The girls will add it to the boys' job list.

BRIAN

What time do I open the laundry room?

MARTY

Wait until all the drunks have found alleys to pee in. Bums'll try and sneak in to find a place to sleep.

ADRIENNE, a very attractive woman in her yoga pants enters the Laundry Room. She finds her panties in a bunch.

ADRIENNE

Mother fuckers.

She turns to Brian and Marty, ready to be hostile.

ADRIENNE

Did you guys move my laundry?

Marty watches Brian, expecting him to answer.

BRIAN

No. I'm sorry.

ADRIENNE

Who did this?

BRIAN

Someone who needed the washer?

Adrienne rolls her eyes sarcastically.

ADRIENNE

Yeah. Thanks.

She bundles up her clothes with nothing more to say.

Marty motions for the door.

MARTY

Come on.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

They enter the Storage Room. It is full of paint cans, broken bathroom fixtures, and other projects in states of disrepair.

MARTY

Maintenance works in here. No reason to let anyone in. Keep it locked.

Marty grabs a BANKER'S BOX resting on a work bench.

MARTY

I grabbed this when we got word the manager was vacating. Didn't want them throwing it out when they cleaned up. It's your paperwork. Leases. Rental forms. Eviction notices. Pay or quits. Take it with you and don't lose it.

Brian grabs the Banker's Box.

Marty leads the way out.

BRIAN

Should I have gotten involved?

MARTY

What? Laundry room? Not your job.

BRIAN

She was pissed.

MARTY

I'd be too if someone was messing with my briefs baby. Guess you could have introduced yourself.

Brian looks worried that he didn't think of that.

INT. WEEPING WILLOW 1ST FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Marty and Brian wait for the elevator.

The elevator arrives. An old Asian woman, PEARL, shuffles past carrying a GLASS of WATER. She barely notices them.

Brian steps up to the plate, ready to impress.

BRIAN

Hi there! I'm your new building manager! Brian!

His approach is way too strong. Strike two. She looks up at him, scowls, and moves on without another word.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Marty pushes the button for the sixth and final floor. It's a cramped space for two men.

MARTY

Nice try but don't go scaring them like that. People keep to themselves. You're here to keep it clean, keep it full, and keep it safe. You don't need to make enemies.

Brian looks confused from the contradiction.

BRIAN

I wanted to introduce myself...

MARTY

I said introduce yourself to the girl whose panties you got a good look at.

That makes Brian blush.

MARTY

Hey baby, I'm old but I've got eyes. Love this town.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW ROOFTOP - MOMENTS LATER

There is a great view of the Hollywood Hills to the North and downtown LA to the East. Weeping Willow is one of the tallest buildings in the area so nothing obstructs the view.

The rooftop has a DIRTY COUCH blending in with the satellite dishes and air conditioning vents.

Marty beelines for the couch.

MARTY

How the hell did that get up here?
I'll get Francisco to get rid of it.

They inspect closer and find a single SILK SLIPPER.

Marty picks it up.

MARTY

No f-ing respect. This isn't their lounge. Throw shit like this out.

BRIAN

What if someone looks for their missing slipper?

MARTY

The better question is - why did they leave the roof only wearing one? If you find Cinderella, remind her to not treat my building like her bathroom.

He hands it over. Brian props up the Banker's Box with one arm and grabs the Slipper. He holds it like its a biohazard.

MARTY

Better be on your toes around here.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - MOMENTS LATER

At the entrance, Brian struggles with the Banker's Box.

Marty takes out a Key Ring. He holds up the Master Key.

MARTY

This one here is the master key. Opens all the doors on locks we installed. I own fifty buildings in LA. Five right here in East Hollywood. This'll open up all the doors in all of them.

BRIAN

What if someone changes their lock?

MARTY

Some tenants gets picky about privacy and change them. *Again*. You are not here to nurse them. If they fuck up their apartment and we can't get in to fix it, too fucking bad. And they can pay me for the damages to my building.

He tosses the Keys at Brian. Brian awkwardly tries to catch them but a Banker's Box doesn't make a good catcher's mitt.

He bends over to pick up his keys.

BRIAN

What are the other keys for?

MARTY

The rest are copies of what the tenants have in case they lose theirs. Couple of doors don't open with the master. Key's on there.

BRIAN
What doors don't open?

MARTY
What is this, twenty questions?

BRIAN
I'm trying to be thorough. I'm trying
not to forget anything.

Marty has a poker faces. Brian hesitates. Marty laughs.

MARTY
I'm messing with you, lighten up. Just
a couple of storage closets and rooms
like maintenance. Take a look around
later and learn the layout.
(beat)
This is a privacy versus protection
game bub. Most times just go with your
gut and you'll do fine. Stay out of
peoples' business and if you do
stumble on a secret - hide it. Right?
Simple.

Brian balances the Box on his knee and reaches for the door.

MARTY
You're killing me with that. You
should go throw it in your apartment.

BRIAN
Right. Great idea.

MARTY
Call me after you get settled in. Can
you come by the office tomorrow and
take care of your paperwork. Figure
out all the little details.

Brian manages to get the door angled open with one foot.

BRIAN
Of course. I won't let you down.

MARTY
I know. Call me later, baby.

Marty saunters off.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Brian sets the Banker's Box down on the Kitchen Counter. He
opens all the cupboards. Opens the Fridge. The Stove.

Everything is empty.

Flips all the light fixtures on and off.

Messes with the ceiling fans.

Tests the faucets. Strong water pressure.

Flushes the toilet. Nice, strong, flow.

He's satisfied - it'll do nicely...

INT. WEEPING WILLOW - DAY

Brian locks the deadbolt on his apartment.

He heads for the stairs and takes a long tour of the building. All the different floors.

The ever so slightly changing doors.

He takes note of every single fire escape.

Every dark hallway.

All the nooks and crannies...

...And never sees a living soul.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Later, he sits on the floor writing a list of essentials on his Cell when he hears an eerie SOUND coming from next door.

MR. GUZMAN

Agua. Agua por pavor. Agua.

