

A Haunting
By
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INT. CHURCH FRIENDSHIP ROOM- DAY

Guests at a funeral for Christopher Winters stand around, idly chatting amongst themselves.

Mary-Anne Winters-- forty, frail, with a tall, thin build, and stout demeanor-- stands off to the side, along the wall.

A woman across the room waves over to her and starts to walk over.

Mary-Anne quickly flees up the steps.

INT. CHURCH CHAPEL- DAY

At the end of the meticulously lined rows of pews, atop the tiled alter, rests an ornately sculpted casket.

Mary-Anne slogs down the aisle towards the alter.

When she reaches it, she stares at it disdainfully.

The woman from the friendship room, Janet, appears behind her.

JANET

Needed to get away?

Mary-Anne turns to address her.

MARY-ANNE

Yes, actually.

Janet acknowledges the casket.

JANET

Did you look at him?

MARY-ANNE

No, actually. The coroner said that the steering-wheel went straight into his forehead.

JANET

I'd be the same way. A friend of mine, though, took one final look before the burial. She said it comforted her, to see her husband one last time.

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE

Him being in there is all the
comfort I need.

A beat.

JANET

Everyone's looking for you
downstairs. Whenever you're ready.

MARY-ANNE

I'll be down soon.

Janet nods and leaves.

Mary-Anne is now alone in the chapel.

She scopes out the room quickly before approaching the
casket.

She cautiously lifts the cap.

Inside rests the nicely dressed corpse of Chris Winters.

His skin is pale, and there's a noticeably large indenture
in his forehead from the steering wheel.

Mary-Anne stares at his face with raw indifference.

MARY-ANNE

(to herself)

Good riddance.

She raises her arm to close the cap, but out of the corner
of her eye, she catches a glimpse of what appears to be
Chris's feet moving.

She pauses, with one hand on the cap, and the other resting
on the extendover of the casket.

She stares at his corpse in disbelief of what just happened.

Suddenly, his head rolls over onto its side and stares her
dead in the eyes.

She yelps as the cap of the casket comes crashing down on to
her hand.

She pulls it back in pain as the casket closes with a thud.

The skin has been torn from her fingers, and it's bleeding
severely.

INT. CHURCH BATHROOM- DAY

Mary-Anne runs her injured hand under cold water.

She removes some cloth from her purse and bites her lips as she dresses the wound.

Another woman, Patricia (a friend of Mary-Anne's) swings open the bathroom door and finds herself relieved to see Mary-Anne.

PATRICIA

There you are! Everyone's been looking all over for you.

(looks at Mary-Anne's hand)
What happened? Are you okay.

MARY-ANNE

Yeah, I just got it caught in a door upstairs.

PATRICIA

These church doors are so heavy, I'm surprised I haven't hurt *myself* yet.

MARY-ANNE

Yeah.

PATRICIA

Well, let me get you something. Water maybe? I have aspirin in my purse.

MARY-ANNE

Oh, really, you don't need to do that. It doesn't even really hurt.

PATRICIA

You sure?

MARY-ANNE

Really.

PATRICIA

I should warn you before you go out, Linda's on the hunt for you.

MARY-ANNE

Well then, maybe there is something you can get for me. Some planks and nails to board myself in with.

Patricia chuckles.

(CONTINUED)

PATRICIA

I'll go ask Father Matt where they
store the rapture supplies.

Mary-Anne finishes with her wound and checks her phone. It
reads 12:01.

PATRICIA (CONT.)

It's going by much slower than you
thought, huh?

MARY-ANNE

Yeah.

PATRICIA

Well, trust me, today will be the
hardest. After today, every day
gets easier and easier, I promise.

MARY-ANNE

Well, thank you.

INT. CHURCH FRIENDSHIP ROOM- DAY

Swarms of people are huddled in various corners of the
room-- all layered from head to toe in black.

As Mary-Anne exits the restroom, their gazes all turn to
her. Some give little waves. Some pout to exhibit their
empathy. Others turn away almost immediately, in fear that
they might make direct eye-contact.

There are banquet tables lined with food along the left and
right wall, and at the back of the friendship room, directly
adjacent to where Mary-Anne stands now, is a large, poorly
painted portrayal of her late-husband Chris.

Mary-Anne stares disapprovingly at the hideous piece of art.
She hadn't even wanted it done, but her Mother-in-law Linda
insisted.

She fixates her eyes on some finger-sandwiches and begins
her trek to vanquish the hunger that has plagued her since
the 9am service began.

Along the way, she is inundated with platitudes to the likes
of "So sorry about your loss" and "I hope you're doing
well," to which she replies with the same monotonous "Thank
you" she's recited all day.

She survives the pool of uncertain-condolences and finally
reaches the finger-sandwiches.

(CONTINUED)

She grabs a plate and takes one, then a second, and then a third before she finally just empties the tray onto her plate.

She is met with contemptuous looks.

MARY-ANNE
(Mutters under her breath)
I paid for them anyways.

As she turns to leave the table, she stumbles into Linda.

Linda is a plump, disagreeable, and malign old woman who has been verbally opposed to Mary-Anne since she and Chris wed.

MARY-ANNE
Oh, Linda, I'm so sorry.

LINDA
Well, you really must pay more attention to where you're going.

MARY-ANNE
I'm sorry.

LINDA
That's quite a bit of food. Burl and I didn't think you were going to eat at all today. It's not often that grieving wives do.

MARY-ANNE
Well, hunger has gotten the best of me.

LINDA
As have a lack of manners. You've hardly spoken to any of the guests today.

MARY-ANNE
I don't have much to say to them. They're mostly Chris's friends, not mine.

LINDA
The least you can do is introduce yourself.

MARY-ANNE
Why should I? I'm sure you've already given them an earful about me.

LINDA

Callousness doesn't suit you.

MARY-ANNE

Same could be said about you. This is what you always wanted. Now I can finally be out of your life.

INT. MARY-ANNE'S HOUSE- DOWNSTAIRS- NIGHT

Mary-Anne's House is two-stories. It has a living-room, kitchen, dining-room, and study downstairs, and upstairs is where Mary-Anne's room is.

The downstairs floorplan is open, with all of the rooms connected by little entrances laid out by divider-walls.

Mary-Anne, dressed in the same clothes as before, is seated on the sectional in her living-room.

She flips through channels exhaustedly.

There is nothing on, so she rises from the sofa and walks over into the kitchen.

She opens the fridge, scans it for anything worth eating, but soon abandons hope and opts to search the pantry instead.

She grabs a bag of potato-chips and returns to the couch.

She sits and eats for a few moments before, from behind the sofa, an unearthly whisper interjects.

WHISPER

Mary-Anne.

She turns around, startled, but sees nothing but her own reflection staring back at her in the window.

She rubs her face wearily.

MARY-ANNE

(to herself)

I need to go bed.

She rises from the sofa and shuts off the television.

She walks upstairs, and turns the lights off on her way up.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY- NIGHT

The upstairs is ostensibly open to the floor below. Mini-balustrades line the first few feet from the left and right at the top of the stairs.

Mary-Anne enters two solid-oak doors into her room.

INT. BEDROOM- NIGHT

Mary-Anne enters her bedroom and collapses onto the bed.

She falls asleep.

An hour or two pass, and Mary-Anne still lies asleep on the bed.

From the open door-frame, you can see the lights downstairs click on.

The room steadily grows brighter.

It is now morning.

Mary-Anne sits up and yawns.

She gazes around the room.

In the corner rests some luggage that had belonged to Chris. It's haphazardly packed.

She stares at it briefly.

Her clock reads 11:48

She slinks out of the bed and pads her way down the hall and down the stairs.

INT. KITCHEN- DAY

The light is still on.

She flicks it off, confused.

As she saunters towards the counter, she notices a box of cereal that hadn't been there the night before.

She is bewildered.

EXT. MARY-ANNE'S HOUSE

Mary-Anne hurriedly exits through her front door.

As she walks towards her car, her phone rings.

She answers. It's Kathy, the Realtor.

KATHY

Mary-Anne? It's Kathy from Entry Realty. I was just calling to see if you were still going to make our appointment this afternoon?

MARY-ANNE

Hey, Kathy. Yeah. I just got a little caught up, I'm really sorry, but I'm in my car now and I'm on my way.

Mary-Anne steps into the driver's side of her car.

INT. MARY-ANNE IN HER CAR- DAY

KATHY

Don't worry yourself.

MARY-ANNE

Okay, I'll be there shortly.

KATHY

Okay.

MARY-ANNE

Bye.

