RESURGENCE

by

Abel Orfao

abelorfa@hotmail.com
FADE IN:

EXT. PENITENTIARY - FRONT GATE - NIGHT

A thunderstorm rages over the state facility. Two large groups of PROTESTORS, one for the death penalty and the other against, chant slogans and wave placards.

Several STATE POLICEMEN are on hand to keep the peace. Numerous MEDIA MEMBERS in the area cover the story. A female TELEVISION REPORTER delivers a live news report.

TELEVISION REPORTER
... has refused to file any appeals, and a third-party attempt at a stay has been rejected by the State Supreme Court. Barring a miracle, this means Quentin Grant, the Lake Resurgence Killer, will be put to death at one minute past midnight.

State police cruisers escort a black sedan up to the facility. The convoy passes through the front gate and enters the penitentiary grounds.

EXT. PENITENTIARY - MAIN ENTRANCE - NIGHT

NAYLOR (52), a sturdy man with a thick moustache, stands under an umbrella by the front doors of the building. The black sedan and state police cruisers arrive on the scene.

DALTON (54), a stout and bespectacled man with a receding hairline, exits the sedan with umbrella in hand. The two men step forward and shake hands.

DALTON
Deputy Secretary Dalton, Department of Corrections.

NAYLOR
Superintendent Naylor. Nice to finally meet you.

DALTON
What a night for an execution.

NAYLOR
Let's get you out of this rain.

Naylor leads Dalton toward the front doors of the building.
You know, this is the sixth time I've done this. You'd think it'd get easier each time, but...

Well, this is the eighth time for me. I hate to disappoint you, but it never gets easy.

INT. PENITENTIARY - CELLBLOCK - NIGHT

The facility's CHAPLAIN (67), a small and frail man, stands outside one of the cells. Six PRISON GUARDS stand nearby as he speaks to an unseen prisoner.

Quentin, this is your last opportunity to accept the Lord as your savior. Please, I beg of you, make peace with your maker before it's too late.

The prisoner, his face obscured, lies on a bed inside the cell and casually leafs through Jean-Paul Sartre's "Being and Nothingness."

God? You want me to make peace with God? The same God who stood idly by while those I trusted conspired against me? While they tried to drive me insane? While they railroaded me and now plan on executing me?

How long will you blame others for your actions? Don't you realize what the next life has in store for you if you do not repent?

My next life? Oh, yes. Yes, I most certainly do. In fact, I'm looking forward to it.

This is not the time for humor. Quentin, I am talking about saving your eternal soul.
QUENTIN (O.S.)
There's a lot about me that will live forever, Father, but my soul has long since been extinguished.

The gate at the end of the corridor slides open. Naylor and Dalton approach the cell as the resigned chaplain performs the Sign of the Cross in the prisoner's direction.

CHAPLAIN
May God have mercy on you.

The chaplain heads down the corridor while Naylor and Dalton peer at the prisoner.

NAYLOR
Quentin, it's time.

QUENTIN GRANT (36), the tall and muscular prisoner, lowers the book and reveals his angular face and intense eyes.

QUENTIN
Let's make history, gentlemen.

Quentin rises to his feet and approaches the front of the cell. He looks on with amusement as the prison guards shackle his wrists and ankles.

The cell door slides open and Quentin steps into the corridor. Naylor and Dalton follow the prison guards as they lead the condemned man to his fate.

Quentin playfully whistles Elmer Bernstein's main title theme from "The Great Escape." Naylor and Dalton share an uneasy look as they trail behind him.

INT. PENITENTIARY - EXECUTION CHAMBER - NIGHT

The prison guards escort Quentin into the room and lead him toward an electric chair. Naylor and Dalton appear as the prisoner is strapped into the seat.

Quentin looks through the large window straight ahead of him into a viewing gallery next door. Several WITNESSES shrouded by darkness look on from behind the glass.

DALTON
It's customary for the condemned to be allowed to speak.

NAYLOR
Do you have any last words, Quentin?
QUENTIN
Yes. Yes, I do.

He stares through the window at the obscured witnesses.

QUENTIN
I can see you. You hide in the dark like cowards, but I can still see you. You're here 'cause you think this will bring the story to a close, right? Wrong. This is the start of a new chapter. This is the beginning of something... Something wonderful. I've spent eight years preparing for this special moment, this moment of transcendence, and I promise I will have my revenge. I'm coming back to Lake Resurgence. I'm going to turn those crystal-blue waters red with your blood, and there's nothing you can do to stop me.

DALTON
Alright, that's enough.

QUENTIN
I am invulnerable! I am indomitable! I am invincible!

NAYLOR
Gag him.

The prison guards place a gag in Quentin's mouth as Naylor and Dalton head for a control room next door.

INT. PENITENTIARY - CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Naylor and Dalton join the male JUDICIAL EXECUTIONER inside the room. The group peers through a large window and looks on as the prison guards exit the execution chamber.

The executioner places his hand on the electric chair's power switch. Naylor turns toward Dalton as the latter places a hand on top of a red telephone.

NAYLOR
You don't think the governor's going to issue a stay, do you?

DALTON
God, I certainly hope not.
INT. PENITENTIARY - EXECUTION CHAMBER - NIGHT

Quentin clenches his fists and pulls at his restraints. He smiles through his gag and chuckles to himself.

INT. PENITENTIARY - CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Naylor, Dalton, and the executioner stare at an analogue clock. The timepiece reaches one minute past midnight.

Naylor and Dalton nod to the executioner. He nods in response and pulls down on the power switch...

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE - REFRIGERATION ROOM - NIGHT

A thunderbolt shoots down from the sky. The thunder and lightning are part of a 1950's black-and-white horror film which plays on a television.

GINA (38), a cherubic deputy coroner, munches on a doughnut and watches the film with bemusement. HECTOR (30), a slender coroner's assistant, pushes a gurney into the room.

She turns around as he wheels it toward a bank of nearby refrigeration units. A corpse covered with a sheet rests on top of the gurney.

    GINA
    Hey, Hector. So, this is the stiff I've been waiting for.

    HECTOR
    Here's your boy, Gina. You need to sign these.

He hands over a set of forms. She briefly examines them.

    GINA
    The chair? Thought they were phasing that out.

    HECTOR
    Guess a needle in the arm was too good for this guy. Hey, didn't the boss warn you not to eat in here?

She dismissively gestures toward the refrigeration units.

    GINA
    Who's going to rat me out? Them?

She signs the forms and hands them over.
HECTOR
Thanks. Need help putting him away?

GINA
Nah, I'll get one of the interns to do it. That's what they're here for.

HECTOR
Gina, you're the greatest.

GINA
I know. Night, Hector.

He waves goodbye and steps out of the room. She leans on the gurney and eyes the covered corpse.

GINA
Hmm... Wonder if his head caught fire like the last guy.

She prepares to lift the sheet when a whistle cuts through the air. She looks toward a table on the other side of the room where an electric kettle shoots out steam.

She strolls across the room and pours herself a mug of instant coffee. She stands in front of the television as the film's MAD SCIENTIST tries to reanimate a corpse.

MAD SCIENTIST (V.O.)
Live! I demand it! Live!

Gina idly dips her doughnut in the coffee and nibbles on the pastry with her back to the gurney. The corpse, still obscured by the sheet, quietly sits up.

Gina watches the television as a lightning bolt strikes the mad scientist's reanimation apparatus. She smirks to herself and turns toward the gurney.

GINA
Bet you wish electricity had the same effect on you, huh, buddy?

She stops in her tracks with a look of horror on her face. She drops her doughnut and coffee mug onto the floor. Two legs covered with electrical burns step off the gurney.

Gina trembles with fear as she points at the man and opens her mouth to scream. She abruptly faints and collapses to the floor with a thud.

The man turns toward the television as the REANIMATED CORPSE on the screen starts to stir. The mad scientist shouts with ecstasy as his experiment succeeds.
MAD SCIENTIST (V.O.)
It's alive! It's alive!

The man eyes the television and cackles with delight.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. ANDERSON HOME - FRONT - DAY

The sun shines over a large and picturesque lake surrounded by a lush forest. A spacious two-story home surrounded by trees and other greenery comes into view.

There is one house to the left of the property and two to the right. A black SUV backs up and parks on the driveway next to a wooden electrical pole.

JOAN ANDERSON (26), a tall and slender blond, steps out from behind the wheel. PAUL ANDERSON (28), a sturdy and handsome blond, joins her at the back of the SUV.

JOAN
Boy, I'm glad that vacation's over.

PAUL
Joan, you're the first person who hated spending a week in Hawaii.

JOAN
Paul, it rained non-stop. Non-stop.

PAUL
Well, if that's how you're going to judge the vacation...

Paul opens the rear door of the SUV and disappears inside. Joan turns to the right as a whistle cuts through the air.

KENNETH HAMILTON (58), a spry man with short white hair, uses garden shears to trim an overgrown bush next door.

MARGO HAMILTON (56), a petite woman with white streaks in her dark hair, works over a flower bed with a hand spade.

KENNETH
Leave the husband in Hawaii?

Joan stands at attention and salutes in response.

JOAN
Yes, sir! I've decided to trade up!
Paul steps out of the SUV with a luggage bag in hand.

**PAUL**
Damn, I knew I should've made you sign a prenup.

Paul sets the luggage down and joins Joan as she walks toward the property line and approaches Kenneth and Margo.

**KENNETH**
How was the vacation?

**JOAN**
Terrible. Rained all week.

**PAUL**
Still have your badge, Deputy Hamilton? Maybe you can arrest the weatherman.

**MARGO**
Don't encourage him, you two. I don't want Kenneth even thinking about coming out of retirement.

**KENNETH**
Stop exaggerating, Margo. I only listen to the police scanner once or twice a day now.

**PAUL**
Hey, where are the boys?

Margo whistles loudly.

**MARGO**
Dwight! Omar! Come here, boys!

**DWIGHT** and **OMAR**, a pair of German Shepherds, appear and sprint toward the others. The group stroke and pet the playful animals for a moment.

**KENNETH**
Well, you've probably heard the news.

**JOAN**
The execution? Yeah, we heard about it on the radio just after we landed.

**MARGO**
You'd think that'd be the end of it, but now they've lost his corpse...
JOAN
Wait, what?

MARGO
You didn't hear? The coroner's office misplaced the body.

PAUL
How do you lose a body?

KENNETH
Well, if you listen to the crazy lady on duty at the morgue, he just got up and walked away.

JOAN
Walked away? What do you mean?

MARGO
Oh, he's just teasing. The deputy coroner was watching a horror movie on the TV when she slipped and fell on some coffee. The concussion must have rattled her brain quite a bit.

PAUL
Do they have any clue what happened?

KENNETH
My guess? Clerical error. Don't worry, he'll turn up eventually.

A white SUV drives along the nearby road.

INT. WHITE SUV - DAY

ZACHARY (22), an athletic man with a deep tan, sits behind the wheel. OPAL (22), a fit woman with dark skin, rides in the passenger's seat.

IAN (20), a tall man with a large frame, lounges in the back seat. VANNA (21), a slender woman with fair skin, sits beside him.

VANNA
You weren't lying, Opal. This place is gorgeous.

OPAL
Yeah, this is the best hiking spot nobody knows about.
IAN
Oh, they know about it. That's why no one comes here.

VANNA
What's that supposed to mean, Ian?

IAN
Don't you know where we are? This is the home of --

ZACHARY
Don't start. We're here to have fun, not talk about --

VANNA
Quentin Grant! Oh, my God! Zachary, this is where he --

ZACHARY
Yes, Vanna. Now, can we please stop talking about --

OPAL
The Lake Resurgence Killer.

