

HALLOWEEN GAMES

by  
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FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - 1930 - NIGHT - DREAM

Thick fog blocks out everything.

A couple clings to each other.

LUCA, a handsome thirty year old gypsy, and NORA, a wholesome twenty year old stand together in an embrace.

NORA  
He'll never let us be.

LUCA  
Do you love me, Nora?

She looks up at him.

NORA  
With all my heart.

LUCA  
Then we must leave. Your father  
will have to accept us then.

NORA  
When?

LUCA  
Tonight.

MAN (O.S.)  
Nora!

A pitchfork stabs into the ground.

END DREAM

INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM

Daylight slivers in between the curtains.

SUSIE (20) GASPS as she springs up in bed. BILL (20s) wakes at her side.

BILL  
Another bad dream?

She forces a breath.

SUSIE

Yeah.

BILL

Moose tracks and hot wings before  
bed.

She faces him, gives him a look.

SUSIE

I can't help my cravings.

BILL

You should eat more fruit. It would  
be better for the baby, too.

He reaches out and rubs her swollen belly.

INT./EXT. CAR - STREET - DAY

A sunny day. A few cars drive down a four-lane rural road.

Susie drives at the normal rate of speed.

She glances to a plastic grocery bag on the passenger seat,  
reaches inside it, and pulls out an apple. She turns her  
attention back to the road, and stiffens with surprise.

A velvet-antlered buck lays in the center of her lane. It  
stares directly at her as the gap between the two narrows.  
Brakes SQUEAL as her car comes to a stop only a few feet shy  
of the deer. It doesn't move.

Susie slides the gear shift into park, and clicks on her  
emergency flashers. She looks over her shoulder for oncoming  
traffic, then opens her door.

EXT. STREET

The deer watches Susie as she approaches it.

SUSIE

What are you doing?

She waves her arms at the buck.

SUSIE

Go on now. Shew!

He doesn't move.

She grabs a hold of his antlers with both hands and gives a gentle tug, attempting to pull the buck to his feet.

SUSIE

Come on.

The buck doesn't budge. She lets go of the antlers, and walks around behind it where she notices a smear of blood on his hip. Heartbreak strikes across her face.

SUSIE

You can't move. Can you?

She moves back to the deer's face, and strokes his head.

Susie looks toward traffic.

SUSIE

I need help over here!

Cars pass her by, one after another.

SUSIE

Help! I need help!

Its antler brushes against her hand lovingly.

Susie looks down at the deer. At its open mouth. A trickle of blood on its tongue. She sinks further into despair.

SUSIE

I have to leave.

She turns away.

EXT. STREET

Light traffic moves down the road.

Susie stands at a pay phone and places a call.

EXT. STREET

Susie trots to her car with a look of relief on her face.

SUSIE

No one would stop.

A cop stands in front of the automobile. He turns to her.

COP  
We got a call.

Susie makes it to the front of the car, and notices the deer, flopped over in a heap. Dead. She stops in her tracks. Sinks.

COP  
Did you hit it?

She looks puzzled.

SUSIE  
No.

The cop takes a quick glance at her bumper. Susie's confusion intensifies. She glances at her bumper, too.

He pulls a note pad and pen from his shirt pocket, begins to write something on it.

She takes a step toward him.

SUSIE  
It was just laying there in the road. It was alive.

He jerks a nod, as he writes.

COP  
I'll take care of it.

She focuses on the deer.

SUSIE  
Then I should leave...

The cop ignores her.

She backs to her car door, and gets inside.

INT./EXT. SUSIE'S CAR

Susie drives down the road at the normal rate of speed.

She's a wreck. Trembling. Tears trickle down her cheek.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
No one would stop. No one would help.

She swipes away her tears.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
People are so dark anymore. There's  
no compassion. It's like their  
souls are full of disease...

A shadow falls on the car.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
So dark... So, so dark.

Thunder RUMBLES in the distance. Rain begins to fall.

EXT. SUSIE'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD

Dark clouds cover the sky. Rain falls steadily.

Susie stands still, holding a plastic grocery bag at her side. She tilts her head upward, welcoming the rain to wash over her, soaking her face.

She stands in front of a charming country home.

INT. SUSIE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM

Lamp light shines down on Susie. She lays back on the bed, and stares straight ahead, clearly upset.

SUSIE  
I can just imagine what he was  
thinking.

Bill lays at her side.

BILL  
He probably thought you were an  
Angel coming to take him home.

Bill reaches a comforting arm around her.

SUSIE  
I felt so helpless.

BILL  
Some things you can't fix.

SUSIE  
His eyes are going to haunt me  
forever. They were so big and  
beautiful, yet so full of pain.

She turns toward Bill and looks him in his eye.

SUSIE  
He rubbed his antler on my hand  
like he was trying to comfort *me*.

He pulls her a little closer.

BILL  
Aw baby. Don't you see? He knew you  
were trying to help.

Susie pulls back, and looks him in the eye again.

SUSIE  
Do you think so? Really?

BILL  
I know so.

She lays her head on his chest.

AGAINST A BLACK BACKGROUND

A series of still shots: Jack-o'-lanterns in a row. A lit  
candle in a dark room. Tarot cards spread out in a fan.

A banner reads: "Happy Halloween".

INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM

Lamp light leads down to Susie as she relaxes on the bed in  
her colorful nightgown, and reads a paperback book.

Words in the book blur together. The page turns dark.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

Moonlight illuminates the tops of the cornstalks.

SUPER: "1930".

A flash of white between the stalks.

Nora, in a white dress, runs through the cornfield. She  
glances behind her for a brief second, continues to run.

Quick, rhythmic HEARTBEATS pace her way through the field.

The edge of the cornstalks open up to reveal a dirt road.

Her bare feet pound through grass.

Her foot reaches the

DIRT ROAD

as she glances behind her again. WHUMP! She comes to an abrupt stop. Nora's face is frozen in shock.

A pitchfork impaled in her abdomen.

She falls forward.

The pitchfork handle sinks into soft earth.

INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM - BACK TO SUSIE

She turns the page in her book.

A freshly showered Bill steps into the room with a towel wrapped around his waist.

Susie doesn't notice him inching toward her.

He takes a flying leap onto the bed. Susie jolts in fright. She snaps her head toward him, and stares as he scoots a little closer.

BILL

Hey chicky poo. What you doin'?

SUSIE

You scared me!

She gives him a love whack with her book.

Bill lifts her hand and glances at the books cover.

BILL

No. *This* is what scared you.

Why don't you put it away?

He smiles seductively, and winks at her in a comical way.

BILL

We could cuddle.

His glare rolls from her to his side of the bed.

Susie makes a face. It only takes a moment for her to return his smile.

She closes the book, and puts it on the night stand.

The book's cover reads: "LUCA". A pitchfork is also on the cover.

A CLICK of the lamp. Darkness.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

A knife stabs down through a pumpkin, and begins to carve a circle around the stalk.

Susie sits on top of a spread of newspapers with a hand towel at her side. The pumpkin is directly in front of her.

GLORIA, mid twenties, stands next to her. She's dressed in a mini-skirt and black leather jacket.

GLORIA  
So, what's he like?

Susie lifts the stalk, and pulls the top off of the pumpkin. A stringy mess of pumpkin guts come out with it. She sets the top on the newspapers.

GLORIA  
Susie?

Susie reels back, and looks up at her.

SUSIE  
I really don't know him all that well. He stopped in a couple a' times before work, and he seemed pretty nice.

Susie turns back to the pumpkin.

She scoops the insides out with a spoon.

GLORIA  
Nice? That's not what I meant.

Susie keeps working on the pumpkin.

GLORIA  
What does he look like?

Susie wipes her hands on the towel.

SUSIE  
Sorry... Picture a lumberjack.

Gloria's face shrivels with confusion.

GLORIA  
I thought you said he works with  
Bill.

SUSIE  
He does.

Gloria's confusion intensifies.

Susie begins to draw a face on the pumpkin.

SUSIE  
I'm done with your book.

Gloria sits down next to her, very interested.

GLORIA  
You are? So, what did you think?

SUSIE  
Wicked just like you said --

Susie lifts the knife, and begins to carve the pumpkin.

SUSIE  
-- but I don't think he did it.

Surprise strikes across Gloria's face.

GLORIA  
No way!

Susie stays focused on the pumpkin.

SUSIE  
Yes way! There was no proof that he  
did it. It could have been anyone.

GLORIA  
Like who?

Susie shrugs.

SUSIE  
I don't know. Maybe it was her  
father.

GLORIA  
Her father?

SUSIE  
He hated gypsies.

GLORIA  
So he killed his own daughter?

SHANE (O.S.)  
Hey Susie! --

Both girls look to the

ROAD

where SHANE (50's) sits behind the wheel of an IDLING pick up truck. He looks tired and sweaty, like he's put in a full days work.

SHANE  
-- Is Bill around?

The lot behind the truck is full of tall cornstalks.

SUSIE (O.S.)  
No. He's at work.

SHANE  
Welp, when he gets home, tell him I was by. I've got a canoe, and a couple stereos that he might be interested in.

SUSIE (O.S.)  
Alright.

He gives a wave. Drives off.

PORCH

Gloria looks for Susie's reaction. Susie turns back to the pumpkin.

GLORIA  
What was that?

Susie shrugs nonchalantly.

SUSIE  
Shane. He's always selling something or another.

Gloria's face fills with shock.

GLORIA  
And you buy some of these things?  
What if they're stolen?

SUSIE  
They're not stolen. He finds stuff,  
fixes it, and resells it is all.

Susie puts the top on her pumpkin.

SUSIE  
Done.

She turns and looks Gloria in the eye.

SUSIE  
Back to the party. Could you get  
here a little early?

GLORIA  
Sure. Why?

Susie, satisfied with her answer, turns back to the pumpkin.

SUSIE  
I need a ride. I just decided we  
need one more thing.

Susie lifts the jack-o'-lantern for Gloria to see. She turns to Gloria with a proud smile on her face.

SUSIE  
So what do you think? Is it scary?

Gloria stares at the pumpkin's smiling face.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE

Plenty of books in shelves, and in stacks. Tubular cylinders on the glass counter are full of incense sticks. There's a card table with two chairs, and another couple chairs are backed against a wall.

JAMES, a thin man in his late twenties, sits on a stool behind the counter, and reads a book. He's dressed in jeans and a black T-shirt.

OLIVIA, early thirties, and in a long dress, stands behind the counter. She uses a feather duster to dust off stacks of books. Along with her warm smile, there is a gentleness about her. A motherly charm.

Susie places a Ouija game on the counter.

SUSIE  
Okay. I guess I'm ready.

Olivia sets the duster down on a stack of books.  
She glances at a Ouija board game on the counter.

OLIVIA  
Conjuring spirits?

Susie perks up a little.

SUSIE  
Having a party.

Olivia nods with a smile. She begins to write her order on a receipt book.

SUSIE  
It's for a Halloween game. We're  
going to try a seance, too.

James looks up from his book, to Susie.

JAMES  
Sounds like my kind of fun.

Susie notices the tarot cards, rose quartz, and a few fancy daggers inside the glass case.

Olivia rips the receipt from the book.

OLIVIA  
Your total is fifteen twenty one.

Susie digs through her purse. She pulls out her wallet, counts out some dollar bills, then hands them to her.

Olivia pulls a cash box from under the counter and makes change. She hands Susie some coins.

OLIVIA  
Thank you. You have a good day, and  
good luck with your party.

Susie nods, then turns away.

She makes it to the door, and stops to look at a bulletin board with many different ads. She turns back to Olivia.

SUSIE  
You do readings here?

Olivia smiles coyly.

OLIVIA

Um hum. They told me you wanted to know... But aren't you supposed to wait and find out together? At the birth...

Susie squints at her with uncertainty.

Olivia turns slightly, listens to something only she can hear. She nods.