KATHY

Bye.

She hangs the phone up and continues to drive.

It rings again.

She answers. It's her mother, Kristine.

MARY-ANNE

Mom?

KRISTINE

Mary-Anne. I've been calling you since after the service.

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE
I've just been busy.

KRISTINE
With what?

MARY-ANNE
I don't know. Things.

KRISTINE
Well can you talk now?

MARY-ANNE
You know, I'm driving and there's a
police officer and I just don't
think it's a good idea.

KRISTINE
Well where are you going?

MARY-ANNE
Out.

KRISTINE
Out?

MARY-ANNE
Yes, out. I'm allowed to go out.

KRISTINE
Well can you call me later?

MARY-ANNE
I'm really tired today. I didn't
sleep well last night.

KRISTINE
Tomorrow?

MARY-ANNE
I'll see. I really have to go
though.

KRISTINE
We don't talk for years and

click Mary-Anne hangs up on her.

INT. ENTRY REALTY OFFICE- DAY

Mary-Anne approaches the receptionist's desk.

MARY-ANNE
Uhm, I'm looking for Kathy.

RECEPTIONIST
Who is looking for Kathy?

MARY-ANNE
I am.

RECEPTIONIST
And who might you be?

MARY-ANNE
Oh, I got ahead of myself, I'm
sorry. I'm Mary-Anne. I had an
appointment at three. I know I'm
late but she called and

The receptionist interjects.

RECEPTIONIST
I'll call her office. You're
welcome to take a seat.

MARY-ANNE
Oh, I'll just stand. I've been
sitting all day.

Mary-Anne hangs awkwardly around the desk until Kathy,
dressed in one of those obnoxious paint-suits, walks out
from the hallway.

KATHY
Mrs. Winters!

Mary-Anne looks annoyed.

MARY-ANNE
You can just call me Mary.

Kathy gives a little nod to the receptionist.

KATHY
You can follow me.

Kathy leads Mary-Anne down the hallway.

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE

Uhm, I like your building.

KATHY

You do? I hate it. You'd think that as Realtors we'd have a nicer building.

MARY-ANNE

Yeah.

They turn into a doorway and walk up a flight of steps.

As they reach the top of the stairs, Kathy ushers Mary-Anne into the first door on the right.

KATHY

It's this one here.

They enter the office.

Kathy deposits herself behind the desk, and Mary-Anne sits stiffly on the other side.

KATHY

Please relax.

Mary-Anne remains stiff as a nail.

KATHY

How are you today?

MARY-ANNE

I'm fine.

KATHY

Chris was a friend of mine. I am so very sorry for your loss.

MARY-ANNE

I'm sure you are.

KATHY

To be honest, I was a little surprised at how quickly you called me.

MARY-ANNE

Well, you know, I really just don't want to live in that house anymore.

(CONTINUED)

KATHY

Oh, I can understand.

MARY-ANNE

(doubtfully)

I don't know if you can.

KATHY

Well, Mrs. Winters,

MARY-ANNE

I am not Mrs. Winters anymore.

KATHY

Are you sure you want to do this?
Selling a house is a lot of work.
Stress. Can you handle this right
now?

MARY-ANNE

You're the Realtor. Isn't it your
job to handle all of the work and
the stress?

KATHY

Well.... yes. I do handle a lot of
it. But moving. Are you sure you're
ready for this? Given all that's
happened?

MARY-ANNE

All that's happened is the reason
I'm ready for this.

KATHYJ

Well, luckily for you, home selling
is my métier.

Kathy makes a sassy hand motion.

MARY-ANNE

How quickly can we do this?

KATHY

Well, after the preliminary work,

MARY-ANNE

Can we skip that? I mean, can't we
just plop a sign in the front yard?

KATHY

There's more to it than that. We'll
have to look at the house, study

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KATHY (cont'd)
the market, the neighborhood, all
of that. We want to get you the
most for your house that we can.
That is the Entry Realty Promise.

MARY-ANNE
I don't need any of that. Honestly,
I'll take a loss if I have to. I
really just don't want to live
there anymore. The sooner I'm out,
the better.

Kathy thinks for a moment.

KATHY
My associate and I will be over
tomorrow. We'll do most of the
paperwork here, talk to the bank;
we'll be as quick as possible.

MARY-ANNE
Thank you.

EXT. ENTRY REALTY- DAY

Mary-Anne walks to her car.

She enters.

As she checks her phone, it reads that she has 7 missed
calls from her mother.

She starts the car and pulls off.

EXT. MARY-ANNE'S HOUSE- DAY

As Mary-Anne pulls up to her house, and as she does, she
spots her mother on the porch.

MARY-ANNE
Jesus Christ.

Mary-Anne parks the car and steps out.

Her mother stays on the porch.

MARY-ANNE
What are you doing here?

(CONTINUED)

KRISTINE

I came to see if you were okay.

MARY-ANNE

Why wouldn't I be okay?

Mary-Anne reaches the porch.

MOTHER

You hung up. I thought something had happened.

MARY-ANNE

I told you I had errands to run. Do you want to come in?

MOTHER

Yes I would.

Mary-Anne unlocks the door.

The two step in.

INT. MARY-ANNE'S HOUSE- DAY

Mary-Anne steps walks upstairs and directs her mother towards the kitchen.

The two continue to talk as they part.

KRISTINE

It's a lovely place you have here.

MARY-ANNE

Not for long.

KRISTINE

What do you mean by that?

MARY-ANNE

I'm selling it.

KRISTINE

This soon?

MARY-ANNE

Yup.

Mary-Anne returns downstairs and meets her mother in the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE

Are you going to sit?

KRISTINE

You've got dishes in the sink. Let me do those for you. Please.

MARY-ANNE

I do?

KRISTINE

You do, what?

Mary-Anne walks over towards the sink and stares down upon a pile of dishes.

MARY-ANNE

Those aren't mine.

KRISTINE

Are they Chris's? Please tell me you haven't just left those sitting there.

MARY-ANNE

(angrily)

No, I haven't. I don't know whose they are.

KRISTINE

Regardless of whose they are, just let me

MARY-ANNE

(She interjects)

I don't need you washing my dishes.

KRISTINE

I'm just trying to be helpful.

MARY-ANNE

And you think doing my dishes is helpful.

KRISTINE

It's a start.

MARY-ANNE

What do you want?

KRISTINE

Come to dinner with your father and I tonight.

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE
(bewildered)
Dinner!

KRISTINE
Yes, dinner. We're only in town for
a few more evenings and we haven't
seen you in years.

MARY-ANNE
And I wonder why that is.

KRISTINE
We want to try and move past that.

MARY-ANNE
We? You have nothing to move past.

KRISTINE
You know what I mean.

Kristine wanders over towards the pantry and opens it.

KRISTINE
And see, you haven't even got
anything to eat.

MARY-ANNE
Stop going through my things!

KRISTINE
Forgive me for being concerned.

MARY-ANNE
Forgive me for mistaking your
concern as retribution.

KRISTINE
Retribution!

MARY-ANNE
It's your sly way of pointing out
my faults! It isn't concern. It
never has been.

Kristine pauses for a little over 10 seconds.

KRISTINE
I don't want to fight. I just
wanted to ask you to dinner. Your
father really misses you.

MARY-ANNE
Then why didn't he invite me?

KRISTINE
He's caught up with work.

MARY-ANNE
Oh, of course, 'work.'

KRISTINE
Are you going to come or not?

MARY-ANNE
I don't really have much of a
choice, do I?

KRISTINE
It's at the Sixth Street Grill. We
have a reservation for three at
eight. Please don't be late.

MARY-ANNE
Fine..... fine. Fine.

KRISTINE
Please dress nice.

MARY-ANNE
I will.

INT. SIXTH STREET GRILL- NIGHT

Mary-Anne approaches her parents' table.

Jeff, her father, is seated next to Kristine. Mary-Anne's
seat is isolated on the other side of a table meant for
four.

They're dressed very formally.

Mary-Anne, on the other hand, is dressed in jeans and an
over-sized-collegiate-sweatshirt from UMD.

She takes her seat.

KRISTINE
I told you to dress nicely.

MARY-ANNE
You're saying I don't look nice.

(CONTINUED)

JEFF

Please, let's not start this. It's great to see you.

MARY-ANNE

You too, daddy.

JEFF

You're so beautiful.

MARY-ANNE

I'm really not.

JEFF

Pish-posh, you're the most gorgeous woman I know... next to your mother of course.

He leans in and kisses Kristine's cheek.

