

NEEDLES

Written by

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FADE IN

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It is dark.

The branches of a pine tree slap against a window. Heavy wind gusts shake the lake house.

Headlights shine in and sweep across family photos of a couple and their young daughter on the living room wall. A car engine approaches then turns off.

Muffled footsteps run up onto the porch. A key inserts into the lock. It turns.

The door flies open.

ANGELA (22), radiant in a simple white wedding dress, stands in the doorway. Her hair blows in the wind.

SASHEN (23), meticulously groomed in a tuxedo, holds her back. His voice has a slight Indian accent.

SASHEN

Wait. Wait.

He scoops her up in his arms.

Angela yelps and laughs as he carries her inside. Her head knocks against the doorframe.

ANGELA

Ow.

He puts her down immediately and checks her head.

SASHEN

Oh crap. Are you okay?

Angela laughs and brushes his hand away.

ANGELA

You don't need to knock me out. I'm willing.

She shuts the door. Pulls him close. They lock in a passionate kiss and stagger through the room.

Angela turns on a lamp. The place has a classic cozy lake house aesthetic. Wood furniture, antlers above a stone fireplace, antique fishing gear.

SASHEN

Wow.

ANGELA

Like it? We've got the place all to ourselves. No one's been here in years.

SASHEN

Are you sure about that?

Sashen points. Pine needles and dirt have been tracked across the floor.

Angela looks concerned.

ANGELA

I... Screw it, I'll clean it up later.

She grabs Sashen's shirt and drags him upstairs to the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Light spills in from the hallway.

They stumble across the floor and fall onto the bed, tearing each other's wedding clothes away.

A gust of wind rattles the window.

SASHEN

Nice weather for a honeymoon.

Angela turns Sashen's face back to hers.

ANGELA

Well, I guess we'll just have to stay in bed all week.

She pushes him down onto the bed.

SASHEN

I like the way you think.

She climbs on top of him.

Sashen stares up. She is stunning in her white, silken wedding slip.

ANGELA

I know what else you'll like.

She smiles and pulls the covers over them.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rain pounds on the window glass.

The lamp flickers.

The front door blows open and the pine needles swirl on the floor.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sashen and Angela moan under the covers.

ANGELA

Oh shit.

SASHEN

What? Don't stop.

Angela sits up and the covers drop away. She wipes her nose and looks at her finger. It glistens wet in the dark.

Angela turns on the bedside lamp. Her finger is streaked with blood. The pillows and sheets are stained red.

Sashen stares up at her.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

What the hell?

Blood runs from Angela's nose and drips onto his chest.

Angela jumps out of bed and grabs a washcloth from the closet. She holds it to her nose to stop the bleeding.

Sashen gets up and wraps a sheet around her.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

Her voice is muffled through the washcloth.

ANGELA

Bloody nose. I'm sorry.

Sashen looks down at the blood on his chest, then at the stained sheets.

SASHEN

Don't be silly. It's probably the
air. Go get cleaned up and I'll
take care of the sheets.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Angela washes her face in the sink. Stuffs tissue in her
nose to stop the bleeding. She stares at herself in the
mirror. Disappointed.

Sashen enters, wearing his pajamas. Smiles lovingly and
holds out a bathrobe for her.

SASHEN

Trade you.

Angela gives him her bloody sheet and puts the bathrobe on.

ANGELA

Thank you.

Sashen drops the sheet into a laundry basket with the other
linens.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Will you turn up the heat while
you're down there? It's freezing.

She wraps the robe tightly around her. Shivers.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sashen finds the front door standing open. He pokes his head
out and scans the yard. Nothing.

Looks around the living room. No one.

Shuts the door and locks it.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sashen carries the laundry basket to a door in the hallway.
Opens it. Stairs lead down to a dark basement. He tries the
light switch, but it doesn't work.

ANGELA (O.S.)

The washing machine is on the back
porch.

Sashen jumps at the sound of her voice.

SASHEN

Scared me.

He shuts the door and follows her down the hall.

INT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

The washer and dryer are in an enclosed back porch. Rain beats against the thin windows.

Sashen sets the laundry basket down.

SASHEN

Oh man. Something stinks in here.

ANGELA

I can't smell a thing.

Sashen laughs.

Angela looks ridiculous as she finishes stuffing tissues up her nostrils.

Sashen finds a flashlight on a shelf and searches the dark corners. The beam of light lands on a dead mouse in a trap behind the dryer.

SASHEN

Gross. I found where the smell is coming from.

Angela leans over the dryer to look. She slumps against the wall and hangs her head.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

Hey, it's just a mouse.

A tear rolls down her cheek.

ANGELA

I wanted our wedding night to be perfect.

Sashen wipes the tear away. Hugs her.

SASHEN

It is. It will be. I'll get this all cleaned up and we'll start fresh. I'll even carry you across the threshold again, and this time I won't bang your head.

ANGELA
You're sweet.

Sashen shoves the bloody sheets into the washing machine.
She stops him.

SASHEN
What?

ANGELA
You have to treat the stains first.
Didn't your mom ever teach you to
do laundry?

SASHEN
It's the twenty-first century. Men
know how to do laundry.

ANGELA
Okay. So how do you treat
bloodstains?

Sashen stares blankly.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
I'll do this if you put the
groceries away.

SASHEN
It's a deal.

He kisses her on the forehead.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Sashen runs through the rain to the car. Opens the back
passenger door and grabs their luggage. Runs back to the
house to set the bags inside the door.

He returns to the car and fumbles for the keys to open the
trunk.

A GIRL in a dirty, white dress stares from the tree line.
Wet, black hair obscures her face.

Sashen opens the trunk, blocking the view. He pulls out
several bags of groceries. When he shuts the trunk the Girl
is gone.

Sashen glances at the trees. The wind howls. The branches
sway wildly.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sashen enters with his arms full. Kicks the door shut behind him.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sashen drops the bags onto the counter and opens the fridge. Kneels down to put the food and beer away.

He notices dried, muddy footprints on the floor.

SASHEN

Hm.

He traces his finger around the shape of a bare foot. He brushes the dust off his finger on his pant leg and stands back up.

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT

The laundry machine runs.

Sashen finds Angela staring out the open back door. Her bathrobe blows in the wind.

He approaches and puts his arm around her shoulder.

Angela holds a dustpan with the dead mouse in it.

ANGELA

Mousey was a good mouse, and an even better friend. Ever since the day my mother's accident, this place has been empty and quiet. Except for this little guy who has diligently watched over it. Sure, Mousey may have left little poops everywhere, and he was probably the one who chewed holes in the linens, but he also cleaned away all of the crumbs and dead bugs. Thank you for looking after the place, little Mousey.

SASHEN

Aw. That was sweet.

Angela swings the dustpan, flinging the mouse's dead body into the forest.

ANGELA
I'm hungry. Want a snack?

She turns and heads back into the house.

Sashen glances out at the forest. Shuts the door.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

When Sashen enters, Angela already has a bottle of red wine uncorked. She holds it up proudly.

ANGELA
Found my Dad's wine collection.

SASHEN
Uh... that's not expensive, is it?

Angela pours a glass and sniffs it. Takes a sip.

ANGELA
Wow. Tastes expensive. He only buys the best.

SASHEN
Oh man. Your Dad's already going to hate me enough when he finds out we're married. If I drink his wine, he'll probably kill me.

Angela takes his hand.

ANGELA
Don't worry. He'll get used to you. Just like I did. He's just... Conservative.

Sashen opens a box of crackers.

SASHEN
Meaning he doesn't like brown people.

ANGELA
Oh come on. He's grumpy, not a racist. You know all the work he's done for the community. Can you blame him for being protective of his precious little girl?

SASHEN
I know, I know. You are pretty precious.

Sashen reaches into the fridge and grabs a package of cheese.

Angela holds out the wine bottle.

ANGELA
Sure you don't want some?

Sashen pulls out a beer.

SASHEN
I'm all good.

He grabs a kitchen knife and slices up the cheese.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
I think someone's been here.

He points to the muddy footprints with the knife.

ANGELA
Weird. Maybe Dad had someone looking after the house.

SASHEN
With muddy bare feet? Better hope it's not squatters. They can legally end up owning the place.

Angela takes the kitchen knife from Sashen. Holds it menacingly. Calls out to the house.

ANGELA
Hey! If there's anyone here, you'd better look out. We're going to find you!

Sashen smiles.

SASHEN
She means it too. She's crazy!

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A fire crackles in the fireplace. Angela and Sashen relax on the floor with their drinks and food.

Sashen braids Angela's hair as she stares into the fire.

ANGELA
That feels so nice.

SASHEN
I know what you like.

She takes a sip of her wine.

ANGELA
Oh you do, huh?

SASHEN
I do.

Sashen gently places his hand on her cheek and turns her head for a kiss.

Angela smiles and shuffles her body around to face him.

ANGELA
I can do better than that.

SASHEN
Oh yeah?

ANGELA
Yeah.

SASHEN
Hmm. Let's see.

Angela pushes him down, careful not to spill her wine.

She licks her lips seductively. Leans in close... then sloppily runs her tongue up the side of his face.

Sashen recoils, laughing.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
Ahh!

He tickles her. Angela squirms away.

ANGELA
Don't make me spill my wine!

She takes another big sip and sets her glass down.

Sashen wipes his cheek with his sleeve.

SASHEN
I'll get you for that.

ANGELA
Yeah? I think you should.

They lock in a kiss. Sashen pushes her to the floor and climbs on top of her.

SASHEN
You're so beautiful.

Sashen sits up and unties her robe. He pulls it open, revealing her silk nightgown.

She stops him.

ANGELA
Hold on.

SASHEN
What's wrong?

Angela sits up and puts her hand to her forehead.

ANGELA
I feel a little lightheaded.

Sashen strokes her hair, concerned.

SASHEN
How much did you drink?

ANGELA
One glass. Just give me a minute.

She brushes his hand away and closes her eyes.

Sashen waits patiently.

Finally she opens her eyes and smiles weakly at him.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Where were we?

She leans closer to him, but then swoons again.

SASHEN
Okay. Come on, we're getting you into bed.

He stands and helps her up. She protests.

ANGELA
No. I want tonight to be perfect.

SASHEN
We've got the whole week for that.

Angela pouts as he helps her stumble up to the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sashen helps Angela into bed.

She flops down. Barely awake. She mumbles.

ANGELA

I'm sorry.

SASHEN

You've had a long day. You need to sleep.

Sashen climbs in next to her and cuddles up.