OLIVIA

Right.

She turns back to Susie.

OLIVIA

That's what they are telling me. Are you sure you want to know?

Susie rubs her swollen belly, and nods.

Olivia beams.

OLIVIA

You're having a girl. Sylvia says she loves the name you picked out for her. Helena. It's a beautiful name, and I agree.

Susie's jaw loosens. She opens her purse and fumbles through it nervously.

Olivia looks surprised.

OLIVIA

Oh no. You don't owe me anything, but if you'd like to get a reading...

Susie nods nervously. She turns to the door and opens it. A bell on the door CHIMES. She leaves.

EXT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - DAY

Gloria sits in her car that's parked at the curb.

INT. CAR

Susie opens the passenger door and gets inside.

GLORIA  
What took so long?

Susie, still a little shaken, looks at her.

SUSIE  
You should have came in.

Gloria sighs.

GLORIA  
Look, Sus' I brought you up here,  
but they aren't getting any of my  
money for their phoney baloney.

SUSIE  
I don't know about that.

Gloria turns the key, starts the MOTOR.

SUSIE  
She told me I was having a girl.

Gloria glances at her.

A beat.

GLORIA  
She took a fifty, fifty guess.

Gloria puts the car in gear, pulls away from the curb.

SUSIE  
And that my dead mother Sylvia told  
her she liked the name we had  
picked out... Helena.

Gloria stops the car. She turns to Susie, surprised.

SUSIE  
She said their names.

They both look back toward the bookstore.

A couple cases of beer in the back seat.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The night is calm. Eerie shadows stretch across the front of  
the darkened house.

A deep set flickering light comes from inside a window.

Moving toward the window, the light.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Drifting into a dark room, past chunky shapes of furniture, toward the light in another room.

DINING ROOM

Four people sit around a table that's lit by candlelight.

The glow illuminates their faces. Notice all eyes closed.

Susie wears a gypsy-like babushka, and hoop earrings.

Bill, in his paint-speckled painters whites.

Gloria, dressed to impress. Looks like a million bucks.

CHUCK (20's), a man's man, grips onto a beer bottle. He's wearing a baseball cap, orange hunting vest that doesn't cover his big belly, and a thermal underwear shirt.

Susie opens her eyes and looks around at the others.

SUSIE

Let's try someone else.

Everyone opens their eyes.

CHUCK

How about your neighbor? Paul.

Everyone gapes at Chuck.

BILL

He's not dead.

CHUCK

Hey, he could be *if* his wife found out about that little blonde he's been runnin' around with.

Bill smiles to himself.

BILL

Tell it like that.

Chuck smiles with amusement.

CHUCK  
Has anyone seen him around lately?  
I haven't.

Susie frowns.

SUSIE  
Come on.

Susie smiles coyly.

SUSIE  
There is someone I'd like to  
contact.

Chuck nudges Bill.

CHUCK  
Did ya' hear that?

Susie and Gloria exchange glares.

GLORIA  
Who knew that wasn't coming.

Bill turns to Susie.

BILL  
What? I mean who?

SUSIE  
His name was Luca. He was a gypsy.

Gloria frowns.

GLORIA  
He was a murderer.

Chuck nudges Bill again.

CHUCK  
So that's why she's wearing the  
gypsy stuff. Your woman done turned  
gypsy on ya'. She'll be dancin'  
around naked next.

Chuck gives Susie "the eye".

CHUCK  
Where's your tambourine?

Susie gives Chuck a numb stare.

SUSIE  
Shut up Chuck.

Bill gives Chuck a dirty look.

BILL  
Yeah Chuck. Shut up.

Chuck shrugs. He lifts his beer to his lips. Guzzles it down.  
He lets loose of a very loud and rolling BURP.

Gloria turns to Susie.

GLORIA  
Thanks.

Chuck stands.

CHUCK  
I'll be right back.

Everyone watches him stumble away.

Gloria turns toward Susie.

GLORIA  
You thought I'd be interested in  
that?

Susie gapes at Gloria.

LIVING ROOM

Chuck walks in the dark room. He bumps into some furniture  
with a THUD.

CHUCK  
Excuse me.

BILL (O.S.)  
You okay in there?

CHUCK  
Yep. Be right back.

DINING ROOM

Bill notices Susie's expression. He turns to Gloria.

BILL  
Hey he's alright. You just have to  
get to know him.

Gloria turns to Susie, ignoring him.

GLORIA  
Susie, this is boring me.

Susie's jaw drops.

SUSIE  
What? I thought you'd like this. We  
used to do this all the time when  
we were younger.

GLORIA  
When we were kids.

Bill's eyes follow the conversation.

SUSIE  
Remember when we brought Jimi  
Hendrix back, and his shadow  
appeared on the wall?

GLORIA  
We had wild imaginations.

SUSIE  
Wild or not it happened.

Chuck BELCHES as he enters the room.

Everyone watches him move to his chair, and take his seat. He notices the eyes on him.

CHUCK  
Everything came out alright. Just  
in case anyone wants to know.

Gloria rolls her eyes over to Susie, and looks for her reaction. Susie straightens up in her seat.

SUSIE  
How about we get back to what we  
were doing.

Chuck sits down. He wraps his hand around his beer.

CHUCK  
Drinking beer.

Susie watches him lift his beer bottle from the table.

SUSIE  
Having a seance.

Chuck lowers the bottle.

CHUCK  
Oh... Right.

Susie moves around a little in her chair, gets comfortable.

SUSIE  
Everyone close your eyes and join  
hands.

Gloria looks at Chuck's hand, and makes a face.

CHUCK  
I don't bite.

Gloria's fingers stretch toward Chuck's hand. He takes her hand and immediately lifts it to his mouth. She pulls back, forcing him to LAUGH.

Susie straightens up. She takes Bill's hand, then Gloria's.

Chuck raises his eyebrows, flirts with Bill as he takes his hand. Bill frowns back at him.

Susie looks around at the others.

SUSIE  
Are we ready?

Everyone looks at her, and makes a face.

SUSIE  
Okay...

Susie closes her eyes. Everyone closes their eyes.

SUSIE  
We're looking for the spirit of  
Luca.

GLORIA  
The murderer in the book.

Susie peeks at Gloria.

SUSIE  
The Luca that was killed by  
vigilantes in Charlesville.

Gloria shrugs. They close their eyes.

SUSIE  
 Luca can you hear me? Come to us  
 Luca. Tell us of your innocence.  
 Let us clear your name.

Chuck peeks around at the others.

CHUCK  
 Enie meenie chili beanie.

Susie's eyes snap open. She gives Chuck a stern look.

SUSIE  
 Ssshhh!

Chuck winces. He closes his eyes in a hurry.

Susie closes her eyes again.

SUSIE  
 Luca, come to us. Speak to us.

Chuck opens one eye, and looks around. He opens his other eye, and looks around more.

CHUCK  
 See. This stuff doesn't work.

LIVING ROOM

The curtains balloon open as a breeze enters through the screen.

SUSIE (O.S.)  
 It could have if you would have  
 given it a chance.

CHUCK (O.S.)  
 I've been giving it a chance for  
 two hours. There ain't no spirits  
 comin' here.

The curtains flap into the room as the breeze gets stronger.

BILL (O.S.)  
 Who were you trying to get a hold  
 of anyway?

SUSIE (O.S.)  
 A gypsy who killed his lover.

The curtains drop down straight.

DINING ROOM

Gloria points an accosting finger at Susie.

GLORIA

There! You said it! He killed her!

Everyone looks for Susie's reaction. She shakes her head in disagreement.

SUSIE

I meant a gypsy who was killed for a murder he did not commit. There was no proof.

GLORIA

There was plenty of proof. In the book.

BILL

Wait a minute. What book?

SUSIE

The book I was reading.

BILL

The one that scared you the other night?

Susie nods.

GLORIA

He killed her with a pitchfork.

Gloria stabs an imaginary pitchfork into the air.

GLORIA

Whump! Right through her belly!

Bill and Chuck exchange glares.

SUSIE

He didn't do it, but the vigilantes killed him anyway.

Everyone glares at Susie in shock.

SUSIE

He loved her. Brought her wildflowers everyday. And they were going to run away together.

Gloria explains to the others.

GLORIA

He was poor. Met a woman who had money.

Susie watches Bill and Chuck nod in understanding.

SUSIE

No. I've dreamed about him and what happened.

Everyone stares at Susie. She shivers from a chill.

SUSIE

It's getting cold in here.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - NIGHT

Olivia stands behind the counter and puts her sweater on.

The bell on the door CHIMES as the door opens.

James steps inside.

JAMES

You ready?

Olivia takes an envelope from beneath the counter.

OLIVIA

Just about...

She comes out from behind the counter with the envelope, and a set of keys in her hands.

OLIVIA

I need to make a drop tonight. Can we go by the bank first?

Olivia meets James. He wraps an arm around her.

JAMES

Sure, then we can swing by the pizza place and grab one to go.

They turn toward the door.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM - BACK TO THE SEANCE

Susie looks around the table at the others.

SUSIE  
Aren't you cold?

Bill rises from his seat.

BILL  
I'll close the window.

A CRASH in another room gets everyone's attention.

BILL  
And see what that was.

Chuck rises from his seat.

CHUCK  
I'll go with you bro'.

Gloria rises from her seat.

GLORIA  
It's getting late.

SUSIE  
Yeah. I thought this was going to  
be fun, but no one's into this  
seance stuff except for me.

LIVING ROOM

Bill clicks on a lamp.

Light showers down to the floor where a broken vase, and silk  
wildflowers lay.

Bill and Chuck stand there looking down at the mess.

They exchange glares. That's odd.

DINING ROOM

Susie looks down.

SUSIE  
I know he's innocent. I can feel it  
in my heart and even though he's  
dead I think someone should clear  
his name. It's not right.

Gloria puts her hand on Susie's shoulder in a comforting way.

GLORIA  
Susie everything in this world is  
about money. Money or power.

Susie looks up at her.

GLORIA  
Love is for people who believe in  
fairy tales.

BILL (O.S.)  
Susie, you want to come here?

Susie gives her a slight smile.

SUSIE  
That's my fairy tale calling me.

Gloria just shakes her head, and smiles.

Susie rises from her chair.

LIVING ROOM

Bill notices a breeze coming in through the open window.

Susie notices the mess on the floor.

SUSIE  
My mother's vase!

She squats down, and begins to pick it up.

Bill closes the window.

BEDROOM

Light enters through the window.

Susie and Bill lay on the bed fast asleep.

The "LUCA" book drops from the night stand, and lands face  
down on the floor.

Loud rock n' roll MUSIC blares from another room.

They stir.

BILL  
Susie you wanna' turn that down?

Susie covers her head with the blanket. Bill covers his head  
with a pillow.

BILL  
Susie! You wanna' turn that down!

Susie flips the blanket back. She looks around, and finds Bill with the pillow over his head. She pulls the pillow away.

SUSIE  
I'm right here. I didn't turn it on.

They exchange surprised glares, then cautiously get out of bed.

LIVING ROOM

The loud MUSIC continues to play.

The window is closed.

The front door is shut.

The MUSIC STOPS.

Bill shrugs.

BILL  
Probably a short.

He walks to the stereo, and pulls the plug from the wall.

KITCHEN

Susie, dressed in a robe, plugs in the coffee maker.

MAN (V.O.)  
(whisper)  
Susannah...

She spins around.

She's alone. She looks around, decides it's imagination, foolishness. She turns back to the coffee maker, turns it on.

A tall shadow catches the corner of her eye.

She turns around quickly, scans every inch of the room, and questions herself.

LIVING ROOM

Susie sips coffee as she sits on the couch, and reads a magazine.

Bill appears before her in his boxers, and with messy hair.

BILL  
What's for breakfast?

Susie puts down the magazine.

SUSIE  
Broken hands?

