# Dream of the Dead

by John Boitano

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EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

The moon is full and casts a beautiful reflection on the lake. The reflection is interrupted by the wake of a small boat. NED the sole human occupant of the boat is accompanied by a large black dog.

Ned looks to be in his 60's, dressed in traditional fishing attire, he docks the boat in front of an impressive lake side house. Securing the boat and grabbing his daily catch, the dog jumps off as they both head towards the house.

Walking along a stone path, the dog stops and starts barking, pointing in the direction of the woods to the side of the house.

NED What is it Lucky? Smell a friend out there?

Ned starts to move toward the house, the dog is still fixated on the woods.

NED Come on Lucky let's go.

He grabs the dog by the collar and pulls it along. Lucky gives up reluctantly and starts to walk with him.

Something in the woods let's out a sharp inhuman sound, Ned can see movement inside the wooded area. Lucky bolts towards the sound.

Clearly confused by the sound and worried about his dog, Ned starts toward the area where Lucky entered.

NED Lucky get back here!

Inside the wooded area next to his house, the moonlight barely penetrates this area. Taking a small flashlight out of his vest, it barely illuminates the immediate area.

## NED

Lucky!

His cry is met with a groan, a sound of anger more than pain. He moves the flashlight in the direction of the sound and makes out a human shape. NED Who's there?

There are more shapes, they are moving towards Ned. He's not sure what to do, he is encircled, one thing is certain whatever is going on, it is unimaginable beyond rational thought.

> NED Just take what you want and go, I have money I'll --

The woods start crashing in around him as other dark shapes encircle him, he get's off one scream as he is pounced on by human forms. Their bloody white hands and arms claw his face as he falls to the ground.

## EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A billboard advertising "Horror-Con this Weekend" a picture of zombies moving through the woods chasing an intended victim.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Sitting behind a desk in a well decorated office is ETHAN CURTIS, the name plaque on his desk Reads "Senior Accountant". Impeccably dressed and groomed business man, his look exudes a no-nonsense, straight-laced demeanor. He is tapping at his computer when the phone rings.

> ETHAN Hello, this is Ethan.

A smile comes across his face, the voice on the other line is his girlfriend VICTORIA.

## INT. ETHAN'S LIVING ROOM

Victoria is sitting on the coach with a Guitar in her lap phone to her ear. She is a complete opposite of Ethan, a natural beauty, very little make-up, a jeans and T-shirt type of girl.

> VICTORIA Hi Honey, how are you?

I was just thinking about you, this has been a week from hell. Freye has been an asshole. I can't wait for this day to end. Hey I have a great idea, how about dinner at "The Tavern" tomorrow night?

## VICTORIA

Sounds great, but I have a better idea.

ETHAN Does it involve a Mime?

## VICTORIA

Very Funny, well it's a convention and film festival this weekend that --

#### ETHAN

What kind of convention?

# VICTORIA

It's um... A horror convention and film festival.

#### ETHAN

Come on Victoria, you know I hate that stuff.

## VICTORIA

I know, but it's close to Halloween and you promised me that you would try something different this weekend.

#### ETHAN

I am, we haven't eaten at "The Tavern" for a couple of months and I --

## VICTORIA

That's not what I had in mind. You told me you would try opening your mind up, try something new, break out of your day-to-day routine. Well, this is it and you know I love this stuff.

My idea of a trying something new was the time I rented "Field of Dreams"

Ethan is met by silence on the other end. With a sigh of submission he shakes his head.

#### ETHAN

OK, one condition we have lunch before. I hate that convention food and they better serve beer.

# VICTORIA

(very cheerful) Great! Will I see you before I leave for the club?

## ETHAN

I have to visit a client right after work and I promised a game of pool with GEORGE and JIM. But I can catch your last set.

#### VICTORIA

Sounds good, you know where I'll be... Hey I can't tell you how excited I am about tomorrow.

# ETHAN

(sarcastically) Me too, I wasn't this excited since the Patriots and Red Sox won championships in the same season.

VICTORIA

Enough, I'll see you later, love you.

#### ETHAN

Same here.

Ethan hangs up just as two of his coworkers GEORGE and JIM walk into his office. They both look like stereotypical accountants, bookish looking, the type that probably played Dungeons and Dragons in High School. They take a seat in front of his desk.

GEORGE What's on the agenda for rest of the day?

Mr. Personality is joining me to visit the new account after work.

JIM

The HARMONY HILL MALL? Can't that wait until Monday?

ETHAN

I don't know, he's had a bug up his ass all week long. Doesn't he ever go home.

GEORGE Have you met his wife?

Both nod no.

GEORGE The foul temptress of New England

A knock at the door interrupts their conversation, standing at the door is RICHARD FREYE Senior Partner. An uptight looking man wearing a bargain basement suit and tie. His look carries an impression that he has never smiled in his life.

> FREYE The foul temptress?

GEORGE Yeah, ah my High School prom date.

FREYE I though you grew up in Florida.

GEORGE Yeah, my mistake, I meant Florida.

FREYE

Right... both of you gentleman perform some duty at this firm.

Both men answer in the affirmative and nervously get up to leave.

ETHAN I'll see you both later... (turning his attention to Freye) Richard if were starting this project on Tuesday, why do we need to take care of this today. FREYE

Because the manager is on vacation next week, I want both of us to meet him before he leaves and finally because I said so. Let's go, were taking two cars, my wife is meeting me there for dinner and a movie.

INT. ETHAN'S CAR DAY

Ethan's cell phone rings, the caller ID reads "Dad"

ETHAN Hi Dad, what's going on?

## INTERCUT SAM CURTIS'S LIVING ROOM/ETHAN'S CAR

Looking at Ethan's father Sam, you can see where he inherited his style and demeanor. Conservatively dressed, living room impeccably neat forty years younger he could be Ethan.

> SAM We'll I'm packing.

#### ETHAN

For what?

## SAM

I've been invited by Victoria's parents to stay at their house on the island for the weekend.

ETHAN

Now that sounds good, you need to get out of that empty house. I wish I could go, Victoria's dragging me to this thing tomorrow.

SAM

It's not that empty, I've been having poker nights every Thursday.

ETHAN

Your letting your friends come over to smoke cigars and drink beer. Are you running the vacuum every ten minutes? SAM

No, I wait till the morning to clean up, everyone has to change... Speaking of change, her parents told me she's getting a little frustrated with no ring on that left hand.

## ETHAN

(frustrated) Not you, I've had this talk with Victoria, her parents, her friends and even her hair dresser. It's just not the right time.

SAM I understand, but I like her and I don't think you can do any better.

ETHAN

I agree... Listen have a good time, call me when you get back and we'll have dinner.

SAM OK, take care and I'll call you on Monday.

Ethan hangs up clearly a little agitated, he scrolls through his cell phone's address book and stops at Victoria's name. His thumb hovers over the send button for moment, changing his mind he presses the end button and puts the phone away.

He arrives in the parking lot of their new client, a large multi-level mall called Harmony Hill Mall. The light is draining from the sky.

## EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - DUSK

Ethan and Freye park next to the service entrance, on the wall next to the entrance is an intercom system with a sign to "Press Button for Assistance" Freye presses the button, waits a few seconds, no answer. With a frustrated grunt he presses the button again, this time holding it down longer. Ethan is in back of him shaking his head. This time a voice comes across the intercom.

> MAN ON INTERCOM Can I help you?

FREYE Yes, Richard Freye and Ethan Curtis to see Tim Keene.

MAN ON INTERCOM He'll be right there, I'll buzz you in.

The door buzzes and Freye opens it immediately,

INT. MALL EMPLOYEE SERVICE AREA

Ethan and Freye find themselves standing in the malls employee service area. Coming towards them is an older man wearing a suit, he spots both of them, throws a hand up acknowledging their presence. By his dress and demeanor you can tell he is someone that has risen through the ranks by hard work.

> FREYE Let me start this one.

ETHAN That's a new concept for you.

Freye shots him stone-faced glare.

The man approaches, Ethan reads his name tag as "Tim Keene - Mall Manager" Freye extends his hand and introduces himself.

FREYE Mr. Keene thanks for staying late to meet with us.

KEENE Please call me Tim, and it's no problem, I'll be out next week and

problem, I'll be out next week and wanted to give you the keys and security codes before I left.

FREYE

I appreciate that, this is Ethan Curtis, he will be handling this project and he reports to me directly.

KEENE Yes, we spoken on the phone several times.

(shaking Keene's hand) Nice to finally meet you.

KEENE

Well before I forget, here are two sets of keys and the security codes for both of you. Also, Richard here are the complimentary passes for the bowling alley and cinema. Your employees can use them at anytime.

FREYE Thanks, I'll make sure these get handed out.

Ethan shoots a look at Freye, with a "Yeah Right" expression on his face. Keene catches this exchange and pauses for a moment.

> KEENE Well, let's take a walk and I'll introduce you to my crew. You've both have been here before, correct?

Both nod in acknowledgment.

KEENE

I kind of figured that, so we won't need to cover the retail area. The entrance you came trough is for all mall employees and receiving. The other entrance is for garbage, boiler room and maintenance equipment.

Keene walks them down the hallway as his voice trails off leading them through his tour of the offices, employee areas and ground crew area.

Back where they started at the employee entrance, they have finished their task.

KEENE Great, any questions before I leave

ETHAN Not at this time, but I am sure I'll have quite a few when you get back. FREYE

Everyone knows about our presence, so I don't foresee any problems.

KEENE

Of course. A memo went out to all employees about your firm and you have already met my management team and most of the security guards.

FREYE

Great, I'm off to have dinner with my wife. Have a great vacation Tim. Curtis will be here on Tuesday morning.

With that Freye walks back into the mall.

KEENE

I guess he forgot to say goodbye to you.

ETHAN

Yeah, right. I'll see you when you return and don't worry everything will be here when you get back.

KEENE I'm sure it will be. YOU were the reason the new owners choose your firm, not Sgt. Freye

ETHAN Thanks, I appreciate that. Take care.

Keene walks away towards the inside of the mall. Ethan checks his watch, 7:30. Shakes his head, opens the door and walks toward his car. It is dark now.

INT. BAR & GRILL - NIGHT

Ethan tie loosened walks into your typical neighborhood bar, neon signs promoting beer and the local New England sports teams. In the back are pool tables, Ethan spots his coworkers George and Jim. He grabs a drink for himself and refills for them and walks over to their table.

> ETHAN Gentleman, how is the evening thus far?

#### GEORGE

You made it, thought maybe Freye had you landscaping the mall while you were there.

#### ETHAN

He never ceases to amaze me. How did he make it that position, he has no clue about what he is doing.

JIM

By bull shitting better than everyone else. Plus he told the new owners that he was a Dallas Cowboy fan. It will catch up to him one of these days.

GEORGE Cowboys? He hates the Cowboys.

## ETHAN

He does, but the new owners are from Texas, so he's a Cowboy fan now.

JIM He probably irons his underwear to.

