Shadow Claws

Ву

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"They're Sharp. They Cut. They Kill."

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#### EXT. FLEA MARKET DAY

Titles play over:

Close on a Woman's Fancy Shoes - dress heels under a longish print skirt - walking slowly down the row. She's out of place amongst the sneakers and flip flops that pass.

Close on her hands, wearing thin, elegant gloves, brushing over items on the table.

Again the feet walking down the rows.

Sounds of CHATTER from various patrons, haggling over prices, asking about items for sale.

The hands pause at some Tableware, stroke fondly over KNIVES, pick them up.

Close on the bag at the woman's side.

Again her hands pick out knives, lots of them, kitchen knives, paring knives, slicers, cheese knives. But not a K-BAR military knife, too masculine.

Close as money changes hands.

Different shoppers haggle, laugh and talk.

Other shoppers drink sodas, eat hot dogs. It's a county fair ambiance.

Close again on the woman's shoes, continuing down the rows. The shoes pause.

Hands again at the table, gathering up more knives.

Close again as money is handed over.

A complete Steak Knife set is scooped up and tipped into the bag, now bulging with knives. The woman lifts the bag.

Close at the woman's waist, she continues moving through the market. The woman walks towards a chain link fence.

Longish now - we see the woman walking down the rows of parked cars.

Close on her hand with a key fob, she pushes a button and -

- the Trunk of a Small Blue Car pops open. The woman plunks the heavy bag down, making the stash of knives within rattle.

#### EXT. TENNIS COURTS NIGHT

A group of seedy types hang out in the darkness just beyond the streetlamp, smoking, drinking, swearing and laughing.

DAVEY, a scruffy young man with tattered hair at his chin and upper lip swaggers down the walk, cigarette drooping from his lip, smoke curling past his head.

He bumps fists with MONK, another tough guy, who's drinking a beer.

DAVEY Monkey man, how's it going?

MONK Fine man. Fine.

#### DAVEY You in the market?

Davey draws a small zip lock baggy from his pocket, crystal meth.

MONK Nah, I don't do that shit.

DAVEY Cool. Cool.

Davey swaggers away down the walk way.

He walks in between the fenced off tennis courts and pauses.

Davey walks past the chain link fences and towards a bush in the park. He looks around, flicks his cigarette into the bush and unzips his fly. He takes a piss into the shrubs.

Something scuttles in the dark nearby.

Davey jumps, glances around. He starts to zip up -

- and again something moves, rustling branches and crunching dry leaves.

Davey jerks in pain, then unzips and straightens himself. He zips up.

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## DAVEY

God damn it.

He steps backwards, looks warily around.

The lit area by the tennis courts is far away.

Davey turns slowly, walks towards the lit area.

Something moves up in the branches of a tree. Leaves scatter and fall.

Davey looks up.

DAVEY Not funny man. You shouldn't fuck around you wanna live.

He pulls his shirt free from his waistband, revealing the handle of a pistol.

DAVEY Hunnh? You see what I mean? I ain't got no sense of humor. I take this shit seriously.

He continues walking towards the lights.

Something skitters over the grass, behind a garbage can.

Davey walks backwards, and MONK brushes past him, going the other way.

Davey whirls on him, pistol pointed at Monk's head.

Monk walks past, frowning at Davey.

MONK You alright bro'?

DAVEY Yeah I'm fuckin' aces.

Monk tosses a beer bottle into the brush at the edge of the park. He sniffs, keeps walking.

Davey shoves the pistol back into his waist band, walks towards the tennis courts.

He gets closer, moving along the walkway, still glancing from side to side.

A writhing, Dark Mass SLAMS into him, claws SLASHING, then scuttles away.

Davey shrieks, grabs at the slashes across his chest. He looks at the blood on his hands.

#### DAVEY What the..?

He winces in pain, grits his teeth and pulls out the pistol.

Davey moves faster now, not quite running towards the tennis courts.

Something scuttles from the other side.

Hits Him HARD, Slashes and Stabs, rocking him.

Davey fires a wild shot - but -

- the thing is already gone in the dark.

Davey cringes, grabs at his shoulder. He's bleeding, cuts on his hands and arms.

Up ahead the tennis courts are empty.

The lamp post vacant.

Davey turns, leading with the pistol, nothing to aim at.

He runs towards the tennis courts.

Something slams into his back, knocks him face down.

He Screams as Cuts and Stabs strike his back.

Davey rolls over, slapping the thing away.

He gets to his feet and runs towards the lights. He reaches the tennis courts and halts, protective chain link fences on both sides.

Davey turns, looks up and back down the sidewalk. Blood runs down his forehead.

He jumps at a CLATTERING sound, somewhere in the dark.

DAVEY

Fuck.

Again something scuttles in the darkness.

Davey breathes heavy, raises the pistol.

DAVEY Rabid fuckin' coon, or badger, whatever the fuck you are. Come out and say hi. HI! And I'll blow your ass away.

At the far end of the tennis courts, something electrical BUZZES, and the end court goes DARK.

Davey glances over, frowns.

At the second set of courts, the lights FLICKER, and then go OUT.

#### DAVEY

God damn it.

He hobbles towards the lamp post on the far side of the courts.

CLOSE on a posted sign: LIGHTS OUT AT 10 P.M. - and then the switches BUZZ, and the last tennis court goes dark.

Davey runs towards lamp post.

The Dark Mass slams into him, drives him against the chain link fence.

More slashing, stabbing.

Davey screams, the revolver flying away.

Davey drops - goes silent.

The chain link rattles as the stabbing and cutting continue.

Longish - looking over the dark tennis courts and drawing back, away from the lamp post.

#### INT. OCHOA KITCHEN MORNING

Several empty whiskey bottles lay in a recycling bin at one corner of the room.

Another whiskey bottle lays in the sink atop a dirty dinner plate.

INT. OCHOA BEDROOM MORNING

Ochoa.

The clock reads 5:45. The bedside phone rings.

MICHAEL OCHOA, 40ish, graying slightly, stirs. He grabs the phone.

MICHAEL

Silence.

MICHAEL Ochoa, who's this?

RAMONA (on the phone) I need you to take the kids to school.

Michael rubs a hand over his face. Looks at the clock.

MICHAEL

When?

RAMONA (on the phone) This morning. About an hour or so.

MICHAEL

Shit.

RAMONA (on the phone) Dr. Fredrick had a cancellation. I can get in today, but it's early.

Michael stares at the ceiling.

RAMONA (on the phone) Michael?

MICHAEL Yeah I'm here.

RAMONA (on the phone) Can you do it? I can call my sister. MICHAEL No. Don't do that. I'll be there.

RAMONA (on the phone) Okay.

MICHAEL How're they doing?

RAMONA (on the phone) Fine. Taylor's been...

MICHAEL

What?

RAMONA (on the phone) Distant. I don't like some of the boys he hangs out with.

MICHAEL You want me to talk to him?

RAMONA (on the phone) No, I don't think so. Maybe once all this is over. Thanks again.

The phone clicks off.

Michael hangs up, then throws back the covers.

INT. OCHOA SHOWER MORNING

Michael showers, scars from two Gunshot Wounds prominent.

INT. OCHOA CAR DAY

Michael, wearing a sport coat and slacks, drives.

BESS, an elementary school girl, rides up front.

TAYLOR, a high school teenager, rides in the back, frowning.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DAY

Their car pulls to the curb.

INT. OCHOA CAR DAY

BESS Thanks Dad.

MICHAEL You bet baby.

Bess gets out, leaves the door open.

MICHAEL Tell your mom I'm making a pot roast tomorrow. You're all welcome to come.

#### TAYLOR

Swell.

BESS I don't think Mom likes pot roast.

MICHAEL Probably not.

Bess waves and heads to school.

MICHAEL Hey Taylor, come ride up front.

TAYLOR Nah, I'm good.

MICHAEL I ain't a damn chauffeur. Get up here.

Taylor groans, gets out and reenters the car. He puts his back pack on the floor board and closes the door.

Michael pulls the car out and drives.

EXT. CITY STREETS DAY

The Ochoa car drives along.

INT. OCHOA CAR DAY

Michael looks at Taylor, who faces forward.

MICHAEL How sick is your Mom?

TAYLOR She was throwing up the other day.

MICHAEL With blood?

TAYLOR (getting angry) I don't know.

MICHAEL I worry is all.

Taylor says nothing.

MICHAEL

I do you know? I worry about your mom, your sister, and even you.

TAYLOR Don't worry about me.

MICHAEL

Somebody's got to. You think you got things figured out, then something happens, something terrible. And you have to decide how to deal with it, or you'll do something stupid. Something you'll regret.

TAYLOR You'd know all about that.

#### MICHAEL

I'm learning. You're lucky, you have a family. You can talk to us. About anything.

#### TAYLOR

Yay me.

Michael looks away and focuses on driving.

#### EXT. TENNIS COURTS DAY

Longish - up high - Police vehicles in the parking lot.

An M.E.'s van parked on the grass. Yellow crime scene tape around the tennis courts and blocking off the walkway.

People mill about, civilian gawkers, cops.

A pair of E.M.T.'s chat, one takes a photo with his cell phone.

STANLEY, the white coated Medical Examiner, squats beside the body, raises a camera with a long lens and snaps a flash photo.

PETER YAMAGUCHI, 30ish, in sports jacket and slacks walks up with Michael. Both have Detective badges clipped to their belts.

#### MICHAEL

Damn.

STANLEY You can say that again.

PETER (shrugs) Damn.

STANLEY Somebody really, really hated this guy.

MICHAEL He looks like flank steak. You know? After they slice it and spread it out on a platter.

PETER That's sick 'bro.

The arm of the corpse is cut into multiple, thin strips.

MICHAEL Well hey, just saying.

Peter looks around.

PETER So what happened here? STANLEY Everybody wants to know.

Stanley gets up, points to the tennis courts.

Evidence tags are spaced around the near end of the court.

STANLEY Blood spatter goes all the way to the foul line. More blood back that way. Platter boy must have fallen at least once, we got blood outlining a body.

Stanley points to the path between the tennis courts.

STANLEY Found a revolver over there. Looks like he got off a single round.

PETER Just the one deceased?

STANLEY Yeah, no other bodies. And get this, no other footprints. No sign of who the assailants were.

MICHAEL Left without a trace?

STANLEY Not a whisper.

PETER

Assailants?

STANLEY Look at the guy. Ginsued all to hell. Had to be multiple assailants.

Michael steps back and looks down the walkway towards the crime scene tape.

MICHAEL So a bunch of knife crazy killers hate our vic'. They hide out over in those trees and jump him when he's alone. They've each got two blades, and wail on him. PETER

Without dripping blood on their shoes? Or stepping in it? What are they, ninjas?

#### MICHAEL

Don't say shit like that man. Friggin' rumor mill get's started and it's hard to stop.

#### STANLEY

I had some guys check around those trees. No footprints. And the dirt's damp. Creek bottom. So if they were there, should have been something.

PETER Like the Hutchinson case?

Stanley grits his teeth.

STANLEY That was unfortunate. But the situation has been rectified.

PETER

Rectumfied.

#### STANLEY

Har, har. Things like that don't happen anymore. We keep crime scenes pristine.

MICHAEL Stop busting the man's balls, okay.

Peter raises his hands in surrender.

PETER

Yeah fine. Call us when you got I.D.

MICHAEL Don't need I.D. That's David Issacson.

PETER

Yeah?

Michael nods.

MICHAEL

There was a notice came through about his release. Poor bastard should have stayed in the joint. He'd have been safer.

#### EXT. WATERFRONT STREET DAY

Peter and Michael walk down the parking lot between the buildings and the river.

Michael carries a lunch sack.

They walk down a dirt trail to a flat spot with some scattered cardboard and litter.

A VAGRANT darts away through the brush as they approach.

HENRY, a crack head, squats beside some of the trash. He looks up, grins broadly.

HENRY Hey hey hey, it's my boys. What's chumming sons?

MICHAEL Hey Henry, you want a burger?

Michael holds out the sack.

HENRY You bribing me cuz'? I like me some bribes.

Henry takes the bag, pulls out the sandwich, and eats voraciously.

MICHAEL Serious bribe Henry. Got a question for you.

HENRY (around mouthfuls) Ask away.

MICHAEL What's Davey been up to since he got out?

HENRY Davey? Ain't talked to Davey. MICHAEL Spots said he saw you and Davey out by the check cashing place.

HENRY Spots don't talk to me. Didn't like my tat', said it was faggy.

Henry lifts his arm, shows off some tattoo glyphs.

MICHAEL He said Davey talked to you though. Couple of days ago. By the check cashing place.

HENRY Outside Spit 'n Go?

Peter gives Michael a frustrated look. Michael shakes him off with a turn of his head.

MICHAEL That's the one, Cash 'n Go.

HENRY Spit 'n Go. Ain't got spit then you can just go.

Henry laughs.

MICHAEL Were you buying Henry?

Henry looks up, glances around nervously.

MICHAEL It's okay man, you can tell me.

HENRY I maybe needed a lil' som'n, to tide me over.

Michael nods.

MICHAEL Davey been up to anything special?

