

RETRIBUTION

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. NISHA'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A small wood frame house sits nestled in a row of similarly designed homes.

A moonless, cloudy night means the structure is barely illuminated, save for a light on in a corner window.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

NISHA, 23, a tall, slender African American sits at a desk talking on a cell phone, a laptop computer open in front of her.

The walls of her room are covered with posters of black men and women who had their lives ended at the hands of police.

Her short hair is covered by a baseball cap that reads "I CAN'T BREATHE" and she wears a "BLACK LIVES MATTER" T-shirt. She scans details on her computer as she talks.

NISHA

I just sent the protest march details to the Facebook group, posted it on Instagram, and provided a link on Twitter. You need to send a press release to the paper and all the local news channels... Okay, see you at the park tomorrow. Be there at four-thirty. Bye.

She hangs up the phone, only to hear a sudden high-pitched PING emanate from her computer.

Curious, she glances at the screen. A brief message is highlighted in a box on the screen:

"WE KNOW WHERE YOU LIVE. WE ARE COMING FOR YOU."

Nisha is frozen momentarily, unsure what to make of the message. She hits escape repeatedly, but nothing happens. A second message pops up.

"YOU HAVE DESTROYED OUR CITY WITH YOUR AGITATION AND RHETORIC. NOW WE WILL DESTROY YOU. LOOK OUTSIDE YOUR WINDOW... IF YOU DARE"

Nisha tries to power off the computer, but she has no control over any of its functions.

NISHA (CONT'D)
 KEITH! Come here!
 (to herself)
 Stay calm... don't panic...

KEITH, 25, African-American with a beard and short-cropped hair, walks in.

KEITH
 What's up?

NISHA
 Look at this! Someone's trying to keep us from doing this protest. Can you believe this? Eight months since Floyd was killed and we're still having to put up with this bullshit.

Keith facial muscles twitch as he reads the computer screen. He walks over and turns out the bedroom light.

NISHA (CONT'D)
 What the hell are you doing?

Keith motions for her to move towards the door. He eases to the side of the window and slightly raises a blind to look outside. As he does, a rock SMASHES through the window, sending glass flying all over.

KEITH
 Fuck!

NISHA
 Baby! You okay?

He mumbles that he's okay, but the angry scowl on his face says otherwise. Nisha pushes past him to the window.

KEITH
 Girl, get away from there!

But Nisha is already there and she has fixed her gaze on something outside that makes her shake with a mixture of anger and fear.

EXT. NISHA'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A large oak tree sits in the corner of the yard next to the street. Hanging from one of the branches is a NOOSE. It sways in the wind ominously.

INT. NISHA'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Nisha rushes to her desk and grabs her phone. She tries to dial but the phone won't respond.

A message pops up on the phone:

"TRYING TO CALL FOR HELP? NO ONE CAN HELP YOU NOW"

NISHA

Oh my God! They've hacked my phone.
Try yours.

Keith punches at his phone, but no luck.

KEITH

Locked as well. We have to get out
of here.

NISHA

And do what? They'll kill us out
there for sure. We need to get
protection here now.

KEITH

How we supposed to do that, huh? We
can't call anyone and we're sitting
ducks if we stay--

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

Nisha and Keith look at each other, frozen. More knocks.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

(muffled)

Los Angeles police! Are you okay in
there? Open up!

Keith peers out the broken window. A police cruiser sits in front of their home. He rushes quickly to--

THE LIVING ROOM

And moves to the front door. He cracks the door open.

OFFICERS KINGSTON, 31, and WILLIS, 33, stand on the porch. Sturdy. Hard-looking.

OFFICER KINGSTON

We were patrolling the area and saw
the noose and broken window.
Thought we'd check on you.

KEITH

We're okay. Just shaken up... Our computers and phones -- I think we were hacked.

OFFICER WILLIS

Hacked?

NISHA

Almost like ransomware, but they didn't ask for money. Just threatened us.

OFFICER WILLIS

Mind if we take a look?

Keith and Nisha exchange glances, and nod. Keith fully opens the door for the officers.

Keith motions the officers towards the bedroom. Kingston walks with Keith while Willis surveys the living room. Nisha eyes him suspiciously.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Keith shows Willis the computer, who smiles upon seeing the threats on the screen.

KEITH

What's so funny? Doesn't look like a goddamn joke to me.

Nisha enters the room and notices the cop grinning as he observes the computer.

OFFICER WILLIS

See? I told you.

NISHA

Told us? Told us what -- oh, shit.

Behind NISHA comes the ominous sound of a CLICK. She wheels to see Kingston pointing his service revolver at her head.

OFFICER KINGSTON

Told you we knew where you lived.

Nisha backs into a corner, her hands over her face.

NISHA

Please! You don't have to do this! I'm begging you.

OFFICER KINGSTON

Hear that? She's begging us to let her off easy. After all the times in these rallies that she's come down on us guys in uniform. Stirring up trouble. You're nothing more than a low-life fucking agitator and we're putting an end to that now.

KEITH

You think killing us will end anything, man? It'll come back and land on your doorstep and what you're seeing out there now will just be a hundred times worse.

OFFICER WILLIS

Not when we make it look like a murder/homicide. You're the one taking the fall for all this shit.

Willis pulls his weapon and trains it on the side of Keith's head. Nods to Kingston.

But just as Kingston's ready to shoot, a STRONG BURST OF WIND blows out the rest of the broken window.

The wind blows a heavy layer of dust through the room, and the swirling air creates an almost a cyclone-like effect in the room's center.

A GROANING emanates from inside the center of the cyclone of dust, and it begins to glow a deep purple color.

And out of the midst of the cyclone steps a MAN. Ghostlike in nature and appearance. Young, African American, scars along his neck where a rope apparently had been.

Kingston and Willis are now the ones to back up, turning their weapons toward the man.

OFFICER WILLIS (CONT'D)

Stop right there mother fucker or I will shoot you!

But the man doesn't stop.

Willis and Kingston fire round after round into the spirit, but it's like shooting blanks. The bullets have no effect.

The spirit HOWLS in anger and points a finger at Willis' gun. It dissolves in Willis' hand and he SCREAMS in pain.

The spirit then points to Kingston and the officer is hurled through the air against a wall and crumples to the floor. He turns back to Willis, levitates the screaming officer and brings him down to the floor with a tremendous THUD.

Both officers try to crawl away, but the spirit is having none of that. He floats quickly to the doorway, blocking their entrance.

The spirit looks to Nisha and Keith, and nods to the doorway. They get the message and run out of the room, shocked and overwhelmed.

When they have left, the Spirit MOANS, a ghastly, ear-splitting wail that leaves the two officers cowering.

SPIRIT

It is time. Time for...
retribution.

And with that he claps his hands, and a BOOMING sound like thunder results. Two NOOSES drop from the ceiling.

EXT. NISHA'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Keith and Nisha run through the yard toward the street as SCREAMS echo from inside the home.

FADE OUT.