THE MAN IN THE WINDOW

screenplay by
Eric C. Dickson
EXT. SIDEWALK – SUBURBS – MORNING
A couple of feisty pups GROWL, tear at each other while their female owners tug at their leashes.

A very bored MAN watches the action from his immaculately kept lawn across the way. He sips a coffee and inspects a long row of trash bins dotting the narrow street.

This is SCOTT RYAN (40s), neatly shaved, polo and dockers, an inquisitive mind at work.

Scott turns to his neighbor's lawn.
No trash bin.
Checks his watch.
7:06 AM
A dog BARKS.
He turns back to one of the two pups barking and grunting in his direction.

WOMAN
Shhh! That’s enough!

The woman snags at the leash, chokes the angry pup as they head up the sidewalk.

Scott gives the dog an angry scowl. He throws his coffee in the grass, heads inside.

CUT TO:

INT. RYAN HOUSE – BEDROOM – DAY
Scott finishes tying his shoes, straps an ipod to his bicep and pops in an earplug. He checks his watch --

7:55 AM
He stands, peeks through his curtains and spots --

A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN disrobing in the bedroom across the way. Her hair is wet as she drops a silk nightie to the floor.

This is ELSA DAVIS (30s), jet black hair, gorgeous. Elsa rests on her mattress before Scott can get an eyeful.

SCOTT
(smiles)
Good morning.
EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD – DAY

Elsa, now in some tight jogging shorts and sports bra, runs with a fierce determination.

She fights a smile as she spots Scott coming the other direction trying hard not to notice her.

The two neighbors pass without a word.

Elsa looks first, then Scott, who catches her checking him out. She quickly faces forward.

ELSA
(embarrassed)

Shit.

Scott also turns away. A mischievous smile.

CUT TO:

EXT. RYAN HOUSE – FRONT PORCH – NIGHT

Scott puffs a cigar and sips a scotch while he listens to Elsa's piano through an open window. An original piece.

CUT TO:

INT. RYAN HOUSE – KITCHEN – NIGHT

Scott grabs a bottle of Johnny Walker from a modest breakfast table, pours another glass as Elsa's music seeps in from the open windows.

He steps into a living room area where a BABY GRAND sits in the corner. He fixates on the instrument. Focused.

OPEN WINDOW

Scott stares out, into the night, hears the melodic sounds of Elsa's PIANO reach an emotional peak.

He takes a seat, sips at his drink as he flips through some sheet music. He looks up, stares over at --

A PHOTOGRAPH OF A WOMAN

sitting at this same piano, a very sexy but sophisticated pose as she smiles back at the camera.

Scott grins.

CUT TO:
EXT. ELSA'S HOME – MORNING

Scott makes his way toward the front door with a stack of mail in hand. He gives a short KNOCK.

Elsa arrives at the door, surprised to see Scott waiting on the other side. Her hair still wet from the shower.

SCOTT

Hi. Did I catch you at a bad time? I can come back.

ELSA

No. You're fine.
(catches herself)
It's fine. What is it?
(flustered)
I mean, how are you?

Elsa laughs. Nervous.

SCOTT

It's been awhile since you've had guests?

ELSA

That obvious?

Scott hands her an opened envelope. She gives it a look.

SCOTT

I'm afraid I opened it by mistake.

Elsa is a bit confused as she stares at her PHONE BILL.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Mail man dropped it in my box.

Elsa watches Scott, a bit unsure of him.

ELSA

Oh. Of course.
(nervous laugh)
Come in. Please.

Scott steps inside.

The across the street neighbor takes a special interest in the strange man entering Elsa's home.

This is GREER (40s), long, braided hair, thick sweater jacket, with a full string of child-like buttons on her lapel.
INT. ELSA'S HOME – LIVING ROOM – DAY

Elsa and Scott stand near the front door in an awkward pose as if an early mating ritual.

She hands him a coffee as he nervously takes his first sip. He quickly retracts.

SCOTT
Mmm. It's hot.

ELSA
It's a fresh pot.

SCOTT
No, no. I mean...thank you.

Scott offers his own nervous laugh. These two are a train wreck but it's plain to see an attraction exists between them.

ELSA
What brings you by?

Scott points at her phone bill. A reminder.

SCOTT
Your mail?

ELSA
Yes, of course. I'm so sorry. You can tell I haven't had my coffee, can't you?

Scott smiles, does a quick survey of his surroundings. A very modest living room.

A simple television and couch, no artwork, and no photos of any kind resting on the walls or furniture.

SCOTT
You just moving in?

ELSA
Umm. Yeah. It's actually been a few weeks. Guess I just haven't had the time to put everything away.

Scott helps himself further into the home, snoops around and has a good look for himself. Elsa gives him a strange look.

He seems to be searching for something.
SCOTT
You stay pretty busy, do you?

Scott stops, turns to her. She smiles.

ELSA
Yeah. Well. I've been looking for work mostly. Putting together a mailing list of possible students. Flyers on doors, that sort of thing.

SCOTT
Students? You're a teacher?

ELSA

A nervous giggle.

ELSA (CONT'D)
Now I teach piano mostly. Private lessons. Doctors kids, that sort of thing. So far...not so good, but I'm working on it.

(beat)
Guess you could say I'm just trying to settle back in.

SCOTT
Yeah. I know the feeling.

An awkward silence.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Well, I've enjoyed what I've heard. My wife...she used to play.

ELSA
Used to?

SCOTT
Yeah. Before she passed. I guess I've been doing some settling back in myself.

Elsa seems sad for him.

ELSA
I'm sorry.
SCOTT
It's okay.

ELSA
What happened? If you don't mind me asking?

Scott stalls, uncomfortable, hands her his cup.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
I'm gonna get going.

Elsa seems almost disappointed.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Thanks for the coffee.

Scott heads for the door. Elsa follows.

ELSA
I never got your name.

SCOTT
Ryan. Scott Ryan.

ELSA
I didn't mean to...

SCOTT
It's okay. Really. I'm just...
I have some things to do.

Scott smiles as he heads out. Elsa watches him closely. A bit smitten. And mostly confused.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

Elsa's daughter REENA DAVIS (16), bright dyed red hair, cut near the neck, haunting eyes and the pale white skin of an innocent, walks home from school with her friend LANIE (17), dark goth meets valley girl, pink hair and fishnets.

LANIE
You know, I don't just walk home with anyone. Consider this your first step up on the social ladder.

Reena rolls her eyes. A small grin.
REENA
I'm touched.
Lanie laughs as she opens a fresh pack of smokes.

LANIE
You see? That's what I like about you. You don't give a shit. That's hard to come by these days.

REENA
It takes years of practice.

LANIE
I mean it. Since that first day at lunch when you told Reemus to go screw himself. I knew there was something about you.

Reena grows visibly uncomfortable with the conversation.

REENA
You're not gonna go all lesbo on me, are you?
Lanie throws an arm around her.

LANIE
Why? You want me to?

Reena laughs, removes her arm.

LANIE (CONT'D)
Seriously. It took a lot of balls doing what you did. I figured this chick's either crazy or she's looking for trouble.

REENA
I don't like people taking my chair.

LANIE
Yeah I noticed. You know I would've kicked your ass, right?

Reena isn't so convinced.

LANIE (CONT'D)
But I didn't.
LANIE (CONT'D)
You see, most people are scared of me. But not you. Of all the tables, you came and sat right in my seat.

Reena cracks a grin.

LANIE (CONT'D)
Like you were saying “Move over, bitch. There's a new slut in town”. (beat)
No one's ever tried shit like that before. You know, I think me and you have more in common than you think.

REENA
How's that?

LANIE
It don't take Doctor Phil to figure out you got a messed up home life.

REENA
Yeah, you could say that.

LANIE
So? You wanna talk about it, or am I supposed to guess?

REENA
It's kind of a long story.

LANIE
You got some place to be?

The low RUMBLE of a beat up clunker with no muffler grabs the two girls attention. They turn.

A CONVERTIBLE TWO DOOR
slows to a halt as a young male student pokes his head out the driver's window. This is TEDDY (17), gruff, simple t shirt and oily hair, boyishly handsome.

TEDDY
Hey, Lanie! Who's your twin?!

Lanie and Reena chuckle.
LANIE
Just someone else who won't sleep with you, Teddy.
    (to Reena)
My douchebag ex.

TEDDY
What kind of talk is that? Here I am trying to be nice and civil and you're talkin' trash.

LANIE
And you just happened to be passing through here?

TEDDY
Yeah. Something like that. Look, are you gonna give me a hard time or come for a ride? It's like a hundred degrees out here.

LANIE
Why should I?

TEDDY
Oh, I don't know. No reason. I just might need help smokin' this fatty I just rolled.

A big smile shoots across Lanie's face as she slowly turns to Reena.

LANIE
    (to Reena)
On second thought, it is getting hot out here, isn't it, Reena?

Reena isn't so sure.

TEDDY

Lanie grabs her friend by the arm, quickly drags her toward the car as they head for the passenger door.

CUT TO:
INT. TEDDY'S CAR – DAY

Reena and Lanie squeeze in tight, pushing dirty laundry and other garbage to the floor and rear window.

Teddy passes the fat joint to an eager Lanie as Reena's eyes instantly connect with a pair of baby blues staring back at her from the visor.

This is SKAZ (20s), jet black hair, dyed and shaved thin to the skull. An intense young man with eyebrows like Spock and an unsettling stare.

Reena likes him as she fights a growing smile.

TEDDY
Who's your friend?
(to Reena)
Whatever she's telling you about me don't listen. It was all her fault. Ask anyone.

LANIE
Oh, shut up, Teddy. Don't start any shit. Today sucked and I don't need you ruining my high.

Teddy laughs, eyes on Reena.

TEDDY
You have a name or do we just keep calling you new chick?

Reena plays coy and ignores him. Lanie just laughs as she puffs and passes to Reena.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Skaz quietly and creepily stares back at her from his sun visor. Unflinching and unfeeling.

TEDDY (CONT'D)
He don't say much but I can tell he likes you.

Skaz reaches his left hand to the rearview mirror and positions it on Reena's face. Reena spots an inverted pentagram tattoo on the back of his hand and is taken aback.
TEDDY
Whoa-ho! Lanie, you better keep an eye on this one. I believe she's been targeted for termination.