IAN
I prefer the Resurgence Lake Ripper nickname, personally.

Zachary rubs his head in frustration.

ZACHARY
He's dead no matter what name you call him, so we don't have to talk about how --

OPAL
He was a highly respected teacher at the local high school 'til he had a nervous breakdown. He lashed out and claimed there was some sort of conspiracy against him.

IAN
Yeah, they placed him on leave and tried to have him committed to a mental hospital against his will. Then, one night he snapped and --

Zachary slams his fists down upon the steering wheel.
This is a vacation! I don't want to hear another word about --

What was wrong with him? Did he have a brain tumor or something?

His lawyer claimed he suffered from some sort of mental illness but the jury didn't buy it.

You know what the scary part is? When he was sentenced to the chair, he promised the court he'd get his revenge... after his execution.

Yeah, and now the body's gone missing! Oh, scary! Knock it off.

Hey, I was just curious.

Zachary taps his chest as he responds.

Yeah, well, keep it up and you'll have to deal with the new Lake Resurgence Killer.

Resurgence Lake Ripper.

Don't press your luck.

A family sedan pulls into the driveway of the two-story home to the left of the Anderson property.

BEN WESTPHAL (12), slim with a shaggy brown mop of hair, steps out of the back of the vehicle.

SARAH WESTPHAL (12), slender with straight brown hair, exits through the sedan's other rear door.

You shut up!
SARAH
You shut up!

BEN
No, you shut up!

SARAH
No, you shut up!

ROBERT WESTPHAL (42), a bespectacled man in a sweater vest, steps out from behind the wheel.

CAROL WESTPHAL (40), a soccer mom with curly brown locks, appears through the passenger-side door.

CAROL
Ben! Sarah! My goodness! Do you two ever stop arguing?

BEN
I'm not arguing, Mom. I'm engaging in civil public discourse.

SARAH
You don't even know what that means! Your mind's about as sharp as an apple, you know that?

ROBERT
Settle down, you two. If I want to hear yelling all weekend, I'll talk to your mother.

Robert winces as Carol playfully punches his arm. Ben and Sarah grab their packsacks from the back seat.

Robert and Carol remove several grocery bags from the trunk. Ben turns to Sarah and nods toward the next property.

BEN
Hey, look, the Andersons are back.

SARAH
Paul's back?

Robert and Carol carry their groceries inside the house. Ben and Sarah rush over to the fence which borders the property. Joan and Paul spot the pair and cheerfully approach them.

BEN
Welcome back, guys!

SARAH
Hi, Paul!
JOAN
Hey, what about me?

SARAH
Oh, you too.

Joan and Paul share a bemused smile. Ben covers his mouth and tries not to laugh. Sarah bites her lip nervously.

BEN
How was the vacation?

PAUL
Don't get her started. So, what are you two doing this weekend?

BEN
Well, I'm gonna start another draft of my screenplay.

SARAH
Oh, God, not this stupid thing again!

BEN
It's not stupid! Conquest of the Living Dead's gonna be the greatest film ever made! It's got drama, suspense, action, romance --

JOAN
And brain-munching zombies.

BEN
Well, yeah, but there's so much more! It's got a beautiful love story, genuine thrills, lots of pathos --

SARAH
Pathos? You don't even know what that is, do you?

BEN
No, but when I find out I'm gonna add some.

SARAH
You're so stupid, Ben, your only brain cell died of loneliness.

BEN
I dunno what makes you so dumb, Sarah, but it's really working.

Robert and Carol exit their house and approach the fence.
CAROL
Okay, you two, time to go inside and put your school stuff away.

BEN
Dad, can I park the car in the garage?

ROBERT
No, not today.

BEN
This isn't 'cause I almost dented the front, is it?

ROBERT
No, of course not. Well, maybe.

Ben and Sarah wave goodbye and head for home.

BEN
See you later, guys!

SARAH
Bye, Paul! Oh, you too.

Ben giggles in response. Sarah glares back at him.

SARAH
What's so funny?

BEN
Oh, Paul! You're so dreamy! I wanna have your babies!

Ben whimpers as Sarah punches him in the shoulder. The pair disappears inside the house as Robert and Carol speak with Joan and Paul.

JOAN
The twins are as lively as ever, huh?

CAROL
Robert and I have the headaches to prove it.

ROBERT
So, I guess you've heard the news.

PAUL
Yeah. You were living here the night it happened, right?
ROBERT
Oh, yes. It was the longest night of our lives. Ben and Sarah were too young to remember, thankfully, but Carol and I won't ever forget it.

JOAN
Well, hopefully things will quiet down around here from now on.

A rust-covered van roars past the house as heavy metal music blares out of the vehicle's open windows.

PAUL
So much for that theory.

EXT. VACATION HOME - FRONT - DAY

The rusted van screeches to a halt in the driveway of the two-story home next to the Hamilton property.

FRANK (21), an athletic young man with tattoos on his arms, hops out from behind the wheel with a bag in hand.

TARA (21), her short hair dyed a deep purple, exits the front of the vehicle with a bag as well.

FRANK
Finally! If I had to spend another minute behind those tools on the highway, I would've snapped.

TARA
Yeah, and after all that you bring us out in the sticks. Great job, Frank.

FRANK
Jesus Christ, Tara, you gonna start with this shit already? The place was cheap to rent and the only one on a lake.

TARA
Oh, yeah, 'cause I've always wanted to hang out in the middle of nowhere. Where's the retarded kid with the banjo?

NANCY (19), a perky young woman with a toothy grin, steps out of the van's sliding door with a duffel bag in hand.

EDDIE (19), a slender young man with brown hair, follows her out of the vehicle with a bag of his own.
NANCY
Ohmigod, there's like a kid with a banjo? Where's the little guy, Eddie? I totally wanna picture with him.

Eddie rubs his forehead in frustration.

EDDIE
There's no kid with a banjo, Nancy. Tara was telling a joke.

Nancy and Eddie approach Frank and Tara.

EDDIE
Nice job, Frank. Knew you wouldn't let us down. That's what I love about you, man.

TARA
Why don't you get on your knees and thank him properly?

Eddie glares at Tara while Nancy surveys the scene.

NANCY
Like, where's the lake? Is it behind the house or something?

TARA
Yup. They used to keep it out front but people kept stealing the water.

NANCY
Ohmigod! That's like totally not -- Hey, wait a minute! How'd they move all that water 'n' stuff?

TARA
Tanker truck.

NANCY
Oh, that makes sense.

She sprints up to the front door and tries to open it only to find it locked.

NANCY
Ohmigod! We're like totally locked out! How we supposed to get inside 'n' stuff?

Frank wearily reaches into his pocket, shows her the keys, and tosses them to her. Nancy smiles sheepishly, unlocks the front door, and disappears inside.
FRANK
No offense, man, but I dunno how you put up with her.

EDDIE
She may be pretty dense, but the sex is fantastic. We do it all the time.

TARA
Yeah, sure you do... when you think of other dudes.

EDDIE
Would you knock it off?! Goddamn it.

He angrily marches inside the house and slams the door.

FRANK
He's not gay, you know.

TARA
He's so gay, he makes Perez Hilton look like a lumberjack. Hey, where'd Larry and Dana go?

Frank and Tara look back at the van as smoke drifts out of the back windows. They rush toward the vehicle and yank the side door open.

LARRY (20), his blond hair tied into dreadlocks, puffs away on a marijuana cigarette. DANA (20), her short black hair spiked straight up, takes the joint from him.

LARRY
¿Qué pasa, amigos?

DANA
Dude, their auras are really red.

FRANK
Jesus Christ! I told you not to bring that shit! You know what the cops in these small towns do to people like you? Get the fuck out of my van!

Larry and Dana clumsily stumble out of the vehicle.

TARA
Think you can unload your bikes before you fall asleep?

Larry and Dana make their way to the back of the van. Frank and Tara march toward the house.
TARA
Should we leave 'em alone out here?

FRANK
Yes. If we're lucky, they'll get hit by a semi.

Frank and Tara disappear inside the house. Larry and Dana clumsily unload their bikes from the back of the van and pass the joint back and forth.

DANA
Where you wanna go first, man?

LARRY
You know where we are, babe? There's a ton of places in town where that teach butchered a bunch of people.

DANA
Fuck, man, I'm not ridin' all the way to the city.

LARRY
Well, there's that house across the lake where he killed the principal and his family.

DANA
How do you know all this shit?

LARRY
Wikipedia.

DANA
Dude, that thing's awesome. It's like the encyclopedia of... encyclopedias.

LARRY
Yeah, babe, let's ride over there and check it out.

DANA
You wanna go durin' the day? Chicken!

She flaps her arms and squawks like a chicken.

LARRY
You go durin' the day so you can see all the blood stains, babe.

DANA
Dude, they cleaned up that stuff when they took the bodies away.
LARRY
There's only one way to find out.

He hops on his bicycle, starts to ride, and topples to the ground. She laughs as he moans in pain. She hops on her bike, begins to pedal, and falls over as well.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL ENTRANCE - DAY

The white SUV is parked by the entrance to a series of hiking trails cut into the woods. Vanna retrieves her packsack from the rear of the vehicle.

Ian climbs inside the back of the SUV and disappears from view. Vanna joins Zachary and Opal by the front of the vehicle as they inspect their packsacks.

ZACHARY
Okay, that's everything on the checklist.

VANNA
You two have a checklist? Why? It's just a quick hike --

OPAL
Vanna, you should always be fully prepared for any contingencies.

ZACHARY
At lest you have water and a cell phone, right?

VANNA
I don't own a cell phone.

ZACHARY
What?! It's the Twenty-first Century!

VANNA
So? Why do I need a cell phone?

OPAL
It can be the difference between life and death. What happens if you're injured and need help? How are you going to contact anyone?

VANNA
Well, the bear spray I bought came with an air horn. Good enough?
OPAL
Well, it'll have to do. See you in a couple of hours.

Zachary and Opal start down the second hiking trail. Vanna calls out to the fourth member of the party.

VANNA
Come on, Ian, let's go.

She waits for a response but does not receive one.

VANNA
I hope he didn't leave without me.

She marches toward the back of the SUV and scans the area. The rear door of the vehicle is now closed.

VANNA
Ian? Ian, where are you?

A masked man dressed in black bursts out of the back of the SUV. Vanna recoils in shock as he raises a large hunting knife and charges at her.

She delivers a solid kick square in the middle of her attacker's chest. The man falls to the ground in anguish, lifts up his ski mask, and reveals himself to be...

IAN
Ow! What the hell's wrong with you?

VANNA
What's wrong with me?! What's wrong with you?!

IAN
Can't you take a joke?

VANNA
That wasn't funny, jackass! Why do you have a hunting knife, anyway?

IAN
Don't you know I can kill a deer using just this knife?

VANNA
Don't you know I can kill you using just my bare hands?

She stalks off toward the first trail entrance.
IAN
Hey, where you going?

VANNA
Hiking! Alone!

IAN
Wait! Zachary and Opal said we should stick together!

VANNA
Maybe you should have thought of that first, asshole!

She disappears down the first trail. He casually leans against the SUV.

IAN
Hmm, must be that time of the month. Oh well, guess it's just me against the deer. That's right, Bambi, Rambo's coming for you!

He pulls the ski mask back down over his head, grips the knife with his teeth, and enters the first trail.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Paul stands next to the water dressed in shorts with a Frisbee in hand. Joan arrives clad in a one-piece swimsuit.

PAUL
What, no string bikini? No thong?

JOAN
The only thongs I wear go on my feet. What's with the Frisbee?

PAUL
Were you planning on only treading water for an hour or two?

JOAN
Frisbees are for dogs.

He tosses the flying disc into the picturesque lake.

