

ASHES

Written by

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V 1.3

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FADE IN:

EXT. CONWAY FARM - NIGHT

A quiet night in farm country.

SUPER: SCOTT CITY, KANSAS, NOVEMBER, 1965

A barn and several outbuildings jut from the shadows. Nearby, the glow of a porch light outlines a two-story house.

There, two FLASHES of light illuminate a BASEMENT window-- followed by the distant, muffled THUD of gun shots.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

MRS. CONWAY, 38, sits up in bed, instantly alert. She reaches out, instinctively touches the spot next to her. It's empty.

She slips from the bed, tentatively moves toward the door-- the direction of the shots.

BASEMENT

PERCY G. JONES, 32, oddly charming, intellectual-wanna-be, stands at the base of the stairs, his back turned, smoke trailing from the shotgun in his hand.

He turns, starts up the stairs, as he calmly wipes a bit of blood from his round, friendly face.

KITCHEN

Percy pushes the basement door closed, comes face-to-face with Mrs. Conway. Before she can even react, Percy smashes her in the forehead with the butt of the gun.

LIVING ROOM

Mrs. Conway lies limp in the background.

Three shotgun shells sit in a neat row on the fireplace mantle. Percy places two empty shells inline, for a total of five--two empty, three unspent.

He takes a fresh shell from the row, reloads the shotgun. Stepping to the doorway between the living room and the kitchen...he aims.

PERCY

I do hope you'll forgive me. It has begun, and I can no longer desist.

Percy shoots, kills Mrs. Conway.

He removes the spent shell from the shotgun, places it in the line on the mantle--now three empty, two full.

He loads the two full shells into the shotgun, straightens his shirt and heads upstairs.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Percy quietly works his way down the hall.

GIRLS' BEDROOM

A teddy bear sits askew on an empty, ruffled bed. A second bed, crisply made, sits in the corner.

Floorboards CREAK outside the room. The door slowly opens.

Shotgun at his side, Percy presses in, sees the empty beds. He focuses for a second on the made bed. His face twitches with anxiety...something's not right.

He looks underneath both beds. Nothing. He spies the closet.

Percy opens the door, sees a young GIRL, 11, hiding beneath the hanging clothes.

He sets the shotgun aside, sits next to her.

PERCY

Numerically speaking, which is your favorite?

She doesn't respond.

PERCY

That was a fancy way of asking: what's your favorite number? I sometimes forget I should speak in a more...pedestrian manner.

He draws a six in the air with his finger.

PERCY

I think six is a nice number. I like the way it loops back to itself. So graceful. Eleven is nice. Streamlined--like an open vent--everything just flows right through. But, five...

He draws a five in the air.

PERCY

Five has everything. Crisp across the top. Definitive in its downward advance to the beautiful arcing finish. Five is strong, but comfortable. A very approachable number.

He settles back against the door frame. Comfortable. Almost approachable.

PERCY

It's also a very important number in my life. Do you know how many colleges asked me to attend?

GIRL

Five?

PERCY

That's right. Practically begged me. I couldn't go. Long story involving my daddy's grocery store-- Jones' Grocery--a little bit of blackjack, and a whore from Atchison. None of which is appropriate for a girl your age. Pardon me for even mentioning it.

He recalibrates...

PERCY

Had five brothers. Five different pets over the years. Three cats, two dogs. A Shepherd and a Spaniel. Exactly five people I would consider friends. Five girlfriends-- not at once, of course. Anyway, I could go on. It's really quite remarkable, the coincidences.

He retrieves the teddy bear, motions her out of the closet, hands it to her.

PERCY

I imagine this is scary--me here in your room. I'm sorry about that. I didn't mean to wake you. It was inevitable, in hindsight. Poor planning on my part.

GIRL

Where are my parents? My brother?

He glances to the made bed.

PERCY

The question is--where is your
sister?

She looks away.

He explodes. Completely out of nowhere...

PERCY

Where is she!?

The Girl bolts upright, snapped back into fear.

He gathers himself.

PERCY

Once again, I find myself
apologizing.

He takes her hands.

PERCY

I have a trick, for when my anger
or anxieties get hold of me.

He draws a deep breath, counting as he does...

PERCY

One. Two. Three. Four. Five.

He exhales.

PERCY

One. Two. Three. Four. Five. Now,
you--deep breath.

She inhales.

PERCY

One. Two. Three. Four. Five. Good.
And, let it out.
(she exhales)
Excellent. Now. Can you tell me
where your sister is?

GIRL

She's at a friend's house. They had
a sleepover.

The news rattles Percy. He takes a deep breath.

PERCY

Will you count with me?

PERCY

One. Two. Three. Four. Five.

GIRL

One. Two. Three. Four. Five.

PERCY

So much better. You're very good at
this. Very calming.

He points to an open window.

PERCY

Look there. Keep counting.
Breathing. In. Then out.

She turns. Continues the exercise.

PERCY

Good girl.

Quietly, he raises the shotgun to the back of her head.

His head cocks, as if he hears something near the door.

A FEMALE VOICE--weak, distorted...

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Make all this worth something. Give
it purpose.

There's nothing--nobody--there.

Shaking it off, he again points the gun at the Girl.

His finger shakes as it hovers over the trigger--a touch of
reluctance.

A table next to the door jerks sideways. A vase atop the
table wobbles.

SECOND FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Nancy, wait!

He spins toward the door, gun raised as the vase topples to
the floor and SHATTERS.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - NIGHT

A LIGHT flashes in the upstairs's window as a GUNSHOT rings
out. Seconds later, a second GUNSHOT lights the window.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. SMALL SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT

ANNE, 26, beaten physically and mentally, sits in her car, staring at the house, her gaze broken only by the occasional falling autumn leaves.

SUPER: OLATHE, KANSAS, PRESENT DAY

INT. ANNE'S CAR - NIGHT

Anne hurriedly, almost guiltily, finishes off a hot dog, chases it with the last sips of a fountain drink.

She reaches for the door handle. Hesitates. Takes a deep breath. Opens the door.

INT. SMALL SUBURBAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Anne tiptoes through the kitchen. She sets a bag of groceries on the counter with a THUNK--louder than she hoped. She looks around the corner: nothing there.

She quickly stuffs the hot dog wrapper and the drink cup into the trash--even turning back to push the trash deeper.

Anne quietly unpacks the groceries, puts them away, wiping a tear from her face as she does.

Finished, she folds the bag, drops it into the trash.

She turns around, right into: BRAX, 26, a Midwest version of that rugby asshole you hope your daughter never dates.

BRAX

Where ya' been?

Never afraid to use his physical presence as a weapon, he looms over her.

ANNE

We needed groceries.

BRAX

Could have told me you were going.

ANNE

You were sleeping. I didn't want to wake you before your shift tonight.

BRAX
Is that the only place you went?

ANNE
Yes.

He eyes the trash. The QT cup peeks from under the grocery bag. They both notice.

ANNE
Well--I--uh--stopped at QT--for a roller dog.

BRAX
Why didn't you say that? When I asked? You only said "groceries."

ANNE
That's the reason I went out. Groceries. You think I'm hiding a hot dog?

BRAX
Why are you so defensive? I just asked.

ANNE
I'm sorry. I should have said groceries and QT.

He grabs a sandwich from the fridge.

BRAX
There somebody you like at QT?

ANNE
What? No.

BRAX
I'm just wondering why you were hiding it?

ANNE
I'm not hiding anything.

BRAX
You literally hid the QT cup in the trash.

ANNE
I threw it away.

BRAX
Under the grocery bag.

ANNE
Because I threw that away second.

BRAX
You get me anything?

ANNE
You don't usually eat before a
night shift.

BRAX
So, you went to QT without me.
Didn't think to get me anything.
Then hid it from me. You don't
think that looks weird?

She pulls him close.

ANNE
I don't want to fight.

He's not having it.

BRAX
Then quit lying to me.

He pushes her away, steps down the hall. She trails behind.

ANNE
I don't lie to you.

BEDROOM

Brax pulls on a work shirt as Anne comes around the corner.

BRAX
Is hiding lying?

ANNE
What?

BRAX
Is hiding stuff the same as lying?

ANNE
I don't hide stuff from you.

He lifts the mattress. There's an envelope underneath.

ANNE
That's--not--I'm--just--

He throws the envelope at her. She shrinks as he puffs.

BRAX
Fucking college application?

ANNE
I want to go back.

BRAX
You want to get away.

ANNE
No. I just--

BRAX
--You think you're smarter than me?
I can't take care of you? What?

ANNE
I'd like to--I like literature.

BRAX
Do you know how much college costs?
You can read your fucking books at
home for free.

He grabs a book from the side table, throws it past her head.

ANNE
I'll find the money. Get a job, or--

He charges--pushes her back against the wall. He pulls his
arm back, slams his fist into the wall next to her head.

BRAX
I'm not enough for you?

ANNE
No. I just--want to do this.

He slaps her across the face. She slides to the floor. Weeps.

BRAX
Jesus, Anne.

He softens, sits next to her.

BRAX
I don't understand. Are you not
happy with me?

ANNE
I am. I'm sorry. It was a stupid
idea. I just thought--maybe I could
become a teacher. Teach children to
love books like me.

BRAX

I promise you. I'll give you everything you ever wanted.

ANNE

I know.

BRAX

I gotta go to work. I'll take you out to dinner tomorrow. Someplace nice, like that barbecue place you like. What's it called?

She can barely get the words out.

ANNE

Italian would be nice. Ya-Ya's, maybe?

BRAX

Q-thirty-nine. I'll take you there. They got great pulled pork. Would that make you happy?

She nods, long ago out of fight.

BRAX

Good. Maybe I can pop home on break tonight. Say hi.

He kisses her on the forehead, heads out.

LATER -- BATHROOM

Anne looks at her bruised face. She presses a cold pack to her eye.

BEDROOM

Anne picks up a book, climbs back into bed. She flips to a random page, blindly points. (A little game she plays.)

She reads aloud...

ANNE

Whitman. Song of the Open Road.
Afoot and light-hearted I take to
the open road, Healthy, free, the
world before me, The long brown
path before me leading wherever I
choose. Henceforth I ask not good-
fortune, I myself am good-fortune.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Henceforth I whimper no more,
postpone no more, need nothing,
Done with indoor complaints,
libraries, querulous criticisms,
Strong and content I travel the
open road.

She stops--a thought spinning in her head. She looks at the clock. Tears run down her face. She looks at the book.

EXT. SMALL SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Anne rushes from the house with a handful of clothes. Between tears, she hurries to stuff the clothes into the car amongst a pile of other belongings--all haphazardly thrown in.

She fights to push the back car door closed. Successful, she pulls the driver's door open.

INT. ANNE'S CAR - NIGHT

Between glances toward the road, Anne fumbles through her purse, grabs her car keys.

She tries to start the car, but drops the keys. She quickly retrieves them, finally starts the car.

Ready to go, she looks up--a muscle car turns into the driveway, blocking her path. Brax jumps out.

BRAX

What's going on?

Anne keeps the window up, doesn't respond. Brax sees the clothes in the backseat. It's obvious what's going on. He pounds on the window.

BRAX

You think you're leaving me?

Anne puts the car in reverse, eases it backwards, looking to create space to go around Brax's car.

EXT. SMALL SUBURBAN HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Brax rushes to his car, reaches into the back seat. He emerges with a baseball bat.