Reena grows increasingly uncomfortable with Skaz and it shows. Lanie takes notice.

LANIE
That's not funny, Teddy. You guys are scaring her. Cool it.

TEDDY
So did you ask her yet?

Lanie rolls her eyes. Reena is confused.

TEDDY (CONT'D)
Come on. What's the big deal. Just do it. Or do you want me to?

REENA
Ask me what?

TEDDY
Well. On your stroll home today, Lanie here was supposed to ask if you moved into that big blue house on Peyton Drive. I take it from your confusion, she never had the balls to ask.

LANIE
Knock it off.

TEDDY
Okay fine. I'll tell her.
(to Reena)
A girl was killed there last year and she looks just like you.

LANIE
Shit, Teddy!!!

TEDDY
What? Someone should tell her. She's just gonna hear it from someone else.
REENA

Bullshit.

LANIE

He's just playing with you. Don't listen to him.

SKAZ

A cute little redhead, just about your size. Walking home from school. Took this same road. The same time, every day. Only one day, she never made it home. Somewhere between here and there...she got snatched.

Reena is scared to death. Lanie can't help but be intrigued by Skaz's storytelling.

SKAZ (CONT'D)

Cops never found the body. But every now and then you hear stories. About seeing her walking these same roads. School books in arm.

Reena swallows. Her fear is palpable.

SKAZ (CONT'D)

They say that sometimes after people die, they don't know their dead. Like it happens so fast, they never knew what hit them. Some say it was a hit and run. Others say she was taken in the woods, and her spirit roams these streets searching for a killer.

Reena and Lanie share a brief look. Lanie shakes her head at Reena, as if to deny the story.

SKAZ (CONT'D)

You see, this particular girl made a lot of enemies, so they say. The kind of girl that liked to put down other kids and talk all kinds of shit. Cops had a list of suspects that stretched longer than this road.

Skaz reaches in closer to the mirror, stares dead at Reena.
SKAZ (CONT'D)
The moral of this story...sometimes it's better not to poke your nose in other people's business. You just might get it cut off.

Reena is trembling with fear. Her lips quiver as Skaz's cold stare shoots a visible chill up her spine.

INT. ELSA'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY
Elsa has dinner on the stove as her eyes frantically move in a nervous frenzy between her cell phone and a wall clock.
It's pushing 4:20 PM.
The sound of a SCREEN DOOR OPENING draws Elsa's attention to the kitchen window and onto the back porch. She spots Reena on her way in.
Elsa storms out the door and meets her half-way.

EXT. BACK PORCH - DAY

ELSA
Where the hell do you think you've been?! I've been calling and texting for an hour now!

REENA
Have an aneurism why don't you.

ELSA
We had a deal! Why didn't you answer your phone?! I'm only gonna ask once!

REENA
It's dead, okay! Sorry! It happens!

ELSA
And where have you been?!

REENA
School! Where do you think?!

ELSA
School's been out over an hour, and don't tell me the bus was late because I called!
Reena drops her bag on the carpet and heads for a mini fridge in the corner, as Elsa follows one step behind.

ELSA
Don't walk away! Answer me!

Reena grabs a soda from the fridge, cracks it open. Elsa grabs her wrist, squeezes hard.

ELSA (CONT'D)
Look at me!

REENA
What?!

ELSA
Where were you and don't lie to me!

REENA
I got a ride home with friends, okay? It's not a big deal.

ELSA
Friends? What friends?

REENA
I don't know. Just these guys. Friends of Lanie's.

Elsa throws her hands in the air. Smacks her palms on her jeans in angry frustration.

ELSA
Oh, that's great. That's real great.

Reena stares at the floor in defeat. She knows she screwed up. Elsa gropes both of Reena's arms in a desperate plea.

ELSA (CONT'D)
Do you understand what's going on? Why we're here? Do you understand the significance of that?

REENA
Yes.

ELSA
It means if you go anywhere other than school, it's with me. After school, you take the bus and come straight home.
And you don't get rides with friends, or anyone else but me. Do you understand?

Reena bounces on her heels. Angry. Stubborn.

REENA
I guess so.

Elsa strikes her across the face. Reena is shocked. Elsa is even more shocked as tears shoot from her eyes.

ELSA
Yes or no!

REENA (shaken)
Yes.

Reena runs for the door as she angrily yanks her book bag from the carpet. Elsa covers her mouth to keep from crying out as the tears roll down her face.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOME – LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Elsa has Jimmy Fallon on the tube as she pours a good double shot of vodka into a glass. Her face is red and swollen from heavy crying.

She takes a large gulp, attempts to rest the glass on a night stand, but misses the table by a good two inches.

SPLASH!

Elsa doesn't bother picking it up as she rubs at her sore head and buries her face.

CUT TO:

INT. REENA'S ROOM – NIGHT

Reena is on her laptop, ear plugs in, as Elsa rests her back on the door frame. She gives a quick knock as Reena halfheartedly pulls out her plugs.

REENA
What now?
Elsa enters.

ELSA
These boys. Were they cute?

REENA
They were a ride home, Mom. That's it.

CUT TO:

INT. RYAN HOUSE – HALLWAY – NIGHT
Scott stands at the window in this dark second story passage as he watches Elsa stroll about Reena's bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. REENA'S BEDROOM – NIGHT
Elsa folds her arms and shuffles about the room as we see Scott peering through the window from across the way.

ELSA
I know this has been hard on you. Maybe even harder for you than it has been for me. Sometimes I forget that.

Elsa faces the window as Scott quickly ducks out of view. She turns back to Reena.

ELSA (CONT'D)
I know it's important for you to have friends on your own time without hanging around boring old me. I understand that. Last thing I wanna do is keep you from living your life.

Reena sets her laptop on her bed. The screen is carefully faced away from Elsa. As if on purpose. Reena nervously wraps her arms around her legs.

ELSA (CONT'D)
We're all alone here. Greg's dead and we've got no one else to watch out for us, or rely on but each other.
ELSA
That scares the shit out of me and
I really don't know how else to
deal with it.

Elsa shakes with anxiety. Tears up again as her trembling hand
wipes her tears.

REENA
You said no matter what we have to
move on. That's all I'm trying to
do.

ELSA
(smiles)
I know, baby. I know.

THE ALMOST DEAFENING ROAR OF DEATH METAL
scares the hell out of both Elsa and Reena as they gasp to catch
their breath.

ELSA
What is that?!

Reena covers her ears.

REENA
Where's it coming from?!

Elsa instinctively grabs Reena's arm and yanks her from the bed
as they head out.

ELSA
Come on!

Before they can make it to the door: CRASH! The bedroom WINDOW
SHATTERS as a HEAVY ROCK tumbles onto the carpet.

Reena SHRIEKS in horror as she trips and falls face first to the
floor. Elsa helps her up as they hurry from the room.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOME – HALLWAY – NIGHT

Elsa and Reena rush up the hall and stop at Elsa's bedroom door.
Elsa runs inside, grabs a THIRTY TWO REVOLVER from a dresser
drawer.
Reena runs in circles, panicked, as Elsa checks the chamber for shells.

    REENA
    Hurry!

Elsa grabs Reena by the hand, keeps her one step behind as they move for the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOME – KITCHEN – NIGHT

Elsa and Reena move for the door but are stopped by the sight of a HIGH BEAM FLASHLIGHT circling their back porch.

    REENA
    (cries)
    Oh my God.

    ELSA
    Everything's gonna be okay. You just stay one step behind me. Got it?

Reena nods. The two girls walk to the door as Elsa quickly opens and points her weapon at the mystery figure waiting on the other side.

It's Scott. And he swiftly retrieves the weapon from Elsa's hand and restrains her.

    REENA
    No!

    SCOTT
    (to Elsa)
    It's me. It's Scott. Your neighbor.

Reena pulls a large cutting KNIFE from a block set and holds it in Scott's direction.

    SCOTT (CONT'D)
    I'm gonna very slowly let go of you and hand you back your gun. When I do, I want you and your daughter to run as fast as you can to my house and lock all the doors.

    REENA
    What's going on?!
ELSA
   It's okay. You can put down the knife.

SCOTT
   No, don't put it down. You may need it.

Scott slowly releases Elsa and hands her the thirty two.

ELSA
   Who the hell is that?

Scott stalls. Strangely quiet.

SCOTT
   I don't know.

Reena watches him with distrust.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
   (beat)
   Take the front door. With any luck, they woke the neighbors. Remember what I said. When you get to my house, you lock all the doors and windows. Get going.

Elsa grabs Reena's hand.

ELSA
   Come on.

The girls head for the front door.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELSA'S HOME – NIGHT

Elsa and Reena run like hell for Scott's house as Elsa notices a strange woman watching from her front lawn. Greer.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELSA'S HOME – DRIVEWAY – NIGHT

Scott wanders about the driveway with his large FLASHLIGHT in hand. The beam stops on a WIDE OPEN GARAGE DOOR. Elsa's car parked inside.

He is cautious as he begins toward it.
GARAGE

Scott gives the garage a good once over, waves the flashlight around every inch of the room. He turns, checks over his shoulder:

SCOTT'S POV – REAR LAWN

The bright light ILLUMINATES the sprawling green lawn as there is not a soul in sight.

BACK TO SCENE

Scott opens the basement door and heads inside.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOME – BASEMENT – NIGHT

Scott flips on a light switch and waits safely at the door as he scans the messy room.

All of Elsa and Reena's belongings occupy the dusty room. Old suitcases, shoe boxes, large garbage bags and heavy plastic totes take up a good portion.

Some clothes and winter coats hang from a clothes line that stretches the room.

Scott takes his time as he strolls the room with his flashlight and investigates each corner.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOME – DINING ROOM – NIGHT

Scott keeps the lights off as he cautiously searches the house. He wanders into a dining room parlor, spotlights something on the white wall hanging over the dinner table.

Something we cannot see. We only see his reaction.

SCOTT

Bingo.

CUT TO:

DINING ROOM – LATER THAT NIGHT

The lights now on. Elsa stands in shock as she observes the blood red PENTAGRAM painted on her wall.

A picture of Reena taped to the dead center.
Scott quietly speaks with DEPUTY HAYES in the living room as he throws a concerned look at Elsa.

HAYES (40s), black, trim and fit, simple t-shirt and jeans and a gun poking from the rear of his pants, approaches Elsa with a real compassion in his eyes.

