

Night of the Damned

FADE IN:

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

A woman clerk stocks a cigarette shelf behind the counter. She's around 45, plump and wearing a "Howdy Market" shirt.

GUNMAN (O.S.)  
Trick or treat.

She turns and jumps. Her name badge, IRIS, quivers on her chest. Her eyes stare down the barrel of a shiny Colt .45.

IRIS  
Oh Lord, don't shoot me,  
mister. Please...I got kids.

GUNMAN (O.S.)  
Me too, Iris.

Gripping the Colt is a man wearing a ski mask. A tall man with a cigarette jutting from his lips. DADDY.

DADDY  
I want the cash. All the cash.

The woman clerk complies. She pops open the register and transfers greenbacks from the till to a paper bag.

DADDY  
Now where's the rest?

Woman clerk looks confused. Daddy snaps back the gun hammer.

DADDY  
All of it...or you'll be in  
heaven before midnight.

O.S. a woman SCREAMS.

INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT

A burly man carries a screaming WOMAN over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes. Down a flight of stairs. She flails her arms and legs.

WOMAN  
No, you asshole. Let me go.

Her kicking causes the burly man to fall back on the stairs. The woman breaks free and scrambles up the stairs. Tries to reach the door at the top of the stairway, but --

A thatch of her head is grabbed by the burly man. She SCREAMS and he drags her down the stairs.

INT. REFRIGERATED SECTION, CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

A 10-year-old girl opens a refrigerator door. GUMBALL, who is dressed in jeans and a T-shirt, grabs a quart of milk. She stoops down and pours a monstrous puddle on the floor.

At her feet is a small cat, which laps up the milk.

Gumball watches and smiles.

FRONT OF STORE

Daddy steps out of a room, breathing hard. He stares at the front door. His eyes scan the store.

AISLE

Gumball opens a stick of pink lipstick. Then opens a stick of red lipstick. Notices on the shelf above, ladies compacts.

She picks up a compact and pops it open. Gumball spins her gaze to see her cat still lapping milk. Back to the

COMPACT MIRROR

which reflects Gumball's face.

A slight twist of the mirror and she sees Daddy coming at her brandishing the Colt. The compact mirror falls and shatters.

Gumball turns and Daddy lifts the gun to her face.

DADDY

What part of watch the door  
don't you fucking understand?

GUMBALL

Have a coronary why don't you.

He pulls the trigger. SNAP--Gumball blinks.

DADDY

Get in the car.

Gumball turns and sees the puddle of milk, but no Cat.

GUM

Where's Cat?

Daddy pulls off the ski mask, revealing his thinning, matted brown hair and raw-bone features. Sweating like a madman.

DADDY

Let me worry about that  
fucking cat. Now get.

Gumball smiles and shakes her head. Puts a reassuring hand on Daddy's sleeve.

GUMBALL

Daddy, you're clearly on your  
way to a stroke. And my  
goodness, you haven't even  
turned forty yet.

Gumball winks at Daddy and strides off.

EXT. OPEN HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Car headlights streak down an open highway.

INT. CAR

Daddy open the driver-side door and slides in.

GUMBALL

Where's Cat?

Daddy hold up his bloody knife. Around the blade is a cat collar.

Gumball cuts loose with a SCREAM of anguish.

INT. CAR

Daddy at the wheel, sipping on a can of beer.

BACKSEAT

Gumball sitting, looking dazed. In a trance-like state.

GUMBALL

I heard Rogaine only works on  
the crown. It wouldn't help  
you none.

Not a word from Daddy.

Gumball pulls some lipstick and colors her lips.

GUMBALL  
Doctor Toni Grant says that  
fathers who molest their  
daughters have --

DADDY  
Shut up. I never molested you.

GUMBALL  
But it crossed your mind.

DADDY  
You're begging for the rod.

GUMBALL  
Do you mean your penis?

Brakes SCREECH, car stops and Gumball rocks forward, caught  
by her seat belt.

Daddy looks back.

DADDY  
I've about had it...

He stares at Gumball. Flicks the dome light.

DADDY  
What in Holy Hell?

Gumball shrugs.

DADDY  
What did you do to your face?

GUMBALL  
I'm just looking pretty for  
Daddy Dearest.

He grabs the lipstick from her hand. Tosses out the window.

DADDY  
Did you steal that from that  
store?

GUMBALL  
I would have paid for it, if  
the clerk was alive to take my  
money.

WHACK. A swift backhand to her cheek. Gumball wimpers and  
holds her face.

GUMBALL

Fucker.

DADDY

What are you, Queen of the  
fucking hop? Wipe your face  
off. You're disgusting.

GUMBALL

Asshole.

DADDY

If your mama could see you  
now, she'd slit her other  
wrist.

GUMBALL

You're a prick.

Daddy grabs Gumball by the collar.

DADDY

You load up my gun real nice  
and I'll forgive you.

He shoves her back in her seat. Then hands her the empty Colt  
.45. And a box of shells.

Daddy turns and the drops the gear into drive.

GUMBALL

You got a nervous tick, you  
know. I noticed that the other  
night.

Gumball whistles a sad little tune. Cracks open the six-  
shooter. Takes bullets from the box, then drops each shell  
out the window.

GUMBALL

I know this won't make sense  
to you. But you wear a ski  
mask and I don't. So what do  
you say?

DADDY

I've only got one ski mask.

GUMBALL

Good answer.

She hands back his Colt. And gives him the box of shells.

GUMBALL

All loaded.

Daddy shoves a cigarette in his mouth. He flicks his lighter, which doesn't fire up. He shakes the lighter. Empty, so he hands it back to Gumball.