PAUL
Fetch.

She laughs insincerely. He grins mischievously. She taps him in the groin with her fist. He yelps and bends over in pain while she gleefully sprints into the lake.
PAUL

Bad touch!

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The cozy room overlooks the lake behind the house. A love seat, an old rocker, and a worn-out easy chair are arranged around a television and coffee table.

A flight of stairs leads to the second story. A closet is positioned beside the back door. A large trophy rests on a bookshelf placed against the wall.

An open archway connects the room to a kitchen. Robert sits in the easy chair and leafs through a magazine. Ben jogs down the stairs and approaches his father.

BEN
Dad, can I go fishing while the light's still out?

ROBERT
Have you finished your homework?

BEN
Yes.

ROBERT
Ben...

BEN
No, but I don't have much to do. I can do it later tonight, okay?

Robert ponders the question as Carol enters via the archway.

ROBERT
Carol, should I let Ben go fishing?

CAROL
Robert, the children have had a long week at school. Let them have a little fun.

BEN
Yeah, what Mom said!

ROBERT
Okay, you can go but be careful.

BEN
I will.
CAROL  
And take your sister.

BEN  
Mom! I want to go fishing to get away from her!

CAROL  
Well, it's your choice. Take your sister out on the lake with you or stay inside and do your homework.

Ben grumbles to himself as he retrieves fishing gear and a life jacket from the closet.

ROBERT  
Yes, we are one happy family.

Robert returns to his magazine as Carol jogs up the stairs.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - DAY

Sarah crouches beside an open window and clumsily tries to smoke a marijuana cigarette. She takes a tiny breath in and immediately coughs and wheezes.

CAROL (O.S.)  
Sarah?

She gasps in surprise and frantically waves her hands around in an effort to get rid of the smoke.

SARAH  
Yeah, Mom?

CAROL (O.S.)  
Ben's taking the boat out on the lake. Are you going with him?

SARAH  
Oh, okay. I'll be down in a minute.

She places the joint inside an old shoebox alongside a few others and a small bag of marijuana. She grabs an air freshener and liberally sprays the room.

CAROL (O.S.)  
Sarah, are you coming?

SARAH  
I'll be right down!

She cracks open the door, peeks outside, and scurries out of the room with the shoebox in hand.
INT. WESTPHAL HOME - SARAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

The bed sheets and curtains feature a pink floral design. Teddy bears rest on every piece of furniture. The walls are plastered with posters of young actors and pop stars.

Sarah quickly slips inside the room and closes the door. She scans the area nervously, slides the shoebox underneath her bed, and scurries away from the scene.

EXT. FIRST HIKING TRAIL - DAY

Vanna emerges from the woods and arrives on a small clearing which overlooks the lake. She wipes the sweat from her brow and admires the scenic vista.

VANNA
Wow, it's so beautiful. I should have brought my camera.

She stops as the trees and bushes behind her rustle. She spins around and meticulously scans the forest.

VANNA
Ian? Don't worry, you can come out. I won't hurt you. Yet.

The greenery no longer rustles and the area falls silent. She dismisses the noise and looks toward the lake. She spins around when the trees and bushes shake once more.

VANNA
Come on, this isn't funny.

The greenery nearby rustles more vigorously and the sounds of broken branches cut through the air.

VANNA
Oh, my God. It's a bear. It's a bear!

She rummages through her packsack and seizes her bear spray and air horn. A masked man dressed in black bursts out of the woods with a hunting knife in hand.

The masked man raises the blade and charges forward. She halts the attack with a high kick to the face. He falls to the ground and holds a hand to his cheek.

VANNA
What the hell's wrong with you?! It wasn't funny the first time, and it's not funny now!
She reaches down and angrily rips the ski mask off his head. She stops as a stunned look washes over her face.

EXT. SECOND HIKING TRAIL - DAY

Zachary enjoys the scenery while Opal swats at mosquitoes.

  ZACHARY
  This is great, isn't it? You, me, and Mother Nature.

  OPAL
  Don't forget the mosquitoes.

  ZACHARY
  I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times --

  OPAL
  I know, always carry mosquito repellent. Especially with all those reports about West Nile --

The wail of an air horn echoes through the woods.

  ZACHARY
  Damn it! We told Vanna she needed a cell phone.

  OPAL
  Did Ian bring one?

  ZACHARY
  If he owned one, he'd never figure out how to work it.

  OPAL
  Come on, let's go find them.

The pair turns around and heads back up the trail.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Tara stands by the lakeshore while clad in a swimsuit and takes in the scene. She looks on as Joan and Paul toss their Frisbee back and forth in the water.

She is distracted by a pesky mosquito. The insect lands on her arm. She dispassionately swats it to death and flicks it away with her finger.

  TARA
  Goddamn mosquito. I hate nature.
She spots a tennis ball as it bobs in the water nearby. She steps forward and tentatively reaches for it. Dwight and Omar leap into view and scramble for the ball.

She shrieks in shock and falls backward onto the ground. The dogs turn toward her and playfully bark in response. She wails in fear and backs away from the animals.

Frank rushes onto the scene clad in a pair of shorts. He spots Dwight and Omar as they bark at Tara. He rushes toward the lakeshore and picks up a large rock.

**FRANK**
Hey! Get the hell away from her!

He heaves the rock at the dogs. The stone narrowly misses the animals and splashes in the lake. He throws two more large rocks as Kenneth arrives on the scene.

**KENNETH**
Dwight! Omar! To the house!

Dwight and Omar leave while Kenneth marches toward Frank.

**KENNETH**
Who the hell do you think you are?!

**FRANK**
Those your dogs?

**KENNETH**
Yeah, and I'll be damned if I let some punk kid like you --

**FRANK**
You're lucky I didn't kill those mutts! They attacked my girlfriend!

**KENNETH**
Bullshit! They're good dogs!

**FRANK**
They should be rounded up and shot!

**KENNETH**
Are you threatening them? I'm a retired sheriff's deputy! I could have you arrested!

**FRANK**
You call the cops and I'll call animal control! Don't they have leash laws in this county?
KENNETH
You don't want to cross me, boy! I know everyone in the sheriff's department! I could have you thrown in jail for any reason I can make up! I didn't bust my ass for thirty years just to have a little prick like you show up and harass my dogs and me!

FRANK
Trust me, you do not want to piss me off! My uncle's a damn good lawyer! He'll take your money, your home, your car, and he'll get those mutts put to sleep! I didn't come all this way just to have my vacation ruined by some fucking psychopath!

Nancy and Eddie arrive clad in swimming gear. They rush toward Kenneth and Frank and quickly separate the two.

NANCY
Ohmigod! Stop it! There's no need to fight 'n' stuff!

EDDIE
Break it up, you two! Break it up!

KENNETH
Listen to your friends, boy, before you give me a reason to pop you.

FRANK
You want some, old man? Bring it!

Frank lunges at Kenneth. Eddie and Nancy hold him back as Margo rushes onto the scene.

MARGO
What's going on? What's all the shouting about?

KENNETH
This punk tried to kill the boys!

FRANK
No, your mutts just about killed my girlfriend!

MARGO
The boys are usually friendly and well-behaved. If they hurt your friend, we're sorry. Let's go home. This shouting isn't solving anything.

Margo grabs her husband by the arm and leads him away. Kenneth looks over his shoulder and yells at Frank.
KENNETH
I was part of Desert Storm! I know what it's like to kill someone!

MARGO
Would you stop it?!

Margo and Kenneth disappear from view. Nancy and Eddie let go of their friend. Frank glares in the direction of the Hamilton property.

NANCY
I hate when people fight 'n' stuff. It like totally brings me down.

EDDIE
Come on, let's hit the lake.

Nancy and Eddie step into the lake while Frank stares off into the distance. Tara finally pulls herself off the ground and stands up next to him.

TARA
Oh, yeah, I'm just fine and dandy. Thanks for your concern.

She shakes her head in frustration while he continues to stare straight ahead.

TARA
Let it go, man. It's not worth it.

She heads into the lake. He takes one last look toward the Hamilton property and follows her into the water.

EXT. FIRST HIKING TRAIL - DAY

Zachary and Opal scan the nearby woods as they make their way down the path.

ZACHARY
Vanna?! Ian?! Where are they?

OPAL
I just hope they're not -- Hey, look!

The pair scurries down the path and discovers two empty packsacks on the ground. They scan the woods and find two trails of supplies which lead in different directions.

OPAL
I don't like this. Maybe we should call the police.
ZACHARY
Not yet. I'll head this way, you head that way. Holler if you see anything.

The pair heads into the woods in opposite directions. Opal weaves her way through the trees and shrubs.

OPAL
Vanna?! Ian?!

She passes by some overgrown bushes and scans the area. She spots Ian as he leans his back against a tree not too far away. He is no longer dressed in black from head to toe.

OPAL
Ian! Are you all right?

She approaches the tree and places a hand on his arm. His severed head slips off his shoulders and bounces onto the ground in front of her.

She recoils in horror as his headless body crumples to the ground. She presses her back against a nearby tree and opens her mouth to scream.

Someone dressed in black leaps out of the tree and lands behind her. The man reaches around the trunk and clamps a hand covered with electrical burns over her mouth.

He reaches around with his other hand and plunges Ian's hunting knife into her throat. Her eyes widen as a torrent of blood flows from her mouth and nose.

Zachary weaves through the trees and shrubs elsewhere in the area. He follows a trail of scattered supplies deeper and deeper into the woods.

ZACHARY
Ian?! Vanna?!

He reaches a small clearing shrouded by tall trees with some large rocks scattered about. He finds Vanna as she sits on the ground with her back to him.

ZACHARY
Vanna! What's wrong? Are you hurt?

He approaches and gently pulls on her arm. Her head flops backward and reveals her neck has been sliced open. The few tendons which remain uncut keep her skull on her shoulders.

He wails in horror and turns to run when someone leaps out from behind a nearby shrub. The man slashes Zachary's throat with the hunting knife and severs his aorta.
Zachary places a hand to his wound and collapses to the ground. A torrent of blood flows out of the cut to his neck. He opens his mouth to scream but cannot make a sound.

The man puts the hunting knife in his belt and slowly steps forward. He reaches down with his scarred hands and picks up one of the large rocks in the area.

Zachary looks up helplessly as his attacker steps forward and hoists the stone over his head. The man slams the rock down upon his victim's skull.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Joan and Paul play with their Frisbee. Frank, Tara, Nancy, and Eddie swim nearby. Ben and Sarah sit in a small rowboat in the middle of the lake clad in life jackets.

He has his hook in the water and idly waits for a fish to nibble on the bait. She grumbles to herself and struggles to tie a lure onto the end of her line.

BEN
What's wrong, can't tie it on?

SARAH
I've done it hundreds of times.

She struggles with the lure some more only to drop it onto the floor of the rowboat.

BEN
You know, I can hear the wheels spinning up there but I think the hamster's on break.

SARAH
Don't let your mind wander. It's too small to be out on its own.

He shakes his head and returns his attention toward the lake. She picks up the lure and once again tries to tie it to the end of her line.

She glances toward the woods at the far end of the lake and stops in her tracks. She retrieves a pair of binoculars and scans the distant trees.

EXT. FAR LAKE SHORE - DAY

Someone obscured by the trees and shadows marches close to the shore with a large object over his shoulder.
EXT. LAKE - DAY

Sarah lowers the field glasses and turns to her brother. Ben focuses on the fishing rod in his hands. She once again looks toward the far end of the lake through her binoculars.

EXT. FAR LAKESHORE - DAY

The man marches in the other direction without his cargo. He stops in his tracks underneath the shade of a tree and stares daggers back at Sarah.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Sarah leaps to her feet and dangerously rocks the rowboat.