HENRY Nope. Hard up, same as everybody. Business is business. MICHAEL Anybody got it in for him? Maybe cut him up a little?

HENRY Nah. Folks liked Davey. He was straight up.

MICHAEL Okay. You hear anything, you give me a call.

Michael hands over his business card, a folded Twenty dollar bill pressed against it.

Henry takes the card and the money.

HENRY Thanks man. I'll buzz you.

MICHAEL

You do that.

Michael and Peter walk away.

PETER You know he's gonna buy a rock with that.

MICHAEL Yeah, but he won't shoplift or do any B&E. Keeps the petty crime down.

PETER While he smokes himself flipping loopy.

#### MICHAEL

He was gonna do it anyway. Two things, protect your snitches, but don't ever trust your lying, thieving, sack of shit snitches. And don't be afraid to lean on 'em hard if you have to.

Peter nods.

INT. SQUAD ROOM DAY

Peter is at his desk, jacket on the chair back, phone to his ear.

Michael walks up.

PETER (on the phone) Thanks man.

Peter hangs up.

PETER M.E. should have the report first thing in the morning. Looks like multiple, sharp edged weapons.

MICHAEL Which we knew.

PETER Yeah. Still had some money on him, and about 2 grams of meth.

Michael sits.

MICHAEL Interesting.

PETER Whoever hit him didn't care about the shit.

Michael shrugs.

MICHAEL I don't know. This one's weird.

PETER

Yep.

Peter gets up, grabs his jacket.

PETER

You keep thinking about it. I'm gonna cut out early. My kid's got little league. You wanna come? Games at Howarth Park, up on 3rd.

MICHAEL Thanks, but no. PETER Okay. You change your mind, you call me.

MICHAEL

Sure.

PETER If something breaks, you call.

MICHAEL

Yeah.

PETER If you run out of Jack Daniels, call.

MICHAEL

Fuck you.

Peter laughs.

PETER Don't sulk, it's bad for your health. See you tomorrow.

MICHAEL

See you.

Peter walks away.

Michael sighs, pulls his keyboard over and starts typing.

EXT. BASEBALL PARKING LOT DAY

DARCY, a 30ish woman in expensive clothes, stands beside the same Blue Car from the flea market. She wears nice clothes and thin gloves.

She raises her key fob and presses the button.

The trunk pops open, revealing a gear bag for Little League.

SHANE, a 12 year old boy in his team uniform, lifts the bag out of the trunk.

SHANE Thanks Mom.

# DARCY

Go win tiger.

Shane runs off towards the ball field.

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EXT. BASEBALL STANDS DAY

Darcy climbs to a higher level.

Peter spots her, smiles.

PETER Hey Darcy how are you? Is Tom gonna make it?

DARCY No, he's working. Shane's excited about this game. They've been practicing so hard.

MILLY, Peter's wife, smiles.

MILLY So's Chris. As long as they're having fun, that's all I care about.

Darcy sits and unfolds the scoring pad. She smiles, lifting a pencil.

DARCY It's easier to have fun if you're winning.

Peter shrugs then claps.

PETER Come on guys, let's go!

The players leave the dug out and head for their positions on the field.

PETER

At a boy.

Darcy smiles. She doodles PENTAGRAMS in the score books margins.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE NIGHT

After hours, the vacant parking lot is lit by an ugly sodium vapor lamp.

A pickup Truck sits parked, nose in to the back retaining wall.

SCOTT sits on the lowered tail gate, drinking a beer.

MARCEL and GUTHRY pitch quarters against the back wall of the Liquor Store.

Guthry's quarter ends up closer.

GUTHRY Got a shot. Whoo hoo!

MARCEL It didn't hit the wall man.

Guthry picks up a shot glass, pours some whiskey from a bottle.

GUTHRY Another couple rounds, it won't matter.

Guthry downs the shot.

Scott sets the beer down, gets up, and digs in his pocket.

SCOTT

I'm in.

Scott holds up a quarter.

GUTHRY Don't play what you can't loose man.

Marcel laughs.

The three of them line up facing the wall, then take aim, and let their quarters fly.

Marcel raises both hands, gives a whoop.

MARCEL Finally. Shit.

GUTHRY What time is it?

Scott checks his watch.

SCOTT Three thirty or so.

#### GUTHRY Time to go.

Marcel drinks directly from the bottle, then caps it.

The three men gather up their quarters.

Scott grabs his beer bottle and slams the tailgate closed.

EXT. OLDER NEIGHBORHOOD NIGHT

The pickup truck sits parked off the edge of the road, behind some bushes.

The same Small Blue Car from the flea market cruises slowly down the street. The headlights go out and the car parks.

Darcy, wearing her gloves, gets out of the car.

She stands beside the trunk, raises her Key Fob, and hits the button.

The trunk pops open and something HEAVY gets out, making the car body shift.

Darcy closes the trunk and smirks towards -

- an older home down from the parked pickup truck.

INT. OLDER BEDROOM NIGHT

Guthry digs through the dresser drawers.

Scott scoops jewelery into a pillow case. Goes to the next dresser and grabs more valuables.

INT. OLDER LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Marcel unhooks the cables from a flat screen t.v., lifts it up, and walks towards the garage door.

The molding on the door is splintered where the thieves kicked it in.

Marcel puts the flat screen in the back of the pickup.

Something SCUTTLES across the road.

Marcel looks up, glances left and right. He walks back.

INT. OLDER LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Guthry and Scott emerge from the bedroom, each with a pillow case of valuables.

SCOTT I'll check the 'fridge.

He walks towards the kitchen.

Marcel enters.

MARCEL Somebody's dog is out.

GUTHRY Long as it doesn't start barking.

Marcel nods, then grabs a VCR.

GUTHRY Leave it, that ain't worth shit.

MARCEL People hide stuff inside 'em sometimes.

GUTHRY

Okay.

Marcel carries it out the garage door.

INT. OLDER KITCHEN NIGHT

Guthry leans into the kitchen.

GUTHRY Come on, we're out of here.

Scott closes the freezer.

# SCOTT

Mother load man.

He holds up a foil wrapped package, pulled open to reveal money.

A SCREAM emanates from the garage, followed by the sound of a BODY hitting the ground.

Guthry and Scott bolt out of the kitchen.

INT. OLDER GARAGE NIGHT

Marcel lays in a pool of blood, the VCR busted up beside him.

Guthry and Scott stare at the body.

SCOTT What the fuck?

Guthry kneels down, checks Marcel for a pulse. He wipes his fingers off on the body, a look of disgust on his face.

GUTHRY Come on.

come on.

SCOTT What about ...?

GUTHRY

He's done.

Guthry and Scott both look around as -

- something scuttles across the rafters overhead.

Guthry heads out the garage door.

Scott gives a panicked glance to the rafters and also runs out.

EXT. OLDER NEIGHBORHOOD NIGHT

Guthry and Scott hurry towards the pickup truck.

SCOTT Fucking Marcel man. What the fuck was that?

Something darts out of the darkness, Slams into Scott and knocks him down. Scott screams and kicks.

The thing scuttles away.

Guthry helps Scott up, looks at the cuts on Scott's arms and face.

GUTHRY

Go!

They run towards the pickup.

Scott swings his pillow case in a defensive circle.

Guthry throws his pillow case into the back of the pickup and runs for the driver's side.

Scott reaches the passenger door, still swinging the pillow case. He rests, back against the door when -

- something scrambles over the cab of the pickup and slams into him.

Scott screams and goes down.

Guthry pulls at the door handle, but it's locked!

INT. OLDER GARAGE NIGHT

The keys to the truck hang on a clip at Marcel's belt.

EXT. OLDER NEIGHBORHOOD NIGHT

Scott kicks the thing into the door of the truck.

It screeches in pain and vanishes into the darkness.

Scott grabs for the door handle, pops it open.

Guthry leans around the back of the truck cab.

GUTHRY I got to get the keys.

# SCOTT

Okay.

Scott turns to look back to the house -

- and a blurred Mass of Dark Fluff slams Scott into the truck.

Three huge Chef's Knives stab THROUGH Scott's skull, and shatter the truck window.

Guthry darts back.

### GUTHRY

Fuck!

Scott drops.

Guthry runs.

EXT. URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD NIGHT

The pavement is old and cracked, no sidewalks, just lots of overgrown brush.

Guthry runs down the dimly lit street, ducking in and out of pools of light.

Local dogs start BARKING.

Guthry pauses, looks to the side and sees -

- Darcy, standing calmly, watching his plight.

GUTHRY What the hell?

Then something clatters behind him. Guthry turns to look.

Something scuttles towards him.

Guthry bolts through the intersection.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL STREET NIGHT

Guthry runs in front of a blank faced warehouse.

Something slams into him, knocking him to the pavement.

Guthry scrambles to his feet, keeps running.

Guthry vaults onto a loading platform, gets to his feet.

He yanks frantically at the warehouse door, runs to check the next one.

Something scrambles up onto the loading platform.

GUTHRY

Fuck.

Guthry runs to the end of the platform, jumps down.

(CONTINUED)

Lands hard, rolls and get's up but -

- the thing is on him, cutting and slicing.

Guthry screams, slaps the thing away.

Guthry jumps up, runs into a BENCH, topples over it, and rights himself on the other side.

The mass, with knives at the end of it's wriggling legs, jumps up onto the bench, bracing itself against the seat and back. It runs towards Guthry, a macabre spider.

Guthry sprints, his feet throwing up crushed oyster shell.

EXT. RIVER NIGHT

Guthry runs off the end of the landing and plunges into the water.

Guthry breaks the surface, and swims towards the other side.

The thing scuttles over broken blocks of concrete, piled on the river bank. It Growls, frustrated, thwarted.

EXT. RIVER OTHER SIDE NIGHT

Guthry continues swimming.

He finally reaches the other side, hauls himself through the mud and weeds onto the shore.

He lays, panting, cuts on his arms, chest, face, and neck.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL STREET NIGHT

Darcy walks to the end of the loading platform, gazes out over the river.

The thing makes protesting sounds, clatters away over the pavement.

From some what high up, a view of the river front area, the back of warehouses, the sound of dogs barking.

A camera flash goes off. A Forensic Technician with a camera looks over the scene.

Several Uniform Officers walk carefully through, avoiding the body.

EXT. OLDER NEIGHBORHOOD DAY

Michael, now in a darker sports jacket and slacks stands staring at the body beside the pickup truck.

Peter, in a nylon jacket and jeans, looks on with disgust.

MICHAEL I'm starting to think we got us a vigilante.

PETER Somebody trying to clean up our local low lifes?

Michael nods.

MICHAEL

Yeah.

PETER Pretty effective.

MICHAEL Murder isn't justice.

PETER For some folks maybe.

MICHAEL

Never.

Peter shrugs.

MICHAEL Unless I'm reading this wrong and it's a turf war, gang stuff.

PETER I don't see it. These guys were thieves. Issacson sold meth. MICHAEL You've been reading up.

PETER All those years in college, paying off. Same M.O., all the stuff's still here.

MICHAEL Yep. Rival gang would have snatched everything.

BARRET, a uniformed police officer, comes up to them, notebook in his hand.

BARRET Detectives? We got a blood trail headed down the street.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL STREET DAY

Michael and Peter walk the street, headed towards the warehouses.

Peter stops at a loading platform.

PETER Got something here.

A bloody hand print is smeared on the concrete. Peter puts an evidence placard next to it.

Michael vaults the loading platform and checks the doors.

More blood on the locked doors.

MICHAEL Doesn't look like our killers. They would have just driven away. This guy was trying to escape, find a place to hide.

Peter jumps atop the platform, walks to where Michael stands.

PETER So we got a runner?

MICHAEL Yeah. Maybe another body laying somewhere. PETER Maybe he got away. A live witness would be good.

MICHAEL A live witness would be very good.

They walk to the end of the platform, look out over the river.

MICHAEL Better contact County, have 'em send a boat down the river.

Peter nods. He gazes up, then takes several steps down the loading platform.

Peter points to a Plexiglas dome mounted just under the warehouse eaves.

PETER

Camera.

MICHAEL Good eye. Maybe we'll get surveillance lucky.

PETER Hope so. One murder the other night. Two, maybe three last night. Whatever this is, it's spreading.

MICHAEL I hate bad shit happening on my watch.

PETER We'll figure it out, and we'll stop it. That's what we do.

INT. SQUAD ROOM DAY

Peter stands watching the computer monitor.

Michael works the mouse, starts a file playing.

The surveillance video comes up on screen.

MICHAEL Here we go. PETER Time of death was about four a.m.

MICHAEL Right, fast forward.

He hits the button and -

VFX. ON SCREEN

- the view looking onto the loading platform speeds up, black and white grain sizzling. The time stamp in the corner clocks by, approaches four a.m.

A man (Guthry) runs along the platform.

INT. SQUAD ROOM DAY

MICHAEL There's somebody interesting.

Michael works the controls, rewinds the video and then plays it forward at normal speed.

VFX. ON SCREEN

Guthry runs along the loading platform, stopping to test the locked doors. Then he gives a frightened look back and runs off the end of the platform.

