PSYKYESIS

Ву

Eric Wall

E_WALL1498@yahoo.com

FADE IN

INT. BOY NURSERY - DAY

An EMPTY CRIB with music themed bedding sits against a baby blue wall, the name BRANDON stenciled in bright colors. Above the crib totters a mobile of tiny hanging guitars.

A female SOBBING brings us to the floor and...

DREW CHAMBERS(25), dyed purple hair, runny mascara and a bulging Ramones maternity top. One hand clutches a onesie reading "Mommy's Little Rocker". The other lifts a vodka bottle and downs its contents down the holder's throat.

Beside her, a phone lights up and rings... and rings again. She answers.

DREW (slurred) Hello?

A calm, nurturing voice pipes in...

ANN (V.O.) (filtered, from phone) Drew, it's Ann. You said you'd call me yesterday. What happened?

Drew lets out a pained breath.

DREW

I lost him. Doctor Shipman says he can't survive outside the womb for longer than a few minutes.

ANN (V.O.) Oh Drew, I'm sorry.

DREW I can still feel him moving.

ANN (V.O.) Where's Ted? Is he with you?

DREW He went to work.

Drew takes another deep gulp of vodka. It CLINKS against the crib as she lowers it.

ANN (V.O.) Are you drinking?

DREW Why not? It doesn't matter anymore.

ANN (V.O.) Honey, it can create complications-

DREW He's dead, Ann.

ANN (V.O.) But you still have to give birth to him. You need be healthy.

Drew lets out an agonized cry.

DREW I wanna die too.

ANN (V.O.) Christ. I'm coming over, you hear me? Put the cap back on whatever you're drinking and be ready to meet me at the door. I'll be there in five.

Drew lets the cell drop to her side. After a moment's contemplation, she screws the cap back on the bottle.

INT. CHAMBERS' HOME - DAY

Drew, still carrying the onesie and vodka, comes down the stairs into the FOYER, carrying herself carefully. Reaching the bottom she heads back into the...

KITCHEN

It's bright, tidy and cozy. All the trappings you'd expect of a modern middle class kitchen. Drew returns the vodka to the refrigerator turns and stops...

A sliding glass door leading to the patio is ajar. She regards it oddly. It shouldn't be like that.

She heads over cautiously and slides it closed, locking it. She gazes into the backyard...

It's fenced-in with some wooded area behind it. The grass could use a trim, but it's otherwise unremarkable.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

Drew moves back to the

FOYER

closing on the front door.

DREW You didn't need to speed over. I'm not officially on suicide watch.

She opens the it...

Nobody's on the stoop. The neighborhood beyond is a modest residential development. Every house looks like the house next to it, and presumably like hers. Classic McHousing.

She closes the door.

A STUN GUN SLAMS into the back of her neck. Electricity CRACKLES as Drew stiffens and falls to the ground.

A FIGURE dressed in a baggy black tracksuit, latex gloves and full balaclava stands over Drew's unconscious body.

The Figure pockets the stun gun and draws out a STEAK KNIFE. Kneeling down, it pulls up the Ramones top and rolls back the waistband of her sweatpants, fully exposing her baby bump. There is a moment of hesitation...

The Figure plunges the knife into her lower abdomen. Blood pours from the incision as the blade saws back and forth.

It sets the knife down and reaches inside the opening... searching... finding... pulling...

An infant's head begins to breach, but the wound isn't wide enough to slip through. The Figure takes up the knife again and clumsily gashes another three inches.

The baby boy, BRANDON, slips out of the womb and lets out a shrill cry.

The Figure handles him with care as it folds the umbilical cord in one hand and slices it clean through. Standing, it moves back to the...

KITCHEN

grabs a towel off the oven handle and tenderly swaddles the baby in it.

The Figure takes a moment to admire the infant. Brandon coughs... and coughs again, followed by hitched breathing.

Sensing urgency, the Figure rushes to the glass door, slides it open and disappears into the backyard.

INT. MCGILL HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A BABY SHOWER is in full swing. A GAGGLE OF WOMEN are crowded into the living room, giggling and tipsy on wine coolers. In the corner, a FEW DUDES keep out of the way.

The focus of the group is VICTORIA "TORI" MCGILL (31), a redhead Irish beauty, six months pregnant and looking like she could pop any moment.

An EAGER GUEST sets a big package in front of Tori, who tears off the wrapping, revealing a baby walker inside.

The Gaggle "oohs" and "ahhs" as Eager Guest starts pointing at the box... eagerly.

EAGER GUEST It's got three height adjustments, it folds down easy, but it's also got speakers on either side and a USB drive so you can hook up an MP3 player to it.

TORI You hear that, Lionel? It's got a sound system.