She's already out.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

The bedroom light shines out from the window. Rainwater pours from the roof.

The light turns off.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The house is quiet. Sashen snores gently in bed.

His eyes open. Sashen rolls over to put his arm around Angela, but finds the bed empty. He rubs the sleep from his eyes and looks around.

SASHEN

Sweetie?

He gets up and stumbles out of the room.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sashen checks the bathroom. It is empty.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sashen descends the stairway to the living room. The house is dark.

SASHEN

Angela, where are you?

He checks the hallway that leads to the back of the house.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Angela stands in her nightgown, staring at the closed basement door.

SASHEN
Hey. Come back to bed.

Angela doesn't answer.

Sashen approaches.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
Aren't you cold?

He puts his arm around her, but she doesn't react. He shakes her shoulder gently.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
Angela?

Angela still doesn't react. He shakes her harder.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
Wake up.

Angela GASPS! Life floods back into her eyes. She turns to look at Sashen.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
You scared the crap out of me. What are you doing down here?

Angela looks at the basement door, confused.

ANGELA
(mumbles)
I... I was just getting a glass of water.

SASHEN
I'll get it. Go back to bed.

He kisses her and heads to the kitchen.

Angela watches him leave. Turns to the basement door and reaches for the handle. She opens it. The stairs lead down into darkness.

A low howl emanates from the void. Angela shivers. The howl rises in pitch, like the wind outside is blowing through cracks in the walls.

As the noise grows louder, a faint, but steady sound of a girl's scream seems to be mixed in. Angela leans closer to listen.

A cabinet slams in the kitchen and the wind noise suddenly stops. Angela shakes out of her daze.

Sashen peaks down the hallway at her, holding a glass of water.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
Are you coming back to bed?

Angela shuts the door and follows him back upstairs.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sashen climbs into bed next to Angela. Strokes her hair.

SASHEN
You were sleepwalking.

Angela mumbles something, half asleep.

ANGELA
Mmm...

She's out.

Sashen continues to gently stroke her hair. His eyes remain wide open and he stares through the window at the storm outside.

Finally his eyes drift shut.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Angela stands at the counter in her jeans and t-shirt.

She wraps a sandwich up in a paper towel and places it in a picnic basket.

When Sashen enters, Angela rushes over and gives him a huge kiss.

ANGELA
Good morning, hubby!

SASHEN
You look stunning.

He means it.

Angela brushes away a strand of hair that didn't make it into her ponytail and tucks it behind her glasses. Despite her girl-next-door style, she has an air of elegance.

ANGELA

So do you.

Sashen laughs. He wears a bed-head, a day's worth of stubble and an old hoodie.

Angela pours a mug of coffee for him.

SASHEN

How are you feeling?

ANGELA

Better. I don't know what came over me last night. I must have been exhausted from the wedding.

She puts another sandwich in the basket.

SASHEN

I'm surprised you're up so early. Especially after sleepwalking.

ANGELA

What?

SASHEN

You don't remember? I woke up and found you down here staring at the basement door.

ANGELA

That's weird.

SASHEN

Has that ever happened before?

Angela finishes packing the basket and hands it to Sashen.

ANGELA

Not that I know of. Will you get the fishing gear together? I want to get on the water while the fish are still biting.

SASHEN

You're not even slightly concerned about the fact that you were sleepwalking?

ANGELA

Why? People do it all the time.

She grabs a broom and sweeps, clearly not wanting to talk about last night.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I'm going to finish cleaning up in here and I'll meet you by the boat.

Sashen shrugs and grabs some fishing bait out of the fridge. He leaves.

Angela sweeps the needles into a dustpan and empties them into the trash. She straightens up and watches out the window as Sashen walks down to the boathouse.

She sighs.

She turns back around. Her eyes open wide. The floor is covered evenly with pine needles!

EXT. BOATHOUSE - DAY

Sashen opens the door to the boathouse. He freezes at the sound of Angela's SCREAM.

He runs back up to the house.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Angela huddles in the corner of the kitchen. Tears on her cheek.

Sashen rushes to over her and kneels down.

SASHEN

What's wrong?!

She points at the floor.

ANGELA

The needles.

SASHEN

I'll sweep them up.

ANGELA

I don't need you to sweep them up!
I just did. Then I turned around
and they were covering the floor.

SASHEN

I think we should get you back in bed.

ANGELA

I don't need to go back to bed! I had this floor clean, and a few seconds later it was like this. I'm not imagining it.

SASHEN

Maybe they blew back in when I opened the door.

Angela looks outside. It's perfectly still.

ANGELA

I know you think this is funny, but I don't need you playing jokes on me this morning.

SASHEN

I didn't do anything, I swear. You're tired. You probably just thought you swept them all up --

Sashen tries to stroke her hair from her face, but she pushes his hand away.

ANGELA

I know what I did! Can't you just listen to me and believe me? Isn't that what a husband is supposed to do?

Sashen stands up frustrated.

SASHEN

Fine. Needles mysteriously appeared on the floor.

ANGELA

You know what? I'm not doing this. It's been one thing after another and you don't seem to care how I feel.

SASHEN

Of course I do. Do you want to leave? Want me to go pack our stuff right now?

Angela sighs. She looks outside. The sunlight streams through the trees.

ANGELA

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to yell at you. Just forget it.

SASHEN

Are you sure?

ANGELA

You're right. I'm probably just tired.

SASHEN

We can stay in bed all day if you want. There is literally nothing we have to do this week.

ANGELA

No, it so beautiful outside. Let's go enjoy the lake.

SASHEN

You sure?

Angela kisses him. Smiles.

ANGELA

Get the boat ready.

Sashen takes the picnic basket and heads out.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Oh, and Sashen?

SASHEN

Yeah?

ANGELA

It's "figuratively."

Sashen smiles and leaves.

Angela looks at the needle on the floor. Her face darkens. She grabs the broom and sweeps them up again.

EXT. LAKE SHORE - DAY

The sunlight warms up the trees. Water drops fall gently to the forest floor. Birds chirp away happily.

A lone boat floats in the middle of the lake.

EXT. LAKE - BOAT - DAY

Angela stabs a fishhook through a wriggling worm. She hands the line to Sashen who wrinkles his nose.

SASHEN

Thanks.

ANGELA

You're doing your own next time.

SASHEN

Do I have to?

ANGELA

You've never baited a hook before?

SASHEN

I've never even been fishing before.

ANGELA

Seriously?

SASHEN

Hey, I'm a city kid. If you want to know where the best sushi restaurant in town is, I'm your guy.

Angela shakes her head.

ANGELA

Did you know sushi actually comes from fish? Fish swim in water, like lakes or the ocean. You can catch them with fishing poles and eat them. You don't even need chop sticks.

SASHEN

Wow. I'm going to learn so much, being married to you.

Sashen swings his pole.

Angela ducks as the line swings around wildly.

ANGELA

Whoa! Okay. Let me cast it for you. Watch and learn.

Angela takes the pole from him. She pulls the release and pinches the line with her fingers.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Let go of the line as soon as the pole is pointed straight up.

She holds the pole back then flings it. The hook sails through the air and plops in the water. The bobber settles.

SASHEN

Impressive.

ANGELA

Now, if the bobber bobs, just give it a little tug. Like this.

She demonstrates a tug on the line then hands him the pole.

Sashen takes it and settles back.

SASHEN

Now what?

ANGELA

Fishing is all about patience. You could be out here all day and not even --

Sashen jerks the pole.

SASHEN

Got one.

Angela looks. The bobber disappears under the water.

ANGELA

Reel it in! Not too fast!

Angela holds a net over the side. The fish swims frantically as it is reeled in. She scoops the net underneath and pulls out a large trout. It flops around in the net.

SASHEN

Holy crap! I really caught a fish.

ANGELA

Nice work.

She places her foot on the fish to hold it down while she digs the hook out.

SASHEN

Do we throw it back now?

ANGELA

Hell no. We're eating this. Give me
the whacker.

Sashen picks up a billy club that looks like a small wooden
baseball bat.

SASHEN

This thing?

Hands it to her.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

You're not going to --

WHACK! Angela knocks the fish out with a solid hit. Blood
trickles from its mouth into the water at the bottom of the
boat.

She expertly hooks a clip from a fish stringer through its
gills and drops it over the side of the boat into the water.

ANGELA

Now catch me some more and I'll
cook them up for dinner.

She hands Sashen the bait.

EXT. DOCK - DAY

The sun hangs low in the sky. The water is glassy calm,
except for the ripples from the boat.

Sashen unloads the gear into the boathouse.

Angela ties the boat to the dock. Pulls out the fish
stringer, which has five healthy sized trout hanging from
it.

ANGELA

Last one up cleans the fish.

SASHEN

There's no way I'm gutting those.

ANGELA

Better hurry then.

Angela takes off running up the path.

Sashen chases after her. It is clear he won't catch up so he
takes a short cut straight up the hill. He gains on her.

SASHEN
See you up there!

Angela sees him catching up and goes off trail too.

Sashen races past and hits a steep slope. They both try to scramble up, but the loose, wet soil gives way and they slide back down.

ANGELA
You're cleaning these!

They wrestle to keep each other from winning.

Angela tries to keep the fish from getting crushed.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
The fish! The fish!

They stop. Exhausted and laughing. Both covered head to toe in mud. They lay on their backs looking up at the sky.

SASHEN
I knew you'd like getting dirty
once we were married.

She throws a glop of mud at him.

INT. BACK PORCH - DAY

They enter the back porch. Angela puts the fish into a sink and fills it with water.

ANGELA
I'll clean the fish if you do the
laundry.

Sashen removes his muddy shirt and drops it into a laundry basket.

SASHEN
Deal. But I'm going to need these
clothes.

He unbuttons her top while looking into her eyes. He slides it off and places it in the basket. They admire each other's bodies.

Sashen pulls a twig out of her hair.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
You're pretty messy.

Angela uses her finger to swipe a lump of mud off his cheek.

ANGELA
Hmm. You know, I think actually do
kind of like you dirty.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

They burst into the bathroom, kissing passionately.

They strip off the rest of their clothes and step into the shower. Steaming water washes the mud away as they embrace.

SASHEN
I love you so much.

ANGELA
Now aren't you glad we waited?

SASHEN
You have no idea how hard it was.

Angela smiles and reaches down to feel him.

ANGELA
I do now.

SASHEN
What happened to my innocent and
shy girl?

ANGELA
She wants you.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dim light from the evening sky filters in through the window. The warm light of the bedside lamp illuminates the room.

