RESURGENCE

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. PENITENTIARY - FRONT GATE - NIGHT

A thunderstorm rages over the state facility. Two large groups of PROTESTORS, one for the death penalty and the other against, chant slogans and wave placards.

Several STATE POLICEMEN are on hand to keep the peace. Numerous MEDIA MEMBERS in the area cover the story. A female TELEVISION REPORTER delivers a live news report.

> TELEVISION REPORTER ... has refused to file any appeals, and a third-party attempt at a stay has been rejected by the State Supreme Court. Barring a miracle, this means Quentin Grant, the Lake Resurgence Killer, will be put to death at one minute past midnight.

State police cruisers escort a black sedan up to the facility. The convoy passes through the front gate and enters the penitentiary grounds.

EXT. PENITENTIARY - MAIN ENTRANCE - NIGHT

NAYLOR (52), a sturdy man with a thick moustache, stands under an umbrella by the front doors of the building. The black sedan and state police cruisers arrive on the scene.

DALTON (54), a stout and bespectacled man with a receding hairline, exits the sedan with umbrella in hand. The two men step forward and shake hands.

DALTON Deputy Secretary Dalton, Department of Corrections.

NAYLOR Superintendent Naylor. Nice to finally meet you.

DALTON What a night for an execution.

NAYLOR Let's get you out of this rain.

Naylor leads Dalton toward the front doors of the building.

DALTON

You know, this is the sixth time I've done this. You'd think it'd get easier each time, but...

NAYLOR Well, this is the eighth time for me. I hate to disappoint you, but it never gets easy.

INT. PENITENTIARY - CELLBLOCK - NIGHT

The facility's CHAPLAIN (67), a small and frail man, stands outside one of the cells. Six PRISON GUARDS stand nearby as he speaks to an unseen prisoner.

CHAPLAIN

Quentin, this is your last opportunity to accept the Lord as your savior. Please, I beg of you, make peace with your maker before it's too late.

The prisoner, his face obscured, lies on a bed inside the cell and casually leafs through Jean-Paul Sartre's "Being and Nothingness."

QUENTIN (O.S.)

God? You want me to make peace with God? The same God who stood idly by while those I trusted conspired against me? While they tried to drive me insane? While they railroaded me and now plan on executing me?

CHAPLAIN

How long will you blame others for your actions? Don't you realize what the next life has in store for you if you do not repent?

QUENTIN (O.S.) My next life? Oh, yes. Yes, I most certainly do. In fact, I'm looking forward to it.

CHAPLAIN This is not the time for humor. Quentin, I am talking about saving your eternal soul.

QUENTIN (O.S.) There's a lot about me that will live forever, Father, but my soul has long since been extinguished.

The gate at the end of the corridor slides open. Naylor and Dalton approach the cell as the resigned chaplain performs the Sign of the Cross in the prisoner's direction.

CHAPLAIN

May God have mercy on you.

The chaplain heads down the corridor while Naylor and Dalton peer at the prisoner.

NAYLOR Quentin, it's time.

QUENTIN GRANT (36), the tall and muscular prisoner, lowers the book and reveals his angular face and intense eyes.

QUENTIN Let's make history, gentlemen.

Quentin rises to his feet and approaches the front of the cell. He looks on with amusement as the prison guards shackle his wrists and ankles.

The cell door slides open and Quentin steps into the corridor. Naylor and Dalton follow the prison guards as they lead the condemned man to his fate.

Quentin playfully whistles Elmer Bernstein's main title theme from "The Great Escape." Naylor and Dalton share an uneasy look as they trail behind him.

INT. PENITENTIARY - EXECUTION CHAMBER - NIGHT

The prison guards escort Quentin into the room and lead him toward an electric chair. Naylor and Dalton appear as the prisoner is strapped into the seat.

Quentin looks through the large window straight ahead of him into a viewing gallery next door. Several WITNESSES shrouded by darkness look on from behind the glass.

> DALTON It's customary for the condemned to be allowed to speak.

NAYLOR Do you have any last words, Quentin? Yes. Yes, I do.

He stares through the window at the obscured witnesses.

QUENTIN

I can see you. You hide in the dark like cowards, but I can still see you. You're here 'cause you think this will bring the story to a close, right? Wrong. This is the start of a new chapter. This is the beginning of something... Something wonderful. I've spent eight years preparing for this special moment, this moment of transcendence, and I promise I will have my revenge. I'm coming back to Lake Resurgence. I'm going to turn those crystal-blue waters red with your blood, and there's nothing you can do to stop me.

DALTON Alright, that's enough.

QUENTIN I am invulnerable! I am indomitable! I am invincible!

NAYLOR

Gag him.

The prison guards place a gag in Quentin's mouth as Naylor and Dalton head for a control room next door.

INT. PENITENTIARY - CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Naylor and Dalton join the male JUDICIAL EXECUTIONER inside the room. The group peers through a large window and looks on as the prison guards exit the execution chamber.

The executioner places his hand on the electric chair's power switch. Naylor turns toward Dalton as the latter places a hand on top of a red telephone.

> NAYLOR You don't think the governor's going to issue a stay, do you?

DALTON God, I certainly hope not. INT. PENITENTIARY - EXECUTION CHAMBER - NIGHT

Quentin clenches his fists and pulls at his restraints. He smiles through his gag and chuckles to himself.

INT. PENITENTIARY - CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Naylor, Dalton, and the executioner stare at an analogue clock. The timepiece reaches one minute past midnight.

Naylor and Dalton nod to the executioner. He nods in response and pulls down on the power switch...

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE - REFRIGERATION ROOM - NIGHT

A thunderbolt shoots down from the sky. The thunder and lightning are part of a 1950's black-and-white horror film which plays on a television.

GINA (38), a cherubic deputy coroner, munches on a doughnut and watches the film with bemusement. HECTOR (30), a slender coroner's assistant, pushes a gurney into the room.

She turns around as he wheels it toward a bank of nearby refrigeration units. A corpse covered with a sheet rests on top of the gurney.

GINA Hey, Hector. So, this is the stiff I've been waiting for.

HECTOR Here's your boy, Gina. You need to sign these.

He hands over a set of forms. She briefly examines them.

GINA The chair? Thought they were phasing that out.

HECTOR Guess a needle in the arm was too good for this guy. Hey, didn't the boss warn you not to eat in here?

She dismissively gestures toward the refrigeration units.

GINA Who's going to rat me out? Them?

She signs the forms and hands them over.

HECTOR Thanks. Need help putting him away?

GINA Nah, I'll get one of the interns to do it. That's what they're here for.

HECTOR Gina, you're the greatest.

GINA I know. Night, Hector.

He waves goodbye and steps out of the room. She leans on the gurney and eyes the covered corpse.

GINA Hmm... Wonder if his head caught fire like the last guy.

She prepares to lift the sheet when a whistle cuts through the air. She looks toward a table on the other side of the room where an electric kettle shoots out steam.

She strolls across the room and pours herself a mug of instant coffee. She stands in front of the television as the film's MAD SCIENTIST tries to reanimate a corpse.

MAD SCIENTIST (V.O.) Live! I demand it! Live!

Gina idly dips her doughnut in the coffee and nibbles on the pastry with her back to the gurney. The corpse, still obscured by the sheet, quietly sits up.

Gina watches the television as a lightning bolt strikes the mad scientist's reanimation apparatus. She smirks to herself and turns toward the gurney.

GINA

Bet you wish electricity had the same effect on you, huh, buddy?

She stops in her tracks with a look of horror on her face. She drops her doughnut and coffee mug onto the floor. Two legs covered with electrical burns step off the gurney.

Gina trembles with fear as she points at the man and opens her mouth to scream. She abruptly faints and collapses to the floor with a thud.

The man turns toward the television as the REANIMATED CORPSE on the screen starts to stir. The mad scientist shouts with ecstasy as his experiment succeeds.

MAD SCIENTIST (V.O.) It's alive! It's alive!

The man eyes the television and cackles with delight.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. ANDERSON HOME - FRONT - DAY

The sun shines over a large and picturesque lake surrounded by a lush forest. A spacious two-story home surrounded by trees and other greenery comes into view.

There is one house to the left of the property and two to the right. A black SUV backs up and parks on the driveway next to a wooden electrical pole.

JOAN ANDERSON (26), a tall and slender blond, steps out from behind the wheel. PAUL ANDERSON (28), a sturdy and handsome blond, joins her at the back of the SUV.

JOAN Boy, I'm glad that vacation's over.

PAUL Joan, you're the first person who hated spending a week in Hawaii.

JOAN Paul, it rained non-stop. Non-stop.

PAUL

Well, if that's how you're going to judge the vacation...

Paul opens the rear door of the SUV and disappears inside. Joan turns to the right as a whistle cuts through the air.

KENNETH HAMILTON (58), a spry man with short white hair, uses garden shears to trim an overgrown bush next door.

MARGO HAMILTON (56), a petite woman with white streaks in her dark hair, works over a flower bed with a hand spade.

KENNETH Leave the husband in Hawaii?

Joan stands at attention and salutes in response.

JOAN Yes, sir! I've decided to trade up! Paul steps out of the SUV with a luggage bag in hand.

PAUL Damn, I knew I should've made you sign a prenup.

Paul sets the luggage down and joins Joan as she walks toward the property line and approaches Kenneth and Margo.

> KENNETH How was the vacation?

JOAN Terrible. Rained all week.

PAUL

Still have your badge, Deputy Hamilton? Maybe you can arrest the weatherman.

MARGO

Don't encourage him, you two. I don't want Kenneth even thinking about coming out of retirement.

KENNETH

Stop exaggerating, Margo. I only listen to the police scanner once or twice a day now.

PAUL Hey, where are the boys?

Margo whistles loudly.

MARGO Dwight! Omar! Come here, boys!

DWIGHT and OMAR, a pair of German Shepherds, appear and sprint toward the others. The group stroke and pet the playful animals for a moment.

> KENNETH Well, you've probably heard the news.

> > JOAN

The execution? Yeah, we heard about it on the radio just after we landed.

MARGO You'd think that'd be the end of it, but now they've lost his corpse... JOAN

Wait, what?

MARGO

You didn't hear? The coroner's office misplaced the body.

PAUL How do you lose a body?

KENNETH

Well, if you listen to the crazy lady on duty at the morgue, he just got up and walked away.

JOAN Walked away? What do you mean?

MARGO

Oh, he's just teasing. The deputy coroner was watching a horror movie on the TV when she slipped and fell on some coffee. The concussion must have rattled her brain quite a bit.

PAUL

Do they have any clue what happened?

KENNETH

My guess? Clerical error. Don't worry, he'll turn up eventually.

A white SUV drives along the nearby road.

INT. WHITE SUV - DAY

ZACHARY (22), an athletic man with a deep tan, sits behind the wheel. OPAL (22), a fit woman with dark skin, rides in the passenger's seat.

IAN (20), a tall man with a large frame, lounges in the back seat. VANNA (21), a slender woman with fair skin, sits beside him.

VANNA You weren't lying, Opal. This place is gorgeous.

OPAL Yeah, this is the best hiking spot nobody knows about. IAN

Oh, they know about it. That's why no one comes here.

VANNA What's that supposed to mean, Ian?

IAN Don't you know where we are? This is the home of --

ZACHARY Don't start. We're here to have fun, not talk about --

VANNA Quentin Grant! Oh, my God! Zachary, this is where he --

ZACHARY Yes, Vanna. Now, can we please stop talking about --

OPAL The Lake Resurgence Killer.