He rubs his head.

BILL  
No. A sprained brain.

She rises from the sofa.

SUSIE  
No wonder. All that beer you had  
last night.

KITCHEN

Susie stands at the stove, cooks scrambled eggs.

Bill, now dressed in his painters whites, sneaks up behind her. He wraps his arms around her waist, kisses her neck.

BILL  
Thank you.

She turns into him.

SUSIE  
I couldn't send you off to work on  
an empty belly now could I?

They kiss.

SUSIE  
Are you feeling any better?

BILL  
Somewhat. What are you going to do  
today?

SUSIE  
Take back the Ouija board. We don't  
need it.

The smoke detector SIREN begins to wail in another room.

Bill covers his ears with both hands.

BILL

Yee oow!

Susie spins toward the stove.

SUSIE

Your eggs!

Smoke rises from the pan.

HALLWAY

The SMOKE DETECTOR SIREN continues to wail.

Bill holds the smoke detector in his hand. He pulls a 9 volt battery from its compartment. The siren continues. He shakes the smoke detector, smacks it with his hand. The siren continues. He stoops down on one knee.

Susie watches over his shoulder as he lifts a hammer, then gives the smoke detector a good whack. It breaks into pieces. Now it's QUIET.

SUSIE

That's strange.

Bill looks at her.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE

DENISE, a Gothic employee in her twenties, stares at the counter... To an open, and empty cash box.

James sits behind the counter on a stool, and holds a plastic bag of ice on the side of his head. He appears to be in pain. Olivia stands at his side, and rubs his shoulder in a comforting way.

A COP (30's) stands in front of the counter and takes notes on a note pad.

The door CHIMES as Susie steps in with the Ouija board in her hand.

Everyone freezes, and turns toward her. Immediately she is uneasy. She lifts the Ouija box for them to see.

SUSIE

We didn't use it. I was wondering if I could get a refund.

OLIVIA  
Sorry Hun' but you're going to have  
to come back at another time. We  
were just robbed.

Olivia runs her hand across James' back. Aggravation strikes  
across his face. He jolts away from her hand, and gives her a  
stern look.

JAMES  
Could you stop!

She backs off.

Susie nods. She scopes the scene, taking it all in.

SUSIE  
Sure... I'm very sorry.

Olivia nods.

EXT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - DAY

Gloria waits in her parked car. Susie opens the passenger  
door and gets in.

INT./EXT. CAR

Gloria gazes at Susie, quite surprised, as Susie puts the  
Ouija board on her lap.

GLORIA  
What? She wouldn't give you your  
money back?

SUSIE  
They were just robbed.

A MUFFLED VOICE forces them to glance at Gloria's window.

A WOMAN's face is pressed against the glass.

Gloria jolts back in fright.

WOMAN  
Do you know Jesus?

Gloria is speechless, dumbstruck. Susie leans in.

SUSIE  
We don't have time. Sorry.

The woman shrugs. She turns away.

Susie CHUCKLES as Gloria shakes off the scare.

SUSIE  
That was so funny.

Gloria glances back to the window. She is gone.

She reaches for the key in the ignition.

WOMAN (O.S.)  
He died for you!

Both girls jolt with fright. They turn to Susie's window. The woman presses her face against the glass, and points at Susie.

WOMAN  
He died for you. Praise Jesus! Open  
your heart and receive!

Susie is suddenly angry. Her glare shoots daggers through the Jesus lady.

SUSIE  
Receive what? Emptiness?

The Jesus woman appears puzzled.

SUSIE  
Where was Jesus when a little girl  
was praying and praying that her  
mother would get well?!

Gloria lays a comforting hand on Susie's arm.

GLORIA  
Sus'...

Susie glares at the Jesus lady for her reaction. She stares back.

Gloria turns back to the ignition. She turns the key. The MOTOR starts.

The woman watches them drive away.

EXT. CITY - ALLEY WAY - NIGHT

MAC (20's) hides in the shadows barely visible in a black leather jacket and black pants. He looks toward the lighted street.

James turns the corner and walks toward him.

Mac puts on a black stocking mask. He steps back, into total darkness.

James continues to walk closer. Closer yet.

Mac reaches out and grabs a hold of his shirt.

MAC  
Give me all your money!

James shoves him away.

JAMES  
You asshole! My head's still  
hurtin'. Why'd you have to hit me  
so hard?

Mac takes off his mask. He wraps an arm around James' shoulder.

MAC  
You said to make it believable.

JAMES  
Damn...

Mac reaches into his jacket and pulls out some dollar bills.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Susie sits at the table and writes on a piece of paper. She stops, lifts the pen to her mouth, thinks for a moment.

Gloria sits beside her, and looks down at the paper.

GLORIA  
Do you really think he'll answer  
your questions?

Susie looks her in the eye.

SUSIE  
A big time author like him...  
Probably not.

Gloria smiles.

GLORIA  
You might hear from his attorney.

Susie throws out a LAUGH.

SUSIE  
If he can answer my questions, that  
would be great.

Gloria lets out a breath.

SUSIE  
Well... I want to know why the  
police never questioned anyone. And  
what about Luca's family. I  
couldn't find out anything about  
his family at the library.

GLORIA  
Probably because they were all  
gypsies, Sus'... Drifters.

SUSIE  
Well somehow or another he should  
have had them in the book. I mean  
there was no judge, no jury, no  
police.

An idea lights across Susie's face. Gloria notices it.

GLORIA  
Oh no. Don't even think it.  
Everyone's probably dead or gone by  
now.

Susie frowns.

SUSIE  
I know... Darn it!

Gloria perks up a little.

GLORIA  
Hey, maybe he'll write another book  
about it.

Susie shrugs.

SUSIE  
Maybe. A part two. With new facts.

A smile spreads across her face.

SUSIE  
Now to sign my name.

Susie signs the letter.

SUSIE  
Done.

She folds the letter, and places it into an envelope.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE

The door bell CHIMES as Susie and Gloria step inside.

Olivia stands behind the counter with James, focused on the entrance. A smile spreads across her face.

OLIVIA  
Well hello.

James eyes the two. He moves around the counter as they move closer.

SUSIE  
Hi. I decided to keep the Ouija,  
but I'd like to get a reading.

James keeps walking toward the door.

OLIVIA  
Sure. Excuse me just a second.

Olivia stretches to look after James.

OLIVIA  
Where are you going?

The bell CHIMES as James leaves.

Olivia shakes her head.

Susie glances around the room for a second.

SUSIE  
Do you have time to do a reading  
right now?

Olivia smiles warmly.

OLIVIA  
Sure. I do a fifteen minute tape  
recorded reading for twenty  
dollars.

Susie returns her smile.

SUSIE  
Great.

OLIVIA  
That'll be twenty dollars.

Susie digs into her purse and pulls out a twenty dollar bill.  
Olivia takes the money and stuffs it into her pocket.

OLIVIA  
We'll just go over here.

She motions to the card table where a tape player, and a  
small bottle of scented oil sits.

Gloria moves in the opposite direction toward a chair.

Olivia and Susie sit opposite each other at the table.

Olivia puts a cassette into the recorder, and presses the  
record button. She opens the bottle, and pours a drop of oil  
onto her hand. She rubs her hands together.

Gloria slumps down in the chair.

Olivia holds out open hands to Susie.

OLIVIA  
Your hand.

Susie extends her hand to Olivia. Olivia cups her hand. She  
turns her head, and listens.

A beat.

OLIVIA  
Right.  
(turning to Susie)  
You're very fortunate. You have a  
wonderful husband.

Susie smiles happily.

OLIVIA  
Sylvia sends her love.

Susie is a little surprised.

SUSIE  
She's here?

OLIVIA  
She comes and goes around you. Is  
she your mother?

Susie nods.

OLIVIA  
Yes. That's what she's telling me.  
She also says not to worry about  
the vase. That it was old anyway.

Susie's eyes widen.

SUSIE  
She knows about the vase?

OLIVIA  
Honey, they know everything.

Olivia looks around, listens.

OLIVIA  
She's gone now. Do you have any  
questions?

SUSIE  
Does she know --

OLIVIA  
-- That you miss her? Of course she  
does, but I can assure you that she  
comes around you often. Do you ever  
notice the scent of Gardenias?

SUSIE  
Gardenias?

OLIVIA  
Perfume.

Susie's eyes widen.

SUSIE

Now that you mention it, yes. Every now and then. I thought it was just me.

Olivia shakes her head.

OLIVIA

That is your mother.

Gloria moves around in her chair.

GLORIA

(mumbling)

Oh brother.

She focuses back on the two at the table.

OLIVIA

Do you have any other questions? About your career? Your future?

Susie thinks it over.

SUSIE

Will I ever have a career... or will I be just a plain old housewife?

Olivia looks off in thought.

OLIVIA

I see you studying. Going back to school when your daughter is older. Law enforcement. The F B I? I also see you doing some writing. A book.

Susie CHUCKLES to herself.

OLIVIA

Anything else?

Susie thinks it over carefully.

SUSIE

Any more children?

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Susie stands in front of a grave, cradling an infant in her arms. The baby is wrapped in a blanket.

She also has a bouquet of flowers. She kneels down, and sets the flowers by the headstone.

OLIVIA (V.O.)  
None that I can see. I think she  
will be an only child --

She rises from the grave.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - BACK TO THE READING

Olivia forces a warm smile.

OLIVIA  
-- But she will have many friends.

Susie looks down for a second, then looks back up with a serious expression. She looks Olivia in the eye.

SUSIE  
The reason why I came here is  
because... well... can a ghost harm  
you? I mean me. I think I have  
another ghost that's not my mom.

Olivia studies Susie's expression.

INT. HOUSE - HALLWAY

The smoke detector SIREN wails loudly. Susie watches over Bill's shoulder as he kneels on the floor, and whacks the smoke detector with a hammer.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
The smoke alarm went off and it  
kept going even without a battery  
in it.

GLORIA (V.O.)  
Sus', that couldn't have happened.  
It's just impossible.

Bill and Susie exchange puzzled glares.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
The stereo started blaring by  
itself the other morning, and woke  
us up.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - BACK TO THE READING

Gloria looks to Susie as she waits for Olivia's reaction.

GLORIA  
The stereo Bill bought from Shane?

Susie turns toward her and nods.

GLORIA  
I told you not to buy anything from  
him.

Susie ignores the comment. She turns back to Olivia.

SUSIE  
And I see shadows. Dark shadows of  
like people that move around, then  
disappear into thin air.

Olivia turns her head, looks slightly puzzled.

OLIVIA  
It's not your mother. It's someone  
else... A male. That's what they're  
telling me.

Susie leans in toward her.

OLIVIA  
They show me this man in black and  
white. Their way of telling me that  
he lived a long time ago.

Olivia squints as she studies something only she can see.

OLIVIA  
He has a very dark soul... He's...  
He's weeping...

Susie freezes, listens intently.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The curtains balloon into the room. A gentle breeze enters through the screen. The curtains slap into the room as the breeze intensifies.

OLIVIA (V.O.)  
He's showing me blood on his  
hands... and... and he's saying he  
did not do this.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Luca! I knew it was him. What does  
he want?

The curtains fall down straight, back into place.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - BACK TO THE READING

Olivia smiles at Susie, quite surprised by her comment.

OLIVIA  
They told me you were the one who  
called him.

Susie's eyes widen.

SUSIE  
I wanted to help him, but there's  
really no way I can. I didn't mean  
for him to stick around.

Olivia looks her in the eye.

OLIVIA  
Help him?

SUSIE  
He was a gypsy I read about. He  
supposedly killed a girl for her  
money. A girl he was in love with,  
but no one seems to remember that  
she didn't have money. It belonged  
to her father. A stuffy old fart  
who hated gypsies. I dream about  
this guy a lot. I dreamed he was  
framed.

Olivia takes a moment, collects herself.