A dark shadow, moving fast, zips towards Guthry and is gone.

INT. SQUAD ROOM DAY

PETER What the hell was that?

Michael clicks the controls, runs the video back. He plays it forward.

VFX. ON SCREEN

Again the blur. Michael rewinds it. Steps it forward a frame at a time.

The dark shadow streaks across two frames of the video.

INT. SQUAD ROOM DAY

MICHAEL Is that an animal? A pit bull or something?

PETER I don't know. See if there's a clear frame of our guy.

Michael runs the video back and forth.

VFX. ON SCREEN

The video plays, but Guthry never looks at the camera.

INT. SQUAD ROOM DAY

MICHAEL Nothing, he never turns around.

PETER Damn it. Print me a couple of the best frames and I'll put a bolo out.

Michael pauses the video.

MICHAEL Looks like he got sliced a time or two. Explains the blood.

Peter stares at the video.

PETER Person of interest with multiple knife wounds, that narrows it down.

Michael chooses a frame, hits the print button. Chooses another and clicks again.

Peter goes to retrieve the prints.

Michael presses play and continues watching the video.

VFX. ON SCREEN

The view of the loading platform continues. Then Darcy walks into frame.

INT. SQUAD ROOM DAY

MICHAEL Got something.

Peter comes back, black and white prints in his hand.

PETER What's that?

MICHAEL Someone else on the loading dock.

Peter watches over Michael's shoulder.

PETER

Oh Christ.

MICHAEL

What?

VFX. ON SCREEN

Michael pauses the video on a clear frame of Darcy.

INT. SQUAD ROOM DAY

PETER That's Darcy Seward.

MICHAEL You know her?

PETER Yah. Print that out, will you?

Michael works the mouse, prints the frame.

MICHAEL Is this a good thing or a bad thing?

PETER I don't know. What the hell was she doing at a crime scene at four in the morning? MICHAEL

Weird.

PETER

Very weird.

EXT. POST OFFICE DAY

Michael and Peter walk towards a long folding table, clip boards with petitions scattered over the surface.

Taped up posters proclaim "Crime Prevention" and "Neighborhood Watch".

Darcy, wearing an elegant print dress and her gloves, sits behind the table along with TWO LADIES from the community.

Darcy smiles as Peter walks up.

DARCY Peter, will you sign our petition? It's to fund two more Neighborhood Watch programs.

PETER Maybe later. Darcy can we talk?

DARCY Something wrong Peter? My house didn't get broken into did it?

PETER Nothing like that.

DARCY (suspiciously) Okay, so what's this about?

Michael leans in, extends his hand, shakes with Darcy.

MICHAEL We haven't met. I'm Detective Michael Ochoa. Let's take a little walk.

Darcy stands up.

DARCY I guess I'm due for a break. I'll be right back.

Darcy heads away, Peter and Michael walking quickly to come up beside her.

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DARCY What do you want detectives?

PETER We've got video of you outside a warehouse on "H" street, early this morning.

DARCY I've had insomnia lately. Sometimes I go for long walks.

MICHAEL A man fleeing from a crime scene also appears in this video, moments, and I mean moments, before you do.

DARCY I don't remember seeing anyone else.

Michael and Peter stare at her.

PETER You didn't hear anything? See anyone?

DARCY No, I was just walking.

PETER

I checked Darcy. Your house is on the other side of town, like 2 miles away.

DARCY Sometimes I take very long walks.

Michael looks at Peter.

MICHAEL Your doctor can confirm the insomnia?

DARCY Why would he need to?

MICHAEL Anybody else vouch for your whereabouts this morning?

Darcy frowns at him.

DARCY I should be getting back.

MICHAEL You saw something or you were involved somehow.

DARCY I don't know what you mean.

MICHAEL Two men, maybe three died this morning. We know you were there.

Darcy get's flustered, angry.

#### DARCY

You police. You're all so apologetic after the innocent get slaughtered. But you don't do a damn thing to get these murderers and rapists off our streets.

PETER

You know that's not true.

DARCY I know you're useless. Do you have

a family Detective? Peter does.

MICHAEL Yes I have a family.

DARCY

Darcy turns sharply.

Peter puts a hand on her arm.

PETER Darcy don't.

DARCY Get your hand off me.

Michael steps close to her.

MICHAEL Don't make us cuff you in front of your friends.

DARCY That would be a huge mistake.

MICHAEL

Maybe. Or maybe we'll find blood on your clothes, match the dirt from your tires, find something in your house.

Darcy grins.

DARCY You don't want to go down this road boys.

MICHAEL Have it your way.

He grabs her arm, cuffs her.

MICHAEL

This isn't an arrest, but we do have some questions for you. Since you aren't willing to be helpful, we'll get a warrant and check your house, your phone, see if anything interesting turns up.

PETER

Sorry Darcy.

MICHAEL Maybe you're memory will improve.

They put Darcy into the back of their Sedan.

The Ladies at the Petition Table talk and whisper.

INT. BOOKING ROOM DAY

A BOOKING OFFICER watches.

Darcy removes her gloves, revealing Pentagram TATTOOS on the backs of her hands.

She presses her hands to a glass panel on an electronic machine. Green glows move within the glass beneath her fingers.

VFX. ON SCREEN

Darcy's fingerprints show up on the monitor.

INT. PHOTO ROOM DAY

Darcy lines up in front of a height scale. The camera flash goes off. She turns profile, again a photo is taken.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM DAY

Darcy sits at the long edge of a table, lips pursed, angry.

INT. HALLWAY DAY

Michael and Peter confer with the CAPTAIN, a 50ish man in a nice suit. Michael holds a manila folder.

CAPTAIN She says she didn't see anything.

PETER She was there Captain. She had to have seen something.

CAPTAIN And those tattoos.

MICHAEL It suggests a deeper involvement.

CAPTAIN

Unlikely.

PETER I hate to think of that myself, but we can't rule it out.

CAPTAIN

Fine. I'll ask the Judge for a warrant. Grill her a little, see if you can get her to let something slip.

MICHAEL

Yes sir.

The Captain walks away.

MICHAEL You want to talk to her?

PETER I should stay out of this. In case you have to lean on her.

# MICHAEL

Okay.

PETER Just, not too much. She's not some junkie.

MICHAEL Frankly, I'm not sure what she is.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM DAY

Michael enters, followed by Peter.

Michael sits in a chair across the table from Darcy, who smiles.

Peter remains standing a few steps back.

DARCY Will we be done by two? I have a hair appointment.

MICHAEL Might have to reschedule.

DARCY Pity. It's hard to get a time slot, Ruthie's always booked.

MICHAEL

I'm sure.

Michael lays the folder on the table. Opens it, and slides the photo across.

Darcy gazes down at herself, in the photo.

DARCY Where did you say this was?

MICHAEL Back of "H" street, at the river. 37.

DARCY I don't think that's me. I don't remember being down there.

PETER Stop this nonsense Darcy. That's you.

DARCY If you say so.

She holds up the photo.

DARCY I'm beginning to have my doubts.

She turns the photo face down.

MICHAEL This man was running for his life.

Michael slides the two photos over.

Darcy smirks, touches the man's image in the photos.

DARCY

Yes. (a beat) He's still alive, but on the move, running from a determined pursuer.

MICHAEL And who might that be?

DARCY I'm sure I don't know. Just a feeling I had.

MICHAEL Does your feeling have a name? Do you know this man?

Darcy laughs.

DARCY

No.

Michael slides over two crime scene photos of the murder victims.

MICHAEL These two men were knifed to death.

DARCY Disturbing, but I told you, I wasn't there.

Darcy puts her hand on the back of the over turned photo. Her eyes close and she begins whispering, something low, inaudible.

Michael looks at Peter, who moves closer to the table.

PETER Darcy. Tell us how you're involved. Do it now and we can protect you.

# INT. CAPTAINS OFFICE DAY

The Captain sits in his chair, phone to his ear.

OPERATOR (on the phone) I have Judge Ashby for you sir.

CAPTAIN

Thank you.

ASHBY (on the phone) William how are you?

CAPTAIN Doing great Phil. Did you catch the Niner game?

ASHBY (on the phone) Sorry William, I'm a transplanted Seattlite.

CAPTAIN Forgot. So how are the Seahawks doing?

ASHBY

(on the phone) Like crap. Ever since I left they've been doing poorly. Still, my joints couldn't take the damp anymore. What can I do for you William?

(CONTINUED)

CAPTAIN I need a favor.

ASHBY (on the phone) Name it.

The Captain pauses, his eyes defocus, his mouth goes slack, jaw opening. A BUZZING builds in his ears.

ASHBY (on the phone) William?

The Captain recovers himself.

# CAPTAIN

I ... I was wondering if I could borrow your cabin this weekend. I could use some time away.

#### ASHBY

(on the phone) Of course, come by for the keys and we'll have a drink.

CAPTAIN

Thanks Phil.

# INT. INTERROGATION ROOM DAY

Darcy slumps her head to the table, her words, still unintelligible, coming to a crescendo.

Michael slams a hand to the table top.

# MICHAEL Stop this bullshit.

Darcy looks up.

DARCY Whatever you say detective.

Michael grabs the photos, rights and stacks them. He shows her the photo of the man.

MICHAEL If you saw this man, then you can identify him. We have a witness protection program and it works. 40.

DARCY I don't need protection.

PETER Maybe it's more than that. Maybe this P.T.A. soccer Mom thing you've got going is a lie.

DARCY Father of lies, mother of lies.

MICHAEL What the fuck is that supposed to mean?

Michael rearranges the photos, shows Darcy the murder victims.

MICHAEL Do you kill these men?

DARCY I didn't touch them.

PETER Did you order it done?

Darcy looks surprised.

DARCY So now I'm some kind of crime boss? I had nothing to do with those men. I wasn't even there.

Michael turns another photo.

MICHAEL Stop lying. We know you were.

Darcy looks at the photo, smirks.

The person in the picture is now GONE!

Michael tilts the photo back, looks, then spins the photo around and stares at it.

MICHAEL What the hell?

Peter leans in. He studies the photo then gives a nervous look to Darcy.

DARCY I'd love to help you, but you're mistaken. So if there's nothing else, I do have that hair appointment.

# EXT. POLICE STATION DAY

Darcy walks out, again wearing her gloves and carrying her purse.

INT. SQUAD ROOM DAY

Michael throws the manila folder down on his desk.

MICHAEL What the hell was that?

Peter sorts the photos - comes up with the empty one, stares at it.

Michael pulls his chair around and sits. He grabs the mouse and launches the surveillance video.

> PETER Impossible. Nobody can tamper with evidence like that. No way no how.

MICHAEL That bitch did something.

Michael speeds the video file.

Peter comes around the desk.

VFX. ON SCREEN

The video gets to the four a.m. time mark. The man rushes through, followed by the blur - and then nothing.

INT. SQUAD ROOM DAY

Michael and Peter both stare at the monitor.

MICHAEL Fuck me. There's nobody there. PETER Impossible.

MICHAEL Stop saying impossible, it's God damn blank. She's not there.

The Captain walks in. He pulls Peter's chair over, sits down facing the detectives.

CAPTAIN You two want to explain what that was about?

Peter throws the folder down, leans against the desk.

PETER Beats the hell out of me.

Michael raises his hands in defeat.

MICHAEL

I thought we caught a break. First she was in the video, then she wasn't.

CAPTAIN Stop talking nonsense.

PETER

You saw the photos yourself. Now she's gone.

# CAPTAIN

Now? Gentleman, all I saw was an empty loading dock. I'm shocked that you brought an innocent woman, an upstanding lady, down here for no reason.

PETER No reason? Sir she was ...

Michael waves him off.

# CAPTAIN

Don't get me wrong. I stand by you guys. I support you. Three murders is very serious business. But it doesn't help if you're distracted by things that aren't relevant. Don't go down that road. MICHAEL Don't go down that road.

# CAPTAIN

(brightens) Exactly. Focus on the case. Try to find that missing man. Maybe he killed those other men. Maybe they defended themselves and he was wounded. That explanation fits.

# MICHAEL

Yes sir it does. I'll check with County, see if the river patrol turned anything up.

CAPTAIN Good. You do that.

The Captain stands, pushes in the chair.

#### CAPTAIN

Mrs. Seward isn't going to press charges. Hopefully she'll let this incident slide. Don't want a lawsuit.

PETER (catching on) I can't believe we cuffed her.

CAPTAIN Well, she's a very forgiving woman, pillar of the community.

PETER Pillar of the community.

CAPTAIN Try to remember that.

The Captain walks away.

PETER (whispers) What the hell?

Michael gets up.

MICHAEL Let's grab some lunch. I feel like splurging. Steak?

# PETER Sure, steak.

The two men walk out of the squad room.

#### EXT. PARK BENCH DAY

Michael and Peter sit, eating steak sandwiches out of white paper sacks. A tray of French Fries sits between them. Both men also have large drink cups with straws.

> MICHAEL How well do you know Darcy Seward?

> PETER She comes to Little League. Her son's a good kid. Husband's Tom, I think he's into financial markets. Something like that.