IAN

I prefer the Resurgence Lake Ripper nickname, personally.

Zachary rubs his head in frustration.

ZACHARY

He's dead no matter what name you call him, so we don't have to talk about how --

OPAL

He was a highly respected teacher at the local high school 'til he had a nervous breakdown. He lashed out and claimed there was some sort of conspiracy against him.

IAN

Yeah, they placed him on leave and tried to have him committed to a mental hospital against his will. Then, one night he snapped and --

Zachary slams his fists down upon the steering wheel.

ZACHARY

This is a vacation! I don't want to hear another word about --

VANNA What was wrong with him? Did he have a brain tumor or something?

OPAL

His lawyer claimed he suffered from some sort of mental illness but the jury didn't buy it.

IAN

You know what the scary part is? When he was sentenced to the chair, he promised the court he'd get his revenge... after his execution.

ZACHARY Yeah, and now the body's gone missing! Oh, scary! Knock it off.

VANNA Hey, I was just curious.

Zachary taps his chest as he responds.

ZACHARY

Yeah, well, keep it up and you'll have to deal with the new Lake Resurgence Killer.

IAN

Resurgence Lake Ripper.

OPAL Don't press your luck.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - FRONT - DAY

A family sedan pulls into the driveway of the two-story home to the left of the Anderson property.

BEN WESTPHAL (12), slim with a shaggy brown mop of hair, steps out of the back of the vehicle.

SARAH WESTPHAL (12), slender with straight brown hair, exits through the sedan's other rear door.

BEN You shut up! SARAH

You shut up!

BEN No, you shut up!

SARAH No, you shut up!

ROBERT WESTPHAL (42), a bespectacled man in a sweater vest, steps out from behind the wheel.

CAROL WESTPHAL (40), a soccer mom with curly brown locks, appears through the passenger-side door.

CAROL Ben! Sarah! My goodness! Do you two ever stop arguing?

BEN I'm not arguing, Mom. I'm engaging in civil public discourse.

SARAH You don't even know what that means! Your mind's about as sharp as an apple, you know that?

ROBERT Settle down, you two. If I want to hear yelling all weekend, I'll talk to your mother.

Robert winces as Carol playfully punches his arm. Ben and Sarah grab their packsacks from the back seat.

Robert and Carol remove several grocery bags from the trunk. Ben turns to Sarah and nods toward the next property.

BEN

Hey, look, the Andersons are back.

SARAH

Paul's back?

Robert and Carol carry their groceries inside the house. Ben and Sarah rush over to the fence which borders the property. Joan and Paul spot the pair and cheerfully approach them.

> BEN Welcome back, guys!

> > SARAH

Hi, Paul!

JOAN Hey, what about me?

SARAH

Oh, you too.

Joan and Paul share a bemused smile. Ben covers his mouth and tries not to laugh. Sarah bites her lip nervously.

BEN

How was the vacation?

PAUL

Don't get her started. So, what are you two doing this weekend?

BEN Well, I'm gonna start another draft of my screenplay.

SARAH

Oh, God, not this stupid thing again!

BEN

It's not stupid! Conquest of the Living Dead's gonna be the greatest film ever made! It's got drama, suspense, action, romance --

JOAN

And brain-munching zombies.

BEN

Well, yeah, but there's so much more! It's got a beautiful love story, genuine thrills, lots of pathos --

SARAH Pathos? You don't even know what that is, do you?

BEN No, but when I find out I'm gonna add some.

SARAH You're so stupid, Ben, your only brain cell died of loneliness.

BEN I dunno what makes you so dumb, Sarah, but it's really working.

Robert and Carol exit their house and approach the fence.

CAROL Okay, you two, time to go inside and put your school stuff away.

BEN Dad, can I park the car in the garage?

ROBERT No, not today.

BEN

This isn't 'cause I almost dented the front, is it?

ROBERT No, of course not. Well, maybe.

Ben and Sarah wave goodbye and head for home.

BEN See you later, guys!

SARAH Bye, Paul! Oh, you too.

Ben giggles in response. Sarah glares back at him.

SARAH What's so funny?

BEN Oh, Paul! You're so dreamy! I wanna have your babies!

Ben whimpers as Sarah punches him in the shoulder. The pair disappears inside the house as Robert and Carol speak with Joan and Paul.

> JOAN The twins are as lively as ever, huh?

CAROL Robert and I have the headaches to prove it.

ROBERT So, I guess you've heard the news.

PAUL Yeah. You were living here the night it happened, right?

ROBERT

Oh, yes. It was the longest night of our lives. Ben and Sarah were too young to remember, thankfully, but Carol and I won't ever forget it.

JOAN

Well, hopefully things will quiet down around here from now on.

A rust-covered van roars past the house as heavy metal music blares out of the vehicle's open windows.

PAUL

So much for that theory.

EXT. VACATION HOME - FRONT - DAY

The rusted van screeches to a halt in the driveway of the two-story home next to the Hamilton property.

FRANK (21), an athletic young man with tattoos on his arms, hops out from behind the wheel with a bag in hand.

TARA (21), her short hair dyed a deep purple, exits the front of the vehicle with a bag as well.

FRANK Finally! If I had to spend another minute behind those tools on the highway, I would've snapped.

TARA

Yeah, and after all that you bring us out in the sticks. Great job, Frank.

FRANK

Jesus Christ, Tara, you gonna start with this shit already? The place was cheap to rent and the only one on a lake.

TARA

Oh, yeah, 'cause I've always wanted to hang out in the middle of nowhere. Where's the retarded kid with the banjo?

NANCY (19), a perky young woman with a toothy grin, steps out of the van's sliding door with a duffel bag in hand.

EDDIE (19), a slender young man with brown hair, follows her out of the vehicle with a bag of his own.

Ohmigod, there's like a kid with a banjo? Where's the little guy, Eddie? I totally wanna picture with him.

Eddie rubs his forehead in frustration.

EDDIE

There's no kid with a banjo, Nancy. Tara was telling a joke.

Nancy and Eddie approach Frank and Tara.

EDDIE

Nice job, Frank. Knew you wouldn't let us down. That's what I love about you, man.

TARA

Why don't you get on your knees and thank him properly?

Eddie glares at Tara while Nancy surveys the scene.

NANCY Like, where's the lake? Is it behind the house or something?

TARA

Yup. They used to keep it out front but people kept stealing the water.

NANCY

Ohmigod! That's like totally not --Hey, wait a minute! How'd they move all that water 'n' stuff?

TARA

Tanker truck.

NANCY

Oh, that makes sense.

She sprints up to the front door and tries to open it only to find it locked.

NANCY Ohmigod! We're like totally locked out! How we supposed to get inside 'n' stuff?

Frank wearily reaches into his pocket, shows her the keys, and tosses them to her. Nancy smiles sheepishly, unlocks the front door, and disappears inside. FRANK No offense, man, but I dunno how you put up with her.

EDDIE She may be pretty dense, but the sex is fantastic. We do it all the time.

TARA Yeah, sure you do... when you think of other dudes.

EDDIE Would you knock it off?! Goddamn it.

He angrily marches inside the house and slams the door.

FRANK He's not gay, you know.

TARA

He's so gay, he makes Perez Hilton look like a lumberjack. Hey, where'd Larry and Dana go?

Frank and Tara look back at the van as smoke drifts out of the back windows. They rush toward the vehicle and yank the side door open.

LARRY (20), his blond hair tied into dreadlocks, puffs away on a marijuana cigarette. DANA (20), her short black hair spiked straight up, takes the joint from him.

> LARRY ¿Qué pasa, amigos?

DANA Dude, their auras are really red.

FRANK

Jesus Christ! I told you not to bring that shit! You know what the cops in these small towns do to people like you? Get the fuck out of my van!

Larry and Dana clumsily stumble out of the vehicle.

TARA

Think you can unload your bikes before you fall asleep?

Larry and Dana make their way to the back of the van. Frank and Tara march toward the house. FRANK Yes. If we're lucky, they'll get hit by a semi.

Frank and Tara disappear inside the house. Larry and Dana clumsily unload their bikes from the back of the van and pass the joint back and forth.

DANA

Where you wanna go first, man?

LARRY

You know where we are, babe? There's a ton of places in town where that teach butchered a bunch of people.

DANA

Fuck, man, I'm not ridin' all the way to the city.

LARRY Well, there's that house across the lake where he killed the principal and his family.

DANA How do you know all this shit?

LARRY

Wikipedia.

DANA Dude, that thing's awesome. It's like the encyclopedia of... encyclopedias.

LARRY Yeah, babe, let's ride over there and check it out.

DANA You wanna go durin' the day? Chicken!

She flaps her arms and squawks like a chicken.

LARRY

You go durin' the day so you can see all the blood stains, babe.

DANA

Dude, they cleaned up that stuff when they took the bodies away.

He hops on his bicycle, starts to ride, and topples to the ground. She laughs as he moans in pain. She hops on her bike, begins to pedal, and falls over as well.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL ENTRANCE - DAY

The white SUV is parked by the entrance to a series of hiking trails cut into the woods. Vanna retrieves her packsack from the rear of the vehicle.

Ian climbs inside the back of the SUV and disappears from view. Vanna joins Zachary and Opal by the front of the vehicle as they inspect their packsacks.

ZACHARY Okay, that's everything on the checklist.

VANNA

You two have a checklist? Why? It's just a quick hike --

OPAL

Vanna, you should always be fully prepared for any contingencies.

ZACHARY

At lest you have water and a cell phone, right?

VANNA

I don't own a cell phone.

ZACHARY What?! It's the Twenty-first Century!

VANNA So? Why do I need a cell phone?

OPAL

It can be the difference between life and death. What happens if you're injured and need help? How are you going to contact anyone?

VANNA

Well, the bear spray I bought came with an air horn. Good enough?

OPAL Well, it'll have to do. See you in a couple of hours.

Zachary and Opal start down the second hiking trail. Vanna calls out to the fourth member of the party.

VANNA

Come on, Ian, let's go.

She waits for a response but does not receive one.

VANNA

I hope he didn't leave without me.

She marches toward the back of the SUV and scans the area. The rear door of the vehicle is now closed.

VANNA Ian? Ian, where are you?

A masked man dressed in black bursts out of the back of the SUV. Vanna recoils in shock as he raises a large hunting knife and charges at her.

She delivers a solid kick square in the middle of her attacker's chest. The man falls to the ground in anguish, lifts up his ski mask, and reveals himself to be...

IAN Ow! What the hell's wrong with you?

VANNA What's wrong with me?! What's wrong with you?!

IAN Can't you take a joke?

VANNA

That wasn't funny, jackass! Why do you have a hunting knife, anyway?

IAN

Don't you know I can kill a deer using just this knife?

VANNA

Don't you know I can kill you using just my bare hands?

She stalks off toward the first trail entrance.

IAN

Hey, where you going?

VANNA Hiking! Alone!

IAN Wait! Zachary and Opal said we should stick together!

VANNA Maybe you should have thought of that first, asshole!

She disappears down the first trail. He casually leans against the SUV.

IAN Hmm, must be that time of the month. Oh well, guess it's just me against the deer. That's right, Bambi, Rambo's coming for you!

He pulls the ski mask back down over his head, grips the knife with his teeth, and enters the first trail.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Paul stands next to the water dressed in shorts with a Frisbee in hand. Joan arrives clad in a one-piece swimsuit.

PAUL What, no string bikini? No thong?