Slow and pleading, as if in pain or disorientated.

Brian looks like he's caught in a possible set of potential crisis headlights. He obviously has no clue what to do.

The Voice stops. Brian refocuses on his list.

MR. GUZMAN

Agua. Agua. Agua por pavor.

Silence again. Deathly quiet.

BRIAN

Hello?

No answer. He cautiously resumes what he was doing.

MR. GUZMAN
Agua. Agua. Agua por pavor.

Brian opens the Banker's Box and rifles through it.
He finds a FILE marked "RICARDO GUZMAN #109".
He goes to the wall where the voice comes from and knocks.

BRIAN
Mr. Guzman?

Nothing. His heart settles down. He waits a touch longer.
Brian looks creeped out. He knocks on the wall gently.

BRIAN
Hello? Do you need help?

Brian raises his hand to knock again.
There is a KNOCKING that doesn't originate from Brian.
Which scares the SHIT out of him so much that it takes him a couple extra seconds to realize someone is at his front door.

INT. WEEPING WILLOW 1ST FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

He finds Adrienne with hand ready to knock again.

BRIAN
Jesus. You scared me.

ADRIENNE
Guy from basement. Who are you?

He covers up his rattled nerves expertly in front of her.

BRIAN
Brian. New manager. I don't know who moved your clothes, but if I see who it is, I can try to say something...

ADRIENNE
Adrienne. #209. Forget the laundry.
Can you help me with something else?

He now notices she has her own anxiety riddled body language.

BRIAN
Sure. I can try to help. What is it?

ADRIENNE
Come take a look.

They pass #109.

Brian takes a quick look but a closed door tells no secrets.

INT. ADRIENNE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Adrienne's place is the same size as Brian's.

She must be a model. Clothes are scattered about; it's got that busy lady syndrome. Glamor shots are posted on the wall.

Brian looks at a sexy photo.

Adrienne is very distracted and doesn't notice him gawking.

ADRIENNE

Come here.

Brian follows her into the kitchen.

ADRIENNE

(whispers)

There is a spider behind the fridge.

Brian blinks. His male spirit of conquer triggers like mad. There's a monster on the loose to help protect a lady from.

BRIAN

Spider killing. I got this.

ADRIENNE

It's not funny.

Brian reaches for the side of the Fridge, ready to pull.

BRIAN

Trust me. I've killed plenty. Gotten pretty good at catch and release too.

Adrienne doesn't seem to like the posturing.

ADRIENNE

I can kill a spider asshole. This one is different. It's big. It's black. I think it's a black widow.

Brian reels from the direct attack.

BRIAN

No. I wasn't saying. You look decent. Capable. I'm from the Midwest. I spent all my time outdoors. I'm an idiot.

ADRIENNE

Just take a look.

BEHIND THE FRIDGE

The SHADOWS clearly look like a place a Spider could lurk. There is a jostle. A crack of light expands.

The light hits the large BLACK WIDOW SPIDER.

She scurries for the dark just before Brian can see her.

BRIAN

Nothing back here.

Adrienne pushes past him.

ADRIENNE

I just saw it. It was here.

Her kitchen with its dark corners now looks more sinister.

BRIAN

Could be anywhere. Remember. It's just as scared of you. Don't threaten it, it won't attack. What's your number?

ADRIENNE

Why?

BRIAN

If it comes back. Text. And keep your eye on it. I'll come and get it out.

ADRIENNE

What if I don't see it?

BRIAN

I can put in a work request and get someone over here tomorrow morning.

ADRIENNE

Fuck it. I'm finding somewhere to stay tonight. You got a couch?

Unfortunately Brian knows his room is empty.

BRIAN

I'm on my way to Target to get some basics. I'll see what they have for trapping and/or killing a spider. Can you hold tight for a couple hours?

This starts to calm her down, somewhat.

ADRIENNE

Okay. Fine. But I'm not going to be able to rest until this bitch is dead.

Brian puts her # into his Cell.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - DAY

Brian is focused on his mission, charges down the stairs. But he's distracted when MUNGA, a tiny CHIHUAHUA, runs up to him.

BRIAN

Look at you.

Brian gives the pooch a good ear scratch.

BRIAN

Who's looking after you?

He looks around. On the front steps is CAESAR, a Latino scumbag smoking a cigarette while texting.

BRIAN

This your dog?

Caesar looks up, the attitude drips off him like sweat.

CAESAR

No. It's the fucking Easter bunny's.

BRIAN

You live in the building?

Caesar gives Brian a very hard look. Message received.

CAESAR

Why you want to know?

BRIAN

I'm Brian, the new building manager.

CAESAR

Caesar. #403.

BRIAN

Let me know if you need anything.

CAESAR

What happened to the last pendejo?

BRIAN

I guess he had to leave town suddenly.

CAESAR

They all have to leave town suddenly.
(calls to the dog)
Come here Munga.

Munga ignores him.

CAESAR

Munga! Get over her now! MUNGA!

Munga scampers up the steps. Caesar gets ready to give his dog a vicious kick, but fakes it at the last moment.

Yeah, real nice guy. Big dog and little dog go inside.

INT. TARGET - DAY

Brian pushes an empty shopping cart around the aisles. He stops and puts a cheap INFLATABLE MATTRESS in his cart.

He gathers cleaning supplies and bathroom tissue.

Light bulbs, trash bags, laundry soap.

A cheap, folding chair.

He then takes a trip down the home and garden aisle.

After careful inspection, loads up on spider killing gear.

INT. PUBLIC BUS - DAY

Brian struggles with his bags, more than an armful as he fights his way onto a crowded bus.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Brian sets his purchase bounty on his new kitchen counter - except for the bag of spider killing gear.

INT. ADRIENNE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Adrienne opens the door and lets Brian in.

BRIAN

Got all sorts of stuff here. Traps.
Sprays. Something called a fogger.

ADRIENNE

Can you just go get rid of it?

Brian goes into gunslinger mode. Arms himself with SPRAY.

He carefully enters her kitchen.