Anne inches her car forward, steering into the grass and around his car. Brax leaps in front of her, raises the bat over his head, brings it down onto the hood, hard.

INT. ANNE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Anne jumps at the impact, but, again, she inches the car forward, bucking herself up as she does...

ANNE

Edna St. Vincent. I shall forget
you presently, my dear, So make the
most of this, your little day, Your
little month, your little half a
year...

BRAX

Come on, let's just talk about it.

Anne gives it a little more gas. Again, Brax swings, this time connecting with a headlight.

ANNE

Ere I forget, or die, or move
away...

BRAX

Why won't you talk to me!?

Brax backpedals, still fighting to inflict damage on the car. Anne holds the pace. Brax, realizing she's not going to stop, steps aside. Anne accelerates across the lawn, drives past.

She looks in the rearview mirror where Brax takes one last swing, connecting with a tail light.

ANNE

And we are done forever; by and by
I shall forget you.

EXT. SMALL SUBURBAN HOUSE - FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

Brax watches as the car speeds away.

BRAX

Crazy bitch.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

The beaten car slinks into a parking spot.

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Anne tries to clean up with water from the sink. Her phone RINGS. She ignores it.

INT. ANNE'S CAR - NIGHT

Anne sleeps.

She's startled awake by a car door SLAMMING. She looks. It's just a young family. No threat.

INT. ANNE'S CAR - DAY

Anne sits behind the wheel, her open purse and wallet on the seat next to her. She lays out her assets: a five dollar bill, a couple of ones, a bit of loose change.

She empties her purse onto the seat and pulls at the bottom of the purse. She slides something from underneath--from her secret hiding place: a gas station credit card.

Her phone RINGS. She silences the call, looks at the screen: 20 MISSED CALLS.

Anne checks her voicemail.

PHONE (V.O.)

You have sixteen messages.

She listens...

BRAX (V.O.)

Babe. It's me. I'm so sorry. I want you to come home. Please. Call me back. I love you.

She hits delete. Starts another...

BRAX (V.O.)

I did the laundry. Dishes are clean. I've been thinking about it. I'm making changes. I never should have hit you. I--sometimes you make me so angry. It's--I love you so much. Call me back.

Delete. Another...

BRAX (V.O.)

Screening my calls? You think you can hide from me? I gave you everything, you ungrateful bitch. You and me--we have unfinished business. I'm coming--

She hits delete. Again. And Again. And again.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Anne pumps gas, starting and stopping until the pump shows exactly: \$17.50.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

She stares at a map on the wall: YOU ARE HERE. RUSSELL, KANSAS. I-70.

Anne closes her eyes, mumbles to herself...

ANNE
Somewhere quiet.

With her eyes still closed, she twirls her finger around, pokes at the map. She opens her eyes: SCOTT CITY, KANSAS.

EXT. REAL ESTATE OFFICE - DAY

Anne sits inside her car, staring at the building: SCOTT CITY REAL ESTATE. She doesn't see the MAN approaching from behind, lunch in hand.

CLYDE, 50s, a bull physically and in personality, leans in, knocks on the window.

CLYDE
You coming in?

INT. ANNE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Anne leaps with fear.

Immediately, she's reconsidering. Though, she can't get the words out...

ANNE
I was--I don't think--

He looks at the clothes in the car.

CLYDE
--You need a place. I've got one.

He stomps for the door. She slips her keys into the ignition.

Another car pulls into the lot.

Anne watches as an older woman, NANCY, early 70s, steps from the car and enters the building.

INT. REAL ESTATE OFFICE - DAY

Anne cautiously steps into the office. She looks around.

ANNE
(to Clyde)
The woman?

CLYDE
You're looking to rent, I assume?

She nods. He stabs a stubby finger toward a chair near his desk: SIT. She complies, but continues to look around.

ANNE
I was hoping to speak to--

CLYDE
--This is the one you want.

He slaps a flyer on the desk in front of her.

CLYDE
Studio. Only four hundred a month.
That's dirt cheap. Two fifty
deposit. You got two fifty?

She points to another flyer.

ANNE
What about--?

CLYDE
That's not for you. This one.
That's for you. Two fifty?

ANNE
I don't have any money. But I--

He sighs--condescending.

CLYDE
Job?

She shakes her head. He pulls the flyer back.

CLYDE
Sorry. Can't help.

Nancy rounds the corner, sees Anne.

She steps back, shaken.

CLYDE

(to Anne)

Check with Gus. Motel down the street. Might let you clean rooms, trade for a place to sleep.

Anne slinks from her chair, towards the door.

CLYDE

You gotta get your life in order, miss.

She leaves, too exhausted to protest.

Nancy rushes to catch up with her.

CLYDE

She's a waste of time--

Nancy stops, looks at him. She's still shaken.

NANCY

--I--she--

Realization sweeps his face. He points, almost dumbfounded. As if to say: HER?

Nancy rushes out.

INT. ANNE'S CAR - DAY

Outside the real estate office, Anne sits behind the wheel of her car, lost as to her next move.

She jumps as Nancy knocks on the window.

NANCY

Would you like to go for a ride?

Anne shakes her head as she fiddles with her NECKLACE: gold with a distinctive center stone.

NANCY

Please. Allow me to show you just one place. I promise, it will work for you.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DAY

Anne and Nancy stand in the driveway, staring at the same farmhouse we saw earlier--back in 1965. It's more weathered, of course, with small differences. But, it's the same house.

NANCY

It's been empty for quite a few years. The current owner will trade rent for care. Basically, you clean it up, and keep it up, you can stay for free. Until you get on your feet. Can you afford free?

Anne nods, allows a tiny smile. Nancy heads for the house.

NANCY

I'll show you around.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Autumn sunlight splashes across the fully-furnished, dated space. Dust hangs in the air.

NANCY

It'll clean up real nice. Just had the furnace checked. No worries there.

Anne takes it in. Family pictures. Knick knacks on the shelves. It's as if the home were frozen in time from sixty years ago--occasionally cleaned, but little changed.

NANCY

Refrigerator's newer. Washer, dryer, too. They're in the basement. But, if you're not comfortable down there, there's a laundromat in town.

(off Anne's look)

It's a little dark downstairs.

Anne points to stairs leading up.

NANCY

Three bedrooms on the upper floor.

Anne starts up the stairs, stops when Nancy doesn't follow.

NANCY

Go ahead. I'll wait here.

Anne continues up the stairs.

When she's out of view, Nancy pulls a NECKLACE from inside her shirt: gold, distinctive center stone--an older version of the one Anne wears.

She touches the necklace to her lips.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Anne peeks into the main bedroom, glances around. Like the downstairs, it's fully furnished, stuck in time.

She checks a bedroom at the end of the hall. A boy's room.

She turns for the third bedroom--the girls' old bedroom, reaches for the doorknob.

She hesitates. After a few long seconds, she turns back for the stairs.

LIVING ROOM

Seeing Anne descend the stairs, Nancy quickly drops the necklace back into her shirt.

NANCY

It's nice, right?

She spins for the window, points to the fields.

NANCY

Now, it's a working farm. Boys'll leave you alone, though. Most days you'll never even see 'em.

Anne joins her, looks out.

NANCY

Town is quiet. Good people. Give 'em time, they'll take you in.

Anne shakes her head.

NANCY

You okay?

ANNE

I think I made a mistake. Coming here--thinking I could--

NANCY

--I don't know what you've got going on, but I know people. I can see you're strong. Whatever you've been through--whatever's coming your way --you can handle it.

ANNE

I've never been on my own.

NANCY

Everyone should be on their own for at least a little while. How else can you know who you truly are?

Nancy turns for the door.

NANCY

How about you just try it out? If it doesn't work for you, you've lost nothing. I'll take you back to get your car, get your stuff.

Nancy pulls Anne along.

NANCY

We can buy you a few groceries. Oh, and Clyde was right about one thing. Gus--at the motel--he'll hire you. I'll see to that. It won't be much money, but you won't starve. Once you know who you are, you'll know what to do next. We've all got a purpose, dear. You'll find yours.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Anne walks with Nancy to the car. Movement by the barn catches their attention.

AJ, 24, male, scruffy young farmhand, looks their way. Anne quickly diverts her focus as Nancy climbs into the car.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Anne unpacks a few items by the low light of a small table lamp. She pulls out a photo: her and a smiling Brax.

It's not without hesitation, but she drops it into the trash.

Anne continues unpacking, finds the folder with her college application. With no hesitation, she crumples it up, drops it into the trash on top of the photo.

KITCHEN

Anne washes dishes. Finished, she tosses a dish towel into a basket of dirty laundry. The basket overflows.

She sighs, picks up the basket, opens the basement door and turns on the light.

BASEMENT

A single bulb SWAYS gently from the ceiling--only enough light for the center of the space.

Reaching the bottom of the stairs, Anne sets the basket on the floor, steadies the light bulb, and uses the light from her phone to check out the dark areas of the basement.

Cobwebs and dusty shelves line the space--exactly what you'd expect in an old farm house. A little farm mouse scoots across the room, startling Anne.

She quickly finds the washer and dryer, grabs the basket, tosses in a load, and starts the washer.

BOY (V.O.)

Who are you?

The voice comes from behind her, distressed and pleading.

Anne spins. There's no one there.

BOY (V.O.)

Why are you here?

She spins again. Still no one. She runs to the stairs.

KITCHEN

Anne leans against the basement door, holds it shut as she tries to gather herself.

She grabs a nearby chair, wedges it against the door knob.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anne sleeps.

A bit of LAUGHTER, outside, wakes her.

She scurries to the window.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Three TEENAGERS cross from their parked car to the front of the house.

One carries a shotgun. Another sweeps a cellphone across the length of the house, recording video, as the third Teen, flashlight in hand, peers into a basement window.

TEEN WITH FLASHLIGHT
I heard it started down there.

TEEN WITH CELLPHONE
Naw. Started upstairs with a knife.
It finished downstairs.

TEEN WITH FLASHLIGHT
I don't think so. Downstairs first.
Then upstairs. And, no knife.

TEEN WITH SHOTGUN
They were all shot.

TEEN WITH CELLPHONE
They ever figure out who the dead
lady was?

TEEN WITH CELLPHONE
Never.

TEEN WITH SHOTGUN
Record this.

He holds the shotgun up, makes a crazy face while Teen With Cellphone lines up to shoot the video, the house in the background.

They all laugh as Teen With Shotgun mugs for the video.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anne ducks back, grabs her phone, dials.

ANNE
There are teenagers outside. With a
gun.

BRAX (V.O.)
Where are you? I'll--

ANNE
--I just need you to help me stay
calm.

It's a victory for Brax.

BRAX (V.O.)
You need me.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

The teens continue to mug for the camera.

TEEN WITH SHOTGUN

Let's go inside. I heard there's still bloodstains.

TEEN WITH CELLPHONE

There's a car in the driveway.

TEEN WITH SHOTGUN

I'm seeing the basement. Cowards can stay here.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Anne rushes down the stairs.

ANNE

I think they're coming inside.

BRAX (V.O.)

Get a knife.

ANNE

Should I call the police?

BRAX (V.O.)

Get a knife. And, tell me where you are. I'll make sure those kids never come around again.

KITCHEN

Anne grabs a knife, looks out the window, again trying not to be seen. She watches the teens continue around to the back of the house. She shifts to a back window.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Two of the teens lean down, peer into the basement window with the flashlight. The third continues to film.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

ANNE

I think they're trying to get in!

