

THE WITCHING HOUR

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. AMERICAN TOWN - NIGHT

The soft Autumn wind blows, rustling the orange and brown leaves in the dying trees, and scattering them across the ground.

The town is quiet. Asleep. Only faint sounds of cars in the distance can be heard. The only light is shining from poles scattered across town, hardly illuminating it.

Most windows are dark, save for a select few. The homes are still.

The streets are damp from a recent shower, lightly reflecting an eerie light.

SMASH!

The silence is broken by a beer bottle shattering in the street.

EXT. STEVEN'S HOUSE, PORCH - NIGHT

Three friends are gathered on a front porch.

TODD

This sucks. I'm bored.

TODD is your typical trouble-maker. He's got a cool demeanor, ruggedly handsome, and dressed accordingly.

Sitting with him is ANNA and STEVE.

Anna is your average high school teen. Pretty. Dark hair. Nice body.

Steve is the stoner of the three, wearing a Bob Marley shirt and a beanie.

ANNA

What do you want to do?

TODD

I don't know, dude. There's nothing to do. This town dies after ten o'clock.

STEVE

I've got a bowl pack if anyone
wants to burn with me.

TODD

Tempting. Do we have any more beer
left?

Anna holds up an empty beer bottle and shakes it.

ANNA

We're dry.

TODD

Damn it. I want something to do.

STEVE

I'm cool just chilling.

ANNA

We can always just call it a
night.

TODD

No way. It's only eleven thirty.

ANNA

Got anything better to do besides
sleep?

TODD

No. I don't know. What's something
we haven't done before?

STEVE

I'm pretty sure we've bled this
town dry of shit to do.

TODD

There's gotta be something.

Steve takes out his bowl and a baggie, and begins to pack
the bowl.

STEVE

I'm gunna hit this.

TODD

Knock yourself out.

STEVE

Oh, man, that would be so tight!
Can you imagine smoking something
so strong that it knocks you out?

(MORE)

STEVE (cont'd)

That'd be some grade-A high-class
shit.

ANNA

You ever thought maybe you smoke
too much?

Steve stops to think for a moment, then shakes his head,
laughing.

STEVE

Nah, dude.

TODD

You guys aren't helping.

ANNA

I don't see you throwing any ideas
out yourself, genius.

TODD

Why do I always have to come up
with shit to do?

STEVE

Cause you're always the one
bitching about it.

Steve giggles, and then lights up his bowl, inhaling.

TODD

The mortuary.

Anna and Steven look at Todd.

ANNA

Huh?

TODD

The mortuary. You know, the one on
Hill Street that's supposed to be
haunted. We could go check that
out.

STEVE

What the hell for?

TODD

I dunno. Just something to do that
we haven't done before. See if
it's really haunted and all that.

ANNA
Sounds kinda lame.

TODD
What's the matter, Anna? Scared?

ANNA
No, I just don't see how that
could possibly be fun.

TODD
Pussy! Anna's a pussy!

ANNA
No, I'm not. But if you keep
calling me a pussy, you won't be
getting mine for a while.

Todd stops smiling, a look of concern on his face. Then,

TODD
Chicken shit!

Todd jumps up and starts bawking like a chicken.

ANNA
I'm not a chicken shit, Todd!
Asshole.

TODD
Then lets go.

Anna stands up.

ANNA
Fine.

TODD
Steve?

Steve looks up at them, his eyes bloodshot.

STEVE
Whatever dude. I'm good with
whatever.

EXT. MORTUARY - NIGHT

The three stand outside the mortuary, looking at it.

It's bathed in darkness, surrounded by looming trees.

It's an old building. Very Gothic. Very creepy. Very run-down appearance.

ANNA

Now what?

TODD

Let's take a look around. See if we can find a way in.

Anna and Todd take the left side, and Steve takes the right side, examining the building, looking into the windows and such.

The three meet up at the back door of the mortuary.

TODD

See anything?

STEVE

Nah, it's too dark in there.

TODD

Let's check the back door.

Todd walks up to the back door, and pulls on it.

It shudders under the weight of Todd's pull, but stays firmly shut.

TODD

Locked. Shit!

ANNA

Well, there goes that idea.

STEVE

Oh, well.

The three make their way back to the front of the mortuary, and as they're walking away, a loud creaking sound is heard, like the opening of an old door.

The three turn around.

The front door of the mortuary has opened.

The three look at each other.

ANNA

You probably created a draft when you tugged on the back door.

TODD

Is that all, smart ass?

STEVE

I'm glad you were smart enough to check the front door.

TODD

Dude, shut the fuck up. You didn't check it either.

Todd looks at the open door.

TODD

Well, let's check it.

INT. MORTUARY - NIGHT

The three step inside the mortuary, looking around.

The place is dark, but aside from being dusty and looking like it hasn't been used in a while, there's nothing really out of the ordinary about it.

The three walk forward a bit.

SLAM! The front door slams shut.

TODD

Shit!

STEVE

The hell was that?

ANNA

It was just a draft.

TODD

Another one?

Anna walks up to the front door and tugs on it. It won't budge.

ANNA

I can't get it open.

TODD

Put some muscle behind it you pansy.

Anna looks back at Todd, and scowls.

Somewhere in the mortuary, a clock begins striking 12.

ANNA

I warned you about that. It's not moving. It's stuck on something.

TODD

Let me see.

Anna steps away from the door as Todd approaches it.

Just as Todd pulls on it

WHOOSH!

A fire roars up in the fireplace.

Everyone turns and looks at it, shocked.

STEVE

Dude.

Todd looks at Anna.

TODD

And what's your explanation for that?

ANNA

Uh.

A door in the corner creeks open, revealing some light.

SLAM!

Something crashes deep behind the door.

ANNA

There's somebody here.

TODD

Bullshit. This place has been empty for years.

STEVE

Maybe someone is partying here. Let's check it.

The three slowly make their way towards the door, and open it.

They walk down the winding steps into

INT. MORTUARY, MORGUE - NIGHT

The morgue, unlike the rest of the place, looks like it is used quite often.

There's an operating table, various tools, a lit lamp, body drawers, the works.

Aside from being blood stained and a little grimy, the place is very much in use.

TODD

I told you there's nobody down here.

ANNA

Then why is that lamp on, dumb ass?

TODD

I don't know, but as you can see, there's nobody here!

ANNA

This is lame. Let's just go.

STEVE

Anyone want to help me finish my bowl?

The three turn around and head back for the stairs.

SLAM!

One of the body drawers slams shut.

THE MORTICIAN (O.S.)

Leaving so soon?

The three turn around, terrified.

THE MORTICIAN is a tall, gaunt figure. His eyes and cheeks are sunken in, giving him an almost skeletal appearance with his pale skin.

His fingers appear slightly long and skinny, like the rest of his body.

He has a very haunting appearance, and is dressed in some

old fashioned undertaker clothing.
His voice is hollow and slightly raspy.

STEVE

Dude, I am way too stoned for
this.

TODD

Where the fuck did you come from?

THE MORTICIAN

Where indeed. I suppose you could
say I work here.

ANNA

Sir, this place has been closed
down for years.

THE MORTICIAN

Has it now? Interesting.

STEVE

We were just checking on the
place. We heard some noises. But
we'll just be going. We don't want
to disturb you.

THE MORTICIAN

What's your rush? You came here to
bring back tales of ghosts and
goblins, did you not?

TODD

No. I mean, we had heard the place
was haunted, but, uh.

THE MORTICIAN

And is it, do you think?

ANNA

Seems all right to me. Just your
average mortuary. We'll be seeing
you.

The door at the top of the stairs closes.

THE MORTICIAN

Stay a while. I insist. If you
make it out of here tonight, I
promise you'll have some stories
to tell.

The three look at each other, the fear apparent.

The Mortician bursts out laughing. It's an unpleasant sound.

THE MORTICIAN

Pull up a chair. Get comfortable.

The three hesitate for a moment or two, and then each grab a stool, pulling them up to him and sitting down on them.

THE MORTICIAN

Do you know what time it is, my friends?

ANNA

Just after midnight?

THE MORTICIAN

The Witching Hour.

STEVE

What's that?

THE MORTICIAN

The time between midnight and three a.m. where magic is at it's strongest, and all the things that go bump in the night are free to do as they please.

TODD

Is that right?

THE MORTICIAN

Do you not believe in evil?

TODD

I don't believe in ghosts.

THE MORTICIAN

And yet here you are, fancying a trip to a "haunted" mortuary. Intriguing.

ANNA

It was just something to do.

THE MORTICIAN

Something to tell people, right?

TODD

Something like that.

THE MORTICIAN

I always hate being disappointed.
I'll give you something to talk
about for years to come. Your
childrens children will tell these
tales. If you make it long enough.
Are you ready?

STEVE

For?

THE MORTICIAN

Terror.

The Mortician then turns and opens up one of the body
drawers.

THE MORTICIAN

I'm going to tell you the story of
a girl named Anna that once went
ice skating to clear her mind, and
never returned.

Anna looks at Todd, frightened that The Mortician said her
name.

Todd shakes his head, and looks back at The Mortician, who
smirks.

DISSOLVE TO:

"NO ESCAPE"

INT. ANNA'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

THE MORTICIAN (V.O.)

I call it "No Escape."

It's morning, the light of the rising sun bathing the room
in bright, cheerful tones.

The room isn't the cleanest, as in there's plenty of
clothing strewn across the floor, but it's still a nice
room.

Plenty of stuffed animals, posters, etc.

Anna is sleeping in bed.

Yes, the very same Anna from our prologue.

MOM (O.S.)

Anna! Breakfast is on the table!

Anna stirs, opening her eyes with a slight smile.

ANNA

'kay.

Anna throws the covers aside, and stretches.

She climbs out of bed, and walks into her bathroom, shutting the door behind her.