OLIVIA  
Spirits come to us many different  
ways. Dreams and shadows are a  
couple ways. Electricity and the  
phone are other ways.

SUSIE  
Can he hurt my baby?

Olivia takes the tape from the recorder and hands it to her.

OLIVIA  
No. He can't harm you or your baby.  
It's possible that he can't find  
his way back.

Susie sinks, somewhat relieved.

OLIVIA  
Tell him to go to the Heavenly  
light.

Susie nods.

Olivia rises from her chair.

OLIVIA  
If he doesn't leave, and you still  
want him gone, come back and see  
me. We can make him go away.

Susie nods. She will.

Olivia moves toward the counter.

SUSIE  
Oh. I almost forgot to ask you. Did  
they catch the guy that robbed you  
the other day?

OLIVIA  
Nothing yet.

Susie walks toward Gloria. Gloria rises from her seat.

GLORIA  
Why don't you ask the spirits who  
did it?

Olivia shakes her head.

OLIVIA  
It doesn't work that way. At least  
not for me. The spirits won't tell  
me anything about my own life.

Gloria smiles smugly.

OLIVIA  
I guess they want me to experience  
life while I'm here, instead of  
dwelling on death all of the time.

Susie nods in understanding.

SUSIE  
I can certainly understand that.

Gloria looks at Susie, and just stares.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Susie sits at the table with a Tarot card spread directly in front of her. She flips through a book searching for something. She stops and runs her fingers along a line of words.

BILL (O.S)  
Honey I'm home.

Susie closes the book, and scoops up the cards. Bill appears by her side in paint-splattered painter's whites.

BILL  
What are you doing?

Susie just looks at him.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE

James jitters nervously, geeked up on drugs, as he sneaks money from the cash box, and slides it into his pant pocket.

He turns around, directly into Olivia.

JAMES  
I needed a couple bucks.

Olivia is suddenly angry.

OLIVIA  
For more drugs?

James mirrors her anger.

JAMES  
Get outta' my face!

He shoves her away, turns and walks off.

Olivia follows after him.

OLIVIA  
I think you should know. I'm filing  
for divorce.

James turns back, and gives her a smug look.

JAMES  
Just try it.

Olivia stops dead in her tracks. She watches him leave.  
The bell CHIMES.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM - BACK TO SUSIE AND BILL  
Bill looks at Susie, and waits for an answer.

SUSIE  
Well, I was trying to see if I  
could find out what was going to  
happen in our future.

Bill shakes his head.

BILL  
Hun' I'm tired, and I'm hungry.

Susie perks up.

SUSIE  
I didn't forget about you. Dinner's  
already cooked and on the stove.

Bill gives a sigh of relief.

EXT. CITY - ALLEY WAY - NIGHT

James lights a small pipe. He takes a few hits, then passes  
it to Mac. Mac takes a hit from the pipe. James looks around  
nervously.

JAMES  
Keep an eye out for the cops. They  
may be comin' for me.

Mac CHOKES on the smoke.

MAC  
What!

James takes the pipe from him.

JAMES

The witch got in my face about the money, so I beat her ass.

Mac shoves James.

MAC

You know I'm on parole!

Mac snatches the pipe back.

MAC

Now you go back home and make up with our little meal ticket. You hear me!

James reaches for the pipe in Mac's hand. Mac pulls the pipe back out of his reach.

MAC

Get outta' here!

James appears confused. He turns away, and walks off. He glances back.

INT. HOUSE - BATHROOM

Susie lays back in a bubble bath, and closes her eyes.

Luca leans over her. He kisses her cheek.

Her eyes snap open. Her hand reaches for her cheek.

She looks around the empty room nervously. Sinks herself further down into the tub.

KITCHEN

The room is tidy, everything in its place.

Gloria pours two glasses of cola on the counter. An envelope, within reach, catches her eye. She sets the bottle down, and picks it up. She takes a closer look.

GLORIA

Susie!

She lifts the glasses, and turns away.

DINING ROOM

Susie sits at the table, fully dressed, hand drying her wet hair with a towel.

Gloria sets the glasses of soda down. Susie notices her.

SUSIE

Thanks.

Gloria holds out the envelope for Susie to see.

GLORIA

Why didn't you open it?

Susie drops the towel in her lap.

SUSIE

What is it?

GLORIA

The letter from the author.

Susie rips the letter from Gloria's hand.

SUSIE

I didn't know it had come. Bill must have gotten it this morning.

Susie tears the envelope open, reads.

SUSIE

Dear Ms Wilks I'd like to thank you for purchasing my book, Luca.

She rolls her eyes.

SUSIE

Shows what he knows.

Gloria leans in closer to her, listening.

GLORIA

Go on, read.

Susie looks back to the letter, reads.

SUSIE

I'm glad that you enjoyed it. The questions you asked, I have no answers for.

(MORE)

SUSIE(cont'd)

While I do appreciate your interest, I must admit to you that I have no desire to pursue this particular story any further. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Sincerely, Michael snake in the mud.

Susie sets the letter on the table.

SUSIE

Who knew?

GLORIA

So are you going to give it up now?

SUSIE

Yeah. I'm done. He's dead anyway. What does it matter?

Susie wads the letter into a ball, and tosses it across the table.

SUSIE

Like Bill said, some things you just can't fix.

She stares into air.

Gloria rests a comforting hand on Susie's shoulder.

GLORIA

You look tired, Sus'.

SUSIE

I didn't sleep well last night. I don't sleep well any night anymore.

Gloria looks off in thought.

A beat.

GLORIA

I forgot to put the pop away.

She turns away from Susie.

KITCHEN

Gloria steps into the room, and freezes in her tracks. Something is definitely wrong.

GLORIA

Susie!

SUSIE (O.S.)

What?

GLORIA

Look at this.

Susie appears at her side.

SUSIE

What?

GLORIA

Your stove...

Susie turns her head, fixes her stare on something.

All four burners on the stove are ablaze.

Susie goes to the stove and turns the burners off. She turns back to Gloria.

SUSIE

I told you I had a ghost. You  
wouldn't believe me.

Gloria stares at her, dumbfounded.

BILL (O.S.)

Susie, I'm home.

Susie catches a dark shadow out of the corner of her eye.

LUCA (V.O.)

(whisper)

Help me.

Gloria grabs Susie's arm. The two exchange a wide-eyed look.

SUSIE

You want to give me a ride  
somewhere?

Gloria nods.

DINING ROOM

Bill sets his keys on the table.

Susie goes to him.

SUSIE

Gloria's taking me to get dinner.

BILL  
I'll shower off then.

Gloria, wide-eyed and frightened, appears by her side.

GLORIA  
You can come with us.

He smiles.

BILL  
I need a shower.

GLORIA  
You can shower later.

Bill looks suspiciously at the two of them.

BILL  
What's going on here?

GLORIA  
There's a ghost in your kitchen!

Bill busts out in LAUGHTER.

Susie kisses his cheek.

SUSIE  
But he can't hurt you.

She tugs Gloria's arm.

SUSIE  
Come on. Let's go.

Bill pretends to be frightened.

BILL  
You're going to leave me alone with  
the ghost?

The girls turn away.

BILL  
Good thing I got Chuck to back me  
up.

Bill LAUGHS.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Susie and Gloria step off the porch. They notice something in the street.

Chuck and Shane look into the back of Shane's pick-up truck.

SUSIE  
What you doin' Chuck?

Chuck and Shane turn toward them. Chuck lifts a couple fishing poles from the back of the truck.

CHUCK  
Buyin' me and your old man some fishin' poles for that canoe.

Gloria shakes her head. She rushes to her car.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE

Olivia reaches to a book on the bookshelf.

She hands the book to Susie.

OLIVIA  
This is a good one. Everything you need to know should be in there.

Susie looks at the book only for a second, and takes her at her word.

SUSIE  
Alright.

Olivia walks off and gathers a black candle and a stick of incense.

OLIVIA  
You'll need these, too.

Susie nods.

SUSIE  
Alright. Thank you.

Olivia writes the order on the receipt book.

Susie looks around and notices Mac peeking in through the window. She turns back to Olivia, and motions to the window.

SUSIE  
You see that?

Olivia looks.

Mac backs out of sight.

EXT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - DAY

Mac backs away from the window.

The Jesus woman walks up behind him. He is oblivious to her.

She makes it to his side, then sticks her head in front of his face.

WOMAN  
Do you know Jesus?

Mac jumps back about a foot, startled.

MAC  
Gee zuz lady!

Her jaw drops.

Mac turns away, and walks off. He glances back at the her.

She watches him walk away.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - BACK TO SUSIE AND OLIVIA

Olivia shrugs it off.

OLIVIA  
I get that all the time.

Olivia rips the receipt from the book.

OLIVIA  
Twelve fifty.

Susie hands her money.

EXT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - DAY

Gloria LAUGHS and laughs as she waits in her car parked at the curb.

Susie holds onto a small bag as she opens the car door, and gets inside.

INT. CAR

Susie looks at Gloria.

SUSIE  
What's so funny?

Gloria looks at the store.

GLORIA  
The Jesus lady got someone else.  
The guy nearly jumped out of his  
skin.

Susie LAUGHS with her.

SUSIE  
We better be gettin' Bill his  
supper... or he'll be jumpin' out  
of his skin next.

GLORIA  
I needed that laugh. It took my  
mind off the ghost.

She starts the car MOTOR.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD

Gloria's car drives away from a beautiful sunset, toward a dark sedan, parked at the side of the road.

Mac and James stand by a tree in some sort of conversation. They notice Gloria's car approaching them.

Susie flashes a wave as they pass by. James waves back.

MAC  
Who was that?

JAMES  
A wanna' be witch. She been coming  
into the store a lot lately.

They watch them drive away.

INT. CAR - BACK TO GLORIA AND SUSIE

Gloria glances at Susie.

GLORIA  
That's who the Jesus lady got.

SUSIE  
That's the bookstore owners  
husband.

Susie takes a french fry from a fast food bag and eats it.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE

Olivia sits at the table and chairs, sorting through a large pile of paperwork.

Denise appears at her side.

DENISE  
Is there anything else you want me  
to do before I leave?

Olivia looks up from her paperwork.

OLIVIA  
Could you lock the door on your way  
out?

Denise nods. She will.

OLIVIA  
Thank you.

DENISE  
You should get some rest Olivia.  
Tomorrow is going to be a big day  
for you.

Olivia smiles warmly.

OLIVIA  
Halloween always is. I just have a  
few more things to go over here  
before I leave.

Olivia focuses back on her paperwork.

Denise smiles to herself, shakes her head from side to side.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - BACK TO MAC AND JAMES

Mac backs up against a tree.

MAC  
So you beat her ass huh? She didn't  
look beat up to me.

James sits down.

JAMES  
She's filing for divorce.

Mac appears concerned.

MAC  
I told you to make up with her. You  
didn't do it, did you?

James looks down.

JAMES  
I tried...

Mac stares at him.

MAC  
You'll be alright. You can move  
along. Get a job.

James snaps his head up at Mac.

JAMES  
Half of that store is mine! She  
owes me.

Mac throws out a LAUGH.

MAC  
Bet she doesn't see it that way.

James pulls up a couple blades of grass.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM

The room is getting dark, dusk. Susie sets the fast food bag on the table. She takes french fries and hamburgers from the bag, and sets them on the table.

SUSIE  
Honey, could you turn on the light?

A CLICK, and an overhead light goes on.

Bill sits down at the table with Gloria.

He notices the bag from the bookstore on the table.

BILL  
What's this?

He reaches for the bag. Susie grabs the bag, and sets it out of his reach.

SUSIE  
A little somethin' for later.

He gives her a puzzled look. Gloria notices.

GLORIA  
Bill, have you ever noticed shadows?

Bill's confusion intensifies.

BILL  
What? You mean Chuck? He's outside.

Gloria shakes her head, dismissing.