BRAX (V.O.)

You need to tell me where you are!

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Teen With Cellphone, still filming, looks up at the window. Anne ducks back, but not before being seen. The Teen presses against the house.

TEEN WITH CELLPHONE
Somebody's in there.

Seeing their friend scramble, the other two join them under the window.

TEEN WITH SHOTGUN
Was it him?

TEEN WITH CELLPHONE
It was a lady.

TEEN WITH FLASHLIGHT
Maybe it was her. Was she dead?

From the front of the house, a car HONKS and an engine REVS.

TEEN WITH CELLPHONE
What the hell?

They sprint around the house.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The HONKING and REVVING continue outside.

ANNE
Someone's here.

BRAX (V.O.)
Who? Who the fuck is there, Anne?

She runs to the

LIVING ROOM

Anne peeks out, watches as AJ, behind the wheel of the teens' car, repeatedly hits the HORN.

ANNE
It's one of the farmhands.

BRAX (V.O.)
Farmhands?

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

As the boys get close, AJ steps from the car, circles around to the front. While the panicked Teenagers pile into the car, he pounds on the hood, hard enough to leave dents.

AJ
Get out of here!

TEEN WITH CELLPHONE
Go! Go! Go!

AJ jumps out of the way as the car peels away.

AJ
Don't come back, you little
assholes!

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anne drops the phone, runs for the door.

BRAX (V.O.)
You living with another fucking
guy? Anne? You hear me, bitch? Are
you living--?

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - NIGHT

AJ watches for a moment as the car speeds away. He turns for the barn. Behind him, the house door opens slightly, Anne calls out...

ANNE
Thank you.

AJ stops, doesn't turn. Walks on.

Anne pulls the door closed. Brax's voice blasts from her nearby phone.

BRAX (V.O.)
Pick up the phone, goddammit! Anne!

She hangs up the phone, throws it in the trash can.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DAY

Anne walks from the house to her car.

Near the barn, a pig GRUNTS at AJ.

Anne stops, watches as AJ tries to put some space between himself and the pig, who just won't leave him alone.

AJ
 (to the pig)
 This whole farm--you gotta be right
 here?

Not seeing Anne, AJ tries a few awkward maneuvers to shake the pig from following him. He sprints left, jigs to the right. Jumps this way. Darts that way. Nothing works.

Anne can't help but LAUGH. AJ, seeing Anne, and embarrassed, hangs his head in mock shame.

Suddenly, though, it's Anne who feels most on display. She fidgets nervously as she works her way to the car.

ANNE
 I'm sorry, I'm just going to--uh--

She fumbles with the car door as AJ starts toward her.

Anne finally manages to open the door and slip into the car. Just as AJ arrives, she pulls the door shut.

INT./EXT. ANNE'S CAR - DAY

Anne slips the key into the ignition, turns it partway. The car DINGS with alerts as she pulls on her seatbelt, but she doesn't yet start the car.

AJ
 Sorry I didn't stop to talk last
 night. I don't get much practice
 talking to people, so I'm not very
 good at it.

Anne fights to gather herself as AJ talks through the still-closed car window.

AJ
 My name's AJ.

Anne tries to go with it. She motions to the pig.

ANNE
 She likes you.

AJ
 She gets clingy when she's scared.

ANNE

A pig, scared? Of what?

AJ glances to the house, second-story window. For just a brief second we see: PERCY. Anne doesn't notice.

AJ

Who ever really knows what a pig is thinking?

Growing more comfortable, Anne rolls down the car window. Her hand shakes as she holds it out to greet AJ.

ANNE

I'm Anne. Thank you for last night.

AJ

You heading into town?

ANNE

I need a cup of coffee. I'm assuming there's a diner?

AJ

If you take this road east about--
Why don't I just show you?

ANNE

I don't--It's--I don't know you.

AJ

I got a pig that'll vouch for me.

Anne laughs.

AJ

Figured you might want company--
being your first full day here.

ANNE

I didn't mean to--I don't need any complications right now.

AJ

It don't get less complicated than
a work truck and a cup of coffee.

Anne ponders, but, eventually grabs her purse and hops from the car, accidentally leaving the key turned in the ignition.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

AJ drives, Anne stares out the window as the old work truck bounces down a country road.

AJ

You running to or running from?
(off Anne's look)
My daddy always said, people are never where they are. I'm guessing running to. Sick parent or something. You want to be closer.

ANNE

I'd rather not talk about it.

AJ

Ooh. From. It's probably a guy.
(off Anne's silence)
I forgot. Complications.

ANNE

What about you? If no one is where they are--

AJ

--From. Definitely from.

Another pickup approaches, passes. Anne watches as the other driver stares at her--intently, uncomfortably.

ANNE

He seemed friendly.

He didn't.

AJ

People around here can be standoffish. You'll get used to it.

INT. DINER - DAY

AJ and Anne find a booth in the back.

A WAITRESS sets a menu on the table.

WAITRESS

Coffee?

ANNE

Two. To-go cups, please. And, I'm buying.

AJ tries to wave her off, but...

ANNE

I insist.

The Waitress hesitates, then turns away. To a COOK behind the counter...

WAITRESS

Two coffees. Says she's buying.
Insists.

The COOK looks at Anne, chuckles as he resumes working.

Anne can't help but notice: everyone stares, though all try to hide it.

AJ

You don't have to buy me coffee.

ANNE

I've got no job. No money. If this is my last cup of coffee for awhile, I don't want to drink it with you just staring at me.

AJ

Fair enough.

He shifts uncomfortably.

AJ

I got something I gotta make right with you.

ANNE

I've known you like five minutes. Four of them were spent protecting me. What could you possibly have to make right?

AJ

I told you a lie before.

ANNE

Oh?

AJ

I do know what the pig is thinking.

ANNE

That's exciting. You're a pig whisperer.

It's a joke, but AJ is serious.

AJ
She don't like Percy.

ANNE
Percy?

AJ fidgets nervously...

AJ
Do you know who you are?

ANNE
Do I--? What kind of a question is that? And why does everyone--?

AJ
--When it comes to Percy, you have to know who you are. If you don't, you'll find out fast.

ANNE
Back up. Who's Percy?

AJ
You say you don't want complications. Well, Percy is a walking complication.

Anne is suddenly aware that a restaurant PATRON, male, 60s, stands at her table, staring at her.

PATRON
You the one staying at the Conway house?

ANNE
Yes.

The Patron turns, hollers to FRIENDS at another table.

PATRON
Conway house.

Several CUSTOMERS throughout the diner acknowledge the thought: "I knew it." "Of course." "Makes sense."

PATRON
(whispers, to Anne)
You want my advice?

ANNE

No. But I bet you give it to me anyway.

PATRON

Get out. Now. It's not your responsibility.

ANNE

Responsibility?

PATRON

Just drive away. Fast as you can.

Anne grabs her purse, nods to AJ...

ANNE

We should go.

She stands, eyes the Patron.

ANNE

I've got no shortage of men telling me what to do, when to do it. In fact, I came to Scott City to get away from it. But, I do appreciate you piling on.

She drops some cash on the table, heads for the door, grabbing the coffees as she goes.

INT./EXT. PICKUP TRUCK/DRIVEWAY - DAY

AJ turns into the drive of the Conway house.

AJ

You've been quiet.

She climbs out of the truck.

ANNE

Thanks for the ride.

AJ

See you around?

ANNE

You seem like a nice guy. And I appreciate you running those kids off. But, I don't need friends right now. Especially guy friends. Nothing personal.

AJ
Right. Simple.

ANNE
Yes.

She heads for the house.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS - ANNE SETTLES IN/CLEANS

-- Anne rearranges furniture in the living room.

-- She pulls items from the kitchen cabinets. Dated items. 1950s-60s. Wipes them down.

-- She hangs clothes in the main closet. She stops to look at a man's shirt amongst her clothes. She moves the shirt to the very back of the closet.

-- She sweeps the hall. Stops at the closed bedroom door. Puts her hand on the knob. Backs off, turns down the hall.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Anne dusts the mantle.

She stops to look at an old, framed photo: A family. Father. Mother. Teenage boy. Two young daughters.

A noise catches her attention: muffled THUMPS, from the direction of the basement.

KITCHEN

Anne stares at the basement door (still blocked by the chair). Light shines from underneath.

BASEMENT

Anne descends the stairs, slowly. The basement is empty, the light on. She calms herself. Sees the washing machine.

ANNE
Oh my God, the laundry.

She hurries to the washing machine, pulls out a load of damp clothes. She smells them, shakes her head.

Anne looks at the dryer: Nope. She scurries for the stairs.

KITCHEN

Anne drops the clothes on the kitchen table, moves to close the basement door. A voice calls out, from the basement...

BOY (V.O.)
Who are you?

It's the same as before. Distressed. Pleading. Tentatively, she tries to answer...

ANNE
My name is Anne. Who are you?

BOY (V.O.)
Why are you here?

BASEMENT

Anne starts down the stairs.

ANNE
I just--I need a place to live.

She reaches the bottom. Like last time, the basement light sways gently.

ANNE
Are you okay?

Another voice rings out. Male. Adult. Stronger...

MAN (V.O.)
Leave us alone!!

A SHOTGUN BLAST rings out.

Startled, Anne ducks, tries to run up the stairs. Instead, she runs straight into a support column, knocking her down.

Anne, blood running down her forehead, covers her ears as a SECOND BLAST rings out.

She looks around, her mind swimming...there's nobody there.

Anne crawls to the stairs, pulls herself to her feet and hurries from the basement.

KITCHEN

Anne slams the door closed, returns the chair to underneath the doorknob. She fights to gather herself.

Checking her forehead, she sees the blood.

Anne cleans up in the sink, grabs some ice from the freezer.

PERCY (O.S.)
I'm sorry. It's all so--
uncomfortable.

Anne spins to see: Percy, looking no different than the Percy of 60 years ago, lounging on the couch in the living room.

She grabs a nearby kitchen knife.

LIVING ROOM

Anne stands in the doorway, knife in hand. Percy points to a picture on the mantle.

PERCY
Do you mind if I--?

He stands, adjusts the picture.

PERCY
Trust me. I've got an eye for these things. Name's Percy G. Jones. The "g" is for Gabriel. Like the angel. Don't know why I said "g" in the first place. I should have just said it straight: Percy Gabriel Jones. Though, the "g" does sound a bit more mysterious, I guess.

Anne stares while he adjusts other items on the mantle.

PERCY
I'll just--half an inch to the left. Otherwise it'll drive me absolutely insane.

He admires his work.

PERCY
Now I can relax.

ANNE
I've been warned about you.

PERCY
By who? The farm boy? I saw you talking to him.

He laughs as he returns to lounging on the couch.

PERCY

There's nothing wrong with a good,
hard-working farm boy.

Percy picks up a nearby book of poetry.

PERCY

It's just--some people think on a
higher level.

(re: the book)

It appears you might be a fellow
intellectual.

As he thumbs through the book...

PERCY

"An intellectual is someone whose
mind watches itself. I like this,
because I am happy to be both
halves, the watcher and the
watched."

He smiles, proud of himself.

PERCY

(pronouncing incorrectly)

Albert Camus.

ANNE

Impressive. But, it's French. You
don't pronounce the S. CAM-OO.

