

THE GHOST IN MY ROOM

screenplay by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SIDEWALK - SUBURBS - MORNING

A couple of feisty pups tear at each other while their female owners tug at their leashes.

OWNER #1
That's enough! Stop!

SCOTT RYAN (40s), neatly shaved, polo shirt, khakis, watches the action from his immaculate lawn. He sips a coffee, inspects a row of trash bins that dot the narrow street.

He turns to his neighbor's lawn.

No trash bin.

Checks his watch.

7:06 AM

A dog BARKS.

He turns to one of the two pups who bark and grunt his direction.

The woman snags at the leash, chokes the angry pup as they head up the sidewalk.

Scott gives the dog an angry scowl. He throws his coffee in the grass, heads inside.

CUT TO:

INT. RYAN HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Scott ties his shoes, straps an ipod to his bicep and pops in an earplug. He checks his watch --

7:55 AM

He stands, peeks through his curtains and spots --

A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN disrobe in the bedroom across the way. Her hair is wet as she drops a silk nightie to the floor.

This is ELSA DAVIS (30s), jet black hair, gorgeous. Elsa rests on a mattress before Scott can get an eyeful.

SCOTT
(smiles)
Good morning.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Elsa, now in some tight jogging shorts and sports bra, runs with a fierce determination.

She fights a smile as she spots --

SCOTT

Jogging towards her.

The two pass without a word.

Elsa looks first --

-- then Scott, who catches her checking him out.

Elsa quickly faces forward. A shit eating grin.

CUT TO:

EXT. RYAN HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Scott puffs a cigar and sips a scotch while he listens to Elsa's piano through an open window.

CUT TO:

INT. RYAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Scott grabs a bottle of Johnny Walker from a modest breakfast table, pours another glass as Elsa's music seeps in from the open windows.

He steps into a --

LIVING ROOM

where a BABY GRAND sits in the corner. He fixates on the instrument. Focused. He walks to an --

OPEN WINDOW

-- and stares out, into the night, hears the melodic sounds of Elsa's PIANO reach an emotional peak.

He takes a seat, sips at his drink as he flips through some sheet music. He looks up, stares over at --

A PHOTOGRAPH OF A WOMAN

sitting at this same piano, a very sexy but sophisticated pose as she smiles back at the camera.

Scott grins.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELSA'S HOME - MORNING

Scott makes his way toward the front door with a stack of mail in hand. He gives a short KNOCK.

Elsa arrives at the door, surprised to see Scott waiting on the other side. Her hair still wet from the shower.

SCOTT

Hi. Did I catch you at a bad time?
I can come back.

ELSA

No. You're fine.
(catches herself)
It's fine. What is it?
(flustered)
I mean, how are you?

Elsa laughs. Nervous.

SCOTT

It's been awhile since you've had
guests?

ELSA

That obvious?

Scott hands her an opened envelope. She gives it a look.

SCOTT

I'm afraid I opened it by mistake.

Elsa is a bit confused as she stares at her PHONE BILL.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Mail man dropped it in my box.

Elsa watches Scott, a bit unsure of him.

ELSA
Oh. Of course.
 (nervous laugh)
Come in. Please.

Scott steps inside.

The across the street neighbor takes a special interest in the strange man entering Elsa's home.

This is GREER (40s), long, braided hair, thick sweater jacket, with a full string of child-like buttons on her lapel.

INT. ELSA'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Elsa and Scott stand near the front door in an awkward pose as if an early mating ritual.

She hands him a coffee as he nervously takes his first sip. He quickly retracts.

 SCOTT
Mmm. It's hot.

 ELSA
It's a fresh pot.

 SCOTT
No, no. I mean...thank you.

Scott offers his own nervous laugh. These two are a train wreck but it's plain to see an attraction exists between them.

 ELSA
What brings you by?

Scott points at her phone bill. A reminder.

 SCOTT
Your mail?

 ELSA
Yes, of course. I'm so sorry. You
can tell I haven't had my coffee,
can't you?

Scott smiles, does a quick survey of his surroundings. A very modest living room.

A simple television and couch, no artwork, and no photos of any kind resting on the walls or furniture.

SCOTT
You just moving in?

ELSA
Umm. Yeah. It's actually been a few weeks. Guess I just haven't had the time to put everything away.

Scott helps himself further into the home, snoops around and has a good look for himself. Elsa gives him a strange look.

He seems to be searching for something.

SCOTT
You stay pretty busy, do you?

Scott stops, turns to her. She smiles.

ELSA
Yeah. Well. I've been looking for work mostly. Putting together a mailing list of possible students. Flyers on doors, that sort of thing.

SCOTT
Students? You're a teacher?

ELSA
Yes. I was a teacher. Before I moved here. To Bradford.

A nervous giggle.

ELSA (CONT'D)
Now I teach piano mostly. Private lessons. Doctors kids, that sort of thing. So far...not so good, but I'm working on it.
(beat)
Guess you could say I'm just trying to settle back in.

SCOTT
Yeah. I know the feeling.

An awkward silence.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Well, I've enjoyed what I've heard. My wife...she used to play.

ELSA
Used to?

SCOTT
Yeah. Before she passed. I guess
I've been doing some settling back
in myself.

Elsa seems sad for him.

ELSA
I'm sorry.

SCOTT
It's okay.

ELSA
What happened? If you don't mind me
asking?

Scott stalls, uncomfortable, hands her his cup.

SCOTT
I'm gonna get going.

Elsa seems almost disappointed.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Thanks for the coffee.

Scott heads for the door. Elsa follows.

ELSA
I never got your name.

SCOTT
Ryan. Scott Ryan.

ELSA
I didn't mean to...

SCOTT
It's okay. Really. I'm just... I
have some things to do. I'll see
you around, Elsa.

Scott smiles as he heads out. Elsa watches him closely. A bit
smitten. And mostly confused.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

Elsa's daughter REENA DAVIS (16), bright dyed red hair, cut near the neck, haunting eyes and the pale white skin of an innocent, walks home from school with her friend LANIE (17), dark goth meets valley girl, pink hair and fishnets.

LANIE

You know, I don't just walk home with anyone. Consider this your first step up on the social ladder.

Reena rolls her eyes. A small grin.

REENA

I'm touched.

Lanie laughs as she opens a fresh pack of smokes.

LANIE

You see? That's what I like about you. You don't give a shit. That's hard to come by these days.

REENA

It takes years of practice.

LANIE

I mean it. Since that first day at lunch when you told Reemus to go screw himself. I knew there was something about you.

Reena grows visibly uncomfortable with the conversation.

REENA

You're not gonna go all lesbo on me, are you?

Lanie throws an arm around her.

LANIE

Why? You want me to?

Reena laughs, removes her arm.

LANIE (CONT'D)

Seriously. It took a lot of balls doing what you did. I figured this chick's either crazy or she's looking for trouble.

REENA

I don't like people taking my chair.

LANIE

Yeah I noticed. You know I would've kicked your ass, right?

Reena isn't so convinced.

LANIE (CONT'D)

But I didn't. You see, most people are scared of me. But not you. Of all the tables, you came and sat right in my seat.

Reena cracks a grin.

LANIE (CONT'D)

Like you were saying "Move over, bitch. There's a new slut in town".

(beat)

No one's ever tried shit like that before. You know, I think me and you have more in common than you think.

REENA

How's that?

LANIE

It don't take Doctor Phil to figure out you got a messed up home life.

REENA

Yeah, you could say that.

LANIE

So? You wanna talk about it, or am I supposed to guess?

REENA

It's kind of a long story.

LANIE

You got some place to be?

The low RUMBLE of a beat up clunker with no muffler grabs the two girls attention. They turn.

A CONVERTIBLE TWO DOOR

slows to a halt as a young male student pokes his head out the driver's window. This is TEDDY (17), gruff, simple t shirt and oily hair, boyishly handsome.

TEDDY

Hey, Lanie! Who's your twin?!

Lanie and Reena chuckle.

LANIE

Just someone else who won't sleep with you, Teddy.

(to Reena)

My douchebag ex.

TEDDY

What kind of talk is that? Here I am trying to be nice and civil and you're talkin' trash.

LANIE

And you just happened to be passing through here?

TEDDY

Yeah. Something like that. Look, are you gonna give me a hard time or come for a ride? It's like a hundred degrees out here.

LANIE

Why should I?

TEDDY

Oh, I don't know. No reason. I just might need help smokin' this fatty I just rolled.

A big smile shoots across Lanie's face as she slowly turns to Reena.

LANIE

(to Reena)

On second thought, it is getting hot out here, isn't it, Reena?

Reena isn't so sure.

TEDDY

Yeah. That's what I thought. Come on. I'm running out of gas over here.

Lanie grabs her friend by the arm, quickly drags her toward the car as they head for the passenger door.

CUT TO:

INT. TEDDY'S CAR - DAY

Reena and Lanie squeeze in tight, pushing dirty laundry and other garbage to the floor and rear window.

Teddy passes the fat joint to an eager Lanie as Reena's eyes instantly connect with a pair of baby blues staring back at her from the visor.

This is SKAZ (20s), jet black hair, dyed and shaved thin to the skull. An intense young man with eyebrows like Spock and an unsettling stare.

Reena likes him as she fights a growing smile.

TEDDY

Who's your friend?

(to Reena)

Whatever she's telling you about me don't listen. It was all her fault. Ask anyone.

LANIE

Oh, shut up, Teddy. Don't start any shit. Today sucked and I don't need you ruining my high.

Teddy laughs, eyes on Reena.

TEDDY

You have a name or do we just keep calling you new chick?

Reena plays coy and ignores him. Lanie just laughs as she puffs and passes to Reena.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Wow. Okay. New chick. Meet my boy Skaz.

Skaz quietly and creepily stares back at her from his sun visor. Unflinching and unfeeling.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

He don't say much but I can tell he likes you.

Skaz reaches his left hand to the rearview mirror and positions it on Reena's face.

Reena spots an inverted PENTAGRAM TATTOO on the back of his hand and is taken aback.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Whoa-ho! Lanie, you better keep an eye on this one. I believe she's been targeted for termination.

Reena grows increasingly uncomfortable with Skaz and it shows. Lanie takes notice.

LANIE

That's not funny, Teddy. You guys are scaring her. Cool it.

TEDDY

So did you ask her yet?

Lanie rolls her eyes. Reena is confused.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Come on. What's the big deal. Just do it. Or do you want me to?

REENA

Ask me what?

TEDDY

Well. On your stroll home today, Lanie here was supposed to ask if you moved into that big blue house on Peyton Drive. I take it from your confusion, she never had the balls to ask.

LANIE

Knock it off.

TEDDY

Okay fine. I'll tell her.

(to Reena)

A girl was killed there last year and she looks just like you.

LANIE

Shit, Teddy!!!

TEDDY

What? Someone should tell her. She's just gonna hear it from someone else.

REENA

Bullshit.

LANIE

He's just playing with you. Don't listen to him.

SKAZ

A cute little redhead, just about your size. Walking home from school. Took this same road. The same time, every day. Only one day, she never made it home. Somewhere between here and there...she got snatched.