GLORIA  
Never mind. I guess they can't hurt us anyway.

Susie hands him a hamburger.

SUSIE  
She means like a ghost. Spirits...

He turns to Gloria and frowns.

BILL  
No.

Gloria shrugs.

Bill unwraps his burger, begins to eat.

The overhead light BUZZES and dims.

Susie and Gloria exchange a look. Bill notices.

BILL  
Oh come on! It's an older house.

Susie looks around cautiously, continues to take food from the bag. She hands Bill some fries. He sniffs the air.

BILL  
You wearing new cologne?

SUSIE  
No.

BILL  
(ignoring her answer)  
Smells like flowers... Gardenias.

Susie freezes. Her and Gloria exchange a look. Bill smiles.

BILL  
I like it.

Susie looks around cautiously. She hands food to Gloria.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Chuck sits on the porch and watches a dark sedan come closer.

Mac sits in the passenger seat. He notices Gloria's car parked in front, then stares hard at the house.

Chuck rises to his feet.

BILL (O.S.)  
Hey Chuck! Come on and grab  
yourself a burger!

A phone RINGS O.S.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Susie lifts the telephone receiver to her ear.

SUSIE  
Hello. -- Hello?

STATIC comes from the receiver.

SUSIE  
Hello?

Susie moves the receiver in front of her face. She stares at it, puzzled.

DINING ROOM

Gloria, Chuck, and Bill sit at the table eating hamburgers and french fries.

BILL  
Who was it?

Susie sits down with them.

SUSIE  
I don't know. I couldn't hear  
through all that static.

Gloria smiles.

GLORIA  
Wait. Don't tell me. You got the  
phone from Shane, too.

Susie smiles smugly.

SUSIE  
Ha ha very funny.

Bill and Chuck look at each other. They don't get it.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE

Olivia sits at the card table, still going over paperwork.

A KNOCK at the door.

She looks at the door, a little surprised.

OLIVIA  
Sorry. We're closed.

BANG BANG BANG of knocks at the door.

She rises from her chair.

ENTRANCE

Olivia looks at the closed door.

OLIVIA  
I said I'm sorry, but we're closed.

JAMES (O.S.)  
Olivia it's me.

Olivia makes a sour face.

JAMES (O.S.)  
Open up. I need to talk to you.

She opens the door.

James stands outside.

JAMES  
Can I come in?

She slowly, reluctantly, moves aside. James steps in. Mac pushes in behind him.

Olivia looks puzzled.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM - BACK TO THE GROUP

Gloria, Chuck, and Bill sit at the table while Susie collects empty hamburger and french fry wrappers from them. She puts them into the fast food bag.

Susie takes the bag, leaves. Bill follows her.

Chuck opens a beer, then looks to Gloria.

CHUCK  
So how long have you known Susie?

Gloria looks to Chuck with boredom written all over her face.

GLORIA  
She's been my friend since I was about five.

She looks away.

Chuck peeks inside the bag from the bookstore.

He LAUGHS.

CHUCK  
Ya' know if I would'a met you on the street, I never would'a took you to be one of them kooks who's into this stuff.

He slides the bag away from him.

Gloria gives Chuck her full attention.

GLORIA  
What do you mean by that?

He shrugs.

CHUCK  
You know. Spooks.

Gloria straightens up in her seat.

GLORIA  
Hey, I wouldn't have believed it  
either, but you didn't see what I  
saw.

He reaches for his beer.

CHUCK  
See. Saw. Hell, I've never seen nor  
sawed nothin'. This is the only  
spirit I believe in.

Chuck raises his beer, takes a swig. Gloria looks away.

KITCHEN

Susie and Bill stand in the middle of the room in an embrace.  
Susie jolts.

SUSIE  
Ohhh! Did you feel that?

Bill watches her rub her belly.

BILL  
What? The baby?

Susie looks at him, amazed.

SUSIE  
Well duh...

He rubs her belly.

BILL  
He wants out.

SUSIE  
She, and yes it feels that way.

Bill looks into her eyes.

BILL  
We'll find out soon enough now,  
won't we?

Bill moves his hand around on her belly, waits to feel something. Susie leans forward, and pushes down on her swollen belly.

SUSIE  
Geesh... Now she's under my ribs.

Bill reaches out and moves his hand around on her swollen belly.

DINING ROOM

Chuck smokes a cigarette, and stares off into the distance, lost in thought. He takes a drag, and let's the smoke just ooze out of his mouth.

Gloria glares at him, quite disgusted.

GLORIA  
Did you know that they use nicotine  
in pesticides?

Chuck snaps back to the here and now. He perches his cigarette between his lips, and squints to see through the rising smoke.

CHUCK  
Then I guess it's lucky for me that  
I'm not a bug.

Chuck smiles, happy with his comeback.

Gloria frowns, unimpressed. She looks away.

Susie and Bill come back into the room. Gloria notices them.

GLORIA  
Sus', he's smoking in here.

Susie's eyes widen in shock.

SUSIE  
Chuck! What are you doing?

Chuck looks to Bill for support. Bill stares numbly at him.

SUSIE  
Smoke outside, okay.

Chuck drops his cigarette into his beer bottle.

CHUCK

Sorry.

Gloria looks to Chuck with an ear-to-ear grin.

Susie nods.

SUSIE

It's okay, just don't do it again.

She turns to Gloria.

SUSIE

Let's go to my room.

Chuck raises his brow, makes a face.

CHUCK

What cha' gonna' do in there?

BILL

Yeah. What are you going to do in there?

Susie reaches for the bag on the table. She smiles coyly.

SUSIE

Girl stuff. No boys allowed.

Chuck reels back, impressed.

Gloria rises from her seat. Chuck grabs a hold of her wrist.

A beat.

Gloria looks up from her wrist, to his face.

His face lights up with a school boy crush.

CHUCK

You hurry back here cutie pie. I think I'm takin' you home with me.

Chuck LAUGHS as he lets go of her wrist.

The girls exchange a sour look, then leave.

Bill sits down at the table.

BILL

You wanna' lighten up a little bit?

Chuck fidgets in his seat.

CHUCK  
What? I'm just havin' fun.

BILL  
She's not that kind of girl.

Chuck LAUGHS.

CHUCK  
Ya' mean she's not a hooker?

Bill looks amazed.

BILL  
No, she's not a hooker!

Chuck thinks it over.

CHUCK  
I think all women are hookers if  
the price is right.

Bill's hand goes to his forehead with an instant headache.

Chuck LAUGHS.

CHUCK  
Miss Hooker! Come on down! You're  
the next contestant on...

Chuck LAUGHS again, quite amused with himself. He reaches beside his chair, and grabs another bottle of beer from the case.

CHUCK  
I couldn't get laid if I was in a  
whorehouse with a fist-full of  
fifties.

Bill shakes his head.

BILL  
And you wonder why?

Chuck shrugs. He twists open his beer.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - BACK TO OLIVIA AND BOYS

Mac frowns with disgust as he looks around.

James has Olivia backed against the wall.

JAMES  
You don't want me around anymore,  
Olivia? Are you sure?

OLIVIA  
We tried, James, but I think it's  
better we just part ways.

James searches her eyes.

JAMES  
You do? I don't. I'm not letting  
you go, Olivia. I love you, and I  
know we can work this out.

He tries to kiss her. She turns her head.

OLIVIA  
Stop!

Mac looks at them.

MAC  
Damned witch!

Mac turns back to a stack of books on the counter. He lifts  
the top book, and takes a closer look at it.

MAC  
Just look at this shit!

He slings it back down.

Olivia glares into James' eyes.

OLIVIA  
I think you two should leave.

James frowns at her.

JAMES  
I don't think you should be tellin'  
me what to do.

Mac looks into the glass counter.

MAC  
Sweet.

He takes a fancy dagger from the case.

Olivia notices Mac with the dagger in his hand.

OLIVIA  
Put that back!

Olivia struggles. James holds her at bay.

Mac lifts the cash box from beneath the counter.

MAC  
Well looky here.

He opens the box. It's full of money.

MAC  
Nice.

Olivia gives James a stern look.

OLIVIA  
Tell your friend to put the money  
back.

Mac turns toward them and frowns.

MAC  
Or what witch? You'll cast a spell  
on me? Oh. I'm so scared.

Olivia glares at him.

OLIVIA  
You will be scared!

James gets in her face.

JAMES  
Half of that money is mine!

Olivia's jaw drops. She can't believe what he just said.

OLIVIA  
You're out of your mind! I owned  
this store long before I met you!

Mac crams the cash into his pant pocket.

MAC  
We'll take this as an advance on  
his cash.

Olivia struggles harder.

INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM

Gloria and Susie sit on the bed, and thumb through the open book in Susie's hand.

Susie runs her finger across a line of words.

SUSIE

It says here that we are supposed to tell the spirit to go away. We're supposed to do that in every room.

GLORIA

Okay.

SUSIE

Then we're supposed to sprinkle salt around every door and window to keep it out.

GLORIA

What about the candle?

Susie flips through the pages, and looks for something. Anything.

SUSIE

It doesn't say.

They look at each other.

SUSIE

We'll burn it anyway.

Susie sets the book down on the bed. She lifts the black candle, and a lighter from her side.

SUSIE

Ready?

Gloria nods. Yes. She is.

GLORIA

Ready.

They stand. Susie lights the wick, holds onto the candle.

SUSIE

Here we go... But this isn't for my mother... Go away, Luca!

Gloria nods in agreement, then smiles with amusement.

GLORIA  
Go away!

SUSIE  
You're not wanted here!

GLORIA  
You're not wanted here!

They begin to walk a circle around the room.

GLORIA AND SUSIE  
Go away!

DINING ROOM

Bill turns in his chair, and listens.

BILL  
What the Hell?

Chuck stretches to look in the same direction.

GLORIA AND SUSIE (O.S.)  
You're not wanted here!

Chuck pouts.

CHUCK  
Look. I can take a hint.

Chuck rises from his chair. Bill grabs his arm, trying to stop him.

BILL  
Hold up.

Bill listens.

LIVING ROOM

Gloria and Susie's faces are lit by the candle glow.

GLORIA  
Go away!

SUSIE  
You're not wanted here!

Bill appears before them.

BILL  
Susie! What in the world?

The girls ignore him, and begin to move in a large circle.

GLORIA AND SUSIE  
Go away! You're not wanted here!

Chuck stumbles toward Bill.

CHUCK  
Hey bro' I'm outta' here.

Bill turns toward Chuck.

BILL  
You're not going anywhere. You're  
too drunk.

GLORIA AND SUSIE  
You're not wanted here!

Bill stares a hole through Susie.

BILL  
Susannah!

She faces him.

SUSIE  
I can't talk now. We're ridding the  
house of evil spirits.

Bill, suddenly struck with amusement, begins to LAUGH.

CHUCK  
Just let me get my beer and I'll be  
out your way.

Chuck turns away.

DINING ROOM

Chuck collects his case of beer.

Bill slumps down in a chair.

BILL  
Sit down Chuck.

Chuck pouts.

CHUCK

If your woman doesn't want me here,  
I'll go. It don't hurt my feelings  
none.

BILL

It's ghosts, Chuck.

Chuck freezes in confusion.

GLORIA AND SUSIE (O.S.)

Go away! You're not wanted here!

BILL

They're trying to get rid of a  
ghost. Not you.

Chuck's confusion disappears. A huge smile spreads across his  
face. He sets his beer on the table.

CHUCK

Oh I get it. It's devil's night.  
There's ghosts!

Chuck stumbles toward the living room.

CHUCK

Hey, Sus'. Want me to kick their  
ass?

Chuck turns back toward Bill.

CHUCK

I will kick their ass for ya' bro'  
cos' I love you like that.

Bill smiles, amused by the whole situation.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - BACK TO OLIVIA AND BOYS

Olivia knees James in the crotch. He doubles over.