His smile fades.

PERCY

I disagree.

ANNE

You disagree that he's French?

PERCY

I disagree that it's polite to
correct someone in their own house.

ANNE

So, this is your house?

PERCY

In a sense. I took it over when the
Conways no longer had use for it.

ANNE

Well, I disagree.

PERCY

You disagree that I live here?

ANNE

I disagree that it looks better
moved to the left.

She steps to the mantle, returns the photo to its original location. Satisfied with her bit of defiance, she spins back to Percy. But, he's gone. She drops the knife.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - NIGHT

Anne bolts from the house, paces the front porch.

AJ (O.S.)

Anne?

She leaps at the sound of his voice. AJ holds his hands up: he's no threat.

AJ

You okay?

She waves him off.

ANNE

You didn't tell me--he's in the
house!

AJ

(re: blood on her
forehead)
Did he do that to you?

ANNE

Is he a--ghost?

She rocks back at the thought.

ANNE

That sounds so stupid. He just--
appeared. Then--just--gone. And,
the basement--the gunshots--is this
house--like--haunted--is that what
those teenagers--?

AJ

--Take a breath.

ANNE

And, I was--scared--so scared--but
also--not.

AJ
He does that.

ANNE
He does that? What does that even mean? Who is he, AJ?

AJ
Calm. Down.

He sits on the porch stairs, motions her to join.

AJ
This happens every year. Some kind of spiritual overlap. Like waves of energy colliding. The collisions get bigger and bigger until--the night of.

ANNE
The night of what?

AJ
The anniversary. It'll be sixty years this year. People died.

ANNE
In the house? This house?

AJ nods.

ANNE
He killed them.

AJ nods again.

ANNE
I'm living with a murderer.

AJ
If you stay--you're going to see some things. Bad things.

ANNE
I can't stay. I won't.

She breaks down at the thought.

ANNE
But, where--? I don't know what to do.

AJ

Here's the thing--I think you're supposed to be here.

(off her look)

You're different. I don't know if it's some sort of divine intervention, or if Percy is somehow powerful enough to pull you here--but something tells me you can make a difference in what happened here.

ANNE

Happened. As in, the past. I don't think so.

AJ

I know two things: you're here, and you're lost. You want to find out what you're made of--learn who you are--Percy'll help you figure that out real fast.

He stands, walks away. She calls after him...

ANNE

What have you learned?

AJ

Being around Percy is like riding a bull. It's a thrill. But, the dismount's gonna hurt.

ANNE

Did you find yourself?

AJ

I hope you stay.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Anne frantically packs her belongings.

She turns to pick something up--only to come face-to-face with Percy.

PERCY

Did I frighten you? You appear to be preparing to separate yourself from these premises.

He considers his word choice.

PERCY
Premises? Or, premissi?

He steps back, flustered with himself.

PERCY
It's possible I've just invented a word.

She eyes the nearby knife.

PERCY
Buttress yourself, Anne. There's no reason for such radical maneuvers.

She spins.

ANNE
You killed people. In this house.

PERCY
That shouldn't define me.

ANNE
I think maybe it should.

PERCY
Yes. Maybe it should. But, what if you could help me redefine myself? What if you could save them?

ANNE
From you?

PERCY
We might even become friends. Please, I need you. Stay.

She grabs a suitcase, heads for the front door.

ANNE
I'm hearing that a lot lately.

PERCY
Help me reach my highest eventuality.

ANNE
What does that even mean?

PERCY
Potential, Anne.

As she drags her suitcase out the front door...

PERCY

What if I could help you reach your potential?

ANNE

I can reach my "highest eventuality" without you.

Anne pulls the door closed behind her.

PERCY (O.S.)

No need to mock those you might need, Anne.

INT. ANNE'S CAR - NIGHT

Anne searches her purse. She can't find her car keys. Defeated, she sits back...notices the keys in the ignition.

ANNE

Shit.

She turns the key. Nothing happens. The car is dead. She slumps against the steering wheel.

EXT./INT. ANNE'S CAR - DAY

Morning sun reflects off Anne's car in the driveway.

Rumpled, Anne stirs awake in the back seat of the car.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Anne walks along a long, empty stretch of road.

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

Aged but cared for, the small motel sits on the edge of town.

Anne approaches, worn from the walk.

INT. MOTEL - DAY

Anne RINGS the bell on the desk.

GUS, 60s, disinterested, rounds the corner.

GUS

Yep?

ANNE

Um--at the real estate office--they
said--I'm here about a job.

GUS

I got nothin' here. Sorry.

LINDA, 60s, over-the-top, outgoing, sweeps into the room.

LINDA

Don't be ridiculous, Gus. Of course
we'll help.

GUS

We can't--

LINDA

--Nancy called.

She looks Gus straight in the eye. She's got a point to make,
but she doesn't have to say it.

GUS

The house?
(off Linda's look)
Alright then.

LINDA

(to Anne)

You'd prepare and maintain a light
continental breakfast every weekday
for our guests, plus clean any
rooms. Usually only three or four.
A few other things. You'd be done
by two most days. Minimum wage, if
you can make that work.

Anne fidgets. Gus stares, like he's seen a ghost.

LINDA

(to Gus)

Go make some tea or something.

Gus HURUMPHS his way from the room. Linda, reading Anne's
indecisiveness, leans in...

LINDA

Your choice, of course, but I think
you'd like it here.

ANNE

Is there--if I start today, can you
pay me today? Just this once?

LATER

Anne sweeps the lobby. Linda walks in, glances at the clock.

LINDA
That's plenty for today.

She pops the register open, pulls out multiple twenties, hands them to Anne.

LINDA
Plus a little extra.

ANNE
Thank you.

Linda takes the broom and Anne turns for the door.

LINDA
I do hope to see you tomorrow.

Anne nods.

LINDA
Good luck either way.

Anne leaves.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Anne, on the same road as before, walks in the opposite direction. She carries a car battery.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The car's hood is up. Anne stares at her car engine.

She sets the battery next to the car, heads for the house.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Standing at the threshold, Anne rummages through her purse. She pulls out a cross and a motel Bible, presses forward, holding the cross in front of her.

She notices something. There, on the mantle...a folder: HER CRUMPLED COLLEGE APPLICATION.

She grabs the application, slumps on the couch, the cross and Bible on her lap.

PERCY (O.S.)
I'm not a vampire.

Anne looks up to see Percy leaning against the mantle.

PERCY
I mean, I get it. Good versus evil
and all that.

ANNE
I thought about garlic cloves.

PERCY
Garlic? Could only be helpful if
you were serving Italian tonight.

He likes the idea.

PERCY
Big plate of spaghetti. Couple
slices of garlic bread. Nice bottle
of red. I propose we indulge.

ANNE
What do you want from me?

PERCY
If pasta's too much--

ANNE
--I'm serious.

PERCY
I was hoping to get to know you
before getting into the weeds.

ANNE
Am I safe? With you here?

PERCY
You're thinking of staying.

ANNE
Am I safe?

PERCY
Instinct is telling you that you
are. Am I right?

ANNE
My instincts don't have a great
track record.

He motions to the cross sitting between them.

PERCY

May we dispense with the puerile
theatrics?

She sets the cross aside.

ANNE

Why do you talk like that?
(off Percy's look)
"Puerile theatrics." You speak like
an academic.

PERCY

Do I not strike you as academic
material?

He leans forward. This is dangerous territory.

ANNE

It's not that. You're just--here.
Scott City. Kansas. Trapped, I
presume.

PERCY

I can be perplexing to people. To
myself, I'll admit, on occasion.
PHD was always the goal. Until--
life.

ANNE

Murdering someone isn't
circumstance. Or, bad luck.

PERCY

You are a focused one, aren't you?
If you insist on seeing me through
this singular lens...

She reaches into a bag, pulls out a book.

ANNE

I stopped by the library.

She hands it to him.

ANNE

I figure, if I leave it here--you
can read it? I mean--can you?

PERCY

A peace offering.

He flips through it. Reads.

PERCY

Yeats. Nor dread nor hope attend A
dying animal; A man awaits his end
Dreading and hoping all; Many times
he died, Many times rose again...

He looks up from the book...

PERCY

Perhaps you do see me. Thank you.

ANNE

Does that mean you accept?

PERCY

The offering was never necessary.

ANNE

I can't sleep in the car again.
And, as you can see, my options are
limited.

He sets the book aside. Picks up the college application.

PERCY

I must know. You kept it, so, it's
meaningful. Then, you threw it
away, so...it's a goal, but not
deemed reachable?

ANNE

Like your PHD?

PERCY

I have regrets.

ANNE

It's so expensive.

PERCY

The money question does cloud one's
mind.

ANNE

I'm working on it. But, it's nearly
twenty thousand a year. It feels--

PERCY

--impossible. I may be able to
help. But, that's another day's
discussion.

(off Anne's look)

Let's not rush the moment--make
things--transactional.

He settles in.

PERCY

Tell me--why here? Why now?

ANNE

The "here" is random. The "now" I'd rather not talk about.

PERCY

I propose a plan for your future.

He jumps up, replaces the application on the mantle.

PERCY

Make your progress tangible.
Measurable. Whenever you compile a
little extra cash, drop it inside.
(off her look)
You think me a thief? I mean,
you're right to question. But,
what, my dear, do I need for money?

ANNE

I suppose you're right.

PERCY

And just what is the cretin's name?
From whom you run?

ANNE

Brax.

Percy turns, looks out the window.

PERCY

Brax? Good lord, that's a brute of
a name. I'm assuming he's
responsible for the condition of
your vehicle?

ANNE

He's going to kill me someday. If
he finds me.

Percy sighs.

PERCY

The universe insists we discuss
business.

He turns back to her.

PERCY

Are you speaking metaphorically, or literally? I mean, I can help either way, but it'd be nice to know the stakes.

ANNE

I don't think he'd actually kill me. He loves me.

PERCY

Perhaps we can trade services. A bit of quid pro quote?

ANNE

Quo, not quote.

Percy bristles at the correction.

ANNE

Apologies. What do you mean by "trade services?"

PERCY

You stop me from killing those people sixty years ago, I protect you from the ruffian Brax.

ANNE

Stop you?

PERCY

I'm of two minds, Anne. Constantly in conflict. Both, powerful forces. Here's the nut--I endeavor one side to win. The intellectual, not the brute. For, I am both, until I am only one. You're right about me-- I'm a killer. With your help, I can erase that side of me.

ANNE

I don't understand.

PERCY

As you've no doubt been made aware, I have, lets call them... "deformities" in my personality. Flaws that drive me forward. These obsessions ingrain thoughts into my psyche. That night, sixty years ago, there were supposed to be five people here. Five.

PERCY (CONT'D)

When that killer in me appropriated the moment--when he killed one--he committed to killing five. The order of the universe--of my brain--commanded it. So, when there were only four people here--

ANNE

--You killed *four* people?

PERCY

I'm defined already. Would it make a difference if it were only two? No. The point--the relevant piece of this problematic puzzle--is: the number of people that I kill...it has to be five. Or, it has to be zero. There can be no peace in-between. The offer I'm making you--the proposal I'm suggesting--is you help me make it zero--before the killer in me makes it five.

ANNE

I don't understand how I can--?

PERCY

--A discussion for another day. Know that I wouldn't commence this agreement without the firm belief that you could--safely--uphold your commitment.

He holds out his hand.

