CODE RED

A Screenplay by Gregory Kerrick

WGA Registration #: 1305779

E-mail: DirectorG13@aol.com

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)

The threat is still unknown. Do not come out of your homes. We are under attack.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Disturbing images of war. Brutal acts of terrorism. Displayed in rapid succession on a television set, which overlooks the surrounding room. JULES (20), brunette, sits at the foot end of her bed. Intensely watches the screen. Her eyes and facial expression are comparable to the living dead.

NEWS ANCHOR

(from television)

Don't trust anyone. Don't answer the door. Don't answer telephone calls. This is a code red. I repeat a code red alert.

The bedside digital clock: 4:35 AM. The cell phone alongside it rings. Vibrates against the wood. The caller ID flashes on: UNKNOWN. The obnoxious ring tone doesn't phase her. Her blood-shot eyes remain utterly hypnotized.

Another ring. She blinks. Eyes wander. Comes back to consciousness. A fourth ring. She turns. Suspiciously eyes the mobile device.

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(from television)

The extent of the terrorist threat is still unknown. Avoid any and all contact with the outside world for your safety.

The phone continues ringing. She struggles to ignore it, to keep herself from answering. Clenches her fist. Knuckles turn pale white. Every muscle in her body tenses. Resists the temptation.

The ringing stops. She relaxes. A deep sigh. Relief. She focuses back on the television screen.

Again, the phone vibrates. She spins around and snatches the annoying device. Hurls it at the wall. The battery bursts out. The phone's power dies.

Silence.

She catches her breath. Settles back on the bed. Increases the television volume.

A faint vibration. The cellular phone?

Jules glances at the lifeless mobile device. The sum of its parts still scattered on the carpet.

A distant "boom" outside. Another vibration.

Jules turns. A queen-sized bed comforter covers the bedroom window. She stands. Inches her way forward. A third, off-setting vibration occurs. She missteps. The low, subdued firecracker-like explosion is more distinct. More recognizable. A vague orange glow seeps through the thick fabric. Jules stiffens. Hesitant. Unsure whether to proceed.

Silence. Reluctantly, she continues. Kneels. Slides a corner of the blanket aside, searching outside. Her face muscles mellow. There doesn't seem to be anything visibly threatening to her.

Boom! An explosion. A harsh orange light illuminates her face. She falls on her buttocks. Quickly recovers and crawls backward. Smacks her spine on the bedside railing.

She stares, wide-eyed. Hyperventilating.

Incoherent yelling rises outside. Murderous, helpless shrieks. Gunfire. The muzzle flashes serve as a dying strobe light through the comforter.

Silence. Jules' breathing stops. Stays seated. Motionless.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.) (CONT'D) (from television)
Please remain in your homes until the threat has been neutralized.

Jules jumps. Shoots her gaze to the television. The violent war images are no longer displayed. A security camera-like high angle shot of Jules occupies the broadcast now.

Jules stares in disbelief. She waves her hand in the air. The video feed is live. She's being watched.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.) (CONT'D) (from television)
Stay right where you are. You're doing just fine.

Indistinguishable chatter. Across the street. Feet charge toward her home. She crawls back to the window. Presses her ear to the wall, keeping extremely quiet. They halt just beyond the wall. The loud chatter noticeably decreases to whispers. Then --

Silence.

A command spoken in a foreign language. They resume sprinting past her home.

She exhales.

The front door! The distinct sound of it being kicked off it's hinges. The same incoherent, chaotic talk from before occurs in the living room. Furniture and other belongings are heard being damaged. Sabotaged.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.) (CONT'D) (from television)
Please. Don't panic.

Jules climbs over the bed. Rushes for her cell phone. She reassembles the parts. Dials the police station. One ring. Someone on the other end immediately answers.

JULES

Hello?

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)
(from television and
telephone)
Please refrain from making contact
with the outside world for your
safety. This is a code red.

Jules looks at the television. The news anchor stares right back. Smiling.

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)
(from television and
telephone)
I repeat... a code red.

Jules chucks the phone. Breaks it in half on impact with the wall.