HAYES
Miss Davis?

Elsa keeps her focus on Reena's photo.

ELSA
Tell me you know who did this.

HAYES
If I knew that, we'd already have them in custody.

Elsa shoots him a deadly serious stare.

ELSA
Them? Who's them? There's more than one?

Hayes and Scott share a look.

HAYES
Miss Davis? I took a statement from your neighbor. Apparently she saw a car load of kids driving up and down the street who seemed to take a special interest in your house.
(beat)
Kept slowing down and stopping and so forth. This was a little over an hour ago.

Elsa storms out – confronts Reena sitting on the couch.

ELSA
Do you know anything about this?!

Reena thinks it all over.

REENA
(to Hayes)
Did they say what the car looked like?
HAYES
From the description, it sounded like maybe an early model Cutlass. Blue with a black top. Convertible.

ELSA
(to Reena)
You know who it was? Who?

REENA
Wait. Why would they do this?

HAYES
Who's they?

REENA
This kid from school. Teddy. And this other guy. Said his name was Skaz.

HAYES
Yeah, Teddy Baaz. I know that kid. He's a low level dealer, high school dropout type. Spends most of his days slinging to tenth graders.
(to Reena)
What's your involvement with them?

ELSA
A drug dealer?! What the fuck???

REENA
I'm not doing drugs and I'm not involved with them. I just met them today. They're friends with Lanie.

HAYES
And? What else?

REENA
There is no what else. That's it.

ELSA
They didn't just break into our house cos they were bored! What did you do?

Reena leaps from the couch, worked up as she paces the carpet.

REENA
It was nothing!
SCOTT
Must've been something.

REENA
Who the hell are you?

ELSA
Hey! They're here to help! And watch your mouth! What happened with you and these kids?

Reena grows more annoyed as she spins in a sort of frantic circle and plays with her hair.

REENA
Me and this girl Lanie got into it a few days ago at school. Just a fight in the lunch room. I sort of made her look like shit in front of half the class.

ELSA
That's great. What about the others?

REENA
I told you! There was these two guys! I never saw them before today!

ELSA
And you didn't say anything to them? You didn't smart off? Nothing?

REENA
No! I don't know why they would do this, okay?! It wasn't a big deal! We've been walking home together ever since! If she was still mad, I'd know about it!

Elsa shakes her head in disappointment.

SCOTT
(to Hayes)
Bottom line. Is this kid Teddy violent? Somebody we need to worry about?

HAYES
Before tonight, I would've said no. Him and his crew pulled some stupid shit before, but nothing like this.
ELSA
Okay, so what're we talking about here? You know who he is, go pick him up.

HAYES
It's not gonna be that easy. This kid Baaz hasn't held a legal residence in years. You could say he's sort of a drifter. Goes from couch to couch. Girl to girl. Or whoever else will put him up for the month.

ELSA
So you have no idea where these kids could be? Is that what you're telling me?

HAYES
I can do some asking around. Shake all the usual trees. Believe me, when we find them, I'll make it real clear they're not welcome in my neighborhood. They'll think twice before pulling a stunt like this around here again.

Scott pats him on the back and shakes his hand.

SCOTT
Thanks for coming out, brother.

HAYES
(to Elsa)
Keep these doors locked.

Hayes heads out as Scott locks up behind him. Elsa shakes her head in frustration as tears shoot down her face.

ELSA
I can't stay here. Not tonight.

SCOTT
No, you're not. You're gonna come stay with me. I don't want either of you here until he says it's safe.

Elsa isn't so sure. And neither is Reena who watches from behind a corner wall.
INT. RYAN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Elsa rests on a couch, a thick blanket covers her lap as she still shakes a bit. Her nerves shot.

Scott fixes a couple shots of scotch on a nearby counter.

SCOTT
Bobby Hayes was the resource officer at the high school for years before he took the detective's exam. He's still got a lot of pull with the faculty.

Scott hands Elsa a stiff drink.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
I don't care how tough your daughter says this Lanie girl is. She'll be squealing like a pig by tomorrow morning.

ELSA
How do you two know each other?

Scott hangs out near a corner window as he keeps a careful eye on Elsa's home.

SCOTT
I used to work at the school. I was an administrator. Assistant Principal. Bobby and I spent a lot of time together.

ELSA
I bet.

SCOTT
I tell ya, the way these kids are now, Bobby's better off on the streets. But he's tough. He knew right away the only way to get through was to put the fear of God into them.

ELSA
They don't have any respect. It's so disgusting.
Reena creeps up quietly behind a wall and listens in on their conversation.

**SCOTT**

How do you expect these kids to learn respect when half of them don't even know their father and the other halves parents aren't shit.

Elsa grows frustrated as she can't keep her hands from shaking. She gulps down her drink.

Scott quickly re fills her glass.

**SCOTT**

It's the breakdown of the American home. We don't teach anymore. We mediate. Then sending them off for a life they're not prepared for. Why? Because we weren't strong enough.

Scott takes his place back at the window.

**SCOTT**

It's easier to send her off to her girlfriend's for dinner, shut off the wife's voice and nurse a bottle than to ask how their day went. We only have a few years to get it right. Then, after awhile, it's too late.

Elsa senses a sadness in him.

**ELSA**

I like to think I do my best.

**SCOTT**

(regret)

Yeah. So did I.

Scott throws down his scotch. Reena pays special attention to Scott's sorrowful demeanor.

**SCOTT**

So I noticed you're kind of hard on your girl. Any reason?
ELSA
Part of the reason we moved back. She started getting in with the wrong crowd. Just like any other inner city school, I suppose. Things just seemed to get worse for her, especially after Greg died.

SCOTT
Greg?

ELSA
My husband. Sort of the other reason we left.

SCOTT
I didn't know.

ELSA
Greg and I met at the hospital where we both worked. I was an admit nurse in the ER. He was just finishing his residency. We had only been married a few months when it happened.

Elsa takes a generous swig.

ELSA (CONT'D)
One day, it was work as usual. Greg was working on a GSW. A young kid, maybe eighteen. Gang colors. Well this kid must've told him a few things.

Elsa spins her glass in a nervous fit.

ELSA (CONT'D)
A few minutes later this carload of bangers park at the ambulance bay and bumrush the ER. They put about six shots in this kid then hold Greg as a shield on their way out the door.

Reena grows sad for her mother all over again.
ELSA
Well, I guess they figured their boy talked because they took Greg with them. Tossed him right in the trunk and sped off. That was eight months ago. It was the last time I saw him.

Elsa finishes her drink.

SCOTT
You saw this?

ELSA
I couldn't go back to that place. Not after that. These guys. They came into my home. Where I worked, where I lived. In a blink of an eye, they took everything. I guess I didn't feel safe there anymore.

Scott smiles.

SCOTT
They didn't get everything.

ELSA
I thought coming back here was gonna be different.

( tearful plea)
I can't let anything happen to her.

Reena takes it all in as she stares blankly at the opposite wall. She quietly tip toes to a spare bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT
Reena, still scared but mostly bored, wanders about the room, taking it all in. It is modestly decorated with the bare minimum effort.

Something catches her eye. A photograph rests on an old oak chest. The color RED stands out.

Reena steps closer and spots a TEEN GIRL WITH RED HAIR sitting on a playground swing.

Reena's eyes shift in careful thought.
INT. RYAN HOME – LIVING ROOM – MORNING

Elsa awakens on the couch as the morning sun creeps through the windows. She sits up, a bit disoriented and hungover.

ELSA

Reena?!

Elsa checks her watch.

ELSA (CONT'D)

Shit.

A conversation from outside the home can be slightly heard as Elsa tries to listen in. She follows the noise to the front window and peeks behind some blinds.

Scott and Hayes are talking in the driveway. Scott's head shaking as he paces the ground.

Hayes pats him on the shoulder and heads to his car. Elsa runs for the door and opens but is too late.

EXT. RYAN HOME – DRIVEWAY – MORNING

Elsa meets Scott halfway. Anxious for the news.

ELSA

Where's he going? I wanted to talk to him.

SCOTT

The girl's got an airtight alibi for last night. She says she's got no idea why they would do this to Reena.

ELSA

She's lying.

SCOTT

I know.

ELSA

If they know she's lying, why won't they do something?!

SCOTT

It's not that simple. She wasn't with these kids and she can prove it.

ELSA

So what about the others?
ELSA
Did he find them or not?

SCOTT
Not yet. He spent all morning going class to class, asking around. Giving this Teddy kid's history of dealing, nobody was talking.

Elsa twists in circles. A nervous wreck.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Calm down. I'm not finished yet. Hayes authorized a locker search on some repeat offenders. Let's just say he found more than school books and gummi bears.

ELSA
What? What is it?

SCOTT
One of the kids he busted is gonna set up a fake deal. If Teddy takes the bait, they've got him for distribution. Threaten him with jail time, he rats the others out, cased closed.

Elsa finally calms herself.

ELSA
(dead serious)
I'm not going back in that house until I know Reena's safe.

SCOTT
I know you're not. If this works, this will all be worked out in a couple days. In the meantime, I've got another idea.

ELSA
(intrigued)
What?

CUT TO:
INT. ELSA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Elsa awaits patiently as she watches Scott install the last of a series of video surveillance cameras inside the belly of a bushy potted plant.

Reena watches, unamused, from down the hall, soda can in hand and a slouched, uninterested posture.

SCOTT
All done. There's not one inch of this place that isn't covered. We keep lights to a minimum to hide the cameras but keep enough where it counts.

Reena huffs with boredom.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
The lamp at the end of the hall and the kitchen light will paint a nice big target on their face.

ELSA
I hope this works.

SCOTT
If all works out, we'll have their mug on video before they even know what's going on.

ELSA
(to Reena)
You hear that? Let this be your official warning next time you wanna sneak out after hours.

REENA
Why are you doing this for us?

Both Elsa and Scott are taken aback by her outburst. Elsa gives Reena the signal to back off. Scott doesn't back down as he and the teen lock eyes

ELSA
He's trying to help. In a way, he's here cos of you. A little courtesy would be nice. Or even a sign of appreciation.
REENA
It just seems a bit extreme. The cops already scared the shit out of them. They're not gonna come back.

ELSA
We don't know that.

SCOTT
A little precaution never hurt anyone.

REENA
(to Scott)
Why don't you tell her what this is really about? I see how you look at my Mom.