PERCY

What say you? It's only a matter of you doing more of what you've already done.

She doesn't shake his hand.

PERCY

That's fine. I'll give you some time to think it over.

He points to the window as he walks away.

PERCY

I believe that young man to be smitten.

She glances out. Sees: AJ, under the open car hood, examining the engine, battery at his feet.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Anne marches from the house to the driveway.

ANNE
Get away from my car.

AJ
I'm just trying to help.

ANNE
I don't need your help.

He closes the hood.

AJ
I'm sorry--I thought I was doing a
good thing.

She glares. Message received, he turns away.

After a few steps, he stops. Turns back.

AJ
I should have asked. If you would
like some help, I'm here.

Again, he heads for the barn.

ANNE
I actually could use your help.

He stops.

ANNE
I have no idea how to replace a
battery.

He returns and the two of them start the business of
replacing the battery together.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anne sleeps.

VOICES grow in volume outside her window--a large, angry
crowd--their individual voices indistinguishable.

They grow loud enough to wake Anne.

She creeps, cautiously, to the window. Looking out, she sees:
NO CROWD. JUST AJ. HANGING FROM A TREE.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - SIDE YARD - NIGHT

Anne rounds the corner, sprints to AJ. She grabs his legs, fights to take his weight from the grip of the noose.

ANNE
Help! Somebody help me!

AJ (O.S.)
Anne!

She turns to see: AJ rushing to her.

And, just like that...AJ no longer hangs from the tree. The body is gone. The noose, also gone.

Anne slumps to the ground, emotion overwhelming her.

AJ wraps her up.

ANNE
I thought you were dead. This place, I--

AJ
--It won't break you. It can't.

She looks him in the eye. A connection.

AJ
You're strong. You're smart. You're bigger than all of this.

She kisses him.

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

Anne pushes a cleaning cart from a room, pulls the door closed behind her.

She wheels the cart to a new room. KNOCKS. There's no response. She pushes into the room.

INT. MOTEL - GUEST ROOM - DAY

Anne makes the bed. Scrubs the shower. Vacuums.

She FREEZES at the sight of a gym bag in the corner.

Anne slowly approaches. She reaches in, pulls out a shirt.

Panicked, she runs from the room.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

A car screams past, Anne driving.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Anne whips her car into the driveway, sprints for the house.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - DAY

Anne furiously packs her belongings.

Something outside catches her attention.

She looks out the window.

Anne slumps on the bed.

EXT./INT. CONWAY HOUSE - PORCH/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Brax, large bouquet of flowers in hand, aggressively KNOCKS on the front door.

Anne, dejected, answers. Brax shoves the flowers toward her.

BRAX

Get your stuff. We're going home.

Anne stands in the doorway. Frozen in the moment.

Percy, previously out of view, leans in...

PERCY

Close the door.

She does. Brax immediately POUNDS away on it.

PERCY

Ready to take my deal? You help me,
I help you?

ANNE

You'll kill him.

PERCY

An intriguing solution, I agree.
Solves both of our problems--if not
in the way that I endeavor.

ANNE
(to Brax, through the
door)
I don't want to be with you.

BRAX (O.S.)
You're in danger. I can prove it.

ANNE
Go away.

BRAX (O.S.)
You're going viral. All over the
internet. It's how I found you.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Anne sits next to Brax on the sofa, an open laptop in front of them.

Percy paces the room.

Brax, unable to see him, types on the laptop.

PERCY
I fail to understand how you could
possibly be attracted to this
beast.

BRAX
Check this out.

On the laptop: a video, paused on a shot of the farmhouse.

Brax hits play as Percy circles around.

They all watch a shaky cellphone video: Teenagers shine a flashlight into a basement window. It's the scene from earlier--at the farmhouse. In the window above them, a woman peeks from behind the curtain--her.

She gasps. Brax turns to her.

BRAX
I recognized you immediately.

He fast forwards.

BRAX
Watch this. At first, I thought it
was a hoax.

The video continues: The teenagers are startled by the car's HORN. They sprint around the house, to the car, scramble inside--exactly how it happened earlier.

The car rocks violently.

Dents appear in the hood, only now there's no source visible.

No AJ.

BRAX

Freaky, isn't it?

ANNE

Where's--?

BRAX

Exactly. I remembered what you said on the phone. "Someone's here. One of the farmhands." It's AJ, right?

ANNE

You know about AJ?

BRAX

He's in the comments.

Percy glances over her shoulder.

PERCY

The farm boy is famous?

Brax scrolls past the video.

BRAX

He's one of the killers. Him and some guy named Percy. Killed four people right in this house. Sixty years ago.

He clicks on a link.

Up pops two black and white photos: Percy and AJ, dated November, 1965.

PERCY

It appears I, too, am famous.

Anne reels from the new information.

She spins away, remembering...

INSERT: ANNE'S MIND RACES

-- Anne rides in AJ's truck. Another truck passes, the driver stares. In her truck, there's no driver, no AJ.

-- Anne in the restaurant. No AJ. The waitress turns to the Cook, laughs. "Two coffees. Says she's buying. Insists."

-- Anne talks to an empty booth. Where AJ should be.

-- The customer stands at her table, declares to the other restaurant guests: "Conway house." Everyone reacts with understanding.

END INSERT

Anne buries her face in her hands.

BRAX

It's real, isn't it? You can see them, can't you? At least, AJ.

She doesn't respond. Brax points to the laptop.

BRAX

The townsfolk--they hung him from the tree right outside.

PERCY

They found us hiding under the Eisenhower bridge.

BRAX

The other guy--Percy--they hung him in the house. Downstairs, where the father and son were killed.

PERCY

I don't know how they found us so quickly. Like they drove straight to us.

BRAX

You gotta move back in with me. This house is cursed.

PERCY

Focus, Anne. He's trying to exploit this knowledge for his gain.

Anne, without thinking, responds.

ANNE

You don't know him.

BRAX
I don't know who?

Anne can't help but glance toward Percy.

ANNE
I was talking--I mean--

BRAX
Are they here?

He stands. Puffs.

BRAX
Come get me, motherfuckers.

Percy, all smiles, gets right in his face--though there's no way for Brax to know he's there.

PERCY
Observe how quickly he flares. I do most certainly know him. Guys like him will punch you in the nose and blame you for bleeding.

BRAX
Nobody messes with my girl.

PERCY
He owns you. You hear it? Say the word, Anne. Problems solved.

ANNE
(to Brax)
Please leave.

BRAX
You can't be serious. I just--

ANNE
--Please.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Brax storms from the house as a car pulls into the driveway.

He opens his car door, preparing to leave, but stops when he sees Nancy and Linda climb from her car.

He quickly zeroes in on Nancy...

BRAX
Who are you?

NANCY

Don't you just look like trouble.

He approaches her--slowly. She holds her ground as he looks her over. Linda sweeps around the car to intercede.

LINDA

Don't be weird there, big boy.

He stays locked on Nancy.

BRAX

This fucking place...

NANCY

You're the boyfriend. No matter. As far as what happens, you're completely irrelevant.

BRAX

We'll see about that.

He returns to his car and peels away.

LINDA

He looked like he recognized you.

Nancy turns to knock on the front door. Just as she does, Anne yanks the door open, on her way out.

ANNE

Nancy. Linda. Hi. I was just going to talk to--

LINDA

--You left the motel in a rush. Like something might be wrong.

Nancy motions to Brax's car speeding away.

NANCY

I think we met the something.

Percy pokes his head around the corner.

PERCY

I'm sorry, Anne can't entertain right now, as she needs to prosecute a young farm boy for his voluminous deceit.

Anne motions them inside.

ANNE
Come in, please.

PERCY
Prosecute? Perhaps execute is more
accurate.

Anne shoots Percy an angry glance.

PERCY
Too soon?

NANCY
We don't want to impose. Just want
to make sure you're okay.

ANNE
I could actually use the company.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Percy circles as Nancy sits on the couch. Linda, always a
bundle of energy, surveys the room. Neither react to Percy's
presence.

NANCY
(to Anne)
Is there anything I can help you
with?

ANNE
I just found out about...What do
you know about this house?

LINDA
Ooh, what's this?

She snags the envelope from the mantle, peeks inside.

ANNE
It's a--

LINDA
--college application.

She pulls a few bills from the folder.

LINDA
Are you saving up?

ANNE
It's going to be awhile.

Linda fishes through her purse, pulls out a twenty, drops it into the folder along with the other money.

LINDA

This is an idea I can get behind.

ANNE

(back to Nancy)

I know something horrible happened in the basement.

PERCY

I'm sorry to say--the kitchen, too.

Linda places the folder back on the mantle.

LINDA

I always wanted to go East. Like, NYU or something. Never could make it work.

PERCY

Unplanned. I promise. I mean, technically, it was all unplanned.

LINDA

Maybe I could have been a singer. Or an actress or something.

ANNE

(to Nancy)

Upstairs--Were children killed? In that room?

Nancy stands, shaken by the question. She checks her watch.

PERCY

Originally, it was about money.

NANCY

I can't--I forgot about an appointment. Maybe come by the office. We can talk more.

PERCY

Never could find it. Searched and searched.

ANNE

I'll be leaving tomorrow.

LINDA

Oh, there's no need for that.

Nancy moves to comfort Anne.

NANCY

I know it's all strange and scary.
Forget the office, let's do lunch
or something. Talk about it all.

ANNE

(to Nancy)

You didn't hear me. I won't be
here.

NANCY

Of course.

She heads for the door. Linda trails her.

LINDA

We'll do lunch together. The girls.
I want to talk more about that
college thing. So exciting.

Nancy and Linda leave.

Anne, defeated and down, climbs the stairs. Percy calls out
from the living room...

PERCY

What about the farm boy? Aren't you
going to give him the "what for?"

Anne slams the bedroom door.

PERCY

I was so looking forward to that.

INT. REAL ESTATE OFFICE - DAY

Nancy works at her desk. The office door opens, she looks up
to see: Brax, heading for her.

He towers over her, holds out his phone.

She looks at the screen.

BRAX

Pretty big coincidence, yes?

Nancy doesn't respond.

BRAX

You're going to help me convince
her to come home, or I tell her.

NANCY
 You can't possibly understand what
 you're looking at.

He leans over the desk.

BRAX
 You listen--

CLYDE (O.S.)
 --Bad idea.

Brax looks to see Clyde striding his way. He turns to meet
 the threat. The men stand face-to-face.

CLYDE
 Whole town's on her side. Me
 included.

He looks to Nancy.

CLYDE
 Is he going to be a problem?

NANCY
 No. What's going to happen is going
 to happen.

CLYDE
 (to Brax)
 Get the hell out of my office. And,
 leave her, and that girl, alone.

Brax holds for a moment. But, he knows he can't win this
 fight. He leaves in a huff.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Anne pulls into the driveway, exits her car.

AJ heads her direction, smile on his face. Anne picks up the
 pace, ignoring him as she strides to the front door.

AJ
 Wait up. Anne. Stop. What's going
 on?

Anne closes the door behind her as she enters the house.

AJ KNOCKS on one of the living room windows. She pulls the
 curtain closed.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Anne washes dishes. AJ appears outside the kitchen window. She spins for the living room.

Seconds later, there's a KNOCK on the front door.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Anne answers the door.

AJ

I'm guessing you learned something about me.

ANNE

That you're dead? Yes. That you, too, are a murderer? Yes. I learned that, too.