INT. ANNA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Anna's MOM and DAD are already in the kitchen.

Dad is sitting at the table, looking through the newspaper.

Mom is by the stove, scooping scrambled eggs and putting them on plates.

She walks over to the table, and sets a plate in front of Dad.

DAD

Thanks, dear.

MOM

Mhm.

Mom returns to the stove, and grabs two more plates.

She returns to the table, sets them down, and sits down herself.

DAD

The Giants lost again. I'm telling you, if their coach doesn't get his head out of his ass, this is going to be a terrible season.

Dad sets the paper down.

MOM

It's only the third game of the season. There's still plenty of time.

DAD

No, I already know where this is heading. I don't know what they were thinking appointing him as manager.

MOM

Well apparently someone felt that he was qualified for the job, so you should too.

DAD

We'll see.

Anna walks into the kitchen, dressed warmly.

ANNA

Morning.

MOM

Good morning.

MOM

Morning, dear.

Anna sits down at the table, and looks at her eggs.

MOM

Eat them while they're hot.

ANNA

Did you put cheese in them?

MOM

No, we didn't have any. I'll have to pick some more up when I go to the store.

ANNA

It's fine.

Anna picks up her fork, and begins eating, as do Mom and Dad.

DAD

What's on the agenda for today?

ANNA

I'm spending the day with John. I don't know what he's got planned.

DAD

I can only imagine.

A look of mock perversion spreads across Dad's face.

ANNA

Dad!

DAD

What?

MOM

That's not a very pleasant thing to say.

DAD

I'm just saying. I was a young guy once, too. You were there.

MOM

We won't go there.

Mom chuckles, as does Dad.

ANNA

Seriously, though. Today is our ten month.

DAD

We'll break out the champagne! When's the wedding?

ANNA

Shut up!

Anna chuckles, and then takes another bite.

MOM

What time is he picking you up?

ANNA

One. I think.

MOM

And should we expect you home at a reasonable hour?

ANNA

I'm not sure. I'll call.

MOM

Take a jacket. It snowed last night.

ANNA

Yeah, I will.

Anna finishes off her eggs, and gets up from the table, walking away.

Dad looks at Mom.

DAD

It's good to have her home again.

MOM

Don't get used to it, dear. It's just for winter break, and back up to school she goes.

DAD

Mm. Don't remind me.

Dad goes back to reading his paper, and the kitchen is quiet.

Mom looks out the window.

EXT. ANNA'S HOUSE - DAY

The skies have now become gray, creating very little light.

A truck pulls up into the driveway, and the horn is honked.

A minute later, Anna steps out of the house.

ANNA

Love you, bye!

Anna closes the door, and heads down to the driveway.

She gets into the truck.

INT. TRUCK

JOHN is about 21 years old. He's got shaggy hair, and is ruggedly handsome.

ANNA

Hey!

Anna kisses John.

JOHN

Hey. You all set?

ANNA

Yeah. Whatcha got planned?

JOHN

You'll see.

John smiles, but it seems forced. In fact, he doesn't look all that happy to see her at all.

ANNA
Everything okay?

JOHN
Yep. Everything's fine. I'm fine.

EXT. ANNA'S HOUSE

The truck pulls out of the driveway, and drives away.

TIME LAPSE

EXT. ANNA'S HOUSE - DAY

It's an hour or two later, and the truck returns to the driveway.

Anna gets out of the truck, and slams the door.

The truck pulls out of the driveway, and speeds away.

Anna slowly walks up the steps to the front door, tries to compose herself, and enters the front door.

INT. ANNA'S HOUSE - DAY

Anna walks into the house, and heads for her room.

Mom is in the hallway, a basket of laundry in her hand.

MOM
I wasn't expecting you home this early. I would've planned dinner if I had known.

ANNA
It's fine.

Anna brushes past Mom.

MOM
What happened? Is everything okay?

ANNA
I'm fine. Everything's fine.

Anna enters her room and closes the door behind her.

Mom shakes her head.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Dad is reclined in the chair, watching TV.

Mom sits down on the couch, and sets the laundry at her feet.
She begins folding it.

A moment later, Anna walks into the living room, ice skates in her hand.

ANNA

I'm going skating. I'll be back later.

Mom looks at Anna with concern.

MOM

Sweetie, are you sure everything is all right?

ANNA

Yeah. I just need to go clear my head.

MOM

Did you and John have a fight?

ANNA

I don't want to talk about John right now. I just want to go skate.

MOM

All right. Be careful, sweetie.

ANNA

I will.

Anna heads for the door and opens it.

MOM

I love you.

ANNA

Love you, too.

DAD

Have fun.

Anna walks out, shutting the door behind her.

Dad glances back at Mom.

DAD

What's that all about?

MOM

I think John broke up with her.

DAD

Really? He picked a hell of a day to do it. What a jerk.

MOM

Yeah. I hope she's okay.

DAD

I'm sure she'll be fine. There's plenty of other fish in the sea. It won't take her long to reel another one in.

MOM

Girls don't think like that. We follow our hearts, not our hormones.

Dad turns back to the TV.

DAD

One more reason why I'm proud to be male.

EXT. FROZEN POND - DAY

The skies just get grayer as the day progresses.

Anna sits on a log, putting her ice skates on.

In front of her is a pretty decent sized pond, frozen over.

Two little girls are skating on it, JULIE and BECCA. They can't be more than 12 years old.

The pond is completely surrounded by woods. It's sort of remote, and slightly ominous. Not quite the place you'd want to be at when darkness falls.

Anna finishes tying her skates, and stands up.

She looks at the little girls.

ANNA

You girls don't mind if I skate with you, do you?

JULIE

No.

BECCA

Yeah, come on. There's lots of
room!

Anna steps onto the ice, and begins skating.

She's good. She obviously skates often.

JULIE

You're a good skater!

ANNA

Thanks.

Julie and Becca continue skating around each other, having
fun and laughing.

As Anna skates, it becomes clear that she's thinking about
what happened a couple hours ago.

FLASHBACK

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - DAY

The truck pulls up to the house.

INT. TRUCK

Anna looks at the house, and then back at John.

ANNA

I thought we were going out
somewhere?

JOHN

We are. I just thought we'd stop
here first. My parents aren't
home.

Something still isn't quite right with John. He seems very
distant. Anna notices, but she smiles anyway.

ANNA

Okay. Sure.

PRESENT

EXT. FROZEN POND - DAY

Anna begins skating a little faster, her emotions starting to show on her face.

FLASHBACK

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

John and Anna enter his bedroom, and he closes the door behind them.

His room is pretty bland, actually. Save for a couple decorative pieces.

John walks over to his mini-fridge, and takes out a bottle of alcohol.

He opens the bottle, and takes a drink.

JOHN

You want some?

Anna takes the bottle, and swallows some. She cringes.

ANNA

I don't know how you drink that the way you do.

JOHN

It's good stuff.

Anna sits down on the bed, looks around, and then back at John, who looks uncomfortable.

ANNA

You sure you're fine?

JOHN

Yeah.

ANNA

So?

JOHN

What?

ANNA

We're here. What did you have in mind?

John sits down next to her, smiles uneasily, and then kisses her.

PRESENT

EXT. FROZEN POND - DAY

As Anna skates around the pond faster, her eyes begin to water. She's getting more upset by the minute.

FLASHBACK

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

John and Anna are in bed, having sex.

As they have sex, Anna bites John's ear, and whispers into it.

ANNA

I love you. Forever.

John looks at her, not stopping, not saying a word, a half-smile on his face and then kisses her.

PRESENT

EXT. FROZEN POND - DAY

Anna is freely crying now, the tears falling down her face.

FLASHBACK

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Anna finishes buttoning her pants back up.

John is back at the fridge, drinking more alcohol. He sighs.

ANNA

What is it, babe?

John sets the bottle down, and looks at Anna.

JOHN

We have to talk.

John sits down next to Anna on the bed, not looking at her.

ANNA

About?

JOHN

Us.

ANNA

What about us?

John sighs, looking at the floor.

JOHN

It's not working for me, Anna.
I've cheated on you. Twice.

Now it's Anna's turn to look at the floor, trying to conceal the pain on her face.

ANNA

Uh. Wow. Why? How could you do this to me?

JOHN

Come on, Anna. Be realistic here.
I see you, what, maybe once a month if I'm lucky?

ANNA

That's not fair. I go to school out of town! You're the one who told me you could do it!

JOHN

I know, and I thought I could. But no. I can't. I don't see you enough. And I never know if you're cheating on me. And just, no. I can't do it anymore. It's over.

ANNA

But it's our ten month.

John stands up.

JOHN

I know the timing sucks. I'm sorry.

Anna looks at him, tears in her eyes.

ANNA

Please don't do this. Please stay.
Don't leave me.

JOHN

It's done.

ANNA

You're really ready to throw away
ten months?

JOHN

I have to.

Anna looks down at the floor, swallowing hard, her eyes
filling with tears.

She blinks them away.

JOHN

We can still go out today if you
want to.

ANNA

Take me home.

Anna stands up.

John nods his head, and opens the bedroom door.

Anna walks past him, not even glancing at him.

PRESENT

EXT. FROZEN POND - DAY

Anna breaks down. She slides across the ice on her knees,
sobbing.

Julie and Becca skate over to her.

BECCA

Are you okay?

JULIE

Did you hurt yourself?

Anna wipes her eyes, looking at the girls.

ANNA

No, I didn't hurt myself. I'm
okay.

JULIE

Why are you crying, then?

ANNA
My heart hurts.

BECCA
Why? Are you having a heart
attack?

Anna shakes her head, laughing away the tears.

ANNA
No. It's nothing. Don't worry.
It's stupid.

Anna gets back up on her feet.

ANNA
What are your names?

JULIE
I'm Julie.

BECCA
And I'm Becca.

ANNA
My name's Anna. Anyway, Julie and
Becca, I've got some advice for
you.