JEFF

Oh, God, I don't even know where to start. It's been so long.

MARY-ANNE

I thought about it after mom left. Can we please just put this whole inheritance thing behind us? It's in the past.

JEFF

Your mother and I are so sorry for that.

MARY-ANNE

In the past.

JEFF

All right then. So many years to catch up on. Are you working?

MARY-ANNE

No. Uhm, Chris wanted me to stay home, tend to the house. His paycheck was more than enough to support the two of us.

KRISTINE

That was nice of him.

MARY-ANNE

(irritated)

No. Don't say that.

(CONTINUED)

KRISTINE
(confused)
What did I say?

MARY-ANNE
It doesn't matter.

JEFF
So are you going to find something?
I can get you a job at my firm. Of
course that would mean moving to
Austin.

KRISTINE
You're selling the house, aren't
you.

JEFF
Oh, you're selling?

MARY-ANNE
It's not sold yet, but yes.

JEFF
Are you sure you want to do it now?
The market's terrible.

MARY-ANNE
I'm positive. I just really wanna
get out of there.

KRISTINE
Even if it means taking a loss?

MARY-ANNE
Well, my money paid for it, mom, so
it'll be my loss.

The waiter approaches the table.

He places a basket of rolls in the center of the table.

WAITER
Good evening. I'm Chad, I'll be
your server this evening. May I
start you off with something to
drink?

KRISTINE
White wine.

JEFF
Iced-tea, please.

WAITER
(To Mary-Anne)
And for you?

MARY-ANNE
Water, please.

KRISTINE
Honey, you could use something to
drink.

MARY-ANNE
Could, I? Sir, you wouldn't happen
to have an open-bar would you?

JEFF
(to the waiter)
That'll be it. Thank you.

WAITER
I'll be back shortly with those.

The waiter leaves.

MARY-ANNE
Are you ordering for me now, too?

KRISTINE
You just look so worn out.

MARY-ANNE
I can't imagine why.

JEFF
Now, we'll have none of this.
There's nothing I hate more than my
two favorite women in the world
fighting.

Jeff reaches for the rolls, he hands one to both Kristine
and Mary-Anne.

JEFF
You've got to try these rolls.
They're delicious.

MARY-ANNE
You've had them before?

(CONTINUED)

JEFF

Yes. I was down here on business last year, and we ate here one evening.

MARY-ANNE

You were here? Last year?

JEFF

Oh, honey.

MARY-ANNE

Why weren't you ready to patch things up last year?

JEFF

It was on business.

KRISTINE

(To Mary-Anne)

You're not being fair!

MARY-ANNE

(shouts)

I'm not being fair!

KRISTINE

Damnit, Mary-Anne, lower your voice.

MARY-ANNE

What even is this? Chris passes away and all of a sudden you're ready to make ammends?

JEFF

You were no more willing than we were.

MARY-ANNE

I was no more willing? Are you fucking serious? I didn't sue myself. If I can properly recall, that was you!

JEFF

What happened to that being in the past?

MARY-ANNE

Did you ever once think? Did it ever once cross your mind that I may have needed you?

(CONTINUED)

KRISTINE
Needed us for what?

MARY-ANNE
(Shouts again)
You're so fucking brilliant mom!
What do you think? What the fuck do
you think?

KRISTINE
Don't do this. Not here. Not now.

JEFF
Kristine, please.

MARY-ANNE
What did you think was happening
these past ten years?

KRISTINE
We don't know! You wouldn't tell
us!

MARY-ANNE
I didn't tell you or you didn't
care?

JEFF
Don't say that. You know we cared.

MARY-ANNE
While the two of you were living it
up with the inheritance that
Grandma left to me, to me, your
'beautiful' daughter that you
'love' was having a really shitty
time.

JEFF
What happened to you?

MARY-ANNE
You have no fucking idea.

Mary-Anne suddenly rises from her chair, and accidentally
collides with the waiter, which sends the tray of drinks all
over the floor.

MARY-ANNE
Fuck you. Fuck you. FUCK YOU!

She hits the bowl of rolls off the table.

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE
Enjoy your rolls, dad.

Mary-Anne storms out.

Kristine attempts to get up after her, but Jeff places his hand on her shoulder and guides her back into her seat.

INT. MARY-ANNE'S BATHROOM- NIGHT

The room is flushed with steam.

Mary-Anne showers as shampoo cascades down her back.

She breathes in heavily. The steam moves in and out of her pores.

Suddenly, the faint sound of music drifts into the bathroom.

Mary-Anne notices. She slides the shower-door open and pokes her head out.

It is coming from down the hall.

She shuts the shower off and steps slowly from it

Hesitantly, she moves towards the bathroom door.

It is unlocked.

She turns the lock. *click*

It's locked.

The music hangs insidiously in the air.

Mary-Anne picks up a pile of pajamas from the floor.

She dresses.

She scans the bathroom counter.

MARY-ANNE
Shit. Shit, shit, shit. It's in the
car.

The music resets itself, and starts from the beginning.

Indefinite humming begins to seep into the bathroom as well.

Mary-Anne checks the bathroom window as a possible means of escape, but it's too far down.

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE

Fuck.

She sits on the edge of the whirlpool-tub and trembles.

The music stops almost as suddenly as it had begun. The humming too.

She rises.

From under the counter she grabs a curling-iron.

She grips it in her right hand.

She walks over to the door.

Click she unlocks it.

Slowly she pushes it open.

INT. BEDROOM- NIGHT

Darkness has enveloped the room.

The two doors that lead into the hallway are closed.

She pads over to them.

She opens them.

INT. UPSTAIRS- NIGHT

All of the doors in the hallway are closed, save for the room directly in front of her, at the end of the hall.

The windows in it are closed, so even slivers of moonlight fail to illuminate the room.

She turns on the hallway light.

Her gaze remains fixed upon that room.

One second passes. And then two. And then ten.

She continues to stare.

Her breathing intensifies.

She wearily treads toward the room.

When she reaches the halfway point, she stops again.

(CONTINUED)

The humming from earlier has returned.

BAM The light-bulb in room has exploded, and for a just brief instance, the room is effulgent. And in that brief instance, the putrescent corpse of Chris Collins is seen. His corpse stands upright in the center of the room. He is naked and anemically white. Black holes in the sockets where his eyes should be. It is a ghastly image whose brief presence strikes ineffable terror into Mary-Anne.

Mary-Anne screams at the sight of it.

She runs back and down the stairs.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS- NIGHT

She bolts from the front door.

EXT. MARY-ANNE'S HOUSE- NIGHT

She doesn't even shut the door, Mary-Anne just runs to her car.

She opens the driver's side door and gets in without haste.

She scrambles looking for the keys.

MARY-ANNE

Keys! Fuck!

She turns her stare back to the house.

She can see straight into the house, the margin of the kitchen and living-room in view.

She returns her focus to the car.

She finds her phone on the passenger seat and picks it up.

She dials 911, but before it can even ring once, hangs it up.

She goes to her contacts menu.

It reads as follows: Chris, Chris Work, Dominos, Kathy Entry, Mom, Patricia, Sylvia, Westhaven Church.

She throws the phone down angrily.

She locks the doors and puts her head down on the passenger seat.

She begins to cry.

EXT. MARY-ANNE'S HOUSE- DAY

Mary-Anne has slept through the night.

As she sleeps, a female jogger, Alex-- a neighbor of hers-- taps on the driver's side window.

It startles her, and she awakes.

Alex taps again.

ALEX

Mary-Anne? Mary-Anne? Can you hear me?

Mary-Anne goes to roll the window down, but she can't since the car is not started.

Mary-Anne slinks out of the passenger door, rounds the car, and approaches Alex.

ALEX

Did you sleep in your car?

Mary-Anne tries to laugh and play it off.

MARY-ANNE

Must have. I, uhm, got home really late last night and I must have just passed out.

ALEX

Your front door is wide open. Are you okay?

MARY-ANNE

Yeah. Uhm, I went inside first, but I, uhm, forgot something in the car, and I guess I didn't close it, and then I fell asleep.

ALEX

In your car?

MARY-ANNE

In my car.

ALEX

You're so pale. You look as if you've seen a ghost.

(CONTINUED)

Mary-Anne just laughs.

MARY-ANNE

But listen, it was great seeing you. And uhm, have a nice day, and good luck on your run.

ALEX

Uhm, thanks. Good luck on your... car.

MARY-ANNE

Bye now.

Mary-Anne abruptly walks from Alex and up to her porch.