Reena is scared to death. Lanie can't help but be intrigued by Skaz's storytelling.

SKAZ (CONT'D)

Cops never found the body. But every now and then you hear stories. About seeing her walking these same roads. School books in arm.

Reena swallows. Her fear is palpable.

SKAZ (CONT'D)

They say that sometimes after people die, they don't know their dead. Like it happens so fast, they never knew what hit them. Some say it was a hit and run. Others say she was taken in the woods, and her spirit roams these streets searching for a killer.

Reena and Lanie share a brief look. Lanie shakes her head at Reena, as if to deny the story.

SKAZ (CONT'D)

You see, this particular girl made a lot of enemies, so they say. The kind of girl that liked to put down other kids and talk all kinds of shit. Cops had a list of suspects that stretched longer than this road.

Skaz reaches in closer to the mirror, stares dead at Reena.

SKAZ (CONT'D)

The moral of this story...sometimes it's better not to poke your nose in other people's business. You just might get it cut off.

Reena is trembling with fear. Her lips quiver as Skaz's cold stare shoots a visible chill up her spine.

INT. ELSA'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Elsa has dinner on the stove as her eyes frantically move in a nervous frenzy between her cell and a wall clock.

It's pushing 4:20 PM.

The sound of a SCREEN DOOR OPENING draws Elsa's attention to the kitchen window and onto the back porch. She spots Reena on her way in.

Elsa storms out the door, onto the --

BACK PORCH

-- meets Reena half way.

ELSA

Where the hell do you think you've been?! I've been calling and texting for an hour now!

REENA

Have an aneurism why don't you.

ELSA

We had a deal! Why didn't you answer your phone?! I'm only gonna ask once!

REENA

It's dead, okay! Sorry! It happens!

ELSA

And where have you been?!

REENA

School! Where do you think?!

ELSA

School's been out over an hour, and don't tell me the bus was late because I called!

Reena drops her bag on the carpet and heads for a mini fridge in the corner, as Elsa follows one step behind.

ELSA (CONT'D)

Don't walk away! Answer me!

Reena grabs a soda from the fridge, cracks it open. Elsa grabs her wrist, squeezes hard.

ELSA (CONT'D)

Look at me!

REENA

What?!

ELSA

Where were you and don't lie to me!

REENA

I got a ride home with friends, okay? It's not a big deal.

ELSA

Friends? What friends?

REENA

I don't know. Just these guys.
Friends of Lanie's.

Elsa throws her hands in the air. Smacks her palms on her jeans in angry frustration.

ELSA

Oh, that's great. That's real great.

Reena stares at the floor in defeat. She knows she screwed up. Elsa gropes both of Reena's arms in a desperate plea.

ELSA (CONT'D)

Do you understand what's going on?
Why we're here? Do you understand
the significance of that?

REENA

Yes.

ELSA

It means if you go anywhere other than school, it's with me. After school, you take the bus and come straight home. And you don't get rides with friends, or anyone else but me. Do you understand?

Reena bounces on her heels. Angry. Stubborn.

REENA
I guess so.

Elsa STRIKES HER across the face.

Reena is shocked.

Elsa is even more shocked as tears shoot from her eyes.

ELSA
Yes or no!

REENA
(shaken)
Yes.

Reena runs for the door as she angrily yanks her book bag from the carpet.

Elsa covers her mouth to keep from crying out as the tears roll down her face.

CUT TO:

IN. REENA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Reena still has unopened boxes stacked on her floor, on her bed, everywhere. She grabs a tall MIRROR from on top of her mattress and carefully hangs it from a hook on the wall.

She takes a moment, stares back at herself. Not impressed.

REENA
Your hair is stupid. Nobody likes
you. Just give up.

Reena ducks away from the mirror. A REDHEAD (16) is seen sitting on the edge of Reena's bed. She gives Reena an angry scowl as she jumps up.

Reena, with her back turned to the mirror, grabs a few belongings from inside a box.

The REDHEAD crawls through the mirror and PUSHES Reena onto the mattress.

Reena SCREAMS OUT in a panic as she quickly turns over and stares back at --

THE MIRROR

The REDHEAD now gone.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Reena picks at her food as Elsa steps back in from the kitchen with her dinner. She stares back at

Reena who is strangely quiet. She drops her fork to the plate and picks up a glass of punch. Her hand SHAKES so bad she can barely put it to her mouth.

ELSA

Reena? What is it?

Reena's mouth and lips quiver with fear. She stares back at her mother, unable to speak. She quickly runs out of the room and out the porch door.

INT. ELSA'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Elsa has Jimmy Fallon on the tube as she pours a good double shot of vodka into a glass. Her face is red and swollen from heavy crying.

She takes a large gulp, attempts to rest the glass on a night stand, but misses the table by a good two inches.

SPLASH!

Elsa doesn't bother picking it up as she rubs at her sore head and buries her face.

CUT TO:

INT. REENA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Reena is on her laptop, ear plugs in, as Elsa rests her back on the door frame. She gives a quick knock as Reena halfheartedly pulls out her plugs.

REENA

What now?

Elsa enters.

ELSA

These boys. Were they cute?

REENA

They were a ride home, Mom. That's
it.

CUT TO:

INT. RYAN HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Scott stands at the window in this dark second story passage
as he watches --

Elsa stroll about Reena's bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. REENA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Elsa folds her arms and shuffles about the room as we see
Scott peering through the window across the way.

ELSA

I know this has been hard on you.
Maybe even harder for you than it
has been for me. Sometimes I forget
that.

Elsa faces the window as Scott quickly ducks out of view. She
turns back to Reena.

ELSA (CONT'D)

I know it's important for you to
have friends on your own time
without hanging around boring old
me. I understand that. Last thing I
wanna do is keep you from living
your life.

Reena sets her laptop on her bed. The screen is carefully
faced away from Elsa. As if on purpose.

Reena nervously wraps her arms around her legs.

ELSA (CONT'D)

We're all alone here. Greg's dead
and we've got no one else to watch
out for us, or rely on but each
other. That scares the shit out of
me and I really don't know how else
to deal with it.

Elsa shakes with anxiety. Tears up again as her trembling
hand wipes her tears.

REENA

You said no matter what we have to
move on. That's all I'm trying to
do.

ELSA

(smiles)

I know, baby. I know.

THE ALMOST DEAFENING ROAR OF DEATH METAL

scares the hell out of both Elsa and Reena as they gasp to
catch their breath.

ELSA (CONT'D)

What is that?!

Reena covers her ears.

REENA

Where's it coming from?!

Elsa instinctively grabs Reena's arm and yanks her from the
bed as they head out.

ELSA

Come on!

Before they can make it to the door:

CRASH! The bedroom WINDOW SHATTERS as a HEAVY ROCK tumbles
onto the carpet.

Reena SHRIEKS in horror as she trips and falls face first to
the floor. Elsa helps her up as they hurry out.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOME - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Elsa and Reena rush up the hall and stop at Elsa's bedroom
door.

Elsa runs inside, grabs a THIRTY TWO REVOLVER from a dresser
drawer.

Reena runs in circles, panicked, as Elsa checks the chamber
for shells.

REENA

Hurry!

Elsa grabs Reena by the hand, keeps her one step behind as they move for the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Elsa and Reena move for the door but are stopped by the sight of a HIGH BEAM FLASHLIGHT circling their back porch.

REENA
(cries)
Oh my God.

ELSA
Everything's gonna be okay. You
just stay one step behind me. Got
it?

Reena nods. The two girls walk to the door as Elsa quickly opens, points her weapon at the mystery figure waiting on the other side.

It's Scott. And he swiftly retrieves the weapon from Elsa's hand and restrains her.

REENA
No!

SCOTT
(to Elsa)
It's me. It's Scott. Your neighbor.

Reena pulls a large cutting KNIFE from a block set and holds it in Scott's direction.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
I'm gonna very slowly let go of you
and hand you back your gun. When I
do, I want you and your daughter to
run as fast as you can to my house
and lock all the doors.

REENA
What's going on?!

ELSA
It's okay. You can put down the
knife.

SCOTT
No, don't put it down. You may need
it.

Scott slowly releases Elsa and hands her the thirty two.

ELSA
Who the hell is that?

Scott stalls. Strangely quiet.

SCOTT
I don't know.

Reena watches him with distrust.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
(beat)
Take the front door. With any luck,
they woke the neighbors. Remember
what I said. When you get to my
house, you lock all the doors and
windows. Get going.

Elsa grabs Reena's hand.

ELSA
Come on.

The girls head for the front door.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELSA'S HOME - NIGHT

Elsa and Reena run like hell for Scott's house as Elsa notices a strange woman watching from her front lawn. Greer.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELSA'S HOME - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Scott wanders about the driveway with his large FLASHLIGHT in hand. The beam stops on a WIDE OPEN GARAGE DOOR. Elsa's car parked inside.

He is cautious as he begins toward it.

GARAGE

Scott gives the garage a good once over, waves the flashlight around every inch of the room. He turns, checks over his shoulder:

SCOTT'S POV - REAR LAWN

The bright light ILLUMINATES the sprawling green lawn as there is not a soul in sight.

BACK TO SCENE

Scott opens the basement door and heads inside.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOME - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Scott flips on a light switch and waits safely at the door as he scans the messy room.

All of Elsa and Reena's belongings occupy the dusty room. Old suitcases, shoe boxes, large garbage bags and heavy plastic totes take up a good portion.

Some clothes and winter coats hang from a clothes line that stretches the room.

Scott takes his time as he strolls the room with his flashlight and investigates each corner.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Scott keeps the lights off as he cautiously searches the house. He wanders into a dining room parlor, spotlights something on the white wall hanging above a dinner table.

Something we cannot see. We only see his reaction.

SCOTT

Bingo.

CUT TO:

DINING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

The lights now on. Elsa stands in shock as she observes the blood RED PENTAGRAM painted on her wall.

A picture of Reena taped to the dead center.

Scott quietly speaks with DEPUTY HAYES in the living room as he throws a concerned look at Elsa.

HAYES (40s), black, trim and fit, simple t shirt and jeans and a gun poking from the rear of his pants, approaches Elsa with a real compassion in his eyes.

HAYES
Miss Davis?

Elsa keeps her focus on Reena's photo.

ELSA
Tell me you know who did this.

HAYES
If I knew that, we'd already have
them in custody.

Elsa shoots him a deadly serious stare.

ELSA
Them? Who's them? There's more than
one?

Hayes and Scott share a look.

HAYES
Miss Davis? I took a statement from
your neighbor. Apparently she saw a
car load of kids driving up and
down the street who seemed to take
a special interest in your house.
(beat)
Kept slowing down and stopping and
so forth. This was a little over an
hour ago.

Elsa storms out - confronts Reena sitting on the couch.

ELSA
Do you know anything about this?!

Reena thinks it all over.

REENA
(to Hayes)
Did they say what the car looked
like?

HAYES
From the description, it sounded
like maybe an early model Cutlass.
Blue with a black top. Convertible.

ELSA
(to Reena)
You know who it was? Who?

REENA
Wait. Why would they do this?

HAYES

Who's they?