In the corner, LIONEL (35), a man who used to go wild in his teens but now programs software for a living and budgets his finances using Excel, looks up from his light beer.

LIONEL Think it can handle some Pantera?

TORI No, but I'm sure The Corrs will sound just great on it.

Tori thanks the Eager Guest and picks up the next gift, a very small, soft package. She reads the tag attached.

TORI This one's from May.

Tori smiles over at MAY CARVER(24), a young woman seven months pregnant herself, set just outside the main circle. She appears out of place in groups, especially this one. Her posture stiffens in nervousness. Tori opens the gift and holds up a small orange hat with some green fraying at the top.

TORI Oh... that's very cute. MAY (too quiet) It's a carrot. TORI What was that? MAY It's a carrot... top. It's carrot top.

There's an awkward silence, then Tori bursts out in a rich genuine laugh.

TORI Oh my God, it's my worst nightmare. My baby's Carrot Top! Thanks May. It's perfect.

May relaxes a little as Tori is handed the next gift.

EXT. MCGILL HOME - BACKYARD - LATER

The party's now a backyard BBQ. The men grill and the women mill about. Multiple tables with decorations and favors are set up. The lay out of the yard, the house itself and the wooded area behind it is exactly the same as the Chambers' residence. Likely the same McHousing development.

May drifts through the crowd, holding what looks like a glass of red wine and making connections with no one. She comes to a table where two snobby looking girls, we'll call them BAD EXTENSIONS and BLEACH JOB, stand examining a sheet of paper with grid lines drawn on it.

BAD EXTENSIONS What is this?

BLEACH JOB I think you're like, supposed to bet on what the baby looks like.

BAD EXTENSIONS I don't see a box for ugly. They snicker to themselves as May watches reproachfully. They don't notice her. Bleach Job grabs a pen and one of the sheets of paper. She starts marking boxes as she goes.

> BLEACH JOB Well, let's see. If it's a 'she'... with her dad's ears... dad's chin... and mom's nose... I'd say that's a pretty ugly baby.

May walks off, leaving the idiots to laugh at each other.

TORI (O.S.)

May!

May turns to see Tori, barefoot and ankle deep in a kiddie pool. She sips on fruit punch and waves May over.

TORI Come on in, the water's fine.

May comes to stand next her, but doesn't step in. Tori points to the wine glass in May's hand.

TORI You're not drinking, are you?

MAY No, it's punch. It just calms me to pretend it's wine.

TORI How're you holding up?

MAY Okay. Your friends are stupid.

Tori laughs and motions for her to quiet down.

TORI Well, that's why I invited you.

She wiggles her toes under the water.

TORI

I really liked your present.

MAY I am so sorry about that. I kept looking for something that-

TORI You don't have to explain it. We work together, I know your money situation. I'm just glad you came. She points to May's belly. TORT We're in the same boat, you and I. We should be spending more time together. A car horn honks in the distance. MAY I've told you how Peter is. He's very protective. HONK-HONK. TORI He's overprotective. I guess that's not the worst quality to have in a prospective father, but you can't even take a piss without-HOOONK-HOOONK. Tori looks toward the house. TORI What the hell's going on up there? Then she notices May, her eyes closed, head dipped. TORI Oh for fuck's sake, that's him right now isn't it? INT. MCGILL HOME - FOYER - MOMENTS LATER Tori trails behind May as they make their way to the door. TORI You don't have to leave right now. Ask him to come in. He can play horseshoes with the guys. MAY Peter doesn't really like games.

> TORI Oh, well thank God he doesn't have kids.

May shoots her a look.

TORI Sorry. It's just, I'll be going on maternity leave soon. I wanna be able to see you outside of work.

MAY I live right in the neighborhood.

TORI

I know...

HONK.

MAY I'll figure it out. I promise. (they hug) Thanks again for inviting me.

EXT. MCGILL HOME - FRONT YARD

The door opens and May exits down the walk way. PETER (32) dressed sharply, but looking disheveled all the same, peers out impatiently from his Subaru Forester.

Tori watches May go, letting out a sigh... then Eager Guest pops up next to her.

EAGER GUEST Hey, are we making the boys chug formula or not?

Tori smirks, a mischievous glint in her eyes.

TORI

Yes.

She closes the door. May reaches the SUV and tosses her purse in the open passenger window.

MAY I told you, I'm fine to walk home.

PETER

I was out getting us groceries. I thought you might appreciate it.

She shakes her head at him and starts to open the door when something catches her eye three houses down...

LOUISA (28) a dark-haired, dark-eyed Latino woman stands at the end of her driveway, staring at the house... or at May.

PETER You clinging to the outside of the car, or you wanna get in?