Elsa moves for her daughter. A sore issue.

ELSA
That's enough.

REENA
He thinks he can just walk in here. Instant family. Just add daughter and stir.

(to Scott)
Isn't that right, Mister Ryan?

ELSA
I don't know what the hell your problem is, but you're gonna close your mouth.

REENA
You know, if you guys are hot for each other then make it official. But don't pretend any of this is about me.

ELSA
I said shut up!

REENA
What're you, gonna hit me again, mother?

Elsa backs off, embarassed.

REENA (CONT'D)
If you know my mother's history, you'll know it's never been about me. Not once.
Reena storms off as Elsa chases her all the way to her bedroom.

ELSIA
Now wait just a damn minute.

Reena slams the door in her mother's face but Elsa doesn't back off as she raps it with her fist.

ELSIA (CONT'D)
Reena!

Scott peers around the corner and rests his back on the wall as Elsa continues to beat the door down.

SCOTT
Let it go. She's just under stress.
Just like you.

Elsa points her boney finger at Scott, at an emotional breaking point and done taking crap from anyone.

ELSIA
You know what?! I appreciate what you're doing for us, but I can handle my own daughter! I'm her mother! She's my responsibility, so just back off!

Scott tosses his hands in the air in surrender as he walks off. Elsa is hit with the reality of what's happened.

ELSIA (CONT'D)
Shhhit.

She slaps her own forehead and slumps against the wall.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Elsa nurses a bottle of vodka at a modest breakfast table as Scott views the interiors and exteriors of the house on his laptop.

ELSIA
What happened earlier...

Scott peeks over his laptop.

ELSIA (CONT'D)
I think I know what that was.
SCOTT
Okay. Tell me about it.

ELSA
I don't have what you would call a solid track record when it's come to the men I've allowed in Reena's life.

SCOTT
I see.

ELSA
Her father left when she was just a baby. For reasons I don't discuss with her, even though she asks almost every day of her life.

Elsa twists her glass in a nervous fit as she usually does.

ELSA (CONT'D)
After that were a few rebounds, all just as lousy as the last.

Elsa puts the glass to her lips. Scott stops her and hands her a glass of water instead.

SCOTT
Try this instead. Get you to the same place but minus the hangover.

Elsa stares into the foggy water, unsure.

ELSA
What is it?

SCOTT
Something I take to help me sleep.

Elsa takes a sip.

ELSA
Where was I?

SCOTT
Talking about your lousy taste in men.

ELSA
Oh yeah.
ELSA  
Even Greg was no choir boy. Besides his career, he had a dark side.

Elsa takes another chug of her drink.

ELSA (CONT'D)  
Being an ER doc pretty much kills any chance of a normal home life. We saw each other at work, but that was pretty much it.

(beat)  
For awhile I went along with the Two AM phone calls and trips to the hospital. Him disappearing for hours and not calling. I knew it came with the job.

Scott hangs on every word. Totally invested.

ELSA (CONT'D)  
Until I started calling work and found out he's been lying. He was playing doctor alright. With half of the nursing staff.

SCOTT  
How did you find out?

ELSA  
He told me. Bastard stared right at my face and told me. As if to think I was just gonna be okay with it.

(angry)  
After all, he was the bread winner. He didn't think I would walk, you see?

SCOTT  
Did you?

ELSA  
I never had the chance. Less than a week later, he disappeared. Can you believe it? Greg's long dead and I'm angry cos he got the last word in.
SCOTT
It's a chapter in your life you never got to close.

ELSA
I know it's not important. But I just can't seem to stop hating the bastard.

Elsa takes a drink.

SCOTT
Well you got more important things to worry about now. Liker your daughter.

Elsa seems affected by the words.

ELSA
Yeah. I guess you're right.

Elsa chugs the rest of her drink as Scott watches closely. His phone RINGS.

SCOTT
(answers)
Yeah, Hayes, what is it?
(listens)
No way.

Elsa grows worried.

SCOTT
Okay. Yeah. It was worth a shot. Thanks.

Scott hangs up.

SCOTT
Teddy Baaz was a no show. Someone at school must've got wind of what happened and tipped him off.

ELSA
The cops aren't gonna follow this up, are they?

SCOTT
In their eyes? It's a simple B and E. Nobody was hurt. No harm, no foul.
ELSA
Yeah, this time. But what about next
time? God knows what they're capable of.

SCOTT
Look, it doesn't mean he won't find him.
Just let him do his thing. I'm here and
I'm not gonna let anything happen.

INT. ELSA'S BEDROOM – NIGHT
Elsa tosses and turns in her sleep. Restless. Her eyes twinkle
a bit as she slowly awakens.

ELSA'S POV
Her sight is blurry but is able to make out a tall CLOAKED
FIGURE at the foot of her bed. She is caught somewhere in
between awake and asleep.

BACK TO SCENE
The cloaked figure now gone as she comes out of her sleep to the
loud roaring sound of WHITE NOISE.

INT. ELSA'S LIVING ROOM – NIGHT
Elsa spots the BRIGHT WHITE GLOW OF THE TV and its reflection
bouncing off every wall.

Scott face down on the couch, sound asleep.
She walks briskly to the set, grabs the remote control from the
tv stand and shuts it off – places the remote back in its place.
Elsa heads back to bed. She is halfway down the hall when she
hears the familiar hum of WHITE NOISE.

The BRIGHT BEAMS OF LIGHT hitting every wall around her. She is
visibly startled by this as she slowly turns, heads back toward
the living room.

As Elsa turns the corner we see --
Scott still asleep.
The WHITE SNOW once again blasts from the television.
The REMOTE CONTROL still in the same spot.

ELSA
Scott!
SCOTT
What's going on?

Elsa, now frustrated, unplugs the television from the wall.

SCOTT
What is it?

Elsa pauses. Thinks it over.

ELSA
Nothing. Go back to sleep.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL – DAY

Reena makes her way up a sidewalk with a couple of friends when she spots her mother's car pull to the curb. She is less than thrilled when she spots Scott behind the wheel.

She rolls her eyes, jumps in the back.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S CAR – DAY

Reena dumps her books, slumps in her seat and pops in her ear plugs.

ELSA
Hi baby. How was your day?

REENA
Lousy considering I was up most of the night.

(angry)
Could you guys make any more noise?

Elsa and Scott share a look.

ELSA
Yeah, sorry about that.

Reena gives Scott an ugly scowl as they catch eyes in the rearview mirror.

REENA
What's he doing here?
Scott grins, plays it off.

ELSA
Scott thinks it's a good idea we get out of the house tonight. Maybe go have dinner and catch a movie. What do you think?

Reena rolls her eyes.

REENA
Whatever.

SCOTT
So. Have you talked to your girlfriend since the other night? What's her name? Lanie?

REENA
I thought you said she didn't know anything.

SCOTT
Never said that. I doubt very seriously she doesn't know anything. Maybe she wasn't there. But she knows something.

REENA
You think she'd tell me if she did?

Scott locks eyes with her.

SCOTT
Depends on how close you guys are.

REENA
Like I said. We walked home from school together a few times. That's it.

SCOTT
Okay. If you say so, then I guess you say so.

Elsa turns to him. A real nasty stare.

SCOTT
So other than what happened the other night, how is everything else going for you? Enjoying life here in Bradford? You settling in okay?
REENA
I guess so. Just as lame as any small town. Why do you ask?

SCOTT
No reason. I was just thinking if I was in your shoes. Picking up and moving away from school, friends, my life. I'd be real hesitant to change. May even be a bit resentful. Do something foolish. Like things I wouldn't normally do.

Elsa's stare could burn a hole in his stomach. Reena notices and smiles.

REENA
Like what exactly?

SCOTT
Is there anything about the other night you'd like to tell your mother and I?

REENA
Not sure I follow.

SCOTT
Your mother seems to think someone's broken into the house although there's no signs of forced entry. Almost like someone from the inside painted that pentagram on the wall. Just so happened to have a photo of you handy.

ELSA
Okay, I think that's enough.

REENA
It's okay, Mom. He's just asking some questions, that's all. Now that we're being all open and honest with each other. Maybe you can tell me about that redhead that disappeared last year.

Elsa grows more and more irritated.

ELSA
What redhead?
REENA
There was this girl, walking home from school. About my age, my height. Freckles, red hair, the whole bit. She was picked up in broad daylight and never heard from again.

(beat)
I just thought maybe Mister Ryan knew something about it. Since he seems so interested in what's going on with me.

Elsa awaits his answer, as does Reena. He seems a bit shaken by her smug smile.

SCOTT
Can't say that I do, Reena. Just heard the stories. Whatever version the kids decide to spin that week and so forth. Guess I know about as much as you.

REENA
Interesting. Small town like this. You'd think a story like that would stay with a person.

Elsa watches Scott closely. He avoids eye contact.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELSA'S HOUSE – DRIVEWAY – NIGHT
Scott pulls the car up the driveway as he and Elsa both spot the garage door wide open.

ELSA
Tell me you left the door open.

Scott surveys the back lawn and surrounding trees. No one in sight.

SCOTT
I didn't.

ELSA
Oh my God.

SCOTT
You two stay put. You see anyone but me walk out that door you take off.
SCOTT
Go straight to the police. Got it?

ELSA
You're not going in there by yourself!

SCOTT
We don't have time to argue. Just stay put and wait. Like I said, anyone but me you don't stop and smell the roses. You haul ass.

Scott jumps out, heads for the open garage.

ELSA
Scott! Wait!

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S HOUSE - NIGHT
Scott goes room to room, gun drawn. Everything is where it should be. He checks the living room and then down the hall toward the bedrooms.

He ducks into --

REENA'S BEDROOM
-- and is immediately drawn to the carpet.

A PENTAGRAM
-- is marked on the floor with what looks like WHITE GRAINS OF SALT in a perfect circle.

FOUR BLACK CANDLES
-- recently blown out, stand tall at all four points.

A BLACK HANDED DAGGER
-- sits inside the homemade altar.

A CHALICE
-- filled with WATER also rests just outside the circle.

And lastly --

A FULL LENGTH MIRROR
-- sits just before the altar.
EXT. ELSA'S HOUSE – NIGHT

Elsa grows impatient, taps her feet on the car floor, bites at her nails.

ELSA
Is your door locked?

REENA
Yes. You locked it five times already.