SPIDER POV

The Black Widow works on a web under the sink.

BRIAN THE HUNTER

Opens all the cupboards. He moves the Fridge and Stove out from the wall. He pokes at all the nooks and crannies.

He starts to spray Spider Killer everywhere.

SPIDER POV

This is one smart arachnid. The Spider senses danger and scurries down a hole under the sink where the pipes come in.

The escape hatch.

BRIAN THE HUNTER

Does his damage. Adrienne opens windows while he works.

Brian inspects the cupboards. He finds a few dead cockroaches but no spider corpses.

BRIAN

I used a full can.

ADRIENNE

Do you think that killed it?

BRIAN

Nothing with six legs and up could have survived that gas attack. But, just to be safe...

Brian opens up a package of Spider Bait Traps. He sets them in the different cupboards. One goes under the sink.

After he's done, he looks happy with his efforts.

Adrienne's stress looks lowered.

ADRIENNE

Thank you.

BRIAN

Let me know if you want to fog.

There's an awkward pause when that doesn't come out right.

BRIAN

I'd better go.

Adrienne shows him out.

SPIDER POV

The Black Widow crawls back into her sink-cavern lair. She spies with all her mighty little eyes, the Trap.

And in that space that happens between nature and chance...

She knocks the fucking thing into the abyss she just crawled out of.

Spiders should not be able to do that...

...but she did, she's the Queen.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - MOMENTS LATER

Brian goes back to the Bus Stop.

INT. CROWDED ONE BEDROOM - NIGHT

He packs all of his worldly possessions into a large suitcase, a big duffel bag, and a laptop bag.

He leaves the crowded bedroom carrying his way to freedom.

INT. PUBLIC BUS - NIGHT

But freedom is one super crowded bus ride away.

Brian struggles with his belongings and avoids the death glare of perturbed passengers bothered by his bulk.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - NIGHT

Brian is on the first step, reaches into his pocket.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

In Brian's hurry to save his damsel in spider distress, he forgot his new KEYS on the counter in the kitchen.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE

Brian's brain kicks in and informs him of his dilemma...

BRIAN

FUCK!

He gets out his Cell.

He looks at Adrienne's number, decides NOT to call it.

INT. MARTY'S HOME - NIGHT

Marty enjoys a fancy dinner with his wife, ROSEY. He looks at his wife apologetically when his Cell rings and he answers.

MARTY

It wasn't me. I swear it.

He flashes a smile for his Rosey.

INT. THAI TAKE-OUT PLACE - NIGHT

Brian picks at a curry. His bags stacked on the empty seats.

BRIAN

I'm so sorry to call you this late.

MARTY (CELL)

Brian, baby. What's the problem?

INT. MARTY'S HOME

Marty gives Rosey his best puppy dog look. An actual puppy dog, BOOTSY, a Laso Apso, leaps up on Marty's lap.

BRIAN (CELL)

I made a stupid mistake.

Marty looks like he's making calculations in his head.

MARTY

Did you already blow up the place?

He turns away from the dinner table.

INT. THAI TAKE-OUT PLACE

Brian is about to swallow a big pill made out of pride.

BRIAN

I locked my keys in the apartment.

MARTY

Is that all? Jesus. Kid. First night? Pretty impressive, you know? Did you try Francisco?

BRIAN

He didn't answer.

MARTY

Doesn't know your number. No worries, baby. You're lucky there's a manager who lives close by. Here's her number.

He has no pen. He writes the number in Sirachi on a napkin.

BRIAN

Got it. Thank you! I promise this
isn't like me at all.

MARTY

Don't worry about it baby. Come see me
at the office tomorrow.

Marty ends the call. Brian types the number into his phone.

EXT. ROSEWOOD MANOR - NIGHT

Brian puts his luggage down on the ground and waits. He looks nervous that all his possessions are so openly on display.

The front door opens and Anna comes outside.

BRIAN

Hi. Are you Anna?

Anna is surprised to see all the baggage he carries.

ANNA

Wow. Just come from a hostel?

BRIAN

Something like that. Marty said you
could help out. I am so sorry to
bother you. I'm such an idiot. I know.

ANNA

Okay. You're an idiot. Now what?

BRIAN

I hadn't thought that far ahead.

ANNA

Take my master. Go open your door.

Anna takes the Master Key off her key chain, hands it to him.
He picks up his luggage.

ANNA

Hey wait.

BRIAN

Yes?

ANNA

There's a Zankou Chicken near your
place. Bring me back a 1/4 white with
two extra garlic sauces. Two!!

BRIAN

Right. Okay. Chicken. Be right back.

She shrugs and goes back inside her building.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - LATER

Brian approaches his building. Two kids, JUNIOR (10), and HECTOR (7), play with Munga. The kids don't see Brian.

JUNIOR

Munga! Get over here!

Brian's surprised at the yelling. Munga's scared to approach. He reaches down and scratches Munga's ears. Munga licks his fingers and relaxes after being yelled at.

BRIAN

He would be safer on leash.

Their Child Guard is up. They are not sure what to do.

BRIAN

I'm the building manager. I met your dad today. Is that your dad? Caesar?

JUNIOR

Caesar? He's our dad.

HECTOR

Our dad has only one testicle.

Brian was not ready to hear that.

BRIAN

Oh. I see. That's good to know.

JUNIOR

We're sorry. We didn't want to lose him. He always tries to run away.

BRIAN

Ask your dad for a leash.

Brian unlocks the front door.

HECTOR

Bye Manager!

He goes inside.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Brian puts all of his worldly possessions into a pile in the center of the room.

He grabs his keys and jams them into his pocket. He's already on his way out when a SOUND stops him in his tracks.

MR. GUZMAN (O.S.)
(constant pleading)
Agua por pavor. Agua. Agua.

Brian pauses, apartment door open. He waits.

MR. GUZMAN
Agua. Agua por pavor.

INT. WEEPING WILLOW 1ST FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Brian knocks on #109.

BRIAN
Mr. Guzman? It's Brian. I'm the new building manager. Do you need help?