    SARAH
    There's somebody in the trees!

Ben grabs his sister and tries to get her to sit down.

    BEN
    Hey! You're gonna tip the boat over!

    SARAH
    He's staring at me!

    BEN
    What? Who?

She points at the trees across the lake.

    SARAH
    He's right there! Look! Look!

Ben grabs the binoculars and scans the far end of the lake while the others in the area take notice of the commotion.

    BEN
    Where?

    SARAH
    Under that tree! Right there!

EXT. FAR LAKESHORE - DAY

The trees sway in the breeze. There is no one in the area.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Ben lowers the field glasses and glares at Sarah.
BEN
Let me guess, before you got on the boat you fell and hit your head repeatedly. Right?

SARAH
I'm not joking around! There was a man in the trees carrying something, and he stopped and stared at me.

Joan and Paul wave at the twins and get their attention.

JOAN
Hey, you guys okay?

BEN
We're fine, we're fine.

PAUL
Sarah?

SARAH
I'm okay, Paul.

Ben looks at Sarah and wearily shakes his head.

BEN
You know, if you were any dumber --

SARAH
Don't talk to me.

EXT. VACANT LOT - DAY

Larry and Dana ride their bikes toward their destination. He excitedly turns to her while she puffs on a joint.

LARRY
Here we are, babe! Check out the --

DANA
Dude! Somebody stole the house!

The pair finds an empty lot overgrown with trees and other greenery. A chain-link fence surrounds the area. A sign on the barrier reads: County Property -- No Trespassing.

LARRY
Who'd have thought they'd tear down the house where a whole bunch of people got killed?
DANA
Fuck it, man, might as well poke around anyway.

The pair lean their bikes against the fence and scale the barrier. They climb over the top only to crash to the bottom on the other side.

LARRY
Shit! That hurt like a mother!

DANA
Here, man, take your pain medication.

She hands him the joint as they slowly climb to their feet. They dust themselves off and wander around the lot.

DANA
Oh, no! A scary tree! Hold me!

LARRY
Look! A little bush! I'm so scared!

The pair mills about aimlessly until they come across an old blue tarp. They approach the canvas and notice several bumps which indicate something hidden underneath.

DANA
There's somethin' under the tarp.

LARRY
What do you think's under there?

DANA
Dead bodies, man! It's nothin'.

LARRY
Just logs or somethin'.

The pair quietly stares at the tarp for a moment.

DANA
C'mon, man, check it out.

LARRY
Fuck no, you check it out.

DANA
Okay, we'll both check it out.

They approach the canvas and grab hold of it.

LARRY
Ready? One... two...
DANA
Wait, on three or on go?

LARRY
On three. Ready? One... two... three!

The pair pulls back the tarp and reveals Zachary, Opal, Ian, and Vanna's corpses underneath. They recoil in horror and open their mouths to scream...

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - KITCHEN - EVENING

A teakettle perched on an oven burner whistles and shoots out steam. Carol removes the kettle from the burner and pours herself a cup of tea.

She stops as the teakettle's whistle is replaced by the wail of police sirens. She scurries over to the front window and peers through the blinds.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - FRONT - EVENING

Several county patrol cars race past the house.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - KITCHEN - EVENING

Robert enters from the next room and approaches Carol.

ROBERT
What's the commotion?

CAROL
I don't know. It's just like... just like eight years --

ROBERT
Don't. Quentin Grant is dead and everything that happened that night died with him.

He places a loving arm around her shoulders. She rests her weary head against his chest.

CAROL
Sorry. Probably a false alarm.

EXT. VACANT LOT - EVENING

The patrol cars stop outside the lot and several COUNTY DEPUTIES exit the vehicles. The deputies unlock and open the fence and allow another patrol car through.
SHERIFF VAUGHN (64), a gaunt white-haired man, steps out from behind the wheel as his patrol car comes to a stop. Two deputies let Larry and Dana out of the back of the vehicle.

VAUGHN
Okay, where did you see this tarp?

DANA
Over there, behind those bushes.

Vaughn leads Larry, Dana, and his deputies toward the tarp.

LARRY
You're gonna look under it?!

VAUGHN
I need you to relax, okay? Stay back.

The sheriff cautiously approaches the tarp, grabs hold of his nightstick, and slowly lifts the canvas.

DANA
Don't look, man! It's horrible!

LARRY
You've gotta find who did this and --

Vaughn spins around with an irate look on his face.

VAUGHN
Is this supposed to be funny?

DANA
What? We ain't laughin', man!

VAUGHN
I worked the Quentin Grant case and I don't appreciate being dragged back here for your little prank!

LARRY
What are you talkin' about?

The sheriff pulls the tarp away and reveals some old logs.

LARRY
No! There were bodies there, like, ten or twenty minutes ago!

DANA
There were four of 'em, and they were all cut up like --
Vaughn takes notice of something on the ground. He crouches down and picks up a used marijuana cigarette.

VAUGHN
What's this?

LARRY
I... I have absolutely no idea.

DANA
I ain't ever seen that before in my whole entire life.

VAUGHN
Which one of you dropped it?

Larry and Dana remain quiet for a brief moment. They each point an accusatory finger at the other.

LARRY
She did! I told her not to smoke that shit! She's been high as a kite since --

DANA
He did! He showed up with a whole bag of the stuff! He's been smokin' all day --

The sheriff ignores the pair and turns to his deputies.

VAUGHN
Take these two pranksters into town and charge them with trespassing and simple possession. Let's see how funny these two find the idea of spending the night in jail.

Vaughn wearily shakes his head as his deputies lead Larry and Dana away from the scene.

EXT. LAKE - EVENING

Ben and Sarah pull their rowboat out of the water. They stare across the lake as the police lights cut through the distant trees.

SARAH
I'm telling you, I saw someone.

BEN
I believe you.

SARAH
Oh, shut up!

BEN
No, seriously. I believe you.
SARAH
Why?

BEN
The police showed up, didn't they?

SARAH
Yeah, but they didn't catch the guy.

BEN
Sure they did. Bet it was one of those people staying next to the Hamiltons.

SARAH
They were in the lake, idiot!

BEN
Not all of them.

SARAH
It wasn't any of those guys.

BEN
How do you know? You said he was hiding in the trees.

SARAH
I know what I saw, and it wasn't any of those people!

BEN
Then, who was it?

SARAH
I... I don't know.

BEN
Gee, what a surprise. Your slinky don't go all the way down the stairs, you know that?

SARAH
You're as dumb as a rock with an extra chromosome. Pick up the boat.

The pair drags the rowboat behind them as they for home.

EXT. VACATION HOME - FRONT - EVENING

Water drips from Frank, Tara, Nancy, and Eddie as they stand on the driveway across from Vaughn.
TARA
We told 'em not to bring that garbage, I swear.

FRANK
They were just too stupid to listen.

VAUGHN
I see. Are any of your parents staying with you?

TARA
Parents?! What kinda question is that?! We're all adults --

FRANK
Settle down. We're all in college, sir, but our families know where we are and how to get a hold of us.

VAUGHN
Sorry, didn't mean to offend. I'm just doing my job.

KENNETH (O.S.)
Sheriff Vaughn! Sheriff Vaughn!

Kenneth marches onto the scene and immediately points an accusatory finger at Frank.

KENNETH
I want this antisocial menace placed under arrest right now!

FRANK
Are you fucking kidding me?! He's been harassing me since we arrived!

VAUGHN
Hold on a minute. What happened?

KENNETH
First, this punk tried to kill my dogs by throwing rocks at their heads! If I didn't show up when I did, he would have killed my boys! Then, after I stopped the jackass from committing canine homicide --

FRANK
First, he let his rabid mutts run around without their leashes! Who the fuck let's two dangerous dogs run around attacking people? Then, after I stopped them from killing my girlfriend, this asshole --
VAUGHN
Quiet! Look, it's bad enough I had to deal with the prank across the lake. I don't want to have to come back here again, understood?

Margo arrives with a less than pleased look on her face.

MARGO
Kenneth, go back to the house! This is none of your business!

Kenneth opens his mouth to respond. Margo waves him off and turns to the others.

MARGO
I'm very sorry. This hasn't been a good day. I think everyone needs to calm down before someone does something they'll regret later.

She takes her husband by the arm and leads him away.

TARA
How much is it gonna cost to bail out our friends?

VAUGHN
Well, if it was just the trespassing charge, they could've each paid a hundred dollar fine. The simple possession charges, however, mean they'll each have to pay another two thousand dollars each.

TARA
Are you insane?! That's robbery!

VAUGHN
I don't make the law, ma'am, I just enforce it. Have a nice day.

He walks away, steps inside his patrol car, and drives off.

TARA
Four thousand dollars? Fuck me.

NANCY
Ohmigod, do you always have to like swear 'n' stuff?
TARA
When you complete a sentence without saying Ohmigod, like, or totally, you can lecture me.

EDDIE
Enough. It's been a long day. Let's go before the crazy old man next door shows up again.

Nancy and Eddie head inside the house. Tara taps Frank on the shoulder while he remains deep in thought.

TARA
We don't have a lot of cash, but if we find a bail bondsman --

FRANK
Fuck 'em. They can rot in jail for all I care.

He turns his gaze toward the Hamilton property next door.

FRANK
Besides, I've got more pressing issues on my mind.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Carol and Ben sit on the love seat while Robert sits in his easy chair and peers over the top of his magazine.

ROBERT
What do you mean, weird?

BEN
I mean weird! She nearly tipped the boat over.

CAROL
Can you blame her? I got chills just watching the police drive by.

BEN
No, this was before that. She said there was someone in the trees across the lake but I didn't see anybody.

CAROL
Well, it could have been one of those young people renting the house next to the Hamiltons.
BEN
That's what I said, but she said it was someone else. I'm telling you, Sarah's gone totally bonkers.

ROBERT
Come on, don't talk about your sister that way.

BEN
It's true! The past couple of weeks, she's been acting all crazy. Haven't you noticed?

ROBERT
Son, that's called being a twelve-year-old girl.

BEN
This is why I'm never having kids.

CAROL
Ben!

BEN
It's true! She'd better not be hogging the bathroom again.

He scurries up the stairs while his mother shakes her head and his father leafs through the magazine.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - EVENING

Sarah crouches beside the open window and once again attempts to smoke a joint. She coughs and hacks away when someone pounds on the locked door to the room.

BEN (O.S.)
Out of the bathroom!

She recoils in shock, knocks over her shoebox, and spills its contents onto the floor.

SARAH
Hold your horses!

She frantically places her belongings back in the box and tries to clear the smoke from the room.

BEN (O.S.)
Hurry up, already!

SARAH
Gimme a minute!
She closes the box and sprays the room with air freshener.

BEN (O.S.)
What's going on in there?

SARAH
Woman problems!

BEN (O.S.)
Ew, gross!

SARAH
Next time, don't ask!

She unlocks and flings open the door. He barges past her and grimaces once he takes in a deep breath.

BEN
Smells like flowers.

SARAH
Woman problems!

She leaves the room and he closes the door. He walks toward the toilet only to stop as something catches his eye. He crouches down and retrieves an unused joint from the floor.

BEN
Oh, my God! Sarah, you are so busted!

INT. VACATION HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Frank, Tara, and Eddie have dried themselves off and changed back into their clothes. Nancy has wrapped a beach towel over her wet swimsuit.

Frank paces back and forth with a livid look on his face. Tara sits on a couch and watches television with a glass of whiskey in hand.

Nancy leans against a wall near the staircase. Eddie leans against a table with a bottle of whiskey and a few empty glasses nearby.

FRANK
That old man wants to push things?
Maybe it's time I pushed back.