# MICHAEL Anything else?

PETER That's about it. I didn't know she had tattoo's. She always wears those gloves. I thought it was kind of grandiose.

Michael nods, takes a bite of sandwich.

MICHAEL (around the food) But she's covering up.

PETER The tattoos? Yeah.

MICHAEL Probably more than that.

PETER

Probably.

MICHAEL Whatever she did to the photos...

PETER And the Captain. MICHAEL And the Caption, Jesus that was weird. Whatever she did, you agree she's into this pretty deep?

PETER

Yes.

MICHAEL Did she kill those men?

PETER I think so. I don't know how, or why, but yes.

Michael nods.

MICHAEL I think so too.

PETER

So now what?

else.

MICHAEL The usual. Evidence of means, motive, opportunity.

PETER Can't get a warrant.

MICHAEL Nope. Have to think of something

PETER And she knows that we know.

MICHAEL She thinks that doesn't matter. Anybody who can work the hoojoo she did and alter evidence believes they're in control.

PETER She might be right.

MICHAEL

You misunderstand. Somebody who needs that kind of control, is terrified of not being in control. Probably doesn't like planes. PETER Yeah? You don't like to fly.

MICHAEL

Exactly.

INT. SEWARD LIVING ROOM DAY

The house is upscale and bright, modern minimalist, sterile.

Darcy storms in the front door, slams it shut. Her hair disheveled.

She throws her purse across the room, breaking a vase of glass beads and artificial flowers.

DARCY Sloppy. Sloppy. Stupid.

She paces back and forth, hands clenching and opening.

She stops, takes a deep breath.

Darcy walks to the side table, looks at the mess. She kneels and picks up fragments of the vase. She picks up glass beads and plastic flowers, stacks them in the broken half.

INT. SEWARD KITCHEN DAY

Close as Darcy throws the broken fragments into the trash.

INT. SEWARD LIVING ROOM DAY

Darcy vacuums, cleaning up broken glass bits.

The phone rings.

Darcy pauses, tilting her head to listen. She switches off the vacuum.

The phone rings again.

Darcy goes to the phone, picks it up.

DARCY

Hello?

RUTHIE (on the phone) Hi. We missed you today.

(CONTINUED)

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DARCY Ruthie. I'm so sorry. I had urgent business elsewhere. Couldn't make it.

RUTHIE (on the phone) No problem sweetie. I've got some openings next month.

Darcy glances to the side.

A Mirror hangs on the wall. Darcy's face, as reflected in the mirror, is Badly SCARRED on the left side.

Darcy quickly turns away from the mirror, her face Back to Normal.

DARCY I'll call, set something up for later.

RUTHIE (on the phone) Sure thing. Soon as you get your other business taken care of.

Darcy smiles.

DARCY Count on it.

EXT. STEAMER LANDING PARK DAY

Taylor sits on the back of a park bench, smoking an E-Cig and staring over the water.

Guthry, tired and dirty, climbs up the river bank and hurries down the path. He's cut in multiple places.

Guthry rounds the bend in the path, heads towards the park bench.

Taylor spots Guthry, climbs down from the bench.

Guthry rushes forward, his hands raised defensively.

Taylor draws a knife, flicks it open.

TAYLOR Back off man.

GUTHRY Get away from here kid. Something's after me. It won't stop.

Guthry runs past. Taylor walks after him, watching suspiciously.

A Black sports car zooms up, RAUL, a teenage punk at the wheel.

DELANO, another teenage punk, climbs from the passenger seat to the side window, sits on the door.

DELANO Hey Taylor, did you fuck that guy up?

Taylor grins, waves the knife.

TAYLOR Nobody messes with the River Rats!

DELANO Got that right. Get in man.

Taylor folds the knife, walks to the car.

Delano gets back in, opens the door.

Taylor climbs into the back and Delano closes the door.

INT. BLACK SPORTS CAR DAY

Raul looks to the back seat.

RAUL Taylor you one bad ass. That dude was cut up. Casi muerto.

Raul reaches back over the seat and bumps fists with Taylor.

EXT. STEAMER LANDING PARK DAY

The Black sports car races away.

# INT. OCHOA KITCHEN NIGHT

Michael takes the lid off a steaming crock pot. With a serving fork and tongs he lifts a pot roast and places it on a cutting board.

# INT. SEWARD DINING ROOM NIGHT

An elegant dining room, table cloth, full place settings with cloth napkins. The tapered candles are lit.

TOM, a handsome 35ish man, sits at the table with Shane to his right.

Darcy stands to one side, reaching for their dinner plates, her hands still gloved.

We can't hear them, but everyone chats happily as Darcy serves mashed potatoes.

# INT. OCHOA KITCHEN NIGHT

Michael pulls a chef's knife free from a wall mounted MAGNET BAR, then slices the pot roast. He puts two slices onto a chipped dinner plate.

He scoops out some potatoes and carrots, spoons some of the broth over the meat. Then he puts the lid back on the crock pot.

# INT. SEWARD DINING ROOM NIGHT

Tom, Darcy, and Shane laugh and eat. Talking happily.

Darcy takes a drink of her wine.

Tom gives Shane's shoulder a playful push, their dinner pleasant, elegant.

#### INT. OCHOA KITCHEN NIGHT

Michael sits alone at the kitchen table. He picks at his food. He cuts the pot roast to fork size and eats.

Michael unscrews the top of a whiskey bottle, pours a generous serving into a plain glass jar.

Michael drinks, stares at the empty chairs around the table.

He sighs and puts the glass down, his dinner lonely, painful. INT. SHANE'S BEDROOM NIGHT Shane lays in bed, the sheets pulled up. Darcy sits beside him, stroking his hair. SHANE The math test was easy. DARCY I told you. You shouldn't have been so worried. SHANE It's strange though. DARCY What's that my darling? SHANE I felt like... you're gonna laugh. DARCY I might smile. She gives him a playful poke in the ribs. Shane laughs. SHANE (protesting) Mom. I mean it. I had like, a deja vu. Darcy's smile fades. SHANE It was like we'd gone over this stuff before. But I don't know when. DARCY Two weeks ago when you brought in your homework. I thought I was over that, and here I am, dividing fractions. Ugh. Shane smiles.

Darcy touches his hair, then puts her forefinger on his forehead.

DARCY Don't worry about it. Get some sleep.

SHANE Okay. Night Mom.

# DARCY

Good night.

Shane's eyes close and he's instantly asleep.

Darcy gets up and exits the room, softly closing the door.

INT. SEWARD BEDROOM NIGHT

Tom's clothes are strewn across the floor, slacks, underwear, socks.

Darcy enters and sighs.

# DARCY

Really Tom?

Tom lays in the bed, chest bare. He grins lewdly.

TOM Are you gonna keep me waiting, or are you gonna march your sexy self over here?

Darcy bends to pick up the scattered clothes, gathers up Tom's slacks and places everything in the laundry hamper.

> TOM And don't say that Shane's still awake. He nods off faster than an ice cube melts in blast furnace.

Darcy approaches the bed.

DARCY You really love me don't you?

#### TOM

You know I do.

Tom tugs at the fingertips of her gloves.

# TOM

Now take these off and come to bed.

Darcy leans over and kisses him passionately.

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She places her forefinger on his forehead.

DARCY Get some sleep.

Tom's eyes close, he sinks back against the pillow and drops into a deep sleep.

#### INT. SEWARD KITCHEN NIGHT

Darcy opens the utility closet and takes out the vacuum cleaner.

She opens the machine's cover, and pulls out the bag, bulging with dust. She replaces the cover and puts the machine back into the closet.

#### EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING NIGHT

Once a factory, the brick building has two stories, now graffiti covered, boarded up, roof punched through. A chain link fence keeps the curious away.

Darcy's blue car pulls up to the building and parks. The headlights flash on the building, lighting a section of GLASS BLOCK in the wall, then go out.

Darcy opens the trunk, lifts out the vacuum cleaner bag, a box of Tampons, and a bulging plastic trash bag. She closes the trunk, locks the car with her key fob, and walks towards the building.

Darcy ducks through an opening in the chain link fence, continues through the over growth towards the building.

# INT. SHABBY WORKROOM NIGHT

Darcy places her items on a rickety work table next to a roll of paper towels, a box of Feminine pads, and a box of Nitrile gloves.

An old bucket sits on the table, an antique LAUNDRY WRINGER resting above it's mouth.

Darcy opens the tampons and takes a new one out. She unwraps it, casting the paper aside.

She puts on a pair of the Nitrile gloves.

She opens the plastic trash bag, revealing BLOODY, USED FEMININE pads and tampons.

Darcy reaches under her skirt, and extracts a Bloody feminine pad. She removes her old, Used Tampon, placing both on the pile in the bag.

She cleans herself and puts a new tampon into place. Then peels the paper off a new pad and puts it into place.

Darcy runs the tampon through the wringer, catching it as it squeezes out the other side.

Menstrual blood runs down into the bucket.

Darcy runs the pad through the wringer, catching more blood.

She runs each of them through the wringer.

Darcy sets the wringer to one side and tilts the bucket.

A surprising amount of blood pools in bottom.

Darcy tears open the vacuum cleaner bag and dumps the contents into the bucket.

She reaches into the bucket and mixes the contents.

She mixes, then winces in pain.

# DARCY

Ow!

She raises her hand, her finger cut and bleeding.

#### DARCY

Damn it.

She reaches back into the bucket and mixes some more.

Darcy stops, picks up the bucket, and walks out.

# INT. CEREMONIAL SPACE NIGHT

Darcy lays face down, sculpting and shaping a Wet Mass around the handles of a dozen kitchen knives.

DARCY Klestos amna mi nerutesh.

She shapes the mass, smoothing it's surface.

DARCY Lamna icht vulsta. Lamna icht vertos. Darcy crawls backwards.

The wet mass with it's embedded knives, lays in the center of a huge Pentagram. Candles burn at each of the 5 points.

Darcy sneers, shakes her head, hair tumbling over her face.

DARCY Latusa mesh ni artos cumsa. Eesay nah feroonsa. Maksa.

She trembles, extends her hands and shouts.

# DARCY

Fetisay!

The wet mass quivers, and one of the knives MOVES, shifting a bit. Another knife shifts, and the thing begins to stand.

It trembles, then clatters as the knife/feet get under it, and the mass walks away.

Darcy smiles, pushes herself upright and stands.

INT. CEREMONIAL ALTAR NIGHT

Candles burn around a Dark Altar. Several Police Line Up photos, wallet sized, are held on stands.

Three of these have burns in the center, as though from a candle.

Darcy removes her nitrile gloves, cleans her hands with a wet wipe.

The dark mass moves somewhere behind her, making soft GROWLING sounds as it clatters in the dark.

Darcy picks up one of the unburnt photos, tilts it face down, and holds a candle flame under it.

The photo begins to darken and burn.

The dark mass makes EAGER, GROWLING noises. It moves faster, clattering loudly.

Darcy blows out the flame and puts the photo back.

The dark mass growls and clatters around somewhere inside.

# INT. CRACK HOUSE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

A filthy room, dirty drapes, dingy, cracked walls.

SANCHO, a hefty biker dude with a pistol and knife in his belt, locks the heavy bolt on the front door.

The T.V.'s on, lighting the red sores on the face of a 20 something GIRL. She's in her underwear, seated on a tattered side chair.

Close on a .38 revolver, laying on a coffee table.

Delano, Raul, and Taylor stand, cautiously looking around.

DELANO

How much?

On the other side of the coffee table, seated on the sofa, is JASPER, a 30ish man. He grins.

JASPER A hundred and twenty five.

DELANO Does it have a body on it?

JASPER No it's clean. You boys want some tail?

Jasper kicks the side chair, rocking the Girl.

GIRL Twenty bucks. Each.

Raul gives the girl a lusty look.

DELANO Just the gun man.

Taylor looks to one side of the room.

Henry, lost in a stupor, sits against the base of a side wall.

TAYLOR What's wrong with him?

JASPER Nothing. We cook it, he smokes it. That's what pays the bills. You boys should try some, there's nothing like it. Better than pussy.

DELANO Seventy five for the gun.

JASPER

Screw you.

EXT. CRACK HOUSE NIGHT

A rough neighborhood, boarded up windows, overgrown weeds and shrubs, junked cars.

GROWLING sounds come from behind one of the junkers as something scuttles across the pavement, and clatters up the cracked sidewalk.

INT. CRACK HOUSE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

DELANO

Seventy five, and another fifty worth of Hard Ball. We'll sell it for you.

JASPER

Yeah? You boys want to move some stuff for me?

RAUL Sure. We got connections.

JASPER Oh, connections. So why do you need the gun?

DELANO Don't want to get robbed man.

JASPER

That is an occupational hazard. A hundred for the piece. Twenty five for the nuggets, wholesale. Should get you two hundred. I take half. RAUL Half? Shit that ain't nuthin'.

JASPER Pays for the gun. You start small, work your way up. Once I know I can trust you.

From somewhere in the back there's the sound of a Window BREAKING.

Jasper looks at the three boys, grabs the revolver and stands.

JASPER Who the fuck did you bring with you?

#### DELANO

Nobody man.