Angela and Sashen stumble across the room and fall onto the bed.

Angela pulls the blankets over them.

SASHEN
So, is marriage as good as you
imagined it?

ANGELA
Better.

Angela reaches her hand out from under the covers and feels for the light switch on the bedside lamp.

Click.

Lights out.

EXT. LAKE SHORE - NIGHT

The boat rocks in the water, thumping rhythmically against the deck.

INT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

The dead fish float in the sink.

Muddy clothes sit unwashed in the basket.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sashen sleeps with his arm around Angela.

She stirs. Climbs out of bed.

Sashen wakes up and mumbles.

SASHEN
Are you alright?

ANGELA
I have to pee.

SASHEN
Oh. Thought you were sleepwalking again.

ANGELA
I'm fine. Go back to sleep.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Angela doesn't bother turning on the overhead light, the nightlight is enough.

She sits on the toilet and pees.

Outside the bathroom the floor CREAKS.

ANGELA
I'll be done in a minute.

Footsteps shuffle around, but don't leave.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
I told you, I'm fine.

Angela listens carefully, but the steps have stopped. She finishes up and flushes the toilet.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Angela opens the door and peeks out.

She catches a glimpse of a shadow going down the stairs.

ANGELA
Sash?

Angela crosses her arms and shivers in the night air. She heads towards the stairway in her bare feet.

Looks down.

Nothing.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Angela descends the stairs.

She stops at the bottom. Muddy footprints and drips of water lead to the hallway.

She picks up a candleholder and holds it defensively.

She quietly traces the footprints to the back of the house.

INT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Angela turns on the porch light.

The back door is closed.

Their mud covered clothes sit unwashed in the laundry basket, next to their muddy shoes. The footprints must be theirs.

Angela relaxes and turns the light off.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Angela climbs back into bed and cuddles up to Sashen. She pulls the blankets tightly around her.

The dark figure of the Girl stands silhouetted in the bedroom doorway, staring at them. Water drips from her long wet hair.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Sashen spoons next to Angela as the morning light hits. His eyes open and he lovingly strokes her hair.

SASHEN
Good morning, sweetie.

Sashen fingers come away with a streak of blood on them.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
Angela?

She is still asleep.

Sashen takes her shoulder and rolls her on her back.

Angela's face is smeared with blood. Her side of the bed looks like a murder scene.

Sashen jolts up.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
Angela! Wake up!

Sashen shakes her.

Angela's eyes spring open to find him staring down at her in panic.

She screams!

SASHEN (CONT'D)
What happened?!

Angela wipes her face and looks at her hand.

ANGELA
Damn it. Bloody nose again.

Sashen leans back relieved.

SASHEN
Holy crap. I thought you were dead!

Angela gets out of bed, holding her nose. She's a bloody mess.

Sashen looks ill.

ANGELA

Aw, my poor baby. Sorry to traumatize you. Is there anything I can do for you, dear?

Sashen jumps out of bed.

SASHEN

Sorry. How can I help?

ANGELA

Don't worry about it. I'm going to take a shower.

Sashen looks at the bed.

SASHEN

I'll clean the sheets. Good thing I know how to treat bloodstains now, right?

ANGELA

Hmm.

Angela rolls her eyes and heads to the bathroom.

Sashen carefully gathers the sheets, still a bit grossed out.

EXT. DOCK - DAY

Angela follows the pathway down to the lake. Her hair is still wet from the shower. A warm sweater and steaming mug of coffee protect her from the chilly morning air.

She spots Sashen sitting in a camping chair at the end of the dock.

He finishes reeling in his line and casts again.

ANGELA

Looks like I got you hooked.

Sashen turns and smiles.

SASHEN

You know the only reason I married you is because you're so funny, right?

Angela sits in a chair next to him.

ANGELA

Catch anything yet?

SASHEN

Nope. I had to throw out the fish from yesterday. We got distracted somehow and didn't put them in the fridge.

ANGELA

Well, I'll try not to distract you again until you've caught another fish.

Sashen smiles.

SASHEN

I think I could get used to it here.

ANGELA

Don't get too attached. I'm not sure how much longer my dad will keep the place.

SASHEN

He's not going to sell it, is he?

ANGELA

It's just hard to be here since the accident.

SASHEN

I'm sure it is. Are you doing okay?

Angela sighs.

ANGELA

I'm alright. It's been a couple of years.

SASHEN

You never did tell me the whole story.

Angela takes a sip of coffee she stares out at the lake.

ANGELA

I wasn't here when it happened. My dad was up for the weekend working on the dock and my mom decided to surprise him. She parked across the lake to take the boat over, but she never made it. It was really windy and the boat must have capsized.

SASHEN

So your dad didn't even know she was here?

ANGELA

Not until the boat washed up to the shore. Divers found her body later that week. Dad was devastated. He tried coming back a couple of times but couldn't do it. He can't stand the place.

SASHEN

So why keep it?

ANGELA

I think he just had trouble letting go of the past.

They sit in silence for a moment.

Sashen stares at the bobber floating in the still water.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

If you don't catch anything, you're cooking tonight.

SASHEN

Come on, stupid fish!

Sashen jerks the pole. Angela sits up, excited.

ANGELA

Did you get a bite?

SASHEN

No.

She slumps back in her chair.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Angela relaxes in front of the warm fireplace, absorbed in a book.

The sounds of cooking come from the kitchen.

Sashen rushes into the room, wearing an apron.

SASHEN
Where's the spatula?

ANGELA
In the drawer next to the stove.
Are you sure you don't need any
help in there?

SASHEN
No. Just relax.

He rushes back into the kitchen.

Angela returns to her book. A wind gust blows against the window. The house creaks.

She calls to Sashen.

ANGELA
Think we'll get another storm?

No answer.

She continues reading, but another sound catches her ear. She listens carefully. It almost sounds like someone crying. Angela calls out louder this time.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Sash? You okay in there?

SASHEN (O.S.)
Doing great!

She hears the faint cry again. Maybe. The noise of the wind outside masks the sound.

She gets up to look around the room. Checks the basement door, the fireplace, the windows. Nothing.

Then she notices a trail of pine needles tracked in from the front door. They lead to the stairs.

She climbs up to the second floor.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

There are only a couple of rooms to check upstairs and nothing seems amiss in her bedroom or bathroom.

The door to the other bedroom on the other hand is opened a crack. She cautiously pushes it open.

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

She flicks the light switch a couple of times. It doesn't work, but there is enough light from the hallway to see that there is no one in the room.

Just as she turns to leave, she hears a rustling noise from the closet. Now she's nervous.

She holds her hand out for the closet door handle as she approaches. Another shuffling sound inside makes her hesitate.

ANGELA
Is someone in there?

Angela doesn't notice as the bedroom door quietly closes behind her.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
(warning)
I'm opening the door.

She turns the handle slowly. Then YANKS!

The door flies open. An ironing board falls out.

Angela SCREAMS! She dodges as it crashes to the ground. Stumbles back and falls on her butt.

Clothes sway on their hangers.

She catches her breath. But then...

She hears the sound of breathing from the darkness of the closet.

Angela scoots back across the floor. She tries to open the bedroom door but it's locked. She pounds on it with her fist.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Sashen!

The breathing grows louder and more frantic. Angela panics. She edges further away from the closet.

Sashen bursts into the room, startling her. He flicks the switch and the overhead light turns on.

SASHEN
What's going on?

Angela points.

ANGELA
There's someone in the closet.

Sashen steps forward.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Careful.

Sashen sweeps the hanging clothes aside. He jumps as a mouse runs out of the closet and past Angela.

SASHEN
Hey look, you found Mousey's buddy.

ANGELA
I heard something and it was not a mouse.

SASHEN
Want me to check under the bed?

ANGELA
It's not funny. When I tried to leave the door was locked.

Sashen tries the door handle.

SASHEN
It doesn't even have a lock. Are you okay?

Wind shakes the house.

ANGELA
Yeah. I guess I just got scared.

The smoke alarm goes off downstairs.

SASHEN
Damn it. The garlic bread.

He rushes out of the room.

Angela picks up the ironing board and shoves it back in the closet.

She kneels down and inspects the back of the closet. The mouse had made a little nest of shredded cloth and insulation.

Then she notices something else curious. She looks closer.

There are marks on the inside of the doorframe. Almost like finger nail marks. She traces them with her finger. It's as if someone had been dragged out of the closet.

She closes the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Angela comes downstairs, arms folded across her chest.

The fire burns nicely in the fireplace. Candle light flickers off the ice in the water glasses on the dining table.

Sashen brings two bowls of spaghetti out to the table.

ANGELA
Spaghetti and ice water. Very fancy.

SASHEN
Only the finest cuisine for you. This is the best dish I know how to cook. Just wait.

He winks at her and rushes back into the kitchen.

She pulls out a chair and sits.

Sashen re-emerges with a plate of burnt garlic bread.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
Voila!

A reluctant smile creeps onto Angela's face. She slow claps for him as he bows.

ANGELA
Very nice. Very nice. Thank you for cooking.

She reaches her hand out. Pulls him close for a hug.

He takes a seat.

SASHEN
Do you want to say grace?

ANGELA
I like it when you do.

SASHEN

Okay. Dear Lord, thank you for this truly amazing meal you have provided us. And thank you for my wonderful and beautiful wife. I promise I will give everything to keep her healthy, happy and safe. Amen.

ANGELA

Amen.

They dig in. Sashen a little more enthusiastically than Angela. He looks up.

SASHEN

Are you sure you're okay?

ANGELA

I really got spooked up there.

Sashen looks around.

SASHEN

Well, I'll admit, this place is kind of murderly, especially with the storm rolling in.

Angela uses her fork to push the spaghetti around her plate.

ANGELA

You probably don't believe in ghosts, do you?

SASHEN

Are you kidding? My whole family is superstitious. They think all of our ancestors are constantly watching us. Makes showering uncomfortable.

ANGELA

But have you actually ever seen anything?

SASHEN

Nope. Have you?

ANGELA

I swear I heard something up there. It freaked me out.

SASHEN

How about we go on a ghost hunt after dinner? If we find any, I'll kick their butts.

ANGELA

You would bust ghost ass for me?

SASHEN

Of course. My brothers and I use to ghost hunt all the time when we were kids. Never saw anything, but I am so ready if we do.

He lifts his glass and clinks hers with it.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Angela rinses dishes in the sink.

Sashen sits on the counter next to her. Dries the last dish with a towel as she hands it to him.

SASHEN

Ready?

ANGELA

Let's do it.

