## Black Rose

by Shawn D. Kelley FADE IN:

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - NIGHT

The tall lamps that light the vast campus gives the place an eerie glow.

All is silent.

BEN FALLON, 20, sits alone, hunched over on a bench at the edge of the empty quad.

Earphones stuck in his ears. He's lost in his thoughts. He spins the stem of a bright red rose in his fingers.

After a minute, he sits back. Exhales.

Hands CLASP around his neck from behind. He snatches out the earphones - snaps around.

ERIN ROSENTHAL, 19, stands beaming at him. She growls playfully and laughs. She wears glasses and a frilly dark dress...with sneakers. She's quirky. A bit off-kilter but cute.

ERIN

Hey.

BEN

Hey. How was class?

She pauses. Thinks for a moment. Sighs.

ERIN

Redundant.

Ben smiles, offers her the rose. She takes it bashfully.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Awww. Thanks.

She sniffs the flower and frowns at the smell. She hates roses.

ERIN (CONT'D)

What's the occasion?

BEN

No occasion.

ERIN

You're too sweet.

BEN

Don't say that.

She laughs.

ERIN

You know you didn't have to come. Actually my sister's on her way to get me.

BEN

Yeah, I know. I kinda need to talk to you.

ERIN

Mission accomplished. You're talking to me.

She laughs.

BEN

For real, though.

ERIN

Okay, "for real, though". Go ahead.

He takes her hand and they sit. Ben hunches again. Staring at the ground. Silence. Then-

ERIN (CONT'D)

(laughs)

Okay! What is it, babe?

He takes a breath. Sits up, looks at her. Eyes softening.

ERIN (CONT'D)

You okay.

BEN

Yeah...it's just-

Another breath.

BEN (CONT'D)

I don't think this is...working out...anymore.

ERIN

What are you talking about?

BEN

I'm sorry...I can't see you
anymore.

Erin takes a moment, takes this in. Ben studies her.

ERIN

It's been good for me. It's been great! What's wrong? What's the problem?

BEN

I don't wanna sound like a jerk...It's just I don't...feel for you the same, you know?

Erin stares at him for a bit, shocked

BEN (CONT'D)

Erin?

She turns away from him. She stares ahead blankly.

ERIN

I don't understand. What'd I do?

BEN

Nothing. It's not your fault, I promise.

Tears well in her eyes.

BEN (CONT'D)

You're a pretty cool girl, Erin.

ERIN

Not cool enough for you though.

He sighs.

BEN

Don't say that. We can be friends.

Raina scoffs at this.

ERIN

Yeah, well...fuck you very much.

She places a hand tenderly on his shoulder.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Can you do me a favor?

BEN

Yeah. Anything.

ERIN

Slide that friendship right up your ass for me.

BEN

I'm sorry. I really am.

ERIN

Asshole.

Ben starts to fidget. He checks his imaginary watch.

BEN

Yeah. Well, I got a class.

Ben slowly gets to his feet. He starts backing away.

BEN (CONT'D)

You can call me later if-

ERIN

Hold your breath.

BEN

Sorry.

Ben takes off and soon disappears, out of sight, leaving Erin alone on the bench. She clutches the stem of the rose with a death grip.

She lets out deep SCREAM.

She stands. Dropping the red rose.

She marches off.

INT. BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ben moves into the small bright corridor. He struts along and stands against the wall near the staircase. He stands there for a moment. He shuts his eyes, resting

A FIGURE jumps out from the staircase! This is JEANNIE JACOBS, 19, spry and carefree.

**JEANNIE** 

Hey!

Ben jumps out of his skin.

BEN

Jesus!

She laughs at him.

**JEANNIE** 

So, how did it go chicken shit?

BEN

Like pulling teeth. She seemed really genuinely sad.

**JEANNIE** 

No shit. You thought she wouldn't be?

He shrugs. She takes his arm.

JEANNIE (CONT'D)

Come on. Let's get the hell out of here.