Jasper cocks the revolver, steps around the coffee table. He glances towards the back, then glares at the boys.

JASPER Thought you'd steal from me you little fucks?

RAUL That ain't us hombre. We're just here to make a deal.

Jasper turns to Sancho.

JASPER Check the lab. You find anybody, bust 'em up, then bring 'em to me.

Sancho draws his knife, walks towards the back of the house.

JASPER (to the girl) Don't let these limp dicks leave.

Jasper heads down the hall.

The Girl draws her own pistol from the chair cushion, aims it at the boys.

GIRL Should have coughed up the twenty bucks.

Taylor starts to back away.

The Girl cocks the pistol.

GIRL The man said don't move. So you stay put.

#### INT. CRACK HOUSE KITCHEN NIGHT

The windows are blocked out, but the plastic sheet is torn, glass shards on the floor.

Sancho eases in, knife raised. He spots the damage and pulls out the pistol.

Large glass jugs sit on the counter along with gallon cans of Acetone.

Boxes of chemicals stand on a wheeled work cart.

Other glass bottles sit on the stove, rubber tubing connecting parts of the Meth cooking operation.

Sancho walks to the window, uses the knife to move the plastic back and looks out.

He frowns, then steps back, cracking glass underfoot.

Something SNARLS from behind the work cart.

Sancho FIRES, and the thing skitters to one side.

Sancho lunges and flips the work cart over. Nothing there.

He whirls, hearing clattering sounds from behind. Again nothing.

Jasper rushes in.

JASPER What the fuck? What are you shooting at?

SANCHO Something.

JASPER Something? Something what?

Sancho shrugs.

# JASPER

Keep looking.

Jasper walks out of the kitchen.

Sancho nods, then opens a pantry cabinet. Nothing.

He looks between the refrigerator and the wall. Nothing.

Sancho walks to the stove, looks across the cluttered counter tops.

He squints and steps closer, towards -

- a ring of knives surrounding a pile of fluff and hair. The knives stand on their handles, points in the air.

#### SANCHO

#### Hungh?

The ring of knives suddenly flips over, scrambles across the counter and Slams into Sancho, cutting and stabbing.

Sancho screams and goes down.

Blood sprays from a slice across Sancho's throat, hits the work cart.

More cutting and stabbing.

Jasper opens the kitchen door.

The Thing pauses, GROWLS up at Jasper, and launches itself. Jasper screams and pulls the door closed.

INT. CRACK HOUSE HALLWAY NIGHT

KNIVES slam through the door with an angry growl.

Jasper darts back, fires twice through the door.

The Knives pull back, then slam against the wood.

Jasper backs down the hallway, gun wavering.

The thing SLAMS against the door again and again.

Jasper fires another shot.

The Thing Bursts through the TOP of the door, splinters flying. It crawls across the ceiling, moving fast, like a spider.

INT. CRACK HOUSE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Raul, Delano, and Taylor make a mad dash for the door.

The Girl gets up, glancing back and forth from the hallway to the three boys.

Raul pulls hard on the door handle, but it won't budge.

More shots from the Hallway.

Jasper darts forward.

The Girl, panicked, fires a shot towards him. Jasper flinches, then snarls.

#### JASPER

Bitch!

Jasper grabs her and shoves her down the hall.

The Thing attacks from the hall ceiling, cutting and slicing the Screaming Girl.

Jasper runs for the front door. He Shoots DELANO in the back.

Delano drops.

Taylor and Raul dive to one side.

Jasper paws at the lock on the door, but the Thing scrambles across the room and slams into his back.

Jasper screams, rolls, slapping and kicking.

The thing stabs and slices.

Taylor gets up, races to Jasper and kicks the thing aside.

The Thing shrieks, hits the wall beside Henry and scuttles away.

Henry watches, eyes wide with panic.

Taylor glances around. Delano's dead. Jasper's on the floor panting and bleeding.

The Girl lays still, blood splashed over her body.

Taylor reaches for the door bolt.

The Thing leaps and slams him back, knives flashing.

CONTINUED:

Taylor tries to cover his face and head, slumps to one side of the door. The Thing cuts him, stabs his chest. Jasper pushes himself up, takes careful aim, and fires. The Thing SHRIEKS, a spray of hair and fluff flying. The Thing leaps at Jasper, forcing his gun hand back -- and driving a chef's knife through his wrist, pinning it to the floor. Jasper screams. The Thing pulls back, cuts and slices Jasper again and again. Raul jumps up, unlatches the door, and runs into the night. Taylor crawls towards the open door. The Thing keeps stabbing and slicing at Jasper. Taylor pushes to his knees, starts to stand. The Thing goes still, growls. Taylor slowly rises. The Thing launches itself with a growl --slams into Taylor, spins him to the floor. Cutting and Slicing. The Girl fires a shot. The Thing is hit, more fluff exploding out. The Thing slams the girl hard, stabs and slices. Taylor lays on the floor, blood spatter on his face. He glances around, eyes go out of focus. He passes out.

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EXT. CRACK HOUSE NIGHT

Red and Blue flashes from multiple police cars light the scene.

Michael's sedan screeches up, jumps over the curb and parks.

Michael bolts out, wearing a white t-shirt and slacks.

Peter exits the building, rushing to stop Michael.

MICHAEL I'll kill that bitch! I'll kill her.

PETER Hold it! Hold it. You... you know you can't.

Michael stops, face red, seething.

MICHAEL Fuck can't. That bitch is dead.

Two Paramedics come out with a gurney bearing Taylor.

Michael and Peter race to the gurney, following it to the ambulance.

Michael leans over Taylor.

MICHAEL Taylor. You're gonna be alright son. You're gonna be fine.

TAYLOR

(weakly) Dad.

MICHAEL

I'm right here. I'm right here.

They reach the ambulance and the Paramedics prepare to hoist the gurney into the back.

PARAMEDIC 1 St. Joseph's emergency is closest.

MICHAEL Got it, St. Joseph's. You hold on boy. Hold on.

The paramedics lift the gurney, close the back of the ambulance.

Peter grabs Michael's arm, pulls him back.

PETER You need to see this.

INT. CRACK HOUSE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Michael and Peter step carefully around the blood and the bodies. Peter points down to the floor.

PETER

Right here. Quick, it's crumbling.

Michael kneels down beside a chef's knife, covered in fluff.

The wooden handle crumbles to grainy particles, then the steel cracks and breaks into flakes. Then everything settles to dust and fades.

PETER I got here maybe eight minutes after the call went out. There were more knives here, all clumped in a pile. That was the last one.

MICHAEL More booga booga. Did you get photos?

Peter holds out a cell phone.

Michael swipes his finger over the screen.

MICHAEL Too bad we don't have any hard evidence.

PETER But we know more about the murder weapon. At least I think we do.

Michael gives Peter back his phone.

Henry still sits at the base of the wall.

Michael squats down next to him.

MICHAEL Henry? Henry what did you see?

Henry looks up, squinting.

HENRY Knives. Knives like claws.

Henry closes his eyes.

Michael turns, looking at the carnage in the room. He looks at himself.

MICHAEL I'm not dressed for work. Thanks for the call about Taylor.

PETER You bet. Go to the hospital.

MICHAEL You all right here?

Peter nods.

PETER Fine. This shit is getting old. No murder weapon, no finger prints, nothing, just like all the rest.

MICHAEL Perfect crime.

PETER It's pissing me off.

MICHAEL Pissed doesn't cover it.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM NIGHT

Michael, still in his white t-shirt and slacks, sits, his chin resting on his hand.

RAMONA, 40ish, thin and sickly, her bald head wrapped in a bandanna, comes in with Bess. Michael stands as they approach.

Bess rushes forward and hugs Michael.

MICHAEL

Hey baby.

BESS Is Taylor going to be all right? MICHAEL I think so. The doctor's operating on him now.

Michael looks up at Ramona.

MICHAEL

Hi.

Ramona glances around.

RAMONA Been spending too much time in hospitals lately.

MICHAEL Yeah. They got the bleeding stopped. He's had a unit of blood. They just have to keep him stabilized.

RAMONA So we wait.

MICHAEL

We wait.

The three move to waiting chairs and sit, with Bess hugging Michael and Ramona close by.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM LATER

Bess sleeps on a long sofa. Michael and Ramona sit talking.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM STILL LATER

NURSES pass through. Ramona has her head resting on Michael's shoulder, his hand in hers.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM STILL LATER

A SURGEON in blue scrubs talks to the family. Ramona hugs him. Michael shakes his hand.

There's a buzz at the nightstand. Peter reaches for his cell, knocks it to the floor.

Peter reaches down, retrieves the phone.

PETER

Yeah?

MICHAEL (on the phone) You awake?

PETER

No.

MICHAEL (on the phone) I may have something useful. Pick you up in ten.

The phone clicks off. Peter groans, opens his hand, lets the phone hit the floor.

INT. OCHOA CAR DAY

Michael opens the door and Peter climbs in, picking up a stack of photocopies so he can sit down.

PETER I hope you got a warrant for all this.

Michael scoffs.

MICHAEL Unofficial sources.

PETER Gertie at the Real Estate Office?

MICHAEL Lots of interesting things in the public record if you know who to ask.

Peter closes the door.

Michael puts the car in gear and drives.

#### MICHAEL

The Sewards have been in town maybe a year. Four years ago they lived in Healdsburg. Between then and now there's a gap, two years missing.

PETER They bought a motor home and got off the radar.

# MICHAEL

Dropped off the face of the earth is more like it. The house they left was condemned, bulldozed. Fire damage, and maybe more. Incident reports indicate something bad, maybe a home invasion, arson, but no details. Every report's been redacted, sealed, deleted, or destroyed.

PETER Like our video tape.

MICHAEL Exactly. The new home they're in, doesn't have any lender of record listed. Gertie said it felt like they paid cash.

PETER Insurance payoff?

MICHAEL Probably, but again, no records.

PETER So all this, and we still got nothing.

Michael reaches over and taps an index card.

MICHAEL There's this.

PETER

Which is?

Peter takes the card.

# MICHAEL

Mail forwarding request. Gertie found it with the paperwork for their new house. Check the address. PETER Napa State Mental Hospital.

MICHAEL Time to get to the bottom of this shit.

EXT. NAPA STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL DAY

Pastel colored brick and mortar buildings lay nestled among the oak trees.

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL HALL DAY

RAYMOND CORDELL, 50ish, in a white doctor's coat, walks towards his office.

FAY, a nurse, moves between Cordell and his office door.

FAY Doctor, there are two policemen to see you.

Cordell looks at Michael and Peter, shrugs.

CORDELL Fine. Come on in.

He opens the door and goes into his office.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE DAY

Cordell walks to his desk, sits with a sigh, and rests his elbows on the wooden top.

CORDELL Nurses aren't making appointments like they used to. Obamacare seems to be working.

MICHAEL I don't think we'll be long. No need for a follow up either.

CORDELL My billable hours will plummet. What can I do for you gentlemen?

Peter and Michael sit at the chairs before the desk.

Peter looks around.

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PETER No couch?

CORDELL I'm a Jungian, if that means anything to you.

MICHAEL Not so much, sorry. But you do help people, right?

CORDELL Absolutely. Is this to be a personal visit then?

MICHAEL

Professional.

CORDELL

I'll try to help, as much as I can, given the usual confidentiality.

Michael slides the Mail Forwarding Request across the desktop.

MICHAEL

This woman, Darcy Seward, requested that her mail be forwarded from here, to her new address.

Cordell looks at the card, pushes it away from himself.

CORDELL Yes, that's just what it says.

PETER When was she admitted?

CORDELL Sorry. For all I know, she was a volunteer and not a patient.

PETER A volunteer who uses the hospital as their mailing address?

CORDELL Not impossible I suppose. Do you gentlemen have a warrant?

MICHAEL We can get one, if we have to.

#### CORDELL

If a judge thinks it's important, then who am I to argue? Until then, I can't discuss anything about who may or may not have been here, or why.

#### PETER

We wouldn't be asking, but this is the gravest of circumstances. Six people are dead, one hospitalized, one missing.

CORDELL And you think this Seward woman has something to do with that?

Michael slides over photos of Darcy's lineup, and a closeup of the pentagram tattoos on her hands.

MICHAEL If she was a patient here, you'd know that better than anyone, you tell us.

Cordell looks at the photos.

CORDELL

If she was...

Cordell clears his throat.

CORDELL ...then ...her condition ...

Cordell's face reddens. He tugs his color.

Peter gives a nervous glance to Michael.

CORDELL ... her condition... ..her condition...

White foam rises over the doctor's lips. He spasms, hand twitching towards the desk.

He bolts forward, lays across the desktop, knocking objects aside.

# MICHAEL

He's seizing.

Michael and Peter both jump up as the doctor rolls over the desktop and drops to the floor beside his desk.

(CONTINUED)

The doctor shakes and spasms.

The door bursts open and Nurse Fay bursts in.

FAY Jesus H. Christ, what are you doing?

Michael leans over the doctor.

MICHAEL Doctor Cordell listen to me. We're not interested in Darcy Seward. We're dropping it. You don't need to tell us anything.

Cordell's shaking eases. The flush fades from his face.