JULIE
What?

ANNA
Stay away from boys. They're all
liars and assholes.

BECCA
That's a bad word.

ANNA
I know. You'll understand why I
said it one day, though.

Becca and Julie giggle at each other.

JULIE
We won't tell.

Anna smiles.

ANNA
Thanks.

Anna skates towards the bank, and steps off the ice, sitting back down on the log.

She begins putting her shoes back on.

The girls continue skating around. They look at her.

BECCA

Are you going home?

ANNA

Yeah. It's getting late anyway.
Shouldn't you girls be going back home, too?

JULIE

No, our parents won't be picking us up until later.

ANNA

Okay, well you girls be safe.

Anna stands up, and begins heading for the woods.

JULIE (O.S.)

Bye!

ANNA

(calling back)

Bye!

Anna steps into a sort-of path cut into the woods.

EXT. WOOD EDGE - DAY

Anna continues walking through the woods until she comes upon the edge where her car is parked, along with a mini van next to it.

Something isn't right, though.

Her hood is popped up, and there's a MAN leaning over it, doing something to the engine.

ANNA

Hey! What the hell are you doing with my car?

The Man stops what he's doing, and slowly straightens up. He turns around and faces her.

A lot of the hoses and wires in her engine have been sliced

and/or ripped out.

The Man is attractive, but his eyes show pure evil. He's tall, got a good build behind him, and he seems to have a permanent half-smile or partial grin on his face.

ANNA

I'll just, uh, walk.

Anna begins to back up, and the Man takes a step forward.

It's now that Anna sees the large hunting knife the Man has in his hands. It has blood on it. Fresh blood.

Anna glances back over to the mini van.

A figure is slumped over the steering wheel, and there's some blood on the windshield.

ANNA

Oh, shit.

Anna looks at the Man, who takes another step forward.

ANNA

Look I didn't see anything, okay?
I'll just be on my way.

The Man, referred to as THE STALKER from here on in, merely shakes his head, maintaining that creepy partial grin.

He suddenly slashes at Anna with the knife, and she recoils, screaming. She turns and runs into the woods.

The Stalker goes after her, not running, but not just walking either. He's moving relatively quick.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Anna runs through the woods, branches whipping her face and tearing into her jacket.

Fear is very visible on her face. It encompasses her.

She runs, and, CLUNK! She trips on a stump.

She collides into the snow, and quickly looks behind her.

The Stalker is making his way through the trees, gaining on her.

Anna quickly gets back up on her feet and keeps running.

As she runs, she soon starts to hear Julie and Becca laughing.

She stops and listens, then turns around.

The Stalker hears the little girls as well, and for a moment, his grin seems to widen. He looks at Anna, who is maybe thirty feet ahead.

ANNA

Oh, no.

Anna takes off running in the direction of the frozen pond, and the Stalker takes his own way there.

EXT. FROZEN POND - DAY

Anna steps onto the bank of the frozen pond, and looks at Julie and Becca desperately.

ANNA

Run, girls!

The two stop skating and laughing, and look at Anna, confused.

JULIE

What?

ANNA

Run! You have to get out of here!
It's not safe!

BECCA

No, the ice is fine. You were just skating on it.

ANNA

It's not the ice! Just run! Get out of here!

As Anna gets more desperate, her eyes start to water.

BECCA

You can't kick us off the pond! We were here first!

BECCA

Yeah, you're name's not on the pond! You don't own it!

Anna is becoming frustrated.

ANNA

No! You have to get off! Someone
is coming!

JULIE

I'm going to tell my mom when she
gets here about you.

BECCA

You're just a mean girl. Go away!

Anna looks back into the woods. She doesn't see anything.
She turns back to the girls.

ANNA

You don't understand! He's going
to kill you!

The two girls just shake their heads, and then continue
skating around.

JULIE

That's not funny.

BECCA

She's just trying to scare us.

Anna then runs out onto the ice, and tries to grab the
girls. She misses both of them.

BECCA

Stop it!

JULIE

Leave us alone!

ANNA

Please girls, just run!

Anna begins crying, and the girls skate away from her.

Anna turns solemnly, and slowly stumbles away from the
frozen pond.

She turns and looks back at them, and sees The Stalker
standing in the edge of the woods, looking at the two girls.

She points at him, screaming.

ANNA

He's there! Hurry! Come with me!

The two girls turn and look at The Stalker, who is walking towards the bank of the pond.

The girls look back at Anna, and begin skating towards her.

ANNA

Follow me!

Anna runs into the woods.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Anna doesn't run for very long before she stops and turns around, looking for the girls.

They're not behind her.

ANNA

Oh, no. Julie? Becca?

Silence.

The wind whistles, and the quiet is broken by a scream, followed by another.

ANNA

Girls!

Anna takes off running back towards the frozen pond.

EXT. FROZEN POND - DAY

As Anna runs out of the woods, she stops suddenly, wide-eyed. Mouth agape.

The girls are gone. There's blood on the ice and in the snow by the frozen pond.

One of their beanie's is lying on the snow, bloodstained.

There's a bloodstained scarf draped from a tree branch, and there's a mitten on the pond.

Where are the girls? More importantly for her, where the hell is The Stalker?

As Anna surveys the scene, she begins hyperventilating.

ANNA

Oh, God. Oh, no. Oh, God. Oh, no.

She turns around, and runs right into The Stalker.

She quickly backs up, and he takes a swing at her with his hunting knife.

He misses. Barely.

Anna quickly runs past him, crying, back into the woods.

Without hesitation, The Stalker continues his quick pursuit, still grinning.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Anna continues running through the woods, crying.

The Stalker pursues, keeping good pace.

More branches snag and tug and scratch at Anna.

ANNA

Help me! Somebody!

Anna looks behind her, and sees that The Stalker is still on her tail.

How can this be? He's not even running.

Regardless of how or why, it just is, and Anna is scared.

ANNA

Anybody! Please!

There are no return shouts. No offers for help. It's just her, him, and the dim, gray, woods.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Anna finally makes it to the other side of the woods, and runs out into the road.

She's dirty, sweaty, and covered with scratches.

She stands in the middle of the road.

She looks back into the woods, but doesn't see anything. The Stalker can't be far behind.

A car suddenly appears from around the corner, and the DRIVER slams on his brakes and swerves to avoid hitting her.

Anna turns around and heads for the car.

The Driver gets out of the car, fuming.

DRIVER

What the hell do you think you're doing, standing in the middle of the road like that? I could've killed you! Jesus girl, are you all right?

Anna grabs on to the Driver, sobbing.

ANNA

Please, you've gotta help me. He's going to kill me!

DRIVER

Calm down, girl. Who's going to kill you?

ANNA

It's not safe here. We have to get out of here. Please.

DRIVER

Get in the car.

The Driver gets back behind the wheel, and Anna gets in the passenger side.

INT. CAR

The Driver looks at Anna.

DRIVER

I'll take you to the police station.

ANNA

Do you have a cell phone? We have to call them and get them out here now!

DRIVER

I don't own one. It won't take long to get there. I'll go as fast as I can. You just relax and hold on.

Just as the Driver goes to put the car in gear,
SMASH!

A hand smashes through his side window, and wraps around his throat.

The Driver thrashes around, trying to break free.

Anna begins screaming and crying, and gets out of the car.

EXT. ROAD

Anna begins running down the road.

In the background, The Stalker pulls the Driver from his car, and begins to repeatedly stab him in the gut.

Anna keeps running, not looking back.

She crosses some train tracks, and cuts through the old rail yard.

EXT. DINER - DAY

Anna runs up to a diner, and quickly dashes inside.

She doesn't notice the sign that says CLOSED, nor does she pay any mind to how shabby it looks.

INT. DINER - DAY

Anna dashes into the dim diner.

ANNA
Help me! Please!

She stops and looks around the empty diner.

ANNA
Hello?

Anna runs behind the counter, and back into the kitchen, looking for someone. Anyone.

The back door in the kitchen is boarded up.

The place is empty. Deserted. Closed.

She sees a phone by the hostess station, and runs over to it.

She picks it up, and taps it. No dial tone.

Anna walks back out in the dining area, and freezes.

Outside, the car that she just escaped from slowly pulls up in front of the diner.

ANNA

Oh, fuck.

From where she's standing, she can clearly see inside the car.

The Stalker slowly raises his knife, as if to show her what he has, and full-on smiles. He knows there's no way out.

The Stalker casually gets out of the car, and makes his way to the door of the diner, still smiling.

The door slowly opens, and he slowly steps inside.

Anna begins crying.

ANNA

Please, no. Why are you doing this?

The Stalker stands in front of Anna, and doesn't say a word.

ANNA

What do you want from me?! What have I done? Why? Why are you doing this?

Anna's hysteric.

She looks around. Looks behind her. Looks for any way out. The only door is the one The Stalker is standing in front of.

Somehow, The Stalker smiles even wider.

There is no escape.

Anna screams.

END "NO ESCAPE"

FADE TO:

INT. MORTUARY, MORGUE - NIGHT

Todd and Steve sit there, their faces showing just how creeped out they are.

The Mortician stands there, a creepy grin on his face.

THE MORTICIAN

When the police found Anna's body,
well, let's just say it was much
too late. And they never caught
her stalker. Her parents had to
identify all nine pieces of her.

Todd clears his throat.

TODD

That wasn't bad, old man.

Todd turns to Anna, who is no longer there.

He quickly stands up.

TODD

Shit. Where's Anna?

Todd looks around the room. She's gone.

STEVE

Looks like she got too scared and
dipped out.

TODD

No, I would've seen her.

Todd looks at The Mortician, a little angry.

TODD

What have you done with her? Where
is she?

THE MORTICIAN

I've been here this whole time,
right in front of you, telling the
story.

TODD

Bullshit. You've done something
with her.