JOAN The only thongs I wear go on my feet. What's with the Frisbee?

PAUL

Were you planning on only treading water for an hour or two?

JOAN

Frisbees are for dogs.

He tosses the flying disc into the picturesque lake.

PAUL

Fetch.

She laughs insincerely. He grins mischievously. She taps him in the groin with her fist. He yelps and bends over in pain while she gleefully sprints into the lake.

PAUL

Bad touch!

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The cozy room overlooks the lake behind the house. A love seat, an old rocker, and a worn-out easy chair are arranged around a television and coffee table.

A flight of stairs leads to the second story. A closet is positioned beside the back door. A large trophy rests on a bookshelf placed against the wall.

An open archway connects the room to a kitchen. Robert sits in the easy chair and leafs through a magazine. Ben jogs down the stairs and approaches his father.

> BEN Dad, can I go fishing while the light's still out?

ROBERT Have you finished your homework?

BEN

Yes.

ROBERT

Ben...

BEN No, but I don't have much to do. I

can do it later tonight, okay?

Robert ponders the question as Carol enters via the archway.

ROBERT Carol, should I let Ben go fishing?

CAROL Robert, the children have had a long week at school. Let them have a little fun.

BEN Yeah, what Mom said!

ROBERT Okay, you can go but be careful.

BEN

I will.

CAROL And take your sister.

BEN

Mom! I want to go fishing to get away from her!

CAROL Well, it's your choice. Take your sister out on the lake with you or stay inside and do your homework.

Ben grumbles to himself as he retrieves fishing gear and a life jacket from the closet.

ROBERT Yes, we are one happy family.

Robert returns to his magazine as Carol jogs up the stairs.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - DAY

Sarah crouches beside an open window and clumsily tries to smoke a marijuana cigarette. She takes a tiny breath in and immediately coughs and wheezes.

CAROL (O.S.)

Sarah?

She gasps in surprise and frantically waves her hands around in an effort to get rid of the smoke.

SARAH

Yeah, Mom?

CAROL (0.S.) Ben's taking the boat out on the lake. Are you going with him?

SARAH Oh, okay. I'll be down in a minute.

She places the joint inside an old shoebox alongside a few others and a small bag of marijuana. She grabs an air freshener and liberally sprays the room.

> CAROL (O.S.) Sarah, are you coming?

> > SARAH

I'll be right down!

She cracks open the door, peeks outside, and scurries out of the room with the shoebox in hand.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - SARAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

The bed sheets and curtains feature a pink floral design. Teddy bears rest on every piece of furniture. The walls are plastered with posters of young actors and pop stars.

Sarah quickly slips inside the room and closes the door. She scans the area nervously, slides the shoebox underneath her bed, and scurries away from the scene.

EXT. FIRST HIKING TRAIL - DAY

Vanna emerges from the woods and arrives on a small clearing which overlooks the lake. She wipes the sweat from her brow and admires the scenic vista.

VANNA Wow, it's so beautiful. I should have brought my camera.

She stops as the trees and bushes behind her rustle. She spins around and meticulously scans the forest.

VANNA Ian? Don't worry, you can come out. I won't hurt you. Yet.

The greenery no longer rustles and the area falls silent. She dismisses the noise and looks toward the lake. She spins around when the trees and bushes shake once more.

> VANNA Come on, this isn't funny.

The greenery nearby rustles more vigorously and the sounds of broken branches cut through the air.

> VANNA Oh, my God. It's a bear. It's a bear!

She rummages through her packsack and seizes her bear spray and air horn. A masked man dressed in black bursts out of the woods with a hunting knife in hand.

The masked man raises the blade and charges forward. She halts the attack with a high kick to the face. He falls to the ground and holds a hand to his cheek.

> VANNA What the hell's wrong with you?! It wasn't funny the first time, and it's not funny now!

She reaches down and angrily rips the ski mask off his head. She stops as a stunned look washes over her face.

EXT. SECOND HIKING TRAIL - DAY

Zachary enjoys the scenery while Opal swats at mosquitoes.

ZACHARY This is great, isn't it? You, me, and Mother Nature.

OPAL

Don't forget the mosquitoes.

ZACHARY I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times --

OPAL

I know, always carry mosquito repellent. Especially with all those reports about West Nile --

The wail of an air horn echoes through the woods.

ZACHARY Damn it! We told Vanna she needed a cell phone.

OPAL Did Ian bring one?

ZACHARY If he owned one, he'd never figure out how to work it.

OPAL Come on, let's go find them.

The pair turns around and heads back up the trail.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Tara stands by the lakeshore while clad in a swimsuit and takes in the scene. She looks on as Joan and Paul toss their Frisbee back and forth in the water.

She is distracted by a pesky mosquito. The insect lands on her arm. She dispassionately swats it to death and flicks it away with her finger.

> TARA Goddamn mosquito. I hate nature.

She spots a tennis ball as it bobs in the water nearby. She steps forward and tentatively reaches for it. Dwight and Omar leap into view and scramble for the ball.

She shrieks in shock and falls backward onto the ground. The dogs turn toward her and playfully bark in response. She wails in fear and backs away from the animals.

Frank rushes onto the scene clad in a pair of shorts. He spots Dwight and Omar as they bark at Tara. He rushes toward the lakeshore and picks up a large rock.

FRANK

Hey! Get the hell away from her!

He heaves the rock at the dogs. The stone narrowly misses the animals and splashes in the lake. He throws two more large rocks as Kenneth arrives on the scene.

> KENNETH Dwight! Omar! To the house!

Dwight and Omar leave while Kenneth marches toward Frank.

KENNETH Who the hell do you think you are?!

FRANK

Those your dogs?

KENNETH

Yeah, and I'll be damned if I let some punk kid like you --

FRANK

You're lucky I didn't kill those mutts! They attacked my girlfriend!

KENNETH Bullshit! They're good dogs!

FRANK They should be rounded up and shot!

KENNETH

Are you threatening them? I'm a retired sheriff's deputy! I could have you arrested!

FRANK

You call the cops and I'll call animal control! Don't they have leash laws in this county? KENNETH You don't want to cross me,

boy! I know everyone in the sheriff's department! I could have you thrown in jail for any reason I can make up! I didn't bust my ass for thirty years just to have a little prick like you show up and harass my dogs and me! FRANK

Trust me, you do not want to piss me off! My uncle's a damn good lawyer! He'll take your money, your home, your car, and he'll get those mutts put to sleep! I didn't come all this way just to have my vacation ruined by some fucking psychopath!

Nancy and Eddie arrive clad in swimming gear. They rush toward Kenneth and Frank and quickly separate the two.

NANCY Ohmigod! Stop it! There's no need to fight 'n' stuff!

EDDIE Break it up, you two! Break it up!

KENNETH Listen to your friends, boy, before you give me a reason to pop you.

FRANK You want some, old man? Bring it!

Frank lunges at Kenneth. Eddie and Nancy hold him back as Margo rushes onto the scene.

MARGO What's going on? What's all the shouting about?

KENNETH This punk tried to kill the boys!

FRANK No, your mutts just about killed my girlfriend!

MARGO The boys are usually friendly and well-behaved. If they hurt your friend, we're sorry. Let's go home. This shouting isn't solving anything.

Margo grabs her husband by the arm and leads him away. Kenneth looks over his shoulder and yells at Frank.

MARGO Would you stop it?!

Margo and Kenneth disappear from view. Nancy and Eddie let go of their friend. Frank glares in the direction of the Hamilton property.

NANCY

I hate when people fight 'n' stuff. It like totally brings me down.

EDDIE Come on, let's hit the lake.

Nancy and Eddie step into the lake while Frank stares off into the distance. Tara finally pulls herself off the ground and stands up next to him.

TARA

Oh, yeah, I'm just fine and dandy. Thanks for your concern.

She shakes her head in frustration while he continues to stare straight ahead.

TARA

Let it go, man. It's not worth it.

She heads into the lake. He takes one last look toward the Hamilton property and follows her into the water.

EXT. FIRST HIKING TRAIL - DAY

Zachary and Opal scan the nearby woods as they make their way down the path.

ZACHARY Vanna?! Ian?! Where are they?

OPAL I just hope they're not -- Hey, look!

The pair scurries down the path and discovers two empty packsacks on the ground. They scan the woods and find two trails of supplies which lead in different directions.

> OPAL I don't like this. Maybe we should call the police.

Not yet. I'll head this way, you head that way. Holler if you see anything.

The pair heads into the woods in opposite directions. Opal weaves her way through the trees and shrubs.

OPAL

Vanna?! Ian?!

She passes by some overgrown bushes and scans the area. She spots Ian as he leans his back against a tree not too far away. He is no longer dressed in black from head to toe.

OPAL

Ian! Are you all right?

She approaches the tree and places a hand on his arm. His severed head slips off his shoulders and bounces onto the ground in front of her.

She recoils in horror as his headless body crumples to the ground. She presses her back against a nearby tree and opens her mouth to scream.

Someone dressed in black leaps out of the tree and lands behind her. The man reaches around the trunk and clamps a hand covered with electrical burns over her mouth.

He reaches around with his other hand and plunges Ian's hunting knife into her throat. Her eyes widen as a torrent of blood flows from her mouth and nose.

Zachary weaves through the trees and shrubs elsewhere in the area. He follows a trail of scattered supplies deeper and deeper into the woods.

ZACHARY

Ian?! Vanna?!

He reaches a small clearing shrouded by tall trees with some large rocks scattered about. He finds Vanna as she sits on the ground with her back to him.

ZACHARY

Vanna! What's wrong? Are you hurt?

He approaches and gently pulls on her arm. Her head flops backward and reveals her neck has been sliced open. The few tendons which remain uncut keep her skull on her shoulders.

He wails in horror and turns to run when someone leaps out from behind a nearby shrub. The man slashes Zachary's throat with the hunting knife and severs his aorta. Zachary places a hand to his wound and collapses to the ground. A torrent of blood flows out of the cut to his neck. He opens his mouth to scream but cannot make a sound.

The man puts the hunting knife in his belt and slowly steps forward. He reaches down with his scarred hands and picks up one of the large rocks in the area.

Zachary looks up helplessly as his attacker steps forward and hoists the stone over his head. The man slams the rock down upon his victim's skull.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Joan and Paul play with their Frisbee. Frank, Tara, Nancy, and Eddie swim nearby. Ben and Sarah sit in a small rowboat in the middle of the lake clad in life jackets.

He has his hook in the water and idly waits for a fish to nibble on the bait. She grumbles to herself and struggles to tie a lure onto the end of her line.

BEN

What's wrong, can't tie it on?

SARAH I've done it hundreds of times.

She struggles with the lure some more only to drop it onto the floor of the rowboat.

BEN You know, I can hear the wheels spinning up there but I think the hamster's on break.

SARAH

Don't let your mind wander. It's too small to be out on its own.

He shakes his head and returns his attention toward the lake. She picks up the lure and once again tries to tie it to the end of her line.

She glances toward the woods at the far end of the lake and stops in her tracks. She retrieves a pair of binoculars and scans the distant trees.

EXT. FAR LAKESHORE - DAY

Someone obscured by the trees and shadows marches close to the shore with a large object over his shoulder.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Sarah lowers the field glasses and turns to her brother. Ben focuses on the fishing rod in his hands. She once again looks toward the far end of the lake through her binoculars.