The Nurse kneels next to the doctor, pushes Michael back.

FAY Back the hell off mister.

The Nurse takes the Doctor's pulse. Cordell blinks his eyes, focuses on the Nurse.

CORDELL What happened?

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL HALL DAY

Michael and Peter head down the hallway.

PETER Guess we won't be invited back for Christmas.

MICHAEL The gift exchange was lame anyway.

Michael stops.

PETER

What?

MICHAEL Everybody forgets about the help. They're pretty much invisible.

Down the length of the hallway ZACH, a 30ish Janitor in a blue jumpsuit mops the floor.

(CONTINUED)

Peter and Michael approach Zach, who pauses. Michael raises his badge.

MICHAEL Can we tear you away from that for a few minutes?

# ZACH

I suppose so.

EXT. NAPA STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL DAY

Zach leans against a low, brick wall. Michael hands Zach a photo of Darcy.

ZACH Oh man. That's a sad case. Sad and scary.

MICHAEL

Scary how?

Zach hands the photo back.

ZACH A lot of folks come through here. Most check themselves in, you know, having whatever crisis. They get some counseling, figure out life isn't so bad, and check themselves out. But this one...

MICHAEL

Yeah?

ZACH I've forgotten a lot of the patients, but her I remember.

INT. PADDED CELL DAY

Darcy, hair over her face, sits listless, on the floor of a padded room.

ZACH (v.o.) She was near catatonic when they brought her in. Had to be force fed. Face all burned.

Darcy slumps back to the floor and turns her head, revealing facial burns.

Peter frowns.

### PETER

Burned?

ZACH Yeah. After a while she started getting violent, attacking doctors, orderlies.

INT. PADDED CELL DAY

Darcy, fights with the Doctor, two male orderlies, Nurse Fay.

ZACH (v.o.) They doped her up pretty good.

Darcy, now in a Straight Jacket, bumps along the walls of her padded cell.

EXT. NAPA STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL DAY

ZACH

Went on for over a year. They tried different meds, electroshock, everything they could think of. And then one day...

MICHAEL

Go on.

ZACH She snapped out of it. Totally lucid.

PETER That's a good thing right.

ZACH

Oh hell no.

Darcy sits on the floor, a large pentagram drawn in blood surrounding her.

ZACH (v.o.) She sold her soul to the devil.

Close on Darcy's face as she breaks into an evil grin.

EXT. NAPA STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL DAY

ZACH

I had to clean up the room, and I know what I saw. It freaked me out.

Michael and Peter look at him, both serious.

PETER We believe you. We've seen ... strange things.

ZACH

We also had some deaths here, suicide, wrong medications given out, accidents. As soon as that woman was given a clean bill of health and left, everything went back to normal. I figure it was payment.

MICHAEL

Payment?

ZACH You don't get anything for free.

Not from the devil anyway. Really, really sad. And freaky.

MICHAEL Do you know why she cracked up?

ZACH

Got raped.

MICHAEL

Raped?

ZACH Heard it was a break in. They murdered her husband, her son, (MORE) ZACH (cont'd) raped her, and set fire to the place.

PETER

Oh God.

Zach nods.

ZACH When bad shit happens to people. It killed her. Really did.

MICHAEL She's not dead.

ZACH Inside. That woman is dead inside. Sad and scary.

INT. OCHOA CAR DAY

Michael drives, face stern, pensive.

Peter watches the road pass by.

PETER Maybe we're talking about a different woman. Tom and Shane are both alive.

MICHAEL Everything else fits.

PETER All of our victims so far, figure they're the ones who hit the Seward's house?

Michael nods.

MICHAEL And a few who just got in the way. Wrong place, wrong time.

PETER

Taylor.

MICHAEL

Taylor.

PETER What was he doing in a crack house anyway?

MICHAEL Lashing out. His Mom's got cancer. She'll probably be alright, but maybe not. Absentee father.

PETER He's a teenager. That explains eighty percent of it.

MICHAEL Doesn't excuse my part. I screwed up.

PETER He still has to make his own choices. Same with Darcy. Speaking of which, what's next?

MICHAEL Where does she hang out most afternoons?

EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

Darcy, in a print dress, watches while Shane, in regular clothes, swings at balls in the batting cage.

EXT. PARK DAY

Peter watches through binoculars from the other edge of the park. He puts his cell phone to his ear.

PETER They're just getting started.

MICHAEL (on the phone) Got it. Text me if they move.

EXT. CITY ALLEYWAY DAY

Michael walks down the alley, pauses at a wooden fence.

# EXT. SEWARD HOME DAY

Michael comes over the wooden fence, crosses the backyard to the back door.

He puts an electric pick gun into the lock, slides a manual pick alongside, and with an electric BUZZ, quickly opens the back door.

INT. SEWARD KITCHEN DAY

Michael enters, closes the door behind him.

Michael glances around, begins searching.

He checks cupboards, under the sink. He opens the pantry, checks behind boxes.

He looks over the knife block, but every spot is full.

INT. SEWARD LIVING ROOM DAY

Michael searches the front room. Checks under the sofa, looks behind photos.

# INT. SEWARD BEDROOM DAY

Michael searches the master bedroom, pulls out the dresser drawers, checks beneath the bed.

EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

Shane swings, hits a couple, misses a couple.

Darcy smiles.

DARCY Come on Tiger, out of the park. Eye on the ball.

#### SHANE

Mom.

A missed pitch sails by. Shane plants his feet, grips the bat firmly.

EXT. PARK DAY

Peter keeps watch.

#### PETER

Come on.

INT. SHANE'S BEDROOM DAY

Michael enters, goes to the bed and searches under it. He pulls out the dresser drawers, rifles through the contents.

Michael opens the closet, moves and searches through the hanging clothes.

He gets down on his knees, searches through various shoes, baseball gear, and toys.

EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

Darcy gives a happy little skip, claps her hands.

DARCY That's it baby. Keep your shoulders back.

Shane looks from Darcy back towards the incoming ball.

He hits the next one with a solid CRACK.

INT. SHANE'S BEDROOM DAY

Michael pulls a folded quilt down from a closet shelf. A cardboard shoebox tumbles down, and Michael catches it.

Michael takes the lid off the box, inspects the contents; marbles, jacks, pencils, and a small pair of baby shoes.

Michael looks closer. Something is sticking out of one shoe.

He pulls the object loose, holds it up.

It's a wax figurine with human hair tied around the waist.

MICHAEL That looks like something.

He drops the box and leaves the room.

# INT. SEWARD BEDROOM DAY

Michael enters, goes to the closet and begins shaking out the masculine shoes. When he gets to a pair of tattered, old tennis shoes the wax figurine tumbles out.

> MICHAEL And there you are.

EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

Shane swings, misses.

Darcy gives a sympathetic frown.

DARCY Next one tiger. Focus.

EXT. PARK DAY

Peter checks his cell, no messages.

He looks through the binoculars.

INT. SEWARD KITCHEN DAY

Michael walks in, the two wax figurines in the palm of his hand. He stares at them, his face stern, eyes hard.

He opens an upper cupboard, takes down a saucer.

Michael opens the microwave, places the saucer with the wax figurines inside, and closes the door.

He sets the microwave for thirty seconds and hits the start button.

The microwave begins buzzing, the turntable revolves.

EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

Shane relaxes, lowers the bat.

A ball sails by.

# DARCY What is it baby?

Shane looks at her, puzzled.

### SHANE

Mom?

He shakes his head, drops the bat.

INT. SEWARD KITCHEN DAY

The wax figurines droop, begin to puddle. The hair smolders, bursts into flame.

EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

Shane staggers forward, and a fast moving pitch PLOWS into his Head. Shane drops.

Darcy screams.

#### DARCY

SHANE!

EXT. PARK DAY

Peter lowers the binoculars, RUNS towards the batting cages.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING MEN'S ROOM DAY

A row of fluorescent lit sinks and mirrors, the stalls, doors closed, on the other side.

Tom, Darcy's husband, bangs against the side of one stall, in obvious distress.

Pants and shirt droop over the man's shoes in the stall, then a Thick, Viscous GOO drips down over everything.

### EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

Darcy rushes into the cage, kneels next to Shane.

Shane's face droops, head SOFTENING and loosing it's shape. His arm MELTS, his foot SEPARATES.

His clothes crumble, shred to fuzz.

Darcy screams.

### DARCY

NO!

INT. OFFICE BUILDING MEN'S ROOM DAY

The clothes crumble, and the goo bubbles, sizzling as it dissolves.

INT. SEWARD KITCHEN DAY

The wax figurines are reduced to charred bits on the plate.

Michael looks into the microwave, then nods his head in satisfaction and stands up. He lifts his cell, speed dials Peter.

EXT. PARK DAY

The phone in Peter's pocket rings, but he keeps sprinting -

EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

- towards the batting cage. Peter rushes in, stands over Darcy and the crumbling remains of Shane's clothes.

Darcy swings the bat and CLUBS Peter in the head.

Peter drops, lays stunned on the ground.

Darcy stands over him, still holding the bat.

DARCY I like you Peter, you were nice to Shane, nice to me. If you get in my way again, I'll kill you.

She swings the bat and knocks Peter unconscious. She stands, sneering, tosses the bat. Peter's cell keeps ringing.

Darcy pats Peter down, pulls out and activates the phone. She puts it to her ear.

> DARCY That was really stupid.

MICHAEL (on the phone) Darcy? Where's Peter? DARCY Do you know how many people I have to kill to bring my family back?

# INT. SEWARD KITCHEN DAY

Michael walks towards the back door.

MICHAEL More than the six you've already killed?

DARCY (on the phone) This doesn't accomplish anything you know? I'll just move, settle my family somewhere else and start again.

MICHAEL You don't have a family. They were murdered. They're gone.

Michael opens the back door, steps outside.

EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

Darcy gives an evil grin.

DARCY You took my family away, so I'll take yours. You'll wish you were dead.

EXT. CITY ALLEYWAY DAY

Michael trots down the alley, towards his car.

DARCY (on the phone) And then I'll kill you.

EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

Darcy drops the phone onto Peter's chest and walks away.

EXT. CITY ALLEYWAY DAY

MICHAEL Darcy! Shit.

Michael opens his car door, jumps in.

MICHAEL Peter? Pete?

PETER (on the phone) I'm fine.

MICHAEL What happened?

EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

Peter sits up, phone to his ear, blood on his temple.

PETER She clubbed me with a bat.

INT. OCHOA CAR DAY

MICHAEL Yeah, how many fingers am I holding up?

PETER (on the phone) Fuck you.

MICHAEL Do you need an ambulance?

PETER (on the phone) Probably, but that'll attract too much attention.

EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

PETER Just get over here pronto. Bring an ice pack and some Codine. MICHAEL (on the phone) Be there in ten.

Peter lays back on the ground, hand over his eyes.

PETER Thanks. Just gonna rest up a sec'.

INT. OCHOA CAR DAY

Michael steers his sedan through traffic.

MICHAEL Hold on buddy.

EXT. CITY STREETS DAY

Michael turns the car, goes over the dividing line and passes another vehicle.

EXT. BATTING CAGE DAY

Peter sits in the batting cage, leaning against the side wall, a cold pack pressed to his head.

Michael kneels beside him.

MICHAEL You gonna live?

PETER Oh yeah, soon as the church bells in my skull settle down. Darcy got away?

MICHAEL She was long gone by the time I got here.

Michael puts an arm under Peter's.

MICHAEL Come on big guy, we've got some detective work ahead of us.

PETER Sure. Can we do a marathon first? I'm up for it.

Michael hoists Peter to his feet.

MICHAEL More like a pub crawl for you buddy.

Michael releases Peter and they walk towards Michael's car.

# INT. SHABBY WORKROOM NIGHT

Darcy's face is scarred from burns, her hair ratty and disheveled.

She runs a tampon through the wringer, then sets the wringer aside, tilts the bucket.

This time, there's very little blood.

Darcy frowns.

### DARCY

Damn it.

She tosses the bucket onto the worktable, then paces around the workroom.

Darcy pounds the worktable with her fist, face red, tears streaming.

DARCY No. No. No. Bastard. You bastard. My baby. My poor baby.

She runs a hand over her cheeks, tears loose a paper towel and cleans her face.

Darcy tosses the paper towel aside. She pulls the bucket over and peers into it.

Darcy gives an evil grin.

INT. SQUAD ROOM DAY

Peter swallows a couple of pain pills, drinks from a water glass.

Michael works at his computer.

The Captain approaches. He stares at Michael and Peter.

CAPTAIN You put out a bolo on Darcy Seward? MICHAEL

Yes sir.

CAPTAIN I told you not to....

Michael taps the face of his cell phone, holds it up.

DARCY (on the phone) Do you know how many people I have to kill to bring my family back?

Michael taps the phone, stops the playback.

MICHAEL She's a former mental patient. She assaulted a police officer.

Peter raises his hand, indicating it was him.

#### MICHAEL

She threatened my family, said she was gonna kill me. I've got hard evidence.

PETER And we backed up the file in seventy bazillion places so it can't ever be deleted.

The Captain nods.