REENA

This kid from school. Teddy. And this other guy. Said his name was Skaz.

HAYES

Yeah, Teddy Baaz. I know that kid. He's a low level dealer, high school dropout type. Spends most of his days slinging to tenth graders.
(to Reena)
What's your involvement with them?

Elsa, shocked, turns to Reena. Her jaw almost hits the carpet.

ELSA

A drug dealer?! What the fuck???

REENA

I'm not doing drugs and I'm not involved with them. I just met them today. They're friends with Lanie.

HAYES

And? What else?

REENA

There is no what else. That's it.

ELSA

They didn't just break into our house cos they were bored! What did you do?

Reena leaps from the couch, worked up as she paces the carpet.

REENA

It was nothing!

SCOTT

Must've been something.

REENA

Who the hell are you?

ELSA

Hey! They're here to help! And watch your mouth! What happened with you and these kids?

Reena grows more annoyed as she spins in a sort of frantic circle and plays with her hair.

REENA

Me and this girl Lanie got into it a few days ago at school. Just a fight in the lunch room. I sort of made her look like shit in front of half the class.

ELSA

That's great. What about the others?

REENA

I told you! There was these two guys! I never saw them before today!

ELSA

And you didn't say anything to them? You didn't smart off? Nothing?

REENA

No! I don't know why they would do this, okay?! It wasn't a big deal! We've been walking home together ever since! If she was still mad, I'd know about it!

Elsa shakes her head in disappointment.

SCOTT

(to Hayes)

Bottom line. Is this kid Teddy violent? Somebody we need to worry about?

HAYES

Before tonight, I would've said no. Him and his crew pulled some stupid shit before, but nothing like this.

ELSA

Okay, so what're we talking about here? You know who he is, go pick him up.

HAYES

It's not gonna be that easy. This kid Baaz hasn't held a legal residence in years. You could say he's sort of a drifter.

(MORE)

HAYES (CONT'D)

Goes from couch to couch. Girl to girl. Or whoever else will put him up for the month.

ELSA

So you have no idea where these kids could be? Is that what you're telling me?

HAYES

I can do some asking around. Shake all the usual trees. Believe me, when we find them, I'll make it real clear they're not welcome in my neighborhood. They'll think twice before pulling a stunt like this around here again.

Scott pats him on the back and shakes his hand.

SCOTT

Thanks for coming out, brother.

HAYES

(to Elsa)

Keep these doors locked.

Hayes heads out as Scott locks up behind him.

Elsa shakes her head in frustration as tears shoot down her face.

Scott watches her, sighs with exhaustion.

ELSA

I can't stay here. Not tonight.

SCOTT

No, you're not. You're gonna come stay with me. I don't want either of you here until he says it's safe.

Elsa isn't so sure. And neither is Reena who watches from behind a corner wall.

INT. RYAN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Elsa rests on a couch, a thick blanket covers her lap as she still shakes a bit. Her nerves shot.

Scott fixes a couple shots of scotch on a nearby counter.

SCOTT

Bobby Hayes was the resource officer at the high school for years before he took the detective's exam. He's still got a lot of pull with the faculty.

Scott hands Elsa a stiff drink.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

I don't care how tough your daughter says this Lanie girl is. She'll be squealing like a pig by tomorrow morning.

ELSA

How do you two know each other?

Scott hangs out near a corner window as he keeps a careful eye on Elsa's home.

SCOTT

I used to work at the school. I was an administrator. Assistant Principal. Bobby and I spent a lot of time together.

ELSA

I bet.

SCOTT

I tell ya, the way these kids are now, Bobby's better off on the streets. But he's tough. He knew right away the only way to get through was to put the fear of God into them.

ELSA

They don't have any respect. It's so disgusting.

Reena creeps up quietly behind a wall and listens in on their conversation.

SCOTT

How do you expect these kids to learn respect when half of them don't even know their father and the other halves parents aren't shit.

Elsa grows frustrated as she can't keep her hands from shaking. She gulps down her drink.

Scott quickly re fills her glass.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

It's the breakdown of the American home. We don't teach anymore. We mediate. Then sending them off for a life they're not prepared for. Why? Because we weren't strong enough.

Scott takes his place back at the window.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

It's easier to send her off to her girlfriend's for dinner, shut off the wife's voice and nurse a bottle than to ask how their day went. We only have a few years to get it right. Then, after awhile, it's too late.

Elsa senses a sadness in him.

ELSA

I like to think I do my best.

SCOTT

(regret)

Yeah. So did I.

Scott throws down his scotch. Reena pays special attention to Scott's sorrowful demeanor.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

So I noticed you're kind of hard on your girl. Any reason?

ELSA

Part of the reason we moved back. She started getting in with the wrong crowd. Just like any other inner city school, I suppose. Things just seemed to get worse for her, especially after Greg died.

SCOTT

Greg?

ELSA

My husband. Sort of the other reason we left.

SCOTT

I didn't know.

ELSA

Greg and I met at the hospital where we both worked. I was an admit nurse in the ER. He was just finishing his residency. We had only been married a few months when it happened.

Elsa takes a generous swig.

ELSA (CONT'D)

One day, it was work as usual. Greg was working on a GSW. A young kid, maybe eighteen. Gang colors. Well this kid must've told him a few things.

Elsa spins her glass in a nervous fit.

ELSA (CONT'D)

A few minutes later this carload of bangers park at the ambulance bay and bum rush the ER. They put about six shots in this kid then hold Greg as a shield on their way out the door.

Reena grows sad for her mother all over again.

ELSA (CONT'D)

Well, I guess they figured their boy talked because they took Greg with them. Tossed him right in the trunk and sped off. That was eight months ago. It was the last time I saw him.

Elsa finishes her drink.

SCOTT

You saw this?

ELSA

I couldn't go back to that place. Not after that. These guys. They came into my home. Where I worked, where I lived. In a blink of an eye, they took everything. I guess I didn't feel safe there anymore.

Scott smiles.

SCOTT

They didn't get everything.

ELSA
I thought coming back here was
gonna be different.
(tearful plea)
I can't let anything happen to her.

Reena takes it all in as she stares blankly at the opposite wall. She quietly tip toes to a spare bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Reena, still scared but mostly bored, wanders about the room, taking it all in. It is modestly decorated with the bare minimum effort.

Something catches her eye. A photograph rests on an old oak chest. The color RED stands out.

Reena steps closer and spots a TEEN GIRL WITH RED HAIR sitting on a playground swing.

Reena's eyes shift in careful thought.

INT. RYAN HOME - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Elsa awakens on the couch as the morning sun creeps through the windows. She sits up, a bit disoriented and hungover.

ELSA
Reena?!

Elsa checks her watch.

ELSA (CONT'D)
Shit.

A conversation from outside the home can be slightly heard as Elsa tries to listen in. She follows the noise to the front window and peeks behind some blinds.

Scott and Hayes are talking in the driveway. Scott's head shaking as he paces the ground.

Hayes pats him on the shoulder and heads to his car. Elsa runs for the door and opens but is too late.

EXT. RYAN HOME - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Elsa meets Scott halfway. Anxious for the news.

ELSA

Where's he going? I wanted to talk to him.

SCOTT

The girl's got an airtight alibi for last night. She says she's got no idea why they would do this to Reena.

ELSA

She's lying.

SCOTT

I know.

ELSA

If they know she's lying, why won't they do something?!

SCOTT

It's not that simple. She wasn't with these kids and she can prove it.

ELSA

So what about the others? Did he find them or not?

SCOTT

Not yet. He spent all morning going class to class, asking around. Giving this Teddy kid's history of dealing, nobody was talking.

Elsa twists in circles. A nervous wreck.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Calm down. I'm not finished yet. Hayes authorized a locker search on some repeat offenders. Let's just say he found more than school books and gummi bears.

ELSA

What? What is it?

SCOTT

One of the kids he busted is gonna set up a fake deal. If Teddy takes the bait, they've got him for distribution. Threaten him with jail time, he rats the others out, cased closed.

Elsa finally calms herself.

ELSA
(dead serious)
I'm not going back in that house
until I know Reena's safe.

SCOTT
I know you're not. If this works,
this will all be worked out in a
couple days. In the meantime, I've
got another idea.

ELSA
(intrigued)
What?

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Elsa awaits patiently as she watches Scott install the last of a series of video surveillance cameras inside the belly of a bushy potted plant.

Reena watches, unamused, from down the hall, soda can in hand and a slouched, uninterested posture.

SCOTT
All done. There's not one inch of
this place that isn't covered. We
keep lights to a minimum to hide
the cameras but keep enough where
it counts.

Reena huffs with boredom.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
The lamp at the end of the hall and
the kitchen light will paint a nice
big target on their face.

ELSA
I hope this works.

SCOTT
If all works out, we'll have their
mug on video before they even know
what's going on.

ELSA
(to Reena)
You hear that?
(MORE)

ELSA (CONT'D)

Let this be your official warning
next time you wanna sneak out after
hours.

REENA

Why are you doing this for us?

Both Elsa and Scott are taken aback by her outburst. Elsa gives Reena the signal to back off.

Scott doesn't back down as he and the teen lock eyes.

ELSA

He's trying to help. In a way, he's
here cos of you. A little courtesy
would be nice. Or even a sign of
appreciation.

REENA

It just seems a bit extreme. The
cops already scared the shit out of
them. They're not gonna come back.

ELSA

We don't know that.

SCOTT

A little precaution never hurt
anyone.

REENA

(to Scott)

Why don't you tell her what this is
really about? I see how you look at
my Mom.

Elsa moves for her daughter. A sore issue.

ELSA

That's enough.

REENA

He thinks he can just walk in here.
Instant family. Just add daughter
and stir.

(to Scott)

Isn't that right, Mister Ryan?

Scott is strangely quiet, gives Reena a hard stare. There's something not quite right about him.

ELSA

I don't know what the hell your problem is, but you're gonna close your mouth.

REENA

You know, if you guys are hot for each other then make it official. But don't pretend any of this is about me.

ELSA

I said shut up!

REENA

What're you, gonna hit me again, mother?

Elsa backs off, embarrassed.

REENA (CONT'D)

If you know my mother's history, you'll know it's never been about me. Not once.

Reena storms off as Elsa chases her all the way to her bedroom.

ELSA

Now wait just a damn minute.

Reena slams the door in her mother's face but Elsa doesn't back off as she raps it with her fist.

ELSA (CONT'D)

Reena!

Scott peers around the corner and rests his back on the wall as Elsa continues to beat the door down.

SCOTT

Let it go. She's just under stress. Just like you.

Elsa points her boney finger at Scott, at an emotional breaking point and done taking crap from anyone.

ELSA

You know what?! I appreciate what you're doing for us, but I can handle my own daughter! I'm her mother! She's my responsibility, so just back off!

Scott tosses his hands in the air in surrender as he walks off. Elsa is hit with the reality of what's happened.

ELSA (CONT'D)

Shhhit.

She slaps her own forehead and slumps against the wall.

CUT TO:

INT. REENA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Reena curls up on her bed, in tears. Her earplugs in as she listens to some death metal. She angrily tears the plugs from her ears, walks to her book bag on a nearby chair and rummages through it.