Silence. The chaotic chatter has quieted. Footsteps hastily approach her bedroom. Whispers.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.) (CONT'D) (from television)
Don't be afraid. The threat will be resolved as soon as possible.

Jules darts for the television. Mashes the power button. It won't shut off.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.) (CONT'D) (from television)
Please stay tuned.

Feet shuffle. The overhead hallway light casts shadows of their movements -- Jules yanks the power chord. The television still plays -- The hallway darkens -- Jules stares. Petrified.

The door breathes. The wood creaks. Cracks. A miniscule amount of pressure applied.

Jules bolts to her closet. Crouches. Leans halfway out. Watches. Waits -- The knob twists. The door's locked. The intruders fidget with it.

Whispers. The pressure lessens.

Boom! The door bursts open.

INT. JULES' CLOSET - DAY

Jules free-falls into the closet. Kicks the door shut.

The intruders aimlessly fire. Bullets thud against the wall. Some penetrate. Whiz over her head.

The gunfire seizes. She cowers into the corner. Attempts to conceal herself within the hanging clothes.

A tiny shaft of light. A crack underneath the closet door. The intruders ruthlessly toss her belongings. Search every corner. One of the men come to the closet. She watches the shadow position itself. Ready to inspect. The intruder whispers a command. The closet door inches open.

Jules shuts her eyes.

The closet door crashes inward. She screams. A brief glimpse of overwhelming light. Darkness. Her screams fade. No gunfire ignites. No hostile screaming. Only silence.

Click. A television flickers to life. Jules opens her eyes.

The television set resides at the closet entrance. The violent images of war and violence return.

Jules, bewildered, merely stares.

NEWS ANCHOR
(from television)
This is a code red. This is a code red. This is a code red.

The news anchor repeats this over and over.

Click. Another television set powers on. Directly to her left. The same gratuitous images play.

Click. A third television. The words ,"This is a code red" rise.

More televisions power on. A dozen miraculously appear inside the closet. Surround Jules. She shuts her eyes. Covers her ears.

JULES

Stop!

The television volume rises.

JULES (CONT'D)

No more! Stop it!

Louder.

JULES (CONT'D)

No more! No more! No more!

Jules screams. Her cries become abnormally amplified. The yells increase to an unbearable decibel level until --

Boom! The white television explodes. The screen cracks in half. Jules' screams abruptly stop.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

7:00 AM.

The alarm clock blares the early morning news.

Jules rolls over. Mashes the snooze button. She sluggishly sits up. Rests on the edge of the bed. She rubs her eyes and briefly buries her face into her palms. Then grabs the television remote and pushes the power button.

A CNN news anchor appears. Discusses the recent updates on the war and the imminent threat Iraq poses to American citizens. The topic instantly absorbs her. Jules' eyes succumb to the same dull, brain-dead gaze we initially witnessed her having.

A crackle outside. Distant gunfire? A gut-wrenching shriek. Jules stands. Approaches the window. She peeks.

Bang. Bang. Jules gasps.

Adolescent teenagers fire small plastic, orange cap guns at one another.

Jules sighs. At ease.

Knock. Knock. Someone at the front door.

Jules walks to her bedroom door. Reaches for the knob.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)

(from television)

Coming up. The dangers of cellular phone usage and how the air outside could be potentially killing you faster.

Jules stops. Turns to the television. Instantly absorbed by the topic.

Another knock. Jules comes to. She locks the door.

Beat. The cellular phone rings.

Jules spins around, startled. She grudgingly approaches. Studies the caller ID, contemplative. Pensive. She silences the call and ejects the phone's battery.

She eyes the overblown sunlight spilling from the window.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY - LATER

Nails impale the top corners of Jules' bed comforter to the wall, shrouding the window. Leaves the bedroom in darkness.

Jules is positioned exactly as she was when we first encountered her. The shimmering glow of the TV glints off her glazed, irritated eyes.

Photographs and low quality video footage of war and destruction permeate the entirety of the screen.

The television flickers. The rushing images discontinue. A security camera-like image mirrors Jules' benumbed facial expression. Behind her, a group of men. Faceless. Wield heavy machine guns. Aim. Ready to fire.

THE END