He jumps off the counter and grabs broom and mop from the pantry.

SASHEN

Which do you want?

ANGELA

Hmm. I guess the mop.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

They burst into the room armed with their weapons.

SASHEN

Hah!

Nothing.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

All clear.

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sashen creeps in and flicks on the light. Angela runs in yelling and swings her mop like a samurai.

The room is empty.

SASHEN
Nice technique.

INT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

They charge in together. Sashen thrusts at a coat rack with his broom. A coat drops to the floor. He stabs it with his broom.

Angela turns on the light.

No ghosts.

SASHEN
Thought I had one.

The rain outside pounds the windows.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

They stop at the basement door and look at each other.

Angela tries the light switch.

SASHEN
No light. Oh well, guess we're done.

ANGELA
Oh no. I'm not sleeping until we check the whole house.

Sashen rolls his eyes.

SASHEN
You don't actually think there's something here, do you?

ANGELA
I thought you believed me.

SASHEN
I didn't think you were serious.

Angela glares at him.

Sashen looks at the light hanging above the stairs.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
Fine. Where are the light bulbs?

ANGELA
Back porch. I'll get one.

Sashen stands guard while she heads to the porch. He looks down into the darkness. Shuts the door.

INT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

The storm rages outside.

Lights flicker.

Angela rummages through the shelf until she finds the light bulbs.

CRASH! A tree branch smashes through one of the porch windows.

Angela SHRIEKS!

Sashen charges in.

SASHEN
Oh shit. Are you okay?

Rain blows in onto the counters and the floor. Angela quickly moves laundry and various tools out of the way.

ANGELA
Watch the glass. I swear, can anything else go wrong?

Angela's face flushes as she tries to control her emotions.

SASHEN
I'll take care of this. Why don't you go pour some wine and get the fire going? We'll just cozy up and ride out the storm.

Angela sighs.

ANGELA
That sounds nice.

Sashen uses his broom to sweep up the broken glass.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Angela has a nice fire going in the fireplace. She places another log in. A dim lamp casts a warm light. Very cozy.

She listens to Sashen hammering in the laundry room.

ANGELA
Are you almost done?

SASHEN (O.S.)
Just boarding it up.

Angela heads to the...

KITCHEN

She pulls out two wine glasses and the bottle of red wine.

The trees sway wildly outside the window.

She heads back to the...

LIVING ROOM

Sashen is back and warming his hands by the fire.

SASHEN
How romantic.

ANGELA
The storm's getting worse. I'm worried about the big trees coming down.

SASHEN
Not much we can do about that. I can close the rest of the shutters if you want.

ANGELA
Yeah. Want me to help?

SASHEN
No, I've got it. It'll just take a couple of minutes.

Sashen opens the front door. Wind gusts in.

ANGELA
Be careful.

Sashen smiles and heads outside.

He waves to Angela from the front porch window then closes the shutters.

Angela settles down in a chair by the fire. Pours herself a glass of wine.

The wind roars outside and the lights flicker.

Angela grabs a warm blanket and wraps it around her shoulders. Stares into the fire.

The muffled sound of FOOTSTEPS upstairs draws her attention.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Sash?

The footsteps stop.

She stands up. Wraps the blanket tightly around her shoulders. Goes to the bottom of the stairs and looks up.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Are you inside?

No answer. The house GROANS in the wind.

CRASH. Angela jumps as her wine glass falls off the coffee table and shatters on the wood floor.

Angela slowly approaches the mess. She kneels to pick up the broken pieces.

A dark shape moves in the shadows.

Angela gasps!

The shape ducks behind the couch. The lights flicker again.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Who are you?

Angela move to look behind the couch, but no one is there. Wet footprints darken the wood floor.

The figure now stands in the dark hallway. It is hard to make out, but appears to be a shivering Girl with long wet hair. Maybe a teenager?

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Are you the one who's been using the house?

The figure doesn't move.

Angela takes a few cautious steps forward.

The Girl shrinks back further into the shadows.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
I'm not going to hurt you.

Angela steps closer.

The Girl wears a skimpy wet nightgown that clings to her body. She hangs her head shyly, hair obscures her face. She crosses her arms and shakes from cold.

Angela takes her blanket off and approaches to wrap it around the Girl.

The Girl screams and lashes out. Her fingers rake across Angela's cheek, leaving red marks.

GIRL
GET OUT!

The lamp by the couch flashes bright, then the bulb breaks.

The Girl is gone.

The front door opens and Sashen comes in.

SASHEN
Whew! It's getting nasty out there.

ANGELA
We're leaving.

Angela brushes past him and heads up stairs.

Sashen stands there, confused.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Angela grabs her suitcase and starts packing.

Sashen follows her in.

SASHEN
Hold up, what's going on?

ANGELA
I'm not staying here anymore.

SASHEN

What about our honeymoon?

ANGELA

I don't care. We'll find a hotel.

She finishes shoving her clothes in her suitcase. Grabs his bag to pack it.

Sashen tries to stop her.

SASHEN

Just wait. Tell me what happened.

ANGELA

Why? You won't believe me.

SASHEN

Just calm down and let's --

ANGELA

Don't tell me to calm down! I told you we're leaving.

SASHEN

So is that how it is? I don't get any say in things around here? I thought we were supposed to make decisions together.

Angela sits on the bed and buries her face in her hands.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

Oh come on. Don't cry. I just want to talk.

Angela looks up. Her face is red.

Sashen hugs her close. He looks at her cheek and sees the red fingernail marks. He touches them.

ANGELA

There is someone in this house. I've seen her.

SASHEN

Okay. Then let's call the police. We'll have her arrested for trespassing.

ANGELA

I'm telling you, it won't help. They won't find anyone.

SASHEN

Do you seriously think there's a ghost here?

ANGELA

I'm just telling you what I saw. One minute, she was standing right in front of me, then when I tried to touch her she was gone.

BOOM! The house shakes. The lights flicker and go out.

SASHEN

Okay, let's go.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Sashen and Angela come out the front door with their bags. They run hunched over in the heavy rain.

A large tree leans across the roof of the house behind them.

Sashen opens the trunk and puts their bags in.

Angela gets in the car and starts the engine while Sashen runs back to lock the door.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Sashen jumps in the car and slams the door.

SASHEN

It's a mess out there.

Angela turns on the headlights. The beams highlight the fallen tree.

ANGELA

We'll have to tell my dad.

SASHEN

Then he'll know we were up here.

ANGELA

We'll have to tell him we're married eventually anyway. The fact that we sneaked up to the lake house will be the least of his concerns.

A branch lands on the windshield.

SASHEN

We'd better go before it gets any worse.

Angela puts the car into gear and turns around in the driveway.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The car peels out of the gravel driveway. Branches litter the dirt road. The rain comes down in sheets.

The tires splash through a little stream rushing across the road.

INT. CAR - TRAVELING - NIGHT

The windshield wipers are on full, but the rain still makes visibility difficult. Angela leans forward to see out so she can avoid obstacles.

Sashen smiles at her.

SASHEN

Well, is this the honeymoon you always dreamed of, or what?

ANGELA

I'm not in the mood.

SASHEN

Come on, you have to admit, so much has gone wrong it's almost funny. If this were a marriage test, I'd say we're doing pretty good.

ANGELA

Maybe it will be a good story for our kids, but right now I'm not amused.

She swerves around a branch in the road.

Sashen grips the door.

SASHEN

You want to slow down?

ANGELA

Not until I'm far away from here.

SASHEN
Just asking.

Sashen leans back and looks out his window.

Bright lightning flashes, thunder claps simultaneously.

In the flash, Angela briefly spots the Girl standing in the road. Angela jerks the wheel to avoid hitting her.

ANGELA
Shit!

SASHEN
Whoa! Slow down!

ANGELA
Did you see that?

Angela looks in the rearview mirror.

SASHEN
Look out!

Angela focuses back on the road. A fallen tree blocks the way.

She slams on the brakes.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The car slides to a stop, just feet away from hitting the tree. Sits still. Falling rain glistens in the headlights and red taillights.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Angela pounds the steering wheel with her fist.

SASHEN
Calm down.

ANGELA
Stop telling me to calm down! Did you not just see her?

SASHEN
Who? There's no one out there.

Angela puts the car into reverse and turns around.

ANGELA

There's a chainsaw at the cabin.

SASHEN

Even if we clear this tree away,
the roads are still too dangerous.
Can we please just go back inside
and talk about this?

Angela doesn't say a word. Just drives.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

Angie?

Sashen puts his hand on her shoulder. She shrugs it off.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

The car pulls in and skids to a stop in the gravel.

Angela gets out and stamps back up to the house.

Sashen goes to the trunk to get the two bags.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Angela opens the door and looks inside. She tries the light switch but the power is still out.

She takes out her cell phone. Pulls up the contact card for "Dad". Her finger hovers over the call icon. She turns on the flashlight instead and uses it to light her way to the couch.

She sits and wraps a blanket around her for warmth.

Sashen lugs the bags in through the front door and sets them down. He shuts the door behind him.

ANGELA

I don't want to stay here.

SASHEN

In the morning, I'll cut through
every tree in the road until we're
out of here.

Angela grabs a box of matches from above the fireplace and sits on the couch. She lights the candles on the table.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
You can sleep right here on the
couch. I won't leave your side.

ANGELA
I wish you'd believe me.

SASHEN
I know you think you saw someone,
but there's no one here. We checked
the whole house.

ANGELA
Not the basement.

Sashen leans over and knocks on the floor.

SASHEN
Hello! Anyone down there?

The candles flicker on the table.

ANGELA
Did you see that?

SASHEN
It was just a breeze.

ANGELA
From where, the house is shut
tight.

Sashen stands up. He checks the fireplace. No breeze.

He stands by the stairs.

SASHEN
I'll be right back.

ANGELA
Don't go up there.

SASHEN
It'll just take a second.

He runs up the stairs.

Angela sits alone. Nervous.

The flickering candles cast shadows on the walls. Angela
looks at the dark corners of the room and shrinks down in
the couch. Hugs the blanket up around her.

There is a loud THUMP upstairs. Then the sound of something DRAGGING.

ANGELA

What are you doing up there?

There are muffled FOOTSTEPS, then more THUMPING.

The candles flicker again, then go out. All is quiet.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Sash?

Angela gets up. She strikes a match and re-lights the candles. Drops the match box into her pocket and carries the candle to the stairs.

Sashen runs back downstairs. He has a big branch from a pine tree in his hands.