She bolts away.

JAMES

Ow...

Mac turns from the counter.

Olivia is coming toward him, and she looks pissed.

OLIVIA  
Empty your pockets right now!

Mac smiles smugly.

MAC  
Sure thing.

He takes the money from his pocket, sets it on the counter.

Olivia makes it to him. She slaps him up side his head.

OLIVIA  
Now get out of my store before I  
call the police!

JAMES  
Olivia!

MAC  
You shouldn't have done that witch.

OLIVIA  
I've got your witch.

Before he knows it, Olivia rubs her thumb across his forehead. He leans back, surprised.

Olivia stands boldly before him.

OLIVIA  
Now leave!

Mac's eyes become crazed. He pulls the dagger from his waistband.

The dagger stabs into her chest.

Olivia's eyes bulge in fright. She SCREAMS.

Olivia turns away. She holds onto her wound as she runs toward the door. Mac is on her heels. He stabs her in the back.

MAC  
Die you bloody witch!

James watches in horror.

JAMES  
No! Mac!

James stumbles toward them.

Olivia falls forward, to the floor. She rolls over onto her back. Mac jumps on top of her. She pushes him, fighting with all her might. He doesn't budge.

Mac stares at her in a psycho daze as he stabs her over and over again. Her blood splatters up on his face.

James pulls back on Mac's shoulder.

JAMES

No!

Olivia's arms go limp, and drop.

Mac, still crazed, looks at James. James backs off, scared to death of him.

JAMES

Mac!

Mac blinks.

JAMES

What have you done?

Olivia stares up at the ceiling. Dead.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - BACK TO SUSIE AND GLORIA

The glow from the candle lights their faces.

GLORIA AND SUSIE

We bind you from this place. Go toward the light.

Chuck bounces off the stereo as he moves past it.

CHUCK

Ah excuse me.

He opens the front door, and kicks air out of it.

CHUCK

Go on now ghost! Git! And don't ever think about comin' back!

Chuck LAUGHS. He turns from the door.

CHUCK

Hey Sus', they're gone now!

Bill watches the girls.

BILL  
Come on now Susie. Enough is  
enough.

Susie turns her head toward him.

SUSIE  
But we're not done yet.

Bill steps toward them, and blows out the candle.

BILL  
Yes, you are.

Susie looks to Gloria for her reaction.

GLORIA  
Maybe it's enough.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - BACK TO OLIVIA AND BOYS

Mac stares at Olivia. His jaw loosens, suddenly aware of what he has done.

James stares over Mac's shoulder at his wife.

JAMES  
Come on! We gotta' go!

Mac rises to his feet with wobbly legs.

James goes to the counter, and grabs the cash.

JAMES  
They'll think it was another  
robbery.

He rushes to Mac, and grabs him by his arm. They leave in a hurry.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM - BACK TO BILL AND CHUCK

They sit at the table and drink beer.

Susie sits down with them.

SUSIE  
Why you didn't let us finish? That  
ghost will never go away now.

Bill looks her dead on.

BILL  
I'm beginning to worry about you  
Susie. Are you alright?

She scowls at him.

SUSIE  
I'm fine!

Gloria stands next to Susie, a show of support.

GLORIA  
There is a ghost Bill. I saw it  
with my own two eyes.

Bill rolls his eyes.

BILL  
Wonderful. You can keep Susie  
company at the nut house.

Chuck LAUGHS.

CHUCK  
Don't worry. I'll come visit ya'.

Bill scowls at him.

BILL  
They might keep you, too.

Chuck's smile disappears.

Gloria focuses on Susie.

GLORIA  
Sus', I think he's gone... I should  
be leaving, too.

Chuck looks up at her.

CHUCK  
What's the rush?

GLORIA  
I've got an early class tomorrow.

CHUCK  
What? You a teacher?

Gloria shakes her head.

GLORIA  
No. I'll be teaching at Franklin  
Elementary next Fall.

Chuck smiles at her sweetly.

CHUCK  
Imagine that. I always knew you had  
class.

Gloria smiles, sort of embarrassed.

Bill looks at Gloria.

BILL  
Gloria, do you think I could trust  
you not to do any more Hocus Pocus  
if I asked you to sort of hang out  
with Susie tomorrow?

Susie frowns at Bill.

SUSIE  
I don't need a baby sitter.

Bill focuses on her.

BILL  
That's not what I meant. Chuck and  
I want to try out our new fishing  
gear and you're too close to your  
due date. You shouldn't be left  
alone.

Susie's expression mellows.

SUSIE  
Oh.

Gloria gives Susie a hug.

GLORIA  
Sure. I'll baby sit.

Susie just looks at her.

BILL  
If anything happens, you can call  
my cell phone, and we'll get right  
back here.

Gloria nods.

GLORIA  
Sounds like a plan. I'll see you  
tomorrow then.

Chuck rises from his seat.

CHUCK  
I'll walk you to your car.

Gloria shrugs. Okay.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Gloria sits in her car. Chuck stands outside her window. She starts the MOTOR.

Chuck taps the top of her car with his hand, and backs away.

He watches her drive off.

EXT. CITY - ALLEY

The streetlight shines on Mac as he stands in front of the alley. He looks around in every direction before entering.

Mac walks to a pile of garbage bags.

He holds the dagger out in front of him, and looks down at it. The blade glistens from the light in from the road.

Mac opens a garbage bag, and drops the dagger inside. He ties the bag back up.

EXT. CITY STREET

James sits behind the wheel of the parked sedan, waiting.

Mac comes out of the alley. He goes toward the car, and stops when he notices Gloria's car driving toward them. His eyes stay glued on her car.

Gloria drives closer. Her passenger window is half down. Her car slows. She glances at Mac, recognizes him with a smile. She gives a slight wave.

Mac stands still, and stares at her.

She sticks her head toward the open passenger window.

GLORIA  
(yells)  
Hey! Do you know Jesus!

Mac sticks up his middle finger.

MAC  
Fuck you!

Gloria LAUGHS. She drives away.

INT. CAR

Mac opens the door and gets inside.

MAC  
Damned freaks!

James looks at him.

JAMES  
You dump it?

MAC  
Yeah. It's gone... She saw us  
though.

James turns the key, starts the MOTOR.

JAMES  
Quit being so paranoid. She saw you  
standing by my car. So what? The  
garbage gets picked up in the  
morning.

Mac looks into the alley.

MAC  
Right.

INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM

Susie and Bill lay in bed, ready for sleep. She moves closer  
to him. They cuddle.

BILL  
I sure do like that cologne.

SUSIE  
I already told you. I'm not wearing  
any.

Susie kisses him on his cheek.

SUSIE  
Good night, Hun'.

BILL  
Must be the shampoo.

She turns over, faces the opposite direction. Settles in.

SUSIE  
Good night, Mom.

Bill turns and faces away from her.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Chuck sits on the porch step. Alone. Drinking a bottle of beer.

James and Mac drive by. Chuck doesn't notice them, he's tipping his beer getting the last sip.

A GIRL (7) sits at the edge of the lawn. She's in a frilly dress, and has a head-full of curls.

Chuck notices the girl. He holds onto a beer bottle, and eases toward her.

She holds something to her eye.

CHUCK  
What are you doing out here? Isn't it a little late?

The girl faces him.

GIRL  
Oh no. There's still time.

Chuck points to the object in her hand.

CHUCK  
What do you have there?

The little girl smiles proudly.

GIRL  
A kaleidoscope! Wanna' see?

CHUCK  
Sure.

He takes the kaleidoscope from the child.

CHUCK  
It's too dark for this, isn't it?

GIRL  
It'll work just fine.

Chuck raises the kaleidoscope to his eye, and twists the tube in opposite directions.

INSIDE THE KALEIDOSCOPE

A myriad of colored shapes is re-directed.

CHUCK (V.O.)  
You were right. That's pretty neat.

GIRL (V.O.)  
Look closer...

Suddenly, tiny specks appear on the colors. They start multiplying like amebas. Angry hornets BUZZ somewhere in the distance. The black spots begin a spiral dance to the sound.

BACK TO CHUCK

He tries to twist the tube, it's jammed. He slaps it.

BACK TO KALEIDOSCOPE

A whirlpool starts within the tube, and grows larger with every whorl. The BUZZING gets steadily LOUDER.

CHUCK (V.O.)  
I can't move my arm!

The swirling swarm turns, and grows.

LITTLE GIRL (V.O.)  
Wrong! You can't close your eyes  
and pretend that you don't see.

The swarm bound within the kaleidoscope zero in on their exit... The eyepiece.

The little girl LAUGHS insanelly as...

Blackness slaps up against his eye. Chuck YELLS out.

BACK TO CHUCK

He falls to the ground.



SHANE

This here's a dagger, but it could also be used as a fancy letter opener. Pretty, isn't it?

Susie nods in agreement. He hands the dagger to her.

SHANE

I bet that cost someone a pretty penny, too. Look at all that detail.

Susie eyeballs the dagger.

SHANE

You like it don't you?

She nods.

SHANE

Tell you what. Five dollars and it's yours. I've got to get some gas for my mower.

Susie looks up at him with a surprised expression.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Chuck and Bill are both dressed, and holding onto fishing poles. They are about to step outside when Gloria and Susie step in.

Susie hides the dagger behind her back.

GLORIA

Looks like you're all set. Where are you fishing at?

BILL

Belleville Lake.

Chuck smiles proudly.

CHUCK

In our new canoe.

Gloria smiles coyly.

GLORIA

Ah, yes. The canoe you bought from Shane... which means it could be--

Gloria holds her index finger across her lip moves it up and down rapidly, forcing her words to vibrate as she speaks.

GLORIA  
-- Bbb eelll vell Lake...

Susie LAUGHS. Chuck frowns at Gloria.

CHUCK  
You shouldn't oughta' joke like that. I can't swim.

GLORIA  
I know.

Bill pats Chuck's belly.

BILL  
Should be able to float.

Everyone, except Chuck, LAUGHS. Gloria turns away.

GLORIA  
Bbb eelll vell...

Chuck glares at her, quite surprised.

CHUCK  
Cut it out!

Bill kisses Susie.

BILL  
Remember, call if you need me.

Susie nods. She will.

Chuck takes a step, and trips over his own two feet. He slams against the wall.

Susie and Bill just look at him.

He feels their eyes. He looks at them, quite dumbfounded.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Gloria and Susie sit at the table, and inspect the dagger in Susie's palm.

SUSIE  
I saw fancy letter openers just like this at the bookstore.

Gloria makes a face.

GLORIA  
It's a dagger, Sus'. What are you  
going to do with that, anyway?

Susie shrugs.

SUSIE  
I dunno'. I wonder what it's worth?

Gloria shrugs.

EXT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - DAY

Yellow police tape is torn down and laying on the ground.

Denise comes out of the building with her jacket and a couple  
books in her arms. She leaves the door open.

Susie and Gloria rush up to her, very concerned.

SUSIE  
What's going on?

Denise's eyes are red and swollen.

DENISE  
Just collecting my things.

SUSIE  
Did they get robbed again?

Denise nods, then looks down.

DENISE  
Olivia's gone, too.

Susie frowns with confusion.

SUSIE  
She is? Where did she go?

Denise stares her in the eye.

DENISE  
She's dead.

Susie's jaw loosens in shock. Gloria wraps an arm around  
Susie's shoulder.

DENISE

They said she was stabbed forty six times.

Susie lifts her hand to her mouth, in shock.

SUSIE

Oh my God. I'm so sorry.

Denise's eyes fill with tears. She hangs her head.

DENISE

Me, too. Hopefully they'll find him. The police have gone over every inch of this place.

Denise raises her head, yet avoids eye contact.

DENISE

You know, she spoke to me about you.

Denise faces Susie. A tear runs down her cheek.

DENISE

She liked you a lot.

Susie forces a smile.