They move toward the exit. Ben puts an arm around her.

Just as they reach the exit-

Erin shuffles in, eyes to the ground. She looks up. They meet eyes. Everyone freezes.

Silence.

Erin stares for a moment in disbelief. She takes off, disappearing up the stairs.

BEN

Shit!

**JEANNIE** 

Come on, don't worry about it.

They exit, swiftly.

EXT. WALKWAY - NIGHT

Ben and Jeannie march up the walkway along a length of shrubs, quite cozy with each other.

**JEANNIE** 

So, what do you want to do with the rest of the night?

BEN

Huh. I dunno. What do you have in mind?

**JEANNIE** 

(suggestive)

Hmm. How...about...a late night...movie.

She giggles.

SCRRRAAPPE!

The sound of metal dragging loudly against concrete from up ahead.

A LONG METAL BAT slides across the pavement - UNSEEN

It stops.

Jeannie grips Ben's shoulder, unnerved.

JEANNIE (CONT'D)

What the hell was that?

BEN

Freddy Krueger's blades.

**JEANNIE** 

What? I will Ken doll you!

BEN

And you call me chicken shit. Come on, it's nothing.

Ben snatches up Jeannie's and pulls her along further down the walkway toward where the sound came from.

Jeannie struggles to pull her hand from his grip.

**JEANNIE** 

Ben, quit it!

BEN

Freddy's gonna get ya!

**JEANNIE** 

Stop being a dork.

His back to the bushes - he pulls her toward them. He lets out a sinister laugh.

JEANNIE (CONT'D)

Shut up and let me go you

hemorrhoid.

Erin SPRINGS OUT from the bushes, bat in hand.

She SLAMS the bat into his knee with a maniacal glee. He yelps. His leg buckles. He falls to the floor, clutching his leg, groaning.

Jeannie staggers backward, screaming.

Ben clenches his teeth in pain. Glances up at Erin.

BEN

Erin, what the fuc-

Erin bashes him across the head with the bat. Blood gushes - running down his face. He convulses.

Jeannie screams. Takes off in the opposite direction.

Erin smashes the bat into his head once again. His movement ceases.

She takes off after Jeannie.

EXT. CAMPUS - NIGHT

Erin races after Jeannie, bat raised above her head, screaming madly.

**JEANNIE** 

Help me!

Jeannie quickly ducks into a building.

INT. BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Jeannie careens in frantically, moves behind a far corridor wall. She balls up, knees to her chest. Quiet as can be.

CLOSE

On her face as-

We hear the far door open...then close.

FOOTSTEPS pacing then - inching toward her.

Jeannie clenches her eyes.

The footsteps speed up, sprinting in the opposite direction.

Jeannie breathes a sigh of relief.

CLOSE

As she turns slowly, sticking her head out, peeking down the hall.

JEANNIE'S POV

The hallway is completely empty - clear.

WIDE

Revealing Erin standing right behind her!

She's ready to strike!

WHAM!

The slams into the slide of her head.

BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. BUILDING

Jeannie blinks a awake. Barely coherent. Blood runs down her face.

Erin comes into focus. She grips the bat...ready to let loose again.

Jeannie lets out a horrified scream.

WHAP!

Erin thrusts the bat down into her head. A sickening CRUNCH. Blood spatters up onto Erin's arms, dress, and face. She lifts it and smashes her face again...and again...and again.

Erin stands straight. Looking down at her blankly.

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE - 2ND FLOOR - NIGHT

Erin drags her blood covered bat, staggering up the parking structure incline. Sirens can be heard faintly in the background.

## MOMENTS LATER

Erin stands at the railing.

She flings the bat over the railing - watches it fall to the ground.

She hops onto the ledge, sitting with her feet hanging.

She takes a breath - jumps.

A THUD as her body meets the ground.

CAMPUS - BENCH

The rose lies still on the ground. Slowly the color fades away from it - leaving only black.

The the sirens rage on, growing louder and louder.

FADE TO BLACK.