EXT. FAR LAKESHORE - DAY

The man marches in the other direction without his cargo. He stops in his tracks underneath the shade of a tree and stares daggers back at Sarah.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Sarah leaps to her feet and dangerously rocks the rowboat.

SARAH There's somebody in the trees!

Ben grabs his sister and tries to get her to sit down.

BEN Hey! You're gonna tip the boat over!

SARAH He's staring at me!

BEN

What? Who?

She points at the trees across the lake.

SARAH He's right there! Look! Look!

Ben grabs the binoculars and scans the far end of the lake while the others in the area take notice of the commotion.

BEN

Where?

SARAH Under that tree! Right there!

EXT. FAR LAKESHORE - DAY

The trees sway in the breeze. There is no one in the area.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Ben lowers the field glasses and glares at Sarah.

BEN Let me guess, before you got on the boat you fell and hit your head repeatedly. Right?

SARAH

I'm not joking around! There was a man in the trees carrying something, and he stopped and stared at me.

Joan and Paul wave at the twins and get their attention.

JOAN Hey, you guys okay?

BEN We're fine, we're fine.

PAUL

Sarah?

SARAH I'm okay, Paul.

Ben looks at Sarah and wearily shakes his head.

BEN You know, if you were any dumber --

SARAH Don't talk to me.

EXT. VACANT LOT - DAY

Larry and Dana ride their bikes toward their destination. He excitedly turns to her while she puffs on a joint.

LARRY Here we are, babe! Check out the --

DANA Dude! Somebody stole the house!

The pair finds an empty lot overgrown with trees and other greenery. A chain-link fence surrounds the area. A sign on the barrier reads: County Property -- No Trespassing.

LARRY Who'd have thought they'd tear down the house where a whole bunch of people got killed? DANA Fuck it, man, might as well poke around anyway.

The pair lean their bikes against the fence and scale the barrier. They climb over the top only to crash to the bottom on the other side.

LARRY Shit! That hurt like a mother!

DANA

Here, man, take your pain medication.

She hands him the joint as they slowly climb to their feet. They dust themselves off and wander around the lot.

> DANA Oh, no! A scary tree! Hold me!

LARRY Look! A little bush! I'm so scared!

The pair mills about aimlessly until they come across an old blue tarp. They approach the canvas and notice several bumps which indicate something hidden underneath.

DANA

There's somethin' under the tarp.

LARRY What do you think's under there?

DANA Dead bodies, man! It's nothin'.

LARRY Just logs or somethin'.

The pair quietly stares at the tarp for a moment.

DANA C'mon, man, check it out.

LARRY Fuck no, you check it out.

DANA Okay, we'll both check it out.

They approach the canvas and grab hold of it.

LARRY Ready? One... two... DANA Wait, on three or on go?

LARRY On three. Ready? One... two... three!

The pair pulls back the tarp and reveals Zachary, Opal, Ian, and Vanna's corpses underneath. They recoil in horror and open their mouths to scream...

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - KITCHEN - EVENING

A teakettle perched on an oven burner whistles and shoots out steam. Carol removes the kettle from the burner and pours herself a cup of tea.

She stops as the teakettle's whistle is replaced by the wail of police sirens. She scurries over to the front window and peers through the blinds.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - FRONT - EVENING

Several county patrol cars race past the house.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - KITCHEN - EVENING

Robert enters from the next room and approaches Carol.

ROBERT What's the commotion?

CAROL

I don't know. It's just like... just like eight years --

ROBERT Don't. Quentin Grant is dead and everything that happened that night died with him.

He places a loving arm around her shoulders. She rests her weary head against his chest.

CAROL Sorry. Probably a false alarm.

EXT. VACANT LOT - EVENING

The patrol cars stop outside the lot and several COUNTY DEPUTIES exit the vehicles. The deputies unlock and open the fence and allow another patrol car through.

SHERIFF VAUGHN (64), a gaunt white-haired man, steps out from behind the wheel as his patrol car comes to a stop. Two deputies let Larry and Dana out of the back of the vehicle.

> VAUGHN Okay, where did you see this tarp?

DANA Over there, behind those bushes.

Vaughn leads Larry, Dana, and his deputies toward the tarp.

LARRY You're gonna look under it?!

VAUGHN I need you to relax, okay? Stay back.

The sheriff cautiously approaches the tarp, grabs hold of his nightstick, and slowly lifts the canvas.

DANA Don't look, man! It's horrible!

LARRY You've gotta find who did this and --

Vaughn spins around with an irate look on his face.

VAUGHN Is this supposed to be funny?

DANA What? We ain't laughin', man!

VAUGHN I worked the Quentin Grant case and I don't appreciate being dragged back here for your little prank!

LARRY What are you talkin' about?

The sheriff pulls the tarp away and reveals some old logs.

LARRY No! There were bodies there, like, ten or twenty minutes ago!

DANA There were four of 'em, and they were all cut up like --
Vaughn takes notice of something on the ground. He crouches down and picks up a used marijuana cigarette.

VAUGHN

What's this?

LARRY I... I have absolutely no idea.

DANA I ain't ever seen that before in my whole entire life.

VAUGHN Which one of you dropped it?

Larry and Dana remain quiet for a brief moment. They each point an accusatory finger at the other.

LARRY	DANA
She did! I told her not to	He did! He showed up with a
smoke that shit! She's been	whole bag of the stuff! He's
high as a kite since	been smokin' all day

The sheriff ignores the pair and turns to his deputies.

VAUGHN Take these two pranksters into town and charge them with trespassing and simple possession. Let's see how funny these two find the idea of spending the night in jail.

Vaughn wearily shakes his head as his deputies lead Larry and Dana away from the scene.

EXT. LAKE - EVENING

Ben and Sarah pull their rowboat out of the water. They stare across the lake as the police lights cut through the distant trees.

> SARAH I'm telling you, I saw someone. BEN I believe you. SARAH Oh, shut up!

BEN No, seriously. I believe you. SARAH

BEN The police showed up, didn't they?

SARAH Yeah, but they didn't catch the guy.

BEN Sure they did. Bet it was one of those people staying next to the Hamiltons.

SARAH They were in the lake, idiot!

BEN Not all of them.

Why?

SARAH It wasn't any of those guys.

BEN How do you know? You said he was hiding in the trees.

SARAH I know what I saw, and it wasn't any of those people!

BEN Then, who was it?

SARAH I... I don't know.

BEN Gee, what a surprise. Your slinky don't go all the way down the stairs, you know that?

SARAH You're as dumb as a rock with an extra chromosome. Pick up the boat.

The pair drags the rowboat behind them as they for home.

EXT. VACATION HOME - FRONT - EVENING

Water drips from Frank, Tara, Nancy, and Eddie as they stand on the driveway across from Vaughn. TARA We told 'em not to bring that garbage, I swear.

FRANK They were just too stupid to listen.

VAUGHN I see. Are any of your parents staying with you?

TARA Parents?! What kinda question is that?! We're all adults --

FRANK Settle down. We're all in college, sir, but our families know where we are and how to get a hold of us.

VAUGHN Sorry, didn't mean to offend. I'm just doing my job.

KENNETH (O.S.) Sheriff Vaughn! Sheriff Vaughn!

Kenneth marches onto the scene and immediately points an accusatory finger at Frank.

KENNETH

I want this antisocial menace placed under arrest right now!

FRANK Are you fucking kidding me?! He's been harassing me since we arrived!

VAUGHN

Hold on a minute. What happened?

KENNETH

FRANK

First, this punk tried to kill my dogs by throwing rocks at their heads! If I didn't show up when I did, he would have killed my boys! Then, after I stopped the jackass from committing canine homicide -- First, he let his rabid mutts run around without their leashes! Who the fuck let's two dangerous dogs run around attacking people? Then, after I stopped them from killing my girlfriend, this asshole -- Quiet! Look, it's bad enough I had to deal with the prank across the lake. I don't want to have to come back here again, understood?

Margo arrives with a less than pleased look on her face.

MARGO

Kenneth, go back to the house! This is none of your business!

Kenneth opens his mouth to respond. Margo waves him off and turns to the others.

MARGO

I'm very sorry. This hasn't been a good day. I think everyone needs to calm down before someone does something they'll regret later.

She takes her husband by the arm and leads him away.

TARA How much is it gonna cost to bail out our friends?

VAUGHN

Well, if it was just the trespassing charge, they could've each paid a hundred dollar fine. The simple possession charges, however, mean they'll each have to pay another two thousand dollars each.

TARA Are you insane?! That's robbery!

VAUGHN I don't make the law, ma'am, I just enforce it. Have a nice day.

He walks away, steps inside his patrol car, and drives off.

TARA

Four thousand dollars? Fuck me.

NANCY

Ohmigod, do you always have to like swear 'n' stuff?

TARA When you complete a sentence without saying Ohmigod, like, or totally, you can lecture me.

EDDIE

Enough. It's been a long day. Let's go before the crazy old man next door shows up again.

Nancy and Eddie head inside the house. Tara taps Frank on the shoulder while he remains deep in thought.

TARA We don't have a lot of cash, but if we find a bail bondsman --

FRANK Fuck 'em. They can rot in jail for all I care.

He turns his gaze toward the Hamilton property next door.

FRANK Besides, I've got more pressing issues on my mind.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Carol and Ben sit on the love seat while Robert sits in his easy chair and peers over the top of his magazine.

ROBERT What do you mean, weird?

BEN I mean weird! She nearly tipped the boat over.

CAROL Can you blame her? I got chills just watching the police drive by.

BEN

No, this was before that. She said there was someone in the trees across the lake but I didn't see anybody.

CAROL Well, it could have been one of those young people renting the house next to the Hamiltons. BEN That's what I said, but she said it was someone else. I'm telling you, Sarah's gone totally bonkers.

ROBERT Come on, don't talk about your sister that way.

BEN It's true! The past couple of weeks, she's been acting all crazy. Haven't you noticed?

ROBERT Son, that's called being a twelve-year-old girl.

BEN This is why I'm never having kids.

CAROL

Ben!

BEN It's true! She'd better not be hogging the bathroom again.

He scurries up the stairs while his mother shakes her head and his father leafs through the magazine.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - EVENING

Sarah crouches beside the open window and once again attempts to smoke a joint. She coughs and hacks away when someone pounds on the locked door to the room.

> BEN (O.S.) Out of the bathroom!

She recoils in shock, knocks over her shoebox, and spills its contents onto the floor.

SARAH Hold your horses!

She frantically places her belongings back in the box and tries to clear the smoke from the room.

BEN (O.S.) Hurry up, already!

SARAH Gimme a minute! She closes the box and sprays the room with air freshener.

BEN (O.S.) What's going on in there?

SARAH Woman problems!

BEN (O.S.) Ew, gross!

SARAH Next time, don't ask!

She unlocks and flings open the door. He barges past her and grimaces once he takes in a deep breath.

BEN Smells like flowers.

SARAH

Woman problems!

She leaves the room and he closes the door. He walks toward the toilet only to stop as something catches his eye. He crouches down and retrieves an unused joint from the floor.

> BEN Oh, my God! Sarah, you are so busted!

INT. VACATION HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Frank, Tara, and Eddie have dried themselves off and changed back into their clothes. Nancy has wrapped a beach towel over her wet swimsuit.

Frank paces back and forth with a livid look on his face. Tara sits on a couch and watches television with a glass of whiskey in hand.

Nancy leans against a wall near the staircase. Eddie leans against a table with a bottle of whiskey and a few empty glasses nearby.

FRANK That old man wants to push things? Maybe it's time I pushed back.