She slams the door shut so hard as she enters the house that a little wreath that is hung on the door falls off.

INT. MARY-ANNE'S HOUSE-DOWNSTAIRS- DAY

The house is brighter now.

Mary-Anne slinks down to the floor, her back against the front door.

She looks up the stairs first, and then into the kitchen.

She sighs heavily.

She rises from the door slowly.

She counts down to herself.

MARY-ANNE

One, two, three.

On three, she bolts upstairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY- DAY

She careens into her bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM- DAY

She grabs the keys off of her nightstand, does a 180, and flies back out of the room.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY- DAY

She races down the stairs.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS- DAY

As hurriedly as she had before, Mary-Anne bolts from her house.

EXT. MARY-ANNE'S HOUSE- DAY

She darts towards her car, enters, puts the key in the ignition, and speeds off.

INT. SAUDADE RESTAURANT- DAY

Mary-Anne is seated in a quaint diner.

There are a few other guests, but not many.

She has a plate of pancakes and a pot of coffee in front of her.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL LOBBY- NIGHT

Mary-Anne is in line at the hotel's Guest-Services.

There is one person in front of her.

She has two shopping-bags full of new clothes, along with a grocery bag of toiletries next to her.

The lobby is bustling as loads of people enter and exit.

In the center is an in-ground fireplace, surrounded by a gaggle of suave guests dressed in the finest couture.

It is Mary-Anne's turn at the counter.

An enthusiastic young man greets her.

HOTEL EMPLOYEE
Good-evening. Do you have a
reservation?

MARY-ANNE
No, but I'd like a room.

(CONTINUED)

HOTEL EMPLOYEE

How many?

MARY-ANNE

Just me.

HOTEL EMPLOYEE

Just give me a moment and I'll see what we have. Any preferences?

MARY-ANNE

Cheap.

HOTEL EMPLOYEE

Any others.

MARY-ANNE

Really cheap.

He laughs.

HOTEL EMPLOYEE

You're funny. And, it appears that you're in luck. We have a room available. It's on our 13th floor. It's suited for one, with a King-sized Grand Bed, sumptuous European down bedding and a pillow top mattress, with an array of amenities including high-speed wireless Internet, voicemail and video message.

MARY-ANNE

You're like a little brochure.

HOTEL EMPLOYEE

It really is a fantastic room. And the rate of \$249 is unbeatable.

MARY-ANNE

I'll take it.

HOTEL EMPLOYEE

Do you know what day you'll be checking out?

MARY-ANNE

Next week.

HOTEL EMPLOYEE

Do you have a day?

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE
Friday I guess.

HOTEL EMPLOYEE
Fantastic!

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

Mary-Anne lumbers down the hallway with her bags.

She passes other guests on her way to her room.

Her room is 0314.

She places her bags on the ground and removes her key-card from her pocket and slides it.

The door props open.

She enters the room.

INT. HOTEL ROOM- NIGHT

The room is luxurious. The floor is padded with beautiful beige carpet. The bed is appropriately large, situated aside an enormous window with breathtaking views of the city.

Upon entrance, Mary-Anne just tosses her bags on the bed.

She turns back around and finds the bathroom door to the left of the door to the room.

She enters it and finds it just as luxurious as the room.

As she lets out a sigh of relief, she hears her phone as it vibrates in her pocket. It's Kathy.

She answers it.

MARY-ANNE
Kathy.

KATHY (V.O)
Where were you today? I was
stopping by remember?

She pauses briefly.

MARY-ANNE
I forgot.

(CONTINUED)

KATHY (V.O)
Is there another day you'd like to
reschedule for?

MARY-ANNE
(in reference to the room)
This is just what I needed.

KATHY
I'm sorry.

MARY-ANNE
Listen, can I call you back?

KATHY
Is everything okay?

MARY-ANNE
I.... I don't know.

Mary-Anne ends the call before Kathy is given a chance to respond.

She pads her way over to the door and closes it, and then makes her way to the restroom.

INT. HOTEL ROOM- NIGHT

Wisps of steam fill the air as Mary-Anne steps freshly showered from the restroom.

Gently, she seats herself upon the edge of her bed.

She glides her hand across the bed to reach her bags.

She pulls one over to her.

It's empty.

Confused, Mary-Anne rises from the bed and notices that all of her other bags are empty as well.

She darts to the room's perennial drawers and finds that all of her things have been folded and put away.

On the desk there's a corded-phone plugged into the wall.

Mary-Anne grabs it and dials the front desk.

MARY-ANNE
Hello? Hi, I'm in room 0314, and,
you didn't happen to have any
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE (cont'd)
room-service sent here by any
chance, did you? It just appears
that all of my luggage has been put
away, but I wasn't the one who
unpacked them?

The voice that answers is that of a sonorous and menacing man.

MAN (V.O)
Mary-Anne, I've told you a-hundred
times to not leave your things
lying around.

She screams and ejects the phone from her hands.

As she stares horrifically at it, Chris's fully-nude corpse lingers in the lights behind her, but she does not see it.

INT. HOTEL BAR- NIGHT

The television erected above the bar reads 2:14am.

Mary-Anne sits alone with a bottle of water in front of her.

The bartender approaches.

BARTENDER
Sure there's nothing else I can get
for you?

MARY-ANNE
No thank you.

They leave to tend to another guest.

Mary-Anne begins to nod her head before she finally passes out.

INT. HOTEL ROOM- NIGHT

The nightstand clock reads 3:14

Mary-Anne awakens.

MARY-ANNE
What is happening to me?

Suddenly, the television set clicks on.

(CONTINUED)

The light begins to illuminate the pieces of furniture in the room.

Slowly, the outline of a man can be seen as it forms in the corner of the room.

Mary-Anne quickly turns on the lights, and the man vanishes.

The television-set shuts itself off.

INT. HOTEL GIFT SHOP- NIGHT

Mary-Anne stares pensively at the bottles of sleep-aids behind the counter.

MARY-ANNE

Which one will knock me out faster?

CLERK

Well, that's not exactly what they're intended for.

MARY-ANNE

You're also not intended to take six, but we all know that's what I'll be doing.

CLERK

You're only supposed to take one.

MARY-ANNE

Give me a box of both kinds.

CLERK

You're not mixing them I hope.

MARY-ANNE

Cool it, Dr. Oz.

He grabs the boxes and rings her up.

She hands him her card. He swipes it. She leaves.

INT. HOTEL ROOM- DAY

The nightstand clock now reads 4:14

She slept for 13 hours.

Her face nestled in the pillow, she raises one arm and lets it slam on the bed.

(CONTINUED)

She wrestles with getting out of bed, but her will to leave the bevy of pillows eventually overcomes.

On her phone she notices missed-calls from her mother.

She calls her back.

KRISTINE (V.O)
Now you call back.

MARY-ANNE
What do you want?

KRISTINE (V.O)
You sound exhausted. Did you just get up?

MARY-ANNE
A moment ago, yes.

KRISTINE (V.O)
Your father and I stopped by the house earlier. We need to talk about what happened at dinner.

MARY-ANNE
I'm not at the house.

KRISTINE (V.O)
Where are you?

MARY-ANNE
A hotel.

KRISTINE (V.O)
Why on earth are you in a hotel?

MARY-ANNE
I didn't want to be at home, that's all.

KRISTINE (V.O)
How are you paying for it?

MARY-ANNE
Did you call to talk or lecture me?

KRISTINE (V.O)
I'm not lecturing you. I'm looking out for you.

MARY-ANNE

They sound the same to me.

KRISTINE (V.O)

All your father and I want is to talk.

MARY-ANNE

I don't want to talk to anyone right now.

KRISTINE (V.O)

Well then when, honey, when?

MARY-ANNE

When I'm feeling better.

KRISTINE (V.O)

But you're never feeling better.

MARY-ANNE

Goodbye.

Mary-Anne hangs up the phone.

She stares at the phone on which she received the call from Chris the night before.

Tears form in her eyes.

She calls her mom back.

MARY-ANNE

Can you come over?

INT. MARY-ANNE'S HOUSE- DAY

Mary-Anne and her parents are seated in the living-room.

MARY-ANNE

Promise me you'll just listen.
Promise.

JEFF

Promise.

Kristine nods her head.

MARY-ANNE

I just, I just don't know what to do. Bad marriage or good, it's hard to spend twenty years with someone

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE (cont'd)
and then not have them there
anymore.

KRISTINE
I just wish that you'd told us.