THE MORTICIAN

Perhaps you were too engrossed by my story to notice her slip past you.

TODD

Tell me where she is!

THE MORTICIAN

I couldn't tell you where she went. Please sit. What I can tell you is another story.

Todd remains standing, uneasy.

TODD

No, we have to go. We can't let her walk home by herself.

Steve looks at Todd.

STEVE

Dude, just chill out and sit down. She went home. She'll be waiting for us when we get back.

THE MORTICIAN

Listen to your friend. Unless you're too scared to allow me to continue?

The Mortician sneers.

Todd looks at him smugly, and sits back down.

TODD

I'm not scared. So far, you haven't impressed me, bud.

THE MORTICIAN

Well now, let's just see if I can ammend that, shall we?

The Mortician turns and opens a second body drawer. He looks inside, and then back at the guys.

THE MORTICIAN

We all have our pleasures in life, do we not? For some it's writing. Dating. Video games. Films. But there are some who find pleasure in much...darker things. Violent things. Repulsive acts. This is the story of Steve, one such

(MORE)

THE MORTICIAN (cont'd)
person who takes pleasure in the
latter, and the power of guilt.

DISSOLVE TO:

"RETRIBUTION"

EXT. OLD HOUSE - NIGHT

THE MORTICIAN (V.O.)
I call it, "Retribution."

A car drives down a long driveway, heading for a large two-story house.

The driveway and house is surrounded by trees and bushes and is completely covered in darkness.

It is dark and unsettling.

The car stops in front of the house.

Steve gets out of the car, walks up to the front door of the house, unlocks it, and steps inside, closing the door behind him.

INT. OLD HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, ENTRANCE WAY - NIGHT

Steve turns and locks and bolts the door.

He flicks on a dim light, and we see him now for the first time in the light.

It's the same Steve for sure, but he doesn't have the shaggy hair, the stoner gaze, or the bright clothes.

He's adequately dressed, clean shaven, and has a nice hair cut.

There's just one problem: he has some blood stains on his shirt and hands.

Steve walks away from the door, heading for the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

Steve walk into the kitchen, and, without turning a light on, he heads for the fridge.

He takes a beer from it, opens it, and drinks some.

He stands there a moment, thinking.

He then exits the kitchen, and heads for the stairs.

INT. OLD HOUSE, 2ND FLOOR, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Steve slowly climbs the stairs, and walks down the hallway, entering the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM

Steve enters the bedroom, and turns on a small lamp, which barely lights the room.

He sits on the edge of his bed, and looks at the floor, thinking.

He looks up at the ceiling, and sighs.
He then looks back down at his blood-stained hands, and shakes his head.

He stands up.

INT. BATHROOM

Steve enters the bathroom, and flicks on the light.

From outside, thunder quietly rumbles.

He stares at himself in the mirror for a moment, his eyes haunted.

FLASH

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Steve sits behind his desk, staring at a computer screen, twirling his pen in his hands.

He scribbles something down on a piece of paper.

He looks up, something catching his eye.

MARY, a fellow colleague, walks past his cubicle, looking very sexy. Skirt, stockings, athletic, curvy body. Dark hair. Tan skin. She's absolutely stunning.

STEVE

So, when are we going out on that date, Mary?

Mary turns around and forces a smile, clearly annoyed.

MARY

Oh, you know, whenever I think you can afford to take me out.

Steve smiles.

STEVE

Well I've got plenty of money. So, how about tonight after work?

MARY

How about not? You're a cute guy, Steve, but you're not my type. You can't handle me.

Steve's smile quickly disappears.

STEVE

Don't tell me what I can and can't handle. I'm a big boy.

Mary looks at Steve seriously.

MARY

Relax, huh? We're at work, keep it light. That right there is your problem. I'll see you later.

Mary walks away, leaving the office area.

Steve sits there a moment, and throws his pen down, fuming.

STEVE

You're damn right you will.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Steve pins down Mary onto the hood of a car, and begins tearing at her clothes.

Mary fights with him, screaming. Crying. Clawing.

Steve slaps her across the face.

FLASH

INT. OLD HOUSE, 2ND FLOOR, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Steve shakes his head, and begins to undress.

INT. SHOWER

Steve stands directly under the shower nozzle, letting the warm water spray onto the top of his head.

He places his hands onto the shower wall, and bows his head, still thinking.

FLASH

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Steve fights with GUY, Mary's boyfriend.

Mary watches in horror, nearly hysteric.

MARY

No! Stop it! Leave him alone!

The two slug each other other, and Steve tackles him to the ground.

MARY

No!

Steve chokes Guy with one hand, and slugs him across the face with the other.

FLASH

INT. OLD HOUSE, 2ND FLOOR, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Steve has stepped out of the shower, and has wrapped a towel around himself.

He exits the bathroom.

INT. OLD HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve has put on sweat pants and a white T-shirt.

He sits in the living room in a chair, sipping his beer, watching TV.

Outside, it is pouring. Thunder grumbles, and lightning flashes.

Although Steve has the TV on, his mind is clearly elsewhere.

FLASH

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Mary and Guy walk through the empty parking garage, arms linked, laughing and chatting and enjoying themselves.

Steve is just about to get into his car, and turns, watching them walk past.

Steve can't stop staring at Mary. The way she walks. The way she looks.

Sexual frustration and humiliation build up inside Steve.

He closes his car door, and starts following behind them.

FLASH

INT. OLD HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve finishes his beer, and sets it on the coffee table beside him.

Lightning flashes, and the thunder explodes, filling the house with its noise.

In the thunder, it almost sounds like a woman screaming.

Steve stares off again.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Mary and Guy stop at their car, and the two begin kissing.

Steve stops just in front of them, and clears his throat.

STEVE

Excuse me.

Mary and Guy stop kissing, and look at Steve.

GUY

What's up?

Steve looks at Mary, smiles, and then looks at Guy.

STEVE

You have a very pretty girlfriend.
I was wondering if I might borrow
her for an hour or so.

MARY

Excuse me? That's not funny Steve.
I'm tired of this shit. I'm going
to report you to HR, I'm tired of
being nice to you and just
brushing it off.

Guy clearly doesn't like this, and takes a step towards Steve.

GUY

You might want to get the fuck out
of here before I beat you to
death, you prick.

Guy grabs Mary and the two head for their car.

Steve darts forward and grabs Mary, spinning her around.

STEVE

Come here, baby. Let's party.

MARY

Stop it! Let go of me!

Guy pushes Steve away from Mary, and slugs him across the face.

GUY

Get out of here, you creep!

Steve throws himself at Guy, punching him.

The two begin to brawl.

INT. OLD HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve shifts uncomfortably in his chair, sighing.

He looks at the TV, trying to watch it. Trying to clear his mind. It's not working.

Lightning flashes again. The wind picks up, hammering the rain against the windows.

Steve looks out the windows at the pouring rain.

It consumes him.

FLASH

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Steve and Guy are on the ground, brawling.

MARY

You're going to kill him! Stop!
Help!

Guy punches Steve in the side, and this pisses Steve off.

He pulls a knife out of his pocket, and begins stabbing it into Guy.

STEVE

Fucker!

Mary screams and cries.

MARY

Oh my God, no!

Steve gets off of Guy, and looks at Mary.

She turns to run, but Steve is on her.

He pins her down onto the hood of the car, and begins tearing at her clothes.

Mary screams and cries and fights. Slapping. Clawing. She's powerless.

Steve reaches up her dress, and rips off her panties.

He quickly undoes his pants, and thrusts. Hard.

Mary screams in pain, and continues trying to fight him off.

Steve slaps her across the face, and pins her arms down.

STEVE

Stupid bitch! I know you've wanted
this. The way you tease me and
lead me on! Let it happen!

Mary leans up, and latches onto Steve's shoulder with her mouth, biting down hard.

STEVE

Ah! Cunt!

Steve pulls his shoulder away, grabs Mary by the throat, and begins bashing her head against the hood of the car. Once. Twice. Three times. Then four.

Mary stops moving. She stops crying. Her eyes are wide with terror, and are not blinking. He's killed her.

Steve finishes up, and then looks at her lifeless body, realizing that she's dead.

He stands there, staring in shock.

FLASH

EXT. SWAMP - NIGHT

Steve backs his car up towards the swamp, and gets out of the car.

Steve pops open the trunk, and lifts a body out of it. He carries it to the water, sets it into the water, and shoves it away from the shore. The body floats away, and then starts to sink into the murky waters.

He does the same with the other body.

He closes the trunk.

A gator slides into the water, and dips underwater.

STEVE

Gator food.

FLASH

INT. OLD HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As Steve sits there, watching TV, lightning flashes, and thunder roars.

The power goes out, and the house is bathed in darkness.

Steve looks up at the ceiling, and sighs.

He stands up, and walks out of the living room.

Outside the living room window, lightning flashes.

Mary is there, looking inside. Drenched with water. Face ghastly pale. Eyes wide. Make up and mascara running.

INT. KITCHEN

Steve opens the fridge and takes out another beer. He opens it, drinks some, and sets it down on the counter.

Something in the house slams, and the harsh sounds of the weather outside can suddenly be clearly heard.

Steve turns towards the direction of the noise, and walks out of the kitchen.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The back door of the house is now open, and it's slamming against the wall from the harsh winds outside.

Steve quickly walks over towards the door, closes it, and locks it.

He turns around, looking over the dark house.

STEVE

Hello?

Steve then shakes his head, sighing.

STEVE

Stupid.

Steve exits the living room, and heads for the stairs.

As he walks past the hallway, lightning flashes again, and Mary is there with the flash, arms outstretched, reaching for Steve.

INT. OLD HOUSE, SECOND FLOOR, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Steve grabs his cell phone from the nightstand, and opens it.
No signal.

STEVE

Perfect.

Steve closes his cell phone and sets it back down on the night stand.