Pulls out a small plastic baggie with a couple joints and a lighter. Before she can light up, she sees a reflection of herself in the mirror. Just to the right of her --

A PAIR OF RED EYES

Stare back at her from outside her bedroom window. The eyes quickly duck away.

Reena is so shocked, she trips into the chair behind her and tumbles into her night stand. The lamp knocked to the floor and the room going PITCH BLACK.

Reena SCREAMS OUT.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Elsa nurses a bottle of vodka at a modest breakfast table as Scott views the interiors and exteriors of the house on his laptop.

ELSA

What happened earlier...

Scott peeks over his laptop.

ELSA (CONT'D)

I think I know what that was.

SCOTT

Okay. Tell me about it.

ELSA

I don't have what you would call a solid track record when it's come to the men I've allowed in Reena's life.

SCOTT

I see.

ELSA

Her father left when she was just a baby. For reasons I don't discuss with her, even though she asks almost every day of her life.

Elsa twists her glass in a nervous fit as she usually does.

ELSA (CONT'D)

After that were a few rebounds, all just as lousy as the last.

Elsa puts the glass to her lips. Scott stops her and hands her a glass of water instead.

SCOTT

Try this instead. Get you to the same place but minus the hangover.

Elsa stares into the foggy water, unsure.

ELSA

What is it?

SCOTT

Something I take to help me sleep.

Elsa takes a sip.

ELSA

Where was I?

SCOTT

Talking about your lousy taste in men.

ELSA

Oh yeah. Even Greg was no choir boy. Besides his career, he had a dark side.

Elsa takes another chug of her drink.

ELSA (CONT'D)

Being an ER doc pretty much kills any chance of a normal home life. We saw each other at work, but that was pretty much it.

(beat)

For awhile I went along with the Two AM phone calls and trips to the hospital. Him disappearing for hours and not calling. I knew it came with the job.

Scott hangs on every word. Totally invested.

ELSA

Until I started calling work and found out he's been lying. He was playing doctor alright. With half of the nursing staff.

SCOTT

How did you find out?

ELSA

He told me. Bastard stared right at my face and told me. As if to think I was just gonna be okay with it.
(angry)

After all, he was the bread winner. He didn't think I would walk, you see?

SCOTT

Did you?

ELSA

I never had the chance. Less than a week later, he disappeared. Can you believe it? Greg's long dead and I'm angry cos he got the last word in.

SCOTT

It's a chapter in your life you never got to close.

ELSA

I know it's not important. But I just can't seem to stop hating the bastard.

Elsa takes a drink.

SCOTT

Well you got more important things to worry about now. Liker your daughter.

Elsa seems affected by the words.

ELSA

Yeah. I guess you're right.

Elsa chugs the rest of her drink as Scott watches closely. His phone RINGS.

SCOTT

(answers)

Yeah, Hayes, what is it?

(listens)

No way.

Elsa grows worried.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Okay. Yeah. It was worth a shot. Thanks.

Scott hangs up.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Teddy Baaz was a no show. Someone at school must've got wind of what happened and tipped him off.

ELSA

The cops aren't gonna follow this up, are they?

SCOTT

In their eyes? It's a simple B and E. Nobody was hurt. No harm, no foul.

ELSA

Yeah, this time. But what about next time? God knows what they're capable of.

SCOTT

Look, it doesn't mean he won't find him. Just let him do his thing. I'm here and I'm not gonna let anything happen.

INT. REENA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Reena appears to be dead asleep. Her eyes suddenly POP OPEN. Her arms, legs unable to move. Her mouth quivers with terror as the sheets and blankets are jerked off the bed by an unknown force.

A single TEAR runs down her face.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Reena runs a shower and waits while the water gets hot. She is in a simple t shirt as she wraps her arms around her cold body. Her lips still quivering. In shock.

INT. SHOWER - NIGHT

Reena lets the hot water hit her face as she tries hard not to cry out and wake her mother.

Some BLOOD runs into the bath water and down the drain.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Elsa tosses and turns in her sleep. Restless. Her eyes twinkle a bit as she slowly awakens.

ELSA'S POV

A DARK CLOAKED FIGURE stands at the foot of her bed. The image is blurred as Elsa drifts in and out of sleep. In an in between state.

The figure reaches to her feet, removes the covers and exposes her left foot.

Elsa jumps up in a panic. She grabs her aching head.

ELSA
What the hell?

The cloaked figure now GONE as she comes out of her sleep to the loud roaring sound of WHITE NOISE.

Elsa stares at her feet. The covers carefully removed and exposing her left foot.

INT. ELSA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Elsa spots the BRIGHT WHITE GLOW OF THE TV and its reflection bouncing off every wall.

Scott face down on the couch, sound asleep.

She walks briskly to the set, grabs the remote control from the tv stand and shuts it off - places the remote back in its place.

Elsa heads back to bed. She is halfway down the hall when she hears the familiar hum of WHITE NOISE.

The BRIGHT BEAMS OF LIGHT hitting every wall around her. She is visibly startled by this as she slowly turns, heads back toward the living room.

As Elsa turns the corner we see --

Scott still asleep.

The WHITE SNOW once again blasts from the television.

The REMOTE CONTROL still in the same spot.

ELSA

Scott!

SCOTT

What's going on?

Elsa, now frustrated, unplugs the television from the wall.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

What is it?

Elsa pauses. Thinks it over.

ELSA

Nothing. Go back to sleep.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Reena makes her way up a sidewalk with a couple of friends when she spots her mother's car pull to the curb.

She is less than thrilled when she spots Scott behind the wheel.

She rolls her eyes, jumps in the back.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S CAR - DAY

Reena dumps her books, slumps in her seat and pops in her ear plugs. Scott watches her closely.

ELSA

Hi baby. How was your day?

REENA

Lousy considering I was up most of the night.

(angry)

Could you guys make any more noise?

Elsa and Scott share a look.

ELSA

Yeah, sorry about that.

Reena gives Scott an ugly scowl as they catch eyes in the rear view mirror.

REENA

What's he doing here?

Scott grins, plays it off.

ELSA

Scott thinks it's a good idea we get out of the house tonight. Maybe go have dinner and catch a movie. What do you think?

Reena rolls her eyes.

REENA

Whatever.

SCOTT

So. Have you talked to your girlfriend since the other night? What's her name? Lanie?

REENA

I thought you said she didn't know anything.

SCOTT

Never said that. I doubt very seriously she doesn't know anything. Maybe she wasn't there. But she knows something.

REENA

You think she'd tell me if she did?

Scott locks eyes with her.

SCOTT

Depends on how close you guys are.

REENA

Like I said. We walked home from school together a few times. That's it.

SCOTT

Okay. If you say so, then I guess you say so.

Elsa turns to him. A real nasty stare.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

So other than what happened the other night, how is everything else going for you? Enjoying life here in Bradford? You settling in okay?

REENA

I guess so. Just as lame as any small town. Why do you ask?

SCOTT

No reason. I was just thinking if I was in your shoes. Picking up and moving away from school, friends, my life. I'd be real hesitant to change. May even be a bit resentful. Do something foolish. Like things I wouldn't normally do.

Elsa's stare could burn a hole in his stomach. Reena notices and smiles.

REENA

Like what exactly?

SCOTT

Is there anything about the other night you'd like to tell your mother and I?

REENA

Not sure I follow.

SCOTT

Your mother seems to think someone's broken into the house although there's no signs of forced entry. Almost like someone from the inside painted that pentagram on the wall. Just so happened to have a photo of you handy.

ELSA

Okay, I think that's enough.

REENA

It's okay, Mom. He's just asking some questions, that's all. Now that we're being all open and honest with each other. Maybe you can tell me about that redhead that disappeared last year.

Elsa grows more and more irritated.

ELSA

What redhead?

REENA

There was this girl, walking home from school. About my age, my height. Freckles, red hair, the whole bit. She was picked up in broad daylight and never heard from again.

(beat)

I just thought maybe Mister Ryan knew something about it. Since he seems so interested in what's going on with me.

Elsa awaits his answer, as does Reena. He seems a bit shaken by her smug smile.

SCOTT

Can't say that I do, Reena. Just heard the stories. Whatever version the kids decide to spin that week and so forth. Guess I know about as much as you.

REENA

Interesting. Small town like this.
You'd think a story like that would
stay with a person.

Elsa watches Scott closely. He avoids eye contact.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELSA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Scott pulls the car up the driveway as he and Elsa both spot
the garage door wide open.

ELSA

Tell me you left the door open.

Scott surveys the back lawn and surrounding trees. No one in
sight.

SCOTT

I didn't.

ELSA

Oh my God.

SCOTT

You two stay put. You see anyone
but me walk out that door you take
off. Go straight to the police. Got
it?

ELSA

You're not going in there by
yourself!

SCOTT

We don't have time to argue. Just
stay put and wait. Like I said,
anyone but me you don't stop and
smell the roses. You haul ass.

Scott jumps out, heads for the open garage.

ELSA

Scott! Wait!

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Scott goes room to room, gun drawn. Everything is where it should be. He checks the living room and then down the hall toward the bedrooms.

He ducks into --

REENA'S BEDROOM

-- and is immediately drawn to the carpet.

A PENTAGRAM

-- is marked on the floor with what looks like WHITE GRAINS OF SALT in a perfect circle.

FOUR BLACK CANDLES

-- recently blown out, stand tall at all four points.

A BLACK HANDLED DAGGAR

-- sits inside the homemade altar.

A CHALICE

-- filled with WATER also rests just outside the circle.

And lastly --

A FULL LENGTH MIRROR

-- sits just before the altar.

EXT. ELSA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Elsa grows impatient, taps her feet on the car floor, bites at her nails.

ELSA

Is your door locked?

REENA

Yes. You locked it five times already.

ELSA

What the hell's taking him so long?

REENA

I really don't know, but he's seriously creeping me out.

ELSA

What're you talking about now?

REENA

I mean, how well do you know this guy? As far as you know it was him who left the door open and he's just fucking with us.

ELSA

Watch your mouth.

REENA

Mom, I'm serious! Did you even hear him earlier? Trying to turn you against me! Blaming me for what happened. News flash! All this weird shit didn't go down until he showed up on our doorstep!

CRASH!

The rear left window is SHATTERED by the swing of a baseball bat.

Reena SCREAMS. An eerie CHUCKLE from outside.

Elsa attempts to slip into the driver's seat but the driver's side WINDOW is quickly SHATTERED.

A DARK CLOAKED FIGURE snags the keys.

CLOAKED FIGURE #2 jumps on the hood of the car and LICKS THE WINDSHIELD.

Elsa ducks in her seat, unable to escape.

CLOAKED FIGURE #3

-- pulls Reena from the car, kicking and SCREAMING. He drags her by the hair, into the back lawn.

Her legs tear at the grassy terrain.

CLOAKED FIGURE #1

joins him as they attempt to unbutton her pants.

CLOAKED FIGURE #2

opens Elsa's car door, reaches for her, but is met with two hard KICKS to the chest.

Elsa swings and smacks at the figure as he fights to restrain her arms.

And then --

A GUNSHOT in the b.g.