DENISE

She also told me that you were blessed with the gift like her, but you just didn't know it yet... I've got to go.

Denise turns to leave. Susie stops her. She wraps her arms around Denise and gives her a hug.

SUSIE

You take care of yourself now.

Gloria looks inside the door.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE

The room feels unsettling. Overhead lights are off. James stands behind the counter lost in a daze. Susie and Gloria walk slowly toward the counter. He notices them.

JAMES

We're closed.

Susie stops in her tracks. Gloria eases toward the counter.

SUSIE  
I know. I know what happened.

James gives her a look, does she? He lifts a jacket from the top of a stack of books.

JAMES  
Police let me get a few personal things. My jacket. Keys. I have to lock back up --

Susie inches closer.

SUSIE  
(interrupting)  
-- Why didn't he just take the money and leave? Why did he have to take her, too?

James puts on his innocent face.

JAMES  
I don't know.

There's an uncomfortable silence.

Gloria looks inside the showcase.

Susie looks to James.

SUSIE  
She was always smiling. Cheerful.  
It's a darned shame.

James stiffens. He forces a nod of agreement.

Gloria looks at James.

GLORIA  
They'll catch him. They always do.

She looks back into the showcase.

GLORIA  
There's another one just like it here.

He starts toward Gloria. Susie inches back.

SUSIE  
This is a bad time.

He stops watches Susie.

Gloria stiffens. She looks to the window, and notices the Jesus lady looking in.

EXT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - DAY

Gloria steps outside. The Jesus lady notices her, and backs away from the window.

GLORIA  
Excuses me.

The Jesus lady faces her.

GLORIA  
What are you doing?

The Jesus lady shakes her head, saddened.

JESUS LADY  
If only she had came to God.

Gloria forces a breath.

GLORIA  
Ya' know, my friend is really sorry  
about how she treated you the other  
day. It's just that you scared  
her... You scare me.

The Jesus lady nods.

JESUS LADY  
I'm sorry. I know I might seem a  
little odd to you. I just say what  
Jesus wants me to say. Praise  
Jesus! Amen.

Gloria looks creeped out.

GLORIA  
Okay... Well you have a nice day.  
Ya' hear?

She walks swiftly toward her car.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - BACK TO SUSIE AND JAMES

Susie holds the dagger out in her hand for James to see.

His eyes flash open with surprise.

JAMES  
Where did you get that?

SUSIE  
Does that matter?

He shakes his head.

Susie runs her fingertips across the handle, admiring it.

SUSIE  
Nice detail, huh? There is some  
sort of stain. I think it could be  
cleaned up.

He observes her.

SUSIE  
Should be pretty easy to do  
unless...

She looks up at him.

SUSIE  
This is a bad time. I'll come back.

Susie begins to back away.

SUSIE  
We'll talk about this later. So  
sorry for your loss...

James stretches toward her, frantic.

JAMES  
I'll give you two grand.

Susie stops. She looks at him like he's crazy.

A beat.

SUSIE  
What did you just say?

His eyes dart around nervously.

JAMES  
I meant three. I'll give you three.

He looks at her for her answer.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Bill and Chuck push the canoe into the water.

Chuck's foot slides in the mud on the shore. He falls into the lake with a SPLASH.

Chuck turns over quickly, and CHOKES out a mouth-full of water. He looks up to Bill with a wide-eyed expression.

Bill LAUGHS.

BILL

You'll scare all the fish away.

Chuck frowns. Not the reaction he wanted to see.

He stands up in the knee-high water.

INT. CAR/EXT. BOOKSTORE

Gloria watches Susie tuck the dagger into her purse.

GLORIA

So are you going to tell me or what?

Susie looks at her, questioning.

GLORIA

The dagger.

Susie snaps to understanding.

SUSIE

Oh. He said it was worth a lot.

Gloria looks confused now.

GLORIA

Susie, something's not right.

Susie studies Gloria's confused face, not the comment she was expecting.

GLORIA

The one in the case was priced thirty dollars.

Gloria glances back at the bookstore.

A loud THUD THUD forces them both to turn to Gloria's window. They both jump.

The Jesus lady presses her face against the window.

Gloria shakes off the scare very quickly.

GLORIA

Yes! Yes! We know Jesus! You're a very, very nice man!

The Jesus lady smiles at them.

INT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE

James holds a telephone receiver to his ear. His eyes dart around here and there, very nervous.

JAMES

I'm tellin' you she knows. She wants money.

He shakes his head.

JAMES

I told her I could probably get her a few thousand. She looked at me like I was nuts and said she'd think about it.

James glances around, looking at nothing in particular.

EXT. LAKE - BACK TO CHUCK AND BILL

They sit in the canoe about 15 feet from the shore.

Bill's line is already dropped in the water. He watches it, waiting for any kind of movement at all.

Chuck baits his hook.

CHUCK

We'll be eatin' good tonight. I hope the girls got the skillet all greased up and ready to go.

Bill smiles and nods.

Chuck lifts his pole. He swings it over in front of Bill. Bill catches it with one hand.

BILL  
What are you doing?

CHUCK  
Casting my line. I'm left handed,  
remember?

Bill frowns.

BILL  
Well pretend you're right handed  
today. Cast it the other way.

Bill rolls his eyes.

Chuck swings his pole over his right shoulder. He pulls back  
on his pole hard, then SCREAMS out in pain.

Bill looks at him like he's crazy.

Chuck bends forward.

CHUCK  
Get it out! Get it out!

The hook is stuck through his T-shirt, and caught on his  
skin.

CHUCK  
Ow! Ow! Ow!

Bill LAUGHS as he removes the hook from Chuck's back.

Chuck straightens up.

CHUCK  
Ow! That hurt!

Bill palms Chuck's shoulder, and gives it a playful shake.

BILL  
Havin' kind of a rough day, aren't  
ya' Chuck?

Chuck moves his shoulders around, straightens out his back.

Bill wobbles the canoe on purpose.

Chuck panics. He drops his pole, and grabs onto both sides of  
the canoe for dear life.

Bill LAUGHS.

Chuck's pole topples over the side of the canoe. Bill reaches for the pole, but he's too late. It's gone.

Bill looks up from the water, to Chuck. Chuck frowns.

EXT. HOUSE

Susie and Gloria stand at the road with Shane in some sort of conversation.

Susie takes the dagger from her purse, and hands it to him. He examines it.

ROAD

Shane looks puzzled as he looks at the dagger.

SHANE

It's steel. Not gold. Not even silver... Three grand you say?

Susie nods.

GLORIA

Where did you get this, Shane?

He looks off in thought.

SHANE

Welp...

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Shane drives his truck slowly. He looks at different piles of trash on the street.

SHANE (V.O.)

It was last night. Trash night. I had been drivin' along lookin' for somethin' that I might could salvage, and I didn't find much of nothin'.

Shane's pick up slows by an alley. It stops.

SHANE (V.O.)

That's when I noticed an air conditioner almost hidden beneath a pile of garbage bags.

EXT. CITY - ALLEY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Shane lifts a garbage bag from a pile, and sets it aside.

SHANE (V.O.)  
Before I could get the air  
conditioner, I had to move a bunch  
of trash.

He lifts another bag, and jumps back.

SHANE  
Ow! Dammit!

He looks down.

The dagger lays on the ground.

SHANE (V.O.)  
It cut through the bag and landed  
on my dadburned foot! It hurt like  
a son of a gun.

EXT. HOUSE - ROAD - BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Susie and Gloria look at Shane.

SUSIE  
I wonder why he said he'd give me  
so much money for it then?

Shane shrugs.

SHANE  
I don't know, but I'd take it if I  
were you. Before he comes to his  
senses.

Gloria stares off in a daze.

GLORIA  
Something's not right here, but I  
just can't put my finger on it.

Susie smiles at Shane.

SUSIE  
Thanks a lot for all your help.

He nods. Climbs into his truck.

EXT. LAKE - BACK TO BILL AND CHUCK

Chuck sits with his arms folded in front of him, pouting.

Bill rows the canoe toward the shore.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Susie and Gloria sit on the sofa. Gloria looks off, thinking. Susie looks around, bored.

SUSIE  
It's still bothering you isn't it?

GLORIA  
Yeah it is. There's more to this.

Gloria faces Susie.

GLORIA  
Susie, why would the book store lady's husband offer you so much money for a steel dagger? One that he could get for a lot less money.

SUSIE  
I don't know.

GLORIA  
Well, I'd like to know.

OLIVIA (V.O.)  
(whisper)  
Susie.

Susie catches a glimpse of a dark shadow as it glides into the dining room.

SUSIE  
Olivia?

Susie looks to Gloria for her reaction. Gloria looks elsewhere, lost in thought.

INT./EXT. VAN - COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Bill sits in the passenger seat. He looks over to Chuck, behind the wheel.

BILL  
What sounds good? A pizza or a  
burger?

Chuck looks straight ahead as he drives.

CHUCK  
Nothin'. I'm not hungry.

Bill looks out his window.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Susie and Gloria sit opposite each other at the table. The Ouija board is on the table between them. Their hands are pressed on the ends of the planchet. It glides over the board.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

James and Mac sneak up the lawn.

James flags a half-circle, motioning for Mac to go around back.

Mac nods. He hunches over as he darts toward the back.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM - BACK TO THE GIRLS

Susie and Gloria watch the planchet land on the letter "R. It slides around the board, then stops again on the letter "E".

SUSIE  
Beware!

Gloria and Susie exchange a quick glance, then look back to the board. The planchet moves quickly. It stops many times between moving.

SUSIE  
Danger!

Gloria looks up at Susie, they're both scared.

SUSIE  
Where?

The planchet flies off of the board. It sails across the room, and lands on the floor.

Gloria and Susie look at each other.

Gloria rises from her seat. She goes to the planchet. It points to the back wall.

Susie watches Gloria as she focuses in the same direction that the planchet is pointing. Gloria turns toward her. The two exchange a look.

GLORIA

Stay here.

Susie nods.

Gloria turns away. She moves slowly, with caution.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - BACK TO JAMES

He kneels beside the porch, hiding. He looks around here and there.

No one or nothing else around.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN

Gloria's eyes search the room.

An empty beer bottle on the counter.

She grabs the bottle by its neck, holds it upside down as a weapon.

EXT. HOUSE - BACK YARD

Mac leans against the house. He reaches for the handle...

The storm door opens from inside.

Mac jumps back. He presses himself flat against the house, hiding.

Gloria stands in the doorway with the beer bottle in her raised hand, ready to strike. She scans the yard.

INT. HOUSE - BACK DOORWAY

Gloria stands there looking out.

A nice yard outside, no movement anywhere.

She lowers the bottle, and turns away.

EXT. HOUSE - BACK YARD - BACK TO MAC

He reaches for the handle, and inches the door open.

INT. HOUSE - BACK DOORWAY - BACK TO GLORIA

She steps away from the door. A hand grabs her by her hair.

She reaches for her hair.

The bottle drops to the floor. She is dragged outside.

EXT. HOUSE - BACK YARD

Mac slams Gloria against the house, and pins her there.

MAC  
Where's the knife!

Gloria shakes off the shock. She blinks, still dazed.

GLORIA  
Let go of me!

MAC  
Gimme' the knife you Jesus freak.

His face reddens with anger.

EXT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Mac peeks into the store window. The Jesus lady sticks her head in front of him. He jumps, startled.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Mac stands in front of an alley, staring ahead at Gloria's car. He makes a foul face, and sticks up his middle finger.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. HOUSE - BACK TO GLORIA AND MAC

He stares at her with that same foul look.

GLORIA  
I don't know what you're talking  
about!

Mac slaps her.

MAC  
Liar! I watched that pregnant  
little witch bring it into the  
house!

Her eyes show she's frightened. She looks around the yard,  
looking for something, anything.

MAC  
You want to try another lie?