SMASH.

Something breaks downstairs.
Steve looks towards the noise, and stands up.

He grabs a flashlight from under the night stand, and clicks it on.

He exits the bedroom.

INT. OLD HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Steve shines the light down the hallway.

There's something on the ground.
Steve goes over to it and kneels down.

It's a picture of Steve and some of his friends. The glass
is broken.

Steve looks around some more, and sighs.

He stands up, and leaves the hallway, taking the picture
with him.

INT. KITCHEN

Steve carries the picture to the trash, looks at it one last
time, and dumps it.

Somewhere in the house, someone screams.

Steve raises his light, looking around.

STEVE

Who's here?

Steve slowly walks through the kitchen, and exits.

INT. HALLWAY

Steve cautiously walks through the hallway, looking all
around.

Mary suddenly dashes up the stairs.

Steve points the flashlight at them, and sees her legs.

STEVE

Hey!

Steve takes off after her, running up the stairs.

INT. OLD HOUSE, 2ND FLOOR, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Just as Steve makes it into the hallway, Mary darts into one
of the rooms.

Steve runs after her.

STEVE

Gotcha!

Steve runs into the room.

INT. SPARE BEDROOM

Steve darts into the bedroom to find -
Nothing. It's empty. Just a bed, a desk, and some drawers.

Something stirs behind the closed closet doors.

STEVE

I'm going to give you a choice.
You can come out now, and I'll let
you go. Or, you can stay in there
and I'll pull you out myself, beat
you to a pulp, and call the cops.

No response.

Thunder grumbles.

Steve slowly approaches the closet doors, and reaches for
them, tensing up.

He places his hand on the knob, looks at the door, inhales
sharply, rips the doors open, and shines his flashlight in.

The closet is empty.

Steve closes the door and looks around, perplexed.

STEVE

What the hell, man?

Steve looks around the room, and rests the light on the bed.

Steve walks over to the bed, kneels down, and checks under
the bed.

Underneath the bed is just as empty as the closet.

Steve leans back up onto his knees, shaking his head.

Lightning flashes again, and Mary is kneeled down right by
him, eyes wide, mouth agape.

Steve suddenly turns to where she was, standing up with a
start.

She's not there any more.

Steve shakes his head, and then whacks it with the
flashlight.

STEVE
You're losing it.

Steve exits the bedroom.

INT. OLD HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Steve slowly walks down the stairs, clicking off his flashlight.

Once he reaches the bottom of the stairs -

MARY (O.S.)
(Whispered)
Steve.

Steve stops moving, and looks around, cocking his head, listening.

MARY (O.S.)
(Whispered)
Come here.

Steve slowly walks away from the stairs, slowly walking through the hallway, listening.

MARY (O.S.)
(Whispered)
I want you.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Steve steps back into the living room, and looks around.

MARY (O.S.)
(Whispered)
Outside, Steve.

Steve slowly walks over to the window, and raises the blinds.

Lightning flashes.

Outside, in the yard, Mary is spinning around in circles, hands raised, looking up at the sky.

Steve watches in disbelief.

STEVE
No.

Steve looks away, rubbing his eyes.

He looks back outside.

Mary is gone.

Steve sighs, continuing to look.

Lightning flashes again, and Mary is suddenly there, throwing herself against the window, shrieking.

Steve jumps back away from the window with a yell, and falls on his ass.

Steve quickly gets back up, and runs for the back door.

EXT. OLD HOUSE, BACK YARD - NIGHT

Steve runs outside into the pouring rain, flashlight on.

Lightning cracks and thunder roars.

He looks around frantically. The yard is empty. There's nothing but trees and darkness.

STEVE

What do you want? Huh? Show yourself, damn it!

Steve spins around.

STEVE

Where are you? Come out and face me!

The only response Steve gets is more thunder and lightning.

Steve looks to a fro, on edge, close to a heart attack.

STEVE

Come on! I'm right here!

Nothing.

Thunder lightly grumbles, and Steve lowers his flashlight, and his head.

INT. OLD HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Steve walks into the kitchen, grabs a hand towel from the stove, and wipes off his hair, face, and hands with it.

He looks around, sighing, and exits the kitchen.

STEVE

Keep it together, man. You're losing it.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Steve walks through the living room to the fireplace, grabs some lighter fluid from the shelf, squirts some on the wood, grabs a match, strikes it, and lights the fire.

The fire roars to life, and Steve stays crouched there a moment, warming his hands.

After a few moments, Steve stands back up, and makes his way over to a big comfy chair.

He plops himself in it with a great sigh.

STEVE

Keep it together, keep it together.

MARY (O.S.)

(Whispered)

Steve.

Steve looks around, terrified.

STEVE

Just leave me alone! You're not real. You're in my head.

The fire suddenly goes out, and the house goes dark again.

Lightning flashes. Thunder cracks.

BONG! BONG! BONG!

A clock chimes from somewhere in the house, louder than usual, filling the living room with noise.

All goes silent again.

STEVE

Please. Just go away. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

Lightning flashes again, and Mary is right there in front of him, a large knife in her hand.

Her eyes are wide, her mouth is agape. She looks ghastly.

She lunges at him with a shriek, toppling the chair over.

Steve screams in terror.

In another flash of lightning, Mary raises the knife, and slams it home.

Thunder roars.

EXT. OLD HOUSE - NIGHT

Thunder rumbles in the distance. The storm ceases almost instantly, and the normal animal noises immediately pick back up, as if the storm was never there to begin with.

EXT. OLD HOUSE - DAY

Morning has arrived, and there are a few police cars outside the house.

A DETECTIVE gets out of his car, and makes his way towards the house.

He is met by a COP.

DETECTIVE

So, what have we got, here?

COP

His friend came by this morning. I guess they were supposed to be going paintballing or something. Anywho, when he didn't answer the door, his friend went around the house and let himself in through the back door. That's when he found our victim.

DETECTIVE

Did he touch or in any other way interact with the body?

COP

He says no.

DETECTIVE

And he called it in and soon as he found it?

COP

That's what he's claiming, yeah.

The two make their way to the door.

The Detective stops and looks at the ground. It's damp. He then looks at the bushes and house itself.

DETECTIVE

It rained last night?

COP

It apparently rained here.
However, the road and all
surrounding property is bone-dry.
It hasn't rained in weeks.

The two step inside the house.

INT. OLD HOUSE - DAY

The Detective and the Cop walk through the house.

COP

It's this way.

The Cop leads the Detective through the house into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Pictures are being taken, and the scene is being surveyed.

The Detective walks over to the tipped-over chair.

Steve is lying there, mouth wide open with horror. But, there isn't a mark on him, nor a single drop of blood.

COP

This is Steven Burrows. Friend
said he believes he was murdered,
but there ain't a mark on him.

The Detective looks over the body.

DETECTIVE

Whatever happened, he looks
terrified. Probably a heart
attack. We'll need an autopsy to
confirm.

The Cop looks at the body again.

COP

What a way to go, frightened like
that. Poor guy.

As we close in on Steve's terror-stricken face -

MARY (O.S.)

(Whispered)

Steve.

Then, she shrieks.

END "RETRIBUTION"

FADE TO:

INT. MORTUARY, MORGUE - NIGHT

The Mortician stands by the body drawer, a smirk on his
face.

Todd sits there, seemingly unimpressed.

TODD

That's it? That's the best you've
got?

THE MORTICIAN

It was apparently enough for your
friend.

Todd turns to Steve.

TODD

Dude, Steve -

Steve isn't there. He's gone.

Todd looks at The Mortician, who cackles.

TODD

Okay, seriously, this isn't funny
anymore. Where are my friends?

THE MORTICIAN

You tell me. Looks like they got
too frightened to stick around for
the finale.

Todd stands up.

TODD

No, you've done something to them,
I know it! Steve would never ditch
me like that over some stupid
ghost story.

THE MORTICIAN

He would, and he did. Clearly,
he's not here.

Todd looks around the room.

THE MORTICIAN

Think about it, where would they
go? There's only one way out of
here. And do you really think
anyone could take them without a
fight? That you would most
definitely notice.

Todd looks around uneasily.

THE MORTICIAN

You seem frightened. The stories
starting to get to you?

TODD

No. I'm just concerned about my
friends.

THE MORTICIAN

Hm. I'm sure you are, mister tough
guy. Well, I still have one last
story to tell. If you think you
can handle it, that is. But, with
the hurry you seem to be in, I'm
not so sure that you can.

Todd looks at The Mortician coolly.

TODD

I can handle whatever you have to
throw at me, pal.

THE MORTICIAN

Is that so? Fantastic.

The Mortician walks over to a third body drawer, and opens
it.

He turns and looks back at Todd.

THE MORTICIAN

Our final story concerns a pesky
scarecrow that is having fun
scaring more than just crows away.

DISSOLVE TO:

"FIELD OF SCREAMS"

EXT. CORN FIELD - NIGHT

THE MORTICIAN (V.O.)

This guilty pleasure of mine is
called "Field of Screams."

JERICHO runs into the cornfield.

There's something wrong with him, though. He's not breathing normally. There's a definite rasp behind it, and, almost animal-like sounds are emitting from him.

Flashlights shine behind him. He's being pursued.

FARMER

There he is!

SHERIFF

I see him!

PRIEST

Don't lose him!

PRIEST, FARMER, and SHERIFF pursue Jericho in the cornfield.

Jericho runs frantically. Hissing. Snarling. Growling.
Something is seriously messed up with this guy.
Jericho runs and runs until

WHAM!

He slams into something.
Jericho looks up at it. It's a scarecrow mounted on a post.

Lights shine on Jericho, and he turns around, hissing.
We see now that his eyes are completely black.

PRIEST

No where left to run. Release
Jericho's body, Azael.

Jericho snarls at the priest.

FARMER

He's not giving in, Father.