EDDIE
He's a former cop, man. You mess with him and the sheriff will come down on you like a ton of bricks.
FRANK
I don't care. He wants to fuck with me? Let's see what he does when those stupid mutts go missing.

Nancy perks her head up with alarm.

NANCY
Ohmigod, you're gonna hurt the dogs?! No way! That's like totally not cool!

FRANK
I won't hurt 'em. I'm just gonna take 'em for a little walk.

TARA
If you think this plan won't end with you in jail, I fear for your sanity. Besides, have you seen his wife? The guy's completely whipped! Hasn't he been punished enough?

EDDIE
Frank, look how much trouble Larry and Dana got into for smoking a little weed. What you're talking about's a lot more serious. You could go to jail for months. Years, even.

Frank derisively shakes his head.

FRANK
Tara was right about you, limp-wrist.

EDDIE
Fuck you! I'm a man! I'm a man!

FRANK
Prove it.

EDDIE
Fine, I'll help but if we get caught I'm pinning the blame on you.

TARA
If this is your idea of sticking it to the old geezer, I've got beachfront property in Arizona to sell you criminal masterminds.

FRANK
If you've got a better idea, Tara, let's hear it.
TARA
Yeah, right. I'm not helping you fulfill your retarded revenge fantasy. Include me out.

FRANK
Well, at least I know who my real friends are. Come on, Eddie.

Frank and Eddie head into the next room.

TARA
If it makes you feel better, Nancy, you're no longer the dumb one.

NANCY
Ohmigod! That's like the nicest thing you've ever said to me! I'm gonna take a shower. If you need me, just gimme a holler.

Nancy jogs up the stairs while Tara sips on her whiskey and watches the television.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Robert stands by the bookshelf while Carol and Ben look on nearby. He examines the marijuana cigarette in his hand.

ROBERT
I don't believe it.

BEN
Sarah's grounded for life, right?

CAROL
Not my little baby.

BEN
You're gonna send her to jail, right?

ROBERT
Ben, go to your room.

BEN
No way! I wanna see --

CAROL
Benjamin Nathaniel Westphal, you will go to your room right now!

BEN
I always miss the good stuff.
Ben dejectedly stalks his way up the stairs. Robert stares intently at the joint. Carol rests a hand on his shoulder.

CAROL
You need to relax.

ROBERT
I know.

She takes his hand and slowly leads him up the staircase.

CAROL
We need to handle this in a calm and rational manner.

ROBERT
Calm and rational. I've got it.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - SARAH'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Sarah lies on her bed and leafs through a magazine. She sits up in shock as Robert flings open the door.

SARAH
Dad! Don't you knock?

Robert shows his daughter the joint with an irate look on his face. Carol enters the room with a look of concern.

ROBERT
What's this?

Sarah sports a blank look in response.

SARAH
Huh?

CAROL
Your father asked you a question.

SARAH
I don't know.

ROBERT
You don't know what you've been smoking?!

SARAH
What?

CAROL
Ben found it on the floor after you left the bathroom.
SARAH
I didn't do anything!

ROBERT
Do I look stupid to you?!

SARAH
No.

ROBERT
Really? You're treating me like I am!

SARAH
It's not mine. A... A friend told me to hide it for her.

CAROL
I see, and which friend was this?

Sarah cries as she wilts under the pressure.

SARAH
I don't know.

ROBERT
I can't believe you're lying to us!

SARAH
It's not my fault!

CAROL
Why, did someone force you to sneak drugs in the house and smoke them in the bathroom?

SARAH
I don't know.

ROBERT
Where are the rest of the drugs?

SARAH
That's it, I swear!

CAROL
Sarah, you're already in big trouble. More lies won't help.

SARAH
I'm not lying!

ROBERT
I see. Then, I guess we won't find any more drugs if we search the room.
He rummages through a nearby chest of drawers and tosses its contents onto the floor.

SARAH
No! You can't! That's private!

CAROL
This is our house. We're entitled to search it.

She approaches a nearby bureau and searches the drawers.

SARAH
Stop it! Stop it!

She rolls off the bed as tears stream down her face.

SARAH
Fine! Fine! Here!

Sarah retrieves the shoebox from underneath her bed and throws it at her mother.

SARAH
Happy now?

She lies on the bed and buries her head in some pillows. Carol looks inside the box and shows Robert its contents.

ROBERT
What on earth were you thinking?

SARAH
Leave me alone.

CAROL
That's not an answer.

Sarah glares at her parents with fury in her eyes.

SARAH
Leave me alone! I hate you!

ROBERT
How dare you talk to us that way!

SARAH
I wish you were dead!

CAROL
Sarah!

SARAH
I hope you die! Leave me alone!
Roberta
That's enough! If you won't take responsibility for your actions --

Carol
No, not now. Let's leave her to think about it. Sarah, you stay in your room 'til we get you.

Sarah sobs into her pillows while her parents step out of the room and close the door behind them.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Robert and Carol wearily descend the staircase and sit down on the love seat. He rubs his forehead in anguish while she places the shoebox on the coffee table.

Robert
Can't believe it.

Carol
Our little girl.

Robert
What the hell was she thinking?

Carol
Obviously, she wasn't.

Robert
When I was twelve, I got my kicks skateboarding. Now, twelve-year-olds smoke dope? Unbelievable.

Carol
It could have been worse.

Robert
How?

Carol
At least she not using that crystal meth stuff or the ecstasy or, God forbid, having sex.

Robert
You don't think a twelve-year-old smoking dope is serious?

Carol
Of course it is, but we smoked dope in college and it didn't kill us.
ROBERT
We were adults. We earned the right
to make our own stupid decisions.
Sarah? She's our responsibility, and
we failed.

CAROL
We should have been upfront and told
her all the facts, not given one of
those alarmist speeches. Those didn't
work on us. I don't know why we
thought it would work on her.

He puts an arm around her. She curls up next to him.

ROBERT
We're terrible parents.

CAROL
No, we're not.

ROBERT
We have a son obsessed with zombie
movies and a daughter who's turned
into a dopehead. I think that makes
us failures.

CAROL
We're not perfect, but we try our
best. Sometimes we fail but, when
push comes to shove, we'll always be
there for them. They may not
appreciate it, but deep down they
know it's true.

ROBERT
You think so?

CAROL
I know so.

EXT. ANDERSON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

The sun sinks behind the trees and brings an end to the day.
Joan and Paul walk past a large shed as they approach the
back porch of the house.

PAUL
See? Wasn't this a good idea?

JOAN
It almost makes up for the rain in --
He quickly clamps a hand over her mouth. The pair shares a laugh and prepares to step inside their home. They stop when a series of loud barks emanate from next door.

JOAN
That's odd. Dwight and Omar rarely get this worked up over anything.

PAUL
You don't think those kids are doing something, do you?

JOAN
I hope not, unless they want Kenneth to shoot them.

The cacophony ceases just as abruptly as it started.

PAUL
Hmm, guess they just needed to let off some steam. Let's get inside before the mosquitoes get us.

INT. HAMILTON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The cozy room features a hardwood floor and assorted bric-a-brac. Margo sits on a couch and busily knits a sweater. Kenneth marches down the stairway behind her.

MARGO
What's wrong?

KENNETH
Didn't you hear?! The boys were barking like crazy!

MARGO
Yes, just as they did yesterday and just as they'll do tomorrow.

KENNETH
Those miscreants next door are up to something, I just know it.

She sets her knitting needles aside as he peers out a window and toward the back lawn of the house.

KENNETH
Where are the boys?! I can't see them anywhere! Didn't I tell you they were no good?! That's it, I'm going to --

MARGO
Oh, would you let me look?
She rises to her feet and looks out the window.

EXT. HAMILTON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Two thick and heavy chains attached to the base of a tree lead inside a large doghouse.

INT. HAMILTON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Margo steps away from the window and turns to Kenneth.

MARGO
They're in the doghouse, just as they were yesterday --

KENNETH
And just as they will be tomorrow.

He slowly walks over to the couch and slumps down in the seat. She stands behind him and gently rubs his shoulders.

MARGO
You know what your problem is? You act before you think.

KENNETH
Oh, I suppose you're right. I spent three decades as a police officer. I had to rely on instinct so many times, it's become second-nature. I need to learn how to let things go.

She leans down and softly kisses him on the cheek. He looks up at her, smiles, and gently caresses her hands.

EXT. HAMILTON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Frank peeks through the window at Kenneth and Margo inside. He ducks back down while Eddie looks on from nearby.

EDDIE
I'm starting to have second thoughts about this. I can't go to jail. I'm not equipped to handle it.

FRANK
Nobody's going to jail. Now keep quiet and let's do this.

EDDIE
What if the dogs try to bite us?

FRANK
They won't.
EDDIE
You sure? I mean, didn't you hear them barking a minute ago?

FRANK
You're a man, Goddamn it! Say it!

EDDIE
I'm a man.

FRANK
You're a man!

EDDIE
I'm a man!

FRANK
Alright!

Frank leads his friend through the numerous trees and shrubs which grow throughout the area. Eddie spins around as the nearby bushes loudly rustle.

EDDIE
Hey, what was that?

FRANK
What was what?

EDDIE
Didn't you hear something?

FRANK
No, now shut up and let's do this.

The pair approaches the back porch and scans the area. The garden shears and the hand spade join a pitchfork, a roll of barbed wire, and other garden tools on the porch.

Eddie's pants are torn when they snag on the barbed wire. Frank glares back at his friend, frees the fabric from the barbs, and punches him in the arm.

The pair approaches the tree across from the doghouse. Frank cautiously nears the enclosure. Eddie places a tentative hand on his friend's shoulder.

EDDIE
You sure they won't bite?

FRANK
Stay there and keep an eye out.
Eddie leans his back against the tree and nervously scans the area. Frank gently rattles the two chains together and creeps toward the doghouse.

FRANK
Come here, boys. Let's go for a walk.

Someone obscured by night slips down behind the tree with a loop of barbed wire in his hands. Eddie gasps as the man wraps the wire around his throat.

He tries to scream but cannot make a sound as the life slowly leaves his eyes. Frank gently pulls on the chains oblivious to his friend's plight.

He looks on in surprise as the two loosened dog collars at the end of the links come into view. He turns around just as his friend's body crumples to the ground.

The man steps out from behind the tree and hurls the hunting knife through the air. Frank gasps as the blade plunges deep into his chest.

He collapses facedown onto the ground and struggles just to breathe. The man places a knee against his back and loops one of the chains around his victim's neck.

Frank widens his eyes in terror as his attacker tightens his grip on the links. He pulls back on the chains and snaps his victim's neck like a twig.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Paul stands in the cozy room and removes a bag of popcorn from inside a microwave.

PAUL
Oh! Hot, hot, hot!

He pours the popcorn into a small bowl and reaches for a salt shaker. Joan looks over her shoulder as she places a few dirty dishes in the sink nearby.

JOAN
Don't use so much salt this time.

He looks at the salt shaker and sets it back down. She faces the sink and turns on a small fluorescent light. The bulb flickers for a brief moment only to burn out.

JOAN
Oh, great. Do we have any new bulbs? This one's burnt out.
PAUL
I think there's a few in the shed.
I'll go get one.

JOAN
That's okay, I'll get it.

PAUL
Hurry back, the movie's starting in a few minutes.

He looks on as she strides into the next room. He reaches for the salt shaker and liberally sprinkles the popcorn.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Joan steps onto the back porch with both a flashlight and a set of keys in hand. She approaches the large shed, shines the light on a padlock, and fumbles through her keys.

A loud snap cuts through the night. She spins around and shines the flashlight toward the Hamilton property. She scans the trees and shrubs as they rustle in the breeze.

