Death Rent

Ву

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WGA Registered

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INT. GARCIA CAR - CITY DRIVING

JESS (16) dignifies her parents, FRANK (40s) and ANNA (40s) as she takes off her headphones. OSCAR the family dog pants in the other back passenger seat.

JESS

Are we there yet?

ANNA

Couple more minutes-

JESS

-You said that ten minutes ago-

FRANK

-Don't talk back to your mother.

JESS

That's right, because you're the one lost.

ANNA

You wanna walk?!

JESS

Sure-

FRANK

-Let's calm down. Hey, if you got \$1500 bucks I can go get our house back.

JESS

None of my friends are poor.

ANNA

Stop the car!

FRANK

Calm down. You too Jessica.

JESS

Jess!

ANNA

We can start calling you other names if we want.

FRANK

Hopefully this will only be temporary. My cousin Mario was nice enough hook us up with this rent. CONTINUED: 2.

ANNA

He owns houses and a pawnshop and he couldn't loan us the money to save our house?

Frank shrugs. Jessica listens to her mp3 player.

ANNA

How much further?

The dog barks in agreement.

EXT. RENT HOUSE - DRIVEWAY

Finally Frank pulls into the driveway of their dilapidated rent house.

ANNA

This is it?

FRANK

Yep. It's already furnished.

ANNA

Let's do it.

Anna looks back at Jess for help but she looks out the window at some boys playing basketball a couple houses down.

FRANK

Leave her...

Frank and Anna get out of the car and open up the trunk to unpack their few items.

Jess glances to her parents as they walk to the front door. She focuses on the boys playing basketball again. They are both high school age, SITU and VINCENT.

Anna and Frank are at the door. Anna looks back at anger at Jess in the car. Frank unlocks the door. He looks at Anna with love and shrugs.

Jess looks back towards the boys. They are gone. Pause.

A knock on the window. SITU smiles kindly and VINCENT smiles at Jess' boobs.

SITU

(inaudible)

How's it going?

CONTINUED: 3.

Jess rolls down the window some and takes off her headphones.

SITU

How's it going?

JESS

Hi...

SITU

I'm Situ this is-

VINCENT

Vincent.

The dog barks at Vincent.

JESS

He doesn't like you.

SITU

What was your name?

JESS

Not interested.

Jessica makes to put her headphones back on.

VINCENT

So you have a boyfriend?

JESS

Yes, I do. We are very happy together.

VINCENT

What did you move out here for?

JESS

It's temporary.

VINCENT

I hope for your sake it is.

JESS

Is this like your gang house or something?

Jess puts on the stubborn fearless gene she gets from her $\ensuremath{\mathsf{mom}}$.

CONTINUED: 4.

SITU

(laughs)

Forgive him. What he means is the house is cursed. Someone dies in that house every year. Eleven months ago some old lady died along with her cats from mold.

VINCENT

Before that it was a family just like yours.

Jess looks wary but then Frank comes out of the house.

FRANK

Hey you!

The boys walk away giving a last grin at Jess.

FRANK

That's right! Walk away!

INT. RENT HOUSE - SMALL DINING AREA

The three eat pizza on a single-college-student size dining room table.

FRANK

What were those boys saying to you?

ANNA

What? Where do they live?

JESS

Nothing Mom. Just jerks thinking they're all that. I can handle myself.

Anna gives Jess the look.

JESS

I'm fine.

They eat some more pizza in silence.

JESS

So who lived here before us?

FRANK

No one, landlord said. Been empty for awhile.

CONTINUED: 5.

JESS

I hear an old lady died.

FRANK

Mario would've mentioned something if that were the case.

JESS

Is the phone working?

FRANK

Should be.

ANNA

Who are you calling?

Anna leaves the table.

INT. RENT HOUSE - JESSICA'S BEDROOM

Jess shuts the door and hopes it will act as a shield against her parent's problems.

She tries to lock the door but there is no lock.

JESSICA

Dammit.

Jess pushes down on the mattress and then sees her solitary box from the move.

She tears at the top to reveal a teddy bear. A teddy bear with a little pendant necklace.

She opens the necklace: BOYFRIEND DAVID and Jess. How cute! Jess digs through the box some more to find her phone and cables.

Where's the phone jack? The furnished nightstand and dressers are the type that collapse when you try to move them on a dolly. Jess peaks around the wall edges.

Jess sees the phone jack behind the nightstand- along with plenty of dust and cobwebs.