SCOTT

races down a hill, into the rear lawn with gun in hand as all three CLOAKED FIGURES retreat, into the trees, into the night.

Scott fires three more shots into the darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. REENA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Elsa stands near the altar, arms folded, furious, but in shock by the site before her.

Scott ducks in, car keys in hand.

SCOTT

Found these in the grass.

Scott rests the keys on a corner nightstand as he watches Elsa take in the demonic site before her.

ELSA

Time's up, Mister Ryan. I'm gonna need an explanation for this. And I don't wanna hear 'I don't know anything', or how you're just being the friendly neighbor, loaning a helping hand. You know something! Start by telling me about that girl. The one Reena was talking about earlier. The one with the red hair. The one that looks just like my little girl.

(beat)

You tell me about her, Scott! And be sure not to leave out any important details!

Scott paces the carpet, searches for the words.

SCOTT

She was my daughter. This kid, Teddy Baaz. She used to run with him.

(MORE)

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Along with the rest of his crew.
Drinking, getting high, partying.
They were all into this dark shit.
Dungeons and dragons type crap.
Witchcraft, casting spells. All of
it.

Scott seems disturbed by the site of the altar. His lips and
face quiver.

ELSA

Keep talking.

SCOTT

Until one day they went too far
with it. I was out of town, on
business. I had no idea what she
was into with these guys. None!

Scott fights his tears.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

She had been gone two days when I
found her. It was right here. In
this room. Same spot. Her body
laying just inside the circle.
Cold. Her eyes staring up at the
ceiling like she had just seen the
devil himself.

ELSA

My God. You lived in this house?
Why did you come back here?

SCOTT

Doctors all said it was her heart.
It just stopped like a broken
clock. Can you believe that?
Sixteen years old.

(serious)

Something else killed my little
girl. Something in this house.

ELSA

You're crazy.

Scott slowly steps toward her. Elsa cautiously steps back.

SCOTT

I came back because I knew they
would. And I'm not leaving here
until I find out what happened.

ELSA
I don't understand. Any of this.

SCOTT
Don't you see what's happening?
They're coming after her next.
Whatever took my daughter wants
Reena and they're the key to make
it happen.

ELSA
You're sick. You need help.

Reena creeps to the edge of the door, peeks down at the altar on the floor.

ELSA (CONT'D)
Reena, I said stay out of here!

Reena spots the CAR KEYS on the night stand, snags them and runs off.

ELSA (CONT'D)
Reena! Get back here!

Elsa chases after her.

CUT TO:

EXT. LANIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

An angry Reena storms the driveway at an unsafe speed and almost strikes the home owner's parked truck.

She jumps out, walks swiftly around the house, grabs a few small pebbles from the ground, chucks them at --

LANIE'S BEDROOM WINDOW

-- one story up.

Lanie flicks on her LIGHT and steps to the window.

LANIE
Reena, what the fuck? With all this
crazy shit goin' down you throw
shit at my window? I thought it was
them! What the hell are you doing
here anyways?

REENA
Just shut up and open the back
door. We gotta talk.

LANIE

Look, my parents told me to stay away from you. So I'll tell you just like I told the cops, I had nothing to do with it, and I got nothing to do with them. Not anymore.

REENA

I'm not here about that. Now will you open the door?

Lanie isn't so sure.

LANIE

I told you. I got nothing to say.

REENA

I'm not leaving here until you talk to me.

Lanie rocks back and forth, fidgety, nervous, unsure.

LANIE

Shit.

Lanie ducks back in.

INT. LANIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lanie behind her computer, Reena at her side. They are browsing an internet site about satanic and demonic rituals.

Several items used in demonic rituals are featured on the page along with the definition of their use.

At the top of the page is a detailed diagram of a demonic ALTAR much like the one in Reena's bedroom.

REENA

That's it. That's it exactly.

LANIE

That big circle you found on the floor wasn't made of sugar, or flour. It was made from salt. As in salt of the earth.

Lanie points out all the finer details of the diagram, one piece at a time.

LANIE (CONT'D)

What you have here are representations of all the elements. Earth, air, fire and water. The four burning candles represent fire. The cup you found filled with water is a chalice. Common in demonic rituals. The knife is called an athame. A sort of homemade daggar with a wooden handle.

Lanie points at the dead center of the altar.

LANIE (CONT'D)

What you do is sit in the circle, point the dagger at all points of the altar. North, south, east, west. Then comes the incantation. The point where the vessel attempts to invite the demon.

Lanie is careful about her next few words.

LANIE (CONT'D)

This particular altar is used specifically in inviting incubus and succubus.

Reena cracks a confused grin.

REENA

Wait. Aren't those like sex demons or something?

LANIE

Exactly.

Reena stands, paces the floor and rubs her sore head.

REENA

This is crazy shit.

LANIE

Look, I wasn't completely honest with you about Teddy and Skaz.

REENA

What do you mean?

LANIE

That guy Skaz. His mother lived in your house.

(MORE)

LANIE (CONT'D)

She died around the same time she got pregnant with him.

REENA

And?

LANIE

And...she was like bat shit crazy. Told everyone in town a demon would fuck her every night when she fell asleep. Not only that. That this same demon was the father of her unborn child.

REENA

You're shitting me.

LANIE

She ended up dying giving birth. No one ever did find out who the father was. Skaz grows up hearing all these stories. Obsessed over finding his father. Finding the truth about what happened with his mother. Was she really crazy, or was there something in that house.

Reena's breathing grows heavy, and the pacing more sporadic and nervous.

REENA

I can't believe this. These guys actually believe in all this?

LANIE

From what Teddy tells me...Skaz has been drawn to that house his whole life. Since he was still a baby. Obsessed over it. Like he felt some connection to it.

REENA

Of course there's a connection. His crazy mother lived there.

LANIE

You don't get it. His stepparents never told him about his mother or the house until he was almost fifteen.

(beat)

(MORE)

LANIE (CONT'D)

Teddy said when Skaz was around thirteen, he he started having horrible nightmares about his mother being tortured by this...thing...whatever you wanna call it.

REENA

You don't actually believe this crazy shit, do you?

LANIE

It doesn't matter if you believe it or not. What matters is they do.

REENA

What does any of this have to do with me?

LANIE

I'll show you. Sit down.

Reena takes a seat next to Lanie as she google searches another news article.

A colored photo of ARIELLE RYAN (16), freckled faced redhead, covers the top portion of the page.

LANIE (CONT'D)

Her name was Arielle. Arielle Ryan. Your neighbor's daughter. They moved in a few years after Skaz's mother died. When Skaz and Teddy became obsessed over the house, it didn't take long for them to get their hooks into this girl.

REENA

For what?

LANIE

An offering.

REENA

You're losing me.

LANIE

Look, Skaz believes that this...incubus ...demon, whatever, still has a grip on his mother. They talk Arielle into summoning the demon and it takes her in exchange for his mother.

(beat)

(MORE)

LANIE (CONT'D)

You see, when the demon takes possession over another vessel, only then will her soul be released.

REENA

Oh my God.

LANIE

If I were you, I'd be packing my bags right about now.

EXT. ELSA'S HOUSE - DAY

Elsa and Reena finish packing some things into Elsa's car trunk as a somber looking Scott watches on.

SCOTT

So you're just gonna pick up and leave again?

ELSA

For now. Yes.

SCOTT

Were you planning on telling me?

ELSA

Look, I just think it's best I get her away from here. And that maybe, we try and keep our distance for awhile.

Scott laughs if off.

SCOTT

You think I'm insane, don't you?

Elsa searches for the right words.

ELSA

I think you're having trouble closing that chapter of your life. You need answers to something there may be no answer for. Take it from the voice of experience. From someone who knows all about starting over.

(beat)

Let it go. Let it go before it makes you sick.

SCOTT

Can you at least leave a number
where I can reach you? Just in case
I need to get in touch with you, or
if they decide to come back to the
house?

Elsa smiles and smooches him on the cheek.

ELSA

No. I'm sorry.

Elsa and Reena get in the car. She cranks the engine.

ELSA (CONT'D)

I'll be back when Hayes catches
these guys. And when they do,
promise me something.

SCOTT

What's that?

ELSA

Don't be here when I get back. Let
it go, Scott. Before it kills you.

Elsa pulls away. Scott watches them leave with a pitiful and
defeated look about him.

He watches as Elsa's car disappears around the bend and down
the road.

Scott's demeanor suddenly changes as a small grin cracks the
corners of his mouth. He walks to the garage.

GARAGE

Scott quickly punches in a security
code.

07-19-98

The DOOR OPENS as Scott ducks under and heads inside the
home.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S BASEMENT - DAY

Scott flips on a LIGHT SWITCH as a dim bulb swinging from the
ceiling barely cuts through the darkness.

He surveys the room, just like before. He takes a few steps
as he rolls up the cuffs of his long sleeve shirt.

LATER

Scott has the basement in utter chaos and disorder as old boxes of junk have been emptied and tossed aside.

He moves toward the very back of the room and spots a very tall stack of heavy boxes neatly tucked away.

He unstacks them, one at a time, quickly and with purpose.

As the pile grows shorter and shorter, he spots a closet door hiding behind the debris.

He moves the very last crate as the CLOSET DOOR is revealed. He reaches for the knob, turns. Locked.

SCOTT
Are you kidding me?

Scott steps back a foot, gives the door a swift kick. Nothing. It barely moves.

He grabs a five iron from a golf bag and goes to town on the old stubborn door. It slowly breaks into shards of thin wood.

Scott drops the club, kicks the rest of the door in as it falls to pieces.

Scott steps inside the dark room.

INT. CLOSET

He pulls the chain on a LIGHT BULB and spots a thick BLACK DUFFEL BAG on the top shelf. He reaches for it, gives it a good yank as it drops to the dusty floor.

Scott squats down and unzips.

INSERT - BAG

It's filled with hundred dollar bills.

BACK TO SCENE

Scott smiles and ducks out of the closet with his new bag of cash.

INT. ELSA'S BASEMENT - DAY

Scott maneuvers his way through the broken remains of the door and the tall stack of boxes. He looks up and spots --

ELSA

-- holding a GUN on him.

ELSA
Going somewhere with that?

Scott drops the bag and holds his hands in the air.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPERIMPOSE:

THREE DAYS EARLIER

FADE IN:

EXT. GREER'S HOUSE - MORNING

Greer waters her plants and watches Scott and Hayes shake hands in Scott's driveway. They have a short exchange as Hayes walks back to his car and leaves.

Greer seems invested. She watches Scott carefully. A look of severe distrust.

CUT TO:

EXT. RYAN HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MORNING

Scott and Elsa sip their coffee and rest on the swing.

SCOTT
I'm telling you. Let me set it up.
It'll work. It's your best bet at
catching whoever's doing this.

ELSA
I don't know. It's gonna feel like
someone's watching me all the time.
It's creepy.

SCOTT
Look, I know the best guy in town.
Used to be a surveillance expert
with the force. Installs security
systems now. A couple calls and we
can get it set up by this
afternoon.

ELSA
Just the idea of those cameras
being on you all the time.