SASHEN

Your dad's going to be pissed. That tree put a nice whole in the roof. Good thing we weren't sleeping in the guest room.

ANGELA

I'm not staying here.

SASHEN

You saw the roads.

ANGELA

We'll take the boat across the lake. We can call a cab to pick us up on the other side.

She heads for the back door.

SASHEN

No. You of all people should know how dangerous the lake is in a storm.

She stops and turns.

ANGELA

What's that supposed to mean?

SASHEN

After your mother --

ANGELA

Don't you dare. You can stay here
if you want, but I'm leaving.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Angela heads down the steps to the lake. Her hair swirls in
the wind.

Sashen chases after her onto the dock.

ANGELA

Oh no, no, no.

She kneels down at the end of the dock and pulls the frayed
end of the boat tie out of the water.

The boat is gone.

She sits and cries.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I guess you think the wind cut the
rope?

SASHEN

Come on. Let's go back up.

He takes her hand and they walk back up to the house.

They pass the spot where they slipped earlier. The rain
continues to wash away the loose soil. They don't notice a
piece of dirty white fabric sticking out of the mud.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sashen brings dry towels out for Angela.

ANGELA

Thanks.

She dries her hair.

Neither of them seem to be in the mood for much talking.

They open their bags in the middle of the living room floor
and change into dry clothes.

Angela looks down the hallway. The basement door is open.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

We need to check the basement.

SASHEN
Okay, if that will make you happy.
I'll find a flashlight.

She goes to the door in the hallway. Turns on her cell phone light and aims it down the stairs.

ANGELA
Use your cell phone.

SASHEN
Battery's dead.

Sashen heads to the porch.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
I'll be right back.

Angela doesn't wait. She steps into the stairwell.

INT. PORCH - NIGHT

Dim light comes in through the windows that haven't been boarded up.

Sashen rummages around in the dark. He finds a camping lantern and tests it, but the batteries are low.

He uses the weak light to search the drawers for fresh batteries.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Angela descends the stairs. The wood steps creak under her weight.

She doesn't notice as the door slowly closes and latches behind her.

When she reaches the bottom of the stairs she aims her light around the room.

The basement has been converted into a study. Law books line the shelves. A computer monitor and printer sit on a nice wood desk by several filing cabinets.

Her father's wine collection is stored in a rack on the wall.

Angela searches the corners of the room. No sign of squatters.

She approaches the desk. A stack of pages sits in the printer. It appears to be the start of a manuscript.

The title page reads: THE DELINQUENT by David Knight.

Angela flips the first page and reads:

TEXT

It wasn't the first time she'd had to plead innocent, but it will certainly be the last thought the raven haired Trisha Cole as she stared out the window of the Jefferson County juvenile detention center bus...

Angela sits at the desk and flips through the pages.

INT. PORCH - NIGHT

Sashen finds a package of batteries in a toolbox and replaces the dying ones. He snaps the battery cover closed and the lantern casts a pale light around the room.

Behind Sashen, the pale-skinned Girl stares in through the window.

He turns and spots her. He nearly falls over as he jumps backward.

SASHEN

Ahh!

Sashen holds the lantern up. The Girl doesn't move.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

Who the hell are you?

The Girl just hangs her head and shivers. Her hair is soaked from the rain. She wears a thin white nightgown that clings to her body.

Sashen opens the porch door.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

Well, come in out of the rain at least.

Sashen makes room for her to enter, then shuts the door behind her.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

What's your name?

The Girl looks up at him with sad eyes.

Sashen can't help noticing how the thin wet nightgown clings to her skin, revealing every curve. Even the shape of her nipples... Sashen averts his eyes.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

Are you the one who's been coming
in here? You've got my wife totally
freaked out --

The Girl steps forward and kisses Sashen on the lips.

This catches him by surprise, and for a brief moment he lingers. He quickly remembers himself and gently pushes her away.

She tries again, but he firmly holds her off.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

No. I'm married. Let me get you
some dry clothes.

This time she is more aggressive. She grabs him and pulls him close.

Sashen has to push her back roughly.

The Girl trips and bumps hard against the counter. The tools rattle. Anger clouds her face.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I think you should
leave.

Suddenly she slaps her own face. Her cheek reddens.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

Hey --

She slaps herself again, harder.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

Stop it!

He tries to grab her arms, but she wriggles away and slams into the counter. The lantern falls over casting angled shadows on the ceiling.

Her hand lands next to the fish clubber. She grabs it.

She turns and swings the clubber at Sashen's head.

CRACK!

BLACK OUT

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Angela looks up at the sound of a muffled THUMP upstairs. She goes back to reading with her phone light.

TEXT

"I said everything." The stern look on the guard's face told Trisha there wasn't any choice. She had always heard about strip searches, but imagined they were to prevent people from sneaking in weapons. Surely they could see...

Angela is disgusted. She flips several more pages and reads again.

TEXT (CONT'D)

...The warden looked up from Trisha's case file. "You're very lucky that the judge has taken an interest in your case. He understands the difficulties of growing up having lost one's parents. If you agree to live under his supervision he has generously offered to suspend your sentence..."

The metal of one of the filing cabinets flexes and pops. Angela flinches and looks.

One of the drawers is open by a few inches. Was it like that before? Angela sets the pages of the manuscript down and goes to the cabinet.

The drawer is full of files. She takes one out.

The label reads "Mills, Emily." Inside is a mug shot of a sixteen-year-old girl. The file details a shoplifting arrest.

Angela places it back and flips through more files. They are all exclusively female juveniles. She opens another drawer, full of more files.

She glances back at the manuscript on the desk, then on a whim flips to the last names starting with "C". There is no "Cole, Trisha". She is about to close the drawer, but stops.

Her eyes land on "Calum, Trisha."

She pulls out the file and opens it. Inside are several photos of a pretty seventeen-year-old teen with long jet-black hair.

She drops the file in shock and steps back. The Girl in the pictures stares up at her. The same girl who scratched her.

She backs away, unaware that TRISHA is behind her. Watching.

Trisha steps back into the shadows.

Angela returns to the manuscript. She flips to the later pages.

TEXT (CONT'D)

...Trisha strained at the ropes.
She had never felt so helpless. Her
naked breasts heaved with...

Angela tosses the pages to the ground.

She opens a desk drawer. There are more manuscripts with other titles evocative of erotic thrillers.

One drawer is locked. She searches around and finds a letter opener. Uses it to pry the drawer open. The lock is stubborn, but finally gives.

Inside she finds an unopened bottle of wine. She sets it on the desk and continues to rummage through the drawer.

She pulls out a cloth bag. It contains a syringe and a small bottle of clear liquid. Confusion clouds her face. There's no label on the bottle.

ANGELA

What were you up to?

She looks at the wine bottle again. Inspects it closely. The foil cover has a tiny pinprick hole in it.

FLASHBACK - QUICK CUTS

- Angela opens a wine bottle on the first night. Firelight shines through the deep red wine as it pours into her glass in slow motion.

- She raises the glass to her lips.

- Staggeres to her bedroom and flops down on the bed.

BACK TO SCENE

Angela slams the bottle on the desk. Her mouth hangs open, stunned at the revelation.

BAM! A book slams to the floor.

Angela steps toward it. Scared. She looks at a empty spot on the bookcase from where it had fallen.

She bends down to pick up the book. The floor underneath appears to be scuffed.

She grabs the bookcase and pulls. It is heavy, but she is able to move it from the wall enough to shine her phone light behind it. She sees an old wood door.

ANGELA

What the hell?

Angela props her phone up on the desk and aims the light at the bookshelf.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Hey Sashen! Come down here, I found something.

Using all of her strength, Angela pushes the bookcase out of the way and stands staring at the door.

It is made of unfinished wood. Probably for an old food storage room, but there is a new deadbolt lock on it, reversed, so that it is lockable from this side.

CLICK. The dead bolt turns by itself.

Angela looks around the basement. She is alone.

She gingerly reaches for the door, and pulls it open. It is heavy. The inside of the door has been reinforced.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - NIGHT

Angela's light shines behind her as she steps into the room.

A mattress lays in the corner of the room. Handcuffs dangle from a ring that has been bolted into the cement wall.

ANGELA

Oh, Dad, no...

She shakes her head. Takes a step back.

Something grabs her and pulls her into the room. The door slams behind her. The room plunges into darkness.

She screams! Pounds on the door. The noise booms in the small cement room.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

On the other side of the door all of her efforts come through as muted thumps.

INT. PORCH - NIGHT

Sashen stirs. A trickle of blood runs down his cheek and onto the floor.

He moans.

Reaches up to feel his head and cringes at the touch. Slowly sits up. The camping lantern still lights the room. No sign of the girl, Trisha.

Sashen stands and picks up a hammer. Holds it defensively. He locks the porch door. Takes the lantern in his other hand and creeps into the...

HALLWAY

Sashen tries the basement door. It's locked.

SASHEN
(whispers)
Angela. Are you down there?

No answer.

Sashen checks the...

LIVING ROOM

No one. He locks the front door. Picks up the house phone and listens. No dial tone. Sets it back down.

He peeks into the kitchen. It's empty.

He quietly climbs the stairs to the second floor.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

He checks each room with the lantern. Tree branches poke through the ceiling of the second bedroom. Water drips in, but no one is there.

Finally he lowers the hammer. Calls out.

SASHEN

Angela!

Sashen heads back down to the...

BASEMENT HALLWAY

He pounds the locked door with his fist.

SASHEN

Open the door!

He turns the handle as hard as he can, but it doesn't budge.

He weighs the hammer in his hands, then slams it on the door handle. The handle bends. He continues pounding until it breaks off and clatters to the floor.

He flings the door open and runs down the stairs.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Sashen spots Angela's cell phone propped up on the desk. The flashlight is still on.

The bookcase is back in its original spot, concealing the door.

He picks the cell phone up and looks at it. The battery is nearly dead.

He looks around the small room. There's nowhere to hide. No windows to climb out of. Sashen kicks the desk in frustration.

He looks at the phone again. Dials 911, but the signal fails.

Sashen heads upstairs, watching for a signal.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Sashen steps onto the porch and finally gets a signal, but doesn't hit send. Instead, he checks the contacts and finds the one labeled "Dad".

He calls and waits impatiently while it rings.

The faint voice of Angela's dad, DAVID KNIGHT, answers.

DAVID (V.O.)
(over phone)
Hey honey, what's up?

SASHEN
Mr. Knight. It's me Sashen.

DAVID (V.O.)
Oh. What do you want? Do you know
what time it is?