ELSA
What the hell's taking him so long?

REENA
I really don't know, but he's seriously creeping me out.

ELSA
What're you talking about now?

REENA
I mean, how well do you know this guy? As far as you know it was him who left the door open and he's just fucking with us.

ELSA
Watch your mouth.

REENA
Mom, I'm serious! Did you even hear him earlier? Trying to turn you against me! Blaming me for what happened! News flash! All this weird shit didn't go down until he showed up on our doorstep!

CRASH!

The rear left window is SHATTERED by the swing of a baseball bat.

Reena SCREAMS. An eerie CHUCKLE from outside.

Elsa attempts to slip into the driver's seat but the driver's side WINDOW is quickly SHATTERED.

A DARK CLOAKED FIGURE snags the keys.

CLOAKED FIGURE #2 jumps on the hood of the car and LICKS THE WINDSHIELD.
Elsa ducks in her seat, unable to escape.

CLOAKED FIGURE #3
-- pulls Reena from the car, kicking and SCREAMING. He drags her by the hair, into the back lawn. Her legs tearing at the grassy terrain.

CLOAKED FIGURE #1
joins him as they attempt to unbutton her pants.

CLOAKED FIGURE #2
opens Elsa's car door, reaches for her, but is met with two hard KICKS to the chest.
Elsa swings and smacks at the figure as he fights to restrain her arms.
And then --
A GUNSHOT
in the b.g.

SCOTT
races down a hill, into the rear lawn with gun in hand as all three CLOAKED FIGURES retreat, into the trees, into the night.
Scott fires three more shots into the darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. REENA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Elsa stands near the altar, arms folded, furious, but in shock by the site before her. Scott ducks in, car keys in hand.

SCOTT
Found these in the grass.

Scott rests the keys on a corner nightstand as he watches Elsa take in the demonic site before her.

ELSA
Time's up, Mister Ryan. I'm gonna need an explanation for this. And I don't wanna hear 'I don't know anything', or how you're just being the friendly neighbor, loaning a helping hand. You know something!
ELSA
Start by telling me about that girl. The one Reena was talking about earlier. The one with the red hair. The one that looks just like my little girl.

(beat)
You tell me about her, Scott! And be sure not to leave out any important details!

Scott paces the carpet, searches for the words.

SCOTT
She was my daughter. This kid, Teddy Baaz. She used to run with him. Along with the rest of his crew. Drinking, getting high, partying. They were all into this dark shit. Dungeons and dragons type crap. Witchcraft, casting spells. All of it.

Scott seems disturbed by the site of the altar. His lips and face quiver.

ELSA
Keep talking.

SCOTT
Until one day they went too far with it. I was out of town, on business. I had no idea what she was into with these guys. None!

Scott fights his tears.

SCOTT
She had been gone two days when I found her. It was right here. In this room. Same spot. Her body laying just inside the circle. Cold. Her eyes staring up at the ceiling like she had just seen the devil himself.

ELSA
My God. You lived in this house?
ELSA
Why did you come back here?

SCOTT
Doctors all said it was her heart. It just stopped like a broken clock. Can you believe that? Sixteen years old.

(serious)
Something else killed my little girl.
Something in this house.

ELSA
You're crazy.

Scott slowly steps toward her. Elsa cautiously steps back.

SCOTT
I came back because I knew they would. And I'm not leaving here until I find out what happened.

ELSA
I don't understand. Any of this.

SCOTT
Don't you see what's happening? They're coming after her next. Whatever took my daughter wants Reena and they're the key to make it happen.

ELSA
You're sick. You need help.

Reena creeps to the edge of the door, peeks down at the altar on the floor.

ELSA (CONT'D)
Reena, I said stay out of here!

Reena spots the CAR KEYS on the night stand, snags them and runs off.

ELSA
Reena! Get back here!

Elsa chases after her.

CUT TO:
EXT. LANIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

An angry Reena storms the driveway at an unsafe speed and almost strikes the home owner's parked truck.

She jumps out, walks swiftly around the house, grabs a few small pebbles from the ground, chucks them at --

LANIE'S BEDROOM WINDOW

-- one story up.

Lanie flicks on her LIGHT and steps to the window.

Lanie isn't so sure.

LANIE
Reena, what the fuck? With all this crazy shit goin' down you throw shit at my window? I thought it was them! What the hell are you doing here?

REENA
Just shut up and open the back door. We gotta talk.

LANIE
Look, my parents told me to stay away from you. So I'll tell you just like I told the cops, I had nothing to do with it, and I got nothing to do with them. Not anymore.

REENA
I'm not here about that. Now will you open the door?

Lanie isn't so sure.

LANIE
I told you. I got nothing to say.

REENA
I'm not leaving here until you talk to me.

Lanie rocks back and forth, fidgety, nervous, unsure.

LANIE
Shit.

Lanie ducks back in.
INT. Lanie's Bedroom - Night

Lanie behind her computer, Reena at her side. They are browsing an internet site about satanic and demonic rituals.

Several items used in demonic rituals are featured on the page along with the definition of their use.

At the top of the page is a detailed diagram of a demonic ALTAR much like the one in Reena's bedroom.

REENA
That's it. That's it exactly.

LANIE
That big circle you found on the floor wasn't made of sugar, or flour. It was made from salt. As in salt of the earth.

Lanie points out all the finer details of the diagram, one piece at a time.

LANIE
What you have here are representations of all the elements. Earth, air, fire and water. The four burning candles represent fire. The cup you found filled with water is a chalice. Common in demonic rituals. The knife is called an athame. A sort of homemade dagger with a wooden handle.

Lanie points at the dead center of the altar.

LANIE
What you do is sit in the circle, point the dagger at all points of the altar. North, south, east, west. Then comes the incantation. The point where the vessel attempts to invite the demon.

Lanie is careful about her next few words.

LANIE
This particular altar is used specifically in inviting incubus and succubus.

Reena cracks a confused grin.
REENA
Wait. Aren't those like sex demons or something?

LANIE
Exactly.

Reena stands, paces the floor and rubs her sore head.

REENA
This is crazy shit.

LANIE
Look, I wasn't completely honest with you about Teddy and Skaz.

REENA
What do you mean?

LANIE
That guy Skaz. His mother lived in your house. She died around the same time she got pregnant with him.

REENA
And?

LANIE
And...she was like bat shit crazy. Told everyone in town a demon would fuck her every night when she fell asleep. Not only that. That this same demon was the father of her unborn child.

REENA
You're shitting me.

LANIE
She ended up dying giving birth. No one ever did found out who the father was. Skaz grows up hearing all these stories. Obsessed over finding his father. Finding the truth about what happened with his mother. Was she really crazy, or was there something in that house.

Reena's breathing grows heavy, and the pacing more sporadic and nervous.
REENA
I can't believe this. These guys actually believe in all this?

LANIE
From what Teddy tells me...Skaz has been drawn to that house his whole life. Since he was still a baby. Obsessed over it. Like he felt some connection to it.

REENA
Of course there's a connection. His crazy mother lived there.

LANIE
You don't get it. His stepparents never told him about his mother or the house until he was almost fifteen.

(beat)
Teddy said when Skaz was around thirteen, he started having horrible nightmares about his mother being tortured by this...thing...whatever you wanna call it.

REENA
You don't actually believe this crazy shit, do you?

LANIE
It doesn't matter if you believe it or not. What matters is they do.

REENA
What does any of this have to do with me?

LANIE
I'll show you. Sit down.

Reena takes a seat next to Lanie as she google searches another news article.

A colored photo of ARIELLE RYAN (16), freckled faced redhead, covers the top portion of the page.

LANIE
Her name was Arielle. Arielle Ryan. Your neighbor's daughter. They moved in a few years after Skaz's mother died.
LANIE
When Skaz and Teddy became obsessed over the house, it didn't take long for them to get their hooks into this girl.

REENA
For what?

LANIE
An offering.

REENA
You're losing me.

LANIE
Look, Skaz believes that this...incubus...demon, whatever, still has a grip on his mother. They talk Arielle into summoning the demon and it takes her in exchange for his mother.

(beat)
You see, when the demon takes possession over another vessel, only then will her soul be released.

REENA
Oh my God.

LANIE
If I were you, I'd be packing my bags right about now.

EXT. ELSA'S HOUSE – DAY
Elsa and Reena finish packing some things into Elsa's car trunk as a somber looking Scott watches on.

SCOTT
So you're just gonna pick up and leave again?

ELSA
For now. Yes.

SCOTT
Were you planning on telling me?
ELSA
Look, I just think it's best I get her away from here. And that maybe, we try and keep our distance for awhile.

Scott laughs if off.

SCOTT
You think I'm insane, don't you?

Elsa searches for the right words.

ELSA
I think you're having trouble closing that chapter of your life. You need answers to something there may be no answer for. Take it from the voice of experience. From someone who knows all about starting over.

(beat)
Let it go. Let it go before it makes you sick.

SCOTT
Can you at least leave a number where I can reach you? Just in case I need to get in touch with you, or if they decide to come back to the house?

Elsa smiles and smooches him on the cheek.

ELSA
No. I'm sorry.

Elsa and Reena get in the car. She cranks the engine.

ELSA (CONT'D)
I'll be back when Hayes catches these guys. And when they do, promise me something.

SCOTT
What's that?

ELSA
Don't be here when I get back. Let it go, Scott. Before it kills you.
Elsa pulls away. Scott watches them leave with a pitiful and defeated look about him.

He watches as Elsa's car disappears around the bend and down the road.

Scott's demeanor suddenly changes as a small grin cracks the corners of his mouth. He walks to the garage.

GARAGE

Scott quickly punches in a security code.

07-19-98

The DOOR OPENS as Scott ducks under and heads inside the home.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S BASEMENT – DAY

Scott flips on a LIGHT SWITCH as a dim bulb swinging from the ceiling barely cuts through the darkness.

He surveys the room, just like before. He takes a few steps as he rolls up the cuffs of his long sleeve shirt.

LATER

Scott has the basement in utter chaos and disorder as old boxes of junk have been emptied and tossed aside.

He moves toward the very back of the room and spots a very tall stack of heavy boxes neatly tucked away.

He unstacks them, one at a time, quickly and with purpose.

As the pile grows shorter and shorter, he spots a closet door hiding behind the debris.