CAPTAIN Fine. It's on your heads.

PETER She'll do time for the assault if nothing else.

CAPTAIN Keep me posted. Do you want some units sent to your wife's house?

MICHAEL No, I'll send Ramona and the kids to her sister's.

CAPTAIN Fine. Make this stick. You have to come up with something solid, or there'll be hell to pay.

The Captain walks away.

### PETER Literallv.

INT. RAMONA'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM DAY

A comfortable, middle class home, soft furniture, a hint of southwest flavor. Near the back a staircase goes to the upper rooms.

Ramona, her head wrapped in a bandanna, moves through the living room. She dusts a side table with a cloth.

The front door bell RINGS.

Ramona puts the cloth in her hip pocket, opens the door.

Raul gives a meek smile.

RAUL Hey Mrs. Ochoa.

Ramona gives him a disapproving look.

RAMONA

Raul.

RAUL Could I yak at Taylor? I mean, if he can get visitors.

RAMONA Not today. Doctor said maybe next week.

RAUL

Okay.

Raul takes a step back.

RAUL I'm really sorry about that night. It's my fault. Delano and me, we just....

Ramona glares at him.

### RAMONA

And that makes everything better? Just 'cause you say sorry? You need to think boy. The world's bad enough without you walking into the lion's den. The phone rings from somewhere in the kitchen.

Ramona looks over her shoulder. When she looks back -

- Darcy walks into the doorway. She shoves Raul into the house, leaving a streak of red BLOOD on the boy's arm.

DARCY What a sweet family squabble. You must be Taylor.

RAMONA Get the hell out of my house.

Darcy touches Ramona's arm, wiping Blood over her skin.

# DARCY

Silence!

And Ramona's mouth opens and closes, but no sound comes out. The phone rings again.

> DARCY Why don't you go get your daughter, and we'll all take a ride.

Ramona pivots awkwardly, walks away, moving stiffly.

Darcy touches Raul's arm. Raul is frozen in place, eyes opened wide.

INT. SQUAD ROOM DAY

Michael holds the phone to his ear. It rings again.

MICHAEL No answer. We better get over there.

He switches off, stands and grabs his coat from the chair back.

Peter gets up and the two race out of the squad room.

INT. FACTORY FLOOR NIGHT

An open expanse with Vertical pillars, raised platforms with bits and pieces of useless machinery, Graffiti covered cinder block walls, broken bottles, and trash; the remains of an abandoned factory.

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A MAGNETIC FLOOR SWEEP lays on it's side, nails stuck to it's surface. A tattered cardboard box has broken open, nails scattered over the floor.

Ramona and Bess are unconscious, seated and tied to one of the pillars, duck tape wrapped around their wrists and mouths.

Darcy presses a button on a hanging control box -

- and a chain hoist lifts Raul, feet first, into the air. He hangs, head down, rope around his ankles, mouth and wrists wrapped in duck tape.

Darcy releases the control box, picks up a bucket and a filleting knife, walks towards Ramona.

DARCY Have you ever noticed, it's hard to make things without the right raw materials?

Ramona opens her eyes, glances around in rising panic, then makes a muffled scream.

Bess awakes, tugs at her bonds.

Darcy walks towards them, raises the knife.

DARCY I need to make a few little friends. Have a proper welcoming committee for your husband.

Darcy whirls around and points the knife at Raul.

DARCY I want to make sure he sees Taylor when he comes in. He has to feel the pain that I've felt.

Darcy walks to Ramona, kneels, and touches the point of the knife to the tape at Ramona's mouth.

DARCY

Have you ever felt the terror of hearing your only child scream? And to know, really know, there's nothing you can do about it?

Raul wakes, swaying as he struggles against his bonds. He makes muffled, angry protests.

Darcy moves to stand beside Bess.

Ramona fights, yanking and screaming against her bonds.

Darcy reaches out, and pulls the tape from Bess's mouth.

Bess screams.

# BESS

Mom!

Darcy steps back away from Bess, puts the bucket down below Raul.

### DARCY

Say goodbye to your big brother.

She grabs Raul's hair and SLITS his throat.

Blood shoots out, then settles to a trickle as Raul kicks and dies.

Bess screams harder, then turns her face away.

Ramona yanks at her bonds, making frustrated shouts.

The bucket fills with blood.

INT. RAMONA'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM DAY

Michael comes down the staircase.

MICHAEL Taylor's sleeping.

Peter emerges from the kitchen.

PETER No sign of Ramona or Bess. Maybe they're out shopping?

Michael walks towards Peter, stops in front of a liquor cabinet.

MICHAEL

Maybe.

A bottle of WHISKEY sits behind the glass door.

Michael eyes the bottle then looks at Peter.

PETER Call them again. Maybe she had her cell off. Michael takes out his cell, hits the speed dial for Ramona. He takes a step away from Peter, listens to the ring. The phone clicks as it's answered.

> DARCY (on the phone) Michael. I was waiting to hear from you.

Michael staggers, face going white. He grabs for a chair to steady himself.

MICHAEL Darcy. Where's my wife?

Peter takes a step towards Michael, his face going hard, angry.

INT. CEREMONIAL ALTAR DAY

Darcy lights the candles at the altar, a cell phone pressed to her ear.

DARCY Come to the old string and twine factory on Wilson. Come alone or your family dies.

On the altar are photo prints, wallet sized, of Ramona, Bess, Taylor, and Public Affairs shots of Michael and Peter.

INT. RAMONA'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM DAY

Michael stands, looks at Peter, then turns away.

#### MICHAEL

If you harm them you won't make it to prison. I'll kill you with my bare hands if I have to.

# DARCY

(on the phone) Bold proclamation. Tough to live up to though. Tell you what, bring Peter along. I need to teach both of you a lesson.

The phone clicks off.

MICHAEL God damn it. She took 'em.

PETER Shit. Now what?

MICHAEL We get my family back.

INT. OCHOA CAR DUSK

Michael drives, silent, brooding.

Peter loads ammo into spare clips. He checks his pistol, then holsters it.

INT. CEREMONIAL SPACE NIGHT

Darcy lays face down, her ratty hair touching the ground.

DARCY Klestos amna mi nerutesh.

In the center of the Pentagram are THREE circles of Knives, each surrounding a mixture of Blood and fluff.

DARCY Lamna icht vulsta. Lamna icht vertos.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING NIGHT

Michael's sedan pulls off the road and parks on the gravel beside Darcy's blue car. His headlights flash over a section of GLASS BLOCK on the wall of the factory building, then go out.

Michael kills the engine, then he and Peter get out.

PETER Nasty place. Lots of ambush opportunities.

MICHAEL Let's make sure we're the one's doing the ambushing.

Michael goes to the rear of the sedan and unlocks the trunk.

He frees a 12 gauge shotgun, goes to the front of Darcy's car. Michael pumps the action, and shoots a round into the grill, blowing the radiator.

# PETER She'll know we're here now.

Michael shrugs. He hands the shotgun to Peter.

MICHAEL I'll go for Ramona and Bess. You take this and watch my back.

### PETER

You got it.

The two men walk towards the chain link fence.

Michael ducks through the opening, Peter follows, sweeping left and right with the shotgun.

EXT. THE ROUGH NIGHT

High weeds and shrubs have died to a brittle brown, blocking clear views. A dirt trail worn by vagrants leads towards the factory building.

Michael draws his revolver, braces it against his flashlight, then leads with his aim as he walks.

They pass a low, broad palm tree, then come up on a corrugated metal out building.

Something CLATTERS across the roof, GROWLING.

Peter sweeps up, aiming the shotgun high, but the Thing jumps off the roof and scuttles away.

Peter and Michael both aim, trying to follow it.

Michael veers off, avoiding Peter.

MICHAEL

Damn.

They continue towards the factory, clearing the far edge of the out building.

Ahead is the skeletal remains of a water tower.

Something looks down on Michael and Peter, GROWLING quietly as it skitters over the aged wooden beams.

The two men head towards the brick factory building.

The main door is chained shut. Michael and Peter walk towards a broken, plywood covered window.

Peter readies the shotgun. Michael pulls the plywood back out of the way.

Peter takes a step forward, aims, but there's no one inside the opening.

Michael nods, and Peter moves the shotgun aside.

Michael flashes the light into the building, sweeps it left to right -

INT. POWER ROOM NIGHT

- across a rusted room with broken up transformers and insulators. Trash is piled at the base of the walls.

EXT. THE ROUGH NIGHT

Michael gets a leg through the window, shimmies inside.

Peter takes a look at the surroundings, then climbs through.

# INT. POWER ROOM NIGHT

Michael moves to the center of the room, sweeps the flashlight around.

A rusted ladder is bolted to the wall, grated catwalk overhead.

Busted ends of large pipes come up from the floor.

Peter makes it through the window. He stands.

PETER We should call for back up. Standard procedure in a hostage situation.

MICHAEL Has standard procedure worked so far? PETER Well... Other than the whole lack of evidence thing.

MICHAEL Or witnesses.

### PETER

Yep.

Peter steps towards Michael -

- and a DARK MASS hurtles through the window.

It SLAMS Peter, spinning him to the ground, claws Slashing and Stabbing.

Peter rolls, knocks the thing aside with the butt of the shotgun.

Michael fires two rounds.

The Thing screams, fluff exploding, and scuttles away into the darkness.

Michael sweeps with the light.

Something GROWLS, clattering behind equipment, moving away.

Peter stands, blood dripping from cuts on his head and back.

MICHAEL You alright?

PETER Yeah. Nasty little shit. Let's keep

moving.

Michael walks towards an open doorway, with Peter close behind.

INT. SHABBY WORKROOM NIGHT

The two men enter, walking past the worktable. Michael shines the flashlight over the trash bag of feminine items.

An old timeclock is mounted on the wall, next to a rack for punch time cards.

Another doorway leads deeper into the building, a warped door hanging by a single, upper hinge.

Michael advances, stoops to go around the hanging door.

96.

A DARK MASS Growls, then scuttles past the doorway.

Michael flinches back, then takes a breath and pushes forward into -

INT. FACTORY FLOOR NIGHT

- the open expanse of the factory floor.

Michael sweeps the flashlight around the room, lighting the raised platforms, the boarded up windows, and the rafters overhead.

Peter steps up beside Michael.

### PETER

Listen.

They hear distant CRIES for help.

Michael starts to rush forward but Peter grabs his arm, holds him back.

PETER Darcy's in here somewhere. We don't want to get your family killed.

Michael nods.

MICHAEL Okay, we take it slow.

They walk towards the far end of the factory, passing cast iron frames of old fashioned machinery.

A DARK MASS clatters to the top of one machine, SNARLING at the two men.

Peter spins with the shotgun and Fires.

The Mass blows apart, single knives flying away. The remaining mass drops to the floor.

Peter pumps another round, advances on a the wounded mass of knives and fluff.

The Mass GROWLS. Peter fires, and the Mass explodes.

Another DARK MASS scuttles across the floor between machines and SLAMS into Michael, cutting and stabbing.

It GROWLS viciously.

97.

Michael slams his upper body against a machine, pinning the mass.

He drops the flashlight, grabs the mass with his free hand and throws it into the distance.

The Thing hits the ground, scuttles away into the darkness.

Michael retrieves his light, stands, blood showing at his chest and thighs.

# MICHAEL

Come on.

The two men move down the length of the factory floor.

Above them, a Dark Mass scuttles along the rafter beam, making quiet GROWLS.

Michael kneels, sweeps with the flashlight beneath some machinery. He stands, continues advancing.

Back behind them, one of the scattered KNIVES swivels, then scrapes, handle first across the floor.

As though from a STATIC PULL, the fluff comes together and the surrounding knives all draw in. The Dark Mass reforms, and the thing stands and scuttles away.

Michael and Peter advance down the rows of raised platforms.

They emerge into an open area, and spot -

- Raul, dead and hanging from the chain hoist.

MICHAEL Oh my God.

### PETER

Careful.

Ramona makes muffled cries, tugs at her bonds.

Bess screams.

# BESS

Daddy!

Michael and Peter walk forward.

Darcy's voice sounds from somewhere behind the machinery.

DARCY You know what's sad? Until today I never killed anyone, not with my own hands.

Darcy slumps against one of the machines, hair ratty, face scarred. She raises her hands, frowns at the blood.

DARCY It's messy, disgusting. You made me kill, and I hate you for it.

Michael walks towards the pillar where Ramona is bound.

MICHAEL Hate yourself. You chose this.

Darcy grins.

DARCY Did I? I suppose so. Now, it's time for your lesson.

Darcy stands, walks out where Michael and Peter can see her. The two men aim their weapons at her.

> MICHAEL Don't move and don't come any closer. You're under arrest.

DARCY Arrest? Hmmm, NO. Kill them, kill them all.

THREE Dark Masses rush in, knives clattering as they scuttle across the concrete.

A Mass slams into Michael, knocking him to the ground. The Thing GROWLS, stabbing and slicing.

Peter fires at another Dark Mass. Misses!

The Thing LEAPS, slices at Peter's arms and face.

Peter rolls, butts the thing aside with the shotgun.

The Mass bounces over the top of a machine, scuttles away.