EDDIE He's a former cop, man. You mess with him and the sheriff will come down on you like a ton of bricks. I don't care. He wants to fuck with me? Let's see what he does when those stupid mutts go missing.

Nancy perks her head up with alarm.

NANCY

Ohmigod, you're gonna hurt the dogs?! No way! That's like totally not cool!

FRANK

I won't hurt 'em. I'm just gonna take 'em for a little walk.

TARA

If you think this plan won't end with you in jail, I fear for your sanity. Besides, have you seen his wife? The guy's completely whipped! Hasn't he been punished enough?

EDDIE

Frank, look how much trouble Larry and Dana got into for smoking a little weed. What you're talking about's a lot more serious. You could go to jail for months. Years, even.

Frank derisively shakes his head.

FRANK

Tara was right about you, limp-wrist.

EDDIE Fuck you! I'm a man! I'm a man!

FRANK

Prove it.

EDDIE

Fine, I'll help but if we get caught I'm pinning the blame on you.

TARA

If this is your idea of sticking it to the old geezer, I've got beachfront property in Arizona to sell you criminal masterminds.

FRANK

If you've got a better idea, Tara, let's hear it.

Yeah, right. I'm not helping you fulfill your retarded revenge fantasy. Include me out.

FRANK

Well, at least I know who my real friends are. Come on, Eddie.

Frank and Eddie head into the next room.

TARA

If it makes you feel better, Nancy, you're no longer the dumb one.

NANCY Ohmigod! That's like the nicest thing you've ever said to me! I'm gonna take a shower. If you need me, just gimme a holler.

Nancy jogs up the stairs while Tara sips on her whiskey and watches the television.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Robert stands by the bookshelf while Carol and Ben look on nearby. He examines the marijuana cigarette in his hand.

ROBERT

I don't believe it.

BEN Sarah's grounded for life, right?

CAROL Not my little baby.

BEN You're gonna send her to jail, right?

ROBERT Ben, go to your room.

BEN No way! I wanna see --

CAROL Benjamin Nathaniel Westphal, you will go to your room right now!

BEN I always miss the good stuff. Ben dejectedly stalks his way up the stairs. Robert stares intently at the joint. Carol rests a hand on his shoulder.

CAROL You need to relax.

ROBERT

I know.

She takes his hand and slowly leads him up the staircase.

CAROL We need to handle this in a calm and rational manner.

ROBERT Calm and rational. I've got it.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - SARAH'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Sarah lies on her bed and leafs through a magazine. She sits up in shock as Robert flings open the door.

> SARAH Dad! Don't you knock?

Robert shows his daughter the joint with an irate look on his face. Carol enters the room with a look of concern.

ROBERT

What's this?

Sarah sports a blank look in response.

SARAH

Huh?

CAROL Your father asked you a question.

SARAH

I don't know.

ROBERT You don't know what you've been smoking?!

SARAH

What?

CAROL Ben found it on the floor after you left the bathroom. SARAH I didn't do anything!

ROBERT Do I look stupid to you?!

SARAH

No.

ROBERT Really? You're treating me like I am!

SARAH It's not mine. A... A friend told me to hide it for her.

CAROL I see, and which friend was this?

Sarah cries as she wilts under the pressure.

SARAH

I don't know.

ROBERT I can't believe you're lying to us!

SARAH It's not my fault!

CAROL

Why, did someone force you to sneak drugs in the house and smoke them in the bathroom?

SARAH

I don't know.

ROBERT

Where are the rest of the drugs?

SARAH

That's it, I swear!

CAROL

Sarah, you're already in big trouble. More lies won't help.

SARAH

I'm not lying!

ROBERT

I see. Then, I guess we won't find any more drugs if we search the room. He rummages through a nearby chest of drawers and tosses its contents onto the floor.

SARAH No! You can't! That's private!

CAROL This is our house. We're entitled to search it.

She approaches a nearby bureau and searches the drawers.

SARAH Stop it! Stop it!

She rolls off the bed as tears stream down her face.

SARAH Fine! Fine! Here!

Sarah retrieves the shoebox from underneath her bed and throws it at her mother.

SARAH

Happy now?

She lies on the bed and buries her head in some pillows. Carol looks inside the box and shows Robert its contents.

> ROBERT What on earth were you thinking?

SARAH Leave me alone.

CAROL That's not an answer.

Sarah glares at her parents with fury in her eyes.

SARAH Leave me alone! I hate you!

ROBERT How dare you talk to us that way!

SARAH I wish you were dead!

CAROL

Sarah!

SARAH I hope you die! Leave me alone!

ROBERT

That's enough! If you won't take responsibility for your actions --

CAROL No, not now. Let's leave her to think about it. Sarah, you stay in your room 'til we get you.

Sarah sobs into her pillows while her parents step out of the room and close the door behind them.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Robert and Carol wearily descend the staircase and sit down on the love seat. He rubs his forehead in anguish while she places the shoebox on the coffee table.

> ROBERT Can't believe it.

CAROL Our little girl.

ROBERT What the hell was she thinking?

CAROL Obviously, she wasn't.

ROBERT

When I was twelve, I got my kicks skateboarding. Now, twelve-year-olds smoke dope? Unbelievable.

CAROL It could have been worse.

ROBERT

How?

CAROL

At least she not using that crystal meth stuff or the ecstasy or, God forbid, having sex.

ROBERT You don't think a twelve-year-old smoking dope is serious?

CAROL Of course it is, but we smoked dope in college and it didn't kill us.

ROBERT

We were adults. We earned the right to make our own stupid decisions. Sarah? She's our responsibility, and we failed.

CAROL

We should have been upfront and told her all the facts, not given one of those alarmist speeches. Those didn't work on us. I don't know why we thought it would work on her.

He puts an arm around her. She curls up next to him.

ROBERT We're terrible parents.

CAROL

No, we're not.

ROBERT

We have a son obsessed with zombie movies and a daughter who's turned into a dopehead. I think that makes us failures.

CAROL

We're not perfect, but we try our best. Sometimes we fail but, when push comes to shove, we'll always be there for them. They may not appreciate it, but deep down they know it's true.

ROBERT

You think so?

CAROL

I know so.

EXT. ANDERSON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

The sun sinks behind the trees and brings an end to the day. Joan and Paul walk past a large shed as they approach the back porch of the house.

> PAUL See? Wasn't this a good idea?

JOAN It almost makes up for the rain in -- He quickly clamps a hand over her mouth. The pair shares a laugh and prepares to step inside their home. They stop when a series of loud barks emanate from next door.

JOAN That's odd. Dwight and Omar rarely get this worked up over anything.

PAUL You don't think those kids are doing something, do you?

JOAN I hope not, unless they want Kenneth to shoot them.

The cacophony ceases just as abruptly as it started.

PAUL Hmm, guess they just needed to let off some steam. Let's get inside before the mosquitoes get us.

INT. HAMILTON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The cozy room features a hardwood floor and assorted bric-a-brac. Margo sits on a couch and busily knits a sweater. Kenneth marches down the stairway behind her.

MARGO

What's wrong?

KENNETH

Didn't you hear?! The boys were barking like crazy!

MARGO

Yes, just as they did yesterday and just as they'll do tomorrow.

KENNETH

Those miscreants next door are up to something, I just know it.

She sets her knitting needles aside as he peers out a window and toward the back lawn of the house.

KENNETH

Where are the boys?! I can't see them anywhere! Didn't I tell you they were no good?! That's it, I'm going to --

MARGO Oh, would you let me look? She rises to her feet and looks out the window.

EXT. HAMILTON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Two thick and heavy chains attached to the base of a tree lead inside a large doghouse.

INT. HAMILTON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Margo steps away from the window and turns to Kenneth.

MARGO They're in the doghouse, just as they were yesterday --

KENNETH And just as they will be tomorrow.

He slowly walks over to the couch and slumps down in the seat. She stands behind him and gently rubs his shoulders.

MARGO

You know what your problem is? You act before you think.

KENNETH

Oh, I suppose you're right. I spent three decades as a police officer. I had to rely on instinct so many times, it's become second-nature. I need to learn how to let things go.

She leans down and softly kisses him on the cheek. He looks up at her, smiles, and gently caresses her hands.

EXT. HAMILTON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Frank peeks through the window at Kenneth and Margo inside. He ducks back down while Eddie looks on from nearby.

EDDIE

I'm starting to have second thoughts about this. I can't go to jail. I'm not equipped to handle it.

FRANK Nobody's going to jail. Now keep quiet and let's do this.

EDDIE What if the dogs try to bite us?

FRANK

They won't.

EDDIE You sure? I mean, didn't you hear them barking a minute ago?

FRANK You're a man, Goddamn it! Say it!

EDDIE

I'm a man.

FRANK You're a man!

EDDIE

I'm a man!

FRANK

Alright!

Frank leads his friend through the numerous trees and shrubs which grow throughout the area. Eddie spins around as the nearby bushes loudly rustle.

EDDIE Hey, what was that?

FRANK What was what?

EDDIE Didn't you hear something?

FRANK

No, now shut up and let's do this.

The pair approaches the back porch and scans the area. The garden shears and the hand spade join a pitchfork, a roll of barbed wire, and other garden tools on the porch.

Eddie's pants are torn when they snag on the barbed wire. Frank glares back at his friend, frees the fabric from the barbs, and punches him in the arm.

The pair approaches the tree across from the doghouse. Frank cautiously nears the enclosure. Eddie places a tentative hand on his friend's shoulder.

EDDIE You sure they won't bite?

FRANK Stay there and keep an eye out. Eddie leans his back against the tree and nervously scans the area. Frank gently rattles the two chains together and creeps toward the doghouse.

> FRANK Come here, boys. Let's go for a walk.

Someone obscured by night slips down behind the tree with a loop of barbed wire in his hands. Eddie gasps as the man wraps the wire around his throat.

He tries to scream but cannot make a sound as the life slowly leaves his eyes. Frank gently pulls on the chains oblivious to his friend's plight.

He looks on in surprise as the two loosened dog collars at the end of the links come into view. He turns around just as his friend's body crumples to the ground.

The man steps out from behind the tree and hurls the hunting knife through the air. Frank gasps as the blade plunges deep into his chest.

He collapses facedown onto to the ground and struggles just to breathe. The man places a knee against his back and loops one of the chains around his victim's neck.

Frank widens his eyes in terror as his attacker tightens his grip on the links. He pulls back on the chains and snaps his victim's neck like a twig.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Paul stands in the cozy room and removes a bag of popcorn from inside a microwave.

PAUL

Oh! Hot, hot, hot!

He pours the popcorn into a small bowl and reaches for a salt shaker. Joan looks over her shoulder as she places a few dirty dishes in the sink nearby.

JOAN Don't use so much salt this time.

He looks at the salt shaker and sets it back down. She faces the sink and turns on a small fluorescent light. The bulb flickers for a brief moment only to burn out.

> JOAN Oh, great. Do we have any new bulbs? This one's burnt out.

PAUL I think there's a few in the shed. I'll go get one.

JOAN That's okay, I'll get it.

PAUL Hurry back, the movie's starting in a few minutes.

He looks on as she strides into the next room. He reaches for the salt shaker and liberally sprinkles the popcorn.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Joan steps onto the back porch with both a flashlight and a set of keys in hand. She approaches the large shed, shines the light on a padlock, and fumbles through her keys.

A loud snap cuts through the night. She spins around and shines the flashlight toward the Hamilton property. She scans the trees and shrubs as they rustle in the breeze.