Priest raises his bible, and holds up a crucifix.

PRIEST

I command you in the name of the
Father, the Son, and the Holy
Ghost to leave that body and go
back from whence you came!

Jericho shrieks, and charges towards Priest.

Sheriff takes out his pistol, and fires a shot.

PRIEST

No! You mustn't!

Too late.

The bullet slams into Jericho's chest, and Sheriff fires two more times.

Jericho takes the shots, and spins around.
As he spins, something flies out of his body.

It's too quick to make it out, but it's a light apparition
of a demon.

It speeds towards Priest, bounces off his bible, and flies
back towards the scarecrow.

It's gone, and all is quiet.

Priest looks down at Jericho's dead body.

PRIEST

In God's name, look what you've
done!

SHERIFF

He was going to attack you,
Father. I had no choice.

Priest kneels down and touches Jericho's lifeless body.

PRIEST

You've taken an innocents life,
and allowed the demon to escape.

FARMER

That demon is somebody else's
concern now.

SHERIFF

Amen.

Sheriff spits on the ground, and turns to walk away, heading back for the farm.

SHERIFF

Come on, Father.

Sheriff keeps walking, and Farmer joins him.

Priest stands up, and looks at the silent scarecrow. Looks into its hollow, black eyes.

Then, Priest turns and walks away.

SHERIFF (O.S.)

We'll get the coroner out here tomorrow.

The scarecrow suddenly twitches, and then is still.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

SUBTITLE: ONE WEEK LATER

A cop car rides down the barren road.

INT. COP CAR

Sheriff is driving.

Sitting in the passenger seat is Todd, looking miserable.

SHERIFF

You'll do basic farm work out here, boy. Plowing, gathering corn, feeding the livestock. Things like that.

TODD

(sarcastically)
I can't wait.

SHERIFF

You put yourself in this situation when you decided to rob that store. You might as well make the best of it.

TODD

I'll get right on it.

SHERIFF

In my opinion, the judge let you off easy. Community service? Pft. I woulda locked your ass up for a spell. You woulda learned then.

TODD

Thank God you weren't the judge, then, huh?

Sheriff looks at Todd, not happy with that remark.

SHERIFF

Watch yourself, boy. I can make your punishment much worse. All it takes is one call to the judge from me.

Todd scoffs, and looks out the window.

SHERIFF

You know, you're not the only kid in the world that's done some stupid things. Hell, we all have. But there's always a line to draw. You crossed that line, and got caught.

Todd doesn't say anything. He just continues to stare out the window.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

Sheriff pulls up to the farm house, and gets out of the car.

Todd follows suits.

Sitting on the front porch in a rocking chair is Farmer, looking smug.

SHERIFF

Morning, Farmer.

FARMER

Good day, Sheriff. This my new farm hand?

Sheriff nods, and the two walk up the steps onto the porch.

Farmer looks Todd up and down.

FARMER

I don't care to know your name,
and you don't need to know mine.
You start working immediately.

Farmer stands up, and starts walking off the porch.

FARMER

Come with me, boy.

Todd follows Farmer.

SHERIFF

You behave yourself, boy. Farmer
will be checking in with me every
night.

Sheriff heads back to his car, and Farmer leads Todd out
back.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Todd sticks two hooks into a bale of hay, and hefts it off
the ground.

He struggles with it, taking it to the barn.

A moment later, he returns, and does the same thing with a
second bale of hay.

INT. CHICKEN COOP - DAY

Todd enters the chicken coop with a pail of grains.

He tosses handfuls of them onto the ground of the coop, and
the chickens devour them as quickly as he tosses them.

He kicks one of the chickens in frustration.

TODD

Stupid things.

EXT. CHICKEN COOP

Todd steps out of the chicken coop, and hangs the bucket of
grains onto a hook.

From the back door of the farm house, Farmer calls.

FARMER

Hey, boy! Come get some lemonade!

Todd makes his way towards the house.

EXT. CORN FIELD - DAY

It's late in the afternoon, and the sun is just starting to go down.

Todd makes his way through the corn field, picking good cobs, and placing them in a basket.

TODD
(mimicking)
Clean the animal cages. Feed the
stock. Move the hay. Go faster.
Paint the barn. Pick the corn.

As Todd walks deeper into the corn field, he stops suddenly and looks up.

Scarecrow.

Its head is turned to the left.

TODD
You're a creepy fucker.

There are crows on its arms, picking at it.

TODD
Not very good at your job though,
are you?

Todd picks a few more cobs of corn, and then looks back up at the scarecrow.

Its head is now turned to the right.

Todd looks at it, confused.

The crows continue pecking at it.

FARMER (O.S.)
Boy! Come on back, now. It's
getting dark! That's enough for
one day!

Todd looks at the scarecrow a moment longer, and then turns around, heading out of the cornfield.

The scarecrow suddenly snaps its head forward, and watches him walk out.

INT. FARM HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Farmer and Todd sit at the table, eating.

It's an uncomfortable situation.

Farmer belches.

FARMER

After you finish eatin' you're going to clear the table and take care of the dishes. Then it's in the tub and off to bed. Lights out in an hour. Understood?

Todd shrugs his shoulders.

TODD

I don't have much of a choice now, do I?

FARMER

Sure you do. This whole thing was your choice. If you wanna dick around and test me, go right ahead. Just know Sheriff will hear all about it come mornin'.

Todd shoves his plate away.

TODD

I'm finished.

Todd stands up.

FARMER

Well, I'm not. Park it.

Todd sits back down, and Farmer grabs his plate. He begins eating the food.

FARMER

When you grow your own food all your life, you learn to appreciate it. I don't waste one bit in this house. You stick around and fix that attitude, you might learn to appreciate some things yourself, boy.

Todd rolls his eyes.

TODD

Oh, boy.

INT. FARM HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Todd is lying in bed, asleep.

The room is dark.

Outside, the wind is howling.

BARK!

The silence is suddenly broken by the barking of a dog.

BARK! BARK! BARK!

Todd is startled out of sleep.

He sits up, moaning.

TODD

Are you kidding?

The dog continues barking.

Todd climbs out of bed, and steps out of his bedroom.

INT. DINING ROOM

Todd makes his way into the dining room, where the dog is propped into the window, looking outside, and barking.

Todd walks up to the dog.

TODD

(whispered)

Hey!

The dog pays him no mind.

TODD

(whispered)

Shut up! Stop barking!

The dog doesn't heed, and keeps barking.

Finally, Todd steps forward and whacks the dog.

The dog whines, and runs away from the window.

Todd glances out the window, and turns around.

Wait. Something definitely just stepped back into the cornfield.

Todd looks back outside.

There's nothing.

Todd shakes his head, laughing at himself.
He heads back to his room.

INT. FARM HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

The sun has risen, and Todd is still sleeping.

FARMER (O.S.)
What in the hell!?

Todd opens his eyes, and jumps out of bed.

EXT. CHICKEN COOP - DAY

Todd makes his way to the chicken coop, and Farmer steps out of it, a bloody chicken in his hands.

There's feathers everywhere.

TODD
Whoa.

FARMER
Every chicken. Every damn one!
Damn foxes. You forgot to latch
the goddamn door, didn't you?

TODD
No, I -

FARMER
Just perfect. You cost me a lot of
money today, boy. The sheriff is
going to hear about this!

Farmer walks away from the coop.

FARMER
Clean this mess up! After that,
get to work painting the barn!

TODD
But, sir! Really, I -

FARMER

Shut up! I don't want to hear it!

Todd looks around at all the feathers, and the dead, bloodied chicken.

TODD

Shit.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Todd angrily paints the side of the barn, the aggravation clear in his brush strokes and on his face.

He looks over at the cornfield, the scarecrow barely visible from where he is.

He continues painting, and then stops, thinking.

He sets the bucket of paint down, and leaves the brush in it.

He begins walking towards the corn field.

EXT. CORN FIELD - DAY

Todd makes his way through the cornfield, and stops once he gets to the scarecrow.

The scarecrow has some blood stains and feathers on it.

Todd looks at it in disbelief.

TODD

No way.

Todd slowly backs away from the scarecrow, and then turns and starts running back to the farm house.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

Todd runs around the farm house.

TODD

Farmer! Farmer!

Todd makes his way around the front of the house to find Farmer sitting on the porch in his rocking chair.

FARMER

What are you doing? You finish that barn already?

TODD

No. Listen, this might sound crazy, but foxes didn't kill those chickens. I know I latched the gate.

FARMER

Well, something sure as hell did.

TODD

I know, and this is the crazy part. I found what did.

Farmer raises his eyebrow.

FARMER

You did, eh?

TODD

Yes. It's in your cornfield.

FARMER

I'm listening, boy. Out with it!

TODD

Well...your scarecrow did it, sir.

Farmer doesn't laugh it off. Nor does he seem shocked. Instead, anger spreads across his face.

He stands up.

FARMER

Now you listen to me, boy. Listen good. I know what you are and what you did. I don't take kindly to jokes from people like you. I don't find it funny. You're pissing me off, boy. Don't you go near that scarecrow, you understand? You want to blame something for your own mistakes, you blame something believable.

TODD

But I can prove it, sir. Come out to the field with me. You'll see!

Farmer eyes him suspiciously.

EXT. CORNFIELD - DAY

Farmer and Todd make their way to the scarecrow and stop in front of it.

TODD

There. See? I'm not making it up.

FARMER

See what?

Todd looks at the scarecrow.

There are no feathers on it. No blood. It doesn't seem like it's been moved in ages.

Farmer looks at Todd.

FARMER

Don't you EVER waste my time on such nonsense again. You're asking for trouble, boy. Sooner or later it's going to find you. Get back to the barn and finish painting.

TODD

But, sir -

FARMER

No! No buts. Go.

Todd sighs, and turns around in frustration. He heads back towards the barn.