He moves the very last crate as the CLOSET DOOR is revealed. He reaches for the knob, turns. Locked.

SCOTT

Are you kidding me?

Scott steps back a foot, gives the door a swift kick. Nothing. It barely moves.

He grabs a five iron from a golf bag and goes to town on the old stubborn door. It slowly breaks into shards of thin wood.

Scott drops the club, kicks the rest of the door in as it falls to pieces.
Scott steps inside the dark room.

INT. CLOSET

He pulls the chain on a LIGHT BULB and spots a thick BLACK DUFFEL BAG on the top shelf. He reaches for it, gives it a good yank as it drops to the dusty floor.

Scott squats down and unzips.

INSERT – BAG

It's filled with hundred dollar bills.

BACK TO SCENE

Scott smiles and ducks out of the closet with his new bag of cash.

INT. ELSA'S BASEMENT – DAY

Scott maneuvers his way through the broken remains of the door and the tall stack of boxes. He looks up and spots --

ELSA

-- holding a GUN on him.

ELSA

Going somewhere with that?

Scott drops the bag and holds his hands in the air.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPERIMPOSE:

THREE DAYS EARLIER

FADE IN:

EXT. GREER'S HOUSE – MORNING

Greer waters her plants and watches Scott and Hayes shake hands in Scott's driveway. They have a short exchange as Hayes walks back to his car and leaves.

Greer seems invested. She watches Scott carefully. A look of severe distrust.

CUT TO:
EXT. RYAN HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MORNING

Scott and Elsa sip their coffee and rest on the swing.

SCOTT
I'm telling you. Let me set it up. It'll work. It's your best bet at catching whoever's doing this.

ELSA
I don't know. It's gonna feel like someone's watching me all the time. It's creepy.

SCOTT
Look, I know the best guy in town. Used to be a surveillance expert with the force. Installs security systems now. A couple calls and we can get it set up by this afternoon.

ELSA
Just the idea of those cameras being on you all the time.

SCOTT
It's not permanent. Just until we catch these assholes.

Elsa is hesitant. She nods in agreement.

SCOTT
Great. I'll make the call.

Scott heads inside as Elsa finishes her coffee and spots GREER watching from across the street. Greer heads for the door but gives Elsa one last stare before ducking inside.

Elsa's wheels spin.

CUT TO:

INT. RYAN HOUSE - MORNING

Elsa rests her mug on the kitchen counter and searches room to room for Scott.

ELSA
Scott!
STAIRCASE - UPSTAIRS

Elsa takes the stairs and hears a SHOWER running as she steps off.

She walks toward the bathroom and puts her ear to the door. Scott is taking a shower.

Elsa passes his BEDROOM on the way to the stairs and does a double take when she spots a CAMERA AND TRIPOD set up and pointed out the window.

Elsa ducks inside and walks to the window. She can't help but notice the camera is pointed right at her bedroom across the way.

Her attention is drawn to a legal pad rested on the edge of his bed with the numbers 07-19-98 written in red pen.

She picks up the paper to get a closer look.

ELSA
Sonofabitch.

Elsa stares at the doorway. Scott is coming any second now.

She quickly turns on the video camera and watches some of the recorded footage.

MONTAGE - VIDEO FOOTAGE

-- Elsa undresses
-- Elsa parks her car
-- Elsa punches in a SECURITY CODE near the garage door.

The video ZOOMS IN just as she types it in.

END MONTAGE

ELSA
Son-of-a-bitch.

Elsa turns off the camera and begins rummaging through a stack of old NEWS CLIPPINGS rested on an armoire. All stories about ARIELLE RYAN.

"TEEN FOUND DEAD IN HOME"

"BRADFORD GIRL DIES PERFORMING RITUAL"

"WITCHCRAFT KILLED MY DAUGHTER"
A black and white photo of GREER RYAN under the caption.  

ELSA  
You gotta be kidding me.  

She speed reads a snippet of the article.  

INSERT – NEWS ARTICLE  
...cause of death has not been determined”  
“...is survived by parents Scott and Greer Ryan”  

BACK TO SCENE  

Elsa looks over her shoulder. She neatly places the articles where she found them and heads out.  

EXT. GREER'S HOUSE – DAY  

Elsa gives a hard KNOCK at her front door. Waits. She taps at her heels, impatient. Another hard KNOCK.  

Greer answers. A nervous laugh.  

GREER  
Guess I've been expecting you sooner or later.  

ELSA  
Can I come in?  

Greer steps out of the way as Elsa heads inside.  

CUT TO:  

INT. GREER'S HOUSE – DAY  

Greer hands Elsa a cup of tea as they hover near a living room.  

ELSA  
Okay, I'll make this real quick. Are you and your husband watching my house?  

GREER  
Beg your pardon?  

ELSA  
Don't do that. I asked you a simple question. Has your husband been watching me and my daughter?
GREER
I'm sorry. I never did catch your name.

ELSA
Davis. Elsa Davis. And you are Greer Ryan. Mother of Arielle Ryan. Wife of Scott. And I'm here to tell you that this stops today. Whatever it is you think you're doing in my home, it stops right now.

GREER
I'm not following.

ELSA
I know he's been breaking into my house when I'm not home, and I know you two think there's something strange going on in there, and somehow that had something to do with your girl's death, and that's the only reason I'm here and not the police station as we speak. So I'm giving you you're official warning. Let it go.

GREER
My husband is dead, Miss Davis.

Elsa is shocked beyond words. She takes a sip of her tea and has a seat on the couch.

LATER
Elsa and Greer are on the couch as Greer discusses the chain of events which led to her daughter's death.

GREER
There's been so many stories now about what happened. Most of them untrue. If only they knew the whole story. All the things I knew about my Arielle. About her pain. And all the things she told no one but me. Not even her father.

ELSA
Tell me about them.
GREER
Arielle started having trouble sleeping around thirteen or fourteen. Was having horrible nightmares, night terrors, sleep paralysis. If it existed she had it. These dreams became so real to her she began acting them out. Bringing them into real life.

ELSA
How do you mean?

INT. ARIELLE'S BEDROOM – NIGHT – FLASHBACK
Arielle, in bed, eyes open wide, lowers legs to the floor and begins for her door, wearing only a t shirt.

GREER (V.O.)
She was a sleepwalker. It seems every night, around the same time. Two thirty, Three, she'd get out of bed, go stand on the front lawn and just stare at it. Like a zombie. Wouldn't move, wouldn't blink. Just watching that house. As if it were calling to her.

EXT. GREER'S HOUSE – NIGHT – FLASHBACK
A zombie-like Arielle watches Elsa's house with genuine fascination.

Greer, in a bathrobe, folds her arms, cold, as she just stands on the lawn and watches her daughter's trance.

GREER (V.O.)
After a few weeks of the same dream, she finally broke down and told me.

INT. ARIELLE'S BEDROOM – NIGHT – FLASHBACK
Arielle, eyes open and wide, unable to move, spots a DARK FIGURE standing on the other side of her bedroom window.

His SHADOW CAST on the other side of the window drapes.
Arielle's eyes tremble with fear yet can't shut her eyes or look away.

The MAN IN THE WINDOW rubs his hand up and down the glass in a seductive manner.

GREER (V.O.)
(beat)
Said there was this man. Not so much a man, but this dark figure who would come to her in her sleep. She'd just wake up and see his shadow, standing there, behind the drapes, watching her through her bedroom window. She would try to look away but can't. Like her eyes were stuck open. Her whole body frozen. And she can't move a muscle.

The MAN IN THE WINDOW uses a single finger to beckon Arielle in his direction.

GREER (V.O.)
He calls to her. He motions for her to come with him. And that's when she blanks.

Arielle's eyes face forward, a trance-like state. She sits straight up, legs on the floor, heads for the door.

GREER (V.O.)
Doesn't remember anything after that. That's when we usually found her outside on the lawn.

INT. GREER'S HOUSE – DAY – PRESENT
Elsa and Greer back on the couch where we left them.

GREER
Wanting to go to him. But can't.

Greer laughs.

GREER (CONT'D)
Her shrink said the dreams were Fruedian. Nothing but a young woman at budding sexuality with a secret desire to break free from her home and parents.
ELSA
But you knew it was something else.

GREER
I knew. I could feel it. I could sense it. Watching over us. Whatever it is, Miss Davis, it won't stop until it takes your daughter too.

Elsa's had enough. Not buying a word of this.

ELSA
Yeah.

She rests her tea cup on the table and stands.

ELSA
I should get going.

Elsa heads for the door. Greer stands, meets her halfway.

GREER
I know you think we're all just a bunch of crazies. But get out of that house. Get out before it's too late.

CUT TO:

EXT. SEEDY MOTEL – DAY
Scott parks his car in one of the empty spots. He steps out and heads for room ten.

He gives a KNOCK. The door opens as he dips inside.

Across the street sits a YELLOW TAXI

INT. TAXI CAB – DAY
Reena sits in the back seat, a ballcap and shades, watches the motel while slouched in her seat.

DRIVER
Okay, what now? The meter's running.

REENA
Just sit tight and don't stare. He'll see us.

DRIVER
Who?

CUT TO:
INT. MOTEL ROOM – DAY

Scott stands near the door and watches as GREG LARSEN (40s), graying hair, doughy, but distinguished, finishes dressing on the edge of the bed. Greg is Elsa's supposedly dead ex husband.

GREG
Been calling you all morning. What?
You doing her already?

SCOTT
I caught a tail on the way over here.

Greg stops putting on his sock. A panicked look.

GREG
What? Where?

SCOTT
Across the street. Yellow cab.

Greg jumps up, hurries to the window and peeks through the cheap venetian blinds.

GREG
Who?

SCOTT
The mother's little girl.

GREG
Yeah, just like her mother. Always poking her nose in something.

Greg laughs as he watches the cab.

GREG
Guess I should've seen this coming.

(beat)
How much does she know?

SCOTT
Enough to be suspicious of me I would guess.

GREG
Maybe she's seen me already.

SCOTT
I don't think so. I've been careful.
Greg shuts the blinds, turns to Scott, dead serious.

    GREG
How careful?

    SCOTT
Careful.

    GREG
So how are they? They giving you a hard time yet?

    SCOTT
Does it matter?

Greg laughs, paces the room, anxious.