UNDERBED POV

Jess reaches to try and plug the cord in.

BACK TO SCENE

It seems so easy to plug stuff in until you have to turn your head away from it just to reach.

Jess pulls out with a shock... cobwebs.

Another try.

JESSICA

Got it!

Jessica opens the phone and listens for a dial tone. Time to reconnect: angst teen phone boyfriend.

JESSICA

Hey... You better remember who this is... I miss you too... It's been horrible, I totally live in the ghetto now. And this house is...

The clock shows 9:30 PM.

INT. RENT HOUSE - JESSICA'S BEDROOM - LATER

The clock shows 12:30 AM.

JESS

I mis you... No, I miss you more...

Jess smiles and yawns.

JESS

I think I'm falling asleep... Me too, my parents would totally freak out, my Dad would go Army on you...

Jess laughs mischievously.

JESS

I'll dream about you... good night...

Jess barely hangs up the phone and closes her eyes into sleep.

JESS POV

Black. Pause.

A breath.

Jess opens her eyes. Nothing.

Blink, open... A hooded figure at the end of the bed.

It approaches.

INT. RENT HOUSE - PARENT'S BEDROOM

Frank sleeps. Anna reads a book.

A chilling scream from Jess' room. The dog barks.

ANNA

Frank!

FRANK

What the!

Frank jumps out of the door.

INT. RENT HOUSE - JESSICA'S BEDROOM

Frank bursts in through the door.

Jessica is lying motionless on the bed.

FRANK

Jessica, wake up.

Anna enters the room, she gasps.

FRANK

Call 9-1-1.

INT. RENT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Jess is awake but huddled in a blanket on the couch. An EMT examines her pupils with a flashlight. Frank and Anna await the diagnosis anxiously.

EMT

I don't see anything wrong, but you should definitely get checked up at a hospital.

CONTINUED: 8.

ANNA

How much does that cost?

EMT

I can't say but-

FRANK

No hospital. We can't afford the deductible.

EMT

Are you sure?

FRANK

What can I do?

EMT

What happened again?

JESS

I couldn't move, I thought I... it got black. Then...

Jess gestures 'and here I am.'

EMT

Well, like I said. The hospital is where you should be. But this is an old house, it could be carbon monoxide. Do you got a detector?

ANNA

No.

EMT

Your landlord should provide you with one. Maybe keep the windows open tonight. Sleep with your dog, if he passes out then that's a sign.

FRANK

Great.

EMT

Don't take my word for it. But I'll need you to sign this release form.

Frank takes the clipboard and studies the release.

CONTINUED: 9.

JESS

Didn't an old lady pass away from mold a year ago here?

EMT

We did get a call from a neighbor. Said he heard screams from the house. We showed up though and no one was here. Told him to file a missing person's report.

Frank gives Jess an 'I told you so' look.

INT. RENT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

A TV is playing sports in the background. CU on CO detector on wall. Jess' finger touches the test button. BEEP.

FRANK

God damn that's loud.

JESS

How do you know it's working?

FRANK

It's supposed to wake us up if we're dead.

JESS

You didn't have to call the ambulance.

Frank battles her with a stare. She looks away.

JESS

What's for dinner?

FRANK

There's some left over spaghetti in the fridge.

JESS

000!

FRANK

Get creative then. Someday you're going to have to cook for your man! What's his name, Daryl?

CONTINUED: 10.

JESS

David!

Dad talking about boys, retreat! Jess goes to the

KITCHEN

and searches through the fridge. Nothing.

She starts rummaging through the cupboards. She has to put her knee on the counter top in order to see the upper shelves.

Frank sees Jess climbing and shakes his head.

Jess looks in a top cabinet and sees a folded note at the back. She takes it out. The outside fold reads: LEAVE.

INT. RENT HOUSE - JESSICA'S ROOM

Jessica reads the note to her boyfriend over the phone.

JESS

You'll never believe me, David... This house is so freaking haunted... don't be mean, I found a note.

Jess looks at the note.

JESS

Everyone thinks my Mommy, Daddy, and sister ran away and left me. But the real answer is too crazy. The angel of death lives here, he took my family. The year before he sucked our fish, but my parents wouldn't believe me. He comes on the 21st of December. He'll come for you. GET OUT.

Jess shakes her head to David's response.

JESS

No it isn't! It's still the 20th.

Jess looks at the clock and sees 12:30 AM.