Farmer stays a moment, and looks at the scarecrow.

Its dark, hollow eyes seem to be staring right into Farmer's very soul.

Farmer shudders, and walks away.

On the post the scarecrow is mounted on, its hand balls into a fist.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Todd continues to paint the barn.

Sheriff walks over to him.

SHERIFF

Todd. Come chat with me, boy.

Todd sets down his paint supplies, and walks over to the Sheriff, who is leaning up against the fence.

Todd hops up onto the fence, sitting on it.

TODD

Look, Sheriff, about those chickens -

SHERIFF

I could give a rats ass about those chickens, boy. Foxes kill chickens all the time on farms. It just comes with the territory.

TODD

Oh. Then what?

The Sheriff removes his hat, and sets it on the fence.

SHERIFF

Farmer was telling me that you were blaming the scarecrow.

TODD

It wasn't a joke. And I'm not insane, I swear.

SHERIFF

No, I know. I know. Look, just stay away from that scarecrow, okay? It hasn't been the same since -

TODD

Since what?

Sheriff looks at the ground, then back at Todd.

SHERIFF

About two weeks ago, a man by the name of Jericho came under a sickness. Claimed he was possessed. Spoke it tongues, crap like that. One night about a week ago, a priest comes calling, says he's going to exorcise the demon. It went bad, right out in the corn field, right in front of that scarecrow.

TODD

So, that's why he got touchy about
the scarecrow.

Sheriff nods his head.

SHERIFF

Farmer said he's seen the
scarecrow at night, out walking
around. Thinks that whatever demon
was inside Jericho jumped into it
when I - when Jericho died that
night. If you believe in that sort
of thing.

Todd nods his head, and looks out to the corn field.

TODD

Okay.

Sheriff grabs his hat and puts it back on.

SHERIFF

Look, just stay away from that
scarecrow. Don't talk about. Don't
even look at it, all right? All
it'll do is cause trouble with the
farmer.

Todd jumps off the fence.

TODD

Yes, sir.

SHERIFF

Good boy.

Sheriff walks away.

He stops, and turns around.

SHERIFF

And Todd?

Todd looks at the Sheriff.

SHERIFF

You see anything...unusual, don't
hesitate to call.

Sheriff hands Todd a card, and Todd takes it, looking at it.

He nods.

TODD

Will do.

Todd heads back to the farm, and Sheriff heads to his car.

EXT. CORN FIELD - NIGHT

The wind howls again tonight, and the corn stalks sway from the harsh wind.

CU - SCARECROW POST

The scarecrow is no longer on the post.

INT. FARM HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Todd stirs in his bed, apparently having a bad dream.

After a moment, he opens his eyes, and gets out of bed.

He goes to his window, and draws the blinds, looking outside.

From the window, Todd watches as the scarecrow makes its way towards the barn.

TODD

Oh, shit.

Todd runs out of the room.

INT. KITCHEN

Todd gets on the phone, and dials a number.

TODD

Sheriff? It's Todd up at the farm. I know what time it is, and I'm sorry. Listen, there's someone in the barn. Sheriff...it looked like the scarecrow. Okay.

Todd hangs up the phone.

SLAM!

Something slams outside.

SLAM! SLAM! SLAM!

Todd makes his way towards the window, and looks out it.

The wind is slamming the unlatched barn door against the side of the barn.

Todd inhales deeply, and makes his way towards the back door.

EXT. BARN - NIGHT

Todd slowly makes his way towards the slamming barn door.

Todd steps inside the barn.

INT. BARN

Todd enters the dark barn.

A cow moos, startling Todd.

Todd grabs the lantern from the wall, and turns it on, dimly illuminating the dark barn.

Todd looks around. Everything seems normal.

BANG!

Something falls up in the loft, and Todd aims his lantern up there.

The scarecrow looks down at him, and then disappears into the shadows.

TODD
What. The. Hell.

Todd slowly begins to back up.

A hand suddenly grabs Todd's shoulder, and he turns around with a start.

It's Sheriff.

SHERIFF
What are you doing out here, boy?

TODD
I came to check it out.

SHERIFF
Come on.

TODD
He's up in the loft, sheriff!

Sheriff leads Todd out of the barn.

CU - SICKLE

A gloved hand with straw coming out of it grabs a hand sickle from off the wall.

EXT. BARN

Sheriff leads Todd away from the barn.

TODD
Sheriff, its going to get away!

SHERIFF
Listen to me, boy. Get back inside. Don't come out till morning, you'll only get yourself all excited again.

TODD
The scarecrow -

SHERIFF
I'll take a look at the barn. It's probably just a prowler. Get inside. I'll talk to you in the morning, okay?

TODD
Fine.

Todd turns and heads back to the farm house.

Sheriff draws his pistol, and takes out a flashlight.

He heads for the barn.

INT. BARN

Sheriff enters the barn.

SLAM!

The barn door slams shut, startling Sheriff.

He drops his flashlight, and the barn is bathed in darkness.

SHERIFF
Ha. Shit.

Sheriff sighs, and takes out a cigarette.

He strikes a match, inhaling deeply.

He then leans down and picks up the flashlight, looking around the barn.

SHERIFF
Come out with your hands up.
You've been caught.

He is met with no response.

SHERIFF
Goddamn kid.

Sheriff checks all along the barn.

The cows shift nervously.

Something moves up on the loft.

Sheriff shines the light up there. Nothing can be seen.

SHERIFF
Is anyone up there?

Nothing.

Sheriff makes his way to the ladder.

SHERIFF
I'm getting too old for this
cat-and-mouse bullshit.

He climbs up the ladder, and crawls onto the landing, standing up.

He looks around. Still nothing.

As he takes a step forward, he trips over something, dropping the flashlight again.

The light goes out.

SHERIFF
Goddamn it.

He picks up the flashlight, and clicks the button.

It doesn't turn on.

He begins whacking it with his hand.

SHERIFF

Come on, you son of a bitchin'
thing.

After a couple more whacks, the flashlight clicks back on.

The scarecrow stands behind Sheriff, sickle raised.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

Farmer steps out onto his front porch, a glass of orange juice in his hand.

Sheriff's car is still parked out front.

Farmer looks at it curiously.

FARMER

What in the hell? Boy! Boy, get
out here! Now!

A moment later, Todd steps out onto the porch.

TODD

Sir?

FARMER

Do you know why the sheriff's car
is here?

TODD

I...no. I mean, I called him out
here last night, but I don't know
why he'd be here again. I haven't
seen him.

FARMER

You called him here last night?
Why?

Todd looks at the ground.

FARMER

Answer me, boy.

TODD

I saw a prowler heading for the
barn last night, all right? I
thought that maybe whatever killed
the chickens was after the cows,
too.

FARMER
Another scarecrow tale, eh?

Todd doesn't say anything.

FARMER
Well, let's go see what you've
messed up this time, shall we?

The two walk off the porch and head around to the back of the house.

EXT. BARN - DAY

The two head for the barn.

When they get in front of it, they stop dead in their tracks.

Written on the now closed doors, in red paint: WAITING.

Farmer looks at Todd, disgusted and afraid.

FARMER
This is not funny, boy. That's it.
You're finished.

Farmer turns around.

FARMER
Sheriff? Sheriff!

TODD
I didn't do this!

FARMER
Sheriff! Where are you?

Pissed off, Todd flings open the barn doors and darts inside.

Farmer turns around.

FARMER
The hell you doing?

INT. BARN

Todd looks around the barn.

TODD
Where are you? Huh? Sheriff!

Todd looks around.
Todd looks up at the loft, and as he does, something falls from it. A body.

It's Sheriff.
The sickle is sticking out of him.

Todd stands there, shocked.

Farmer walks in the barn, eyes wide.

FARMER
My God! You've killed him!

Todd turns and looks at Farmer.

TODD
No! Wait! I didn't! I swear! It's
the scarecrow!

Farmer runs as best as he can out of the barn.

FARMER
I'm bringing in the city police!

TODD
Don't! I didn't! Please! You have
to believe me!

But it's too late. Farmer is gone.

Todd yells in frustration.

He grabs one of the hay hooks from the wall, and runs out of the barn.

EXT. CORN FIELD - DAY

Todd runs through the corn field, and stops at the scarecrow.

TODD
Bastard!

Todd begins hacking and tearing at the scarecrow. Hay and straw fly out of it as he rips into it.

TODD
Move! Come alive! Defend yourself!
Come on! Fight me! Stop me!

The scarecrow does not move. It does not make a sound.

Todd stops hacking at it, and looks at it. He's very emotional.

TODD

Why?

Suddenly the scarecrow whips its head so that its looking directly at Todd, and shrieks.

Todd yells.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

A cop car rides down the road.

INT. COP CAR

Two cops are in the front.

Sitting handcuffed in the back is Todd, his head lowered, covered in blood.

COP

Awful thing you did to the sheriff
and that farmer, son. But don't
worry, you're gunna pay. We got a
special place for people like you.

Todd smirks, and looks up.

His eyes are as black as Jericho's were.

TODD (V.O.)

Okay, okay. I got it. I know how
it's going to end.

END "FIELD OF SCREAMS"

FADE TO:

INT. MORTUARY, MORGUE - NIGHT

The Mortician stands there, looking at Todd, his eyebrow raised.

THE MORTICIAN

I'm sure you don't. I have not yet
finished telling the story.
Please, let me continue.

TODD

There's no point. The ending is totally predictable.

The Mortician crosses his arms, irritated.

THE MORTICIAN

Young man, I am the story teller here, not you.

TODD

Check this out, the guy is possessed. There are three possible endings. One, he kills the cops in the car and escapes. Two, they take him to the station, but he breaks out, escaping. Or three, they jail him, execute him, and the demon is free to possess someone else. Its all been done before.

Todd stands up.

TODD

I mean no offense to you, old timer. You told the stories really well, but there's only so much that just a story is going to do, you know?