Silence is the answer he receives. He knocks again.

BRIAN
Do you need me to call someone?

Brian considers using the Master Key.

BRIAN
Do you want me to come in? Mr. Guzman?

From the Building Entrance TIRES SCREECH and a millisecond later, a HORN BLASTS!

He jams the Keys in his pocket and goes to investigate.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - CONTINUOUS

WENDY, a socialite with a superfluous, oversized luxury car too big for her needs is double parked at an awkward angle.

Wendy clutches Munga in a death grip of pink nails while two little boys plead with her to let him go.

Brian has no choice but to do a double take.

JUNIOR
Please. Please. Please. Please.

WENDY

I'm calling child services you little turds. Where are your parents?

HECTOR

Munga!?

WENDY

I'm taking your dog with me. You can't do that to him. It's horrible!

Wendy is in full-on wicked witch mode when Brian arrives.

BRIAN

What's going on here?

WENDY

You know this dog? These kids?

BRIAN

They live in my building. I'm the manager. What's going on?

Wendy jabs her Cell at the kids. She trembles when she talks. Everyone under 200lbs is terrified, especially Munga.

WENDY

This is why I never drive through this shitty neighborhood. Terrible people live here. I'm taking their dog away from them.

BRIAN

You can't do that. It's their dog.

She turns her indignant rage towards Brian.

WENDY

I nearly hit this dog because he ran out into the street.

BRIAN

They are kids. It was a mistake.

WENDY

More like these kids were a mistake.

BRIAN

Do you think you are overreacting?

Emotions are running very high.

WENDY

I got out of my car in case he was a
 poor, defenseless lost puppy. These...
 (pure vile)
 The fat older one screamed at the dog
 to get off the street. Then this one.
 (jabs at Hector)
 Kicked the dog. Kicked. The. Dog.

Hector looks like he is about to cry.

WENDY

I'm taking your dog. You can't kick
 animals. It's wrong. Very, very wrong!
 (at Brian)
 You know they don't learn this on
 their own. Sick. Someone should call
 child services to investigate.

BRIAN

You had better talk to their dad.

WENDY

Yes! I want to give him a piece of my
 mind. Where is the father of the year?

BRIAN

Just wait. Wait! I'll go get him.

Brian rushes inside the building.

INT. WEEPING WILLOW 4TH FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

He BANGS loudly on #403.

Caesar opens the door. He looks highly irritated.

CAESAR

What!?

BRIAN

It's your kids. You better come quick.

The irritated look VERY QUICKLY switches to SCARED DAD.
 Caesar rushes for the door.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - NIGHT

Caesar squares off with Wendy, still clutching Munga in a
 tight death-like grip. His kids cower behind him.

Brian observes from a short distance, staying out of it.

WENDY
They can't hit their dog. It's wrong.

CAESAR
Give him back. Now.

Wendy turns, protects Munga.

WENDY
No. I'm taking your dog. Someone needs
to protect him.

CAESAR
NOW!

Caesar's rage is frightening. Brian looks very uncomfortable.

BRIAN
You two don't need me anymore.

Caesar looks at him.

CAESAR
I've got this. Good looking out Boss.

HECTOR
(timid)
Bye Manager.

Brian quickly escapes the domestic dispute.

EXT. ROSEWOOD MANOR - NIGHT

Brian texts Anna "I'm here. With your 1/4 white."

Moments later, Anna opens the front door. She takes the
goodies from Brian and inspects the contents.

BRIAN
You are a life saver. Thank you.

ANNA
Where's the extra garlic sauce?

Anna rustles the bag, tries to find any hidden sauces.

ANNA
The garlic's the best part. Do you
mind going back?

She sees that Brian is haggard from a very long day.

ANNA
I guess I can make do with one.

She smiles; it's a "he's cute, I'm cute - hope he catches the signal" kind of smile.

BRIAN

You been a manager for a while?

ANNA

About four years.

BRIAN

It's my first time.

ANNA

Congratulations.

BRIAN

How well do you know your tenants?

ANNA

Well enough, I guess. I say hi to them in the building. Get a couple of barbecue invitations every year.

BRIAN

Do you avoid them on purpose?

ANNA

Marty's got this thing about staying out of other peoples' business. I guess it makes sense.

BRIAN

I saw a tenant arguing with a woman and I didn't know what I was suppos...

Anna cuts him off.

ANNA

Let me give you a tip. Every building is its own little complex city. Yours has a hundred people all trying to stay safe. Tenants aren't friends. Friends aren't tenants. Simple.

BRIAN

There is so much to learn.

ANNA

You're right on a fine line between private and public lives. People are going to have secrets and you're going to unfortunately find out. Do your best to ignore stuff that isn't your business and you'll do fine.

BRIAN

Guess everyone needs a home to hide their secrets.

ANNA

You have some to hide?

Brian doesn't answer. Anna gets the hint. There are secrets. The pause in the conversation that neither of them wants.

ANNA

Seen the tour busses yet?

From the look he gives, he has not.

ANNA

Marty didn't tell you?

BRIAN

Tell me what?

ANNA

You think weeping willows are popular in California?

BRIAN

I have had a lot on my mind today. Can you just tell me?

ANNA

Your building is part of Hollywood's best celebrity death tour - "Famous Death Faces and Places".

BRIAN

What the heck are you talking about?

ANNA

Google it. Seriously. Marty's pretty proud of that building.

She offers nothing more about the mystery.

BRIAN

I'd better go. Thanks again.

ANNA

What are neighbors for? Next time don't forget the extra garlic sauce.

Brian starts to leave but Anna isn't going to let him get away that easy.

ANNA

Call me if you have any questions
about managing. You've got my number.

Now he finally catches the chemistry happening. Took him a
little while, but he sees the bait for the hook.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - NIGHT

Across the street from the Building, Wendy talks to TWO COPS,
PETERS and VASQUEZ.

In front of the building, Caesar clutches Munga with his two
kids. Another COP watches him closely.

Brian averts his eyes, ready to shuffle past. No such luck.