SASHEN
I'm worried about Angela. I can't
find her.

DAVID (V.O.)
What? Where are you?

SASHEN
We... We're at your lake house.

DAVID (V.O.)
I told her not to go up there
anymore. I'm guessing it was your
idea --

SASHEN
That's not important right now. I
just want to find her. I don't know
what to do.

DAVID (V.O.)
Did you have a fight? She probably
just doesn't want to see you.

Sashen resists the urge to throw the phone.

SASHEN
Mr. Knight, listen to me! This is
serious. A girl has been living
here at the house. She attacked me.

DAVID (V.O.)
Have you called the police?

SASHEN
I'm going to, but I thought I
should call you first.

DAVID (V.O.)
You did the right thing. Don't call
anyone. Stay right there, I'm on my
way.

SASHEN
The storm has completely blocked
the roads.

DAVID (V.O.)
I'll take the boat. Don't --

The call goes silent. Sashen looks at the screen. The dead
battery symbol flashes briefly before going completely
black.

SASHEN
Shit!

He slams the useless phone down.

Calls out to the forest.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
Angela!

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - NIGHT

It is pitch black. Angela breathes heavily. She pounds the
door once more.

ANGELA
Let me out!

Trisha's whispering voice mocks her.

TRISHA
Let me out.

Angela scuffles away in the dark.

ANGELA
Who are you?! What do you want from
me?

Angela feels around in the dark.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Where are you?

Silence.

Angela shuffles again.

A match strikes. It flares and lights up the room. She has the matchbook that she had put in her pocket.

Angela searches the small room. Other than the mattress and a few scraps of clothing, it is bare.

She examines the door. There is no way to open it without a key.

The match burns her finger and she drops it. The light goes out.

She strikes another. A wisp of smoke curls toward the ceiling but then turns and is sucked through a crack at the top of the door.

She holds the match close to the crack and the breeze is just enough to make the match go out.

Angela takes a few steps in the dark. The mattress scuffs on the ground. There is a sound of cloth RIPPING.

Angela strikes a new match. This time she holds a wad of cloth from the mattress.

She lights the tip of it with the match. Smoke from the fire is sucked through the crack.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Come on...

The cloth burns low. She gathers some mattress stuffing and lights it. Thick black smoke rises.

She coughs and covers her mouth. Holds the smoldering stuffing as close as she can to the crack. The room fills with choking smoke.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Sashen reaches in through the open car door and honks the horn. The sound echoes through the forest.

SASHEN

Come on!

He gives up. Pounds the roof of the car.

Slams the door shut and heads back to the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sashen enters. He sniffs the air and smells smoke.

Sashen runs to the fireplace and feels for warmth. It's cold.

He checks the kitchen. Nothing.

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP....

A smoke alarm goes off in the basement.

INT. BASEMENT STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Sashen opens the door. The light from his lantern shines through a smoky haze. The smoke alarm blares.

He hurries down the steps and searches the room.

SASHEN

Hey! Are you down here?

Sashen knocks the smoke alarm off the ceiling and silences it.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

Can you hear me? Where are you?

Tendrils of smoke come from behind the bookcase and curl along the ceiling.

Sashen pulls the bookcase away from the wall.

Smoke rises from the gap along the top of the door.

Sashen quickly unlocks the door and pulls it open. A dense black cloud billows out.

He coughs and covers his mouth. He goes in.

A moment later he emerges, pulling Angela behind him. He lays her on the floor and shakes her.

SASHEN (CONT'D)

Wake up!

She doesn't stir.

Sashen lifts her in his arms and carries her up the stairs.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Sashen throws the front door open and carries Angela out into the fresh air. He lays her on the porch.

The rain has stopped and a gentle breeze blows over Angela.

Sashen pulls the shirt away from her neck.

SASHEN
Come on. Come on.

He puts an ear to her mouth and listens. She's breathing.

He lightly slaps her face.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
Wake up. I'm here.

Angela coughs. Opens her eyes and looks up at Sashen. Her voice is raspy.

ANGELA
My hero.

SASHEN
Oh, thank God. Can you breath?

She coughs again. Sits up.

ANGELA
I feel like I inhaled a cigar. Did you see the smoke?

SASHEN
Yeah. What happened in there? How did the fire start?

ANGELA
I started it. There was no way out of that room.

SASHEN
Did the girl lock you in there?

ANGELA
You've seen her?

Sashen pulls the hair back from his forehead to show the cut from where she hit him.

SASHEN
We met. She's very real. Let's go find her.

Angela looks at the house. The memory of what she found in there comes back.

ANGELA

I can't go back in there.

SASHEN

It'll be okay. Your dad is coming to help. We'll get her out of there.

ANGELA

What?

SASHEN

I called your dad. I told him about the girl.

Angela stands up. Nervous.

ANGELA

No. You can't let him come here. Call him back.

SASHEN

I can't. Your phone's dead and the landlines are down. He's a little pissed, but I thought you were missing. Don't worry he's coming to help. He's worried about you.

ANGELA

You don't understand. We have to get out of here, now.

Sashen looks up at the LOW RUMBLE of an approaching boat.

SASHEN

This girl is disturbed. Your dad of all people knows how to deal with troubled girls.

ANGELA

I'm not worried about her!

SASHEN

Can you just tell me what's going on?

Angela grabs Sashen's arm.

ANGELA

Don't let him come up here. Tell him I'm fine.

(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Say I went to town or something.
What ever you do, keep him away
from here.

SASHEN
But he just drove out here in the
middle of the night.

ANGELA
I'll explain later. Don't let him
suspect anything.

SASHEN
Suspect what? Angela --

ANGELA
Just get rid of him!

Angela rushes inside.

SASHEN
Wait!

Sashen throws up his arms in frustration. The sound of the
motor gets closer. He heads around the back of the house.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Angela cautiously enters. The lantern still shines on the
desk. She checks the room for Trisha. It's clear.

She hurries over to hidden room and shuts the door. Shoves
the bookcase back into place. Hides the broken smoke
detector.

She straightens up the desk. Places the manuscripts back
into the desk drawers. Shoves the wine bottle and syringe in
the bottom drawer and shuts it.

Picks up the freshly printed manuscript and places it back
on the printer.

Then freezes.

Trisha steps out of the shadows.

ANGELA
What do you want from me?

Trisha points at the pages on the printer.

Angela considers them, then nods in understanding at Trisha.

Trisha walks back into the shadows and is gone.
Angela heads upstairs. Taking the pages with her.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT

Sashen waits at the end of the dock.

The moon pokes out of the clouds and glistens off the water as the boat approaches.

Angela's dad, David Knight (52), an imposing man with a greying beard, steers the boat in for a landing.

He tosses a rope to Sashen.

Sashen catches it and ties the boat to the dock.

SASHEN

Hi Mr. Knight. I'm really sorry you had to come all the way out here --

DAVID

Where's my daughter?

SASHEN

She's actually fine. I just panicked when I couldn't find her. She's sleeping now.

DAVID

You said someone attacked you.

SASHEN

I did. Some girl. I think she may have been breaking into houses around here.

DAVID

And you left Angela alone up there?

David starts toward the house.

Sashen grabs his arm.

SASHEN

I... The girl's gone. We scared her away.

David jerks his arm out of Sashen's grip.

DAVID

Don't ever put your hands on me.
Who was this girl? Do you have a
description?

SASHEN

I don't know. Teenager. Pale. Long
black hair. Someone you know?

David looks at Sashen suspiciously.

DAVID

Why would you ask that?

SASHEN

I just thought maybe she was a
neighbor or something. Everything
is fine now. You can go back home.
It's really not a big deal.

DAVID

There is something you're not
telling me.

SASHEN

No. I'm just tired. It's been a
long night.

DAVID

I read people for a living and I'm
very good at telling when someone
is lying to me, especially you.

SASHEN

Okay, okay. Angela and I... We
started a little fire in the
basement. Everything is fine, it's
just really smoky. We'll clean it
up. I'll pay for any damages.

David puts his hand on Sashen's shoulder.

DAVID

Calm down. You know I've never
really liked you, but I'll admit
you're not the worst kid my
daughter has dated.

SASHEN

Thank you sir.

DAVID

But like I said. You're a really
bad liar.

Sashen's eyes go wide.

He looks down at his stomach. David holds a knife, buried up to its hilt in Sashen's gut.

David pulls the knife out.

Sashen drops to his knees, holding his stomach.

SASHEN

What...

David looks down at him with pity. Shakes his head.

DAVID

Why did you have to come here?

Sashen looks at his hands. Blood glistens in the moonlight. A tear runs down his cheek.

DAVID (CONT'D)

You should have let the past die.

David shoves Sashen off the dock.

SPLASH.

Sashen sinks under. Blood clouds the water.

David heads to the house.

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

Angela shoves a chair around the hanging branches of the tree and over to the closet. She stands on it and shoves the manuscript far back under a pile of bedding on the top shelf.

The bedroom light turns on. The distant sound of a generator filters in from outside.

Angela jumps off the chair and runs to the window. Light comes from the detached garage.

Her dad walks out. Shuts the door behind him.

ANGELA

There was a generator?

David looks up toward the roof of the house.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Shit.

She ducks out of sight.

Angela returns to the closet. Quickly straightens up the pile of bedding and shoves the chair back to the corner of the room.

SLAM.

A door shuts downstairs.

DAVID (O.S.)
Angela. I'm here!

Angela ducks into the closet and shuts the door.

INT. CLOSET - NIGHT

Angela scoots back to hide behind the hanging shirts. She listens to the sound of footsteps coming up stairs.

DAVID (O.S.)
Are you up here?

David's footsteps stop in the hallway.

DAVID (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Sashen told me what happened. I
just want to make sure you're okay.

David's feet get closer. Now they're in the bedroom. Angela holds her breath. Her muscles tense up.

Thump, thump, thump, THUMP. A shadow moves across the gap under the door. David stops right outside the closet.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Where are you sweetie?

The footsteps move away from the door.

Angela lets her breath out. She relaxes slightly. Her knee bumps against the laundry board and it shifts its position.

Clink.

David's feet stamp back across the room. The door flies open and light floods in.

David's hand reaches through the clothing and grabs Angela. He pulls her out.

Angela's arms flail to grab ahold of the doorframe. She tries to hold on but David is too strong. Her fingernails scrape across the wood.

Angela's dad stands her up and looks her in the eyes.

Angela hangs her head like a child in trouble.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Now what are you hiding for? I'm not mad at you. I just want to take you home. You know you shouldn't be up here.

David guides her to the door.