THE MORTICIAN

You're telling me you're not scared?

TODD

Don't get me wrong, the stories definitely have a creepy factor going for them. But, let's face it, they're just stories. None of it is real!

The Mortician laughs, and looks at the open body drawers.

THE MORTICIAN

Not real, eh? Is that what you think?

TODD

Yeah. Why do you keep opening up those drawers?

THE MORTICIAN

See for yourself!

The Mortician reaches into the first body drawer, and pulls out the table.

There's a body on it.

He does the same for the second. Another body.

Todd looks at the bodies in horror.

Body number one is Anna, and she's in several bloody pieces.

Body number two is Steve, eyes wide with terror.

TODD

What the fuck is this? How did you

-

THE MORTICIAN

Real enough for you?

Todd looks at The Mortician in horror.

TODD

What the fuck are you?

The Mortician smiles with morbid glee.

THE MORTICIAN

Me? Why, dear boy, I'm a collector.

TODD

A collector of what?

The Mortician stares into Todd's eyes, a smile spreading across his face.

THE MORTICIAN

Souls.

Todd slowly starts to back up.

The Mortician motions to the third body drawer.

He then picks up a scalpel.

THE MORTICIAN

You see, by the end of my story, you would've been in that drawer yourself, and wouldn't have been the wiser. But you just had to

(MORE)

THE MORTICIAN (cont'd)
interrupt. You kids today. A bunch
of know-it-alls.

TODD
Wh- wh- how?

THE MORTICIAN
How did I do it? The stories hold
magic, my dear boy. It is, after
all, the Witching Hour.

Todd continues backing up towards the stairs, stumbling over
a chair.

THE MORTICIAN
I should tell you to not bother to
try and escape, but you won't
listen to me if I do. I'm taking
your soul, boy. The process has
already begun. It belongs to me
now. There is no escape.

SMASH! SMASH! SMASH!

Three more body drawers explode open, and a GHOUL crawls out
of each one.

The Ghouls are almost stark white with white eyes, sharp
teeth, long fingers and nails. They're bald, and have an
almost bat-like appearance.

They make their way towards the stairs.

Todd takes off running.

The Mortician laughs.

THE MORTICIAN
Run! Run while you can!

He laughs even harder.

Todd slams himself against the door at the top of the
stairs, but it doesn't move.

The Ghouls slowly crawl their way up the stairs after him.

TODD
Help me! Anybody!

THE MORTICIAN (O.S.)
Nobody can hear you. Nobody can
help you.

Todd slams himself against the door again. Still, it doesn't budge.

The Ghouls get ever closer to him.

Todd twists and yanks on the handle to no avail.

The Ghouls soon become mere feet away from the frantic Todd.

With one more burst of strength, Todd busts the door open.

INT. MORTUARY - NIGHT

Todd runs through the mortuary towards the front door.

He tugs on it. It doesn't move.

TODD
Fuck! Come on! Give me a break!

Todd continues to try to open the door.

The Ghouls enter the room, as does The Mortician.

Todd turns around, terror stricken. He then goes back to trying to open the door.

THE MORTICIAN
This is the end of the road, Todd.
It was a good effort on your part,
though. Really. I applaud you.

The Mortician starts clapping.

The Ghouls draw ever closer to Todd.

TODD
Please. Just let me go. I won't
tell. You don't have to do this.
You wouldn't even like my soul!
I'm a bad guy!

THE MORTICIAN
No can do. I need your soul.

Todd turns around and continues his futile attempt to open the door.

As one of the Ghouls grabs on to Todd, the clock starts to chime.

Once. Twice. Three times.

It's 3am.

TODD
Leave me alone!

Todd looks behind him.

The Ghouls are gone, as is The Mortician.

The door flies open, and Todd falls to the ground outside.

EXT. MORTUARY - NIGHT

Todd stands up, and runs from the door way.

He turns and looks at the mortuary.
All is still.

Todd then turns and runs towards town.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Todd runs into the police station, out of breath.

The RECEPTIONIST looks at Todd, surprised to see him.

RECEPTIONIST
I never thought I'd see you here
on your own free will, Todd.

TODD
The sheriff, I need to see the
sheriff!

RECEPTIONIST
The sheriff's gone home for the
night. I'm sure whatever it is,
one of our deputies can help you
out.

Todd shakes his head.

TODD
I only want to talk to him. You'll
all just think I'm crazy.

The Receptionist looks at Todd curiously.

RECEPTIONIST

Well then I guess you'll just have to wait until morning. He said no calls tonight.

Todd scoffs and exits the police station.

EXT. MORTUARY - DAY

A couple cop cars pull up to the mortuary.

The sheriff and a few DEPUTIES get out of the cars, and make their way up to the mortuary.

They tug on the front door. It's locked.

The deputies make their way around, looking at the window, most of which have been boarded up.

They return to the sheriff, who is waiting at the front.

SHERIFF

You boys see anything?

DEPUTY

The place is sealed up tight, Sheriff. All the windows are mostly boarded. What do you think?

SHERIFF

Probably just a goof, but, I'd hate to think that we'd miss something if we didn't go ahead and look inside.

DEPUTY

Sheriff?

Sheriff motions to the door.

SHERIFF

Kick it down. We're going inside.

Two deputies walk over to the door.

They count to three, and with a might kick, the door swings open.

The cops enter the mortuary.

INT. MORTUARY - DAY

It's dusty as all hell inside.

As the daylight floods it with color, rats scurry about.

Sheriff looks at the floor.

No footprints. Just lots of dust.

SHERIFF

Doesn't look like anybody has been
in here for years.

The group of officers look around, and make their way to the morgue door.

A deputy pushes on it.

DEPUTY

Locked as well, sir.

SHERIFF

Kick it down, if you please.

The deputy kicks the door in, and the group makes their way down the stairs into the morgue.

INT. MORTUARY, MORGUE - DAY

As they make their way down the stairs, they flick on their flashlights to illuminate the place.

As with the rest of the mortuary, the morgue is covered with dust, and doesn't look like it's been touched in ages.

They look around.

No blood. No autopsy tools. No Ghouls.

SHERIFF

Open one of them body drawers.
Todd said his friends' bodies were
inside.

A deputy tugs on the heavily rusted body drawer door.

After much strength and the groan of rusted metal, it finally opens. Slowly.

Sheriff shines the flashlight in the drawer.

It's empty. No body.

Sheriff looks at his deputies.

SHERIFF

Well fellas, looks like we've been goofed. The kids are probably hiding out in the woods somewhere, or went on a road trip and didn't tell their parents. Let's head back into town. I've got some words for Todd.

Sheriff and his deputies head back up the stairs.

EXT. TODD'S HOUSE - DAY

Sheriff pulls into the driveway and gets out of the car.

Todd runs out the front door, eager to hear the news.

Sheriff calmly gets out of his car.

TODD

Did you get him? Tell me you got him!

SHERIFF

We went out there and searched the place high and low, Todd.

TODD

What did you find? Did you find them?

SHERIFF

Nobody was there. The place was empty. Deserted. We had to kick in the doors to even get inside. There wasn't even so much as a footprint on the dusty floor.

Todd appears confused.

TODD

But...that can't be. We were there. We were all there. And it was real. They're dead. You must've been too late. See, he had already left. It was the Witching Hour, you see, and -

SHERIFF

That's enough, Todd. All right?
Your cover story is blown. So tell
me, where are your friends?
Where'd they go? Out of town? In
the woods? What?

Anger crosses Todd's face.

TODD

This isn't some cover story. I'm
not making this up, goddamn it!

SHERIFF

You watch your language, young
man.

TODD

No! This is horse shit! What do we
pay you guys for? Why would I make
something like that up? Huh?

Sheriff sighs.

SHERIFF

Todd, you're a trouble maker. I
know it, we all know it. I'm going
to let this one slide. I'm warning
you, though. If you waste our time
again, there will be consequences
for your actions. We're not here
for you to play with. We're here
to help people. Do you understand?

TODD

I'm not wasting your time! What
the hell!

SHERIFF

Do you understand?

Todd looks at the ground.

TODD

I got it.

SHERIFF

Good. I expect your friends to be
back within twenty four hours. If
not, I'll be coming back to get
the real story from you.

Sheriff heads back to his car.

TODD

Yeah, some fine cop you are!

Sheriff opens his car door, and looks back at Todd.

SHERIFF

You watch it, boy. I've got half a mind to bring you in right now.

Sheriff closes his car door, and starts his engine.

TODD

(muttering)

Fucking pig.

Sheriff drives away, and Todd steps back inside his house.

EXT. TODD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Todd sits out on the front steps of his porch, smoking a cigarette.

He looks at his watch.
12:01am.

Todd looks down the street.

Headlights appear, and a car slowly rides towards the house. It stops in front of the house, driver side facing.

Todd gets a good look at it. It's a hearse.

TODD

What the hell?

The driver's window slowly rolls down, revealing blackness inside the hearse.

The Mortician suddenly sticks his head out the window, smiling at Todd.

THE MORTICIAN

There is room for one more!

Todd quickly stands up, suddenly very afraid.

The Mortician smiles at Todd, motioning for him to come closer.

TODD

No, thanks!

The Mortician sits there a for a few moments, just looking at Todd, that same creepy smile on his face.

Todd keeps his eyes on him, ready to move if he jumps out of the hearse.

Then, The Mortician puts the hearse into gear, and slowly drives away, cackling.

Todd runs into the street and watches as the hearse drives away.

In the back window of the hearse, a Ghoul suddenly smashes it's face against the window, startling Todd.

But the hearse doesn't stop, it just keeps right on driving.

Suddenly, headlights flash on Todd, and a horn honks.

Todd turns around, but it's too late.

SMASH CUT TO BLACKNESS

The Mortician's creepy cackle is the last thing heard.

FADE OUT.