She eyes the next property for a moment and shakes her head dismissively. She turns back to the shed, removes the padlock, and swings the door wide open.

INT. LARGE SHED - NIGHT

Joan steps inside the darkened structure and scans the numerous shelves with her flashlight.

JOAN
Okay. Light bulbs... Light bulbs...
Light bulbs!

She crouches down and retrieves a new fluorescent light from a bottom shelf. She rises to her feet and fails to notice a large figure just behind her.

She turns around to leave and runs smack into the figure. She yelps in terror and recoils in shock. She quickly shines her flashlight on the intruder.

The light reveals the figure is a tarp haphazardly placed on top of a few cardboard boxes. Joan smiles to herself and shakes her head in relief.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Joan steps out of the shed, closes the door, and puts the padlock back into place. She takes a step toward the back porch only to stop and eye the property next door.
She shines her flashlight toward the Hamilton property and scans the area. She eyes the trees and shrubs but does not find anything out of the ordinary.

A hand reaches out of the darkness next to her and clamps down on her shoulder. She yelps with fright, spins around, and shines her flashlight upon...

**PAUL**
Whoa! Relax, it's just me.

**JOAN**
What's wrong with you?! You almost gave me a heart attack!

**PAUL**
Don't you have peripheral vision? What were you looking at, anyway?

**JOAN**
Oh, nothing. I thought I heard something, that's all.

**PAUL**
Come on, the movie's starting.

He places an arm around her as they head inside the house.

**INT. VACATION HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Tara sits in the darkened room and watches a late-night talk show on the television. She polishes off her glass of whiskey and rises to her feet.

**TARA**
Shit, this guy's worse than Leno.

She approaches the table and pours herself another glass. She stops as a door slam echoes from the next room.

**TARA**
Oh, the dastardly dognappers return! Did you actually coral the mutts, or did the old man scare you off?

She waits for a reply but does not receive one.

**TARA**
Whatever. If you two wanna spend the night acting all macho, then --

Tara turns around with the glass in one hand and the bottle in the other. The man leaps into view and slices open her chest with the hunting knife.
She wails in anguish, drops her glass on the floor, and leans against the table. He raises the blade and prepares to deliver the final blow.

She cracks him over the head with the whiskey bottle. He moans in pain, drops the knife onto the floor, and collapses to the ground.

She drops the broken bottle neck onto the floor and makes a break for the front door of the house. He reaches out and hauls her down by the ankles.

She collapses facedown onto the floor in agony. He grabs hold of the broken stem of glass and flips her over. She looks up at her attacker and screams in terror.

He thrusts the broken end of the bottle neck into her throat. Her body falls limp and lifeless as a torrent of blood gushes through the glass stem in her neck.

INT. VACATION HOME - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - NIGHT

A window overlooks the back while a mirrored medicine cabinet hangs over the vanity. Nancy stands in the bathtub and pokes her head out from behind the shower curtain.

NANCY
Tara? What's going on?

She turns off the shower tap, dons a nearby robe, and steps out from behind the curtain. She tightens the belt around her robe as she approaches the door to the room.

NANCY
Tara? You all right?

She flings open the bathroom door. A hand covered with electrical burns grabs her by the face. The man slams the back of her head against the wall.

She wails in shock and slides to the floor. The back of her head leaves a bloody streak on the wall. The man grabs her by the hair and drags her toward the vanity.

He slams her face against the medicine cabinet. She wails as the mirror shards cut open her forehead. He grabs her again and pulls her toward the window.

He smashes her head through the window. A large shard of glass plunges into her neck. Her lifeless body twitches as a gush of blood flows from the wound in her throat.
INT. HAMILTON HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Margo stands in front of the sink in the homely room and washes the dishes. Kenneth scrapes the tuna casserole from his plate into a large dog bowl.

MARGO
Are you okay? You barely touched your dinner.

KENNETH
Oh, I'm just not that hungry. Besides, I wanted to leave some for the boys. They can't get enough of your tuna casserole.

She takes his plate and dunks it in the sink while he heads into the next room.

EXT. HAMILTON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Kenneth steps out of the house with the dog bowl in hand and whistles as he approaches the doghouse.

KENNETH
Dwight! Omar! I've got your favorite!

He stops outside the doghouse, picks up the chains from the ground, and examines the loosened dog collars. He growls in frustration and marches toward the back porch.

KENNETH
I'm going to kill those bastards!

Margo steps onto the back porch just as Kenneth arrives. She looks on as he rummages through their gardening tools.

MARGO
What's going on?

KENNETH
Those idiots next door took the boys!

MARGO
What? Are you sure?

KENNETH
Didn't you hear them yelling and screaming a moment ago? They were celebrating! I told you those kids were nothing but trouble. Oh, they're going to get it.

He takes hold of his garden shears and marches off.
MARGO
What are you going to do?

KENNETH
Put the fear of God into them.

MARGO
Kenneth? Kenneth!

She rubs her temple as he disappears into the night.

EXT. VACATION HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Kenneth marches up to the back porch of the darkened house with the garden shears in hand and pounds on the door.

KENNETH
I know you're inside! If you don't open this door right now, I swear to God I'll bust it down!

He waits for a response but does not hear one. He tries the handle and stops as the door swings open.

INT. VACATION HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kenneth enters the vacant room and looks around.

KENNETH
You'd better tell me where my boys are right now!

He marches his way toward the next room.

INT. VACATION HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kenneth rants and raves as he enters the room.

KENNETH
If you don't, I swear I'll...

He covers his mouth and staggers backward in shock. A shadow on the wall behind him steadily grows larger and larger.

INT. VACATION HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kenneth turns to leave only to stop in his tracks. The man strikes him in the face and sends him to the floor. The garden shears fall to the ground nearby.

Kenneth looks up with disbelief as his attacker grabs hold of the garden tool. He whimpers in terror as the man opens the shears and stands over him.
KENNETH

No. No! You're dead! They killed you!
They killed you!

The man drives the points of the shears through both of his victim's eyes. Kenneth's body twitches as blood gushes from his eye sockets.

EXT. HAMILTON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Margo stands on the back porch and wraps her arms around herself. She scans the area but does not see anyone.

MARGO

That's it, I'm calling Sheriff Vaughn.

INT. HAMILTON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Margo enters the room, closes the door, and walks toward a telephone perched on top of a desk.

MARGO

What's this world coming to?

She picks up the phone and starts to dial a number. She turns around as the back door slowly swings open. She lays the receiver on the desk and approaches the door.

MARGO

Kenneth? Kenneth?

She cautiously places a hand against the doorframe and peers outside. A hand covered with electrical burns grabs her by the throat.

She struggles as the man hoists her into the air and slams her against the wall. She opens her mouth in horror as the man raises her hand spade into view.

The man drives the spade through his victim's mouth and out the back of her head. He releases his grip and her body collapses to the hardwood floor.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sarah sits on the edge of her bed and stuffs a change of clothes into her packsack. She heads for the closet and pulls out an emergency kit.

She rummages through the kit and retrieves a rope ladder. She opens the window and sets up the ladder. She tosses her packsack outside and climbs out of her room.
INT. WESTPHAL HOME - BEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ben sits at his computer and furiously types away. The nearby walls feature assorted horror film posters. He leans back in his chair and stares at the monitor.

    BEN
    Hmm... Should the governor be
dismembered or disemboweled?

A series of thumps emanate from outside the house. Ben perks up his head, approaches a nearby window, and peers outside.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Sarah reaches the end of the ladder, picks her packsack up from the ground, and flees the scene.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - BEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ben steps away from the window, smiles, and shakes his head.

EXT. ANDERSON HOME - FRONT - NIGHT

Sarah scales the fence with her packsack in hand and creeps toward the front porch.

She yelps in surprise as the lawn's automatic sprinkler system is activated.

She rushes toward the front door as the sprinklers douse her with a torrent of water.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The doorbell chime echoes throughout the house. Joan appears from the next room and opens the front door.

    JOAN
    Sarah? You're all wet!

    SARAH
    Yeah, sprinklers got me. Just wanted to stop by and, you know, hang out for a little while.

    JOAN
    Well, I should at least give you the chance to dry your clothes.

Sarah holds up her packsack in response.
SARAH
That's okay, I brought a change of
clothes with me.

Joan steps aside as her neighbor enters the home. She smirks
to herself and closes the door.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Paul sits on a couch with the bowl of popcorn in hand and
watches a film on a widescreen television. He raises his head as Joan and Sarah arrive from the next room.

JOAN
Look who's here!

PAUL
Sarah? What brings you here?

SARAH
Hi, Paul. I... I just wanted to get away for a while.

PAUL
Hungry? We've got popcorn.

SARAH
Yes, thanks.

Sarah gleefully curls up on the couch next to Paul. Joan arches an eyebrow. He innocently shrugs his shoulders. She approaches a telephone on a nearby table.

JOAN
I'll just phone your parents and --

SARAH
No, it's okay. You don't have to --

Joan picks up the telephone and grimaces.

JOAN
Again?!

PAUL
What?

JOAN
The phone's still screwed up! I'm getting nothing but static.

PAUL
They were supposed to replace the faulty line while we were away!
JOAN
The phones in your house working, Sarah?

SARAH
Oh, of course! Our phones are fine. No need to check them.

JOAN
I wonder if Kenneth and Margo's phones are out or if it's just ours.

PAUL
I'll swing by and check it out.

JOAN
We can ask tomorrow.

PAUL
Relax, I'll only be a few minutes.

Joan hangs up the telephone while Paul rises to his feet. Everyone perks up their ears as the doorbell rings again.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT
Paul enters from the next room, opens the front door, and finds Ben as he grins from ear to ear.

BEN
Hey, Paul.

Paul looks on as Ben casually saunters into the house and heads for the next room.

PAUL
Hi. Come on in.

Paul shakes his head and closes the front door.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT
Paul follows Ben as they appear from the next room. Joan tilts her head while Sarah sports an irate look.

JOAN
Ben?

BEN
Hey, Joan. Sarah! There you are!

He gleefully takes a seat next to his mortified sister.
BEN
I can't believe you left before me!

JOAN
Yeah, Sarah just... Oh, I forgot to get a towel.

Joan quickly slips out of the room. Paul retrieves the flashlight from the nearby table.

PAUL
Let Joan know I'll be back in about five minutes, okay?

The siblings nod as Paul steps away from view. Sarah glares at Ben with great fury.

SARAH
What are you doing here?!

BEN
Mom and Dad don't know you're missing... yet. That means you've still gotta chance to get back home before they ground you for life.

SARAH
I'm not going back, genius. I'm running away.

BEN
You're next door.

SARAH
It's a start!

BEN
Look, here's the deal. If you go back right now, I keep my mouth shut and you give me your allowance for the next three months.

SARAH
Two weeks.

BEN
Two months.

SARAH
Four weeks.

BEN
Six weeks.
SARAH
Deal!

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Someone lightly wraps on the closed door. Carol steps into view with a dinner tray in hand. She gasps in shock as she discovers the room is empty.

She sets the dinner tray aside and rushes toward the open window. She finds the rope ladder, peers outside, and scurries out of the room.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - BEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Carol knocks on the door, steps inside, and finds the room empty. She moans in despair and slips away from view.

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Robert sits on the love seat and quietly sips on a cup of tea. He sets his drink aside and rises to his feet as Carol tears down the stairs in a panic.

CAROL
Sarah and Ben are missing!

ROBERT
What?!

CAROL
Sarah used the rope ladder from the emergency kit to leave the house, and I think Ben followed her! Oh, my God, they could be anywhere --

ROBERT
Calm down, we know where they went.

CAROL
Next door?

ROBERT
Where else would Sarah run off to?

CAROL
What about Ben?