WENDY

That's the building manager. He saw
what happened. Hey! You!

He notices that Caesar watches him closely and can hear him.

PETERS

Sir. We were called to this address
for a domestic disturbance. Did you
witness this man in an altercation
with this woman earlier tonight?

BRIAN

I locked my keys in my place. I just
got back. I've been distracted.

VASQUEZ

Are you the manager of this building?

BRIAN

Yes.

Brian realized he likes saying that. No time to savor it.

PETERS

Did you see him strike this woman?

Wendy looks at Brian, pleads with her eyes for him to agree.

BRIAN

My mind is on other things. I'm sorry.

WENDY

You saw it! I know you saw it happen!

PETERS

Ma'am. Please calm down.

VASQUEZ

According to her, she was talking to a tenant of yours about a dog when the suspect kicked and slapped her.

WENDY

Punched!

VASQUEZ

Ma'am. Please be quiet.

BRIAN

I didn't see anything.

PETERS

If there was an incident of domestic violence or assault a witness would help with conviction. Did you witness an altercation? Some kind of argument?

WENDY

He saw it happen. He's lying.

Caesar gives Brian a very serious look - the kind that says "I know where you sleep at night and don't forget it".

BRIAN

I know it is his dog. Does that help?

PETERS

She was concerned for the dog's safety which led to the altercation.

WENDY

Tell them the truth. You saw him hit me. I did nothing to provoke him. He's a monster. An animal. He's unstable because he's only got one testicle and is taking it out on this poor dog!

Cops aren't easy to shock, but that last comment got them by the balls a bit.

PETERS

Ma'am. Calm down!

The Cops seem to have determined this bitch is crazy.

VASQUEZ

You sure you didn't see anything?

Awkward silence.

BRIAN
Nothing. I didn't see anything. Sorry.

PETERS
Thank you for your time. Here's the precinct's number in case you remember something.

Peters hands him a local precinct card as Brian leaves.

WENDY
Fucking loser.

Brian passes Caesar, cool as a cucumber.

CAESAR
Good looking out boss.

He responds with a subtle nod. Opens the door.

HECTOR
Bye Manager.

Brian wanly smiles and waves goodbye at the innocent kid.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Brian sits in his plastic chair with his air mattress rolled out in front of him. He attaches a pump to the mattress.

The pump makes horrible loud noises as air fills up the bed.

INT. ADRIENNE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Adrienne does an inspection of her kitchen. She still looks uncomfortable, but overall safe again. No sign of a spider.

Such a lovely kitchen when it is calm.

She opens her fridge and gathers ingredients.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT

Brian tests out his bed.

The comfort received is somewhere between cheap hospital bed and a military barracks cot.

INT. ADRIENNE'S APARTMENT

She slices thick cuts of turkey from a roast.

Something scurries up to a block of Brie behind Adrienne. It's a DIRTY COCKROACH.

It climbs up on to the soft cheese.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT

Brian lays on the air mattress and uses his laptop.

He Googles "Weeping Willow Celebrity Death". After clicking a few links, he finds an "Unsolved Mysteries" style video.

VIRAL VIDEO

A gravel-voiced NARRATOR gives the details in front of Weeping Willow Terrace; circa mid-nineties.

NARRATOR

In 1921, this mysterious building located in the heart of Hollywood was owned by one of the major studios. It was used as apartment housing for contract actors.

The Narrator dissolves and is replaced by...

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - DAY (1920)

Way back when the building was brand new and none of the people in the modern story were even alive.

A VINTAGE CAR pulls up. A DAPPER MAN opens the car door for CLAIRE WILLOW, a stunning woman if ever there was one.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

One of their most famous silent stars, Claire Willow, was at the height of her fame when sound was introduced.

INT. CLAIRE WILLOW'S SUITES - NIGHT

Claire and her MANAGER have a private conversation.

She is very upset. Her Manager clasps her hands in support.

NARRATOR

Claire was one of the biggest stars whose voices couldn't translate to talkies so the studio decided to let her go and terminate her contract.

SCENES OF CLAIRE WILLOW

As her career crumbles.

She cries, or looks to be steps away from tears all the time.

NARRATOR

She was so upset, she cried all the time until...

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - NIGHT (1920)

Claire is alone on the roof. She weeps heaping sobs of tears at her turn of misfortune.

NARRATOR

One day she went to the roof of the only building her former studio would let her stay in...

She stands and walks to the edge of the roof with pride in her steps and humility in her eyes. She leans over.

NARRATOR

And jumped to her death.

Claire falls with the grace of a silent star, tears streaming down her face the whole five seconds.

She lands in a crumpled heap where there will one day be a Cookie's Parking Lot but is now just an open field.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - NIGHT (1990)

The Narrator is in a new shot. Walking the side of the parking lot.

NARRATOR

The owner of the studio renamed the building to Weeping Willow in her honor and the name has never changed.

The Narrator points to the roof of the building.

NARRATOR

Since her death, there have been countless reports of people who have seen her ghost. Is she really haunting this decrepit old apartment building? Or is it just another tragic story?

Dramatic pause. The Narrator's voice lowers to a whisper.

NARRATOR

You. Be the judge.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT

The video ends.

Brian shuts off the browser. He opens the blinds. Nothing outside. Just an empty parking lot.

MR. GUZMAN

Agua. Agua por pavor. Agua.

Brian listens. Silence for a few beats.

MR. GUZMAN

Agua. Agua. Agua por pavor.

He springs into action. He takes a cheap plastic cup he bought and fills it up from the tap and heads for the door.

INT. ADRIENNE'S APARTMENT

Adrienne assembles her sandwich. Mayo. Turkey. Toasted cheese. Lettuce leaf. Cheese.

She SCREAMS and drops the plate when she spies the vermin.

The cockroach scurries across the counter top.

Adrienne recovers quickly. She grabs a spatula and attacks.

She corners the little bastard near the sink.

INT. WEEPING WILLOW 1ST FLOOR

Brian stands in front of #109.

He listens at the door.