JEFF
Kristine, we're supp-

MARY-ANNE
It's okay, dad. I do too. It just
wears you down day after day. It's
not even that I was afraid to tell
you. I was just so weary with
everything that I-- I just didn't.

JEFF
Well we're here now.

MARY-ANNE
I've been on somewhat of an
ego-trip lately, with the funeral
and the house and all. It's not as
easy as I'd initially thought.

KRISTINE
Are you still selling?

MARY-ANNE
Yeah, that I'm sure of, but I'm not
going to rush it. I keep moving in
and out of these phases. Sometimes
I feel incredible, funny; elated.
For maybe just ten minutes at a
time, others for longer. And
sometimes I just don't want to get
out of bed, but I know I have to,
but I just don't.

KRISTINE
I know I've been overbearing, it's
in my nature.

Jeff nods in agreement.

KRISTINE (CONT.)
But it's only because I love you.
And I was scared for you. And I was
angry that you didn't call, or
write, or visit.

(CONTINUED)

JEFF

What your mother is trying to say is that, whether you felt like we were in the past or not, we're here for you. 100%.

MARY-ANNE

I know that.

Mary-Anne sighs.

MARY-ANNE (CONT.)

I've always admired your marriage.

JEFF

(laughs)

We're just in love. It's nothing admirable.

MARY-ANNE

I just don't know how ready I am. For any of this.

Mary-Anne begins to shake.

KRISTINE

Are you all right?

MARY-ANNE

I have something else I need to tell you guys.

JEFF

Anything.

MARY-ANNE

Brace yourselves.

KRISTINE

What kind of news is this?

MARY-ANNE

Do you two believe in, well, acknowledge, the supernatural?

JEFF

You're not trying to use black-magic to fetch a better price on the house, are you?

MARY-ANNE

I'm serious.

(CONTINUED)

JEFF

So am I?

KRISTINE

What exactly is this about?

MARY-ANNE

You know what, forget it. I shouldn't have mentioned it.

JEFF

Now come on! You can't dangle something like that in front of us and not explain it.

KRISTINE

Is this some sort of grieving thing?

MARY-ANNE

(wearily)

Oh, not at all.

JEFF

Well then, what, honey?

MARY-ANNE

I think I've been seeing Chris's ghost.

KRISTINE

(to Jeff)

Is that common?

MARY-ANNE

I'm not a case-study.

KRISTINE

I don't mean it like that.

JEFF

What do you mean by 'seeing him?'

MARY-ANNE

Like a ghost.

JEFF

I've never seen a ghost, so I don't know what that would be like.

MARY-ANNE

Like a ghost, you know?

(CONTINUED)

JEFF

Like sheets and rattling chains?

MARY-ANNE

God, I wish. And I don't even know if it's real or if it's just me losing my mind.

JEFF

I'm sure it's neither.

MARY-ANNE

What then?

JEFF

You're just very upset, and-- and all of these feelings you're having, they're manifesting themselves into something, well, unpleasant. You're going through a huge change right now.

MARY-ANNE

When are you guys leaving?

JEFF

It's like we told you. We'll stay as long as you need us.

MARY-ANNE

Well, I checked out of the hotel. It really wasn't as much of an escape as I'd hoped. And I was hoping you could stay the night.

KRISTINE

Tonight?

MARY-ANNE

Tonight.

JEFF

You're not afraid, are you?

MARY-ANNE

Faintly.

JEFF

(after brief deliberation)
Your mother and I would be happy to.

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE

I can make up the guest-room for you. It's where Chris used to stay, but I've already moved some of his things out. Or you can stay on the couch. It's up to you.

JEFF

It's been years since your mother and I could jointly share a couch.

KRISTINE

Well then, maybe you can have it by yourself?

JEFF

We'll take the guest-room. And don't worry about making it up for us. We can certainly do at least that.

INT. BEDROOM- DAY

Her room has clothes scattered all over the bed and floor.

With her parents beside her, Mary-Anne pulls a trunk out from under her bed and opens it.

Inside are an assortment of sheets and blankets.

MARY-ANNE

These are all freshly washed and should be good for you tonight.

Kristine looks around the room

KRISTINE

Do you ever put your clothes away?

MARY-ANNE

Not without Chris here I don't.

She places the sheets on her bed and returns the trunk to under it.

MARY-ANNE (CONT.)

Thank you, again, for staying the evening.

JEFF

Really, honey, it's no problem.

(CONTINUED)

KRISTINE

Your constant apologizing is almost more bothersome than our little sleepover. We're happy to do it.

MARY-ANNE

Happy or obligated?

KRISTINE

A little bit of both.

JEFF

If Casper is keeping my poor daughter up at night, I'll be glad to be here so I can kick his ass.

MARY-ANNE

(laughs)

Dad, I've never heard you curse before. Plus, I don't know how effective an ass-beating will be on a ghost, but I appreciate the thought.

She motions towards the sheets.

MARY-ANNE (CONT.)

I can help you guys put these on.

KRISTINE

Thank you.

MARY-ANNE

And you're fine being in his... Chris's room.

JEFF

Honey when our house was being fumigated we spent a week in the filthiest motel you could imagine. We'll be fine in there.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS- NIGHT

Mary-Anne, Jeff, and Kristine are seated around the dinner table.

There's a salad and bowl of pasta on the table.

Each family member has a plate and glass of water in front of them.

(CONTINUED)

KRISTINE

So he'd analyze what groceries you bought?

MARY-ANNE

Yep. I'd have to bring him a receipt home so he could see that I was buying only what I needed to.

KRISTINE

That's awful.

MARY-ANNE

Well, I could get around it. Sometimes I just hid the receipts or said I lost them.

JEFF

And what did he do?

MARY-ANNE

Oh, he'd get mad. Yell, tell me I'm a 'useless cunt.' But it happened so often that I became numb to it. It was almost more annoying than cruel.

KRISTINE

I can imagine. I always knew that there was something about him. Didn't I, Jeff?

She looks to Jeff.

JEFF

You certainly did.

MARY-ANNE

I just, I don't know what happened. He was so sweet when we first met. My God, he was such a dork. Do you remember when I went to surprise him after our first date and Linda told me he was "out with friends."

KRISTINE

And you thought he was a wild hot-shot but it turned out to just be dungeon's and dragons.

They all laugh.

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE

I loved him so much. He was sweet, handsome, smart, funny.

KRISTINE

When did it happen.

MARY-ANNE

God, it's been so long. I can't even remember. In retrospect, I feel like it's always happened, I was just too blind to see it. Like on our honeymoon. He chastised me one evening for how much I spent on drinks. He said I was financially negligent or something along those lines. I just thought it was the stress of money and work, since that was when you (she turns to Jeff) got him into PG School. He was so anxious about it, and it was so obvious that it was making him irritable.

KRISTINE

I mean, was there anything else? Like, when did it intensify into what it used to be.

MARY-ANNE

After we moved here. Ennui set in, I guess. He hated his job. All of those years in school and in the navy, wasted. He also hated that I didn't want kids.

JEFF

Why not just a divorce then? I mean, why did he stay with you. He could afford it.

MARY-ANNE

Control, I guess. I figured that he felt so minuscule and inconsequential in life, that controlling me gave him a feeling of validity.

KRISTINE

I hate bringing her up, but what about Linda through all of this?

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE

I blame her almost as much as I blame Chris. She constantly undermined me at every turn. It was always Chris's way and never mine. She still blames me.

JEFF

How?

MARY-ANNE

I don't know. Maybe if I'd been a better wife he wouldn't have been speeding or we wouldn't be living here.

JEFF

That's bullshit.

KRISTINE

That's two for you today.

A beat.

MARY-ANNE

I'm just waiting for my sense of relief.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS- NIGHT

Mary-Anne is seated alone on the sectional watching television when Kristine and Jeff walk into view.

KRISTINE

We're about to go to bed, we just wanted to say goodnight first.

Kristine leans in and hugs a seated Mary-Anne.

She then kisses her on the cheek.

MARY-ANNE

Goodnight, mom.

KRISTINE

Night, sweetie.

Jeff leans in and hugs her next.

JEFF

Goodnight, dear.

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE

Goodnight, dad.

JEFF

Now, you come and get me if I need to go Bill Murray on some ghosts tonight.

MARY-ANNE

I'll be sure to do that.

KRISTINE

Are you going to be up much longer?

MARY-ANNE

Probably an hour or so. I'm exhausted, but my mind is so wound up that I probably wouldn't be able to sleep anyways.

KRISTINE

Just try to get at least some tonight.

MARY-ANNE

I'll try.

KRISTINE

What is this you're watching, anyways? It sounds horrible.

