

Mind Games

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SCENE 1

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY)

A bright, sunny afternoon. The air is still

A big YELLOW SCHOOL BUS shudders to a stop its door hisses open.

LIAM (7) and CHLOE (8) tumble out, backpacks bouncing. They're typical kids - Liam still has a bit of lunch on his cheek, Chloe's pigtails are slightly askew. They wave cheerfully as the bus pulls away

They walk up the pristine sidewalk, past manicured lawns and identical houses

They reach their front door.

INT. LIAM AND CHLOE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MOM (30s) is at the counter, pulling cheese and bread from the fridge. She smiles as Liam and Chloe burst in, dropping their backpacks by the door.

MOM

Hey, my little hungry hippos! Rough day at the intellectual salt mines?

Liam giggles

Chloe rolls her eyes playfully

LIAM

Can we play our game, Mom? Just for a few minutes?

CHLOE

Please? Just until lunch is ready.

Mom considers, a small smile on her face.

MOM

Hmm, alright. But when I call, you drop everything and come get your grilled cheese. Deal?

LIAM

Deal!

CHLOE

Promise!

They high-five each other, a conspiratorial look passing between them, then race out of the kitchen.

Mom shakes her head, chuckling softly as she starts buttering bread

SCENE 2

INT. LIAM AND CHLOE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Liam and Chloe burst into their shared bedroom, which is surprisingly tidy for two kids.

A large window overlooks the street and the house of their neighbors, the HENDERSONS.[]

Liam scrambles onto his bed, Chloe sits on the floor by the window. They both stare intently out the window. Their faces are serious, focused.

EXT. HENDERSON'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS*

MR. HENDERSON (40s), a portly man in a polo shirt, gets out of his sedan, MRS. HENDERSON (40s), chic and elegant, walks out to meet him, a coffee mug in her hand. They share a loving embrace, then stroll towards their front door, chatting amiably.

INT. LIAM AND CHLOE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Chloe makes a subtle hand gesture, like twisting a dial. Liam makes a rapid, small flicking motion with his wrist.

Suddenly, their eyes begin to change. The pupils dilate, then the entire iris and pupil lose their color, becoming a flat, opaque white. It's unsettling. They hold their hands up, fingers twitching, as if grasping invisible controllers. They make small, jerking movements, their expressions intense, utterly absorbed

EXT. HENDERSON'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Henderson smiles at her husband, taking a sip of coffee. Her eyes suddenly go completely BLACK. The coffee cup clatters to the ground, forgotten.

Mr. Henderson stops, confused.

MR. HENDERSON
Honey? Are you okay?

Without a word, Mrs. Henderson's hand shoots out, opening the front door [span She strides directly to a KNIFE BLOCK on the kitchen counter, pulls out a large, gleaming KITCHEN knife

Mr. Henderson's eyes widen in terror.

MR. HENDERSON (CONT'D)
What are you

Mrs. Henderson lunges. The blade flashes in the sunlight.

SCENE 3

INT. LIAM AND CHLOE'S BEDROOM -

Liam lets out a delighted squeal.

LIAM
Level one complete! She got the
weapon!

Chloe leans forward, her white eyes fixed on the scene. Her fingers move with precision.

CHLOE
Don't celebrate yet, you'll
distract the player.)

We need a clean hit. Target acquisition

EXT. HENDERSON'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS*

A bloodcurdling SCREAM rips through the air. Mr. Henderson is on the ground, a growing crimson stain on his shirt. He scrambles backward, desperately trying to crawl away across his pristine lawn, leaving a trail of blood.

Mrs. Henderson, still with black eyes, stalks him, the knife held aloft. She moves with an unnatural, almost robotic grace.

INT. LIAM AND CHLOE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Liam giggles, mimicking the crawling motion with his fingers.

LIAM
He's slowThis character has
terrible agility stats.

CHLOE
Eyes narrowed

Don't let him escape. Close the distance.

Chloe's fingers tap an invisible button rapidly

EXT. HENDERSON'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

[Mrs. Henderson quickens her pace. She raises the knife high, ready for the final strike.

SUDDENLY, the piercing wail of POLICE SIRENS fills the air, growing louder, closer.)Mrs. Henderson pauses, head cocked. Her black eyes dart around

A POLICE CRUISER skids to a stop in front of the house.

OFFICER MILLER (30s, male, stern) and OFFICER REID (30s, female, sharp) leap out, guns drawn.