AJ

I was going to tell you.

ANNE

But, you wanted to kiss me instead.

AJ

No--I--I was afraid you'd leave.

ANNE

I see. You chose manipulation. So much better.

As she swings the door closed, AJ reaches out to block it.

The tips of his fingers slowly dissolve. He quickly pulls his hand back and his fingers slowly re-form as he gathers himself, shakes off the pain...

ANNE

What was that?

AJ

The house.

ANNE

What--?

AJ

I died out here. He died in there. Percy can't come out. I...

AJ, very tentatively, slides his hand toward the threshold. As his fingertips clear the line, they start to dissolve.

He yanks his hand back. Again, he shakes it off.

A FEW MINUTES LATER

They sit together on the front porch.

ANNE

You killed them?

AJ

No--I--yes. Sort of.

(off Anne's look)

Remember when I told you that Percy will show you who you are? Well, he showed me I'm a coward. I drove him here. I sat in the car--right there in the driveway. He said he was going to rob them, but I think I knew better. And, when those first shotgun blasts went off--well, there was no question. I still sat here. Too scared to help them. Too scared to drive away.

He breaks down.

AJ

I might have saved the mother. Or, maybe the old woman upstairs. I don't know. But, I didn't even try.

ANNE

Why didn't you tell me? Why did you lie? Why did you let me--?

AJ hangs his head.

AJ

I needed you to stay. Percy told me he had a plan that might change things. Stop it before it ever even happened. Said if you knew about me, you might run. It was wrong.

ANNE

Just another selfish asshole.

She storms into the house.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - DAY

As Anne sleeps, Percy leans in, whispers in her ear...

PERCY
The brute returns.

Anne wakes, startled by Percy's presence.

PERCY
There's a developing situation in
your driveway.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

A TOW TRUCK DRIVER works to secure Anne's car for towing,
Brax nearby.

Anne sprints from the house.

ANNE
That's my car!

The Driver stops, looks at Brax.

Brax motions: Keep going. Anne races to the Driver.

ANNE
You're helping him steal my car.

The Driver shoots Brax an angry look: Is she right?

BRAX
It's my car.

ANNE
Hell it is. I made every payment.
Every. One.

Brax reaches into the glove box, retrieves the registration
and title.

The Driver looks them over, hands them back to Brax.

DRIVER
I'm sorry, ma'am. It's titled in
his name.

She snatches the papers from Brax, reads them over.

ANNE
But--

It hits her.

ANNE

You said you would take care of it.
Like it was a favor.

BRAX

I'm doing you a favor now. He's
taking the car to fix it.

ANNE

You smashed it.

BRAX

This is how I make it up to you.

Finished with the car, the Driver climbs into his truck.

DRIVER

Should be about a month, depending
on parts.

Anne can only watch as he drives away with her car. The sound of Brax's CAR TRUNK closing snaps her out of it.

Brax marches toward the house, gym bag in hand. She hurries to catch up.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

They pass through the living room on the way up the stairs.

ANNE

What are you doing?

BRAX

Moving in.

Percy leans against the mantle.

PERCY

(to Anne)
Offer still stands.

Brax looks that way. He marches over and...snatches the envelope from the mantle. He looks inside. Takes the money.

He pulls a lighter from his pocket sets the application on fire and tosses it into the FIREPLACE.

PERCY

He's worse than I surmised. If that
were possible.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - DAY

Brax drops his bag in the corner, looks at the bed.

BRAX

Wanna?

She rolls her eyes.

ANNE

I have to get to work.

BRAX

Don't worry about that. I told 'em
you didn't need the job anymore.

The news rocks Anne.

BRAX

It's all right. I'll get a job in
town if I have to. Everything's
going to be okay.

A GUNSHOT rings out from the basement.

BRAX

What the--?

He pushes Anne behind him. Another SHOT rings out.

ANNE

It's in the basement. It keeps
happening. There's nothing down
there, though.

Brax motions for Anne to wait. He heads out.

Once he's gone...Percy leans in to whisper in Anne's ear.

PERCY

He will kill you. That's who he is.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Brax cautiously approaches the basement door.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Anne moves to the hallway, paces as Percy presses his case.

PERCY

I don't understand the hesitation.
By helping me, you save four
people. In return, I protect you.
(off Anne's look)
Will you say yes if I promise the
brute gets to live?

BASEMENT

Brax slowly descends the stairs. The lit bulb swings from the ceiling. Smoke hangs in the air. Brax sniffs, yells...

BRAX

I can smell it. The gun powder.

He's excited. This is a rush. He whispers...

BRAX

You down here, Percy?

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Anne considers.

ANNE

I just don't understand how I can
help.

PERCY

You were there, Anne. That night,
sixty years ago. Just like I'm here
today--you were there then.

He points to the girls' bedroom door.

PERCY

In there. I was--you came at me.
You and--I need you to get there
sooner. Stop me before it starts.

ANNE

That makes no sense.

Frustration builds for Percy.

PERCY

You have a power! I saw it. You can
move between then and now. All you
have to do is choose to do it.

Still, she hesitates. He spins away.

PERCY

I could just kill the brute and be done with it. I'm efforting with extreme diligence to be the good guy here.

BASEMENT

Brax searches the basement. He calls out, like a schoolyard bully stalking his prey...

BRAX

You scared of me, Percy? AJ?

Finding nothing, he turns, runs face-first into: Percy, hanging from the rafters. Dead.

BRAX

Shit!

Brax sprints from the basement.

KITCHEN

Brax leans against the now-closed basement door, still feeling the excitement.

BRAX

Holy shit! That was--Anne! Babe! I saw him!

He laughs.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

PERCY

You see? He loves this. Feeds off of it.

Brax calls upstairs.

BRAX (O.S.)

Have you seen it? The actual killings? Fuck! It's so--damn, this place is crazy.

PERCY

It's deep inside him. Inherent to his identity.

Anne looks at Percy.

PERCY

You can do this. Save them. Save yourself. I'll help you, best I can.

She nods. They have a deal.

ANNE

You can't kill him.

Percy smiles.

PERCY

I'm a man of principle. My word.

ANNE

We're going to talk to him.

Percy rolls his eyes.

PERCY

Fine.

KITCHEN

Brax paces excitedly. He opens the basement door, closes it again--not sure what to expect next.

ANNE (O.S.)

Sit down.

He turns. She points to the kitchen table.

BRAX

I've never seen anything like it--

ANNE

--Sit.

It's more forceful than usual, and Brax immediately stiffens.

BRAX

I'll sit, when I want.

One of the chairs swings from the table--an invitation to sit from an unseen force.

BRAX

Oh, this is interesting.
Percy? Or A.J.?

ANNE

Percy.

BRAX
(to Percy)
Whatcha got?

Brax gets pushed back. He takes a swing at the air.
He gets pushed again--towards the chair.
Fear spreads across his face, though he fights to hide it.

BRAX
Not a fair fight.

His body jerks back, dropping him onto the chair.

ANNE
I don't think Percy cares much
about a fair fight.

Brax's head snaps toward Anne, as if someone were forcing him to look at her.

BRAX
Fine. Fine! Let me go.

He relaxes, released by the invisible force.

Anne calmly sits across from Brax.

ANNE
Percy and I have made a deal.

Brax sneers.

ANNE
He has agreed to two things.

BRAX
That son-of-a--

Brax's mouth snaps closed--the invisible hand at work.

ANNE
One, he's going to protect me. Two,
he's going to let you live. I had
to fight for that one.

She leans in.

ANNE
You need to leave. Tonight. And I
want my car back, first thing
tomorrow. And that's the last I'll
see of you.

Brax laughs, best he can with his mouth muffled by Percy.

ANNE

What's so funny?

Percy lets him free.

BRAX

No way I'm leaving now. Percy or no Percy. Not with the big day coming.

(off Anne's look)

You didn't know? Tomorrow's the anniversary. With what you've told me, and what I've seen already, I figure tomorrow night's going to be a real humdinger.

Anne shoots a look to Percy, now visible to us.

BRAX

So, here's my deal. You call your dog off through tomorrow night, you'll never see me again after that.

PERCY

A detestable proposition. Do not let the brute distract you. For his sake, if nothing else. If, for some inexplicable reason, you can't help me--our agreement is null and void.

ANNE

(to Brax)

Deal.

Brax celebrates while Percy slumps.

BRAX

Suck it, asshole. Hands off through tomorrow.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anne sleeps on the bed, Brax in a chair by the door.

The muffled GUN SHOTS ring out from the basement, waking Brax. He looks over to the sleeping Anne.

Mrs. Conway rises from the bed, fear in her eyes.

She cautiously treads to the bedroom door.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Brax follows Mrs. Conway down the stairs.

LIVING ROOM

Mrs. Conway turns the corner into the kitchen.

Brax stops cold when he hears a THUMP, the sound of wood on flesh. A second THUD quickly follows as Mrs. Conway slumps to the floor.

Brax stands frozen at the base of the stairs as he watches Percy saunter past, shotgun in hand.

Percy reloads the gun at the mantle. He turns, facing Brax straight on, raises the shotgun right at Brax's midsection.

BRAX

You promised Anne.

Percy shoots.

Brax flinches. He looks down to see blood slowly expanding around his feet. Not his. He turns to see Mrs. Conway, dead on the kitchen floor.

Brax looks back up...Percy is gone. In fact, it's all gone, including the blood and Mrs. Conway.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Brax walks down the hall. He stops at the girls' bedroom door. He reaches for the knob.

ANNE (O.S.)

What are you doing?

Brax spins to see Anne standing in the main bedroom doorway.

BRAX

I saw Percy kill the mother.

Anne motions to the girls' door.

ANNE

Leave it alone.

BRAX

I want to know what's in there.
What happened.

She steps toward him.

ANNE
Leave it alone.

BRAX
You're getting awfully comfortable
ordering me around.

He turns, grabs the door handle. She rushes him, tries to wrestle him away from the door.

He fights back and quickly gets the upper hand. In a fit of rage, he pushes her back.

Anne SCREAMS as she tumbles down the stairs.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

AJ hears the scream. He hurries toward the house.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Anne lies at the bottom of the stairs. Motionless.

Brax stomps down the stairs, reaches down, pulls her head back. Blood runs down her cheek from fresh wounds.

Her eyes open. She grabs at his face. The fight is on.

Brax lifts her up, swings her around, pushes her against the mantle. He reaches back--readies a punch.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - PORCH - NIGHT

AJ looks in from the outside. He pounds on a living room window, desperate to intervene.

AJ
Leave her alone!

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A window SHATTERS in a shower of broken glass.

Brax looks over--there's nobody there.

Anne takes advantage of the distraction. She kicks Brax in the groin.

Enraged, he lashes into her--a fury of fists and anger.

The room explodes with chaos as the two wrestle and claw from one end of the room to another, Anne fighting for her life.

Shards of glass rain onto them as, one by one, the living room windows shatter from AJ's rage--a line of destruction that advances across the room with them.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - PORCH - NIGHT

The last window broken, AJ runs to the front door, pushes and pulls at the handle, bangs on the door with all his might.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Brax ignores the pounding on the front door. His chest heaves with anger--each breath now hanging in the air from the icy outside air that's flooded the room.

He again loads up a punch. He swings his arm forward, but it stops inches from her face.

Brax tries again. Again he's thwarted by an invisible force.