    GREG
You know, with Elsa, there was always something. Even when we first met. First it was her ex husband. She gives me the whole story. Oh, the financial strain of living with a man with an unstable job. I come into the picture, give her everything she ever asked for, needed or wanted...

Scott checks his watch, bored.

    GREG
Then comes my turn. You're spending too many hours at the hospital and not enough at home. This isn't what I signed up for. I'm unhappy. All of this kind of shit.

    (beat)
Can you believe this woman? But then I see a solid way out. Just happened to be in the right place at the right time working on the right patient. GSW to the leg. This patient tells me a few things he shouldn't. Next thing you know a couple of suits hand me fifty thousand and a cellular.

    (mimics)
“You work for me now”.

GREG
I'm thinking -- great. I have an out. Steady income, off the books. Next thing you know, cops are showing up at the ER asking questions about certain patients. Then the Feds show at my house with all these pictures. You think all that was an accident?

Scott thinks it all over.

GREG
She knew. It was her way of getting back at me. So one day, I go the right neighborhood and hire a couple bangers to stage my abduction. Cops think I'm dead, so do the Feds. But what does she do? Picks up and moves halfway across the country. No job, no prospects, nothing. Right?

Scott rubs his sore neck, disinterested.

GREG
I don't think so. She found the money. She found the money and took off before the Feds came digging for it. And now...I just want what's rightfully mine.

(beat)
And you're gonna get it for me.

Greg takes a seat on the bed, throws on his socks and shoes.

SCOTT
I had to recruit some extra help.

GREG

SCOTT
It's not gonna be that easy. That cash could be anywhere. May take hours, even days before I find it.
SCOTT
So if I'm gonna spend that kind of time ripping the house apart, I'll need reassurance I won't be caught.

GREG
So what's your plan?

SCOTT
A little scare tactic. Nothing serious. Don't worry about it.

GREG
How many?

SCOTT
Four total. Twenty grand a head, you're looking at an extra eighty k from your end.

Greg jumps up, gets in Scott's face.

GREG
Bullshit, my end. You're bringing in some dipshit locals without consulting me first? Who are they?

SCOTT
A couple punks I caught breaking into my car.

Greg scoffs.

GREG
You're crazy.

SCOTT
Look, I figure if they're breaking into cars, what else can they break into?

GREG
And run off with my money? How much do they know? You tell them about me, or the cash?

SCOTT
They don't know anything. Just what I tell them. If they do what they're told, they can make some cash.
GREG
And that's it?

Greg isn't so sure. He paces the room, goes over the plan in
his head, makes up his mind.

GREG
Alright. You got forty eight hours to
get in, find the cash, and get out.
After that, I'm going with someone else.

Scott nods understandably and heads for the door. As he shuts
the door behind him, Greg heads for the sink and lathers up
for a shave.

Just as he puts the razor to his face.

THE DOOR OPENS

and in rushes REENA WITH A GUN.

Greg turns, razor still in hand.

Reena draws down on him with the thirty eight snub.

Greg cracks a grin.

GREG
Well. Look who find me.

Reena's jaw almost drops at the shock of seeing Greg still alive
and breathing. Her hands tremble a bit.

REENA
You?

GREG
Me.

(beat)
Sorry you had to find out like this.
Guess I got some explaining to do,
huh?

Reena nods.

GREG
You're making me kind of nervous with
that gun.

REENA
That's the idea.
GREG
Look. It's a long, complicated story. Sure would feel a whole lot better
telling you with that gun not pointed at my face.

REENA
They tried to...hurt me. Mom too.

GREG
I'm sorry to hear that. It wasn't part of it. That wasn't my doing. You have
to believe that.

REENA
I don't have to believe shit! You're a liar! You lied to Mom, and then you tried to hurt her!

Reena pulls back the hammer.

REENA
And now I'm gonna hurt you.

GREG
You got this all wrong. What I want from your mother's got nothing to do with hurting her. Or you.

Greg grows nervous of her shaking hands.

GREG
But you have to know, I'm not the only one involved here. There's others. And if they don't get what they want, they could hurt you and your mother. And me.

Greg slowly steps forward.

GREG
That kind of makes us partners, doesn't it?

REENA
Stop that. What you're doing. I'm warning you.

Greg continues.
GREG
Just settle down. Have a seat and we'll talk. Real easy now.

REENA
I said stop it!

A KNOCK at the door startles Reena.

POW!
As she squeezes off a SHOT and hits Greg center mass.
He falls to the carpet, lifeless.
The door is KICKED OPEN and in runs

SCOTT
with his gun drawn. Reena turns, spots him, cries and drops her gun to the floor.
Scott spots Greg's limp body, curled up. His breathing hurried and his mouth agape.

SCOTT
Holy shit.

Reena plops herself down in a leather chair, tears shoot down her face as she drifts into a catatonia.

SCOTT
We don't have long.

Reena ignores him. Her face buried between her hands, tears shoot through her fingers, down her hands and arm.

SCOTT
Are you listening to me? I said we don't have long!

Reena slowly snaps out of it, stares up at Scott while wiping down her face.

SCOTT
I'm assuming that's your mother's gun on the floor? Yes?

Reena nods.
Scott pulls a HANDKERCHIEF from his pocket, picks up the gun, stuffs it back in his coat as he observes Greg's body.
SCOTT
Figure we got about three minutes tops.
I'm gonna need your help, so come here.

REENA
Who the hell are you?

SCOTT
You wanna get into that now, or with the cops?

Reena thinks it over. She checks the door.

SCOTT
Get your ass up and help me get him in the bathroom.

Reena stands, grabs Greg's feet as Scott gets both his hands. They walk him into the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM – DAY
Reena rests on the toilet and watches Scott rip down the shower curtain and spread it evenly on the tile. He rolls the body onto the curtain.

SCOTT
A little help!

Reena kneels on the tile and helps Scott wrap the curtain over Greg's body.

Scott hands Reena his keys.

SCOTT
Start the car and pull it around with the trunk facing the door.

Reena wraps her arms around her stomach.

REENA
I'm gonna be sick.

SCOTT
Be sick later.

Scott CLAPS - points to the door.

SCOTT
Go!!!
Reena runs out.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEEP WOODS - NIGHT
Scott walks behind a crying Reena, watches her closely with a gun to his side.
They watch TEDDY and SKAZ carry Greg's wrapped body over tree trunks, logs, nature's obstacles.
Walking with them is LOCO (30s) spiked white hair, ugly, beady eyed, pockmarked. He carries two shovels, not contributing too much else.
Loco gives Scott a deadly stare. Scott pretends not to notice but is visibly shaken by him.

REENA
What are you doing with these people?

SCOTT
Nothing. Just a plan that got a little out of hand.

REENA
What are you gonna do with me?

SCOTT
Nothing's gonna happen if you keep your mouth shut and do what you're told.

Reena observes Loco giving her a cold stare. Scott notices.

SCOTT
Don't worry about them. Worry about you. And what's gonna happen if the cops get a hold of this gun.

REENA
I don't get it. Why are you doing this?

LOCO
He's talking about getting our money!

Teddy and Skaz are out of gas. Tired.

SKAZ
How much longer? He's getting heavy!
SCOTT
(to Skaz)
Right here's fine.

Teddy and Skaz drop Greg in the dirt.

LOCO
(to Reena)
He's saying you better not go getting stupid on us. Running and telling the cops about your little accident.

Loco steps in Reena's face.

LOCO
Never know when we might come paying you and Mommy another visit. The cops just might not be there this time.
(to Teddy and Skaz)
Isn't that right, boys?

Teddy laughs but Skaz is done playing.

SKAZ
Come on, Loco. Look at her. She's had enough. Just leave her alone.

Teddy shoves Skaz aside.

TEDDY
Forget that, man! Tell her to get us our money! I'm tired of all this fuckin' around!

Teddy steps closer to Scott and Reena, all bowed up, ready to throw down.

Scott grabs Reena and pushes her aside. He guards her from the others.

SCOTT
Why don't you just calm down?

Teddy charges after him. Loco holds him back.

LOCO
You heard the man. Everybody calm down.

Teddy is reluctant, but cools off. Loco shoves him backward like an unwanted step child.
LOCO
He's got everything we need right there in his coat pocket.

Scott steps back a pace or two, holds Reena back with his free hand.

LOCO
(to Reena)
I take it he's got the murder weapon, sweetie?

SCOTT
You don't speak to her. You want something, you deal with me.

LOCO
You hear that, boys? Sounds like our business partner here is already looking to cut us out.

TEDDY
Told you! He's gonna fuck us the first chance he gets! Let's take him out, right now! Both of them!

Skaz reaches in his pants, draws a nine millimeter and points in Scott's direction.

SKAZ
(to Loco)
Just say the word.

Loco laughs.

LOCO
Change in plan. Now, real slowly, hand over the piece and he won't plug both of you where you stand.

SCOTT
I think you're forgetting something.
(beat)
The woman still trusts me. I'm the only way in and out of that house. You want them out of the picture, I'm the key to making that happen. Without me, there is no money. You know it. I know it.
SCOTT
So why don't you tell Alice Cooper over there to holster that thing while I'm still in a good mood.

Loco slowly loses his smile. Skaz watches both of them closely. His eyes shifting back and forth.

SKAZ
What's going on?!

Loco bursts out laughing.

LOCO
How about that? Still partners after all.

(to Skaz)
Let's get digging.

Loco tosses a shovel to both Teddy and Skaz.

TEDDY
Why do I gotta do the digging? I'm the one who carried his ass all the way out here. Why don't you dig?

SKAZ
Just shut up and dig.

Scott walks Reena closer to the grave site. Teddy watches her and smiles.

REENA
What are you smiling at?

TEDDY
Just thinking about that look on your face. The first time we told you about the Ryan girl.

(laughs)
Priceless. Gotta be crazy believing all that witchcraft shit. You're as nuts as her old lady was. Telling the whole town a demon took her daughter.

(beat)
We figured you'd go running to Lanie for answers, so we doctored the whole story. She said you about shit yourself.
Skaz shares a laugh with Teddy.

REENA
She wouldn't do it. Not unless you made her.

TEDDY
Shit, girl. She's just like the rest of us. Broke and desperate. Wave a few bucks under her nose, she'd sell her own mother out.

LOCO
Everyone in town's heard about the Ryan girl. Story changes every year. Tell stories long enough, people start believing them.