ANGELA

Where's Sashen?

DAVID

Don't worry about that.

ANGELA

I'm not leaving without him.

DAVID

He's already gone.

Angela steps into the...

HALLWAY

Angela stops and turns to face him.

ANGELA

He wouldn't leave without me.

DAVID

Face it. The kid never cared about you. I saw him leaving in the fishing boat as I was coming across the lake.

Angela shoves her dad back into the room. He stumbles back and she slams the door.

She races down the stairs.

David throws the door opens and is hot on her heels.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Get back here!

LIVING ROOM

Angela slips on the wood floor as she rounds the corner in her socks. She scrambles to her feet just in time to evade her dad.

She bolts for the back of the house.

David chases after her.

BACK PORCH

Angela reaches the back door and flings it open.

ANGELA

Sashen!

David's arms wrap around her waist and pull her back inside.

DAVID

We need to talk about what you think you saw.

ANGELA

Let me go!

DAVID

I'm your father! You'll listen to what I say.

ANGELA

Help!

David covers her mouth with one hand and slams the porch door.

He drags her through the house to the...

BASEMENT

Her feet thump on the stairs as David drags her down.

He shoves her onto a couch. He checks the printer.

DAVID

Where is my book?

ANGELA

You mean the rape fantasy you're writing?

DAVID

It's an erotic thriller. There's nothing wrong with that.

ANGELA

There is when it's written about people you're responsible for.

DAVID

Now you're imagining things.

ANGELA

Trisha Calum. Age seventeen. I saw her file. You lifted every detail from her actual life.

DAVID

Who cares where it's from? You shouldn't be snooping in my work.

ANGELA

You said you didn't even come up here anymore. Is this what you've been doing since Mom died?

DAVID

It's none of your business.

ANGELA

Where is Trisha now?

David sighs.

DAVID

We shouldn't be fighting. This is all just a misunderstanding.

He reaches into the desk drawer and pulls out the bottle of wine.

Angela eyes the bottle.

Davis uncorks it and grabs two wine glasses from a shelf and pours as he talks.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Things have been hard since your mom died. I've been lonely, and writing is my release. I know you think it's disgusting, but it's only fantasy. That's all.

David hands Angela a glass. He leans back on his desk and sets his own glass down.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Let's have a drink. You can ask me anything. I promise I'll be completely honest. I need you to know you can trust me.

Angela looks at the wine in her glass, then back at her Dad.

ANGELA

Okay. Where is Sashen?

DAVID

I told you. I saw him leaving.

ANGELA

I find that hard to believe since the fishing boat was lost in the storm.

DAVID

I don't know what to tell you. Maybe he needed a break.

ANGELA

He went down to the dock to meet you.

Angela tosses her wine at him. It splashes him in the face and stains his shirt red.

He jumps up.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Tell me the truth! Where's Sashen?
Where's Trisha?

David's face contorts with rage. He grabs the wine bottle and charges straight at Angela. He yanks her head back by the hair.

DAVID

I said have a drink!

David pours the wine into her mouth as she tries to scream. She can't help swallowing it.

He lets go roughly and shoves her back.

Angela falls to her knees on the floor, coughing violently. Tears stream down her face.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Why did you make me do that?

He storms around the room, raging.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I told you never to come here! Why
couldn't you just listen to me?
You're just like your god damned
mother! I did my best to protect
you. Does that make me a bad guy?

Angela tries to crawl away, but the room gets blurrier.

Her Dad's voice slurs and distorts. The lights dim.

David leans down close, yells right in Angela's face.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I took that girl in. I helped her!
She wouldn't have been any better
off on the streets...

Angela swoons.

FADE OUT.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - NIGHT

The door to the basement has been left partially open. Light
spills in. Angela is stretched out on the mattress.

TRISHA (O.S.)

(angry whisper)
Wake up!

Angela's eyes snap open. She is alone.

She tries to move her arms but they are cuffed to the wall
above her head.

With some effort she twists herself into a sitting position.

She catches glimpses of her dad as he paces around the
basement. He tosses stacks of paper into a cardboard box on
the floor.

Angela hears him head up the stairs.

Angela yanks at the handcuffs. The metal digs into her
wrists. She whimpers.

Angela gets on her knees and wraps her hands around the
chain of the handcuffs and puts her feet against the wall.
She pulls again as hard as she can. It's no use. The metal
ring is bolted fast to the wall.

She sits back defeated. Knees to her chest. Buries her face in her arms and sobs.

EXT. SHORELINE - NIGHT

The moon is out. Water laps at the shore.

Something has been dragged out of the water and through the mud.

The tracks lead to two feet. Blood trickles down to the lake.

Sashen lies face down in the mud.

He gasps and wakes up. Groans in pain. He rolls over and grabs his stomach. He cranes his neck to look back up the hill. The lights are on in the house.

He reaches out and grabs a tree root. Pulls himself up the hill. Pain shoots through his side and he doubles over.

He looks at the house again.

SASHEN

Angela!

His voice is weak. He tries to climb again, determined. This time he makes progress.

When he reaches the spot where he and Angela had slipped earlier, the wet soil gives way. Sashen slide back a few feet.

He groans in pain. Then recovers and looks up.

The remains of a human leg poke out of the earth. Tight skin is stretched over the bone, covered with the tatters of a dirty white dress.

Sashen moves with renewed determination.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - NIGHT

Angela is curled up in the corner with her head down. She cries.

David bangs around in the basement, emptying drawers and shelves.

Angela looks up as David passes by the door.

Across the mattress from her, Trisha is huddle up in the same position as Angela. Almost a mirror image.

Angela shrinks back, afraid.

Trisha slowly raises her head. This time blood from her nose is smeared across her bruised face. Tears streak down her cheek. She stares at Angela with bloodshot eyes.

A drop of blood starts running from Angela's nose.

Angela tugs at her chains again. They clink loudly.

David's activity stops in the other room.

Trisha raises a finger to her lips.

TRISHA

Shh.

Angela sits quietly until David starts moving again.

Trisha just stares at her.

ANGELA

(whispers)

What happened to you?

Trisha puts her head back down.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Hey!

Angela tries to kick her. The chains rattle.

Trisha suddenly lunges across the mattress. Her hand wraps around Angela's throat.

Angela's face turns red as she struggles to breath. She tries to pulls Trisha's hands away. Her grip weakens and her hands drop to her side. Her eyes close.

Trisha's hands let go!

Angela's eyes snap open and she gasps for breath. She holds her throat.

David's shadow falls over her. He looms in the doorway.

DAVID

Sounds like someone just woke up.

Angela looks around the room.

Trisha is gone.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Are you ready to talk?

David comes closer. He kneels down to touch Angela's cheek.

She recoils at what would normally be a tender fatherly gesture.

ANGELA
Fuck you.

David grabs her chin and forces her to look at him.

DAVID
Did I raise you to talk like that?

Angela tries to look away, but he holds her tight.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Have I ever laid a hand on you
before this? Answer me!

ANGELA
No.

DAVID
Then I deserve some respect, don't
I? Maybe I've earned the benefit of
the doubt?

Angela nods.

David looks at her neck. She has a ring of bruises from being choked.

DAVID (CONT'D)
What happened to your neck?

Angela doesn't say anything.

DAVID (CONT'D)
How do you want this to end?

Angela averts her eyes to avoid looking at him.

David lets her chin go. Frustrated. Stands up.

DAVID (CONT'D)
I'm not a bad guy. You know that.
You should see the people I have to
deal with.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)
Drug dealers, whores, gangbangers.
They're trash, and I try to help
them.

Angela mumbles.

ANGELA
I'm sorry.

DAVID
What?

ANGELA
I'm sorry I disrespected you.

He looks down at her with pity.

DAVID
If I uncuff you, do you promise not
to run?

Angela nods her head.

ANGELA
I'll be good.

David smiles.

DAVID
Of course. You've always been a
good girl.

He pulls a set of keys from his pocket and kneels down.
Unlocks the cuffs.

Angela rubs her wrists. They're red and chafed.

David takes her arm and examines the red marks.

DAVID (CONT'D)
You know I'd never hurt you unless
I had to, right?

ANGELA
I know, Dad.

David stands up and walks out of the room.

Angela gets up to follow. She looks back at the mattress and
the cuffs.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Angela squints as she steps into the light.

The desk and cabinet drawers are now all open and empty. Two cardboard boxes on the floor are full of papers.

David picks up a box of manuscripts. He points to another filled with case files.

DAVID

Grab that.

Angela leans down to pick it up. A photo of a blond teenaged girl sticks out from a folder. Angela nudges the file to get a better look.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Follow me.

David carries his box upstairs.

Angela follows with hers.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A fire rages in the fireplace. Ashes of other papers glow among the logs.

David sets his box down and tosses a manuscript in. He watches it burn.

DAVID

Do you know how long I worked on these books? It took me years to write them all.

He tosses another on the fire.

DAVID (CONT'D)

It's amazing how quickly they burn.

David sighs.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I got some interest, you know? A few encouraging responses from publishers. I don't think I ever would have made a living at is a writer, but it would have been great to see one of these books bound and on the shelves.

David points to Angela's box.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Shove that over here.

She pushes it over, then backs away.

Angela glances at the hallway.

David lifts the top file out of the box and opens it. He pulls out the photo of the blonde girl.

DAVID (CONT'D)
You think it's wrong to write about
the world we live in?

ANGELA
I think it's wrong to sexually
assault young girls. Isn't that
what your dungeon is for?

DAVID
It was just a game. Believe me,
they all knew what they were doing.
Look at this girl. Picked up for
prostitution. Do you think she
would rather have gone to jail or
to spent a weekend up at a lake
house?

ANGELA
Chained to a wall?

He throws the photo and file into the fire.

DAVID
She liked it. You're an adult. You
know by now that people have all
kinds of different tastes.

ANGELA
You're sick.

Angela takes a step toward the hallway while he watches the fire curl around the edges of the photo.

David looks at her, furious.

DAVID
I'm not sick!

Angela flinches and stops moving.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Some people will never understand,
though. That's why you won't tell
them, will you?

Angela clamps her mouth shut.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Will you?!

She shakes her head no.

David sighs and looks back at the fire. Throws another file
in.

DAVID (CONT'D)
It would ruin everything we have.

Angela bolts toward the hallway!

DAVID (CONT'D)
Get back here!

David tries to grab her, but he trips over the box. She
disappears down the hallway to the back porch.

David chases after her.

INT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Angela bursts out the back door. She sees the boat floating
at the end of the dock and runs down the path. This time she
has a good head start.