ROBERT
He probably followed her for the blackmail opportunity. Let's go.

He shakes his head and leads her toward the next room.
EXT. HAMILTON HOME - FRONT - NIGHT

Paul emerges from the night and walks up to the darkened house. He approaches the front porch and rings the doorbell.

He waits for a response but receives none. He knocks on the front door but still does not hear a reply.

    PAUL
    Hmm... Must be out back.

He turns on his flashlight and heads for the back.

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

Paul walks along the lakeshore with the flashlight in his hand the only source of illumination. The light reveals two shapes on the ground not too far ahead.

He rushes over to the shapes and focuses his light at them. A look of horror washes over his face. He slumps to his knees and rubs his forehead in despair.

The flashlight reveals the shapes are Dwight and Omar's dead bodies. Their corpses have been ripped apart and are riddled with multiple stab wounds.

    PAUL
    Oh, God! What did they do?

He scrambles to his feet and runs off into the night.

EXT. VACATION HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Paul arrives on the scene, sprints toward the back porch, and pounds on the door.

    PAUL
    Open the door! Come on, open up!

He backs away from the door and scans the darkened house with his flashlight. The light shines on Nancy's corpse as it remains stuck in the upstairs bathroom window.

He wails in anguish, rushes back onto the porch, and tries the door handle. He nervously stops in his tracks as the door slowly swings open.

INT. VACATION HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Paul cautiously steps inside and scans the room with his flashlight. He stops as the light reveals Kenneth's body on the floor. He wails in horror and kneels beside the corpse.
PAUL
Kenneth?! Oh, God!

Tears stream down his face as he heads for the next room.

INT. VACATION HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Paul enters the room and illuminates the area with his flashlight. The light reveals Tara's corpse on the ground. He weeps with despair and flees the scene.

EXT. HAMILTON HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Paul emerges from the darkness and sprints past the doghouse on his way toward the back porch. His foot catches on one of the chains and he collapses to the ground in a heap.

The flashlight slips from his grasp and lands just ahead of him. He slowly and painfully pulls himself off the ground and scrambles toward the light.

He picks up the flashlight and looks in the direction of the beam. He yelps as the light reveals Eddie and Frank's bodies underneath a series of bushes across the yard.

PAUL
Margo! Open the door! Margo!

He sprints toward the back porch and furiously pounds on the door. He looks through a nearby window into the darkened house but does not see anyone.

He returns to the back door, tries the handle, and finds it unlocked. He takes a moment to steel himself and cautiously steps inside the home.

INT. HAMILTON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Paul takes a few steps only to slip and crash to the floor. He rolls over and prepares to push himself off the ground. He stops and discovers the area is soaked with blood.

He aims the flashlight toward the source of the blood and finds Margo's corpse on the floor across the room. He wails in horror, scrambles to his feet, and flees the scene.

INT. ANDERSON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah sits on the couch and clutches a towel wrapped around her body. Ben sits next to her with a grin on his face. Joan stands nearby as Robert and Carol lecture their daughter.

ROBERT
Haven't you disappointed us enough?
SARAH
Leave me alone.

CAROL
Don't you dare start with the attitude, young lady.

SARAH
Leave me alone!

JOAN
I'm sorry, if I knew she left without your permission --

CAROL
The only ones who should be apologizing are these two.

BEN
Two? What did I do?

ROBERT
You also left the house without telling us. That means you're both in trouble. Let's go.

SARAH
No! Leave me alone!

BEN
You are so asking for it.

CAROL
Enough! We're leaving right now.

Everyone turns around as a loud slam echoes from the next room. Paul steps into view with his clothes stained with blood. He leans against the wall and gasps for breath.

JOAN
Paul? What's wrong?

PAUL
We've got to get out of here now!

JOAN
What's going on?

PAUL
Everyone's been...

He takes notice of Ben and Sarah as they stare back at him.
PAUL
I... I mean, there's been an accident. We have to get help.

The adults exchange a look of recognition while the children both sport bewildered expressions.

CAROL
Accident? You mean...

PAUL
Yes.

ROBERT
Bad?

PAUL
Very.

BEN
What happened? Are people hurt?

PAUL
It's... It's complicated. Look, we need to leave --

SARAH
What's that on your clothes?

PAUL
Huh? Oh, it's... It's dirt. We'll take our SUV. Let's go.

SARAH
Why are we leaving?

BEN
Yeah, shouldn't we help --

JOAN
It's okay, we'll go into town and the police will help us.

Joan grabs a set of car keys from the table while Paul gestures for the others to follow. Robert and Carol take Ben and Sarah by the hand.

EXT. ANDERSON HOME - FRONT - NIGHT

The automatic sprinkler system saturates the driveway with water. The Andersons and the Westphals exit the house and rush over to the black SUV parked nearby.
Joan steps behind the wheel while Paul takes the passenger's seat next to her. Robert and Carol quickly shepherd Ben and Sarah into the back of the vehicle.

**BEN**
Why are we hurrying?

**ROBERT**
Don't worry, we just want to get help as fast as we can.

**SARAH**
What aren't you telling us?

**CAROL**
Nothing! Just relax, everything's going to be okay.

**INTERCUT WITH:**

**INT. BLACK SUV - NIGHT**

Everyone buckles themselves in as Joan starts the vehicle and the engine roars to life. She turns on the headlights and reveals someone at the end of the driveway.

Quentin, clad in black from head to toe with his body covered with electrical burns, grips the pitchfork and stares back at the others.

**QUENTIN**
What, leaving so soon? The party's just begun!

Ben and Sarah point at the serial killer in terror.

**SARAH**
That's him! That's the man I saw in the trees!

**BEN**
Oh, my God! It's a zombie! It's a real zombie!

Quentin grips the pitchfork and rushes toward the vehicle.

**JOAN**
What do I do?!

**PAUL**
Floor it!
He reaches across the vehicle with his feet and stomps on the gas pedal. The engine roars but the vehicle, still in park, remains stationary.

JOAN
What are you doing?!

PAUL
Drive! Just go! Now!

He grabs the shifter and puts the vehicle into drive. The tires squeal on the wet pavement as the SUV speeds down the length of the driveway.

The vehicle slams into the serial killer. Quentin is thrown several feet through the air and crashes to the ground at the end of the driveway.

Robert and Carol wrap their arms around Ben and Sarah as the children tremble with fright. Paul rubs his forehead with relief while Joan breathes heavily.

JOAN
What... What did we just do?

PAUL
It's okay.

JOAN
We killed him. We killed him.

PAUL
This was self-defense, understand?

BEN
There was no accident, was there?

SARAH
That man, did he... Did he...

PAUL
Look, I'm going to make sure he's... you know. Then, we'll head into the city and --

Quentin sits up and glares back at the others. The Andersons and the Westphals yelp in shock. Joan tightly grips the wheel and slams her foot down on the accelerator.

The SUV speeds down the driveway and races toward the serial killer once more. The vehicle knocks Quentin down and runs its tires over his body.
The SUV stops at the end of the driveway, shifts into reverse, and runs over Quentin's body once more. The vehicle stops in front of the wooden electrical pole.

Robert and Carol place their arms around Ben and Sarah. Joan tightly grips the wheel and takes deep breaths as Paul gently places a hand on her shoulder.

JOAN
How... How did he get up?

PAUL
He's not getting up this time.

JOAN
I hit him... I hit him and he got up.

PAUL
Listen, calm down so we can --

Quentin rises to his knees none the worse for wear. The Andersons and the Westphals scream in disbelief. The serial killer hurls the pitchfork at the vehicle.

The prongs smash through the driver's side of the windshield. Joan ducks at the last moment as the end of the pitchfork narrowly misses her skull.

Her feet slam down upon the gas pedal as she cowers behind the dashboard. The tires squeal as the vehicle races backward and heads straight for the electrical pole.

The rear of the SUV crashes into the pole. The Andersons and the Westphals wail in pain as they are thrown about inside the vehicle.

The pole loudly creaks as it starts to give way. The Andersons and the Westphals yelp with panic as they cower inside the SUV.

EXT. ANDERSON HOME - FRONT - NIGHT

The pole topples forward and caves in the roof of the vehicle. The live electrical wires break away from the pole and flail about on the wet driveway.

Joan staggers out of the SUV in a daze and collapses to the pavement. She looks down the driveway as Quentin grabs the hunting knife from his belt and marches forward.

QUENTIN
Was that fun, bitch? Now, it's my turn to play!
Paul stumbles out of the SUV, scrambles on top of the pole, and leaps through the air. He tackles Quentin to the ground, fights him over the knife, and calls out to Joan.

**PAUL**
Get the Westphals, and get the hell out of here!

Joan rises to her feet and helps Ben and Carol out of the vehicle. He is uninjured while she bleeds profusely thanks to a cut on her forehead.

Paul and Quentin roll around on the pavement and move toward a large puddle on the driveway. The downed electrical wires flail about not too far from them.

Joan circles the SUV and leads Sarah and Robert out of the vehicle. She is unhurt while his hair is soaked with blood due to a head injury.

Paul and Quentin fight over the knife as they land in the large puddle. The serial killer slips behind his adversary and tightly grips the blade.

Quentin plunges the knife into his victim's stomach. Paul wails in pain but grabs his attacker by the arm and prevents another blow.

Paul spots the live electrical wires as they flail about just ahead of him. He reaches out with his feet and tries to snare one of the wires.

Joan and the Westphals stagger toward the front porch of the house and look back at the driveway. Quentin widens his eyes as Paul prepares to snag the wire with his feet.

**QUENTIN**
Oh, shit.

A shower of sparks emanates from the wire as Paul and Quentin are both electrocuted. The street and house lights are extinguished as the power fails throughout the area.

Carol turns Ben and Sarah away from the spectacle. Joan screams in horror and sprints toward her husband. Robert grabs her around the waist and holds her back.

**ROBERT**
No! It's too late.

**JOAN**
Let me go!
ROBERT
Don't look, Joan. Don't!

JOAN
Paul! Paul!

She collapses to her knees and wails inconsolably.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carol leads Ben and Sarah into the darkened room and toward the love seat. She sits next to her children and holds a dishcloth to the cut on her forehead.

Robert enters the room and wearily leans against the bookshelf. He presses a dishcloth against the wound on the top of his head.

Sarah produces a matchbook from her pocket and lights some candles with a shaky hand. Joan appears from the next room and slumps against the open archway.

SARAH
What happened out there? Who was that man? Why did he keep getting up?

BEN
Was he a zombie? 'Cause you have to hit a zombie in the brain --

CAROL
Quiet, you two.

Robert approaches a nearby telephone and places his hand on the receiver. He turns back toward Joan as she wearily leans against the archway.

ROBERT
Joan? It's going to be okay.

JOAN
We married just three years ago. We were supposed to spend the rest of our lives together. What did Paul do to deserve --

The pitchfork plunges through Joan's chest. The Westphals recoil with horror at the sight. Joan whimpers as she looks at the blood-soaked prongs which poke out of her torso.
Carol, Ben, and Sarah rise to their feet in terror. Joan coughs up blood as the life slowly leaves her eyes. Someone grabs her from behind and throws her to the ground.

Quentin, his clothes in tatters and the electrical burns on his body more severe in nature, steps through the archway with the hunting knife in hand.

QUENTIN
You thought I was done?! I'm just getting started!

Quentin raises the knife and lunges toward Carol and the children. Robert races forward, tackles the serial killer to the ground, and calls out to his wife.

ROBERT
Get them out of here!

Carol shepherds Ben and Sarah out the back door. Quentin throws Robert to the floor next to the old rocker. The serial killer raises the knife and charges forward.