SCOTT
It's not permanent. Just until we
catch these assholes.

Elsa is hesitant. She nods in agreement.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Great. I'll make the call.

Scott heads inside as Elsa finishes her coffee and spots
GREER watching from across the street.

Greer heads for the door but gives Elsa one last stare before
ducking inside.

Elsa's wheels spin.

CUT TO:

INT. RYAN HOUSE - MORNING

Elsa rests her mug on the kitchen counter and searches room
to room for Scott.

ELSA
Scott!

STAIRCASE - UPSTAIRS

Elsa takes the stairs and hears a SHOWER running as she steps
off.

She walks toward the bathroom and puts her ear to the door.
Scott is taking a shower.

Elsa passes his

BEDROOM

on the way to the stairs and does a double take when she
spots a CAMERA AND TRIPOD pointed out the window.

Elsa ducks inside and walks to the window. She can't help but
notice the camera is pointed right at her bedroom across the
way.

Her attention is drawn to a legal pad rested on the edge of
his bed with the numbers 07-19-98 written in red pen.

She picks up the paper to get a closer look.

ELSA (CONT'D)
Sonofabitch.

Elsa stares at the doorway. Scott is coming any second now.

She quickly turns on the video camera and watches some of the recorded footage.

MONTAGE - VIDEO FOOTAGE

-- Elsa undresses

-- Elsa parks her car

-- Elsa punches in a SECURITY CODE near the garage door.

The video ZOOMS IN just as she types it in.

END MONTAGE

ELSA (CONT'D)
Son-of-a-bitch.

Elsa turns off the camera and rummages through a stack of old NEWS CLIPPINGS rested on an armoire. All stories about ARIELLE RYAN.

"TEEN FOUND DEAD IN HOME"

"BRADFORD GIRL PERFORMS RITUAL"

"WITCHCRAFT KILLED MY DAUGHTER"

A black and white photo of GREER RYAN under the caption.

ELSA (CONT'D)
You gotta be kidding me.

She speed reads a snippet of the article.

INSERT - NEWS ARTICLE

...cause of death has not been determined"

"...is survived by parents Scott and Greer Ryan"

BACK TO SCENE

Elsa looks over her shoulder. She neatly places the articles where she found them and heads out.

EXT. GREER'S HOUSE - DAY

Elsa gives a hard KNOCK at her front door. Waits. She taps at her heels, impatient. Another hard KNOCK.

Greer answers. A nervous laugh.

GREER
Guess I've been expecting you
sooner or later.

ELSA
Can I come in?

Greer steps out of the way as Elsa heads inside.

CUT TO:

INT. GREER'S HOUSE - DAY

Greer hands Elsa a cup of tea as they hover near a living room.

ELSA
Okay, I'll make this real quick.
Are you and your husband watching
my house?

GREER
Beg your pardon?

ELSA
Don't do that. I asked you a simple
question. Has your husband been
watching me and my daughter?

GREER
I'm sorry. I never did catch your
name.

ELSA
Davis. Elsa Davis. And you are
Greer Ryan. Mother of Arielle Ryan.
Wife of Scott. And I'm here to tell
you that this stops today. Whatever
it is you think you're doing in my
home, it stops right now.

GREER
I'm not following.

ELSA

I know he's been breaking into my house when I'm not home, and I know you two think there's something strange going on in there, and somehow that had something to do with your girl's death, and that's the only reason I'm here and not the police station as we speak. So I'm giving you you're official warning. Let it go.

GREER

My husband is dead, Miss Davis.

Elsa is shocked beyond words. She takes a sip of her tea and has a seat on the couch.

LATER

Elsa and Greer are on the couch as Greer discusses the chain of events which led to her daughter's death.

GREER

There's been so many stories now about what happened. Most of them untrue. If only they knew the whole story. All the things I knew about my Arielle. About her pain. And all the things she told no one but me. Not even her father.

ELSA

Tell me about them.

GREER

Arielle started having trouble sleeping around thirteen or fourteen. Was having horrible nightmares, night terrors, sleep paralysis. If it existed she had it. These dreams became so real to her she began acting them out. Bringing them into real life.

ELSA

How do you mean?

INT. ARIELLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - (FLASHBACK)

Arielle, in bed, eyes open wide, lowers legs to the floor and begins for her door, wearing only a t shirt.

GREER (V.O.)

She was a sleepwalker. It seems every night, around the same time. Two thirty, Three, she'd get out of bed, go stand on the front lawn and just stare at it. Like a zombie. Wouldn't move, wouldn't blink. Just watching that house. As if it were calling to her.

EXT. GREER'S HOUSE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A zombie-like Arielle watches Elsa's house with genuine fascination.

Greer, in a bathrobe, folds her arms, cold, as she just stands on the lawn and watches her daughter's trance.

GREER (V.O.)

After a few weeks of the same dream, she finally broke down and told me.

INT. ARIELLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Arielle, eyes open and wide, unable to move, spots a DARK FIGURE standing on the other side of her bedroom window.

His SHADOW CAST on the other side of the window drapes.

Arielle's eyes tremble with fear yet can't shut her eyes or look away.

The MAN IN THE WINDOW rubs his hand up and down the glass in a seductive manner.

GREER (V.O.)

(beat)

Said there was this man. Not so much a man, but this dark figure who would come to her in her sleep. She'd just wake up and see his shadow, standing there, behind the drapes, watching her through her bedroom window. She would try to look away but can't. Like her eyes were stuck open. Her whole body frozen. And she can't move a muscle.

The MAN IN THE WINDOW uses a single finger to beckon Arielle in his direction.

GREER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
He calls to her. He motions for her
to come with him. And that's when
she blanks.

Arielle's eyes face forward, a trance-like state. She sits
straight up, legs on the floor, heads for the door.

GREER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Doesn't remember anything after
that. That's when we usually found
her outside on the lawn.

INT. GREER'S HOUSE - DAY - PRESENT

Elsa and Greer back on the couch where we left them.

GREER
Wanting to go to him. But can't.

Greer laughs.

GREER (CONT'D)
Her shrink said the dreams were
Fruedian. Nothing but a young woman
at budding sexuality with a secret
desire to break free from her home
and parents.

ELSA
But you knew it was something else.

GREER
I knew. I could feel it. I could
sense it. Watching over us.
Whatever it is, Miss Davis, it
won't stop until it takes your
daughter too.

Elsa's had enough. Not buying a word of this.

ELSA
Yeah.

She rests her tea cup on the table and stands.

ELSA (CONT'D)
I should get going.

Elsa heads for the door. Greer stands, meets her halfway.

GREER

I know you think we're all just a bunch of crazies. But get out of that house. Get out before it's too late.

CUT TO:

EXT. SEEDY MOTEL - DAY

Scott parks his car in one of the empty spots. He steps out and heads for room ten.

He gives a KNOCK. The door opens as he dips inside.

Across the street sits a YELLOW TAXI

INT. TAXI CAB - DAY

Reena sits in the back seat, a ballcap and shades, watches the motel while slouched in her seat.

DRIVER

Okay, what now? The meter's running.

REENA

Just sit tight and don't stare. He'll see us.

DRIVER

Who?

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Scott stands near the door and watches as GREG LARSEN (40s), graying hair, doughy, but distinguished, finishes dressing on the edge of the bed. Greg is Elsa's supposedly dead ex husband.

GREG

Been calling you all morning. What? You doing her already?

SCOTT

I caught a tail on the way over here.

Greg stops putting on his sock. A panicked look.

GREG
What? Where?

SCOTT
Across the street. Yellow cab.

Greg jumps up, hurries to the window and peeks through the cheap venetian blinds.

GREG
Who?

SCOTT
The mother's little girl.

GREG
Yeah, just like her mother. Always poking her nose in something.

Greg laughs as he watches the cab.

GREG (CONT'D)
Guess I should've seen this coming.
(beat)
How much does she know?

SCOTT
Enough to be suspicious of me I would guess.

GREG
Maybe she's seen me already.

SCOTT
I don't think so. I've been careful.

Greg shuts the blinds, turns to Scott, dead serious.

GREG
How careful?

SCOTT
Careful.

GREG
So how are they? They giving you a hard time yet?

SCOTT
Does it matter?

Greg laughs, paces the room, anxious.

GREG

You know, with Elsa, there was always something. Even when we first met. First it was her ex husband. She gives me the whole story. Oh, the financial strain of living with a man with an unstable job. I come into the picture, give her everything she ever asked for, needed or wanted...

Scott checks his watch, bored.

GREG (CONT'D)

Then comes my turn. You're spending too many hours at the hospital and not enough at home. This isn't what I signed up for. I'm unhappy. All of this kind of shit.

(beat)

Can you believe this woman? But then I see a solid way out. Just happened to be in the right place at the right time working on the right patient. GSW to the leg. This patient tells me a few things he shouldn't. Next thing you know a couple of suits hand me fifty thousand and a cellular.

(mimics)

"You work for me now". I'm thinking -- great. I have an out. Steady income, off the books. Next thing you know, cops are showing up at the ER asking questions about certain patients. Then the Feds show at my house with all these pictures. You think all that was an accident?

Scott thinks it all over.

GREG (CONT'D)

She knew. It was her way of getting back at me. So one day, I go the right neighborhood and hire a couple bangers to stage my abduction. Cops think I'm dead, so do the Feds. But what does she do? Picks up and moves halfway across the country. No job, no prospects, nothing. Right?

Scott rubs his sore neck, disinterested.

GREG (CONT'D)

I don't think so. She found the money. She found the money and took off before the Feds came digging for it. And now...I just want what's rightfully mine.

(beat)

And you're gonna get it for me.

Greg takes a seat on the bed, throws on his socks and shoes.

SCOTT

I had to recruit some extra help.

GREG

Help? Help with what? You bust in there, you find the money, you leave. Real simple.

SCOTT

It's not gonna be that easy. That cash could be anywhere. May take hours, even days before I find it. So if I'm gonna spend that kind of time ripping the house apart, I'll need reassurance I won't be caught.

GREG

So what's your plan?

SCOTT

A little scare tactic. Nothing serious. Don't worry about it.

GREG

How many?

SCOTT

Four total. Twenty grand a head, you're looking at an extra eighty k from your end.

Greg jumps up, gets in Scott's face.

GREG

Bullshit, my end. You're bringing in some dipshit locals without consulting me first? Who are they?

SCOTT

A couple punks I caught breaking into my car.

Greg scoffs.

GREG
You're crazy.

SCOTT
Look, I figure if they're breaking into cars, what else can they break into?

GREG
And run off with my money? How much do they know? You tell them about me, or the cash?

SCOTT
They don't know anything. Just what I tell them. If they do what they're told, they can make some cash.

GREG
And that's it?

Greg isn't so sure. He paces the room, goes over the plan in his head, makes up his mind.

GREG (CONT'D)
Alright. You got forty eight hours to get in, find the cash, and get out. After that, I'm going with someone else.

Scott nods understandably and heads for the door. As he shuts the door behind him, Greg heads for the sink and lathers up for a shave.

Just as he puts the razor to his face.

THE DOOR OPENS

and in rushes REENA WITH A GUN.