Silence. Nothing.

He lightly knocks.

BRIAN

Mr. Guzman. I brought you a glass of water. Mr. Guzman?

Nothing. He knocks again.

BRIAN

Hello? Should I just come in? I'm going to let myself in... okay?

Brian puts his key in the door. Starts to turn.

INT. ADRIENNE'S APARTMENT

She swings!

The cockroach makes a mad dash for safety.

And squeezes through a crack leading to under the sink.

Adrienne quickly opens the cupboard below the sink.

She comes face to face with...

The BLACK WIDOW SPIDER.

She unleashes an EPIC SCREAM!!

INT. WEEPING WILLOW 1ST FLOOR

Brian hears Adrienne's scream. Probably everyone on the first, second and third floor heard her.

Might be half of Hollywood heard her, she was that loud.

Brian gives up on #109 and races up the stairs.

INT. ADRIENNE'S APARTMENT

Adrienne swings open the door, grabs Brian and pulls him rapidly towards the kitchen.

BRIAN

You didn't text?

He sees his attempt at humor is greatly not appreciated.

BRIAN

Okay. Where is it?

ADRIENNE

Under there.

She's shaking. Very upset.

The sink cupboard is open. Shadows prevent a clear view.

Anything could be hiding in there.

BRIAN

I'll get it this time.

Adrienne hands him her weapon of choice. He looks at it. Not good enough.

Instead, he selects a large magazine. A very large magazine. The mother fucking 2" thick style issue of Marie Claire.

BRIAN

Is it all right if I?

ADRIENNE

Go right ahead. I can burn that later.

Brian gets on his knees, takes out his phone with his other hand. He sets it for a bright flash.

He puts his head down and looks in.

He spotlights his prey. Or is that his predator?

ADRIENNE

Is it a black widow?

Brian repositions himself so he can get a better angle.

BRIAN

Not sure. Definitely black. And
fucking huge. I thought they were
supposed to be smaller?

Brian lets his hand get dangerously close.

The Spider's many EYES notice the movement. The eight mighty legs begin a rapid march.

ADRIENNE

Did you check for red markings?

He turns and looks at Adrienne. His hand is still under the sink. He leans against the cupboard in an awkward position.

BRIAN

Let me take another look.

His eyes instantly light up in terror.

Adrienne sees the look. She covers her mouth.

BRIAN

Oh Jesus.

ADRIENNE

What?

BRIAN

(drops to a whisper)
It's on my hand.

Adrienne SHRIEKS! Brian pleads with his eyes for her to calm down. He shakes the useless magazine with his free hand.

BRIAN

Calm down!

Brian stares at her. She stares back. She gestures.

ADRIENNE

(whispering)
Is it gone?

BRIAN

Uh... no.

ADRIENNE

Can you kill it?

BRIAN

Not at the moment.

ADRIENNE

Why? You know where it is?

Brian sets the magazine down. He slowly turns his body to face the cupboard. He lowers his head and gets ready to look.

BRIAN

---Because... It knows where I am.

Brian makes eye contact. Two eyes look at hundreds.

Back near the web, a HUGE COCKROACH - twice the size of the one that Adrienne met, puts appendages on the mucky web.

Brian watches the Black Widow frenzy into action.

It leaps on the Huge Cockroach.

The battle is swift. Ruthless even for a National Geographic.

The Black Widow paralyzes its prey and drags the radiation proof wonder bug down into the hole near the pipes.

Watching natural selection at work, Brian realizes he's free.

He stands up.

ADRIENNE

Did you get it?

BRIAN

No. But I saw where it is getting in.

She's not happy with that answer.

ADRIENNE

Fuck that. Fucking kill it.

BRIAN

Listen. I'll just cover up the hole she's coming in through and you won't see her again. I promise.

ADRIENNE

I'm not sharing an apartment with it.

BRIAN

It touched me and nothing happened. Relax. We could chase it all night.

ADRIENNE

I can wait.

BRIAN

I'm not.

It's a battle of wills. Neither side can lose.

ADRIENNE

You sure it will be safe?

BRIAN

She was just looking for something to eat. Luckily it's not one of us.

ADRIENNE

Just make sure she can't get back in.

Brian works some magic. He clears out the web. Patches up the hole and seals it. No sign of the Black Widow.

After he's all done he washes his hands in the sink.

BRIAN

There. No more spider. Itsy-bitsy won't make it up the drain no more.

Brian lingers. Tries to think of something more to say.

ADRIENNE

Thanks.

BRIAN

No problem. You've got my number.

He hesitates at the front door.

A familiar sound causes them both to jump.

MR. GUZMAN

Agua. Agua. Agua por pavor.

They share a look; they both know that voice sounds very unnatural.

ADRIENNE

Did you just hear that?

Brian nods.

They both wait for the next chortle.

ADRIENNE

Have you met him?

BRIAN

Mr. Guzman? No.

ADRIENNE

I constantly hear him calling for water.

BRIAN

I've heard him too.

ADRIENNE

Should you go check on him? See if he's okay?

BRIAN

He stops after a couple of calls. Maybe he has someone who helps him.

MR. GUZMAN

Agua. Agua. Agua por pavor. Agua.

There it is. Adrienne grabs his arm reflexively. She pulls her hand back seconds later.

ADRIENNE

You have to go check on him.

Statement, not question.

BRIAN

I'm new to this job. I don't fully know what the line between privacy and intrusion is yet?

ADRIENNE

Can you call his emergency contact?

BRIAN

It's getting pretty late.

ADRIENNE

You don't think it sounds like an emergency.

Their frayed nerves are rubbing against each other.

BRIAN

Someone has to be helping him!

She crosses her arms, the international female symbol for you're not listening to me.

MR. GUZMAN

Agua. Agua. Agua por pavor.

Even though they sensed it was coming, they both still jump.

ADRIENNE

We have to go help him!

BRIAN

Fine!

Adrienne goes to her kitchen, Black Widow already a forgotten mystery. She pours a glass of water.