May gets in and the SUV starts forward, toward Louisa. Nearing, May watches Louisa's gaze follow the vehicle. Drawing closer, it becomes apparent that <u>Louisa is also</u> <u>seven months pregnant</u>.

> PETER (re: Louisa) Must be somethin' in the water 'round here.

INT. CARVER HOME - LATER

Peter and May enter the foyer, both carrying two bags of groceries. They head back to the...

KITCHEN

Peter places his bags next on the corner counter by the fridge while May opts for the closer kitchen island. She sets the bags on top of junk mail and magazines that clutter the surface.

PETER Put 'em here. The island's a mess.

May starts unloading items (pasta, tomato sauce, cheese) onto the island.

MAY

I'm fine.

Peter tries to straighten up the area.

PETER Let me get some of this first.

MAY

It's fine.

May moves the empty bag and clips a magazine. Papers slide as a mountain of mail gives way. The tomato sauce SMASHES against the floor.

Peter BACKHANDS HER instantly.

PETER GODDAMNIT! What did I just say? Looks real fuckin' fine now, doesn't it? May is calm, passive, head down.

MAY

Sorry.

PETER And now I have to go back and get more sauce so we can eat.

He storms off toward the front door.

MAY We have vine tomatoes. I can make-

PETER I said I'm getting sauce!

He SLAMS the door behind him so hard the house vibrates. A couple more papers slide off the island.

May kneels down, with some effort, and starts placing shards of glass onto a dirtied magazine.

INT. SUBARU FORESTER - LATER

The Subaru tears down the street and Peter tears open the dashboard, pulling out a pack of cigarettes.

The car lighter pops out and Peter grabs it, lighting his cigarette with the red hot coil. As he goes to put it back-

The car BUMPS over a pot hole.

The lighter falls into a cup holder. Peter tries to pick it out and burns himself.

PETER

Fuck.

The cigarette falls his lips and disappears.

PETER

Shit.

He fishes the lighter out, shoves it back in and looks up just in time to see a RED LIGHT.

EXT. SUBARU FORESTER

Peter slams on the breaks, skids into the intersection and is T-BONED by a Pickup Truck.

The Subaru fish tails, goes top heavy and tips over, crashing onto its passenger side.

INT. SUBARU FORESTER

Peter hangs in the air, secured by his seat belt. He looks around, dazed. A gash above his eye.

He tries to unfasten his seat belt, but it's stuck. From somewhere around the car, the sound of LIQUID RUNNING ONTO PAVEMENT.

EXT. SUBARU FORESTER

Outside the car, gasoline flows from the ruptured gas tank.

INT. SUBARU FORESTER

Peter smells the fuel, looks back and sees it pooling under the smashed back window.

He looks to the passenger window... and sees his LIT CIGARETTE laying amongst the broken glass.

He stretches for, but can't reach it.

Gasoline trickles under the window, nearing the cigarette.

He hits the belt buckle, desperately trying to loosen belt, but it holds him fast to the seat.

He reaches for the cigarette again, straining with everything he's got...

EXT. SUBARU FORESTER

The SUV ERUPTS into flames. Peter SHRIEKS in pain as the intense fire burns him alive.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

SANDHURST (53), an over-worked lawyer in a small cluttered office, reads from one of dozens of files on his desk.

Across from him sits May, watching with a far off look in her eyes.

SANDHURST

Unfortunately your husband had significant outstanding debts. Multiple credit lines as well as an five thousand dollar bank loan which he hasn't made payment on since April two thousand fourteen. Were you aware of that one?

She shrugs, dazed.

SANDHURST

Well, there are a lot of people who're gonna get a crack at his estate before it comes to you.

MAY Mr Sandhurst, I'm seven months pregnant-

SANDHURST I understand the timing horrible, but it's not all bad news-

MAY

Is it too late for me to get an abortion?

Sandhurst straightens up, a bit more urgent.

SANDHURST

Well, let me finish Ms Carver, because I don't think we're there yet. Your husband did have a four-oh-one-kay. Company match and he was putting in the max amount. There's enough there to pay your mortgage for a year. Give you a chance to figure out-

MAY

When I-

He quiets. Waiting.

MAY

When I conceived, it was because Peter forced himself on me without wearing a condom. When he found out I was pregnant, he said if I ever tried to leave him, or terminate the pregnancy, he would shoot me in the head and make sure no one ever found the body... so I was just wondering if it's too late to get an abortion.

Sandhurst deflates, absorbing this.

SANDHURST

Legally speaking, no. Colorado law allows for a pregnancy to be terminated through the third trimester. But you'll want to think on it carefully and quickly. If you wait much longer you may have trouble finding someone who's actually willing to perform the procedure.

May nods, satisfied with the answer. Sandhurst looks back to the file before him.

SANDHURST Uh... should I continue?

May nods again.