

AHEAD OF DAWN

By

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CUT FROM BLACK:

INT. LIVING ROOM - MIDNIGHT

The living room is dimly lit; we see a couch in the middle of the room in the sickly orange lighting. A framed poster on the wall shows an advertisement for the 1938 film "Marie Antoinette."

We only hear the quiet sounds of the outside world for a few seconds, until the door swings open. We see GWEN, a woman in her LATE 20s, EARLY 30s, walk into the home wearing her WHITE DRESS SHIRT, laughing and continuing a conversation we couldn't have heard before.

GWEN

... and I find it so funny that you didn't even think to ask him about the cat before?

As she speaks, in walks TIM, in his MID 30s. He wears a PLAID SHIRT UNDERNEATH HIS COAT, shrugging and laughing along with Gwen.

TIM

No? Why would I? He waited until last week to tell me!

Gwen walks off-screen to put her keys on a dresser. Tim closes the door before locking it. He looks up at the ceiling before he calls for his daughter, DAWN.

TIM (CONT'D)

Dawn? Sweetie, we're home!

No answer. Tim shrugs and hangs up his coat as he mutters to himself.

TIM

Probably still at her girlfriend's house.

We hear the JANGLING OF THE KEYS quietly off-screen.

GWEN (O.S.)

Hey, hey. You don't need to worry about her, honey, alright?

Gwen walks back into frame. She goes to Tim and wraps her arms around his neck, her hands behind his head. She smiles at him softly as Tim sighs.

TIM

Tell you what. I'm gonna... go take a quick shower, you can do whatever 'til I get out. 'Kay?

He gives a small smile, still being hugged. Gwen smacks her lips together and chuckles.

GWEN

Y'know, I'm feelin'... frisky tonight, why don't we take one together?

She raises her eyebrows as Tim thinks.

TIM

Yeah?

GWEN

Yeah.

Gwen gives him a quick kiss on the lips as they laugh together. Tim smiles and nods.

TIM

M'kay. You go ahead and...

He looks over her dress shirt.

TIM (CONT'D)

... get that off, I'll start up the water.

GWEN

Oooh, alright! Be ready in a few minutes.

She walks upstairs as Tim watches her go. When she's out of sight, he walks over to the dresser Gwen placed the keys on and opens the drawer.

He looks through, muttering to himself quietly, until he finds an unopened condom package, smirking.

He nods as he places the condom in his pocket.

CUT TO:

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

The hallway is similarly lit like the living room, the only difference being that it's a bit brighter. There's a set of photos showing the couple and their daughter in classic poses on the walls, as well as a singular shot of just the daughter.

The camera's positioned at the back of the hall as Tim WALKS UP the stairs FROM THE RIGHT of the screen. He turns and walks down the hall as the camera FOLLOWS BEHIND HIM. He stops in front of a door on the left and turns toward it, before he grabs the handle and opens the door.

INT. BATHROOM

The bathroom is brightly lit in comparison to the rest of the house, with tan-painted walls and a white tiled floor. A blurred figure is visible on the left of the screen, moving in a repeating back-and-forth motion. We can hear Tim outside the door.

TIM (O.S.)

Can't believe it's finally..

He opens the door and sees the figure.

TIM (CONT'D)

... going to- What the fuck!?

Tim's startled from seeing the figure and slams the door the rest of the way into the wall.

TIM (CONT'D)

Who the fuck are you!?

We hear footsteps in the hall as Gwen appears behind Tim in the doorway, wearing only a bra and underwear. She also jumps in surprise, gasping.

GWEN

Oh my God, who the fuck is that?

Tim turns around to look at Gwen.

TIM

Go get your phone. Call the cops, now.

Gwen nods as she quietly hyperventilates, holding her hands on her head as she walks off. Tim stands in the doorway, looking at the figure.

TIM'S POV

We can finally see the figure: it's a MAN, his disgustingly pale pink skin harshly contrasting with the tan walls. He's COMPLETELY NUDE, giving us a direct view of the many bumps covering his back. His skin is wholly hairless, save for a few short hairs on his otherwise bald head.

He's painfully thin, his shoulder blades close to bursting out of his skin. The man is sitting on a short stool in front of the bathtub/shower combo, his legs spread outward, his knees almost reaching past his neck.

The posture he sits in gives him a hunchback appearance, the top of his head barely visible. It looks as though he's scrubbing or cutting something in the tub, but we can't see what it is.

TIM (O.S.)

Hey! You fucking hear me? Get the fuck out of my house!