MARY-ANNE

Poltergeist.

JEFF

In lieu of what's happened, that hardly seems appropriate.

KRISTINE

I don't know how you do it. I hate horror pictures.

MARY-ANNE

Goodnight.

Jeff tugs on Kristine. They smile to Mary-Anne before they head back upstairs.

She can follow the sound of their footsteps up the stairs, down the hall, and into their room.

Kristine continues to watch television before she for a few more moments before she hears footsteps in the room above her- her room.

She rises from the sofa, walks into the foyer, and up the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY- NIGHT

She turns into her room, but finds no one there.

She turns around and walks down the hall towards her parent's room.

Kristine exits the guest-bathroom as Mary-Anne walks past.

MARY-ANNE
Mom, you scared me.

KRISTINE
I know I'm old, but I'm not a ghost quite yet.

MARY-ANNE
What were you doing in my room?

KRISTINE
I had to use the bathroom.

MARY-ANNE
I mean my bedroom.

KRISTINE
I know I'm invasive but I respect your privacy enough to not go snooping around your room.

Mary-Anne doesn't respond.

She paces back into her room.

Kristine, concerned, follows.

INT. BEDROOM- NIGHT

Mary-Anne flips the light on and begins to search.

She checks under the bed, behind the curtains, in the closets, and in the restroom.

There's no one in there.

KRISTINE
Honey, what are you doing?

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE
Nothing. Nothing.

KRISTINE
Did something happen? Did you see a
ghost or something?

MARY-ANNE
Oh, stop it.

KRISTINE
I'm being serious, Mary-Anne. Did
you see something?

MARY-ANNE
No. Just go to bed. I'll see you
and dad in the morning.

KRISTINE
Love you.

She nods and exits the bedroom.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY- NIGHT

Kristine makes her way down the hall while Mary-Anne hangs
right down the stairs.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS- NIGHT

She walks into the living-room, but to her surprise, someone
has shut the television off.

She turns back around, walks down the hall, and up the
stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY- NIGHT

She turns into her room.

INT. BEDROOM- NIGHT

Mary-Anne, exhausted, collapses on to her bed.

The clock reads 12:13 a.m.

She slivers under the covers and closes her eyes.

INT. BEDROOM- NIGHT

The clock now reads 3:14 a.m.

The mattress creaks as a shrouded figure is seen slowly crawling into bed next to Mary-Anne.

She awakens suddenly.

Her eyes scan the room, but nothing can be seen.

As she attempts to turn her bedside lamp on, the bulb bursts.

Then, the rattling of hangers can be heard from her closet.

She grabs her phone off of the nightstand and rises out of bed.

She hesitantly pads over towards the closet, slipping in and out of slivers of moonlight.

She reaches it and cautiously grabs the doorknob.

MARY-ANNE

One, two.... three.

She swings the door open.

Nothing but darkness.

She glides her hand over the inside wall, finds the switch, and flips it on. Nothing happens; the switch is broken.

Mary-Anne hears the hangers rattle again from inside.

She takes a few steps back and grips her phone firmly in her hand.

She turns it on and loads a flashlight app.

It's buffers as Mary-Anne keeps it pointed at the mass of darkness in the closet.

Suddenly, everything is illuminated, but instead of seeing anything in the closet, a mirror on the back wall reveals that Chris's ghastly corpse is actually standing behind her.

She turns around to stare him straight in the eyes before she stumbles back into the closet.

The door slams shut as she is locked inside.

She screams horrifically for her parents as she pounds on the door.

INT. GROCERY STORE- DAY

Mary-Anne glides in and out of aisles, grabbing whatever she pleases, with no regard paid to a list of any sort.

Her parents lag behind her.

KRISTINE

Honey, do you really need all of this stuff?

Mary-Anne turns around with her arms full of food.

MARY-ANNE

I'm upset.

KRISTINE

I get that, I do, but is this really the way to handle it?

MARY-ANNE

Mom, this is the first time I've gone grocery shopping in years where I don't have to worry about what I'm buying. It's like Christmas.

KRISTINE

Well, shouldn't we talk about last night?

MARY-ANNE

I don't want to talk about it now.

Kristine and Jeff give one another knowing glances.

JEFF

Mary, your mother and I are going to go grab my prescription from the pharmacy.

MARY-ANNE

I'll meet you at the checkout.

Kristine and Jeff walk a few aisles down towards the pharmacy counter as Kristine turns down her next aisle, out of sight.

(CONTINUED)

JEFF

I'm worried about her.

KRISTINE

She's shutting down again.

JEFF

She can't keep repressing things like this.

KRISTINE

You say it like I don't agree with you. She was fine with us yesterday, and now, boom, she's back to repressing it all.

JEFF

Well what do we do?

KRISTINE

We can try to coax it out of her.

JEFF

How? Have dinner in the closet and ask Mary-Anne to share any fond memories she has of the place?

KRISTINE

You're sassy today.

JEFF

After years of marriage, you're finally rubbing off on me.

KRISTINE

How long can we stay?

JEFF

As long as we need to. I hate seeing her like this. I don't want things to go back to how they were.

Kristine leans in and kisses him on the lips.

KRISTINE

You're a good dad.

JEFF

You're a good kisser.

INT. GROCERY STORE- DAY

We return to Mary-Anne, whose cart has filled exponentially with groceries.

She finishes one aisle, and as she goes to turn down her next, she bumps her cart into Linda's as they both round the corner.

MARY-ANNE

Oh, Linda, I didn't see you there.

LINDA

This is becoming a habit.

MARY-ANNE

Do you never have anywhere else to be but in my way?

Linda looks into Mary-Anne's cart and takes notice of the assortment of goodies.

LINDA

Having a celebration.

MARY-ANNE

My emancipation.

LINDA

Looks like you'll be having quite a crowd.

MARY-ANNE

No, just my parents and I.

LINDA

Your parents?

MARY-ANNE

They're in town.

LINDA

I was actually mindful at the service, I know they are. I just didn't know you were close.

MARY-ANNE

I guess you can say an encumbrance has been removed.

LINDA

You have quite a way with words.

Jeff and Kristine arrive behind Mary-Anne.

(CONTINUED)

JEFF

They don't have it in stock. Your mother and I will pick it up later.

Kristine acknowledges Linda.

KRISTINE

Linda, it's great to see you.

LINDA

I've really got to get going.

She backs her cart up.

LINDA (CONT.)

Must be great grocery shopping with your kid.

Linda quickly backs her cart up and heads to check out.

Mary-Anne turns to Kristine angrily.

MARY-ANNE

Don't be nice to her!

KRISTINE

She just lost her son, Mary-Anne. Regardless of your marriage, or her culpability on the matter, it was still her son. I know you're not a mother, but losing a child is the most devastating thing for a mother to imagine. God only knows what I would do if anything happened to you, so ease up on her.

There is a brief silence between the trio.

MARY-ANNE

Well, I've gotten all that I needed to get.

INT. MARY-ANNE'S HOUSE- DOWNSTAIRS- NIGHT

Kristine and Jeff are seated on the sofa watching television while Mary-Anne is seated apart from them at the kitchen table.

The doorbell rings.

(CONTINUED)

KRISTINE
That must be the pizza.

Jeff turns towards Mary-Anne in the kitchen.

JEFF
I still don't understand, you buy
all this food and then you order
pizza.

Mary-Anne gets up to go and answer the door.

MARY-ANNE
I've had such an insatiable
appetite lately. At first, the
thought of food made me want to
throw up, but now, I can't stop.

She turns down the hall to walk towards the door, all the
while projecting her voice so that her parents can hear her.

MARY-ANNE (CONT.)
Chris always made me cook. I can't
believe he kept the joy that is
delivery from me.

She reaches the door, places her hand on the knob, and opens
it.

No one is there.

She pokes her head out and scans the patio.

In the shrouded darkness upstairs, Chris can be seen briefly
as he passes near the stairs into Mary-Anne's room. The
floor creaks.

Mary-Anne whips her head around and looks upstairs.

She retreats back into the house and closes the door.

KRISTINE
(From the other room)
Honey, just pay the man and tip
him.

MARY-ANNE
It wasn't the pizza.

Kristine gets up and meets Mary-Anne at the door.

KRISTINE
Well then, who was it?

MARY-ANNE
I'm not sure.

The doorbell rings and Mary-Anne yelps.

KRISTINE
Are you afraid of doorbells now,
too?

Kristine answers the door.

It's the pizza-man.

PIZZA MAN
Good evening.