Greg turns, razor still in hand.

Reena draws down on him with the thirty eight snub.

Greg cracks a grin.

GREG (CONT'D)
Well. Look who found me.

Reena's jaw almost drops at the shock of seeing Greg still alive and breathing. Her hands tremble a bit.

REENA

You?

GREG

Me.

(beat)

Sorry you had to find out like this. Guess I got some explaining to do, huh?

Reena nods.

GREG (CONT'D)

You're making me kind of nervous with that gun.

REENA

That's the idea.

GREG

Look. It's a long, complicated story. Sure would feel a whole lot better telling you with that gun not pointed at my face.

REENA

They tried to...hurt me. Mom too.

GREG

I'm sorry to hear that. It wasn't part of it. That wasn't my doing. You have to believe that.

REENA

I don't have to believe shit! You're a liar! You lied to Mom, and then you tried to hurt her!

Reena pulls back the hammer.

REENA (CONT'D)

And now I'm gonna hurt you.

GREG

You got this all wrong. What I want from your mother's got nothing to do with hurting her. Or you.

Greg grows nervous of her shaking hands.

GREG (CONT'D)

But you have to know, I'm not the only one involved here. There's others.

(MORE)

GREG (CONT'D)
And if they don't get what they
want, they could hurt you and your
mother. And me.

Greg slowly steps forward.

GREG (CONT'D)
That kind of makes us partners,
doesn't it?

REENA
Stop that. What you're doing. I'm
warning you.

Greg continues.

GREG
Just settle down. Have a seat and
we'll talk. Real easy now.

REENA
I said stop it!

A KNOCK at the door startles Reena.

POW!

As she squeezes off a SHOT and hits Greg center mass.

He falls to the carpet, lifeless.

The door is KICKED OPEN and in runs

SCOTT

with his gun drawn. Reena turns, spots him, cries and drops
her gun to the floor.

Scott spots Greg's limp body, curled up. His breathing hurried
and his mouth agape.

SCOTT
Holy shit.

Reena plops herself down in a leather chair, tears shoot down
her face as she drifts into a catatonia.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
We don't have long.

Reena ignores him. Her face buried between her hands, tears
shoot through her fingers, down her hands and arm.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Are you listening to me? I said we
don't have long!

Reena slowly snaps out of it, stares up at Scott while wiping
down her face.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
I'm assuming that's your mother's
gun on the floor? Yes?

Reena nods.

Scott pulls a HANDKERCHIEF from his pocket, picks up the gun,
stuffs it back in his coat as he observes Greg's body.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Figure we got about three minutes
tops. I'm gonna need your help, so
come here.

REENA
Who the hell are you?

SCOTT
You wanna get into that now, or
with the cops?

Reena thinks it over. She checks the door.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Get your ass up and help me get him
in the bathroom.

Reena stands, grabs Greg's feet as Scott gets both his hands.
They walk him into the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Reena rests on the toilet and watches Scott rip down the
shower curtain and spread it evenly on the tile.

He rolls the body onto the curtain.

SCOTT
A little help!

Reena kneels on the tile and helps Scott wrap the curtain
over Greg's body.

Scott hands Reena his keys.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Start the car and pull it around
with the trunk facing the door.

Reena wraps her arms around her stomach.

REENA
I'm gonna be sick.

SCOTT
Be sick later.

Scott CLAPS - points to the door.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Go!!!

Reena runs out.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEEP WOODS - NIGHT

Scott walks behind a crying Reena, watches her closely with a gun to his side.

They watch TEDDY and SKAZ carry Greg's wrapped body over tree trunks, logs, nature's obstacles.

Walking with them is LOCO (30s) spiked white hair, ugly, beady eyed, pockmarked. He carries two shovels, not contributing too much else.

Loco gives Scott a deadly stare. Scott pretends not to notice but is visibly shaken by him.

REENA
What are you doing with these people?

SCOTT
Nothing. Just a plan that got a little out of hand.

REENA
What are you gonna do with me?

SCOTT
Nothing's gonna happen if you keep your mouth shut and do what you're told.

Reena observes Loco giving her a cold stare. Scott notices.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Don't worry about them. Worry about you. And what's gonna happen if the cops get a hold of this gun.

REENA

I don't get it. Why are you doing this?

LOCO

He's talking about getting our money!

Teddy and Skaz are out of gas. Tired.

SKAZ

How much longer? He's getting heavy!

SCOTT

(to Skaz)
Right here's fine.

Teddy and Skaz drop Greg in the dirt.

LOCO

(to Reena)
He's saying you better not go getting stupid on us. Running and telling the cops about your little accident.

Loco steps in Reena's face.

LOCO (CONT'D)

Never know when we might come paying you and Mommy another visit. The cops just might not be there this time.

(to Teddy and Skaz)
Isn't that right, boys?

Teddy laughs but Skaz is done playing.

SKAZ

Come on, Loco. Look at her. She's had enough. Just leave her alone.

Teddy shoves Skaz aside.

TEDDY

Forget that, man! Tell her to get us our money! I'm tired of all this fuckin' around!

Teddy steps closer to Scott and Reena, all bowed up, ready to throw down.

Scott grabs Reena and pushes her aside. He guards her from the others.

SCOTT

Why don't you just calm down?

Teddy charges after him. Loco holds him back.

LOCO

You heard the man. Everybody calm down.

Teddy is reluctant, but cools off. Loco shoves him backward like an unwanted step child.

LOCO (CONT'D)

He's got everything we need right there in his coat pocket.

Scott steps back a pace or two, holds Reena back with his free hand.

LOCO (CONT'D)

(to Reena)

I take it he's got the murder weapon, sweetie?

SCOTT

You don't speak to her. You want something, you deal with me.

LOCO

You hear that, boys? Sounds like our business partner here is already looking to cut us out.

TEDDY

Told you! He's gonna fuck us the first chance he gets! Let's take him out, right now! Both of them!

Skaz reaches in his pants, draws a nine millimeter and points in Scott's direction.

SKAZ

(to Loco)

Just say the word.

Loco laughs.

LOCO

Change in plan. Now, real slowly,
hand over the piece and he won't
plug both of you where you stand.

SCOTT

I think you're forgetting
something.

(beat)

The woman still trusts me. I'm the
only way in and out of that house.
You want them out of the picture,
I'm the key to making that happen.
Without me, there is no money. You
know it. I know it. So why don't
you tell Alice Cooper over there to
holster that thing while I'm still
in a good mood.

Loco slowly loses his smile. Skaz watches both of them
closely. His eyes shifting back and forth.

SKAZ

What's going on?!

Loco bursts out laughing.

LOCO

How about that? Still partners
after all.

(to Skaz)

Let's get digging.

Loco tosses a shovel to both Teddy and Skaz.

TEDDY

Why do I gotta do the digging? I'm
the one who carried his ass all the
way out here. Why don't you dig?

SKAZ

Just shut up and dig.

Scott walks Reena closer to the grave site. Teddy watches her
and smiles.

REENA

What are you smiling at?

TEDDY

Just thinking about that look on
your face. The first time we told
you about the Ryan girl.

(laughs)

(MORE)

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Priceless. Gotta be crazy believing all that witchcraft shit. You're as nuts as her old lady was. Telling the whole town a demon took her daughter.

(beat)

We figured you'd go running to Lanie for answers, so we doctored the whole story. She said you about shit yourself.

Skaz shares a laugh with Teddy.

REENA

She wouldn't do it. Not unless you made her.

TEDDY

Shit, girl. She's just like the rest of us. Broke and desperate. Wave a few bucks under her nose, she'd sell her own mother out.

LOCO

Everyone in town's heard about the Ryan girl. Story changes every year. Tell stories long enough, people start believing them.

TEDDY

If it wasn't for Skaz here boosting his car, we wouldn't even be here.

Reena checks with Scott. He looks away in shame.

SKAZ

That's right. Crazy how shit happens, huh?

REENA

I don't understand.

TEDDY

Well. He made us, shall we say, a very persuasive offer. Scare the shit out of you and Mommy or go to jail.

REENA

And make a few bucks while you're at it.

TEDDY

Exactly. All we had to do then was come up with a plan.

REENA

Pretty smart. So. Tell me. Which one of you was the mastermind behind all this?

TEDDY

Can't take credit, really. Gotta admit. This one was all Skaz.

Reena's anger with Skaz grows to a boil.

SKAZ

Wasn't that hard. How many freckle faced redheads that look like Arielle Ryan pass through town? Nothing personal. You just had the wrong hair color, hunny.

Teddy laughs. Skaz smiles. Proud of his work.

REENA

Yeah. Nothing personal.

Reena wipes her tears.

REENA (CONT'D)

By the way.

Teddy and Skaz look up.

REENA (CONT'D)

Mother says hi.

Reena pulls her mother's THIRTY EIGHT from the back of her pants and FIRES ONE SHOT into Skaz's head. He falls in the shallow hole in the dirt. Dead.

Teddy almost falls over in a panic. He reaches his shovel back, ready to swing at her.

Scott takes aim:

POW POW POW POW

-- empties a clip in Teddy's direction as he is riddled with multiple bullets. His body flung into the grave.

Loco takes off, into the dark woods. Scott quickly reloads and gives chase.

SCOTT
Don't move! Stay put!

Reena stays put as Scott darts off. She stares down at Teddy and Skazy's dead bodies in the grave.

A SINGLE GUNSHOT startles Reena as it ECHOES through the night air.

EXT. WOODS - LATER

Scott and Reena both shovel the last of the dirt over all three bodies. Reena gives up, drops her shovel and plops to the ground in defeat.

Scott pats the dirt down, nice and smooth. He also drops his shovel.

SCOTT
Nobody but us has to know about this night. Not ever. But that's gonna be up to you.

REENA
You think I'm gonna keep this from Mom? You must really think I'm crazy.

SCOTT
And she does what? Calls the cops? Sends them out here with cadaver dogs? Along with the tv camera crew?
(beat)
And what will she tell them? Better yet, what will you tell them? That all of it's over a bag of stolen cash your mother says doesn't exist?

Reena thinks it all over. Unsure. Scott smiles and shakes his head.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Who knows. Maybe those Feds won't come back asking your mother all kinds of questions about where it came from and from whom her and her ex husband took it.

REENA
You sonofabitch.

SCOTT
That's right. I'm a sonofabitch. A
sonofabitch who saved your skin
tonight. Remember that.

Scott kneels in front of her.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
And now you're gonna make it right.

REENA
How?

SCOTT
You're gonna tell her you need some
time away. Not from school, or out
of town, just out of the house.
Just until the cops find the guys
responsible.

REENA
And what if she doesn't listen?

Scott strokes her hair behind her ear.

SCOTT
I have faith in you.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT. ELSA'S DRIVEWAY - PRESENT DAY

Scott waves goodbye to Elsa and Reena as they pull out of the
driveway. He heads for the garage.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S BASEMENT - DAY

Scott kicks in the closet door, walks inside.

INT. CLOSET

He spots the BLACK BAG OF MONEY on the top shelf and yanks it
down.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S BASEMENT - DAY

Scott steps out with the bag in hand. Elsa is waiting with a gun pointed at his face.