She eyes the next property for a moment and shakes her head dismissively. She turns back to the shed, removes the padlock, and swings the door wide open.

INT. LARGE SHED - NIGHT

Joan steps inside the darkened structure and scans the numerous shelves with her flashlight.

JOAN Okay. Light bulbs... Light bulbs... Light bulbs!

She crouches down and retrieves a new fluorescent light from a bottom shelf. She rises to her feet and fails to notice a large figure just behind her.

She turns around to leave and runs smack into the figure. She yelps in terror and recoils in shock. She quickly shines her flashlight on the intruder.

The light reveals the figure is a tarp haphazardly placed on top of a few cardboard boxes. Joan smiles to herself and shakes her head in relief.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Joan steps out of the shed, closes the door, and puts the padlock back into place. She takes a step toward the back porch only to stop and eye the property next door.

She shines her flashlight toward the Hamilton property and scans the area. She eyes the trees and shrubs but does not find anything out of the ordinary.

A hand reaches out of the darkness next to her and clamps down on her shoulder. She yelps with fright, spins around, and shines her flashlight upon...

> PAUL Whoa! Relax, it's just me.

JOAN What's wrong with you?! You almost gave me a heart attack!

PAUL Don't you have peripheral vision? What were you looking at, anyway?

JOAN Oh, nothing. I thought I heard something, that's all.

PAUL

Come on, the movie's starting.

He places an arm around her as they head inside the house.

INT. VACATION HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tara sits in the darkened room and watches a late-night talk show on the television. She polishes off her glass of whiskey and rises to her feet.

> TARA Shit, this guy's worse than Leno.

She approaches the table and pours herself another glass. She stops as a door slam echoes from the next room.

TARA

Oh, the dastardly dognappers return! Did you actually coral the mutts, or did the old man scare you off?

She waits for a reply but does not receive one.

TARA

Whatever. If you two wanna spend the night acting all macho, then --

Tara turns around with the glass in one hand and the bottle in the other. The man leaps into view and slices open her chest with the hunting knife. She wails in anguish, drops her glass on the floor, and leans against the table. He raises the blade and prepares to deliver the final blow.

She cracks him over the head with the whiskey bottle. He moans in pain, drops the knife onto the floor, and collapses to the ground.

She drops the broken bottle neck onto the floor and makes a break for the front door of the house. He reaches out and hauls her down by the ankles.

She collapses facedown onto the floor in agony. He grabs hold of the broken stem of glass and flips her over. She looks up at her attacker and screams in terror.

He thrusts the broken end of the bottle neck into her throat. Her body falls limp and lifeless as a torrent of blood gushes through the glass stem in her neck.

INT. VACATION HOME - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - NIGHT

A window overlooks the back while a mirrored medicine cabinet hangs over the vanity. Nancy stands in the bathtub and pokes her head out from behind the shower curtain.

NANCY

Tara? What's going on?

She turns off the shower tap, dons a nearby robe, and steps out from behind the curtain. She tightens the belt around her robe as she approaches the door to the room.

NANCY

Tara? You all right?

She flings open the bathroom door. A hand covered with electrical burns grabs her by the face. The man slams the back of her head against the wall.

She wails in shock and slides to the floor. The back of her head leaves a bloody streak on the wall. The man grabs her by the hair and drags her toward the vanity.

He slams her face against the medicine cabinet. She wails as the mirror shards cut open her forehead. He grabs her again and pulls her toward the window.

He smashes her head trough the window. A large shard of glass plunges into her neck. Her lifeless body twitches as a gush of blood flows from the wound in her throat.

INT. HAMILTON HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Margo stands in front of the sink in the homely room and washes the dishes. Kenneth scrapes the tuna casserole from his plate into a large dog bowl.

MARGO

Are you okay? You barely touched your dinner.

KENNETH

Oh, I'm just not that hungry. Besides, I wanted to leave some for the boys. They can't get enough of your tuna casserole.

She takes his plate and dunks it in the sink while he heads into the next room.

EXT. HAMILTON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Kenneth steps out of the house with the dog bowl in hand and whistles as he approaches the doghouse.

KENNETH Dwight! Omar! I've got your favorite!

He stops outside the doghouse, picks up the chains from the ground, and examines the loosened dog collars. He growls in frustration and marches toward the back porch.

KENNETH I'm going to kill those bastards!

Margo steps onto the back porch just as Kenneth arrives. She looks on as he rummages through their gardening tools.

MARGO What's going on?

KENNETH Those idiots next door took the boys!

MARGO What? Are you sure?

KENNETH

Didn't you hear them yelling and screaming a moment ago? They were celebrating! I told you those kids were nothing but trouble. Oh, they're going to get it.

He takes hold of his garden shears and marches off.

MARGO What are you going to do?

KENNETH Put the fear of God into them.

MARGO Kenneth? Kenneth!

She rubs her temple as he disappears into the night.

EXT. VACATION HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Kenneth marches up to the back porch of the darkened house with the garden shears in hand and pounds on the door.

KENNETH I know you're inside! If you don't open this door right now, I swear to God I'll bust it down!

He waits for a response but does not hear one. He tries the handle and stops as the door swings open.

INT. VACATION HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kenneth enters the vacant room and looks around.

KENNETH You'd better tell me where my boys are right now!

He marches his way toward the next room.

INT. VACATION HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kenneth rants and raves as he enters the room.

KENNETH If you don't, I swear I'll...

He covers his mouth and staggers backward in shock. A shadow on the wall behind him steadily grows larger and larger.

INT. VACATION HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kenneth turns to leave only to stop in his tracks. The man strikes him in the face and sends him to the floor. The garden shears fall to the ground nearby.

Kenneth looks up with disbelief as his attacker grabs hold of the garden tool. He whimpers in terror as the man opens the shears and stands over him. KENNETH No. No! You're dead! They killed you! They killed you!

The man drives the points of the shears through both of his victim's eyes. Kenneth's body twitches as blood gushes from his eye sockets.

EXT. HAMILTON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Margo stands on the back porch and wraps her arms around herself. She scans the area but does not see anyone.

MARGO That's it, I'm calling Sheriff Vaughn.

INT. HAMILTON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Margo enters the room, closes the door, and walks toward a telephone perched on top of a desk.

MARGO

What's this world coming to?

She picks up the phone and starts to dial a number. She turns around as the back door slowly swings open. She lays the receiver on the desk and approaches the door.

MARGO

Kenneth? Kenneth?

She cautiously places a hand against the doorframe and peers outside. A hand covered with electrical burns grabs her by the throat.

She struggles as the man hoists her into the air and slams her against the wall. She opens her mouth in horror as the man raises her hand spade into view.

The man drives the spade through his victim's mouth and out the back of her head. He releases his grip and her body collapses to the hardwood floor.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sarah sits on the edge of her bed and stuffs a change of clothes into her packsack. She heads for the closet and pulls out an emergency kit.

She rummages through the kit and retrieves a rope ladder. She opens the window and sets up the ladder. She tosses her packsack outside and climbs out of her room.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - BEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ben sits at his computer and furiously types away. The nearby walls feature assorted horror film posters. He leans back in his chair and stares at the monitor.

BEN Hmm... Should the governor be dismembered or disemboweled?

A series of thumps emanate from outside the house. Ben perks up his head, approaches a nearby window, and peers outside.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Sarah reaches the end of the ladder, picks her packsack up from the ground, and flees the scene.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - BEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ben steps away from the window, smiles, and shakes his head.

EXT. ANDERSON HOME - FRONT - NIGHT

Sarah scales the fence with her packsack in hand and creeps toward the front porch.

She yelps in surprise as the lawn's automatic sprinkler system is activated.

She rushes toward the front door as the sprinklers douse her with a torrent of water.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The doorbell chime echoes throughout the house. Joan appears from the next room and opens the front door.

JOAN Sarah? You're all wet!

SARAH

Yeah, sprinklers got me. Just wanted to stop by and, you know, hang out for a little while.

JOAN Well, I should at least give you the chance to dry your clothes.

Sarah holds up her packsack in response.

SARAH That's okay, I brought a change of clothes with me.

Joan steps aside as her neighbor enters the home. She smirks to herself and closes the door.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Paul sits on a couch with the bowl of popcorn in hand and watches a film on a widescreen television. He raises his head as Joan and Sarah arrive from the next room.

JOAN Look who's here!

PAUL Sarah? What brings you here?

SARAH Hi, Paul. I... I just wanted to get away for a while.

PAUL Hungry? We've got popcorn.

SARAH

Yes, thanks.

Sarah gleefully curls up on the couch next to Paul. Joan arches an eyebrow. He innocently shrugs his shoulders. She approaches a telephone on a nearby table.

JOAN

I'll just phone your parents and --

SARAH No, it's okay. You don't have to --

Joan picks up the telephone and grimaces.

JOAN

Again?!

PAUL

What?

JOAN The phone's still screwed up! I'm getting nothing but static.

PAUL

They were supposed to replace the faulty line while we were away!

JOAN The phones in your house working, Sarah?

SARAH Oh, of course! Our phones are fine. No need to check them.

JOAN I wonder if Kenneth and Margo's phones are out or if it's just ours.

PAUL I'll swing by and check it out.

JOAN We can ask tomorrow.

PAUL Relax, I'll only be a few minutes.

Joan hangs up the telephone while Paul rises to his feet. Everyone perks up their ears as the doorbell rings again.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Paul enters from the next room, opens the front door, and finds Ben as he grins from ear to ear.

BEN

Hey, Paul.

Paul looks on as Ben casually saunters into the house and heads for the next room.

PAUL Hi. Come on in.

Paul shakes his head and closes the front door.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Paul follows Ben as they appear from the next room. Joan tilts her head while Sarah sports an irate look.

JOAN

Ben?

BEN Hey, Joan. Sarah! There you are!

He gleefully takes a seat next to his mortified sister.

BEN I can't believe you left before me!

JOAN Yeah, Sarah just... Oh, I forgot to get a towel.

Joan quickly slips out of the room. Paul retrieves the flashlight from the nearby table.

PAUL Let Joan know I'll be back in about five minutes, okay?

The siblings nod as Paul steps away from view. Sarah glares at Ben with great fury.

SARAH What are you doing here?!

BEN

Mom and Dad don't know you're missing... yet. That means you've still gotta chance to get back home before they ground you for life.

SARAH I'm not going back, genius. I'm running away.

BEN You're next door.

SARAH It's a start!

BEN

Look, here's the deal. If you go back right now, I keep my mouth shut and you give me your allowance for the next three months.

SARAH

Two weeks.

BEN

Two months.

SARAH

Four weeks.

BEN

Six weeks.

SARAH

Deal!

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Someone lightly wraps on the closed door. Carol steps into view with a dinner tray in hand. She gasps in shock as she discovers the room is empty.

She sets the dinner tray aside and rushes toward the open window. She finds the rope ladder, peers outside, and scurries out of the room.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - BEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Carol knocks on the door, steps inside, and finds the room empty. She moans in despair and slips away from view.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Robert sits on the love seat and quietly sips on a cup of tea. He sets his drink aside and rises to his feet as Carol tears down the stairs in a panic.

> CAROL Sarah and Ben are missing!

> > ROBERT

What?!

CAROL

Sarah used the rope ladder from the emergency kit to leave the house, and I think Ben followed her! Oh, my God, they could be anywhere --

ROBERT Calm down, we know where they went.

CAROL

Next door?