A Dark Mass comes from behind Ramona and STABS and Cuts at her arms and back.

Ramona screams into her gag, yanking and trying to twist away.

Michael kicks, gets his leg SLICED.

He gets to his knees, stomps down hard, PINS one of the knives to the ground.

The Dark Mass wriggles it's knife legs, shrieking.

Michael aims, FIRES, splintering a wood handle and sending a knife flying.

Michael rushes to Ramona. He grabs the Dark Mass, takes hold of one of the knives, and CUTS HER FREE!

The Thing screeches, stabbing at Michael's arm and side.

It DRIVES a chef's knife into Michael's Upper Arm.

Bess SCREAMS.

Michael shouts, turns away. He puts his revolver to the thing and FIRES.

Fluff flies and the Dark Mass shrieks and leaps away.

Peter stands, sweeps the room with the shotgun.

Darcy is gone.

Peter moves towards Ramona and Bess.

Ramona tears her hands away from the cut duct tape, pulls the tape off her mouth.

RAMONA

Michael.

MICHAEL Right here babe.

He kneels by her side, hugs her.

Blood runs down his arm and side.

The three Dark Masses circle, scuttling over the concrete.

MICHAEL (to Ramona) Get Bess out of here.

Michael stands. He takes aim and fires.

One Dark Mass is hit, shrieks and rushes forward.

It leaps, and is BLOWN AWAY by the Shotgun.

Peter pumps another round into the gun.

Michael and Peter move away from the pillars, deeper into the factory and towards -

### INT. CEREMONIAL SPACE NIGHT

- an open area in the middle of the building.

Flickering candles glow from the floor and the far wall.

Peter searches, sweeping the shotgun left and right.

Michael pivots, leading with his pistol.

A DARK MASS drops from the rafters, slams into Michael, cutting and stabbing.

Michael throws it off, aims, but ANOTHER Dark Mass hits him from behind, GROWLING and stabbing at his back and neck.

Peter butts the second Dark Mass away with the shotgun.

It hits the floor, scuttles away.

Peter fires, MISSES, blowing a chunk of concrete from the floor.

# PETER I'm almost out.

Michael nods.

MICHAEL Do you see her anywhere?

### PETER

No.

They reach the Pentagram. Three of the five candles still burn.

They walk towards the wall, to the altar with it's photos.

A Dark Mass slams into Peter, knocking him against the altar. It Slices and Stabs, GROWLING.

Peter tries to cover his head. His elbow knocks a candle to the floor.

Michael grabs the Dark Mass, flings it away.

Another Dark Mass scuttles forward. Peter grabs the CANDLE, sets the Thing on fire.

The Thing scuttles away, body Burning. Flaming bits fall away, individual knives drop loose. The Thing writhes, SCREAMING as it burns. Then it's GONE.

Michael steps towards the burning Mass, revulsion on his face.

Peter stands, and DARCY is beside him. She drives a chef's Knife into his side.

Peter gives a muffled grunt, then falls to his knees.

Darcy kneels and grabs Peter's pistol from it's holster. She aims at Michael and FIRES.

Michael spins away. Aims his revolver, but Darcy jerks back into the darkness and is gone.

Michael rushes to Peter.

PETER I'm all right.

MICHAEL You're bleeding.

PETER Go get her. End this.

Michael nods, goes after Darcy.

INT. FACTORY FLOOR NIGHT

Ramona tears at the duct tape binding Bess's wrists. She gets a corner, then tugs, and get's her free.

Bess stands, hugs Ramona. Bess lets go, then shouts.

BESS Momma look out!

Darcy punches Ramona across the jaw with the pistol.

Ramona drops.

Darcy grabs Bess, drags her along.

BESS No. Let go of me.

DARCY Shut up or you'll wind up like you're brother.

Bess screams.

INT. CEREMONIAL SPACE NIGHT

Michael hears the scream.

MICHAEL

Oh God.

He raises his pistol, rushes forward.

INT. FACTORY FLOOR NIGHT

Michael moves through the room, between the rows of machines.

He opens the cylinder of his revolver, tips out the empty shells. He pulls a speed loader from his jacket pocket, reloads, and closes the pistol.

Michael ducks behind a machine.

Ahead, Darcy drags Bess through a doorway into -

INT. STAIRWELL NIGHT

- a large space with a GLASS BLOCK wall. Service pipes run vertically against one wall, and wrought iron stairs, with cast concrete steps, fills the center.

Darcy drags Bess into the room, pulls her towards a doorway on the far side.

Michael peers around the doorway into the stairwell.

MICHAEL Darcy, give it up.

Darcy puts the muzzle of Peter's gun against Bess's head.

DARCY Throw down your gun detective. MICHAEL Ain't gonna happen.

DARCY Then I kill your daughter, and my little friends kill you.

Darcy tenses her grip on the pistol.

MICHAEL Stop. Don't Darcy.

Michael enters the stairwell, ONE HAND behind his BACK, the other holding the butt of his pistol. He kneels, places the pistol on the ground.

MICHAEL You don't have to do this. Murdering an innocent family, that makes you as bad as the people you hate.

Michael get's on his knees.

MICHAEL Please. Let the girl go. I'm right here.

Darcy takes the pistol away from Bess's head, aims towards Michael.

DARCY End of lesson.

Michael holds the KEY FOB from his sedan behind his back. He pushes the RED ALARM button.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING NIGHT

The Headlights of Michael's Sedan FLASH, the HORN sounds repeatedly.

INT. STAIRWELL NIGHT

The Glass Block wall LIGHTS up.

Darcy squints, turns towards the Alarm.

Michael grabs his pistol, and SHOOTS Darcy in the Chest.

Darcy fires a wild shot, then slumps to the ground.

Michael gets up as Bess rushes to hug him. They squeeze each other tightly.

Michael walks to Darcy, looks down on her.

Darcy coughs up a bubble of blood. Her eyes focus on Michael.

# DARCY (weakly) You still die.

Darcy's eyes go distant. She dies.

A DARK MASS clatters down the stairs and leaps at Michael, stabbing and cutting at his neck and chest.

Michael flinches back, takes several cuts across his fore arms.

Bess screams. The Dark Mass leaps for her but -

- Michael grabs one of the blades, SLICING his hand. He throws the thing to one side.

Michael clenches his wounded hand, fires with the other.

The thing is hit, fluff flying. It SNARLS and comes back at Michael and Bess.

# MICHAEL

Come on.

They run, through the doorway and back towards -

INT. CEREMONIAL SPACE NIGHT

- the glow of several candles.

Peter is on his knees, blood oozing from his side. He slowly stands.

PETER Is she dead?

MICHAEL Single round to the chest. Clean.

PETER Good. Help your partner for God's sake. Michael draws one of Peter's arms over his shoulder and hoists him up.

PETER I heard Ramona shouting. Couldn't do anything about it.

MICHAEL She'll be alright.

Something clatters behind them, moving towards the Altar.

BESS Daddy it's coming.

Michael, Peter, and Bess hobble quickly towards -

INT. FACTORY FLOOR NIGHT

- the rows of machines.

They hurry towards the pillar where Ramona and Bess had been bound. They hear SNARLING and CLACKING sounds as they get closer.

Ramona sits on a raised platform, her back against a machine. She's bleeding from multiple, light cuts.

Near her feet, one of the Dark Mass creatures writhes, several blades STUCK to the Magnetic Floor sweep.

Ramona smiles, shrugs.

The Dark Mass gives a Shriek, tries to pull away from the floor sweep.

Michael smiles.

# MICHAEL

Brilliant.

A second Dark Mass clatters to the top of a machine. It SNARLS, and leaps at Michael.

Michael releases Peter, falls away, the thing slashing and stabbing at his face.

One blade strikes Michael's throat.

Michael grabs the thing, hurls it at the Magnetic Floor Sweep.

A Blade CLACKS as it sticks to the Magnet. The Thing snarls, pulls hard, then wriggles around, pressing other blades to the magnet. Tries to pull loose, but only gets more blades stuck.

The thing GROWLS, tugs hard, then SNARLS and SHRIEKS, frustrated.

Bess supports Peter, who's face is contorted in pain.

BESS Daddy help.

Michael gets up, lifts Peter and helps him to sit next to Ramona.

Michael squats, smiles at Peter.

MICHAEL So what do you think? Call for back up?

PETER Sure. Good idea.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING NIGHT

Several police and ambulance vehicles are parked, their red and blue lights flashing on the building.

The chain link fence has been cut and pulled back, making a broad opening.

Two Paramedics wheel a gurney carrying Peter, his bare chest wrapped in surgical tape, through the opening.

Michael, his wounded hand packed with gauze and wrapped with tape, stands beside the ambulance.

Michael grins at Peter.

MICHAEL Thank you Peter. I owe you.

PETER I like A's season tickets, behind home plate.

MICHAEL Keep dreaming. I'll see you soon.

The Paramedics load Peter into the ambulance.

Michael walks to his sedan.

Ramona and Bess sit on the front fender, wrapped in blankets, cuts bandaged.

The Captain approaches, along with two Uniformed Police Officers.

CAPTAIN Forensics is documenting Ms. Seward's shrine. Seems her mental illness leaned towards obsession and murder.

MICHAEL I guess so. At first glance, she didn't seem the type.

CAPTAIN Can't always tell. Her darkness was inside.

Michael nods.

CAPTAIN Okay. Take your family home, but I'll need statements from everybody first thing tomorrow.

Michael nods.

The Captain walks away.

Barret, the uniformed police officer, walks alongside the sedan, approaches Michael.

BARRET Detective, you got a minute?

MICHAEL Sure Barret, what's up?

BARRET You got a raccoon in the trunk?

Loud SNARLS, GROWLS, and the sound of Cutting comes from the trunk of Michael's car.

MICHAEL Two actually. BARRET Seriously?

MICHAEL Yep. I was gonna drive 'em away from the city, set 'em loose.

BARRET You want me to call animal control?

MICHAEL Nah, I got this.

BARRET Okay. See you Detective.

Barret walks away.

Ramona and Bess share a secretive look, then smile at Michael.

Michael gives a huge grin.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE MORNING

Ramona waits in the car, patiently waiting.

Michael stands at the back of the car. He pops the trunk.

Loud SNARLS and GROWLS issue from the trunk.

Bess stands by the rear fender, cautiously watching.

Michael grabs the Magnetic Floor Sweep, lifts it out, pulling the two Dark Masses along.

# MICHAEL

God damn it.

The interior of the trunk is riddled with knife cuts. Slices in the carpet, scratches and dings on the bottom of the trunk lid.

The two Dark Masses struggle, SNARLING and waving their free arms, SLASHING at the air.

Michael hauls the Magnetic Floor Sweep up a low dirt hill.

At the top he and Bess look down on a huge, plywood and two by four structure, the forms for a highway overpass.

Cement is being pumped through a jointed pipe boom, and rises in the form, embedding a steel beam.

(CONTINUED)

Michael twists, and throws the Magnetic Floor Sweep into the center of the liquid cement.

The Dark Masses SCREAM and writhe, sinking into the cement. The Magnetic Floor Sweep CLANKS hard, sticking to the steel beam.

A Construction Worker steps forward, glares up at them.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER Hey! What the hell was that?

BESS It's all right. My dad's a cop.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER Is he? Well you're not getting that back.

MICHAEL Time capsule. Don't open 'til twenty fifty.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER More like twenty two fifty.

MICHAEL

That'll do.

The rising cement completely covers the Dark Masses and the Floor Sweep.

Michael and Bess return to the car.

EXT. RAMONA'S HOUSE DAY

Michael's sedan pulls up. Ramona and Bess get out, head towards the front door.

Michael follows.

The door opens and Taylor is there, face, neck, and arms showing clean bandages.

Ramona hugs him.

Michael joins the group on the porch.

Ramona looks at Michael.

RAMONA If you're tired, you can sleep here. Don't have to go back to the apartment.

TAYLOR Are you guys getting back together?

RAMONA Maybe. If Michael can quit drinking.

Michael smiles.

# MICHAEL

I already did.

Bess hugs Michael, and everybody goes inside.

The house seems tranquil, wind gently moving the leaves on the trees. All seems well.

EXT. HIGHWAY NIGHT

A Greyhound bus travels along, it's headlights lighting the way forward.

EXT. LONELY BUS STOP NIGHT

The bus pulls off the highway, swings to a side area, and squeals to a halt in front of the bus stop shelter. The doors open.

Guthry, still dirty, with dried blood on his face and arms trudges down the stairs and disembarks.

The BUS DRIVER glares at Guthry's back, shakes his head, and closes the doors.

The bus pulls away from the curb, leaves Guthry behind.

Guthry stumbles along, following the pavement towards a solitary building, a neon lit bar.

An 18 Wheel Truck and Trailer drives by behind him.

A DARK MASS scuttles along the top of the trailer, leaps off of the end.

Guthry looks around, peering nervously into the darkness.

Guthry passes several tall Cactus plants.

He turns his head at the sound of CLATTERING moving behind him.

Guthry whirls around - SCREAMS.

The DARK MASS launches itself at Guthry's face.

THE END