PREVIOUS CAMERA ANGLE

We can hear the man quietly breathing as he continues the motion. It sounds as though he has something stuck in his throat by the way he sounds.

A beat of silence as the camera slowly pans to the left, until we see the man's eye staring forward blankly.

TIM (CONT'D)

Hey!

The man finally pauses his motion long enough, his head and visible eye slightly turning in Tim's direction. He speaks in a RASPY VOICE.

MAN

I... do apologize, Mister...

He draws a sharp breath.

MAN (CONT'D)

S-Stevens...

Tim looks at him in disgust and confusion.

TIM

How the... how the fuck do you know my name?
Why are you in my home!?

The man turns his head back forward as he resumes his back-and-forth motion.

MAN

I am afraid that... this is not... your home
anymore, Timothy.

TIM

The fuck did you just say? I fucking live
here, you piece of shit.

The man softly chuckles.

MAN

That... is where you are... wrong. You will
not live here any longer.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - NOON

We see Tim and Gwen walk out the door to their SUV. Gwen turns around.

GWEN

We'll be home about midnight, honey! You
be home by then, okay?

OUTSIDE VIEW OF OPEN SECOND FLOOR WINDOW

Their teenage daughter Dawn has her arms folded on the windowsill. Her fair skin and purple-dyed hair is easily visible in the bright light.

DAWN

Yeah. Whatever, Mom. Love you.

She steps back and closes her window quickly, as it creaks loudly.

CLOSE ON GWEN

Gwen sighs as she turns to Tim, who's now leaning on the driver door of the SUV. He pulls up his sleeve and checks his watch.

TIM

Shit, it's a quarter 'til one, we gotta get there before they close.

GWEN

What?

She turns around.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Oh, yeah. Sorry.

She starts walking to the passenger side of the vehicle.

END FLASHBACK

PREVIOUS CAMERA ANGLE

Tim looks absolutely bewildered at what the man's saying.

TIM

I... okay, you know what...

He points out into the hallway.

TIM (CONT'D)

Go. Get the fuck out. Stop whatever you're doing, and just... go.

But the man continues to perform his routine. He rolls his head around slowly as loud cracks are heard. The man sighs quietly.

EXTREME CLOSE ON MAN

We get the closest look of the man's face so far, as now both of his eyes are visible. They're a clear silver, and staring down.

MAN

I have... already told you, Mister Stevens...
I can not leave. You can not live here any longer.

TIM

Yeah, and why the fuck can't I?

We can hear Gwen quietly calling the police.

GWEN (O.S.)

... no, I don't know how he got in! He's a
fucking naked guy! How the fuck do I know
how...

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - NOON

Tim and Gwen SIT in the SUV, with Tim IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT, Gwen beside him. He TURNS OVER THE ENGINE and DRIVES OFF; as they leave we see a row of decorative bushes in a large garden on the opposite side of the road. The mysterious man is squatting inside the rightmost bush.

EXT. BEHIND BUSH

We see the back of the man's head again. He stares at Dawn's window and has a copy of her prom photo. She's in a bright red dress, smiling without a care in the world.

The man breathes heavily as he crumples the paper in his hand and drops it. He stands and we see him step out of the bush, walking up to Tim and Gwen's house, but from his shins down.

INT. DAWN'S BEDROOM - NOON

We see Dawn laying on her bed, stomach down, scrolling through her Twitter feed with earphones in. A poster of a popular male singer is taped on the large mirror, his head circled multiple Times in black Sharpie. Around the circle is many small hearts, drawn in the same color.

Dawn slowly kicks her legs back and forth as she sings a mid-2010s pop song. Two large, loud knocks are heard on the door to her room, but her music is so loud that she can't hear it.

END FLASHBACK

INT. BATHROOM - MIDNIGHT

CLOSE ON BACK OF MAN'S HEAD

The man takes a shaky, mucus-filled breath. He looks down and reaches into the tub.

INSIDE TUB

We see a few kitchen knives, one of which is covered in blood. An open bottle of shampoo rests upside down in a holder, slowly dripping into the tub. We see the man's hand GRAB A CLEAN KNIFE and take it to whatever he's cutting, as WE HEAR SCRAPING AND SQUISHING SOUNDS.

MAN

Because this is not your home anymore,
Timothy.

CLOSE ON TIM

Tim is absolutely bewildered.

MAN (O.S.)

This is... my... home.

INT. TIM AND GWEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gwen is standing in the doorway with her cellphone up to her ear. She's still in her bra and underwear. She's listening to whatever the person on the other end of the phone is saying. She scoffs.