She grabs the lighter and flicks it several times. No flame.

GUMBALL

Uh oh. We're out of lighter fluid.

DADDY

No way.

GUMBALL

I could pretend we have lighter fluid.

Gumball holds up a can of lighter fluid. Shakes it. The liquid splashed in the can, a full can. She slips the can into a pocket.

Daddy pounds the steering wheel.

DADDY

Shit, am I losing my mind. I forgot the damn beer, too. And it's your fault. That goddamn cat of yours.

EXT. COUNTRY STORE - NIGHT

The dark car rolls into a dirt parking lot. Daddy and Gumball exit.

INT. COUNTRY STORE

Gumball strolls in first. She moseys over to the candy section.

Daddy enters a few seconds later. The ski mask over his head.

At the counter is an OLD MAN, bald with glasses. The OLD MAN steps around the counter and approaches Gumball.

OLD MAN

I know why you're here.

GUMBALL

Huh?

OLD MAN

You're here for the good stuff.

GUMBALL

What good stuff?

OLD MAN

Step this way.

He leads over to the jawbreakers in a jar on the counter. Opens the jar and scoops out some. Drops the candy into a bag. Then hands the bag to Gumball.

GUMBALL

For me?

OLD MAN

Well I can't eat 'em.

He points to his teeth and the upper dentures fall.

OLD MAN

See, they's fake.

Gumball stares. At that moment the Colt taps the old man in the temple.

DADDY

Be true to your teeth and they'll never be false to you.

The old man is startled. He straightens up and lifts his hands.

OLD MAN

Money's in the drawer there.

Daddy steps around the counter. Hits buttons and the register slides open. Daddy scoops out the bills.

OLD MAN

I suppose you want the money in the safe.

Daddy stares at the old man.

DADDY

Now what do you think?



The old man leads Daddy to a stairway.

OLD MAN

Light don't work down there.  
Ain't got a flashlight either.

Gumball strolls the aisles with Cat.

BASEMENT

Daddy follows the old man down the steps. Keeps his Colt trained at the old guy's back. A mini-flashlight in his other hand.

OLD MAN

Don't get trigger happy.

Daddy shines the flashlight around the room.

The basement is full of clutter: boxes, food supply, canned goods. Things piled on things. A meat locker in the corner.

The old man points to the safe, a small thing under a sheet.

OLD MAN

Combination is one, one, one,  
one, one.

DADDY

You open it.

Old man struggles to squat down in front of the safe. Daddy keeps the flashlight beam on the dial. Old man rolls the combination wheel. Then turns the handle and the safe door opens.

WHACK - the old guy is smacked in the head. He hits the floor dead.

Daddy holds the mini-light in his teeth as he opens the safe door. He sees money. He stoops down and pulls out wads of cash. And sees a

BAG

in the safe, next to the cash. Daddy cautiously opens the bag. Then pours out its contents.

DRIVER'S LICENSE

fall out. Dozens of licenses, of men and woman from all over. Nebraska, Iowa, Arkansas, California.

DADDY  
Son of a bitch.

Too bad Daddy is preoccupied and doesn't see the meat locker door behind him. The door creeps open.

Something low crawls out of the freezer. Something crawling toward Daddy.

Daddy spins his head to see somebody on the floor reach up and grab his pants leg. Daddy SHRIEKS.

His flashlight hits the floor. The beam settles on a dying woman.

She is minus one arm. Lots of blood.

Daddy goes for his gun. Aims at the woman...

Then WHOOSH, the freezer door swing wide.

The faint outline of a burly man stands at the open freezer door. Daddy lifts his Colt and takes aim.

Burly Man comes forward. He lift a meat cleaver.

Daddy pulls the trigger -- click, click.

UPSTAIRS

Gumball is standing near a shelf of personal care items. She has a hand mirror and is checking out the bruise on her face.

GUMBALL  
I am so pretty. Everybody says  
I'm so pretty.

She hears noise from another aisle. Gumball pauses. Cat leaps out of her arms.

GUMBALL  
(loud)  
Been watching the door.

Gumball hears heavy footsteps.

GUMBALL  
Found lighter fluid, too.  
Check it out...

Heavy footseps on the move. Gumball looks down the aisle, but nobody is there.

GUMBALL  
Even found you a nice, new  
lighter.

She keeps her eyes peeled at the far end of the aisle.

GUMBALL  
Daddy?

And then a figure steps into her view. A big burly man. In one hand is a human head.

In the other hand is a meat cleaver.

Gumball's eyes fly open.

GUMBALL  
Oh shit.

She doesn't move. Shivers from fear. Burly man rolls the human head like a bowling ball until it stops at Gumball's feet. She looks down.

Daddy looks up.

Gumball SCREAMS. Burly Man strides toward here.

Gumball flicks the lighter in her hand. Flick, flick, it doesn't light.

Burly man getting closer.

Flick and then FLAME. Tears flows down Gumball's face. She drops the lighter next to Daddy's head.

WHOOOH, his head goes up in flames. And that flame shoots down a trail of lighter fluid. Down the aisle.

Burly Man stops and watches the flame roar toward him. He looks down and sees that he is standing in a puddle of lighter fluid.

POOF. Burly Man pants catches fire. He drops the meat cleaver. He tries to swat away the flame and then his flannel shirt is on fire.

Then he is engulfed in flames. An unearthly SCREAM rips out of his throat and he falls.

Gumball turns and pick up the vanity mirror. She wipes away her tears. Stares into the mirror.

Then with her other hand, she grabs a stick of lipstick.

And paints her lips, a bloody red.

FADE OUT

The End