He's pushed back. Brax tumbles over the coffee table.

He leaps back to his feet.

BRAX

Let's go, asshole!

He takes an aggressive stance. His head rocks back, a reaction to receiving an unseen punch.

He resets, only to be punched again. Still, Brax advances, swinging wildly at the air.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - PORCH - NIGHT

AJ watches through a broken front window as Brax and Percy fight a very lopsided fight.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Out of options, Brax rushes to Anne and grabs her, swinging her around as a shield. He pulls her into the

KITCHEN

Keeping Anne in front of him, he sidles up to a drawer.

Brax blindly searches the drawer--keeping his eyes on the living room doorway--as if he could see Percy coming.

He finds the knife...holds it to her throat.

BRAX
I'll kill her.

Percy, off to the side, leans in...

PERCY
(to Anne)
Your call, Anne.

The knife presses against her skin, the blood from her many wounds dripping across the blade.

She considers. Then...

ANNE
Kill him.

Brax still can't see Percy, but he DID hear that.

The knife flies from his hand, knocked by Percy.

Brax spins as he sees another knife rise from the open drawer. It hangs in the air for just a second...then advances on him.

Brax releases Anne and sprints for the

LIVING ROOM

Brax stumbles around the corner as he races into the room.

The knife, thrown, sticks sharply into the wall next to him, just missing its mark.

Brax scrambles to his feet and runs to the front door. A chair smashes into the wall next to him.

He turns to see the knife being pulled from the wall. He bolts out the door.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Brax frantically fumbles his way into his car, starts it up while pulling on his seat belt. He peels away.

INT. BRAX'S CAR - NIGHT

Brax, drives furiously.

BRAX
Shit. Shit. Shit.

He tries to calm himself.

BRAX
You're okay, man. You're okay.

Suddenly, his seat belt releases. Brax looks down, pulls it back across, resets it.

It releases again.

He snaps it back in place. This time it holds.

He looks in the rear view mirror. No one's following.

What he doesn't see: AJ sitting in the passenger seat.

AJ reaches over, releases Brax's seat belt yet again. Then, yanks hard on the steering wheel.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Brax's muscle car careens off the road, down an embankment and head-on into a tree.

It's an explosion of metal and glass punctuated by Brax rocketing through the windshield and into the tree.

Seconds pass as Brax's limp body bleeds out on the hood of the car.

AJ approaches, watches him die. He turns back for the long walk home.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Anne, bruised and battered, sleeps on the couch. Percy sits nearby, reads the poetry book.

He looks up: AJ walks up the driveway toward the house.

Percy greets him at the front door.

PERCY
The farm boy returns. But, from where?

AJ
The boyfriend is dead.

Percy cocks his head.

PERCY
I must admit, despite my
overwhelming disappointment at not
getting to dispatch of the brute
myself, I am intrigued by this
developing side of you.

AJ
They'll be hanging me again
tonight. There's no question I
deserve this one.

Percy nods to Anne.

PERCY
If Anne achieves to the level I
believe she can, it won't come to
such uncivilized activity.

AJ
And if it doesn't work?
(off Percy's look)
You better not hurt her.

PERCY
I can see but the two
potentialities. Now if you'll
excuse me, we have a big night for
which to prepare.

Percy closes the door on AJ, wakes Anne.

PERCY
We need to talk. You should know
what you're going to see.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - NIGHT

Darkness hangs over the old farm house.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anne paces the room, fiddles with her necklace.

Percy slips into the room, knocks on the door frame.

PERCY

While I nodded, nearly napping,
suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping,
rapping at my chamber door.

ANNE

Poe.

PERCY

Seemed appropriate. It's time.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - 1965 - NIGHT

AJ drives as Percy sings along to a song on the radio. (EX:
My Girl by The Temptations)

The farmhouse slides into view in the distance.

INT. AJ'S CAR - 1965 - NIGHT

Percy turns off the radio, motions for AJ to pull off the
road. He does.

Percy reaches into the back seat, pulls out a shotgun.

AJ

Just the money, right?

PERCY

Lights off. Pull up, let me out.
Keep it running.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

A modern car pulls to a stop in the driveway.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - 1965 - NIGHT

Percy hops out of AJ's car.

He winds his way around the house.

INT. AJ'S CAR - 1965 - NIGHT

AJ nervously reaches for the door handle. Reconsiders.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - KITCHEN - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Percy tries to calm Anne as they both stand in the doorway between the kitchen and living room.

ANNE

I can't do this.

PERCY

You *did* do this. You just need to do it sooner.

He looks at his watch.

PERCY

In one minute, I come through the back door. The father and son will be sitting right here.

He points to the table.

PERCY

Caught 'em by surprise. I must say, I surprised myself, too.

ANNE

I don't think I'll be able to stop you. You're enjoying this.

PERCY

It's a fight, I'll admit. Remember, try to ride the wave. Get to the other side and--

ANNE

--Lock the back door.

PERCY

It'll keep me out and get their attention. It's our best chance.

INT. CLYDE'S CAR - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Nancy, front passenger seat, stares at the house, tears running down her cheek.

Behind the wheel, Clyde comforts her.

CLYDE

You don't have to do this.

She caresses her necklace.

NANCY
You know I do.

She looks to the back seat, where Linda and Gus sit.

NANCY
Do you have everything?

Linda checks the supplies.

LINDA
Gauze. Tape. Alcohol.

NANCY
(to Clyde)
You get her out. No matter what.
You find her. You pull her out.

Clyde nods.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - SIDE YARD - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

AJ watches the car from behind a corner of the house.

He turns for the backyard.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - 1965 - NIGHT

Percy sneaks around the corner, approaches the back door.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - KITCHEN - PRESENT DAY/1965 - NIGHT

Percy zeroes in on Anne.

PERCY
Can you feel it?

She nods.

PERCY
It's as strong as it will ever be.
Ride the wave.

The room ripples as images from that night in 1965 fade in and out. Right now, those images are of MR. CONWAY, 40, father/businessman, sitting at the table with his SON, 15, talking, laughing.

Anne steadies herself against a pantry shelf. She bumps a box of Shake'n Bake.

The Son looks over, watches the box wobble, fall over.

The 1965 images ripple away. Anne catches her breath.

ANNE

He saw me. The boy--at the table--
looked right at me.

Percy grabs Anne by the shoulders.

PERCY

I told you you could do it. Get
back there. Lock that door.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - KITCHEN - 1965 - NIGHT

Mr. Conway notices his Son's expression: shock, confusion.

MR. CONWAY

You okay?

SON

Did you see--?

The back door pushes open. Anne, just a ripple of an image,
lunges past, then disappears.

Mr. Conway and the Son turn to see 1965 Percy, big smile,
inside the kitchen, pointing a shotgun at them both.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - KITCHEN - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Anne catches her balance.

ANNE

I'm too late. He's--you're inside.
I can't do it.

PERCY

You have to.

ANNE

You do it!!

PERCY

I can't, Anne. I've tried. So many
times. Please, don't let me take
them downstairs.

Anne concentrates.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - KITCHEN - 1965/PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Present Day Percy steps alongside 1965 Percy as he approaches Mr. Conway and his Son, shotgun raised.

PRESENT DAY PERCY
I'm right here, Anne. Concentrate
on me. The old me.

1965 PERCY
(to Father and Son)
I always admire the trusting nature
of you country folk. Leaving doors
unlocked.

AJ (O.S.)
Percy!

Present Day Percy and Anne turn to see AJ, outside the back door. But, AJ isn't trying to get *their* attention--he's focused on 1965 Percy.

AJ
Percy! You hear me? Stop!

Mr. Conway stands to confront 1965 Percy. 1965 Percy has no reaction to AJ.

PRESENT DAY PERCY
The farm boy's here, God bless his
soul.

MR. CONWAY
Turn around. Walk away.

This is a guy that's not easily intimidated.

ANNE
I can't see them.

PRESENT DAY PERCY
Announce yourself!

ANNE
Percy! Can you hear me?

The room ripples. 1965 Percy motions to the basement.

1965 PERCY
(to Father and Son)
It'd be most unfortunate to awaken
the others. I say we talk this out
downstairs.

1965 Percy uses the shotgun to push Father and Son toward the door. They all descend the stairs.

AJ sprints forward.

AJ
Don't go down there!

ANNE
No!

AJ crosses the threshold. Almost immediately, he disintegrates into a CLOUD OF PARTICLES.

ANNE
AJ!

She collapses to the floor. The room ripples again.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - KITCHEN - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Anne, distraught, fights off panic.

ANNE
AJ's gone.

PRESENT DAY PERCY
We have an agreement, Anne. You're their only hope. *My* only hope.

ANNE
They're downstairs. I can't go down there.

PRESENT DAY PERCY
I'm giving you the opportunity to make a difference. Isn't that what you want? At least the farm boy tried.

Anne considers. She stands, eases to the basement door.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - BASEMENT - 1965 - NIGHT

Percy casually FLICKS the dangling lightbulb as he holds the shotgun on Mr. Conway. The bulb swings gently back and forth as the father begrudgingly ties his Son's hands to a large shelving unit.

SON
(to Percy)
Who are you?

PERCY

I am Percy G. Jones. The g stands
for--

SON

--Why are you here?

PERCY

Rumor is, your father has compiled
certain sums of money.

(to Mr. Conway)

Where would an interested party
procure the fortune?

MR. CONWAY

You're a curious one.

(off Percy's look)

Procure the fortune? You're not
fooling anyone, you know.

Percy flares, digs the shotgun into Mr. Conway's forehead.

The room ripples.

ANNE (V.O.)

P--er--cy--you--don't--want--to--d--
do--th---is.

Percy steps back. Frantically looks around.

Again, the room ripples.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - BASEMENT - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Percy and Anne stand in the empty basement.

PERCY

Harder! Try harder!

Anne steels her gaze, firm in her concentration.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - BASEMENT - 1965 - NIGHT

Percy searches the corners of the basement.

1965 PERCY

Who else is in the house?

MR. CONWAY

Nobody. It's just us.

Percy swings around.

1965 PERCY

You're a skilled liar. I heard you were a banker. Tell me, where have you hidden your ill-gotten gains?

MR. CONWAY

I make an honest living.

The room ripples. Anne stands in a dark corner.

ANNE

We need to talk, Percy. You sent me here. To stop all of this.

1965 Percy turns toward her.

Mr. Conway sees his chance. He charges, tackles Percy.

MR. CONWAY

Leave us alone!!

The two men fight for control.

Anne reaches for the shotgun, knocked from Percy's clutch.

Percy kicks Mr. Conway back, snatches the shotgun just before Anne can grab it and...SHOOTS Mr. Conway square in the chest.

Anne SCREAMS. Disappears.

INT. CLYDE'S CAR - DRIVEWAY - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Nancy buries her head in her hands, sobs.

CLYDE

Is it happening?

She nods.

A second shotgun BLAST rings out, the flash of it fills the basement window. She flinches.

GUS

I don't see anything.

Nancy takes an OLD NEWSPAPER from the glove box, reaches for the door handle.

NANCY

I have to go now.

Linda reaches over the seat, hugs her friend. Nancy gently pushes away, opens the car door.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - BASEMENT - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Anne slumps back as Percy stalks around the room.

PERCY

You can't stop it now. It truly is too late.

ANNE

I'm sorry.