INT. WEEPING WILLOW 1ST FLOOR

Brian knocks on #109.

No answer. No sound of movement. Nothing.

BRIAN

Mr. Guzman? It's Brian, the building manager. Can I come in?

He knocks again. He gets his master key out.

He puts the key in the door.

A withered HAND grabs Adrienne by the wrist.

Adrienne JUMPS! Brian YELPS!

Someone unseen GASPS!

Turns out it is Pearl, the elderly woman. They face her.

Pearl holds a glass of water. And looks just as terrified.

BRIAN

Hi.

ADRIENNE

Hi Mrs. Pearl.

Pearl silently joins their expedition. There is a camaraderie that comes from investigating strange noises at night.

Brian turns the key in the door.

He pushes the door. Something is JAMMED under frame.

Brian puts his back into it. He shoves.

INT. MR. GUZMAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A full bottle of water blocks the door, the same water bottle Godfredo, the old manager brought over before he fled. Brian pushes past it and roughly stumbles into the room.

He gathers his bearings as Adrienne and Pearl enter.

They all react to an OBNOXIOUS ODOR. Brian covers his mouth but still manages to gag.

PEARL

(in Japanese)

What on earth?

A dirty BIRDCAGE is parked near the entrance. Five DEAD BIRDS fill the bottom of the cage.

The place is like a filthy topiary. Bestiary too.

Animal cages of all makes and models fill the room. Most are empty. Some have animals in them, left to die from neglect.

ADRIENNE

This... is... horrible...

Understatement of the year award goes to...

Brian is speechless as he slowly takes a few steps farther.

In the center of the room is a rack of musty goodwill clothes. A hospital bed is pushed up against a wall.

An old TV and a cabinet is against another wall. The TV is on with the sound off.

A recliner faces the TV. Faces away from the Mystery Solvers.

A crop of toupee hair puffs up from the top of the chair.

BRIAN
(finds his voice)
Mr. Guzman?

He ventures closer to the chair.

He knocks over a dog food dish with rotting wet dog food in the bowl. The flies scatter.

BRIAN
Mr. Guzman? Is there anyone we can
call to get you some help?

Mr. Guzman's hand rolls to the left, drops a remote.

MR. GUZMAN
(very feeble)
Agua. Agua.

Brian holds out his glass of water as he turns the side of the recliner.

BRIAN
We brought you some water.

To a DESICCATED CORPSE.

Mr. Guzman is unequivocally DEAD as DUST.

Brian drops the glass of water and runs for it!

Needing no encouragement, Adrienne and Pearl book it too.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - NIGHT

They all make it safely outside.

The two young ones scramble for the phones to call for help.

And the Cookie's parking lot fills up with emergency vehicles and squad cars.

Marty's SUV parks next to a fire truck.

INT. MR. GUZMAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

DETECTIVE ALVARO observes a FORENSICS TEAM. Brian and Marty stand with the Detective.

DETECTIVE ALVARO
When did you hear the victim calling
for help?

BRIAN

I started hearing him a few hours
after I moved in.

DETECTIVE ALVARO

Impossible.

Detective Alvaro raises an eyebrow at him.

BRIAN

I swear I heard him. So did some of
the other tenants.

DETECTIVE ALVARO

The walls have been modified for sound
proofing. Deadbeat over there probably
didn't want you hearing he was up to
no good. Nobody could have heard him.
Or smelled him either. This is what an
animal trafficking hideout looks like.

A glance around does indeed show signs of padded walls and
expert ventilation. Detective Alvaro writes something down.

BRIAN

How did no one notice?

MARTY

Shit like this doesn't show up on a
background check. Your judgement is
what I rely on for good tenants. Is
there going to be an investigation?

DETECTIVE ALVARO

Procedural. Yes. I can't see it taking
too long though.

MARTY

So, if you had to guess - how long
until I can rent the unit out?

DETECTIVE ALVARO

If you let us do our job, one week.

Marty rubs his hands together, savors the information.

MARTY

Just before the 1st. I'll get my
lawyers to clear up the details about
what kind of cleaning we have to do.

(nudges Brian)

Guess he's not getting his deposit
back, huh?

Marty grins at Brian as he gets his Cell out.

MARTY

Looks like you'll get a shot at renting out a vacancy. Lucky you.

Brian is still very much shell-shocked.

BRIAN

Someone died in there...

MARTY

It's not like there's mold in the walls. It'll be brand new after we clean.

Brian looks at the Detective.

BRIAN

Do I have to tell people that someone died in here?

DETECTIVE ALVARO

No. You are not required by law. It will be a matter of public record, but who looks into this kind of shit?

Marty steps out of the chaos filled apartment.

MARTY

(fading)

Bob? Marty here. I've got a vacancy. Well, once we evict the corpse, I've got a vacancy. You got a minute?

Brian watches the Forensics team work with the body.

BRIAN

He was dead for two weeks?

DETECTIVE ALVARO

Give or take. Not my expertise. But I've seen my share of bodies.

BRIAN

How could no one notice?

DETECTIVE ALVARO

Don't get worked up about it. It's shocking. Especially your first. Comes with the territory of having responsibility for other people.

One of the Forensics guys, GUS, motions for Detective Alvaro.

GUS

Come over here and take a look at this. I think we found our killer.

Brian looks sick at the word killer.

DETECTIVE ALVARO

So I get to do some work too?

He walks over to Gus. Gus works with one of the cages. His back is hidden from Brian's view.

Brian just stares at the grim scene. Dead body. Dead birds. Possible dead dog.

DETECTIVE ALVARO

This is what did it?

GUS

You can see the wound on his neck.

DETECTIVE ALVARO

Fucking gnarly.

GUS

Guess this little bugger got to him. Ever seen a poisoned stiff?

DETECTIVE ALVARO

First for me.

GUS

Check it out. Rigor mortis. Paralysis. Probably just felt like he needed a drink of water at first. Then bam. Bile in the lungs.

Detective Alvaro sees Brian casually listening in.

DETECTIVE ALVARO

Want to take a look?