#### ETHAN

What are you guy's up top this weekend?

#### JIM

Well, were going to the Kings Faire tomorrow --

#### ETHAN

You've got to be kidding! Why would you want to go to that? Everyone dressed like an extra from The Holy Grail, fake English accents, overpriced pewter mugs.

#### GEORGE

It's fun, beer wenches with tight dresses, Medieval cleavage. You an Victoria should come, I know she'd like it.

#### ETHAN

I can't, we have plans. Victoria is dragging me to some horror convention down --

GEORGE Your kidding we're going on Sunday!

ETHAN Unbelievable, when was the last time either of you kissed a woman?

George and Jim both look at each other quizzically.

ETHAN Well, I told Victoria that I catch her last set. Have a great time at the Faire fellas.

George and Jim say their good-byes and Ethan leaves the bar for the drive over to see Victoria. He arrives at another club, this time it looks more like an art-house club than a pool hall.

INT. BAR - SAME

He opens the door and immediately looks to the stage, onstage singing and playing guitar is his girlfriend Victoria. She is accompanied by a male guitar player singing backup.

Taking a seat at an empty table next to the stage, Victoria spots him and smiles. He watches her finish her song, a folk type Melissa Etheridge song. The crowd claps in appreciation

> VICTORIA Thank's, we'll be right back for our last set.

Victoria places her guitar on a stand and walks over, bends down and gives him a long kiss

> VICTORIA What a surprise I didn't think you'd show.

#### ETHAN

I made it for the last set, just like I promised. With work this last two weeks, we haven't seen much of each other this week.

## VICTORIA

I know, we have the weekend, I am so happy that you are coming with me tomorrow. How was your ride with hell boss?

Thankfully we took separate cars. But it was the usual, his arrogance is only outdone by his ineptitude. I mentioned that our new client gave our office passes for the cinema and bowling alley. He took them all for himself, he's taking his wife to dinner at the mall tonight, I bet he's either going bowling or the movies after.

#### VICTORIA

Well, this is my last set and I think there are a few things I an do to make you forget about your week.

ETHAN I'll race you home.

They kiss and she walks back on-stage to finish her last set. Ethan orders a beer and sit's back as she starts the first song.

EXT. CAMP SITE - SAME

A fire is lit as four weekend campers, 20's, JACK, KAREN, ERIC and JANE sit around drinking, laughing. Their tents setup behind them.

ERIC Hold on a sec, did you hear that?

All four go silent - nothing. Just the sound of crickets and an owl.

JACK It's nothing, just a --

The sound of cracking branch silences the crickets, immediately followed by another.

JANE It's probably just a deer.

KAREN Or a bear.

JACK Bears are rare here, it's probably a rac -- A man stumbles out of the nearby woods. He is beyond the edge of illumination, all you can make out is that it's a man's form.

# ERIC Oh man, it's a dude... Hey buddy you lost.

The man jerks his head in their direction and starts to walk over. He is walking like he is drunk, almost stumbling over himself as he lumbers forward.

### KAREN

(laughing) Man this guy is shit faced.

He arrives at the edge of camp fire, the lite slowly revealing a pair of very dirty shoes, moving up to his face, revealing a deathly pallor and a bottom lip torn from his face. He let's out a painful moan.

> JANE Oh my God, he's hurt.

Eric runs over quickly to the new arrival.

ERIC Sit down, we'll call for help.

The man stares at him with blank expressionless eyes. He grabs Eric's head by the hair, opening his mouth bringing his neck to his teeth.

KAREN

Eric!

The man bites down as Eric tries to push him off, it takes a huge chunk out of his neck.

Eric falls down as blood spurts between his fingers, the man snarls at the others as blood drips from his chin.

Jane starts to get up as a white hand grabs her forehead, forcing her back down. Her head is bent backwards as a bloody white face descends and rips the flesh from her throat. Like someone taking a bite out of a turkey leg.

Karen and Jack get up as more of these things emerge from the woods, they are all around them - no escape as they converge on remaining two.

Behind the carnage you can just make out the distant lights of the city buildings poking through the trees.

INT. ETHAN'S CAR - SAME

On his way home after Victoria's last set, he drives by the convention center which is displaying an advertisement for horror-con. Ethan looks at the sign, zombies chasing new victims and shakes his head.

ETHAN I can't believe she convinced me to do this.

He arrives at his house, pulling in his driveway, he spots the next-door neighbor putting his trash out. Ethan waves and puts his car in the garage, Victoria's car is next to him.

> ETHAN She beats me home every time.

Ethan's house is a comfortable house, the kind that projects comfort with out screaming out materialism.

VICTORIA VO Ethan, I'm up here.

Victoria is calling from the bedroom upstairs. Ethan makes his way upstairs and finds Victoria in bed wearing lingerie, candles lit on the night stand.

> ETHAN You look beautiful.

VICTORIA Let's see if we can start this weekend off right.

Light fades as Ethan embraces victoria.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

It's Saturday morning Ethan and Victoria are having lunch before going to the convention center.

Among the other diners are fellow attendees of the convention, a majority of them are dressed like it is Halloween. Werewolves, Vampires, Grim Reapers, Etc.

Ethan shakes his head and smiles as he takes the crowds attire in. Victoria catches his amused look.

VICTORIA

Be nice.

ETHAN I didn't say a word.

VICTORIA You didn't have to. Hurry up, everything's about to start. There's a movie I want you to see.

ETHAN What is it?

VICTORIA It's a surprise, let's go.

ETHAN Wait, let me get my Spock ears.

VICTORIA Wrong convention wise ass, but nice try.

They leave the restaurant and head across the street towards the convention. Together with dozens of other attendees, some dressed and some not, they walk under the banner for Horror-Con and enter the convention center.

# INT. CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

Ethan and Victoria are inside the main room, it is typical of most convention halls. The main section is filled with vendors selling horror merchandise of all kinds; posters, DVD's, models. It is packed.

Ethan has an astonished look on his face. Victoria grabs his arm and --

VICTORIA Are you ready?

ETHAN This is huge, I had no idea that this many people were into this stuff.

VICTORIA Of course, from a business standpoint it's a niche industry with a very strong following.

Victoria looks at her watch, eye's grow large.

VICTORIA Were going to be late for the movie.

Victoria looks around and spots a sign "Movie Room", directing them to a new section of the hall. Victoria drags Ethan towards the entrance of the room.

> VICTORIA This is so great, your going to loves this.

ETHAN Well see, it hasn't been that bad yet.

They enter the movie room, it just about filled to capacity. Ethan and Victoria seat themselves quickly. Off to the left next to the screen is a microphone. A convention worker steps up the mike, taps it once to address the audience.

> CONVENTION WORKER Thanks for coming to our first movie of the weekend. What a great turnout. This is the movie that started it all, defining the Zombie genre; "Night of the living dead".

The convention worker leaves the room as the lights start to dim. The screen flickers to life and the movie begins.

The movie starts with the famous opening graveyard scene. The scene begins to unfold and Ethan is transfixed on the screen.

Over the course of the movie we see the expression on Ethan's face as person totally absorbed in the movie.

The deathly faces, the inhuman moaning, as the story unfolds Ethan becomes more involved.

As the movie ends, Ethan and Victoria get up to leave. She looks at him quizzically.

VICTORIA Well, what did you think?

ETHAN Well, I'd hate to admit it, I liked it. I never thought I would, but... it was cool. VICTORIA Wow, wonders never cease. Too bad I have to work tomorrow there's more.

# ETHAN More? Are they on video?

Victoria looks at him bewildered.

INT. CONVENTION HALL

Ethan and Victoria walk through tables of vendors at the convention, they come upon a table of actors dressed as Zombies taking pictures with attendees.

Dressed in torn clothing with makeup professionally applied to mimic the bloody wounds and the deathly pallor of a corpse. They both stop and take a souvenir picture.

> ETHAN Well this has been an unexpected pleasure.

VICTORIA I was so impressed that not that you not only came, but you actually enjoyed it... You did right?

ETHAN I did, Jim and George are going to bust my balls when I tell them about this. They'll be here tomorrow.

VICTORIA Great, now we can go to the King's Faire.

ETHAN Let's not get ahead of ourselves.

They kiss outside of the convention center and walk to their car.

Ethan looks over to nearby convention parking, several people are not only dressed like zombies, but they have the signature walk down.

> VICTORIA Hey look, more of your friends.

Pretty good, keeping in character.

They pass by the them as they start their drive. Ethan slows to take a closer look. One of them looks up and snarls, changing direction and heads towards the car.

Ethan speeds up and resumes the ride home.

VICTORIA Man, their makeup was realistic.

#### ETHAN

I agree.

Ethan looks in his rear view mirror, all of them are in the street now, still in character.

INT. ETHAN AND VICTORIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ethan and Victoria are in bed. Victoria is asleep while Ethan is awake looking at the picture the two of them took at the convention.

They are both flanked by actors dressed as Zombies. He switches off the light on the night stand and closed his eyes.

Ethan is drifting off to sleep, he starts to dream about the movie he watched. The scenes of zombies attacking people and bitting their flesh flickers through his mind. The black and white images of lumbering corpses and screaming victims permeates his dream.

A noise separate from his dreams is slowly bringing him back to reality, his eye's flicker trying to open.

He hears moaning, opening his eyes his vision is blurred from sleep. Ethan rubs his eyes and refocuses, he is staring out of a car window, in front of him is an old country style house. He is parked in front of the main door.

## ETHAN What the hell is this shit.

He looks around at the vehicle he is sitting in, it is an older pick-up truck. Still running, he turns the ignition off.

The full moon bathes the entire front yard with light. The moaning that woke him up is louder, distinctly behind him.

He looks over his shoulder, the rear window is scratched and dirty, but he can still see about six people behind him, walking towards the truck. They are about fifty feet away.

Ethan gets out and walks to the rear of the truck.

## ETHAN

## Victoria?

His eyes take in the scene before him, Victoria has not replied, she is not among the people walking towards him.

What is slowly walking towards him are bloody, pale faced individuals. Their arms are outstretched, moaning, their bodies are covered with wounds.

## ETHAN This can't be real. Don't come any closer

The message goes unheeded, the zombies are coming closer, he can see their faces much clearer now, among them is a small boy, half his face is torn off.

He looks in the bed of the truck and finds a shovel, grabbing it he runs to the steps of the house, he looks back around and is almost face-to-face with a female walking dead.

Using the shovel his pushes the zombie to ground, looking up he sees dozens of the dead things walking towards him. Quickly he climbs the stairs and tries the door - It's locked.

## ETHAN

Shit!

He quickly tries the window next to the door... Unlocked. He quickly climbs in and locks it immediately.

He sits down with his back to the door, holding his head in his hands.

# ETHAN What the hell is happening?

A loud bang on the door brings Ethan to his feet, he stares at the door as the first zombie reaches. He grabs a nearby chair and shoves it underneath the doorknob.