Robert scrambles to his feet and grabs hold of the rocking chair. He breaks the rocker over Quentin's head and tackles the serial killer onto to the floor.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - SIDE - NIGHT

Carol drags Ben and Sarah by the hand as they flee the area. The Westphals pass by a small shed as they head toward the front of the house.

Two decorative bear traps hang on either side of the shed door. A trash bag filled with lawn clippings leans against the side of the structure.

Sarah pulls her hand away from her mother and rushes back toward the shed. Carol and Ben stop and turn around as she disappears inside the structure.

CAROL
What are you doing?!

BEN
We need to get outta here!

Sarah emerges from the shed with a large axe in hand.

SARAH
We're not leaving Dad!

Carol and Ben exchange a look and follow Sarah as she rushes toward the back of the house.
INT. WESTPHAL HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Quentin hurls Robert against the bookshelf and sends him to the floor. The large trophy is among the many items which fall from the shelves and land nearby.

Quentin raises his knife and prepares to deliver a fatal blow. Robert strikes him in the face with the trophy and sends him backward and to the floor.

Carol and Ben enter via the back door and rush toward the fallen serial killer. The mother pounces on top of Quentin while the son tries to wrest the knife from his hand.

Robert rises to one knee in a daze when his daughter enters the room. Sarah helps her father back onto his feet and hands him the large axe.

SARAH
You have to hit him in the brain!

Quentin pushes Carol and Ben away, raises his knife, and prepares to attack. Robert hides the axe behind his back and calls out to the serial killer.

ROBERT
Turn around, you son of a bitch!

Quentin stops in his tracks, smiles devilishly, and rises to his feet. He turns around and charges toward his challenger. Robert unveils the axe and takes a mighty swing.

The axe buries itself deep into Quentin's skull. He reaches out and staggers toward Robert and Sarah for a moment with a shocked look on his face.

His body falls limp and he collapses face-first toward the floor. The axe lodged in his head props Quentin's body up before it can strike the ground.

Quentin's head slowly slides down the length of the axe. His head slips past the bottom of the blade and his body collapses to the floor with a thud.

Carol and Ben rush to their feet and join Robert and Sarah. The Westphals embrace one another as tears of relief stream down their faces.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Carol leads Ben and Sarah out of the house and onto the lawn. Robert wearily leans against the open doorframe.
ROBERT
I can't get a dial tone. There's too much static on the line. You have your keys?

CAROL
Yeah.

ROBERT
Drive to the sheriff's office in town, and take the children with you.

CAROL
What about you?

ROBERT
I'll stay behind and make sure --

Quentin, now with a massive gash in his head, appears and plunges the hunting knife into his shoulder. Carol, Ben, and Sarah scream in terror as Robert falls to the ground.

QUENTIN
Alright, now I'm pissed!

Carol grabs her children by their hands as Quentin rushes out of the house after them. Robert extends his leg, trips the serial killer, and sends him to the ground.

Robert dives forward and latches himself onto Quentin's leg. The serial killer struggles to free himself as Carol leads her children away from view.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - SIDE - NIGHT

Carol and Sarah rush toward the front of the house while Ben lags behind. He stops outside the shed and examines the exterior of the structure.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - BACK - NIGHT

Quentin rises to his feet, kicks Robert in the face, and frees himself. He grips the hunting knife in his hand and starts after the others.

ROBERT
Hey, where are you going?! You want to kill somebody?! Come back here and kill me! Come on!

Quentin stops in his tracks and turns back around. He smiles and playfully waggles his finger.
QUENTIN

Nice try, but I think I'll take care of Mommy and the children first.

Robert wails helplessly as Quentin disappears from view.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - SIDE - NIGHT

Quentin grips the knife in his hand and races past the shed. The bear traps and the lawn clippings are missing.

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - FRONT - NIGHT

Quentin arrives on the scene and finds Carol, Ben, and Sarah as they kneel on the grass and tremble with fear.

CAROL

Please, let us go. Don't do this.

Quentin slowly marches forward and fails to notice the large patch of lawn clippings spread out in front of him.

QUENTIN

I'm going to kill your family, and this is what you do? You're pathetic. You want some sympathy? I'll kill you first, so you don't watch as I rip your children apart piece by --

Quentin blindly steps in a bear trap hidden underneath the lawn clippings. He wails as the trap's sharp metal teeth clamp down upon his leg.

QUENTIN

You fucking bitch!

Quentin's other leg steps in the second bear trap obscured by the lawn clippings. He screams in anguish, drops the knife, and collapses to the ground.

Ben reaches behind his mother's back and retrieves a gas canister. Quentin flails in desperation as the container's contents are poured over his body.

QUENTIN

You little bastards! I'm going to snap your scrawny necks like twigs!

Sarah retrieves the matchbook from her pocket. She lights one of the matches, sets the entire booklet ablaze, and tosses it through the air.
Carol, Ben, and Sarah rush toward the family sedan parked on the driveway nearby. Quentin looks on helplessly as the lit matchbook lands on his chest.

Quentin unleashes a hellish scream as he is engulfed by flames. Carol, Ben, and Sarah stand in front of the sedan and look back at the serial killer.

Quentin thrashes about as his screams become lower and more demonic in tone. He unleashes one last ferocious yell and collapses to the ground.

Carol embraces her children with relief and turns them away from the scene. She retrieves the car keys from her pocket as the fire behind them slowly dies down.

    CAROL
    Come on, we have to go.

    SARAH
    Wait, what about Dad?!

    BEN
    We can't leave him!

    CAROL
    I know, but I don't want you two staying here any longer --

    QUENTIN (O.S.)
    Where the hell do you think you're going?

Carol, Ben, and Sarah spin around and watch in disbelief as Quentin frees his leg from one of the bear traps.

His skin has been burnt to a crisp and his nose, lips, and ears have been completely scorched off.

    QUENTIN
    Did I give you permission to leave?!

Carol shoves the car keys into her son's hand as Quentin frees himself from the second bear trap.

    CAROL
    Get your sister out of here!

    BEN
    What?! I can't drive!

    SARAH
    Yes you can! Let's go!
Ben and Sarah rush toward the sedan as Quentin grabs the hunting knife and rises to his feet. Carol vainly searches for something to arm herself with.

Ben and Sarah open the doors of the vehicle and look on as Quentin slowly marches forward. Carol steels herself, clenches her bare fists, and charges at him.

She unleashes a desperate scream and vainly tries to wrestle him to the ground. Ben and Sarah exchange a tentative look and enter the sedan.

Quentin throws Carol aside and raises the knife. Carol screams as the blade plunges into her shoulder. Quentin pushes her to the ground and heads for the sedan.

INT. FAMILY SEDAN - NIGHT

Sarah looks through the windshield as Quentin steadily approaches her side of the vehicle.

SARAH
Start the car! Start the car!

Ben puts the key in the ignition and starts the sedan.

BEN
Ignition... Brakes... Reverse...

EXT. WESTPHAL HOME - FRONT - NIGHT

Quentin reaches for the passenger-side door's handle when the sedan jerks backward. He starts after the vehicle as Carol leaps onto his back with a scream.

She claws at his face and tears large chunks of charred flesh from his skull. He growls with rage, flips her forward, and sends her to the pavement with a thud.

Quentin looks on helplessly as the sedan backs onto the road and slowly drives off into the night. Carol cradles her injured arm and looks up at him defiantly.

CAROL
You can take me, but you'll never take my children.

QUENTIN
I'm sure they'll mention your valor in the obituary.

CAROL
It's over for you, too. There's nobody here left for you to hurt.
QUENTIN
Nobody? There's a city just down the road. A city that's home to those who conspired against me, those who tried to drive me to insanity. I have plans for Lake Resurgence. Such plans. When I'm finished, the streets will run red with blood. Too bad you won't be around to see it.

CAROL
At least I'm not a freak! Look at yourself! You've been burnt to a crisp! Your skin's peeling off your bones! You're disgusting! You're inhuman! What do you have to say about that, you bastard?!

QUENTIN
This too shall pass. I wasn't expecting vehicular assault, electrocution, axe blows, or fire, but I didn't spend eight years preparing for my rebirth just to be stuck in a rotting shell of a body. You see, my renaissance comes with the perk of regeneration. In a few days, I'll be in better physical shape than at any point in my lifetime. And then... And then my revenge will begin in earnest.

CAROL
Somebody will stop you. Somebody has to stop you.

He cackles and spreads his arms out wide in response.

QUENTIN
Don't you understand? I am invulnerable! I am indomitable! I am invincible! Nobody on this earth can stop me! Nobody!

The large axe swings through the air behind Quentin and severs his right arm at the elbow. He wails in anguish and collapses to the pavement.

Quentin looks at his severed forearm with the knife still clutched in its hand. Carol raises her head as the man with the axe steps out of the darkness.

ROBERT
Nobody? You sure about that?
CAROL
Robert!

She rises to her feet and wraps her arms around him.

QUENTIN
Was that the best you could do?

ROBERT
Let's find out. Carol, go to the garage and get Ol' Betsy.

Carol heads for the garage and disappears into the darkness. Robert clutches the axe and stands guard over Quentin.

QUENTIN
You don't understand what you're dealing with. There's nothing you can do to hurt me. Nothing.

ROBERT
No? Not even this?

Robert swings the axe and severs the serial killer's left arm at the elbow. Quentin moans in pain for a moment only to cackle in amusement.

QUENTIN
You still don't get it, do you?! There is nothing on this earth that can stop me! Nothing!

CAROL (O.S.)
Nothing?

Quentin looks up as Carol emerges from the darkness with a large chainsaw in hand.

CAROL
Let's hear what Ol' Betsy has to say.

Carol pulls the starter cord and the chainsaw's engine roars to life. A look of terror washes over what little is left of Quentin's face as she slowly steps forward.

MONTAGE
A) Quentin whimpers in despair as Carol brings the chainsaw down and severs his legs at the knees.

B) Robert steps out of the garage and stacks the last of ten large wooden boxes on the driveway.
C) Quentin wails in desperation as Carol lowers the chainsaw and separates his legs at the hips.

D) Robert exits the garage once more with a wheelbarrow in hand and a closed bag of concrete mix inside.

E) Quentin cries out in anguish as Carol brings the chainsaw down and severs his arms at the shoulders.

F) Robert empties the bag into the wheelbarrow and uses a garden hose to add water to the concrete mix.

G) Quentin screams in horror as Carol lowers the chainsaw and prepares to separate his head from his torso.

END MONTAGE

Quentin mumbles to himself as he darts his eyes about.

QUENTIN
I... I am invulnerable... indomitable... invincible...

Quentin's severed head rests inside one of the wooden boxes. Robert and Carol stand over the box and look down at what little remains of the serial killer.

CAROL
How can he keep talking?

ROBERT
I don't have a clue.

CAROL
Well, I think he's said enough.

The couple rolls the wheelbarrow into view and pours its contents into the box. Quentin's head is buried underneath a sea of concrete.

They set the wheelbarrow aside and embrace one another. Robert lightly kisses Carol on the forehead. The faint sounds of distant police sirens echo through the night.

CAROL
What do we tell the police?

ROBERT
Honestly, I have no idea.

She waves her hand and gestures toward the driveway.

CAROL
How do we explain this?
ROBERT
I... I don't know.

CAROL
Well, this won't be our problem for long thanks to the postal service.

ROBERT
Yeah, you're right. We'll let New York deal with this. And Los Angeles.

CAROL
And London, and Paris, and Berlin...

ROBERT
Moscow, New Delhi, Beijing, Tokyo, Sydney...

The ten wooden boxes, each with a body part fully encased in concrete, are arrayed on the driveway. Robert and Carol hold one another as they wait for the police to arrive.

FADE OUT.

THE END