He really, really shouldn't. But who can resist?

Forensics Gus holds up a small plastic cage.

Inside is a BROWN RECLUSE SPIDER. Not as large as the Black Widow, but for venom experts - almost as deadly.

BRIAN

He was bit by a spider?

DETECTIVE ALVARO
 Bet this dirt bag wished it was
 radioactive, eh?

The officials share a laugh at the joke. Brian's not amused.

GUS
 Brown recluse. Only one other spider
 in North America can cause death.

BRIAN
 Black widow.

A BLOOD RED HOURGLASS ON A GLASSY BLACK ABDOMEN (FLASHBACK)

Brian thinks about his very close brush with red death.

BRIAN THE HUMBLE HUNTER

Takes a close look at the Brown Recluse.

Doesn't look like a killer. Deadly. But not that deadly.

GUS
 You're lucky we found him. He was
 loose from his cage.

Brian looks like he's going to be sick. He excuses himself
 from the crime scene.

EXT. WEEPING WILLOW TERRACE - NIGHT

The Emergency Response Circus is in town and a CROWD of
 people have gathered to watch the ruckus.

Brian finds Marty standing near his SUV. Marty lowers his
 Cell as Brian approaches.

MARTY
 Bob says we can have a cleaning crew
 over here tomorrow. I want you to give
 Anna a call. She'll teach you how to
 rent out a vacancy.

BRIAN
 Loves her garlic sauce...

MARTY
 Rent this sucker out. Winnings! Get
 someone in here before the first and
 I'll give you a bonus!

Marty's energy is awfully chipper considering the grim scene.

Yet, he does manage to notice Brian's apprehension.

MARTY

Listen up Baby. You did the right thing. Calling me. Trust me. Don't ever think it's too late if it is something like this.

Brian nods.

MARTY

You going to be okay?

BRIAN

Oh yeah. Just a secret I get to keep.

MARTY

That's my boy. It gets easier. Trust me. This is nothing. Just wait until your first late night hooker turf war in the parking lot.

Marty gets in his ride. Brian watches him weave his way past the emergency vehicles.

He looks at all the faces in the crowd.

Some are his tenants. Some are his neighbors. None of them look comforting. None of them look inviting.

Except for one. Adrienne smiles wanly at him.

Somewhere nearby, Pearl also hazards a glance.

Their looks all say it; no one is going to believe us.

BRIAN

Hey.

ADRIENNE

What happened?

BRIAN

Spider bit him. Freak accident.

Adrienne is shocked. She has a realization about her brush with the red and black grim reaper.

ADRIENNE

You have to find and kill that spider. Did you tell them?

Brian hesitates; is that a lie on his lips?

BRIAN

They found it. The spider that did
this is locked back up in its cage.

Adrienne is so tense, she'll believe anything.

ADRIENNE

They should have fucking squashed it.

They stand in silence and watch the circus.

ADRIENNE

Bet you're regretting taking this job.

Brian shakes his head, no.

BRIAN

Pretty weird first day. But I'm in it
for the long haul. It fits my needs
very well. And I can keep secrets.

Said as an old man who died of a spider bite but kept moaning
for help for another two weeks is wheeled past in a body bag.

ADRIENNE

If my apartment is being haunted by a
ghost, do I call you?

BRIAN

That's what Ghostbusters are for.

ADRIENNE

It's a serious question. Is management
responsible for exorcisms?

BRIAN

I have no clue.

ADRIENNE

Someone has to be responsible.

BRIAN

Seems he wanted closure so he could
rest in peace. I can handle that.

Brian shrugs, guessing it's part of his job now.

Adrienne squeezes his arm, showing her support.

ADRIENNE

You did good even though he didn't
deserve it.

BRIAN

Thanks.

She goes inside.

Slowly, the whole circus goes away.

The emergency vehicles leave one by one.

The crowd thins. Then disappears.

Eventually, Brian is left alone - looking at the building.

His building. Weeping Willow Terrace.

It is magnificent. Possibly haunted. And daunting. Just like Los Angeles. His "new" hasty home away from home.

....

He sees a flash of movement in the Cookies' parking lot.

He quickly looks, trying to catch the fleeting visual spark.

....

A woman in a Dressing Gown with her head buried in her hands intensely sobbing stands near the back of the apartments.

BRIAN

Ma'am? Are you okay?

When Brian speaks, she disappears around the back of the building. Curious. Looked a lot like Claire Willow.

EXT. GARBAGE CANS - NIGHT

Brian follows the crying woman to the dumpster area.

....

NO ONE is there. Not a living soul.

A living soul wouldn't have been able to disappear that fast.

Brian looks up when his eyes detect motion again...

This time it's the BLACK WIDOW SPIDER - hanging by a thread.

A light shimmers in the dark, highlights a WEB. The Spider gracefully pull herself up a silken thread to her new web.

Tucked away in a corner, not hurting anyone. Out of sight except for the most ardent observers.

He gets the chills. Deep inside. That's enough for tonight.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - DAWN

Brian is fast asleep on his air mattress. He's in boxer briefs and a T-shirt. Light starts to break in through the small cracks in the curtains.

BAM! BAM! BAM!

Loud, vicious KNOCKING violently wakes him up.

A deep, male VOICE screams from the other side of the door.

VOICE

Open up!

BAM! BAM! BAM!

Brian scrambles to his feet. Sleep is hard to shake off.

BRIAN

What the fuck?

BAM! BAM! BAM!

VOICE

Open the door! NOW!

Brian stumbles to the door, pulling on a pair of jeans.

BRIAN

I'm up! I'm up! Who the hell is it?!

VOICE

Police. Open up the door and put your hands in front of the door. Now!

He opens the door and is greeted with a SHOTGUN pointed at his face.

A RIOT SQUAD

Of TWELVE heavily armed and alert POLICE stand at his door. CHIEF DOAN is the man behind the threatening voice.

CHIEF DOAN

Hands out! NOW!

He does as he is asked and is ROUGHLY dragged from his home.

Better than any alarm clock for non-early risers.

THE END