Ethan is inside a typical country-style house, he is standing in the family living room, to his left is an adjoining kitchen, straight ahead is stairway leading to a darken hallway. Underneath the stairs is a door, Ethan tries it but it's locked. He Walks around the living room making sure the windows are locked and the shades are pulled down, as he goes about his work he can glimpse zombies coming closer to the house.

As he starts to pull down the last shade a badly decomposed face appears on the outside starting at him with dark drool dripping from his face. Ethan jumps back scared and quickly pulls down the shade. The shades are cheap, the image of the corpse can be seen through the shade.

The sound of smashing glass is coming from the next room, the Kitchen. He runs

IN THE KITCHEN

to find a pale face and arm of a Zombie poking through the broken back door window, it's arm is tearing on the shards of glass.

Looking around the kitchen Ethan eyes lock on a small refrigerator. He puts down his shovel and starts to move the fridge in front of the door. Making little progress and losing his grip, a pair of hands appears on the fridge next to him, Ethan falls back scrambling for his shovel.

> STRANGER No, it's alright, I'm alive, let's get this in front of the door.

Ethan looks at the stranger with an bewildered look, it's not a stranger at all, it's his co-worker Jim.

The zombie's upper body is completely inside, if they wait any longer it will fall in.

> ETHAN Jim, what the hell is going on here?

STRANGER Jim? It's Bob. Give me a hand before it gets in.

Ethan walks over still staring at the person he recognizes at his co-worker Jim. Bob grabs the shovel and shoves the zombie out of the window frame.

Ethan grabs a side of the fridge, Jim helps as they both position it in front of the door.

BOB That will do it, their not strong, but enough of them can push their way inside.

ETHAN Enough of what? What is going on here?

BOB What do you think is going on? Do those things out there look healthy? There not trying to get in and have a dinner with us, their trying to get in and have us for dinner.

ETHAN This is a joke, I work with you!

BOB I cut firewood man, I've never seen you before in my life.

FEMALE VOICE O.S. Bob!.. Bob are you OK?

BOB Yeah honey, I'm in the kitchen.

A young woman walks in the kitchen looking very scared. She is Bob's wife MARIANNE 20's. Walking over to Bob she immediately hugs him and starts to cry.

> BOB It's alright, I wanted to help secure this door and help out this guy... This is Marianne, I didn't catch your name.

ETHAN Um... Ethan, hey where am I?

BOB Your in my Uncle's house, he got killed by --

ETHAN Yeah, but where is this house?

BOB Monroeville ETHAN Monroeville, where is that? What city is it near?

BOB City? The closet city is Pittsburg.

ETHAN Pittsburg? That's over 300 miles from where I live, this can't be right.

BOB Sounds like you took a wrong turn.

ETHAN I didn't take any turn.

BOB Not from around here?

ETHAN

No, I'm not

BOB Listen, I have go in the other room to let the others know it's OK.

The three walk

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Bob knocks on the basement door.

BOB It's OK to come up.

Ethan peeks out through the corner of the window shade and sees about two dozen zombies milling around outside the house.

Out of the basement comes three people, two Woman and a Man. Ethan turns his head and is speechless - one of the Woman is Victoria.

## ETHAN

# Victoria!

He runs over and tries to hug the woman he thinks is Victoria - she pushes him away.

WOMAN

Victoria! (pushing him away) You have the wrong person.

MARIANNE This is JANICE, I think your a little confused.

Ethan looks closely at the Woman before him, except for some changes in her hair, she looks exactly like Victoria.

ETHAN Sorry, but I'm not confused. You look exactly like my girlfriend.

JANICE Where is she?

ETHAN I don't know, I don't even know where I am.

JANICE Your truck's outside, where did you drive from.

ETHAN It's not my truck, I don't remember even driving here.

MAN O.S. Sounds like you've had a few drinks.

A man appears behind the others, this is PERRY a middle aged man wearing dirty and torn clothing. It looks like he hasn't slept in days.

> ETHAN I wasn't drinking, I was sleeping.

PERRY Sleeping! We were perfectly safe in the basement until you came and attracted more of those things. We have a son down there hurt who...

A Woman next to him intervenes, it is Perry's Wife NATALIE. Even though her clothing is torn and dirty, is attractive and you can tell she takes acre of herself. choice.

PERRY Yeah he did... keep going.

Perry walks over and sits on the couch, his wife joins him. He holds a silent conversation with his wife.

> BOB Forget him, he walked in just like you. Does your truck have enough gas?

ETHAN Listen it's not my truck and I have no idea how much gas is left.

The sounds of smashing glass is heard from the kitchen. Ethan and Bob run

IN THE KITCHEN

to see white hands reaching through the window above the sink. Bob finds a small end table and lifts it to cover the window.

A set of white fingers are wrapped around the table, Ethan grabs a nearby roller-pin and smashes at fingers, breaking them with a pencil snapping sound.

It now fits perfectly over the window.

BOB There's a hammer and some nails in the closet behind you.

Ethan opens the door behind him, grabs the hammer and a box of nails. He quickly goes over and starts to bang nails around the edge of the table securing it to the wall.

> BOB That's it, they won't get in.

ETHAN The banging's going to attract them.

BOB How do you know?

# ETHAN I saw it in a movie.

Another sound of breaking glass is heard from the living room, followed by screams.

JANICE O.S. Their breaking through the windows!

#### ETHAN

Hold on, were coming.

They both run quickly

IN THE LIVING ROOM

to find Janice and Marianne holding a coffee table over one of the windows. From the sides you can see bloodied white hands trying to force their way inside. Perry and his wife Natalie start to head towards the basement.

#### ETHAN

Hey Perry! We need your help here.

PERRY Screw you all, I'm going down there and I'm not opening the door for anyone.

BOB

Bastard!

More windows break as more zombies gather outside. Janice and Marianne fall backwards as the weight outside is to great for them to hold off.

A male zombie with half it's face torn off is pulling itself through the window. It pauses to look at living with ravenous hungry eyes.

The remaining intact windows are broken as the dead continue to push through, the zombies are climbing over each other to get inside. There's too many, no way to stop them.

> ETHAN Everyone upstairs, I'll keep them busy.

With the shovel in hand, Ethan turns to come face-to-face with a zombie. Using the shovel he pushes the zombie away, doing so he falls down with his back against the wall. A loud pop is heard over the moans of the zombies, the lights flicker and go out. The room is plunged into darkness.

# BOB Ethan! Get up here!

Ethan remains silent as he stands up, the small amount of moonlight penetrating the room is enough to see the silhouettes of the zombies.

With his back glued to the wall, Ethan starts to slowly move along the wall extending his arm, fingers feeling for the corner that will lead to the stairs.

He is close to the edge when a bloody pale hand grabs his wrist, through the faint light he can see a head descending towards his arms, screaming he yanks his arm away falling backward into the arms of more zombies.

A LIGHT TURNS ON

Ethan still screaming finds himself back in his bed. Victoria leaning over him grabbing his shoulders trying to comfort him.

INT. ETHAN AND VICTORIA'S BEDROOM - SAME

VICTORIA

Are you OK?

ETHAN

What a dream.

VICTORIA Sounds more like a nightmare. What was it about?

ETHAN I don't remember, I'm fine, just tired.

Ethan turns over on his side, before Victoria has a chance to turn the light off he looks at his right wrist. Red Marks in the shape of fingers and a thumb circle his wrist. He rubs his wrist as he closes his eyes to sleep. INT. KITCHEN MORNING - DAY

Ethan and Victoria are eating breakfast. Ethan looks tired and a little spaced out.

#### VICTORIA

Sorry about the last minute rehearsal today. We're playing a few new songs tonight and nowhere close to being ready.

#### ETHAN

No problem, I'll get a few things done around the house and I also have to prepare for my new account on Tuesday.

VICTORIA OK, that works then, I'm out of here.

She get's up and gives him a kiss.

#### VICTORIA

See ya.

## ETHAN

Be safe.

As Victoria leaves, Ethan gets dressed, jumps into his car. Driving he passes another billboard for the horror convention.

He is at his destination, one of those music and video stores that carry a full selection of just about anything you want.

## INT. MUSIC AND VIDEO STORE

In the horror section Ethan picks up DVD's of all the George Romero zombie movies. Pays and starts the drive back home.

## INT. ETHAN'S CAR DAY

Driving home from the video store Ethan slows to take a turn. As he is turning he passes an alley - something catches his attention.

Looking over reveals a quick glimpse of a homeless man sleeping on a cardboard box with his back to the wall. Leaning over him is another man, dressed poorly, his face covered with what looks like open wounds. Whoever it is, has his arms extended reaching down to grab the sleeping man, at quick glance it looked like a one of the zombies from the previous night.

Ethan unable to stop and back up, pulls over farther down of the street.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Quickly out of the car door, Ethan runs toward the alley way. The homeless man sleeping in the exact position is alone. He walks further down the alley, it bends to the left farther down.

## ETHAN Hello, anyone here?

He finds nothing.

Walking back to the car he passes the sleeping homeless man, a hand reaches out and grabs his ankle. Startled Ethan jumps back freeing himself from the grip, the homeless man looks up, his face ravaged by the time and abuse of the street.

> HOMELESS MAN Sorry to scare you, can you help out a Veteran?

#### ETHAN

Yeah sure.

He grabs a few dollars out of his pocket and gives it to the man.

ETHAN Where did your friend go?

#### HOMELESS MAN

Who?

ETHAN The man that was here a minute ago.

HOMELESS MAN No one here but me.

ETHAN I saw someone standing right next to you. HOMELESS MAN You must be drinking something stronger than my stuff.

ETHAN Maybe that's the problem, take it easy.

The homeless man waves as Ethan leaves. Back in his car heading towards the house shaking his head.

> ETHAN The guy was drunk, didn't even realize who was there.

INT. ETHAN'S HOUSE - DAY

On his couch Ethan pops in the DVD of "Dawn of the Dead", kicks the recliner out and settles in to watch the movie.

Again he is drawn in by the movie, even more profound than before.

The movie ends, ethan turns the DVD player off and remains on the couch. Slowly his eyes begin to close, before sleep takes him he looks at the time display on the cable box; 2:50.

The room darkens as the time passes.

Ethan blinks his eyes, slowly waking up. It is dark now, the time reads 4:20. He sits up, rubs his eyes and makes his way out of the room walking

IN THE KITCHEN

Ethan flips the light switch and goes to the refrigerator. Grabbing a beer he closes the door and twists the cap off, ready to take a sip he stops with the bottle halfway to his mouth.

Looking across the room at the sliding glass door, there is a bloody hand print on the glass. Ethan walks over and looks at it closely, it is still dripping. He touches the glass, the blood is on the outside.

> ETHAN What the hell is this?

Ethan opens the door and peeks outside. Looks to the right, nothing. Looking to the left he catches a glimpse of a man rounding the corner of the garage.

Hey buddy!