ROBERT Where else would Sarah run off to?

CAROL

What about Ben?

ROBERT He probably followed her for the blackmail opportunity. Let's go.

He shakes his head and leads her toward the next room.

EXT. HAMILTON HOME - FRONT - NIGHT

Paul emerges from the night and walks up to the darkened house. He approaches the front porch and rings the doorbell.

He waits for a response but receives none. He knocks on the front door but still does not hear a reply.

PAUL

Hmm... Must be out back.

He turns on his flashlight and heads for the back.

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

Paul walks along the lakeshore with the flashlight in his hand the only source of illumination. The light reveals two shapes on the ground not too far ahead.

He rushes over to the shapes and focuses his light at them. A look of horror washes over his face. He slumps to his knees and rubs his forehead in despair.

The flashlight reveals the shapes are Dwight and Omar's dead bodies. Their corpses have been ripped apart and are riddled with multiple stab wounds.

> PAUL Oh, God! What did they do?

He scrambles to his feet and runs off into the night.

EXT. VACATION HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Paul arrives on the scene, sprints toward the back porch, and pounds on the door.

PAUL Open the door! Come on, open up!

He backs away from the door and scans the darkened house with his flashlight. The light shines on Nancy's corpse as it remains stuck in the upstairs bathroom window.

He wails in anguish, rushes back onto the porch, and tries the door handle. He nervously stops in his tracks as the door slowly swings open.

INT. VACATION HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Paul cautiously steps inside and scans the room with his flashlight. He stops as the light reveals Kenneth's body on the floor. He wails in horror and kneels beside the corpse.

Tears stream down his face as he heads for the next room.

INT. VACATION HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Paul enters the room and illuminates the area with his flashlight. The light reveals Tara's corpse on the ground. He weeps with despair and flees the scene.

EXT. HAMILTON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Paul emerges from the darkness and sprints past the doghouse on his way toward the back porch. His foot catches on one of the chains and he collapses to the ground in a heap.

The flashlight slips from his grasp and lands just ahead of him. He slowly and painfully pulls himself off the ground and scrambles toward the light.

He picks up the flashlight and looks in the direction of the beam. He yelps as the light reveals Eddie and Frank's bodies underneath a series of bushes across the yard.

PAUL Margo! Open the door! Margo!

He sprints toward the back porch and furiously pounds on the door. He looks through a nearby window into the darkened house but does not see anyone.

He returns to the back door, tries the handle, and finds it unlocked. He takes a moment to steel himself and cautiously steps inside the home.

INT. HAMILTON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Paul takes a few steps only to slip and crash to the floor. He rolls over and prepares to push himself off the ground. He stops and discovers the area is soaked with blood.

He aims the flashlight toward the source of the blood and finds Margo's corpse on the floor across the room. He wails in horror, scrambles to his feet, and flees the scene.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah sits on the couch and clutches a towel wrapped around her body. Ben sits next to her with a grin on his face. Joan stands nearby as Robert and Carol lecture their daughter.

> ROBERT Haven't you disappointed us enough?

SARAH Leave me alone.

CAROL Don't you dare start with the attitude, young lady.

SARAH Leave me alone!

JOAN I'm sorry, if I knew she left without your permission --

CAROL The only ones who should be apologizing are these two.

BEN Two? What did I do?

ROBERT You also left the house without telling us. That means you're both in trouble. Let's go.

SARAH No! Leave me alone!

BEN You are so asking for it.

CAROL Enough! We're leaving right now.

Everyone turns around as a loud slam echoes from the next room. Paul steps into view with his clothes stained with blood. He leans against the wall and gasps for breath.

> JOAN Paul? What's wrong?

PAUL We've got to get out of here now!

JOAN What's going on?

PAUL Everyone's been...

He takes notice of Ben and Sarah as they stare back at him.

PAUL

I... I mean, there's been an accident. We have to get help.

The adults exchange a look of recognition while the children both sport bewildered expressions.

CAROL Accident? You mean...

PAUL

Yes.

ROBERT

Bad?

PAUL

Very.

BEN What happened? Are people hurt?

PAUL

It's... It's complicated. Look, we need to leave --

SARAH What's that on your clothes?

PAUL Huh? Oh, it's... It's dirt. We'll take our SUV. Let's go.

SARAH Why are we leaving?

BEN Yeah, shouldn't we help --

JOAN It's okay, we'll go into town and the police will help us.

Joan grabs a set of car keys from the table while Paul gestures for the others to follow. Robert and Carol take Ben and Sarah by the hand.

EXT. ANDERSON HOME - FRONT - NIGHT

The automatic sprinkler system saturates the driveway with water. The Andersons and the Westphals exit the house and rush over to the black SUV parked nearby.

Joan steps behind the wheel while Paul takes the passenger's seat next to her. Robert and Carol quickly shepherd Ben and Sarah into the back of the vehicle.

BEN Why are we hurrying?

ROBERT Don't worry, we just want to get help as fast as we can.

SARAH What aren't you telling us?

CAROL Nothing! Just relax, everything's going to be okay.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BLACK SUV - NIGHT

Everyone buckles themselves in as Joan starts the vehicle and the engine roars to life. She turns on the headlights and reveals someone at the end of the driveway.

Quentin, clad in black from head to toe with his body covered with electrical burns, grips the pitchfork and stares back at the others.

> QUENTIN What, leaving so soon? The party's just begun!

Ben and Sarah point at the serial killer in terror.

SARAH That's him! That's the man I saw in the trees!

BEN Oh, my God! It's a zombie! It's a real zombie!

Quentin grips the pitchfork and rushes toward the vehicle.

JOAN What do I do?!

PAUL

Floor it!

He reaches across the vehicle with his feet and stomps on the gas pedal. The engine roars but the vehicle, still in park, remains stationary.

JOAN What are you doing?!

PAUL

Drive! Just go! Now!

He grabs the shifter and puts the vehicle into drive. The tires squeal on the wet pavement as the SUV speeds down the length of the driveway.

The vehicle slams into the serial killer. Quentin is thrown several feet through the air and crashes to the ground at the end of the driveway.

Robert and Carol wrap their arms around Ben and Sarah as the children tremble with fright. Paul rubs his forehead with relief while Joan breathes heavily.

JOAN What... What did we just do? PAUL It's okay. JOAN We killed him. We killed him. PAUL

This was self-defense, understand?

BEN There was no accident, was there?

SARAH That man, did he... Did he...

PAUL

Look, I'm going to make sure he's... you know. Then, we'll head into the city and --

Quentin sits up and glares back at the others. The Andersons and the Westphals yelp in shock. Joan tightly grips the wheel and slams her foot down on the accelerator.

The SUV speeds down the driveway and races toward the serial killer once more. The vehicle knocks Quentin down and runs its tires over his body.

The SUV stops at the end of the driveway, shifts into reverse, and runs over Quentin's body once more. The vehicle stops in front of the wooden electrical pole.

Robert and Carol place their arms around Ben and Sarah. Joan tightly grips the wheel and takes deep breaths as Paul gently places a hand on her shoulder.

JOAN How... How did he get up?

PAUL He's not getting up this time.

JOAN I hit him... I hit him and he got up.

PAUL

Listen, calm down so we can --

Quentin rises to his knees none the worse for wear. The Andersons and the Westphals scream in disbelief. The serial killer hurls the pitchfork at the vehicle.

The prongs smash through the driver's side of the windshield. Joan ducks at the last moment as the end of the pitchfork narrowly misses her skull.

Her feet slam down upon the gas pedal as she cowers behind the dashboard. The tires squeal as the vehicle races backward and heads straight for the electrical pole.

The rear of the SUV crashes into the pole. The Andersons and the Westphals wail in pain as they are thrown about inside the vehicle.

The pole loudly creaks as it starts to give way. The Andersons and the Westphals yelp with panic as they cower inside the SUV.

EXT. ANDERSON HOME - FRONT - NIGHT

The pole topples forward and caves in the roof of the vehicle. The live electrical wires break away from the pole and flail about on the wet driveway.

Joan staggers out of the SUV in a daze and collapses to the pavement. She looks down the driveway as Quentin grabs the hunting knife from his belt and marches forward.

> QUENTIN Was that fun, bitch? Now, it's my turn to play!
Paul stumbles out of the SUV, scrambles on top of the pole, and leaps through the air. He tackles Quentin to the ground, fights him over the knife, and calls out to Joan.

> PAUL Get the Westphals, and get the hell out of here!

Joan rises to her feet and helps Ben and Carol out of the vehicle. He is uninjured while she bleeds profusely thanks to a cut on her forehead.

Paul and Quentin roll around on the pavement and move toward a large puddle on the driveway. The downed electrical wires flail about not too far from them.

Joan circles the SUV and leads Sarah and Robert out of the vehicle. She is unhurt while his hair is soaked with blood due to a head injury.

Paul and Quentin fight over the knife as they land in the large puddle. The serial killer slips behind his adversary and tightly grips the blade.

Quentin plunges the knife into his victim's stomach. Paul wails in pain but grabs his attacker by the arm and prevents another blow.

Paul spots the live electrical wires as they flail about just ahead of him. He reaches out with his feet and tries to snare one of the wires.

Joan and the Westphals stagger toward the front porch of the house and look back at the driveway. Quentin widens his eyes as Paul prepares to snag the wire with his feet.

QUENTIN

Oh, shit.

A shower of sparks emanates from the wire as Paul and Quentin are both electrocuted. The street and house lights are extinguished as the power fails throughout the area.

Carol turns Ben and Sarah away from the spectacle. Joan screams in horror and sprints toward her husband. Robert grabs her around the waist and holds her back.

> ROBERT No! It's too late.

> > JOAN

Let me go!

ROBERT Don't look, Joan. Don't!

JOAN

Paul! Paul!

She collapses to her knees and wails inconsolably.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carol leads Ben and Sarah into the darkened room and toward the love seat. She sits next to her children and holds a dishcloth to the cut on her forehead.

Robert enters the room and wearily leans against the bookshelf. He presses a dishcloth against the wound on the top of his head.

Sarah produces a matchbook from her pocket and lights some candles with a shaky hand. Joan appears from the next room and slumps against the open archway.

> SARAH What happened out there? Who was that man? Why did he keep getting up?

BEN Was he a zombie? 'Cause you have to hit a zombie in the brain --

CAROL

Quiet, you two.

Robert approaches a nearby telephone and places his hand on the receiver. He turns back toward Joan as she wearily leans against the archway.

> ROBERT Joan? It's going to be okay.

> > JOAN

We married just three years ago. We were supposed to spend the rest of our lives together. What did Paul do to deserve --

The pitchfork plunges through Joan's chest. The Westphals recoil with horror at the sight. Joan whimpers as she looks at the blood-soaked prongs which poke out of her torso. Carol, Ben, and Sarah rise to their feet in terror. Joan coughs up blood as the life slowly leaves her eyes. Someone grabs her from behind and throws her to the ground.

Quentin, his clothes in tatters and the electrical burns on his body more severe in nature, steps through the archway with the hunting knife in hand.

QUENTIN You thought I was done?! I'm just getting started!

Quentin raises the knife and lunges toward Carol and the children. Robert races forward, tackles the serial killer to the ground, and calls out to his wife.

ROBERT

Get them out of here!

Carol shepherds Ben and Sarah out the back door. Quentin throws Robert to the floor next to the old rocker. The serial killer raises the knife and charges forward.