KRISTINE
How are you?

Mary-Anne hands her the twenty dollar bill.

Kristine exchanges the money for two boxes of pizza.

KRISTINE (CONT.)
You can keep the change.

PIZZA MAN
Thank you. Have a good night.

KRISTINE
You do the same.

She closes the door.

When she turns around, Mary-Anne is gone.

Then, footsteps in her bedroom upstairs can be heard.

KRISTINE
(shouts upstairs)
Mary-Anne, I have the pizza! Come
down so we can eat.

Jeff pokes his head out of the kitchen.

JEFF
Honey, she's setting the table with
me.

Kristine looks upstairs once more. The footsteps have
ceased.

(CONTINUED)

She brings the pizzas into the kitchen and places them in the center of the table.

It's set with three paper plates, a stock pile of napkins in the center, and a two-liter of cola.

KRISTINE

I thought I heard her upstairs.

Jeff opens the top box. It's pepperoni.

He trades its place with the box beneath.

JEFF

Top is cheese. Bottom is pepperoni.

MARY-ANNE

You heard something upstairs?

KRISTINE

Like someone was in your room.

Jeff takes his seat at the table.

Kristine and Mary-Anne stand uneasily, their vision fixated on the hallway.

JEFF

(shouts)

Chris! We're in the middle of dinner. You're welcome to join us!

MARY-ANNE

That isn't funny.

JEFF

I didn't laugh. Honey, don't let him spoil this for you. I told you that I'm 100% on board with whatever you say is happening, and as such, I'm not going to let him interfere with dinner.

MARY-ANNE

(to Kristine)

I thought I heard footsteps upstairs too.

KRISTINE

It's not a pet or anything of yours?

MARY-ANNE

Where would I have been keeping that?

KRISTINE

I'm trying to rationalize it.

MARY-ANNE

Trust me, I've gone down the list of rationalization. I'm just glad you heard something.

KRISTINE

Glad?

MARY-ANNE

It means I'm not crazy.

KRISTINE

No one suggested that you were, and hearing footsteps does not make me witness to anything supernatural.

JEFF

(to himself)

It does if it's ghost footsteps.

Mary-Anne takes her seat.

MARY-ANNE

I'm just imaging how Chris would rationalize it if something like this had ever happened with a, I dunno, dead neighbor or something. I took too many Zoloft and was off in La La Land.

KRISTINE

You were on Zoloft?

MARY-ANNE

At his request. I was depressed, never mind that it was his fault. Every night when we'd have dinner, he'd make sure I took it before he launched into a diatribe about why the Mastercard bill wasn't paid or why I left one of the bath towels on the ground.

KRISTINE

And.... you aren't still taking it are you?

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE

No, it died with him. I thought maybe what's been happening was some adverse effect of stopping.

A beat.

MARY-ANNE

I hated it so much, but it'd make me feel so dazed, that sometimes he could berate me for hours and I wouldn't even notice.

Jeff and Kristine exchange knowing glances.

JEFF

Honey- you probably know what we've been wondering about Chris. Did he, well, did he ever lay his hands on you?

Tears begin to form in Mary-Anne's eyes.

MARY-ANNE

(her voice cracks.)

No.

KRISTINE

No?

MARY-ANNE

(shakes her head no)

Everyone always told me that since he didn't hit me, that what he was doing was okay, and after time I started to believe it.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM- NIGHT

Jeff and Kristine are lying in bed together, their heads propped up against pillows and the headboard.

The door to their bedroom is open, and they can see straight ahead down the hall into Mary-Anne's room, who is lying asleep in bed.

KRISTINE

You're quiet.

JEFF

I'm upset.

Jeff begins to cry, albeit in a very virile manner.

(CONTINUED)

KRISTINE
(endearingly laughs)
Ohhhh, don't cry.

JEFF
I just hate that he was able to do
that to my baby girl, and that I
didn't do a thing about it.

KRISTINE
Well, you're here now, and that
counts for something.

Jeff laughs.

KRISTINE
I can't believe I'm seeing you cry.

Jeff playfully nudges Kristine.

JEFF
It's never going to happen again.

Kristine nestles her head into Jeff's chest.

Meanwhile, Chris's corpse suddenly materializes in the
darkness of Mary-Anne's room.

He pads across the room, out of sight.

The floor creaks.

Kristine lifts her head up and looks down the hall.

KRISTINE
Did you hear that?

JEFF
(jokingly)
Footsteps again?

KRISTINE
Yes, actually.

JEFF
Are you being serious? Where?

KRISTINE
Mary-Anne's room.

JEFF
Are you certain?

KRISTINE

(fatigued)

I.... I don't know. Part of me wants it to be true, to help Mary-Anne.

JEFF

I believe that she believes it's real.

KRISTINE

(in a more lighthearted tone)

It's been so long since I've been maternal. Was it always this hard?

JEFF

Totally. At her baby shower I remember you telling me about little ghosts babies running around.

KRISTINE

Oh, sure, the same baby shower I saw you cry at?

JEFF

We're even.

A beat.

JEFF (CONT.)

But look, if you hear anything else, just let me know, okay.

KRISTINE

I will.

JEFF

Love you.

Jeff flicks the light off as the two of them burrow themselves under the sheets for bed.

INT. MARY-ANNE'S BEDROOM- NIGHT

Her parents are seen in the bed down the hall.

At the exact moment that their fidgeting ceases, signaling their descent into deeper stages of sleep, Mary-Anne awakes.

She turns to her clock as she had countless times before, but she finds it unplugged.

(CONTINUED)

Suddenly, what sounds like someone breathing under her bed is heard.

She props herself up in the bed and crawls over to the edge, looking down.

The bed-skirt obstructs her view of underneath.

Catlike, she crawls back towards her headboard.

She takes note of the lamp on the end-table.

Cautiously, she lengthens her arm out over the chasm between her bed and the table.

She reaches the switch and flips it furiously, but the lamp does not turn on. Her phone rests next to it.

She quickly attempts to grab it, but fails and sends it flying onto the floor.

She reels her arm back quickly to the safety of the bed.

The phone lands partway underneath the bed, with half of it protruding from under the skirt.

Mary-Anne concocts a plan; she positions a pillow behind her leg and proceeds to lie down on her chest, her head hanging over the side of the bed.

She kicks the pillow back, sending it onto the floor with a thump, and at the same instance, jets her hand down, grabs her phone, and belts back to the center of the bed.

A sigh of relief, but then, her phone begins to vibrate.

The screen lists the caller as Chris.

Mary-Anne stares at it in terror.

MARY-ANNE

This isn't happening.

She answers the phone, and then suddenly, a putrescent arm shoots out from underneath the comforter and wraps its limp fingers around Mary-Anne's arm.

She wrestles from its grasp and plummets off of the bed onto her back.

She moans in pain.

She looks under the bed, and Chris's frightening, gaping sockets are staring back at her.

(CONTINUED)

She crawls towards her bedroom door, but his arm latches on to her leg and attempts to drag her under the bed.

She tries to scream, but her voice is hoarse and unheard.

She thrashes around violently to break free.

She does and crawls the remaining distance to her door.

She turns her head to view his revolting corpse as it squirms around underneath the bed, emitting ghastly wails.

She rises to her feet.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY- NIGHT

Mary-Anne races down the hall to where her parents are staying.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM- NIGHT

She shakes them urgently.

Jeff awakens, his speech muddled from the sudden rouse.

JEFF

Hon- honey? What is it?

MARY-ANNE

(frightened)

He's in my room!

INT. LIVING ROOM- NIGHT

Mary-Anne is seated on the couch, with Kristine's arms wrapped around her for consolation.

Jeff sits across from.

MARY-ANNE

He was under the bed, and he was looking at me.

JEFF

And did he say anything?

MARY-ANNE

I don't want to be here anymore. I am frightened to death. Can we leave, please?

(CONTINUED)

JEFF

Where do you want to go?

MARY-ANNE

Anywhere, please, at least until
the morning.

INT. SAUDADE RESTAURANT- NIGHT

Mary-Anne and her parents are seated at a booth in the same restaurant that Mary-Anne was in scenes earlier, and- as she had before- a plate of pancakes and a pot of coffee are in front of Mary-Anne.

JEFF

So, do you always come here.

Mary-Anne nods.

MARY-ANNE

They're open all night. Whenever
Chris and I would get in a really
bad fight, when he'd just wear me
down to the point of where I'd have
a breakdown.

KRISTINE

And always pancakes?

She nods again, this time placing a bite of pancakes,
slathered in syrup, into her mouth.