The man does not return, Ethan waits a moment then quickly closes the sliding door and locks it. He heads

## THROUGH THE LIVING ROOM

opening the door to the garage. It has several frosted windows, the door is closed. The Shadows of trees cast by the streetlights outside dance on the floors and walls. The shadow is seen through the windows as he passes.

He watches as whoever's out there passes the last window, moments later a knocking at the door can be heard.

Grabbing a golf club from his bag, Ethan heads toward the

## LIVING ROOM FRONT DOOR

The knocking is growing louder as he walks slowly to the front door. He slowly turns the knob - it swings open on it's own. Ethan re-grips the golf club, ready to strike.

Fully open the doorway reveals a man with his back turned. The man turns around quickly, shocked to see the raised club in Ethan's hand, jumps back - It's his next door neighbor DARRYL.

> DARRYL Shit Ethan! A little late for golf!

ETHAN What the hell are you doing, I thought you were a burglar.

DARRYL How many burglars knock on the

door. By the way your doorbell is broken.

ETHAN Thanks, what's up?

DARRYL Can I borrow your wet-vac, we just had a minor flood?

ETHAN Yeah sure, it's in the garage. Ethan and Darryl retrieve the wet-vac from the garage.

ETHAN Why the hell did you go around the backyard to get to the front door?

DARRYL I didn't I walked across the front lawn... Why?

ETHAN Nothing, I thought I saw you in the backyard.

DARRYL Thanks again, I'll bring it back tomorrow.

ETHAN No problem, take it easy.

Bob leaves as Ethan locks the door behind him walks back

IN THE KITCHEN

The sliding glass door is perfectly clean.

## ETHAN I'm out of here.

He grabs the keys and heads towards the garage.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Ethan is inside another art-house type bar where Victoria is playing. Orders a beer and walks over to a vacant table. Ethan settles in and listen as she works her way through a ballad, he is visibly more relaxed.

Victoria finishes and announces that the band is taking a break. She walks off stage toward Ethan with a smile on her face.

VICTORIA I was hoping you'd come by.

ETHAN I had to get out of the house.

VICTORIA Why, what's wrong?

Your going to laugh, but after you left I went to the store and bought the sequels to the movie we saw at the convention.

VICTORIA You did, this is so unlike you.

ETHAN Yeah, I watched the second one, fell asleep

Victoria has s growing look of concern of her face.

#### VICTORIA

Go ahead tell me.

## ETHAN

I woke up after the movie and went to the kitchen. I though I saw blood on the sliding glass door. I opened the door and saw a man walking around the corner of the house. Then some one was knocking on the door, it turned out be Darryl. After he left I checked the door, no blood.

#### VICTORIA

Honey, it was a bad dream. I had them too when I watched them for the first time.

ETHAN It was real, not a dream. I was awake.

## VICTORIA

You just woke up, you imagined it. The movie was fresh in your mind.

#### ETHAN

I know the difference between a nightmare and reality. This was reality.

VICTORIA me Ethan, zombies

Trust me Ethan, zombies weren't prowling our backyard.

ETHAN I know it sounds foolish.

#### VICTORIA

What it sounds like to me, is that you enjoyed them and it scared you Ike it does most people.

#### ETHAN

I guess more than I realized

## VICTORIA

Good, we can watch the next one together in bed. I'll protect you if anything happens. I have to get back, I have one more set left. Will you wait for me?

#### ETHAN

Of course.

She resumes her performance as Ethan sits calmly sips his beer.

## INT. ETHAN AND VICTORIA'S BEDROOM

The lights are off as Ethan and Victoria lay in bed watching "Day of the Dead". Ethan is drifting off to sleep.

Slowly Ethan's eyes are fluttering awake . A banging sound is bringing him back to consciousness. Fully awake now he is sitting up in bed. Looking over at Victoria, she is in a deep sleep. The banging continues in Metronome-like fashion.

Looking out the upstairs window he has a complete view of his front yard. The sound is coming from the front door, it's his neighbor Darryl. A quick look at the alarm clock, 2:30 am.

# ETHAN What the hell can he want.

He doesn't wake Victoria, he leaves the room and heads

TO THE FRONT DOOR

Darryl's knocking is steady.

ETHAN Darryl enough already I'm here.

The knocking stops as Ethan opens the door to find Darryl with his back to him.

## ETHAN What the hell is wrong?

Darryl slowly turns around, his face is bloody, one eye is missing. The pallor of his skin is deathly white.

Zombie Darryl takes a step forward as his body fills the inside of the door frame. Ethan closes the door and knocks Darryl back, but his arms catch the molding and he holds his ground. Ethan opens the door again and kicks him in the chest, sending it to the ground. Ethan shuts and dead bolts the door. Listening closely there is no sound at all coming from outside.

He grabs his golf club, still next to the door from last night and heads out the room to

# THE KITCHEN

the lights are off and the room is filled with moonlight. The sliding glass door is open, smeared on the sliding glass door is another bloody handprint. Ethan walks over and closes the door, he touches the bloody print, this time the stain is on the inside.

He steps back from the sliding glass door looking at the blood on his hands. Movement behind him, he looks up and sees a reflection of a lumbering zombie headed his way.

Ethan turns quickly, raises the golf club and smashes the zombie in head, dropping it instantly.

He pauses over the body for a moment, looks towards the stairs leading to the bedrooms.

ETHAN

Victoria!

He turns to the kitchen counter and grabs a large knife from the rack, knife in hand he turns to head up the stairs.

He is instantly tackled by another zombie, the knife comes flying out of his hand. The zombie is on top of him trying to bite him. Ethan tries to shake it off, but only accomplishes knocking a vase over from a nearby table. It crashes to the ground sending the pieces over the floor.

Ethan finally gains leverage on the Zombie and pushes it off. It falls besides the counter out of view. Getting to his feet he grabs the golf club left on the counter, raised over his head he moves around the counter. The zombie is struggling to get up, Ethan is ready to kill it when -- The kitchen lights go on, Ethan looks over to see Victoria looking around the room, taking in the scene. Ethan looks back at the floor - Nothing. The sliding glass door is perfectly clean, no dead zombie.

## VICTORIA

What's wrong? What happened?

### ETHAN

Nothing.. I thought I heard someone down here. I got a little jumpy and knocked the vase over.

VICTORIA Are you sure? It wasn't another nightmare.

### ETHAN

I don't know.

VICTORIA Let's lay off the horror movies for awhile, OK?

ETHAN OK, that might be a good idea.

VICTORIA Let's go back to bed.

Back in bed Ethan stares at the ceiling while Victoria falls back to sleep. The shadows from the tress outside dance across his ceiling.

INT. ETHAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Ethan is standing looking out his window as George and Jim enter his office. Both of them have smiles on their faces.

> JIM Well, go ahead tell us how much you hated it.

Ethan sits back down at his desk.

ETHAN Actually... I had a good time.

GEORGE You must of stayed at the beer concession. ETHAN

No, I watched a movie walked around and even had my picture taken.

GEORGE Dam it, we missed that one.

ETHAN How was your renaissance fair?

JIM Great, George got picked on at dinner. He didn't ask the King's permission to go to the bathroom.

GEORGE Hey I drank way too much of that crappy lite beer on draft.

With out knocking Frey walks into the office with a sour look on his face, a look that is all to familiar. Looking at George and Jim --

FREYE You two leave.

George and Jim obey and leave the office quickly.

FREYE Have you familiarized your self with the new account?

ETHAN I feel comfortable, my first day onsite is tomorrow.

FREYE Good, I'm going there tonight. Call me if you have any questions.

ETHAN

OK.

FREYE This is a big account, don't do anything stupid.

ETHAN I'll try not to disappoint you.

Freye shots him a disapproving look as he leaves his office. The phone rings, he answers the phone in his usually greeting.

VICTORIA

Good morning.

ETHAN Hey your finally up.

VICTORIA I've been up for awhile, I wanted to see how you where.

ETHAN I'm fine, just nightmares. I'm not used to these movies. I do like them though.

VICTORIA As I said, we'll lay off them for awhile.

ETHAN That's not necessary, I can handle it. Hey not to change the subject but let's go out for dinner tonight.

VICTORIA Sounds good. How about Bobby's?

ETHAN Good choice, I'll see you after work.

VICTORIA Alright, I love you.

ETHAN

Me too.

VICTORIA

How much?

ETHAN Enough to buy you dinner.

VICTORIA

I'd rather you buy me something other than dinner.

ETHAN Let's just do dinner tonight. VICTORIA Hey it doesn't hurt to try, talk to you later.

They both hang-up and Ethan goes back to work.

INT. BOBBY'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

#### VICTORIA

Well this is a nice way to spend a Monday night.

ETHAN

I just wanted to get out the house. I felt like I was losing it yesterday.

# VICTORIA

You did lose it, but it's OK, those movies scared me too.. when I was ten.

#### ETHAN

Very funny, I thought you were a musician not a comedian. By the way your friends dog snow ball scared you last week. How big was the dog?

VICTORIA

It doesn't matter how big it is, it doesn't like me.

ETHAN

It was about six pounds. She does Like you she just wanted to sit in your lap. Anyway, it wasn't just the movies, it was my dreams after I watched them. They were the most vivid I've ever had, it was like I was awake.

VICTORIA Well you weren't, I'll be right back.

Victoria get's up to visit the ladies room. Ethan looks outside and sees several people dressed in Halloween costumes. Victoria returns as Ethan is paying the bill, she sits back down to finish her drink.

> VICTORIA Look, nice costumes.

ETHAN Is the convention still going?

VICTORIA Yeah, last night. Hey they look like the two zombies we took a picture with. Their good, still in character.

Ethan looks out he window again, in addition to the others, he's spots the two convention zombies. They lumber toward the restaurant and the costumed convention attendees, they are giving a thumbs-up to the zombies.

> ETHAN Are you ready?

VICTORIA Yeah... Want to go over a say hi?

ETHAN No, I'm all set. Those guys freak me out.

Ethan and Victoria leave the restaurant. To the right of the exit are the attendees, about five feet away are the convention zombies heading towards everyone. They are still in character, lumbering forward making groaning noises just like the movie.

Victoria smile fades as they both head for Ethan's car, she has a look of someone who is sensing trouble.

VICTORIA Wait, There's something wrong.

The two Zombies lung forward and grab one of the attendees. The other jumps on the zombies to pull them off. Ethan grabs Victoria and opens the car door and pushes her inside.

#### ETHAN

Stay here!

As he turns around he is face-to-face with a zombie. This one is different, it is not one of the two that attacked the attendees. It grabs his shirt with both hands trying to get to his neck. Inside the car Victoria is screaming as Ethan struggles before gaining enough strength to push the zombie to the ground.

He runs around to the drivers side, Victoria has the door open as Ethan jumps inside.

ETHAN

Too late.

Ethan backs the car up parallel to the zombies. They are bent over the attendees ripping chunks of flesh off with each bite. One zombie has ripped an entire arm off and is attacking it like a lion eating it's prey.

Distracted by the car, the zombie stops and looks up snarling at the both of them before returning to his meal.