GWEN

Because we don't... f-fucking know him!

She crosses her arms, her phone still up to her ear.

GWEN

He is a random fucking person, who we've never seen, and he is sitting in our bathroom! I can't understand why you're not believing-

She's cut off by the door across from the bedroom she's in opening an inch with a quiet creak. She hears the creak and turns her head to the source. A beat, before she walks to the door.

INT. DAWN'S BEDROOM - NOON (FLASHBACK)

Dawn is still on her bed in the same position as before. The door handle turns slowly and opens a couple inches. Dawn's too focused on her phone to notice the door open.

INT. OUTSIDE DAWN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gwen opens the door all the way and looks inside.

GWEN'S POV

The camera slowly pans from the left to the right; no sign of Dawn.

CUT TO GWEN

Gwen faces the side of the room she was looking at, and sighs, before turning to walk out of the room. Suddenly we hear a MUFFLED IMPACT. Gwen stops and looks back into the room.

GWEN'S POV

She's looking at the closet, the sound where the impact came from. She breathes shakily.

OUTSIDE CLOSET DOOR, FACING GWEN

Gwen stands in silence for a moment, before she starts walking toward the closet.

MAN (V.O.)

I must say... Mister Stevens.

INT. BATHROOM - MIDNIGHT

The camera's focused on the back of the man's head again as he's cutting.

MAN

The one thing that has... always... fascinated me about your family is... your... beautiful daughter.

CLOSE ON TIM'S FACE

A long beat of silence.

TIM

What?

MAN (O.S.)

Yes, your daughter. She was so... mmm... mesmerizing.

Tim's demeanor has changed from confusion to pure disgust.

TIM (WHIS.)

What did you do to my daughter?

Cut to BLACK. Then:

INT. INSIDE DAWN'S CLOSET

The door slowly opens up as we see Gwen standing in the light. She looks up to the top of the closet, then looks down. She quietly gasps as the phone falls out of her hand onto the floor. She stands there in silence, before her hand moves to her mouth.

MAN (V.O.)

Ah, you see, that is an... interesting question to ask.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

TIM'S POV

The camera is focused on the man. He sighs as he drops the knife into the tub and moves his hands up to his face.

MAN

It would be best if... you asked her...
yourself.

The man presses against his face, before he finally stands. He's approximately 8 feet tall, his height being so enormous that he must duck down under the ceiling. He slowly TURNS AROUND, cracking sounds to match his eerie movements.

His face is not visible, for it's covered by Dawn's. The rough, patchy cuts of her face are sticking to the man's face, his silver eyes visible through the empty holes in Dawn's lifeless mask.

CLOSE ON TIM

Tim looks down in the tub.

TIM'S POV

A severed human head with long, blood-stained purple hair is visible in the tub. It's Dawn's.

CLOSE ON TIM

He then up at the man, his eyes welling up with tears as he begins to hyperventilate.

TIM (WHIS.)

N... no... please, God... no...

CLOSE ON MAN

A beat as the man breathes heavily.

MAN

I have told you...

ANGLE SHOWING BOTH TIM AND MAN

The man raises his hands up quickly and grabs onto the sides of Tim's head.

CLOSE ON TIM

Tim begins gasping as a single tear runs down his face. The man's hands start pushing in with force. Tim angrily struggles to speak.

TIM

You... motherfucking...

MAN (O.S.)

You... will not live here... any...

Finally, a loud crack is heard as Tim's mouth hangs open slightly and his stare goes blank. He's dead. A few drops of blood begin to come out of his mouth.

CLOSE ON MAN

The man continues to stare forward as we hear A LOUD COMBINATION OF SQUISHING AND CRACKING. He's completely crushed Tim's head.

CUT TO MAN'S LEGS

Tim's headless body falls to the floor, still. Blood begins to pool out of the cavity that was once his head.

MAN (O.S., WHIS.)

... longer.

CUT TO VIEW OF DOORWAY

Gwen runs into view.

GWEN

Tim! Fuck! Tim, she's...

Her words trail off before she goes silent. She gasps and covers her mouth with both hands.

GWEN'S POV

We see the humongous man tower over Tim's corpse, looking down at it. The corpse has now been surrounded by blood.

CLOSE ON MAN'S FACE

The man's eyes stay looking down for a few seconds, until suddenly they look up to where Gwen would be standing, everything going completely silent. He shows a creepy smile through Dawn's lips, one full of multiple rows of razor-sharp teeth.

MAN

Hello, mother.

CUT TO BLACK

THE END