MARY-ANNE

They make the best pancakes here.

A beat.

MARY-ANNE (CONT'D)

When Chris and I first moved here,
our plane got in at like 3am. I
mean, we were *starving*, and this
was the only place that was open.
We looked for the fattiest thing on
the menu, and we ended up with a
huge plate of flapjacks drenched in
like four different kinds of syrup.
There weren't many, but it was one
of my few happy moments with Chris,
and I know it sounds pathetic, but
whenever something happened, I'd
come here, and I'd remember that
time, and I'd think that maybe,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
just maybe, things would get
better.

KRISTINE
That's not pathetic.

Mary-Anne takes another bite of her food.

MARY-ANNE
You're only saying that because
you're my mother. It absolutely
reeks of desperation. But he was
the only man that I've ever loved,
and he was, I like to think, the
only man that ever loved me. Would
you excuse me?

Mary-Anne rises from her seat and walks to the restroom.

INT. RESTROOM- NIGHT

The restroom is small, composed of only three stalls and two
sinks.

Heart and Soul is humming along on the radio.

Mary-Anne pushes open the door to the end stall, pushes the
lid down, and sits.

She burrows her head into her lap and cries.

Suddenly, the radio begins to repeat itself- caught in an
eerie playback loop.

"Heart and Soul" plays over and over again.

Mary-Anne gets up and races out of the restroom.

INT. SAUDADE RESTAURANT- NIGHT

She returns to her parents.

JEFF
Something is up with the radio.

MARY-ANNE
We need to go back home.

(CONTINUED)

JEFF

We do?

KRISTINE

We do?

MARY-ANNE

Yes, we do.

EXT. MARY-ANNE'S HOUSE- NIGHT

The car pulls up.

Mary-Anne exits and heads to the driver's side to stop her father from exiting.

JEFF

Honey, what are you doing?

MARY-ANNE

You can't come with me.

JEFF

Hell if I'm not.

He again attempts to exit the car, but is impeded.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Mary-Anne, you have to tell me what is going on.

MARY-ANNE

(distressed)

When Chris got into his accident, there was something I didn't tell you. He'd upset me so much that morning, so I called him while he was on his way to work. It was like twenty years of pent-up anger was being expressed. I went off about how I was going to call his boss and tell him about Chris, and I told him how I was going to leave him and take all of his money and how there was nothing he could do to stop me. And I told him that I hoped he'd have an accident to save me all the trouble. I threw my phone when I was done because I was so *fucking* proud of myself, and it was only five seconds later that Chris swerved into the oncoming lane.

(CONTINUED)

JEFF

I don't understand.

Mary-Anne begins to cry again.

MARY-ANNE

I feel like it was my fault. And I feel like *he* thinks it was my fault. And God knows he deserved it, but I wished every day and night for him to just *leave*. I thought every day about all of the good fathers, husbands, and mothers who get into accidents and die, and I'd always think 'Why can't it ever be him?

A beat.

MARY-ANNE (CONT'D)

He ruined twenty years of my life, I'm not going to have him ruin the rest.

JEFF

What do you plan on doing?

MARY-ANNE

I don't know, but I have to do it alone.

JEFF

What do you want us to do?

MARY-ANNE

I don't know, you just can't be here, please. Just drive around. Give me fifteen minutes and come back then. Please.

JEFF

I'm not comfortable with this.

MARY-ANNE

Please.

Jeff turns into the car and deliberates briefly with Kristine.

JEFF

You have fifteen minutes.

(CONTINUED)

MARY-ANNE

Thank you.

Jeff closes the car door and puts the key into the ignition.
He drives off.

INT. BEDROOM- NIGHT

Mary-Anne is seated on her bed.

She sighs heavily before she rises up.

MARY-ANNE

Come and get me, you bastard.

Turning her attention towards the dresser, Mary-Anne begins to violently pull the drawers out and scatter them on the floor.

Next, she removes her checkbook from the nightstand.

She tears check after check in minuscule pieces that float about the air.

Then, she grips the ends of her comforter and forcibly tears it from the bed.

Apoplectically, Mary-Anne races into the restroom.

INT. BATHROOM- NIGHT

The light flicks on.

She turns all the faucets on as water races from them and down the drain.

She goes to exit the restroom when, suddenly, the doors slam shut, her leg caught between.

She collapses fiercely on to the floor, howling in pain.

The injury has deeply penetrated the skin of her left ankle, which bleeds profusely.

Before she can manage to crawl away, the door slams shut once more, striking the right ankle more forcibly than before.

More harrowing cries as a puddle of blood accumulates around her entire leg.

(CONTINUED)

She claws desperately at the carpet of her bedroom.

BAM It slams once more. Bone cracks.

Her thunderous scream is gut-wrenching to hear.

Mary-Anne regards her wound. The fibula bone is beginning to show.

With a surprising display of stamina, Mary-Anne rolls on her torso out of the bathroom.

INT. BEDROOM- NIGHT

She continues to roll until she reaches the bed.

The imminent danger lurking just behind her, she quickly grapples herself up and contends for the door, her left leg dragging behind a trail of blood.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY- NIGHT

She exits the bedroom and turns for the stairs.

As her right leg touches the first step, Chris's petrifying corpse manifests in the darkness behind her.

He jets a hand out, furiously clenches a handful of her hair, and yanks her back.

Her back slams violently on the rim of the landing as her legs hit the steps below.

Once more, she howls in pain.

The sheer momentum and force of her fall sends her into a brief daze.

Regaining consciousness, she bats furiously as Chris's grip.

He lets go, and her battered body stumbles down the steps until she hits the floor.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS- NIGHT

She turns to look up the steps as Chris's corpse stares eerily back.

The entire staircase has been coated in the velvet-red of Mary-Anne's blood.

(CONTINUED)

She hooks her arm around the railing of the steps and propels herself upward, screaming at the pain.

As she had before, she positions all weight on to her right leg and limps for the front door.

As she swings it open, Chris's corpse stands on the other side, blocking her way.

She screams and slams it shut and turns herself around and makes for the living room.

The front door is heard opening and slamming shut again as Chris reenters the house.

She turns to view his corpse faltering after her along the foyer floor.

Mary-Anne hangs right into the kitchen and heaves a drawer open.

She searches the drawer desperately before finally removing a large kitchen knife in her left hand.

As she turns around, she finds Chris to be standing right behind her.

She lacerates him ferociously with the knife.

The wounds fill with blood that gushes down his luridly-pale figure.

She pushes him away and hobbles back towards the front door.

However, Chris removes another knife from the drawer and follows closely behind.

She reaches the door and places her hand on the knob when Chris suddenly sends his knife deep into the recess of her right hand.

He twists it around as a geyser of blood sprays from the gash.

Without looking, she propels her left arm, knife in hand, behind her.

It plunges into Chris's torso as more blood comes streaming out.

She attempts to open the door once more, but Chris grabs her and throws her back into the foyer.

She lies on the ground, unable to conjure up the energy to move.

Chris's corpse stares curiously at her as she mutters one, last phrase, tears beginning to roll plaintively from her eyes.

MARY-ANNE

I hope you're rotting in Hell.

EXT. MARY-ANNE'S HOUSE

The exterior of the house is seen in full view while Mary-Anne screams woefully from inside.

Her screams carry on for fifteen seconds before the entire scene falls quiet.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM- DAY

Kristine and Jeff are seated anxiously next to one another, gripping hands.

An older woman-- the police psychologist-- in a monochromatic suit appears and sits across from them.

Kristine, with tears in her eyes, stares sorrowfully at her.

KRISTINE

Why?

PSYCHOLOGIST

In cases of abuse such as this, the abused often conceive a form of interdependence on the abuser. It's more common amongst women whose relationships have ended. They often seek out men who, like their previous partner, are going to treat them poorly. Kristine's case was special. She was married to Chris for twenty years. I believe that, unable to cope with the loss, she began to relay these stories of Chris' ghost. I'm not saying that what she said happening wasn't real, in her mind it was, but the attack was self-inflicted.

(CONTINUED)

KRISTINE

But why? She'd never do that.

PSYCHOLOGIST

We don't know. But there are no signs of anyone else having been there. No evidence. Nothing.

KRISTINE

He killed her.

FADE OUT

Text on the screen appears that displays the following:

Every 9 seconds in the United States, a woman is assaulted or beaten. Most often, the abuser is a member of her own family. Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women--more than car accidents, muggings, and rapes combined. Every day in the US, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends.
-domesticviolencestatistics.org

The End