Through the glass windows of the restaurant more zombies have appeared and are attacking the diners.

ETHAN There's nothing we can do.

VICTORIA What is happening?

ETHAN I have no idea, but this can't be real.

VICTORIA Not real, what the hell do you call that?

ETHAN I'm hoping I'll wake up again, this will be all over.

Ethan closes his eyes for a second and is quickly brought back with a loud whack on the drivers side window. It's the zombie that attacked him, smearing blood on window as it tries to get inside.

The dull look in it's eye's does not mask the things intentions.

VICTORIA Go! Go! We have to get out of here now!

Ethan quickly drives out of the restaurant.

VICTORIA This has to be a joke, from the convention. It's part of an act. They pass another group of zombies feasting on more victims. One zombie is scooping the brain matter out of one victim, as another tries to take it away like a dog stealing another's bone. The zombie pushes the other away with a menacing snarl.

> ETHAN Somehow I don't think this is an act.

VICTORIA What do we do now?

ETHAN

Let's go home and think this over.

Victoria is silent, she is taking in the scene around her. The street are littered with the walking dead.

Passing through the streets it has turned into a war zone, cars on fire, people laying dead in the streets.

Driving by the town zoo, the animals are fleeing their broken cages, wild animals of all kinds are running out of the front gates. The zombies ignore the animals as they lumber aimlessly through the streets.

ETHAN Let's see the what the radio has to say.

Ethan fumbles for the radio, barely avoiding two young twin female zombies.

FEMALE RADIO ANNOUNCER ... Do not approach these individuals. Stay indoors, do not attempt to leave and seek shelter elsewhere...

The announcer continues with her alert advising citizens about the nightmarish epidemic that has unfolded. They are in the middle of it.

> ETHAN Jesus, this is everywhere.

VICTORIA Just get us home, we'll be safe there.

The rest of the drive home is more scenes of chaos, the dead attacking people, cars frantically trying to avoid the chaos.

Arriving at the house, the zombies are all over the place. Ethan slows and enters the driveway, they take notice and start towards the house.

Just as Ethan presses the button to open the garage door a zombie rounds the corner of the garage, it's his next-door neighbor Darryl. He quickly moves the car in the garage and hits the remote to shut the door. He leaves the motor running and get's out of the car.

ETHAN Stay here, if something happens get out of here.

Before Victoria can raise an objection, Ethan closes the door and heads to the back of the car. The garage door is half-way down, the zombie is trying to move under the door. The door is closing on him and pushing him downward. The zombie is becoming trapped under the door, but like most modern garage doors, it has a security measure that raises the door if anything is trapped underneath.

The door is opening back up, Ethan ducks underneath and grabs his dead neighbors legs and pulls him half way down the driveway, zombie Darryl struggles to get back on his feet. Ethan looks around to see about a dozen dead walking towards him.

# VICTORIA Hurry, their coming!

He quickly runs into the garage and presses the wall mounted control to shut the door. Slowly the door closes as zombies converge, they are about five feet away.

Grabbing a shovel in the garage as one of them reach the door. Ethan hits the zombie as it tries to crouch under the door, the impact sends the it tumbling backward. The door closes safely as Ethan puts down the shovel.

> ETHAN It's OK you can get out of the car now.

Victoria turns the car off and quickly gets out.

VICTORIA You didn't get bit did you?

ETHAN No, I'm fine. VICTORIA Good, you know what happens when you get bit by a zombie.

ETHAN You know how ridiculous that sounds?

VICTORIA I know, but it's what they are.

ETHAN It sounds crazy.

VICTORIA Well what do you want to call them?

ETHAN I don't know, let's just get inside.

VICTORIA What if their inside?

ETHAN Everything is locked, no windows are open. I'll bring the shovel just in case. Hit em in the head, right?

VICTORIA Yeah, except this isn't a movie.

ETHAN Stay behind me.

He opens the door and peeks inside. The lights are off, as his eyes adjust he can see slight shadows in the living room.

> ETHAN Oh Shit their inside!

A closer look reveals that the shadows are being cast from the zombies walking outside.

ETHAN It's OK, it's just their shadows, their outside.

VICTORIA You scared the Shit out of me. Their going to see us when we walk in. ETHAN

I have an idea, we stay low on the floor and shut the blinds.

VICTORIA

I have a bad feeling about this.

They both drop down on all fours and start to crawl into the

LIVING ROOM

ETHAN Stay right next to me.

VICTORIA I'm not helpless, I can do this too.

ETHAN I know you can... sorry.

They move to the nearest window, the shadows from the visitors outside pass over both of them. Carefully and deliberately Ethan reaches up and starts to shut the blind. Slowly and silently with out drawing notice.

VICTORIA That wasn't bad, let's take care of the rest.

They split up and start to close the remaining blinds, leaving the sliding glass door as the last one. The door has vertical blinds that were left open during the day. They take care of the remaining windows with out incident.

> ETHAN OK, let's take care of the sliding glass door and we'll be good.

They continue to crawl carefully to avoid detection as they move

IN THE KITCHEN

Moving to the side of the door Ethan with Victoria at his side grabs the pulley to close the blinds - No luck the strings are stuck. Ethan tries again - no luck - the third time he puts a little more muscle into it and the blind closes with a SNAP. The noise attracts attention as zombies near the sliding door turn and lumber towards the sound. A female slams into the door and peers in at Ethan through the cracks in the blind. An almost triumphant look spreads across her face as a realization of a potential meal is discovered.

#### ETHAN

Shit, they know were in here. Let's move into the living room.

No longer necessary to crawl they get up and quickly move

IN THE LIVING ROOM

# VICTORIA

What now?

ETHAN I don't know, I'm pretty sure they can't get inside.

They remain quite for a moment, more pounding can be heard on the sliding door as more have joined the female.

> ETHAN Hopefully they'll go away after awhile.

Victoria moves the corner of a living room blind and looks out at the front yard. Many more zombies are heading towards their house, drawn by the others activities.

> VICTORIA Ethan! Their not going away. There's too many of them outside, the others banging are drawing them to us... Their going to find a way inside, what do we do?

ETHAN We need to leave.

VICTORIA

To Where?

Ethan has no answer, he sits down and grabs Victoria's hand. Looking up towards the kitchen he spots a set of keys on the counter, it's the keys Keene gave him. His eyes light up.

> ETHAN I know where to go.

Where?

ETHAN The mall, the glass is shatterproof, plenty of food, generators for power.

VICTORIA Can we make it?

ETHAN It's not that far, the roads weren't that bad getting here.

VICTORIA Let's go now.

Ethan grabs the keys as they both head towards

## THE GARAGE

Inside he grabs the shovel and puts in the back seat. Ethan gets in and starts the engine, with his hand on the door remote he turns to Victoria.

# ETHAN

Ready?

Victoria nods her head as Ethan presses the button to open the door.

Half-way open they can see the legs of the approaching zombies through his rear view mirror.

Several have turned towards the noise and start moving their way, a male zombie directly in back of the car is run over as Ethan backs the out. A cracking and snapping sound is heard as the car moves over the corpse.

They both grimace at the sound as the car continues to back out. Zombies are grabbing at the window as Ethan presses the button for the garage door.

> ETHAN Hey, there's none of them inside and let's try to keep it that way.

Ethan puts the car in drive and accelerates through

Zombies clinging on the car are shaken off as they move forward.

The scene before them has gotten worse. The street is filled with the dead, bodies lay strewn throughout, flesh and body parts missing from corpses as they pass.

VICTORIA I can't believe this, their beating us.

ETHAN I hope that's not true.

Ethan moves the car through the maze of zombies, passing one house they can be seen moving in every window.

The occupants of the house are laying on the front lawn being eaten by a mob of zombies.

Victoria takes her cell phone out of her pocket, turns it on and starts to dial.

ETHAN Who are you calling?

# VICTORIA

My parents.

The phone is ringing, service is still on. It is answered by Victoria's mother PHYLLIS in her sixties, well dressed and maintained.

VICTORIA Mom, are you alright, is everything safe there.

INTERCUT PARENT'S LIVING ROOM/ETHAN'S CAR

Victoria's parents are well off, the living is large and filled with expensive furniture and decorations.

PHYLLIS What's going on, the news is going crazy about --

VICTORIA Mom, are there any people walking around outside. Phyllis turns to couch where Ethan's father Sam is sitting with Victoria's father GEORGE, also in his sixties dressed well, expensive watch, a country club type. They are watching a report about the crisis that is unfolding.

# PHYLLIS George is there anyone in our yard?

Sam and George get off the couch and head towards the window overlooking the front yard, it is completely empty. They walk over to the windows looking out the back yard. Phyllis joins them cordless phone in hand.

The back yard is well landscaped and lit throughout with various ground lights. Standing near the pool is an older man wearing a hospital johnny.

GEORGE Is that.. It can't be, it's Robert Mears.

SAM Looks like he took off from a hospital or nursing home.

GEORGE His brother called me yesterday... He died last night.

# VICTORIA

Mom, I heard that. Close and lock all the doors and windows, pull down the shades, turn the outside lights off. Don't let anyone in, even if you know them.

## PHYLLIS

OK, (turning to George and sam) We need to lock all windows and close the shades. Don't let in any sick people.

#### VICTORIA

Their not sick mom, their dead.

### PHYLLIS

That can't be true, this is some sort of flu.

#### VICTORIA

What kind of flu makes you want to eat people?... Listen, I'll stay on then line, take care of the house.

## PHYLLIS

OK, hold on.

Phyllis turns the backyard lights off and starts to lock the nearby windows, George follows and closes the shades.

SAM I'll take care of the other rooms.

Sam exits the living room and walks

### IN THE FOYER

The main door is massive, he checks to make sure that it is locked. Looking out the side lights he can see a distant figure at the end of a very long driveway. Lights line the complete length of the driveway, he starts flipping the switches next to him and plunges the driveway and front of the house in complete darkness. Satisfied he leaves and enters the adjoining

#### STUDY

Just as ornate but not as large as the living room, the study is lined with book cases, a large wooden desk sits in the center. Curtains blow in from an open window, Sam runs over and starts to close the window when suddenly a hand grabs his wrist - it is Mears. It is trying to bring Sam's arm to it's teeth, he struggles to free himself to no avail.

The book case next to him has a small marble statue, Sam grabs it with his free hand and starts to beat zombie Mears over the head, after several swings the zombie let's go, still trying to get inside Sam smashes it head on and it drops instantly.

He closes and locks the window, pulls down the shade and rejoins the others

IN THE LIVING ROOM

GEORGE All set Sam?

SAM All set PHYLLIS Did you see anyone? SAM Your friend Mears made an appearance. They notice the blood on Sam's shirt. PHYLLIS Are you hurt? SAM I'm fine, but I think you'll have to wash that statue on your bookcase. PHYLLIS Did he say anything? SAM Not exactly. GEORGE I'll get you another shirt... And a drink. PHYLLIS Honey, it's alright, we took care of everything. ETHAN Can I talk to my father. VICTORIA Good, Ethan wants to talk to Sam, I will call you later. Victoria hands the phone to Ethan. ETHAN Dad, you OK? SAM Yeah, were all set here, we'll camp out here until this is taken care of. The lights are of, doors and

windows locked. What are you two

doing?

