

Geneva County

by

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Draft Dated 11/7/2014

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FADE IN:

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Grains and weeds reach for the sky.

Through the country brush, AMY, college-aged and tear-stricken, runs for her life.

Amy's eyes hang to the right, too afraid to look directly behind her.

Amy reaches a fence. She hops over it, climbs up the embankment to the dirt road running parallel with the fence.

In the distance, a light. It comes from the barn and farmhouse at the end of the road.

Amy quickens her pace.

A pick-up truck sits just outside the barn. Amy races for it. She reaches for the driver's side door, comes to a dead stop when she sees --

-- her friend, ROBERT, gruesomely impaled to a fence post at the edge of the drive.

More tears spill as Amy finally opens the truck door.

THUMP!

Amy SHRIEKS as a second corpse, MASON, spills out of the truck's cabin. His throat has been slit ear to ear.

Amy hesitantly steps over the body and jumps into the truck.

INT. TRUCK

Amy shuts the door. Locks it.

She reaches for the ignition. No keys.

Amy searches the cabin, runs her hands along the floor.

She pulls out a crinkled flier that reads: "GENEVA COUNTY HAUNTED HAYRIDE! CONTESTS AND CASH PRIZES!"

She tosses the flier aside, looks in the rearview mirror.

In the reflection, standing at the rear of the truck --

A CLOWN. In his gloved hands, a rusty PITCHFORK.

Amy GASPS, ducks down, quietly slides into the darkness.

She puts her hand over her mouth. Controls her BREATHING.

She waits.

Seconds pass, but it feels like an eternity.

Then there's a SOUND. A screen door opening.

Amy slowly sits up. She glances out the passenger window.

The clown stands at the farmhouse porch. The white mask seems to float above his all-black garb.

The clown opens the front door to the house and walks inside.

Amy sits up, throws open the truck door, nearly stumbles over Mason's body, and runs for the barn.

INT. BARN

Amy storms in, closes the barn door behind her. She turns around. SCREAMS.

Straight ahead, her friend, BETH, pinned to the far wall and gutted, stares back at her. Beth's entrails hang over her shoulders like a macabre feather boa.

Amy turns to leave. Opens the barn door.

The clown is there!

Amy slams the door shut. Tries to lock it. Can't see how.

She runs to the back of the barn. Ducks behind a detached trailer. She bends down, sees there's just enough room to hide underneath.

The clown enters in a flash of lightning.

Amy crawls underneath the trailer. Peeks out from around one of the tires.

The clown walks through the barn. Slow. Methodical.

The clown suddenly freezes. The mask's eyes seem to be locked on the trailer, and possibly Amy.

The clown steps closer to the trailer. Closer. And then he's so close that all that can be seen is the tip of his pitchfork and dirty work boots.

THUNDER rolls.

The clown raises the pitchfork. The prongs disappear upwards.

The color drains from Amy's face. She knows what's about to happen. She closes her eyes.

THWACK!

There's a sound. Like a watermelon exploding. And then Amy scrunches her face against an unexpected SPLASH OF BLOOD.

Blood flows down the clown's legs and onto his work boots. He drunkenly sways, drops the pitchfork, then collapses to the barn floor.

Amy stares, terrified and completely confused. She crawls out from the underneath the trailer, sees the clown trembling in a pool of his own blood.

Amy back-pedals.

THUMP!

Amy turns. Whatever color remained in her face vanishes completely when she sees --

BETH

standing in front of her, very much alive.

BETH

What did you do!?

Beth pushes past Amy and moves to the clown's side. She cradles his masked head in her hands.

Amy can't process what's happening. She stares stupidly when Mason and Robert barrel into the barn, also alive.

ROBERT

What happened!?

MASON

Oh my God.

BETH

Mason, help me!

Beth removes the mask. Tosses it. Reveals the youthful face of their friend, STERLING. The back of his head gushes blood.

Mason kicks the pitchfork to the side and joins Beth at Sterling's side.

BETH (CONT'D)
Sterling, can you hear me?

MASON
(to Robert)
Call 9-1-1!

Robert pulls out his phone. Paces for a service bar.

BETH
Sterling, stay with me.

MASON
He's losing too much blood.

Sterling convulses, on the brink of death.

AMY
(hushed)
What's happening?

MASON
Apply pressure.

Robert lowers his phone.

ROBERT
I can't get a signal.

Beth switches spots with Mason, then angrily marches to Amy.

BETH
What did you do!?

Amy blinks the shock from her eyes.

MASON
He stopped breathing!

Mason begins CPR.

ROBERT
I told you this was a bad idea!

Beth steps closer to Amy. Mere inches separate their faces.

BETH
He wasn't going to hurt you!

AMY
What the hell is going on!?

BETH
It was a joke!

AMY

A joke!?

BETH

Yes! None of this shit is real!

Beth tosses a fake intestine to the barn floor.

AMY

I don't understand! Why would you joke about something like this!?

ROBERT

The Geneva County Haunted Hayride? They do it every year. Best Halloween prank gets ten grand. We were going to split the money with you.

BETH

You didn't see the cameras!?

Beth motions to a small camera hidden near the far wall, then another at the opposite side.

BETH (CONT'D)

They're all over!

Mason stops his compressions. Falls back, exhausted.

MASON

He's dead.

Then all eyes are on Sterling's body, and there's a lingering SILENCE no one in the room can fill.

ROBERT

What do we do?

BETH

I'm getting out of here.

MASON

What?

BETH

I want nothing to do with this.

ROBERT

Too late, Beth. You're on film.

BETH

Then you can play the tapes back and catch the real killer.

Beth gives Amy a cold stare.

AMY
I didn't do it!

Beth rolls her eyes.

ROBERT
What do you mean you didn't do it?

AMY
I mean I was under this thing when
it happened. Sterling walked up to
me and --

Amy pauses. Closes her eyes.

AMY (CONT'D)
It just...happened.

ROBERT
You think he did this to himself?

Beth heads for the barn door.

AMY
No. Not himself.

MASON
Hey guys.

The group looks to Mason. He stands about ten feet from Sterling, eyes locked on the barn floor.

MASON (CONT'D)
Where'd the mask go?

All eyes drift to Beth. She opens the barn door, reveals --

THE FIGURE

standing outside in the bloody clown mask, ax raised.

Beth opens her mouth to scream. The ax comes down.

EXT. BARN

As SCREAMS erupt from inside, the "GENEVA COUNTY HAUNTED HAYRIDE" flier blows into the wind.

SMASH TO BLACK!

END.