She struggles harder.

GLORIA  
Fuck you!

Mac appears impressed.

MAC  
Maybe later. After I snap your  
bloody neck!

He grabs her around her throat.

A FIGURE dressed in a black cloak appears in the background.  
Its face a mystery, hidden within a dark shadow. In an  
instant it disappears, then reappears somewhat closer. Its  
face still hidden within darkness.

OLIVIA  
Mac!

The figure disappears. Mac turns, looks around, finds  
nothing. He turns back to Gloria.

MAC  
So you two like to play games.

His hands squeeze tighter around her neck.

MAC  
We can do that.

Gloria's eyes bulge, and her face reddens. She desperately  
claws at his hands, unable to break free.

The dark figure reappears, closer again.

OLIVIA  
 (musically)  
 Mac...

He turns his head quickly, and finds the figure. It disappears right before his eyes, then reappears right next to him. The face is revealed... Olivia.

His hands drop from Gloria's neck. He staggers back in shock.

Olivia holds his attention as Gloria runs into the house, and closes the door behind her.

Olivia stares calmly into his face.

OLIVIA  
 Run.

Mac stands there staring, frozen in shock. Olivia lets go of a sudden burst of anger.

OLIVIA  
 I said run!

Mac turns, bolts for the door. He turns the knob. Shakes it. The door is already locked.

Olivia LAUGHS diabolically.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN

Gloria runs through the room.

GLORIA  
 Susie!

DINING ROOM

A chair lays tipped over on the floor. No Susie.

Gloria runs through the room. She looks around, everywhere.

GLORIA  
 Susie!

She runs on, in a panic.

INT./EXT. VAN - SUSIE'S ROAD

Chuck drives on.

He notices the sedan parked up ahead.

CHUCK

I think we got trouble. That's the  
guy I told you about.

Bill straightens up in his seat.

Bill and Susie's house is a few houses up ahead. Mac runs  
down their front lawn.

BILL

Faster Chuck!

Both men lean forward as the van's MOTOR roars with  
acceleration.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD

Mac runs for his life. He turns, and looks behind him.

He's alone.

He continues to run for the road.

INT. VAN

The gap between them and the house narrows as they drive  
closer. Mac runs along the edge of the street. He looks  
behind him, turns back around quickly, and continues to run.

EXT. STREET - BACK TO MAC

He continues to run. The van closes in on him.

Brakes SCREECH as the van comes to an abrupt stop.

The driver's side door opens. Mac slams into it, and falls  
down.

Chuck jumps out of the van. He jumps on top of Mac, and  
snatches up a wad of his shirt in his tightly-closed fist.

CHUCK

What chu' runnin' from boy?!

Mac bleeds from his mouth. He struggles to get up beneath  
Chuck's weight.

Bill rushes up to them.

BILL  
Where's my wife?

Mac spits out a mouth-full of blood.

MAC  
She's dead, man.

Gloria rushes to them. Her eyes wide with fright. She eyes Chuck and Mac.

GLORIA  
Get him, Chuck!

Susie SCREAMS somewhere in the distance.

Gloria looks off, toward the cornfield.

GLORIA  
Susie!

Bill tosses his cell phone to Gloria.

BILL  
Get help!

Gloria nods. She will. She punches numbers into the phone.

Chuck blasts Mac in the face a few times. Mac passes out.

Bill runs toward the cornfield. Chuck runs after him.

CHUCK  
I got your back bro'.

Gloria moves toward Mac with the phone to her ear. She kicks him in the ribs.

EXT. CORNFIELD

Quick, rhythmic HEARTBEATS pace Susie's way through the field.

She glances behind her for a second.

James is not too far behind. He loses his footing, and falls forward to the ground.

Susie turns back around.

A pair of GLOVED HANDS catch her. She SCREAMS, and faints.

JAMES

gets to his feet. Continues to run.

Susie is just up ahead.

THE GLOVED HANDS

gently toss her aside. She falls to the ground.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - SUSIE'S DREAM

Susie stands in the middle of a dense fog, opposite Olivia dressed in a black cloak.

SUSIE  
Olivia?

OLIVIA  
Yes. It's me.

Susie looks around.

SUSIE  
What are we doing here?

OLIVIA  
Discussing your future, Dear.

SUSIE  
My future?

OLIVIA  
You have the power to help people, Susannah. You have known it all along, yet somehow you have lost your way and given up completely.

SUSIE  
I can't fix everything.

OLIVIA  
Ah... this is true, but you can help many. Trust in yourself the same as others will trust in you...

Olivia fades into the fog.

Susie turns, looks in every direction.

SUSIE  
Olivia? Olivia, I'm frightened.

OLIVIA (V.O.)  
It's your destiny, Susannah.  
Provide the guidance. Listen with  
your ears as well as your heart...

Susie turns, looks around in every direction.

END DREAM

EXT. CORN FIELD - BACK TO JAMES AND SUSIE

James runs. He comes to an abrupt stop. His face freezes in shock. He looks down.

The prongs of a pitchfork stuck into his belly.

The gloved hands drop the pitchfork handle. It falls to the ground.

The cornstalks move.

A SCARECROW slowly rises up from the field until his gloved hands can be seen above the stalks.

James lays on the ground. Dead.

Susie lays on the ground in a heap. Her eyes are closed. She opens them.

She folds into in a fetal position, holding onto her swollen belly, and winces in pain.

Bill and Chuck find her. Bill bends toward her.

BILL  
Susie.

SUSIE  
The baby.

Chuck takes a look at James... then looks up to...

The scarecrow towering above the corn.

Bill scoops her up into his arms.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Susie sits on the sofa cradling a baby in her arms.

Bill walks up to her, dressed in his paint-speckled painters whites, holding something behind his back. He bends over, and kisses Susie on top of her head.

BILL  
Happy birthday, Sweetie.

Susie smiles with surprise. She moves around trying to see what he has behind him.

SUSIE  
What did you do?

He pulls a typewriter out from behind his back for her to see.

SUSIE  
What's that?

BILL  
A little birdie told me it might be a good gift since you used to write a lot back in high school.

Susie stares at the typewriter.

SUSIE  
Thank you.

Bill sinks.

BILL  
You don't like it?

Susie rises to her feet.

SUSIE  
I didn't say that.

Bill pulls the typewriter toward him.

BILL  
I can take it back.

Susie frowns.

SUSIE  
Oh no you won't.

Bill smiles, a bit relieved.

BILL  
So then you do like it?

Susie kisses him on his cheek.

SUSIE  
Of course I like it.

BILL  
Alright then. Uh... I'm going to be  
a little late tonight.

Susie sinks.

SUSIE  
Bill...

BILL  
Well it's a nice day out, and we  
have to finish up that job. We'll  
still go out.

Chuck steps toward them. He tickles the baby's cheek.

CHUCK  
And I'm going to baby sit. Isn't  
that right little He-lane-e-lane.

Susie smiles at Chuck.

SUSIE  
I'm holding you to that.

The guys turn, and walk toward the door.

Susie looks at the baby.

SUSIE  
You sleep too much little lady.

She walks toward the hall.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A much more mature looking Susie strolls to the mail box.

SUPER: "THREE YEARS LATER".

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Things sure quieted down around  
here after Chuck quit drinking, and  
my best friend moved away.

Susie takes a stack of envelopes from inside the box. She  
looks through them. One envelope catches her eye.

INSERT NAME ON RETURN ADDRESS: "Gloria Sparks."

SUSIE (V.O.)  
We still keep in touch though.

Susie rips the envelope open in a hurry.

A huge smile spreads across her face.

A striking photo of Gloria in business attire is enclosed with the letter.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Like Chuck said, the girl's got class.

Susie begins to read the letter.

INT. HOUSE - BABY'S BEDROOM

A cute room with a crib. Plenty of toys.

Susie bounces a baby on her hip as she walks around the room, and reads a book.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
I started doing a lot of reading.

She gently lays the baby into a crib, and gives her a kiss.

She turns away, and continues to read.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Susie sits on the floor in the lotus position, with her eyes closed.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
And a lot of meditating.

Bill walks toward her. He stops and kisses her on top of her head. She smiles.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Susie sits at the table.

She rubs her hands together in front of her, rapidly.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Then I realized all I needed to do  
was listen.

She stops rubbing her hands.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Like Olivia said, sometimes they  
have an awful lot to say.

She turns her head to the side, and listens.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Susie sits at the table.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
So I decided to use this gift to  
help people.

Susie says something to a WOMAN who sits opposite her. The woman leans in and nods, hangs on Susie's every word.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Susie walks through knee-high grass, searching the ground for something.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Sometimes our signals get crossed  
so I'm never a hundred percent  
accurate.

Susie freezes. She points down.

SUSIE  
Right here!

A woman's dirty, and curled fingertips, barely visible within the growth of weeds.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
But sometimes I'm accurate enough  
to help out.

Two POLICE MEN rush over to her. One man pats her on the shoulder. Good job.

Susie turns away, sickened by the sight. She walks away with her head hung low.

EXT. METAPHYSICAL BOOKSTORE

A "For Sale" sign hangs in the window.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Reminds me of that old saying. You  
know the one. What goes around,  
comes around.

Susie walks to the window and looks inside.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
I walked in there looking for a way  
to save Luca's soul, and he ended  
up being the one who saved my life.

Susie backs away from the window.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
It's a pity Olivia was taken the  
way she was though. She didn't  
deserve that. No one does.

Susie runs her fingertips across the building.

EXT. CORNFIELD

The tops of the stalks sway in a gentle breeze.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Mac and James? Well, Mac is serving  
a life sentence without the  
possibility of parole, and James is  
being treated on the other side for  
his chemical imbalance he had here  
on Earth.

A beautiful sky.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
And just as I figured, Olivia has  
forgiven both of them.

EXT. CEMETERY

Susie rises from a grave with an INFANT in her arms. The baby  
is wrapped in a blanket.

Susie looks down to the bouquet of flowers there.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
As for me and Bill...

Susie steps over to Bill. He holds the hand of three year old HELENA. She's dressed in a cute, frilly dress.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Olivia must have gotten her wires  
crossed sometimes, too.

Bill wraps his free arm around Susie's shoulder.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
We had another child.

Susie straightens the baby's blanket.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
A precious, little girl. I named  
her Olivia.

They begin to walk away.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Sylvia thinks it's a beautiful  
name...

Susie looks up to the heavens.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
And I agree.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Susie sits at the table with the typewriter directly in front of her.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
I started writing again.

She types a few words, then stops.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Began work on a new book recently.  
It's a collaboration.

She turns her head slightly, and listens.

SUSIE  
Right.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Luca is supplying all the facts.  
It's about his life. The truth of  
what really happened the night he  
was killed by vigilantes.

Susie turns back to the typewriter, and begins to type again.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
And now I know who's voice it was  
that told Bill to get the  
typewriter. Ha!

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

Susie sits on the porch step with her head resting on her fists, and her elbows propped up on her knees. She looks to the yard with an ear-to-ear grin on her face.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Our lives have certainly changed a  
lot in the past few years.

Bill stands in the yard. He tosses a bouncy ball.

Helena catches it, but it quickly drops from her hands to the ground.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
Some old friends are gone...

Helena GIGGLES with glee as she chases the ball around her ankles.

Chuck sits on the step next to Susie, holding baby Olivia in his arms.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
One promises that he'll never  
leave.

Susie turns to Chuck. She watches him as he smiles at the baby, and tickles her chin.

SUSIE (V.O.)  
I think it's safe to say that I  
feel truly blessed.

Susie fixes her gaze back on Helena and Bill.

Helena picks the ball up and tosses it toward Bill. It falls short.

HELENA  
I love you, Daddy.

Bill scoops up the ball.

BILL  
I love you, too, sweetheart.

He turns to Susie, and winks. She blows him a kiss, and continues to watch them play catch.

FADE OUT.

THE END.