51.

ETHAN The new mall, plenty of food and water.

SAM How are you going to get inside?

ETHAN They're a client now, I have the keys.

SAM Listen, just be careful.

ETHAN You too Dad, call me if anything happens.

They complete their call and Ethan hangs up.

VICTORIA Do you think they'll be OK?

ETHAN I think so, there's not that many people this time of year and you parents house is like a fort.

VICTORIA I hope your right. If we had a boat, I'd say let's go there.

ETHAN

I agree.

Rounding a corner they spot a young girl alive running down the street, she is surrounded by zombies on either side. Doing her best to avoid them as they lunge at her.

> VICTORIA Stop! We have to pick her up.

ETHAN She's not going to make it.

Ethan is right, the zombies are closing in around her. She is trying to elude them, but there are too many. She stops in her tracks, darting from side to side, trying to find a way out. Ethan beeps his horn as he approaches, the sound goes unheeded. He is still about a hundred feet away.

> VICTORIA Their going to get her.

A flash of black and white steaks by their car. Ethan barely misses it.

VICTORIA Was that a horse?

ETHAN Kind of, I think it was a zebra from the zoo.

Pulling up to the girl and the mob of zombies Ethan unlocks his door ready to jump out.

ETHAN Grab the shovel for me.

Reaching in the back seat, Victoria catches a very large shadow go by the side of the car.

Turning back with shovel in hand.

VICTORIA I think I saw another car go --

Standing in front of the car, on it's back legs is a extremely large Polar Bear, an obvious escapee from the zoo. This has caught the zombies attention, they look at the towering animal with curiosity, ignoring the young girl who is crouched with her hands over her head.

The Bear is snarling as it lunges for the nearest zombie, biting it's head off with one quick snap. Back on all fours it walks toward the remaining zombies, blood dripping from it's jaw.

Ethan opens the door and yells to the young girl.

ETHAN Quick get in here now!

The young girl gets up slowly, the bear is attacking another zombie, the rest are just looking at this with a confused look.

She walks behind the bear towards the passenger side of Ethan's car, the zombies and bear continue to pay no attention to her. She gets in safely and Ethan moves the car around the confrontation.

> VICTORIA Are you OK, have you been bit?

She looks about twelve or thirteen. Her clothes are stained with blood.

They look at the scene in back of them, the bear has taken out about four zombies.

YOUNG GIRL They killed my whole family.

VICTORIA Your OK, nothing is going to get you in here.

YOUNG GIRL We were having dinner and one came through the screen door. It attacked my Mother, my Father fought it of but more came. My Mother, Father and Brother all gone.

She completely breaks down and cries. Victoria leans back and tries to comforts her.

VICTORIA I'm Victoria this is Ethan. What's your name?

YOUNG GIRL

Melissa

VICTORIA OK Melissa, were going someplace safe.

MELISSA

Where?

VICTORIA The new mall.

EXT. MALL EMPLOYEE PARKING LOT - SAME

Driving through the mall parking lot, zombies litter the parking lot, it's a the same scene duplicated everywhere they look.

He drives to the rear entrance - bad news. There are multiple zombies in front of the entrance, a couple notice the car and heads towards them. It's not safe to get out of the car.

> VICTORIA What do we do now! We can't get in.

ETHAN Just let me think.

VICTORIA Is there any other way in?

ETHAN I don't have the keys for the other doors.

MELISSA Can we chase them away?

ETHAN That's it! We can distract them.

Ethan moves the car a little closer.

VICTORIA Ethan! What are you doing!

Ethan rolls down the window half-way and starts to yell at the zombies.

All of them this time look up and start to make their way towards the car. Melissa picks up and joins the plan.

ETHAN Hey! Hey! Over here! Over Here!

The zombies are following the car as it maintains just enough speed to keep them from touching.

The car is about half-way across the parking lot, Ethan looks in his rear view mirror. The entrance is completely clear. He takes the mall keys out of his pocket, selects a key.

ETHAN

OK, here's the plane, in a few more feet, I'm going to turn around fast and head towards the door. We need to get out quickly and get inside, I have the key ready. Everyone cool? Ethan stops the car directly in the front of door well ahead of their pursuers. They quickly get out of the car and head towards the door, Ethan opens it immediately as all three step into the

INT. MALL - BACK HALLWAY

ETHAN OK, that wasn't so bad. Good idea Melissa.

VICTORIA What if they got inside?

ETHAN It closed early, it's secure they can't break in.

VICTORIA I hope your right.

ETHAN

Me too.

Ethan walks over to the security key pad, it's lit green.

ETHAN Someone is here, the alarm is off.

VICTORIA Who can it be?

ETHAN I don't know, maintenance, store employee working late.

A thud interrupts the silence, next to the door Melissa jumps into Victoria's arms.

ETHAN Their not going to get inside.

MELISSA Are you sure?

ETHAN I'm sure, but I want to check the place out first. (MORE) VICTORIA I'm not leaving you.

ETHAN I'll be fine, She needs you right now.

Melissa looks around and finds another shovel. She walks over and brings it back to Ethan.

> MELISSA Here you might need this, you left yours in the car.

ETHAN Thanks. OK, follow me.

They walk down the hallway towards the office, it is minimally lit at this time of night. Ethan is in the lead, he carefully unlocks the door and all three enter

### MALL OFFICE

It's dark but they can make out the shapes of the various office equipment with the small amount of light coming through the hallway window.

Ethan flicks on the light, except for the office equipment it is completely empty. There is a darkened hallway leading to another office in the rear.

#### ETHAN

Stay here.

Victoria and Melissa watch as Ethan slowly makes his way down the hallway, shovel raised above his head. He disappears into the darkness.

Moments go by, no sound or word is coming from the back office. It is totally silent as they both wait for Ethan's return, you can hear a pin drop.

A loud crash makes Victoria and Melissa jump back.

VICTORIA Ethan! Talk to me. Out of the darkness a stumbling shape is moving forward. They both take a step backwards, the shadow moves forward as it becomes more defined they both take relief that it is only Ethan, he is holding his head.

> VICTORIA What the hell, you scared the shit out of us. What Happened?

ETHAN I was looking for the light and I hit my head on the shelf.

Melissa looks at him and smiles.

MELISSA

Smooth.

ETHAN No comments from either of you. Okay, stay here while I check the rest of the mall.

# VICTORIA

Be careful.

ETHAN I will, I'm going to lock the door on my way out.

Ethan opens the door, clicks the lock from the inside and shuts it behind him as enters the

MALL BACK HALLWAY

He walks down the corridor to a door marked "Mall Entrance" He slowly opens the door a crack and looks in at the bottom floor of the mall.

ETHAN

Oh shit!

The bottom floor has a dozen or so zombies walking around. Looking left at the he main entrance, it is still locked, they are banging on the doors to no avail trying to get inside.

To the right the stairs and escalators are completely blocked with cars that were on display, as well as furniture and other items. The upper floors look completely empty. Ethan going unnoticed by the unwelcome guests closes the door. Walking further down the hall he stops at stairway door leading to all levels of the mall.

He opens the door carefully and steps

## INTO THE STAIRCASE

The bottom of the staircase is empty. Shovel in hand he slowly rounds the corner of the stairs, all clear. He climbs the flight of stairs to the second level.

Ethan slowly opens the door to the second floor, peering out to the left and right, there is no sign of any movement. He takes out his key ring and locates the correct one to open the door from the outside, testing it again to make sure, he enters the

### MALL SECOND FLOOR

Walking to the edge of the railing, he Looks down he can see the complete first floor, again he looks closely as someone has completely blocked the zombies from the stairs and escalators. The dead walk randomly through the first floor, banging on the locked store doors. Looking up at the third floor reveals it to clear as well.

# MALL THIRD FLOOR

The walkway is empty, but most of the stores on this level are open. As he walks along the railing he hears a loud clicking sound behind him.

Turning around he is confronted by a man and woman pointing guns at him. They are both wearing security uniforms.

> MAN WITH GUN Are you bit?

#### ETHAN

What?

MAN WITH GUN Did one of those things bite you?

ETHAN No, No I'm fine.

MAN WITH GUN How about the other two? ETHAN Their not bit.

MAN WITH GUN Are you sure?

ETHAN Positive, Who are you?

They both holster their weapons.

MAN WITH GUN

Mall Security, I'm DAVE and this is JEAN.

JEAN

I've seen you before, you were here on Friday, we got the memo, your the accountant.

ETHAN

That's me.

DAVE Well that explains why you have keys. Who are the other two?

ETHAN

One is my girlfriend and the other one we picked up on the way. How did you know about them?

JEAN

Security cameras, our office is on the top floor. Glad to see you didn't lead them in the north side employee hallway.

DAVE Come on, let's go get them. There are others in the security area.

JEAN

I'll meet you back in the office.

Jean walks away as Ethan and Dave walk towards the employee staircase.

Returning with Victoria and Melissa they enter

### MALL SECURITY OFFICE

It is lined with flat-screen monitors automatically switching from different shots of the exterior and interior of the mall.

Ethan studies a video shot of the outside with a growing number of zombies in the parking lot. He sees the entrance with his car in front, there's several of them still banging on the door.

#### JEAN

I think they know were here.

Sitting on a couch is a man and woman both middle aged and a young boy of about eight sits in the woman's lap. It's obvious they are a family.

Pointing to the three newcomers.

DAVE This is Ethan, Victoria and Melissa and this is JAMES, CHRISTINE and the little guy is MICHAEL. I found them banging on the same service entrance you came in.

CHRISTINE (WITH A SACRACASTIC TONE) Great you probably attracted more of those things.

DAVE No they didn't, he has the keys and the stairs and escalators are blocked. They can't climb.

James gets up and extends a hand to Ethan. His demeanor is the complete opposite of his wife.

JAMES It's actually good to have some extra hands in case we need it.

#### CHRISTINE

Oh do we!

Ethan dismisses the comment and turns to Dave.

ETHAN What have you heard? What's going on outside? DARRYL Well were just about to go over to electronic store. They have satellite TV.

VICTORIA Sounds like a good idea. (turning to Ethan) I'm going to call the house.

ETHAN I was just going to mention it.

Victoria takes out her cell phone as they all start to leave the office. James tries to help Christine up, she pushes him away.

> CHRISTINE I don't need your help, let's go Michael.

She grabs her son and quickly leaves the office.

JAMES She's really not like this, it's the stress.

ETHAN I understand.

JEAN

I don't.

The rest walk out back into the

MALL AISLE

The group arrives at their destination, a typical big box electronic store, carrying everything from music to plasma TV's. Dave takes the keys from his belt and unlocks the door.

DAVE Good thing all the first floor stores were closed and locked. Those things could have gotten into the employee area.