ELSA
Going somewhere?

Scott laughs in defeat.

SCOTT
I take it she told you.

ELSA
That's right.

SCOTT
When?

ELSA
Last night. While we were packing.
Oh, yes, we had a nice long chat
about you.

Scott steps closer.

SCOTT
Just wait a minute.

ELSA
Shut up! Keep them up!

Scott raises his hands in the air.

SCOTT
Okay, okay. Don't get nervous.

ELSA
My neighbor, Mrs. Ryan, filled me
in on the passing of her late
husband, Scott. Along with a lot of
other interesting tales.
(beat)
Who are you?

SCOTT
Does it really matter?

ELSA
The cops will wanna know.

SCOTT
I thought we decided that wasn't an
option.

ELSA

You decided. Me? I'm thinking of one good reason not to blow you away. Right now. Right here.

SCOTT

I can think of one good reason. About five foot four, bright red hair. Real pretty.

Elsa loses her cocky demeanor as panic sets in.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

You didn't think I was gonna break in here without a look out man, did you?

Elsa's lips quiver with anticipation.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

What if the cops show? I'd be caught, red handed.

ELSA

Where is she?

Scott opens his cellular.

SCOTT

(into phone)

You got the girl?

HAYES (O.S.)

Yeah, we're right here.

REENA (O.S.)

Mom???

ELSA

(to Reena)

Baby? Don't worry!

SCOTT

(to Hayes)

Stay put. This shouldn't take long.

HAYES (O.S.)

Got it.

Scott puts his phone away.

SCOTT

Now's the time, Elsa. Now is the time where you decide what's important. Prove your daughter wrong. That it's not all about you. That you love her more than your own happiness. Put your...excuse the pun...money where your mouth is.

Elsa slowly lowers her gun.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Congratulations. You're not a bad mother after all.

(into phone)

Okay. Time to make the split.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. ELSA'S DRIVEWAY - DAY

Hayes and Reena sit in the front seat of his car. The phone to Hayes ear.

HAYES

Yeah. Gotcha. We'll be right in.

Hayes jumps out. He walks around the car, to Reena's door and opens. He unlocks the cuffs from Reena's hands.

HAYES (CONT'D)

Be a good girl now and we're home free.

Hayes pull her from the car and walks her to the front door.

Watching from down the street is:

GREER

-- with a pair of pruning sheers in hand. She watches the house with unusual interest.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Scott finishes separating all the bills as Hayes loads his share into an equally large duffel bag.

A beautiful set of silverware is disassembled on the table along with some silver china cleaner and a white rag.

HAYES

Gotta hand it to you, brother. Here I was thinking you were full of shit.

Scott smiles as he loads his share back in his bag. Reena watches from a corner chair. Exhausted.

He watches a very pissed off Elsa fold her arms and stare at the wall.

SCOTT

Look. I know you won't believe this. But I'm sorry.

Elsa spits dead in his face. Reena smiles. Hayes laughs.

HAYES

Yep. Always did have a way with the ladies.

Hayes zips up his bag. Scott uses the white rag to wipe off the spit.

SCOTT

You're right. The time has come for us to take our leave of you.

Scott gives her a wink.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

What can I say? It's been an experience.

Scott zips up his bag.

And suddenly --

THE DINING ROOM LIGHTS FLICKER

Hayes is taken aback by this.

HAYES

You pay your light bill?

The lights TURN OFF completely.

Elsa also notices that the electrical surge has somehow managed to spread to the living room.

A TABLE LAMP also FLICKERS.

And then --

The front PORCH LIGHT FLICKERS on and off.

ELSA
What the hell?

The YELLOW BULB in the table lamp EXPLODES. The entire room goes PITCH BLACK.

And then --

The nearby KITCHEN LIGHT FLICKERS as we see only FLASHES of Elsa, Hayes, Reena and Scott.

Everyone in a panic except --

REENA

who is blank and expressionless as she slowly rises from her chair.

ELSA (CONT'D)
Reena!

As the room goes from DARK to LIGHT -

Reena, in the blink of an eye, has moved from one side of the room to the other, next to Hayes, hovers behind him.

Elsa watches her as the room goes DARK and then LIGHT.

Reena, now with a SILVER KNIFE, slices open Hayes throat.

Scott tumbles over a dining room chair in a panic. He watches as Hayes body falls limp to the carpet.

Reena stares him down from across the table. A RED PENTAGRAM painted on her forehead.

Scott makes for the door as every LIGHT in the house FLICKERS ON AND OFF.

FRONT DOOR

Scott attempts to open but the door is dead bolted.

SCOTT
Come on!

DINING ROOM

Reena observes Hayes body. She slowly stares up at her mother who watches in horror.

ELSA
It's me, baby. It's okay. You can
put down the knife.

The LIGHTS continue to FLICKER as Reena disappears and re
appears directly in front of Elsa.

Before Elsa can cry out, Reena has her hand around her
mother's throat. A superhuman grip as Elsa drops to her
knees.

Scott gives up on the door and heads for the kitchen. He
stops as he spots --

Reena CRUSHES Elsa's windpipe. Reena releases her as she
falls dead to the floor.

Scott slowly steps back as Reena moves for him.

Through the living room.

Around a corner. Down the hall.

As Reena moves closer, Scott spots what appears to be the
SHADOW OF A DEMON move from mirror to mirror. Glass to
glass.

SCOTT
What the fuck???

Scott looks over his shoulder. A dead end at the far reaches
of the hallway. He turns back to see:

REENA

at the other end of the hall. The LIGHTS FLICKER once more as
she completely disappears.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Where are you???

No answer. No Reena.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Who are you???

And a realization hits Scott like a ton of bricks. He slowly
turns around and spots --

Reena behind him.

She grabs him by the throat, tosses him against the opposite
wall.

SCOTT'S POV

He spots the dark shadows of a WINGED DEMON in the mirror just behind Elsa.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

No!

REENA

Yes.

Reena smiles as she crushes his windpipe and BLOOD STREAMS from his nose and mouth.

Scott slides to the floor. Dead.

Reena turns toward her bedroom as every light in the house goes dark and a bright GLOWING LIGHT pours out from inside her room and floods the hall.

DEMON (O.S.)

Reeee-naaaa.

Reena smiles as she moves slowly and seductively toward her bedroom.

INT. REENA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Reena enters. The flood of WHITE ENERGY is coming from inside the full length mirror hanging from her wall.

A SLIGHT WIND blows a few items to her floor. A couple of pens, a lipstick, and some other personals form a PERFECT CIRCLE on the carpet.

A letter opener is caught in the wind and blown dead center of the demonic circle.

Reena steps into the circle, grabs the letter opener and points it in all four directions.

She sets the blade on the carpet and begins unbuttoning her blouse.

We watch from the hallway, looking in. The heavy wind catches the door as it shuts in our face.

EXT. ELSA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Greer now stands at the foot of the driveway, stares up at Reena's BEDROOM WINDOW as the WHITE ENERGY fills the room and pours out the window like laser beams.

Greer rushes to the front door.

INT. ELSA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Before Greer can reach for the door, it bursts open on its own as if the demon has invited her inside.

DEMON (O.S.)
Ree-naaaa!

Greer rushes in as the DOOR SLAMS SHUT behind her.

GREER
Arielle! Baby!

Greer heads down the hallway, toward the source of the WHITE LIGHT but stops when she reaches

THE KITCHEN

Reena, now nude, stands at the counter top and pulls a large BUTCHER KNIFE from a block set.

Greer watches as Reena holds the knife to her own neck.

GREER (CONT'D)
Arielle!!!

Reena slowly turns to her. We only see her from the neck up but it is clear she is nude.

GREER (CONT'D)
Let her go! You don't want this!
He doesn't control you! Don't let
him!

Reena ignores her and holds the blade closer to her neck.

GREER (CONT'D)
Honey, it's too late! You can
never come back here! Don't you
understand that? You belong to God
now! Not him! Don't let him take
you! You have to fight it!

Reena slowly lowers the knife. A look of confusion.

REENA
Mommy?

Reena drops the blade to the tile floor. Greer notices the BRIGHT WHITE LIGHT has grown in intensity.

It moves up the hallway and almost blinds Greer. She spots a HAMMER on a breakfast table next to a box of nails.

She snags it up and runs down the hall, toward Reena's room.

Reena still in a confused trance.

INT. REENA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Greer runs in. The WHITE LIGHT pours out from inside the long mirror. Greer reaches the hammer back, ready to smash it to pieces but --

In runs Reena - BUTCHER KNIFE raised as she charges Greer at full speed and SCREAMS at the top of her lungs.

Greer THROWS THE HAMMER into the mirror as it explodes into fifty pieces.

Reena tackles Greer onto the mattress as the KNIFE drops to the carpet below and Greer wraps the young girl in the blankets.

Reena kicks and SCREAMS as Greer holds her down and the WHITE LIGHT slowly dims down. After a few moments, it finally disappears.

The demon now gone.

Reena cries like a baby and stares up at Greer with utter confusion.

REENA
What's happening?

Reena has come back. Arielle now gone.

GREER
It's over. I've got you. It's all over.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELSA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

An SUV parks in the now empty driveway. A family of four steps from the car as we see a new REDHEAD (16), freckles, stare up at the home with little enthusiasm.

FATHER
(to Redhead)
I told you. Beautiful, right?

The Redhead rolls her eyes.

REDHEAD
Yeah, I guess so.

MOTHER
Yeah. You're super excited. I can tell.

The Redhead stares up at the first BEDROOM WINDOW. Reena's old bedroom.

The Redhead's Mother joins her. Throws an arm around her neck as they stare at their new home.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Awfully quiet, kiddo. Ya know, your father's trying real hard. I know moving away from your friends isn't exactly what you wanted, but it's not always about what we want. It's about what's best for the family.

REDHEAD
I don't like this place. It gives me the creeps.

MOTHER
Yeah, well. That's because it's new. Sometimes new things can be scary. It's just gonna take some time to...re adjust. That's all.

REDHEAD
I feel like something's staring at me.

MOTHER
It's probably all that garbage you listen to. Come on. Let's go inside.

Mother heads for the garage and basement door with her husband and son.

The Redhead just stares up at the window as a cool chill runs up her spine. She rubs down her arms and follows the others inside.

Watching from the house next door is Greer and Reena.

The Redhead is almost to the garage and turns, stares back at Reena who is visibly concerned for her.

The Redhead offers a lukewarm smile and heads in.

REENA
(to Greer)
So. Should we tell them now or wait?

GREER
Tell them what, exactly? That their home is possessed by an ancient demon?

Reena contemplates this.

GREER (CONT'D)
That it took my daughter? My husband? Your mother? That it tried to use my Arielle to take you in exchange for her soul?

Reena thinks it all over.

GREER (CONT'D)
But in the end...she did the right thing. Released you back to us. And, by the grace of God, finally recognized the evil that was consuming her. And walked away from one light and into the next.

Greer shakes her head in frustration.

GREER (CONT'D)
Now who in their right mind would believe a crazy story like that?

Greer heads back to the house as Reena turns, stares back at her with a half hearted grin.

FADE OUT.