PERCY

I said it was the money. And, I prospected, Anne. For sixty years I've searched this place. Never finding the justification I wanted to find. But, it was the number five that brought me here. It was always going to be five. I should have known. That's who *I* am.

Another shotgun BLAST rings out from upstairs.

PERCY

That's three. All that remains is upstairs. Then God knows what happens next, because he'll--I'll-- never have peace with four.

Anne rushes for the stairs.

KITCHEN

Anne bursts from the basement, sprints through the kitchen.

She stops cold when she sees Nancy standing in the living room, staring up the stairs.

LIVING ROOM

Nancy turns as Anne enters the living room.

NANCY

Thank you for trying.

ANNE

I couldn't save them. The man and the boy.

NANCY

It was never possible.

She holds the newspaper out, an offering to Anne.

NANCY
You should know who I am.

Anne takes the newspaper. On the front page, a headline
blares: FOUR KILLED AT CONWAY HOUSE. Below that, a subhead:
NANCY CONWAY, 11, LONE SURVIVOR.

ANNE
Nancy?

NANCY
That was my father. My brother.

She motions...

NANCY
Keep reading.

Anne flips the paper over. Below the fold, another headline:
MYSTERY WOMAN AMONG DEAD. A photo accompanies the story--a
large black and white headshot of: MODERN DAY NANCY, eyes
closed, obviously dead.

ANNE
You're dead, too.

NANCY
Not yet. In just a moment. But, you
need to know. Tonight. It's not a
failure. You save me.

Nancy starts up the stairs.

Anne grabs a piece of paper and a pen. She writes: THEY'RE
HIDING UNDER THE EISENHOWER BRIDGE. She slips the paper into
her pocket.

INT. CLYDE'S CAR - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Clyde glances at his watch.

CLYDE
That's three minutes.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Clyde, Gus and Linda exit the car, head for the house.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - GIRLS' BEDROOM - 1965 - NIGHT

1965 Percy raises the gun to the back of the Girl's head as she counts.

GIRL

One. Two. Three...

His head cocks, as if he hears something near the door. Her head turns, too.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - GIRLS' BEDROOM - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Anne and Nancy stand in the doorway of the empty room. It's set exactly as it was in 1965. Nobody has touched a single thing. One made bed, one unmade.

The teddy bear, dappled with blood spatters, sits in the middle of the floor, on a large blood-stained rug.

ANNE

This is your house. Your room.

Nancy nods.

ANNE

It's always been your house. Like everyone else, you manipulated me.

NANCY

No. This is just the way it was supposed to go. The way it went. I wouldn't be here without you. It was thirty years before I understood what I saw as a little girl. Another thirty waiting for this moment. Waiting to meet you.

Nancy grabs Anne, pulls her close.

NANCY

Once you make it back, when this moment has passed, nothing's been written.

The room ripples.

NANCY

Make all this worth something. Give it purpose.

Nancy rushes forward, bumping a table as she does. A vase on the table wobbles.

Nancy disappears.

ANNE
Nancy, wait!

Anne lunges forward to grab at her.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - GIRLS' BEDROOM - 1965 - NIGHT

The vase on the table next to the door topples, SHATTERS.

1965 Percy spins toward the door, gun raised.

Nancy appears as if from nowhere, rushing toward him.

He pulls the trigger. Her body absorbs the shot but her momentum carries her into him.

Anne appears right behind her, also lunging that direction.

She sees Nancy, bloodied, atop a scrambling 1965 Percy--and the young Girl, crawling to get away.

Anne races to the little girl, scoops her up, her back to 1965 Percy, who now has the shotgun trained on her.

1965 PERCY
I only require one of you.

The little Girl clutches Anne's neck, her hands wrapped around Anne's necklace.

Anne stuffs the NOTE into the little Girl's pocket, then slowly lowers her to the ground. But, the little Girl won't let go.

ANNE
Be brave.

Anne carefully but firmly pushes her away, breaking the little Girl free from her clutch--and the necklace free from her neck.

The Girl stands, frozen, necklace in hand.

ANNE
Nancy, run!

The girl bolts toward the door as Anne turns to 1965 Percy.

ANNE
"I am happy to be both halves, the watcher and the watched."

1965 Percy cocks his head, curious.

1965 PERCY
 (again, incorrectly
 pronouncing the "S")
 Albert Camus.

ANNE
 I'm going to miss you, Percy.

She charges him and he shoots--only partially catching her with the shot.

They wrestle to the ground and 1965 Percy quickly gains the advantage. He wraps his fingers around her neck, begins to choke her out.

The Girl, watching from the doorway, turns and runs.

The room ripples.

CLYDE (V.O.)
 Anne! Where are you?

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - GIRLS' BEDROOM - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Clyde and Gus stand in the empty room, both calling out.

	CLYDE		GUS
Anne!		Anne!	

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - GIRLS' BEDROOM - 1965 - NIGHT

Anne, down to her last breath, reaches toward the door.

Suddenly, someone grabs her arm.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - GIRLS' BEDROOM - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Clyde lurches backward, pulling Anne on top of him. They land in a pile.

CLYDE
 I got her! I got her!

Clyde and Gus rush her from the room.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

The men help Anne down the stairs. Linda meets them, quickly examines Anne's gun shot wounds.

LINDA

You're going to be okay. We have a doctor waiting.

They head for the door. Before they can get there...

The door slams shut. The lock turns. They stop, Anne looks up. She can see what they can't: Present Day Percy, blocking the way.

PERCY

I'm sorry, Anne. It can't be four.

ANNE

AJ's dead. That's five.

PERCY

He chose that. Not me.

ANNE

You have a choice now. Be the person you want to be.

Clyde, Gus and Linda look nervously around the room.

PERCY

He's powerful, Anne, that brute inside of me.

Anne pulls herself from Linda and the men.

She steps toward Percy.

ANNE

Who do you want to be, Percy?

He fidgets with anxiety, considering the question.

PERCY

One. Two. Three. Four. Five. One.
Two. Three. Four. Five.

ANNE

Come on. You can do it.

Seconds pass before Clyde, Gus and Linda see the lock turn and the door open.

Anne quickly waves them out. She stays.

Percy turns, picks up a book, hands it to her.

PERCY
Those library fines...killer.

She hugs him.

PERCY
Will you visit? Share new volumes?

Something catches her attention. Over his shoulder. In the fireplace:: the ASHES of her college application.

She pushes back. Unsteady. She winces, the pain of her injuries building.

Before she can take another step, she collapses. Percy catches her.

EXT./INT CONWAY HOUSE - PORCH/DRIVEWAY/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Clyde sees Anne (carried by the unseen Percy) hanging in the air, limp, inside the house, approaching the doorway. He runs to her, takes her.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Percy watches the car peel from the driveway.

He turns to the mantle. Looks at the photo. Adjusts it slightly to the left.

INT. CLYDE'S CAR - NIGHT

Linda and Gus treat Anne's wounds while Clyde drives.

Anne stirs awake, pushes them away.

ANNE
I need to go back.

CLYDE
You go back, he'll kill you.

LINDA
You're too weak.

ANNE
He needs peace. I can give it to him.

Clyde shakes his head.

ANNE
I'm not asking.

There's strength in her voice.

ANNE
I'd prefer your help with a few things. But, if not, you can let me out.

Clyde considers...

ANNE
Now.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Percy spins as the front door flings open. Anne's a picture of pain--bloody and beaten. Still, she stands confident in the doorway.

Percy steps to her, ominous in his approach.

PERCY
There you are. Until now I've only seen but half of you. The half that's full of doubt. Unsteady in life. Unsure if you belong. But, now, I see the other half. The person that knows what she wants-- knows who she is. Strong. Smart. Someone who cares. Who wants to make the world a better place. Someone who helps people. In fact, I believe you're of the mind to help me. Am I correct in my presumption?

Anne nods.

PERCY
You've chosen to sacrifice yourself. To bring me peace. To be number five.

Anne shakes her head. No.

Percy smiles. A big, sly smile.

PERCY
Anne has an idea.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - PORCH - NIGHT

Anne turns from the front door, looks to Clyde, standing nearby.

CLYDE
You sure about this?

Anne nods.

CLYDE
Nancy had a message for you.
Supposed to give it to you
tomorrow. But, seeing as to what
you appear to be about to do, I
think you ought to read it now.

He pulls a letter from his back pocket.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - GIRLS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Percy looks over Anne's shoulder as she pulls at a seam in the back paneling. It pops loose. Behind the paneling: a backpack with thousands of dollars.

She laughs.

ANNE
A banker who didn't trust banks.

PERCY
I was sitting two feet away.

INT. CONWAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Anne tosses the backpack out the front door.

PERCY
I'm just dying to know your idea.

Anne reaches outside, picks up a container sitting on the porch. A GAS CAN. She begins to pour the gas around the room.

PERCY
Unexpected. But, intriguing.

ANNE

Then, coming out, behold a
space, The flame consume my
dwelling place. And when I could no
longer look, I blest His name that
gave and took, That laid my goods
now in the dust.

PERCY

Yea, so it was, and so 'twas just.
Bradstreet.

He nods with satisfaction.

PERCY

No house. No Percy. I never thought
you'd be the end of me.

ANNE

I'm not.

She holds up an unlit match.

ANNE

By your own hand. You're number
five.

Percy smiles.

PERCY

A most elegant solution.

She steps to the front door as Percy lights the match.

PERCY

Am I correct to assume you envisage
to save the world?

ANNE

Always the intellectual.

(off his smile)

Yes. I envisage. One student at a
time.

PERCY

May I share a poem? It would be
most pleasant to culminate on a
high note.

She nods.

PERCY

Ashes denote that fire was; Respect
the grayest pile, For the departed
creature's sake, That hovered there
awhile.

ANNE

Dickinson.

Anne steps back. Percy drops the match.

EXT. CONWAY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Anne, Clyde, Gus and Linda watch the house burn.

Percy stands in the main window.

The fire engulfs the house, the roof collapses.

Percy disappears in a POOF OF PARTICLES.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

CHILDREN crowd into a typical Midwest elementary school.

Anne steps to the sidewalk, stares at the entrance. Happy.

She strides to the door, moves to enter, but stops when she
notices a SCARED GIRL sitting on the stairs.

The last of the other CHILDREN trickle into the school
leaving only Anne and the Scared Girl.

Anne sits next to her.

ANNE

First days can be scary, huh?
Trying new things?

The Girl doesn't respond.

ANNE

It's my first day. I'm scared, too.

SCARED GIRL

It's not that.

ANNE

No?

The Girl points across the street. There's a makeshift
memorial near a fence, just past the crosswalk.

Cards, stuffed animals, PICTURES OF THE GIRL--all aged from several months of wear.

Anne looks at the little girl, notices: she has scrapes and bruises on one side of her body.

ANNE

You can't go inside.

The Girl shakes her head.

SCARED GIRL

You're the first one to see me.

Anne gives her a hug.

ANNE

I do see you. What grade are you?

SCARED GIRL

I'm supposed to be in fifth.

ANNE

Well, it just happens to be that I teach fifth grade.

She stands, pulls the girl up.

ANNE

I'll tell you what.

They walk together as Anne leads her around the building.

ANNE

You wait in the playground, and during recess, we'll start our first lesson.

SCARED GIRL

There are other kids, you know? Like me.

ANNE

Well, if you see them, you tell them I'm here. Okay?

The conversation continues as we...

FADE OUT.