He opens the door and lets everyone inside

## THE ELECTRONIC STORE

Proceeding to the rear of the store, there is a massive TV with a sign promoting digital satellite TV. Dave grabs the remote and clicks on the power.

VICTORIA (whispering to Ethan) Their fine.

Ethan nods as the TV shows familiar images of destruction and chaos in the streets with "Emergency Broadcast" banner running underneath, the group is surrounding the TV in a semicircle

> NEWSCASTER V.O. ... If there are no disturbances in your area, please stay in your house. Help is on the way stay ...

Switching to the next channel

FEMALE NEWSCASTER ... please do not go to the following shelters, they have been compromised ...

As everyone is transfixed on the broadcast, they are interrupted by:

CHRISTINE They haven't told us when this will be over.

VICTORIA Maybe because they don't know.

CHRISTINE How would YOU know that?

Christine looks over briefly and returns to the news broadcast. She looks over at Victoria's ring finger, seeing that it is empty she smiles, turning to Melissa and asks:

> CHRISTINE So honey, how long have your parents been married?

MELISSA Their not --

### VICTORIA

Nice try, were not married and she's not our daughter.

Victoria walks over to Christine and whispers in her ear.

VICTORIA I know what your trying to do don't. We have more important things to worry about than your plastic morals.

Christine just stares back as Victoria walks back over to Ethan and Dave.

VICTORIA Ethan what are we going to do?

#### ETHAN

At the moment - nothing. We have plenty of food, right Dave?

DAVE

Yeah, we have three restaurants, a couple of gourmet stores, the cinema, yeah plenty.

ETHAN James how did you end up here? The mall was closed.

## JAMES

We were bowling when those things came in. We ran outside, couldn't get to our car, luckily Dave was in the right place.

ETHAN

So, their only on the first floor and inside the bowling alley.

#### DAVE

Yeah, they first came in through the bowling alley. I locked the door, but a bunch got in.

## INT. MALL FIRST FLOOR

A door labeled employee entrance opens slowly, a bloody hand reaches around to push the door open. The zombies are getting inside through the second employee entrance. ETHAN How much ammo do you have?

DAVE Not much, about --

CHRISTINE Great, a disaster like this and we get caught with Barney Fife.

JAMES If it wasn't for them we would --

# CHRISTINE Oh shut up! If it wasn't for you, we wouldn't be bowling, we would be safe at home.

VICTORIA We were at home, it wasn't safe.

CHRISTINE Our community is gated and our house is completely fenced in.

MELISSA Good thing for them.

CHRISTINE Excuse me young lady.

ETHAN Enough of this.

JAMES Ethan, Dave can I have a moment with you.

They follow James to the

MALL AISLE

#### ETHAN

What's up?

JAMES I have a problem, my Son is a diabetic. His medicine is in the car and we can forget about that. (MORE) JAMES (cont'd) There's a pharmacy on the first floor, correct?

DAVE Yeah one problem, those things are all over the first floor.

JAMES

Right, but there's an employee area in back of all the stores.

DAVE

Not that one, that store has it's own rear entrance and shipping area. I have the key to the front gate.

## ETHAN

Well it looks like we have some work to do... How long before it starts to affect him?

JAMES A couple of hours maybe less.

#### ETHAN

OK, Dave you and Jean both have guns, you can take the lead and I'll hang back with the shovel. Let's go break the news.

# INT. ELECTRONIC STORE

ETHAN

Listen we have to get rid of those things downstairs.

#### VICTORIA

No, No, you don't need to go down there. Those things can't get up here.

ETHAN Yes we have to, it's more than just those things were worried about.

#### DAVE

Listen it will be easy, we can shoot most of them from the second floor. The rest we'll go down and take of.

Victoria shakes her head and walks away, Ethan follows.

CHRISTINE They make a nice couple don't they.

JEAN Why don't you shut up! We don't need your comments.

Christine makes a sarcastic sound and turns to her son sitting in a chair.

Ethan walks over to Victoria, she has her back turned to him with her head down.

ETHAN Hey, what's wrong?

## VICTORIA

What's Wrong, how can you ask that. There's no need to go down there, we can wait this thing out up here.

ETHAN You don't understand, the kids a diabetic, the medicine is in the car.

VICTORIA There has to be a better way to get inside.

ETHAN We can only get inside the pharmacy

from the front gate.

Victoria turns and hugs Ethan, her checks are moist from crying.

VICTORIA I want come, I can help.

ETHAN Absolutely not, there's only two guns, I have to use the shovel.

VICTORIA

But --

ETHAN No buts, you have to take care of Melissa.

He grabs her hand and heads back out to the

MALL AISLE

Ethan and Victoria are alone walking through the top floor of the mall. Passing a jewelry store, Victoria stops momentarily and looks at a display of engagement rings. Ethan notices, stops and pulls her close to him.

> ETHAN I promise we'll get through this.

> > VICTORIA

Promise?

ETHAN Promise - I have to go.

VICTORIA Please be careful, don't try to be the hero.

Ethan nods and walks back to where Dave and Jean are talking to the rest of group. The three of them start to walk towards the stairs. In addition to their guns Dave and Jean carry baseball bats.

DAVE

You ready?

ETHAN As ready as I'll ever be. Hey, you guy's good shots.

DAVE She's better than me, but I'm sure I can take a few out.

JEAN Hopefully you have better aim than in the bathroom.

DAVE Put a little hair around it and I'll hit it.

JEAN You haven't hit it in a while.

ETHAN You know that constitutes sexual harassment on both sides. ETHAN Oh... Oh, I see.

DAVE Hey, doesn't bother me.

JEAN He wants to watch.

Ethan smiles as they arrive at the entrance to the stairwell, they descend down to the second floor and proceed to the edge.

As the three look down on the first floor, they all have the same equal look of shock on their face.

ETHAN Is it my imagination or are there more of those things down there.

A close look at the first floor shows that his assessment is right. The population has increased, There are more zombies lumbering around.

DAVE I think your right.

JEAN Shit, their getting in somewhere.

DAVE There's not that many more, can't be the main entrance and the bowling alley is locked.

ETHAN Then it has to be the other employee entrance.

JEAN That sounds right, let's take care of these bastards and then we can plug the hole.

ETHAN You both have honors.

Ethan stand back as Dave and Jean take aim. Their shots start to echo throughout the mall as the zombies start falling. They are drawn to the sound while their counterparts are falling besides them.

Dave and Jean keep reloading until they are completely empty of bullets. About six of them are left.

DAVE That's it, the rest will have to be hand-to-hand.

ETHAN We should be able to handle this.

JEAN We need to do this quick so we can find how their getting inside.

ETHAN

I agree.

They walk down the last flight of stairs to the first floor entrance. They pause before the door looking at each other.

DAVE

Ready?

Ethan and Jean nod affirmative and open the door.

MALL FIRST FLOOR

There are about six zombies milling about, their eyes come alive as they notice the new arrivals and start towards them.

Dave moves towards the closets zombie and drops it with one swing of the bat. Jean and Ethan join in and start dropping zombies quickly and efficiently.

Part of the job is done as the three stand inside a pool of dead zombies, out of breath from the work just finished.

DAVE Let's find out where their coming in.

They walk across to the other side of the mall, to the other employee entrance.

ETHAN This has to be it.

Ethan takes out his key chain and opens the door as they all enter the

## EMPLOYEE HALLWAY

The minimal lighting is enough to see the carnage before them, blood and body parts are strewn beyond the doorway. A Zombie with only one arm and leg claws it's way towards the group. Ethan steps up and ends it's travel.

A shadow detaches and moves towards Jean, she reacts quickly and connects with bat dropping it instantly with one shot.

A male Zombie rounds the corner, bloody wounds are visible all over it's body. Ethan looks at the Zombie and his eyes go wide -- It's his boss Freye.

> ETHAN Son-of-bitch, this guy just doesn't quit. I have this one.

Ethan walks directly in front of Frey and with a level swing, Ethan takes it's head cleanly off. The body drops like a sack of potatoes.

> ETHAN That felt good... At least something good is coming out of this.

### JEAN

Friend.

#### ETHAN

Boss.

DAVE Why don't we split up and look for the hole. Ethan can you check the dumpster exit, Jean boiler room?.

ETHAN Alright, let's meet back here.

They split up as Ethan walks along a series of offices and arrives at

THE GARBAGE AREA

Located next to a wall is a cardboard compressor unit. The power light is and the door is open, the area is a bloody mess.

A Ray of moonlight spills along one side of the compressor. Ethan makes his way around the side of the compressor when the light cast by the moon disappears like someone walking in front of a window.

Through the small amount of moonlight left, Ethan faces a zombie stepping over a dead body in the doorway as it makes it way towards him. The dead body is stuck in the doorway, making it impossible for the door to close and lock.

Ethan has found the their way in and more opposition.

Quickly Ethan rushes the door, pushes the zombie out of the doorway, removes the dead body and closes the door.

Turing he is greeted by a badly mutilated Zombie. It lunges forward to grab him, pulling the shovel up to his chest, it is knocked free by the zombie.

#### INT. MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT ROOM

Entering the storage room Dave clicks the light switch - no lights.

DAVE Shit, fucking maintenance.

He takes a small flashlight from his breast pocket, the beam is powerful but narrow.

Dave Hears a sound, a metallic scrapping sound, it's getting closer. He is frantically moving the light around to find the source as a hand grabs his ankle, quickly focusing the light, it reveals a legless zombie dragging itself, leaving a trail of blood from it's torn limbs.

Dave quickly dispenses it with one swing.

# INT. BOILER ROOM

Jean is inside the buildings heating system area, the lights are on, but it is a poorly lit room. A large boiler is in the center of the room with ducts shooting off in different direction, stairs lead to catwalks above the boiler.

As she walks around checking the area, a drop of liquid falls on her shoulder - then a second. Brushing it off with her finger, the dim light reveals a dark red liquid - blood.

Looking up at the catwalk above a zombie is leaning over, arms stretched, half of it's mouth is missing.

The blood flowing from it's mouth spills in Jean's eyes, nose and mouth. She falls back furiously trying to wipe the blood off her face. She spits out continually to rid herself of the blood that dripped in her mouth.

The zombie makes it's way down the stairs, Jean notices and tries to regain her composure. As it reaches the bottom of the stairs, she greats it with her bat, vengefully striking multiple times.

INT. GARAGE AREA

The fight spills out in front of the cardboard compressor. Ethan looks around to find a weapon to defend himself. His eyes lock on the compressor.

Ethan's face strains as he uses all of his might to push the zombie in the compressor, it's legs still hanging out, Ethan quickly stuffs them in closes the door and hits the switch. The machine kicks into life and compresses the Zombie with a series of snaps and pops.

With his hands on his knees, Ethan once again catches his breath, looks around, coast-is-clear. He grabs his shovel and heads back.

JEAN I didn't find any openings.

ETHAN I found it, it's secure.

DAVE Any of those things?