JESS

Oh shit. I gotta get out.

CONTINUED: 11.

Jess leaves the phone off the hook and flings herself off the bed. She slowly opens the door to get out.

A presence is felt outside the room. Jess looks out the door down the

HALLWAY

and sees a dark shape in the distance and hears scrapings.

What to do? Crawl out the window?

Jess approaches the window, about to touch the window sill but a shadow crosses the window.

Jess screams and runs to her

PARENT'S BEDROOM

and wakes them up.

FRANK

What the hell-

ANNA

-You go back out and knock first-

JESS

-We gotta get out of the house. Death is coming.

ANNA

Estas loca girl. Stop it with your-

JESS

-People keep dying here. The old lady, I found a note of a family before that.

FRANK

They just left Jessica.

JESS

Please, it's going to happen tonight.

FRANK

There's no such thing as curses.

CONTINUED: 12.

ANNA

I don't know-

A glass shatters in the B.G. The dog growls.

FRANK

That ain't no devil. Quiet Oscar.

Anna picks up the phone in their room.

ANNA

The phone's dead.

Frank fetches a bat from the closet.

JESS

I left it off the hook, I'm sorry.

FRANK

Go behind me and hang up your phone and come back in here and then dial 9-1-1. I'll deal with this.

ANNA

Frank!

Frank marches from the room.

ANNA

Hurry, Jessica.

INT. RENT HOUSE - HALLWAY - DARK

Frank ninjas down the hallway with his baseball bat. Someone rummages through drawers and boxes in the other rooms.

INT. RENT HOUSE - FRONT ROOM

Frank rushes in and sees Situ bent over some boxes. Jump, swing!

FRANK

This is my house punk!

The bat connects to Situ's back.

SITU

Shit!

Situ rolls. Another swing... miss.

CONTINUED: 13.

FRANK

You'll be sorry.

Situ backs off and pulls a piece.

SITU

You'll be sorry old man.

But behind Situ a darkness grows. The hooded grim reaper waits on the loser of the match.

FRANK

Holy Shit!

PUNK

Damn right, get on your knees.

FRANK

Behind you.

Situ laughs but he feels the cold breath of death on the back of his neck.

SITU

What the-

Frank can't question it. He launches towards Situ with the bat.

INT. RENT HOUSE - JESSICA'S BEDROOM

Jessica calls 9-1-1 on her bedroom phone.

JESS

Help! Help! People are in our house!

GUNSHOT!

JESS

Oh my god.

She doesn't know why but she flees her room to the

HALLWAY

and looks into the darkness. Anna pleads behind the master bedroom door for Jessica to come back.

Jess runs like a beheaded chicken into the

LIVING ROOM

and looks to the right. Wrong way.

Vincent grabs her and prods her in the back with his pistol.

VINCENT

Keep quiet bitch. Situ!

JESS

Please let me go. We don't have any money.

VINCENT

I noticed. Situ, God dammit!

A pistol walks around the corner with Frank attached. Vincent matches his aim to Jessica's head.

FRANK

Let her go.

VINCENT

Where's my buddy?

FRANK

He's gone. Put down the gun.

VINCENT

No deal. I'm getting something out of this.

Vincent two steps away with his hostage. Death steps in line behind them for his next victim.

FRANK

Jessica!

Jessica ducks. Vincent aims...

Frank fires first. Death swallows his 2nd victim. Vincent's gun rattles to the floor.

Frank and Jessica embrace.

FRANK

I'm sorry-

JESS

It's not over Dad. There's always three.

CONTINUED: 15.

FRANK/JESS

Anna/Mom!

INT. RENT HOUSE - PARENT'S BEDROOM

Anna cowers on the bed. Death waits impatiently on the other side of the room. Frank and Jess barge into the room. Frank aims the two punks' guns.

FRANK

Leave us!

Death doesn't care. He floats towards Anna. She chokes and gags. A CO alarm goes off in the background.

A growl...

The dog jumps on the bed and attacks Death. Death settles for the dog.

Silence. Death is gone with the dog. Pause.

ANNA

Next time you see him you shoot him!

JESS

I love you Mom.

Jess hugs her Mom. Frank looks down at the guns.

JESS

Let's leave here.

ANNA

Where would we go?

FRANK

You know, these are nice guns. I bet Mario could give us a really good price for these.

EXT. NICE LOOKING HOUSE

The Garcia's pull into the driveway. They got their home back.