TEDDY
If it wasn't for Skaz here boosting his car, we wouldn't even be here.

Reena checks with Scott. He looks away in shame.

SKAZ
That's right. Crazy how shit happens, huh?

REENA
I don't understand.

TEDDY
Well. He made us, shall we say, a very persuasive offer. Scare the shit out of you and Mommy or go to jail.

REENA
And make a few bucks while you're at it.

TEDDY
Exactly. All we had to do then was come up with a plan.

REENA
Pretty smart. So. Tell me. Which one of you was the mastermind behind all this?
TEDDY
Can't take credit, really. Gotta admit.
This one was all Skaz.

Reena's anger with Skaz grows to a boil.

SKAZ
Wasn't that hard. How many freckle faced redheads that look like Arielle Ryan pass through town? Nothing personal. You just had the wrong hair color, hunny.

Teddy laughs. Skaz smiles. Proud of his work.

REENA
Yeah. Nothing personal.

Reena wipes her tears.

REENA
By the way.

Teddy and Skaz look up.

REENA
Mother says hi.

Reena pulls her mother's THIRTY EIGHT from the back of her pants and FIRES ONE SHOT into Skaz's head. He falls into the shallow hole in the dirt. Dead.

Teddy almost falls over in a panic. He reaches his shovel back, ready to swing at her.

Scott takes aim:

POW POW POW POW

-- empties a clip in Teddy's direction as he is riddled with multiple bullets. His body flung into the grave.

Loco takes off, into the dark woods. Scott quickly reloads and gives chase.

SCOTT
Don't move! Stay put!

Reena stays put as Scott darts off. She stares down at Teddy and Skazy's dead bodies in the grave.

A SINGLE GUNSHOT startles Reena as it ECHOES through the night air.
EXT. WOODS – LATER

Scott and Reena both shovel the last of the dirt over all three bodies. Reena gives up, drops her shovel and plops to the ground in defeat.

Scott pats the dirt down, nice and smooth. He also drops his shovel.

SCOTT
Nobody but us has to know about this night. Not ever. But that's gonna be up to you.

REENA
You think I'm gonna keep this from Mom? You must really think I'm crazy.

SCOTT
And she does what? Calls the cops? Sends them out here with cadaver dogs? Along with the tv camera crew?
(beat)
And what will she tell them? Better yet, what will you tell them? That all of it's over a bag of stolen cash your mother says doesn't exist?

Reena thinks it all over. Unsure. Scott smiles and shakes his head.

SCOTT
Who knows. Maybe those Feds won't come back asking your mother all kinds of questions about where it came from and from whom her and her ex husband took it.

REENA
You sonofabitch.

SCOTT
That's right. I'm a sonofabitch. A sonofabitch who saved your skin tonight. Remember that.

Scott kneels in front of her.

SCOTT
And now you're gonna make it right.
REENA
How?

SCOTT
You're gonna tell her you need some time away. Not from school, or out of town, just out of the house. Just until the cops find the guys responsible.

REENA
And what if she doesn't listen?

Scott strokes her hair behind her ear.

SCOTT
I have faith in you.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT. ELSA'S DRIVEWAY – PRESENT DAY

Scott waves goodbye to Elsa and Reena as they pull out of the driveway. He heads for the garage.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S BASEMENT – DAY

Scott kicks in the closet door, walks inside.

INT. CLOSET

He spots the BLACK BAG OF MONEY on the top shelf and yanks it down.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S BASEMENT – DAY

Scott steps out with the bag in hand. Elsa is waiting with a gun pointed at his face.

ELSA
Going somewhere?

Scott laughs in defeat.

SCOTT
I take it she told you.
ELSA
That's right.

SCOTT
When?

ELSA
Last night. While we were packing. Oh, yes, we had a nice long chat about you.

Scott steps closer.

SCOTT
Just wait a minute.

ELSA
Shut up! Keep them up!

Scott raises his hands in the air.

SCOTT
Okay, okay. Don't get nervous.

ELSA
My neighbor, Mrs. Ryan, filled me in on the passing of her late husband, Scott. Along with a lot of other interesting tales.

(beat)
Who are you?

SCOTT
Does it really matter?

ELSA
The cops will wanna know.

SCOTT
I thought we decided that wasn't an option.

ELSA
You decided. Me? I'm thinking of one good reason not to blow you away. Right now. Right here.

SCOTT
I can think of one good reason.
SCOTT
About five foot four, bright red hair. Real pretty.
Elsa loses her cocky demeanor as panic sets in.

SCOTT
You didn't think I was gonna break in here without a look out man, did you?

Elsa's lips quiver with anticipation.

SCOTT
What if the cops show? I'd be caught, red handed.

ELSA
Where is she?

Scott opens his cellular.

SCOTT
(into phone)
You got the girl?

HAYES (O.S.)
Yeah, we're right here.

REENA (O.S.)
Mom???

ELSA
(to Reena)
Baby? Don't worry!

SCOTT
(to Hayes)
Stay put. This shouldn't take long.

HAYES (O.S.)
Got it.

Scott puts his phone away.

SCOTT
Now's the time, Elsa. Now is the time where you decide what's important. Prove your daughter wrong. That it's not all about you. That you love her more than your own happiness.
SCOTT
Put your...excuse the pun...money where
your mouth is.

Elsa slowly lowers her gun.

SCOTT
Congratulations. You're not a bad mother
after all.
(into phone)
Okay. Time to make the split.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. ELSA'S DRIVEWAY – DAY

Hayes and Reena sit in the front seat of his car. The phone to
Hayes ear.

HAYES
Yeah. Gotcha. We'll be right in.

Hayes jumps out. He walks around the car, to Reena's door and
opens. He unlocks the cuffs from Reena's hands.

HAYES
Be a good girl now and we're home free.

Hayes pull her from the car and walks her to the front door.
Watching from down the street is:

GREER
-- with a pair of pruning sheers in hand. She watches the house
with unusual interest.

CUT TO:

INT. ELSA'S DINING ROOM – NIGHT

Scott finishes separating all the bills as Hayes loads his share
into an equally large duffel bag.

A beautiful set of silverware is disassembled on the table along
with some silver china cleaner and a white rag.

HAYES
Gotta hand it to you, brother. Here I
was thinking you were full of shit.

Scott smiles as he loads his share back in his bag. Reena
watches from a corner chair. Exhausted.
He watches a very pissed off Elsa fold her arms and stare at the wall.

SCOTT
Look. I know you won't believe this. But I'm sorry.


HAYES
Yep. Always did have a way with the ladies.

Hayes zips up his bag. Scott uses the white rag to wipe off the spit.

SCOTT
You're right. The time has come for us to take our leave of you.

Scott gives her a wink.

SCOTT
What can I say? It's been an experience.

Scott zips up his bag.
And suddenly --
THE DINING ROOM LIGHTS FLICKER
Hayes is taken aback by this.

HAYES
You pay your light bill?

The lights TURN OFF completely.
Elsa also notices that the electrical surge has somehow managed to spread to the living room.
A TABLE LAMP also FLICKERS.
And then --
The front PORCH LIGHT FLICKERS on and off.

ELSA
What the hell?
The YELLOW BULB in the table lamp EXPLODES. The entire room goes PITCH BLACK.
And then --
The nearby KITCHEN LIGHT FLICKERS as we see only FLASHES of Elsa, Hayes, Reena and Scott.

Everyone in a panic except Reena who is blank and expressionless as she slowly rises from her chair.

ELSA
Reena!

As the room goes from DARK to LIGHT - Reena, in the blink of an eye, has moved from one side of the room to the other, next to Hayes, hovered behind him.

Elsa watches her as the room goes DARK, then LIGHT. Reena, now with a SILVER KNIFE slicing open Hayes throat.

Scott tumbles over a dining room chair in a panic. He watches as Hayes body falls limp to the carpet.

Reena stares him down from across the table. A RED PENTAGRAM painted on her forehead.

Scott makes for the door as every LIGHT in the house FLICKERS ON AND OFF.

FRONT DOOR
Scott attempts to open but the door is deadbolted.

SCOTT
Come on!

DINING ROOM
Reena observes Hayes body. She slowly stares up at her mother who watches in horror.

ELSA
It's me, baby. It's okay. You can put down the knife.

The LIGHTS continue to FLICKER as Reena jumps from where she stands to directly in front of Elsa.

Before Elsa can cry out, Reena has her hand around her mother's throat. A superhuman grip as Elsa drops to her knees.

Scott gives up on the door and heads for the kitchen. He stops as he spots Reena crushing Elsa's windpipe. Reena releases her as she falls dead to the floor.
Scott slowly steps back as Reena moves for him. Through the living room, around a corner, down the hall.

As Reena moves closer, Scott spots what appears to be the SHADOW OF A DEMON moving from mirror to mirror, photo to photo.

    SCOTT
    What the fuck???

Scott looks over his shoulder. A dead end at the far reaches of the hallway. He turns back to see:

    REENA

at the other end of the hall. The LIGHTS FLICKER once more as she completely disappears.

    SCOTT
    Where are you???

No answer. No Reena.

    SCOTT
    Who are you???

And a realization hits Scott like a ton of bricks. He slowly turns around and spots Reena behind him.

She grabs him by the throat, tosses him against the opposite wall.

    SCOTT'S POV

He spots the dark shadows of a WINGED DEMON in the mirror just behind Elsa.

    SCOTT
    No!

    REENA
    Yes.

Reena smiles as she crushes his windpipe and BLOOD STREAMS from his nose and mouth.

Scott slides to the floor. Dead.

Reena turns toward her bedroom as every light in the house goes dark and a bright, GLOWING LIGHT pours out from inside her room and floods the hall.

    DEMON (O.S.)
    Reeee-naaa.
Reena smiles as she moves slowly and seductively toward her bedroom.

INT. REENA'S BEDROOM – NIGHT

Reena enters. The flood of WHITE ENERGY is coming from inside a full length mirror hanging from her wall.

A slight wind blows a few items to her floor. A couple of pens, a lipstick, and some other personals form a PERFECT CIRCLE on the carpet.

A letter opener is caught in the wind and blown dead center of the demonic circle.

Reena steps into the circle, grabs the letter opener and points it in all four directions. She sets the blade on the carpet and begins unbuttoning her blouse.

We watch from the hallway, looking in. The heavy wind catches the door as it shuts in our face.

FADE OUT.