ETHAN A couple, their gone I don't --Jean, your face is bloody, you OK?

JEAN The one I killed bled all over me, I'm OK, no bites.

DAVE How about some food.

JEAN I think I'll take a nap.

#### ETHAN

I'm hungry, first order of business, survival. I'll stop at the pharmacy and meet you upstairs. Ethan and Victoria are sitting having a drink at one of the mall restaurants. The others are sitting at separate locations in the restaurant and bar area. The lights are low, soft music is playing in the background.

### VICTORIA

So how was it down there?

#### ETHAN

Well, we plugged up their entrance, I killed a few Zombies and that's hard for me to comprehend because up until a few days ago I didn't even know what one was.

#### VICTORIA

But's it's real, it's not a movie anymore, it's not a dream.

ETHAN I'm hoping to wake up back in our bed.

VICTORIA Wow, you said our bed, usually it's your bed.

#### ETHAN

Well that's because I realize what I almost lost. I realize how much I love you.

VICTORIA Ethan, what's gotten into you? You never say that word, it's always "me too", or "same here".

ETHAN I'm realizing what I should have done months ago.

Ethan produces a ring box, opens it to reveal the engagement ring that she saw in the store window.

She is speechless, her eyes are brimming with tears. She takes the ring and slips it in her finger, leans over and kisses Ethan.

ETHAN

Let's have an engagement dinner. There's a lobster tank here, you game.

VICTORIA Yeah, I'm starving, I want to check in on Melissa while your cooking.

## ETHAN

She's OK at the arcade. Sit down and relax.

They move to a more secluded part of the restaurant.

# ETHAN

I'll be right back.

Ethan removes tow lobsters from the tank. Hesitates and removes two more. He starts to prepare dinner.

She is looking at her ring as they are finishing dinner.

# VICTORIA Do you think things will ever get

back to normal?

## ETHAN

I hope so... I just don't know. I do know that we can't give up. Your parents and my father are safe, were both alive, we can stay here until it is contained.

VICTORIA Maybe we can try making it to the island.

## ETHAN

I just think it's to risky, we don't know what the roads are like, if there's any boats available.

## VICTORIA

Your right... You want to get out here, go for a walk.

ETHAN Let's get some fresh air on the roof. Leaving the restaurant they pass the rest of the gang, everyone looks more relaxed, all except Christine, she has the perpetual pissed off look down pat. She shoots them one as they walk outside to the

## MALL AISLE

There walking hand-in-hand through the aisle past all the various stores.

VICTORIA You know, when this is over, I don't think shopping at the mall will have the same allure as before.

ETHAN All in one day I've killed my boss and my finance lost her love for shopping.

VICTORIA You killed Freye?

ETHAN OH yeah, I forgot to tell you, he was downstairs.

VICTORIA (sarcastically) You must of hated that.

ETHAN It was just like Michael Corleone said, it wasn't personal just business.

VICTORIA Yeah right I'm --(staring at the store entrance before them) Hey there's Jean.

Standing in front of a bookstore, they can barely make out Jean in her security uniform. Most of the lights are off except the night lights.

Jean walks towards them moving into light from the aisle. Her face is a deathly pallor, the eyes have that all to familiar opaque look. She raises her arms and let's out hideous moan, she has turned. VICTORIA Oh no, not her.

ETHAN Get in back of me.

VICTORIA We can run and get help, you can't kill her with your bare hands!

ETHAN I have an idea.

Zombie Jean walks towards them, fingers dancing as her arms remain outstretched, almost as if she needs help. She reaches Ethan first, he steps to the side, grabs her neck and belt.

She struggles, her head lunges towards Ethan's as he holds her back. He lifts her easily over the railing and tosses her over.

They both look over as Jean falls and smashes on the first floor head first.

Dave is running towards them with the rest of the restaurant in tow, they heard the commotion and have arrived.

> ETHAN I'm sorry Dave, she turned into one of them.

Dave looks over the railing at Jean's remains as Ethan places a hand on his shoulder. He turns with an understanding nod of his head and walks away.

> ETHAN I really need that fresh air now.

> > VICTORIA

Let's go.

EXT. MALL ROOF - NIGHT

Looking out at the city it looks peaceful from here.

ETHAN You can't hear those things up here.

VICTORIA The electric is still on, that has to be a good sign. ETHAN Someone must be manning the power stations.

VICTORIA So there's more survivors in the city?

ETHAN We can't be the only ones.

VICTORIA Look there's some planes!

In the distance heading in the direction of the mall are several military style aircraft, a helicopter and transport planes farther back.

> ETHAN See I told you, their probably moving people to shelters.

The helicopter is just reaching the edge of the mall, they both start jumping and screaming. The rest of the group joins them on the roof.

The last plane in the procession starts to make erratic maneuvers, rocking from side to side.

ETHAN It's in trouble.

VICTORIA Is it going to crash?

The plane is losing altitude and takes a hard bank and starts to head towards the ground.

DAVE It's going to hit us.

The sputtering of the engines can be heard as it descends rapidly. It falls out of view on the far side as it crashes into the mall.

The mall shakes with a deafening sound. They run to the far side and look over the edge.

The plane opened up a massive hole, the tail is sticking out of the hole. Littered around the crash are dead bodies mixed with zombies slowly getting back on their feet.

> DAVE Ethan, we have to check this out.

INT. MALL TOP FLOOR

Looking over the railing the bottom floor is filled with smoke, small fires are burning.

As the smoke clears the heavily damaged nose of the plane is visible. There is a large gaping hole on the side.

Zombies are entering the mall, one is on fire making a low guttural sound.

Through the hole in the plane, figures start to emerge dressed in military fatigues.

VICTORIA Look survivors!

ETHAN Not for long. Hey watch out, your surrounded by those things!

They look up and reveal they are not survivors.

ETHAN Oh shit, their gone.

VICTORIA The stairs are clear!

DAVE

What?

VICTORIA The stairs! They're clear.

The crash has cleared one of the stairways.

ETHAN We have to get out of here!

DAVE Do you have the keys to your car? ETHAN There in the ignition.

DAVE Let's go now! Everyone!

Behind them unseen, Christine and her family are the first to bolt, the rest follow quickly.

VICTORIA We forgot the bats.

DAVE Go... I'll grab them.

ETHAN Well all get them.

Returning they grab the bats and head back towards the employee staircase. Victoria has Melissa close by her.

Running down the staircase Ethan is first to reach the ground floor door. Opening the door slowly checking for visitors, the coast is clear.

INT. EMPLOYEE SERVICE AREA - NIGHT

ETHAN Alright, my car is just outside this door.

VICTORIA Where are the other three?

DAVE I don't know they must have left first. I'll go look around.

A sound of a car starting is heard.

VICTORIA That can't be what I think it is.

MELISSA

What?

ETHAN That sound likes my car.

Ethan opens the door, his car is exactly where he left it. Christine is at the wheel, she rolls down the window. EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

CHRISTINE I have to protect my family.

She starts to beep the horn, the zombies nearby are attracted to the noise and head towards the car. Christine steps on the gas and speeds away.

Ethan closes the door as the zombies re-focus their attention.

DAVE I can't find them... What's wrong?

ETHAN Their gone.

incii gone.

DAVE They got em?

ETHAN No, they took my car, their gone. Dave where is your car.

DAVE Trashed, the crash wiped it out.

VICTORIA What are we going to do?

ETHAN

I don't know.

Ethan looks over at Victoria, emerging behind her from the hallway darkness is a group of zombies. Discovering the four of them, they become more excited and start falling over each other to get at them.

> ETHAN Shit, they found a way in here!

The zombies are about a fifty feet away.

MELISSA I think we should go inside the office.

VICTORIA I think your right.

Quickly they move through the hallway to

INSIDE THE OFFICE

locking the door behind them. As they catch their breath the moans of the approaching zombies grow louder.

Ethan and Dave move a desk in front of the door.

DAVE These are piece of shit hollow doors. Let's get in the back office and figure out what our next move is.

MELISSA Can they get in?

DAVE

I hope not.

In the back office they close and lock the door, another desk is moved in front of the door.

MELISSA Were going to be OK, right.

VICTORIA Of course we are, we'll figure this out and get somewhere safe.

# INT. OFFICE HALLWAY

Zombies are banging on the office door, it is indeed a cheap door, it is shaking with each hit. It starts to splinter.

INT. BACK OFFICE

DAVE Their getting in and we'll be trapped in here.

VICTORIA Where can we go, there's no window or back door.

Looking up Dave spots a ventilation grate.

DAVE That's it, the heating and air ducts. They connect all over this place. Let's move this desk underneath.

As they move the desk a loud splintering sound comes from the front office.

### MELISSA

They broke through.

Dave jumps on the desk and tries to pull the vent off.

DAVE I need a screwdriver.

Ethan grabs a letter opener from a desk.

ETHAN

This should work.

Dave goes to work loosening the screws, after a several turns he removes one screw.

INT. FRONT OFFICE

The zombies are completely through the first door falling over the desk as they move towards the back office.

INT. BACK OFFICE

# VICTORIA Quick, their inside now.

Dave works quickly as another screw falls out. The first fist lands on the door followed by another.

#### MELISSA

Hurry, hurry.

The door is shaking on it's hinges as Dave removes the last screw. The vent cover falls to the ground.

DAVE Quick Melissa get up here.

Dave helps to lift Melissa inside the duct, followed by Victoria.

The door is starting to splinter, cracks are now visible on the inside of the door.

DAVE Now you Ethan.

ETHAN You first Dave, your going to need help getting up there.

DAVE

I can --

ETHAN No time to argue, GO!

Locking his hands together Ethan lifts Dave by his feet as he pulls himself inside the duct.

The door is giving out, a blow opens a large hole as a white bloodied face peers through.

Ethan jumps up and grabs the edge of the duct.

DAVE Give me your hand!

Ethan grabs Dave's hand but is unable to pull himself up, he lands back down on the desk.

The zombies have completely broken through the door and are scrambling over the desk heading towards Ethan.

# VICTORIA O.S.

Ethan hurry!

Ethan jumps back up and grabs the edge of the open vent. Dave grabs Ethan by the wrists and starts to pull him up.

The zombies are grabbing at his leg's, Ethan kicks furiously as they try to simultaneously pull him down and take a chunk out of his leg.

There are to many of them, Dave's grip is loosening, Ethan is losing the struggle. He falls back on the table face up, he covers his eyes as faces of the walking dead descend upon him.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Ethan jumps awake, he scans the interior of the helicopter and finds Victoria, Melissa and Dave.

VICTORIA Honey It's OK..., Your OK. ETHAN What... What happened?

DAVE You hit your head on the vent, knocked yourself right out. Your not as light as you think, it took both us to drag your ass out.

ETHAN Where are we going?

VICTORIA To my parents house, it's contained there. We'll be safe... I thought we lost you back there.

ETHAN

Yeah me too.

Ethan looks out at the water passing by and then at the ring on Victoria's finger.

THE END