OFFICER MILLER
POLICE! DROP THE WEAPON[

Mrs. Henderson turns slowly to face them, the knife still clutched in her hand. Her black eyes seem to gaze through them.

OFFICER REID
I said, drop it!

Mrs. Henderson takes a single, menacing step towards them.

Two SHOTS ring out. CRACK!Mrs. Henderson stumbles backward, a crimson blossoming on her chest. her black eyes flicker, then dull.)She collapses to the ground, the knife clattering beside her.

SCENE 4

INT. LIAM AND CHLOE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Liam gasps in mock horror.

LIAM

No! You let them shoot the boss!

CHLOE

Frustrated

They interjected! It's a glitch i wasn't expecting an NPC intervention.

She grumbles, then a mischievous glint enters her white eyes. She looks at Liam.

CHLOE</

New characters, though More players
for the next round. You take the
male cop.

Liam nods eagerly, his white eyes glowing. His fingers twitch with renewed energy.

EXT. HENDERSON'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Officer Reid kneels by Mr. Henderson, quickly assessing his wounds. Officer Miller approaches Mrs. Henderson. He nudges the knife away with his foot, then rolls her onto her stomach, pulling out handcuffs. [spanAs he clicks one cuff onto her wrist, his body stiffens. His eyes, slowly at first, then rapidly, turn completely WHITE

Officer Reid looks up.

OFFICER REID

Miller, what are you doing? Help me
with Mr. Henderson. He's losing a
lot of blood.

Officer Miller slowly stands up, his white eyes fixed on something unseen. He ignores His hand goes to his holster, and he slowly, deliberately, pulls out his GLOCK 17.

[Officer Reid sees the gun, her eyes widening in horror

OFFICER REID (CONT'D)

Miller! What the hell are you
doing?

[sOfficer Miller raises the Glock It points directly at Officer Reid's head.

OFFICER REID (CONT'D)

NO. DON'T!

The sharp CRACK of a gunshot echoes through the street. Officer Reid's head snaps back.) She crumples to the ground, motionless.

SCENE 5

INT. LIAM AND CHLOE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Chloe claps her hands, a triumphant grin on her face, her white eyes sparkling.

CHLOE
Two kills! Liam, you're getting good at this!

LIAM
(Giggles)
This is way better than 'Zombie Apocalypse 3'! The graphics are amazing.

Chloe nods, then looks back out the window. [

CHLOE
Let's make this character do something really memorable. Final boss level?

Liam's white eyes gleam. He makes a "shoot" motion with his invisible controller.

EXT. HENDERSON'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Officer Miller, his eyes still stark white, slowly turns. He faces the siblings' house. He raises the Glock, pointing it directly at his own temple.

His finger tightens on the trigger. Just as he's about to fire....

INT. LIAM AND CHLOE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MOM (O.S.)
LIAM! Chloe! get your grilled cheese sandwiches! They're ready!

SCENE 6

INT. LIAM AND CHLOE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Liam and Chloe's white eyes snap back to normal. The color floods back instantly. Their hands drop. The intense focus on their faces vanishes, replaced by typical childlike hunger.

LIAM
Grilled cheese!

CHLOE</

OH, SHOOT! FORGOT.

They both quickly get up, casting one last, casual glance out the window.

EXT. HENDERSON'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Officer Miller's eyes snap back to normal, wide with confusion and terror. He looks at the Glock in his hand, then at the dead Officer Reid, then at the bleeding Mr. Henderson, and finally at Mrs. Henderson's body. He drops the gun as if burned.

OFFICER MILLER
NO! WHAT-WHAT DID I DO?

He clutches his head, his face a mask of utter horror.

More sirens begin to wail, growing deafeningly loud.
[span_163]Flashing red and blue lights begin to illuminate the street.

INT. LIAM AND CHLOE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Liam and Chloe walk into the kitchen. The smell of melted cheese fills the air. Mom places two perfect grilled cheese sandwiches on plates.

Outside, Officer Miller's screams are clearly audible, mixed with the blaring sirens.

Liam takes a bite of his sandwich, cheese stretching.

LIAM
That game was awesome! Best. Round.
Ever.

Chloe giggles, a hint of something darker in her eyes as she munches her own sandwich.

CHLOE

Told you it was a good
one(end_span))Who do you think
we'll play with tomorrow?

They both look at each other, innocent smiles on their faces,
the sounds of chaos echoing from outside.

FADE OUT.