Robert scrambles to his feet and grabs hold of the rocking chair. He breaks the rocker over Quentin's head and tackles the serial killer onto to the floor.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - SIDE - NIGHT

Carol drags Ben and Sarah by the hand as they flee the area. The Westphals pass by a small shed as they head toward the front of the house.

Two decorative bear traps hang on either side of the shed door. A trash bag filled with lawn clippings leans against the side of the structure.

Sarah pulls her hand away from her mother and rushes back toward the shed. Carol and Ben stop and turn around as she disappears inside the structure.

CAROL What are you doing?!

BEN We need to get outta here!

Sarah emerges from the shed with a large axe in hand.

SARAH

We're not leaving Dad!

Carol and Ben exchange a look and follow Sarah as she rushes toward the back of the house.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Quentin hurls Robert against the bookshelf and sends him to the floor. The large trophy is among the many items which fall from the shelves and land nearby.

Quentin raises his knife and prepares to deliver a fatal blow. Robert strikes him in the face with the trophy and sends him backward and to the floor.

Carol and Ben enter via the back door and rush toward the fallen serial killer. The mother pounces on top of Quentin while the son tries to wrest the knife from his hand.

Robert rises to one knee in a daze when his daughter enters the room. Sarah helps her father back onto his feet and hands him the large axe.

SARAH You have to hit him in the brain!

Quentin pushes Carol and Ben away, raises his knife, and prepares to attack. Robert hides the axe behind his back and calls out to the serial killer.

ROBERT

Turn around, you son of a bitch!

Quentin stops in his tracks, smiles devilishly, and rises to his feet. He turns around and charges toward his challenger. Robert unveils the axe and takes a mighty swing.

The axe buries itself deep into Quentin's skull. He reaches out and staggers toward Robert and Sarah for a moment with a shocked look on his face.

His body falls limp and he collapses face-first toward the floor. The axe lodged in his head props Quentin's body up before it can strike the ground.

Quentin's head slowly slides down the length of the axe. His head slips past the bottom of the blade and his body collapses to the floor with a thud.

Carol and Ben rush to their feet and join Robert and Sarah. The Westphals embrace one another as tears of relief stream down their faces.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Carol leads Ben and Sarah out of the house and onto the lawn. Robert wearily leans against the open doorframe.

ROBERT I can't get a dial tone. There's too much static on the line. You have your keys?

CAROL

Yeah.

ROBERT Drive to the sheriff's office in town, and take the children with you.

CAROL What about you?

ROBERT I'll stay behind and make sure --

Quentin, now with a massive gash in his head, appears and plunges the hunting knife into his shoulder. Carol, Ben, and Sarah scream in terror as Robert falls to the ground.

QUENTIN

Alright, now I'm pissed!

Carol grabs her children by their hands as Quentin rushes out of the house after them. Robert extends his leg, trips the serial killer, and sends him to the ground.

Robert dives forward and latches himself onto Quentin's leg. The serial killer struggles to free himself as Carol leads her children away from view.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - SIDE - NIGHT

Carol and Sarah rush toward the front of the house while Ben lags behind. He stops outside the shed and examines the exterior of the structure.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Quentin rises to his feet, kicks Robert in the face, and frees himself. He grips the hunting knife in his hand and starts after the others.

ROBERT Hey, where are you going?! You want to kill somebody?! Come back here and kill me! Come on!

Quentin stops in his tracks and turns back around. He smiles and playfully waggles his finger. QUENTIN Nice try, but I think I'll take care of Mommy and the children first.

Robert wails helplessly as Quentin disappears from view.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - SIDE - NIGHT

Quentin grips the knife in his hand and races past the shed. The bear traps and the lawn clippings are missing.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - FRONT - NIGHT

Quentin arrives on the scene and finds Carol, Ben, and Sarah as they kneel on the grass and tremble with fear.

CAROL

Please, let us go. Don't do this.

Quentin slowly marches forward and fails to notice the large patch of lawn clippings spread out in front of him.

QUENTIN

I'm going to kill your family, and this is what you do? You're pathetic. You want some sympathy? I'll kill you first, so you don't watch as I rip your children apart piece by --

Quentin blindly steps in a bear trap hidden underneath the lawn clippings. He wails as the trap's sharp metal teeth clamp down upon his leg.

QUENTIN You fucking bitch!

Quentin's other leg steps in the second bear trap obscured by the lawn clippings. He screams in anguish, drops the knife, and collapses to the ground.

Ben reaches behind his mother's back and retrieves a gas canister. Quentin flails in desperation as the container's contents are poured over his body.

> QUENTIN You little bastards! I'm going to snap your scrawny necks like twigs!

Sarah retrieves the matchbook from her pocket. She lights one of the matches, sets the entire booklet ablaze, and tosses it through the air. Carol, Ben, and Sarah rush toward the family sedan parked on the driveway nearby. Quentin looks on helplessly as the lit matchbook lands on his chest.

Quentin unleashes a hellish scream as he is engulfed by flames. Carol, Ben, and Sarah stand in front of the sedan and look back at the serial killer.

Quentin thrashes about as his screams become lower and more demonic in tone. He unleashes one last ferocious yell and collapses to the ground.

Carol embraces her children with relief and turns them away from the scene. She retrieves the car keys from her pocket as the fire behind them slowly dies down.

> CAROL Come on, we have to go.

SARAH Wait, what about Dad?!

BEN

We can't leave him!

CAROL I know, but I don't want you two staying here any longer --

QUENTIN (O.S.) Where the hell do you think you're going?

Carol, Ben, and Sarah spin around and watch in disbelief as Quentin frees his leg from one of the bear traps.

His skin has been burnt to a crisp and his nose, lips, and ears have been completely scorched off.

QUENTIN Did I give you permission to leave?!

Carol shoves the car keys into her son's hand as Quentin frees himself from the second bear trap.

CAROL Get your sister out of here!

BEN What?! I can't drive!

SARAH Yes you can! Let's go! Ben and Sarah rush toward the sedan as Quentin grabs the hunting knife and rises to his feet. Carol vainly searches for something to arm herself with.

Ben and Sarah open the doors of the vehicle and look on as Quentin slowly marches forward. Carol steels herself, clenches her bare fists, and charges at him.

She unleashes a desperate scream and vainly tries to wrestle him to the ground. Ben and Sarah exchange a tentative look and enter the sedan.

Quentin throws Carol aside and raises the knife. Carol screams as the blade plunges into her shoulder. Quentin pushes her to the ground and heads for the sedan.

INT. FAMILY SEDAN - NIGHT

Sarah looks through the windshield as Quentin steadily approaches her side of the vehicle.

SARAH Start the car! Start the car!

Ben puts the key in the ignition and starts the sedan.

BEN Ignition... Brakes... Reverse...

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - FRONT - NIGHT

Quentin reaches for the passenger-side door's handle when the sedan jerks backward. He starts after the vehicle as Carol leaps onto his back with a scream.

She claws at his face and tears large chunks of charred flesh from his skull. He growls with rage, flips her forward, and sends her to the pavement with a thud.

Quentin looks on helplessly as the sedan backs onto the road and slowly drives off into the night. Carol cradles her injured arm and looks up at him defiantly.

> CAROL You can take me, but you'll never take my children.

QUENTIN I'm sure they'll mention your valor in the obituary.

CAROL It's over for you, too. There's nobody here left for you to hurt.

QUENTIN

Nobody? There's a city just down the road. A city that's home to those who conspired against me, those who tried to drive me to insanity. I have plans for Lake Resurgence. Such plans. When I'm finished, the streets will run red with blood. Too bad you won't be around to see it.

CAROL

At least I'm not a freak! Look at yourself! You've been burnt to a crisp! Your skin's peeling off your bones! You're disgusting! You're inhuman! What do you have to say about that, you bastard?!

QUENTIN

This too shall pass. I wasn't expecting vehicular assault, electrocution, axe blows, or fire, but I didn't spend eight years preparing for my rebirth just to be stuck in a rotting shell of a body. You see, my renaissance comes with the perk of regeneration. In a few days, I'll be in better physical shape than at any point in my lifetime. And then... And then my revenge will begin in earnest.

CAROL Somebody will stop you. Somebody has to stop you.

He cackles and spreads his arms out wide in response.

QUENTIN Don't you understand? I am invulnerable! I am indomitable! I am invincible! Nobody on this earth can stop me! Nobody!

The large axe swings through the air behind Quentin and severs his right arm at the elbow. He wails in anguish and collapses to the pavement.

Quentin looks at his severed forearm with the knife still clutched in its hand. Carol raises her head as the man with the axe steps out of the darkness.

> ROBERT Nobody? You sure about that?

CAROL

Robert!

She rises to her feet and wraps her arms around him.

QUENTIN Was that the best you could do?

ROBERT Let's find out. Carol, go to the garage and get Ol' Betsy.

Carol heads for the garage and disappears into the darkness. Robert clutches the axe and stands guard over Quentin.

> QUENTIN You don't understand what you're dealing with. There's nothing you can do to hurt me. Nothing.

> > ROBERT

No? Not even this?

Robert swings the axe and severs the serial killer's left arm at the elbow. Quentin moans in pain for a moment only to cackle in amusement.

> QUENTIN You still don't get it, do you?! There is nothing on this earth that can stop me! Nothing!

> > CAROL (O.S.)

Nothing?

Quentin looks up as Carol emerges from the darkness with a large chainsaw in hand.

CAROL Let's hear what Ol' Betsy has to say.

Carol pulls the starter cord and the chainsaw's engine roars to life. A look of terror washes over what little is left of Quentin's face as she slowly steps forward.

MONTAGE

A) Quentin whimpers in despair as Carol brings the chainsaw down and severs his legs at the knees.

B) Robert steps out of the garage and stacks the last of ten large wooden boxes on the driveway.

C) Quentin wails in desperation as Carol lowers the chainsaw and separates his legs at the hips.

D) Robert exits the garage once more with a wheelbarrow in hand and a closed bag of concrete mix inside.

E) Quentin cries out in anguish as Carol brings the chainsaw down and severs his arms at the shoulders.

F) Robert empties the bag into the wheelbarrow and uses a garden hose to add water to the concrete mix.

G) Quentin screams in horror as Carol lowers the chainsaw and prepares to separate his head from his torso.

END MONTAGE

Quentin mumbles to himself as he darts his eyes about.

QUENTIN I... I am invulnerable... indomitable... invincible...

Quentin's severed head rests inside one of the wooden boxes. Robert and Carol stand over the box and look down at what little remains of the serial killer.

> CAROL How can he keep talking?

ROBERT I don't have a clue.

CAROL

Well, I think he's said enough.

The couple rolls the wheelbarrow into view and pours its contents into the box. Quentin's head is buried underneath a sea of concrete.

They set the wheelbarrow aside and embrace one another. Robert lightly kisses Carol on the forehead. The faint sounds of distant police sirens echo through the night.

> CAROL What do we tell the police?

ROBERT Honestly, I have no idea.

She waves her hand and gestures toward the driveway.

CAROL How do we explain this? ROBERT I... I don't know.

CAROL Well, this won't be our problem for long thanks to the postal service.

ROBERT Yeah, you're right. We'll let New York deal with this. And Los Angeles.

CAROL And London, and Paris, and Berlin...

ROBERT Moscow, New Delhi, Beijing, Tokyo, Sydney...

The ten wooden boxes, each with a body part fully encased in concrete, are arrayed on the driveway. Robert and Carol hold one another as they wait for the police to arrive.

FADE OUT.

THE END