David comes out and searches. He spots her running halfway
down the hill. He takes the steps two at a time and gains
ground quickly.

Then BAM! His feet are knocked out from under him. He
sprawls on the ground.

Before David can get back to his feet he is tackled by
Sashen.

Sashen pins him down and yells for Angela.

SASHEN
Run! Get the police!

Angela stops to look back.

SASHEN (CONT'D)
Go!

DOCK

Angela runs to the boat and jumps in. She quickly unties it. The boat floats free.

Angela finds the keys in the ignition.

ANGELA

Thank God.

She turns them. Nothing happens.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Come on.

PATHWAY

David rears his head back and butts Sashen in the face.

Sashen tumbles off into the mud. Blood runs into his eye from a cut on his brow. He wipes it away as David approaches.

DAVID

I thought you were dead.

SASHEN

Not yet.

Sashen kicks out with his foot. Nails David in the knee.

David cries in pain and goes down.

DOCK

The boat slowly drifts from the dock. Angela looks all around for a way to start the motor. She finally grabs the gearshift and pulls. It clicks into neutral.

She tries the ignition again. This time the motor roars to life.

Angela watches Sashen struggle to his feet.

ANGELA

Hurry!

Sashen holds his wounded stomach and starts moving, too slowly.

David rises up behind Sashen. Limpes toward him with a heavy branch in his hand.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Look out!

David swings the branch and hits Sashen on his side near the wound. Sashen collapses in pain.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Sashen!

PATHWAY

David drops onto Sashen and punches him hard in the face.

Blood splatters from his Sashen's nose. Sashen groans.

David punches again. And again.

ANGELA (O.S.)

Stop it!

Sashen is barely conscious, but David keeps pounding.

DOCK

Angela steers the boat back to the dock and jumps out.

She runs back up the hill.

ANGELA

You're killing him! Stop it!

PATHWAY

David glances at Angela, then punches Sashen again.

Angela reaches them. She flails at David's back with all her strength.

David blocks her blows then grabs her arms.

DAVID

You made me do this.

She struggles, but David is much stronger. He drags her back toward the house.

She tries to get a view of Sashen.

ANGELA

Oh God! Sashen!!

He's a bloody mess.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

David drags Angela into the room and throws her to the floor by the fireplace.

DAVID
Don't you move!

Angela buries her head in her arms and sobs.

David grabs a handful of files from the box.

DAVID (CONT'D)
You would turn on your own family
for this?!

He throws a file at her. The papers and photos scatter.

DAVID (CONT'D)
These girls were trash. They're
were worthless.

He throws another file. Some of the papers land in the fire. It glows brighter.

David opens up a folder. A redhead teen with sad eyes stares up for her mug shot.

DAVID (CONT'D)
I gave them a second chance. I took
them in when no one else would. And
they loved me for it.

He throws the file. Picks up another. This one is Trisha's. He stops at the site of her photo.

DAVID (CONT'D)
They deserved worse than me.

David spits on her photo.

The house lights flicker and dim.

David kneels down and grabs Angela's hair. Pulls her head up and hold the photo in front of her face.

DAVID (CONT'D)
What do you know about her?

Through her tears, Angela sees Trisha standing in the shadows behind David, watching.

ANGELA

I know that you killed her.

David lets Angela go.

She scoots away from him.

For the first time a look of remorse crosses David's face.

DAVID

It was an accident.

His shoulders slump.

DAVID (CONT'D)

She liked it rough. She never said so, but I could tell. You can always tell. One night, things went too far and she lost it. She threatened to expose me. Said she'd tell the media. She said I'd lose everything. My job, my wife... you. I couldn't let her leave. I couldn't throw it all away for some... some stupid bitch.

David tosses Trisha's photo in the fire.

The lights flicker again. This time the wood creaks all around, like the house is under a great strain.

David looks up at the noise.

A wine glass flies off the table right past David's head and smashes on the rock fireplace. David ducks away from the shattering glass.

He glances at Angela. There is no way she could have thrown it. His eyes search the room.

A glass-framed picture falls off the wall and breaks.

DAVID (CONT'D)

What's happening?

ANGELA

It's her.

DAVID

What? Who?

ANGELA

Trisha is here.

David steps backward as the flames grow hotter in the fireplace. The pieces of broken glass vibrate on the floor.

DAVID
That's impossible.

He moves to open the front door, but the deadbolt turns and locks by itself.

David tries to unlock it but the deadbolt won't budge.

DAVID (CONT'D)
How are you doing this?

ANGELA
I told you, it's not me.

DAVID
Bullshit! Don't lie to me!

The files erupt out of the box. The room fills with fluttering papers. Photos of girls litter the floor.

Angela spots Trisha in the dark, behind David.

Trisha's angry eyes stare back at Angela.

ANGELA
Lie to you? You've been lying to me for years.

Angela stands up and faces David.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
You've been lying to everyone. Did anyone else know what you were doing?

Angela picks up a poker from the fireplace. She steps closer.

DAVID
Put that down.

David raises his hands. He edges back. A chair slides across the floor behind him and he bumps against it.

Angela's face darkens with a sudden realization.

ANGELA
What really happened to Mom up here?

DAVID

You know about the accident.

Angela swings the poker. It misses David's face by inches. He flinches and falls back into the chair.

Angela looms over him, poker raised high, ready to strike.

ANGELA

No more lies! She found out didn't she?

DAVID

Okay! Yes! She wasn't supposed to come up here that weekend.

Angela drops the poker slightly. Stunned at the confession.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I told Trisha to stay quiet in the room while I tried to convince your mom to leave. But she started to scream. Everything would have been fine if she had just shut up.

Tears stream from Angela's eyes.

David pleads with Angela.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I swear I never touched your mom. When she heard Trisha, she ran away. She took the boat onto the lake, and I never saw her again.

Angela swings the poker at him with all of her strength.

David tries to block it with his arm. She swings again and again until there's a sharp crack as his bone breaks. David yowls in pain.

He grabs the poker with his good arm and wrests it from Angela. Her swings back at her hard, catching her in the ribs.

Angela yelps and drops to the floor. She crawls away from him.

David follows her. He swings again, but she rolls out of the way and the poker clangs off the floor. He takes another swing at her head.

She ducks and the poker smashes a lamp.

David readies for another strike.

Angela kicks the coffee table toward him. It slides and crashes into his shin.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Agh!

David drops the poker and grabs his leg.

Angela gets to her feet and tries to run, despite the pain in her ribs.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Angela staggers and steadies herself against the wall as she makes her way to the porch.

The noise of the generator sputters outside and the lights dim.

The door to the back porch slams shut in front of her.

Angela looks back to see David limping toward her. Her only choice is the basement. She turns and heads down. The broken door doesn't latch behind her.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

The lights waiver as the generator struggles.

She searches the room for a weapon, but there's nothing of any use. Empty shelves, camping lantern on the desk, furniture.

The stairs creak behind her. David's feet come into view on the steps.

Angela ducks behind the desk and tries to stay quiet.

DAVID

There's no way out.

Angela quietly scoots around the desk to stay out of sight as David searches the room. She spots a cardboard box. The bag with the needle lays inside.

Movement catches her eye and Angela looks at the door to the hidden room.

Trisha looms in the shadows, staring at Angela.

Finally the lights go out.

David reaches for the lantern on the desk and turns it on.

The light catches Angela's bare foot behind the desk. She quickly moves her foot back into the shadow.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I'm sorry it had to end this way.

He holds the poker tight, ready to strike. He steps around the corner of the desk. No Angela. She couldn't have moved that quickly.

THUNK!

David grabs his neck. The hypodermic needle is stuck. Angela pushes the plunger on the syringe and injects the liquid.

David drops the poker and grabs for the needle with his good hand. He yanks it out and stares in shock. Flings it aside.

DAVID (CONT'D)

You bitch!

He lurches toward Angela and strikes her.

Angela staggers back. She recovers. Blood drips from her nose. She wipes it with the back of her hand and looks at the red streak.

ANGELA

Look who raised me.

She dodges as David tries to hit her again.

He shakes his head as the drugs begin to take affect. He yells and unleashes a flurry of punches.

Angela raises her arms to defend herself. His punches have grown weak and she is able to get clear.

David staggers. He rubs his eyes.

Angela spots Trisha watching from the hidden room. Trisha steps back into the darkness.

Angela charges at David and shoves him to the door of the hidden room.

David struggles to stay on his feet.

Angela steps away, leaving him leaning against the door.

SASHEN
Will you stay here with me?

Angela looks down at the lake. The boat floats up against the shore.

ANGELA
You're going to be all right.

Angela stands.

SASHEN
Hey. Guess what? I love you.

Angela smiles.

ANGELA
Obviously.

She gets her arms under him, cradling his head, and carefully pulls him down the hill.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

It is a bright summer day. The forest is dry. Birds chirp. Boats motor around the lake.

The house is in good shape. The debris from the storm has been long cleared away.

A boat approaches the dock.

Angela drives while Sashen relaxes next to her. The only visible sign of their ordeal is a scar on Sashen's brow.

Angela guides the boat to the dock.

Sashen gets out to tie it up. His movement now a bit slower due to a lingering pain in his ribs.

Angela shuts the boat off and hands Sashen their bags.

Once they're both on the dock Sashen puts his arm around Angela and they look up at the house.

SASHEN
Are you sure you want to do this?

ANGELA
Yeah, of course.

But she doesn't move.

SASHEN

You really don't have to. The real estate agent said you could get a good price for the place.

ANGELA

Not a single renter has complained about a thing. Trisha is finally at peace.

SASHEN

Okay, but if you start sleepwalking again or your nose starts bleeding, we're out of here.

Angela smiles.

ANGELA

I am one hundred percent determined to finally have our honeymoon. This is our place now. Everything else is in the past.

Sashen picks up their bags and they start walking. As they walk off the dock, Sashen looks back at the spot where he had been dragged to shore.

SASHEN

There was one thing I didn't tell you.

ANGELA

What?

SASHEN

It wasn't Trisha who pulled me out of the water.

ANGELA

You probably don't remember swimming out.

SASHEN

No. I felt someone. I think your mom saved me.

She smiles at him.

ANGELA

Can we not talk about ghosts this week?

SASHEN

Good idea.

They climb the rest of the steps to the back porch. Angela unlocks the door and they step in.

The door closes behind them.

A dark shadow can be seen in the second floor bedroom window. Is it...?

The bedroom light turns on and the figure is gone.

FADE OUT.