

THE DEAD BODY

Written by

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DRAFT 1

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DARKNESS. And then...

A white speck. Two. Then four; eight, sixteen, and so on.

It's snow, fluttering downward from this infinity of black sky toward...

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

IN SLOW MOTION: The snow falls toward the ground--the front entrance of the mansion.

Two suited MEN walk out of the house, each at one end of a stretcher with a DEAD BODY on it, covered with a sheet.

The snow falls gracefully onto the sheet as the two men wheel The Dead Body down the walkway.

It is truly a beautifully solemn sight.

The two men load The Dead Body into the back of a van.

Watching them is THE FAMILY: four women, two men, and a young boy.

And they look terrified.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: THE DEAD BODY

OVER BLACK:

Car doors SLAM shut. An engine RUMBLES to life. The gear SHIFTS, and tires move along the snowy asphalt as the van DRIVES away...

SUPER:

PART I: THE DRIVER

FADE IN:

INT. VAN - NIGHT (TRAVELING)

The two MEN sit in the van, surrounded by darkness save for the light from the dashboard.

In the driver seat is SAM GARFIELD (22), boyish with his clean-shaven face but with a hint of roughness around the edges.

OSCAR FERGUSON (30) sits in the passenger seat, sporting a handlebar mustache and his hair neatly slicked back.

An abyss of darkness occupies the back of the van with The Dead Body behind them...

The RADIO broadcasts a report of mostly static.

RADIO
 ...extreme weather conditions...
 with multiple road closures...to
 proceed with caution...

Oscar turns the radio off.

OSCAR
 Of course we'd get a call at 2:30
 in the morning out in the middle of
 nowhere during a storm.

SAM
 What were ya doin' before this
 call?

OSCAR
 Sleeping.

SAM
 Right.
 (beat)
 I was playing video games. You
 play?

OSCAR
 Nah.

Sam rolls his eyes. Beat.

SAM

That was a nice house back there,
huh?

OSCAR

Mm.

SAM

Whaddya think it takes to get
something like that?

OSCAR

Not this job, that's for sure.

SAM

Ya think that family acted kinda
weird?

OSCAR

They'd just lost a family member.
(re: Sam's driving)
Slow down.

Sam slows the van a bit.

Lingering SILENCE...

Snow blizzards into the van headlights as the road rolls on
and on, forever and ever...

SAM

Storm looks like it's getting bad.

OSCAR

Nah, this is nothin'.

SAM

Death doesn't take snow days, huh?

OSCAR

Death is also an unorganized piece
of shit. Seriously, a call this
late at night should've come with a
warning.

Sam watches a ROAD SIGN pass by.

SAM

What's the craziest thing you've
seen on this job?

OSCAR

I've seen it all. Bloated bodies.
Suicides from skyscrapers. Green
guys--

SAM

Green guys?

OSCAR

The guy was literally green from
decomposition, covered in some sort
of mold.

SAM

How long have you been working this
gig again?

OSCAR

Ten years come January.

SAM

Got any advice for a rookie like
me?

OSCAR

Don't fuck the bodies.

SAM

Alrighty then.

OSCAR

You ever seen a dead body before
this job?

SAM

No. Well, not a fresh one. To be
honest, dead bodies kinda freak me
out.

Oscar looks at Sam, perplexed. Then, he laughs. Sam laughs
too.

OSCAR

Okay, that's a story to tell. What
happened?

SAM

I was six. It was my great
granddad's funeral, and I went into
the chapel by myself to look at
him, and he talked to me.

OSCAR

Bullshit.

Sam stares, then smirks.

SAM

My uncle came out from hiding behind the casket after I screamed and ran away. Really fucked me up.

OSCAR

Gotta love family.

SAM

I've never had anything supernatural happen to me before. That would be the closest thing to it.

OSCAR

Well that wasn't actually your dead great granddad talking to you, so...

SAM

I think it'd be pretty cool to see a ghost. I'm sure this job has plenty of opportunities for that.

OSCAR

Mm.

SAM

What's the weirdest thing that's happened to you on this job?

OSCAR

I don't believe in that crap.
(re: Sam's driving)
Turn here.

Sam turns onto another road.

SAM

Okay, okay, tell me your favorite story then.

OSCAR

That one's easier. The McDonald's regular.

SAM

I'm intrigued already.

OSCAR

They found him in the parking lot a couple days after he died, most likely from an overdose. The police officer on the scene had to use his car to block the view of the people eating inside as we pulled him out of his car.

SAM

Jesus.

OSCAR

He was still stiff from rigor mortis so that was a bitch, but I distinctly remember his left eye being deflated. Not sure how that's possible, but it was.

SAM

No shit.

OSCAR

The parents love it when I tell that one at dinner parties.

Sam looks at the barbed wire fence blurring by off the side of the road. He focuses back on the snow-covered road, the blizzard getting thicker.

SAM

You'd think we'd be on the interstate already.

OSCAR

Mm.

Another ROAD SIGN passes by. It looks like the one from before, but it's just a blur. Sam notices, turns his head until he meets Oscar's stare.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

What?

SAM

Nothing.

Sam turns his gaze back to the road.

Beat.

OSCAR

You go to school?

SAM

I did, graduated, moved a while later. The industry is saturated right now, so this is just a gig until I get something serious. Thanks for letting me drive, by the way.

OSCAR

Yeah.

SAM

I wasn't the best student. Guess I probably shouldn't admit that, but I made it through, at least the second half when I got accepted into the program. First half was a blur.

OSCAR

Let me guess, parties?

SAM

Yeah.

OSCAR

You know what they say: C's get degrees.

The same ROAD SIGN zips by. Sam watches it pass, perplexed.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

I never went to school. Just picked this job up after my dad.

SAM

You sure we're headed in the right direction?

OSCAR

If I had signal on my phone, I'd tell ya.

Sam looks at Oscar, hopeless.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

It's a joke. Yes, just keep going.

SAM

I feel like we're going in circles.

OSCAR

Well, wake me up when you get us back on track, navigator.

Oscar cozies up against the passenger window, ready to sleep.

SAM

Hold up, I have no clue where we are.

OSCAR

You're the one who wanted to drive.

SAM

Yeah, to learn the roads better, not when we're about to become the next Donner party.

Oscar YAWNS.

OSCAR

Don't be so dramatic. Just stay on this road until you hit the interstate.

Oscar gets comfy, closes his eyes.

Sam looks at him uncomfortably, then resumes to the road.

The snow thickens in the headlights. The storm's getting pretty bad out there...

It's quiet in the van. Sam tries the radio (even the clock reads 00:00 but Sam doesn't notice), gets nothing but static.

He SIGHS, looks at Oscar, who appears to be asleep already.

Then, he looks back behind him where The Dead Body lies, a quick glance. It's pitch black back there.

Sam looks back in front of him, uneasy. He gulps, looks over at Oscar again.

SAM

You know where I moved from?

He waits for a response from Oscar, which he knows won't come.

SAM (CONT'D)

Austin. Born and raised. Great music, great food, great entertainment. Definitely a college city, I realized that, with UT and all. That's where I went, by the way. Had some good times there.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

The only thing missing was the cold weather and the mountains, hence why I'm here now. Funny, this job has helped me get to know the city more than when I ventured on my own since I moved here. Like, being a taxi cab driver for dead bodies.

He CHUCKLES at his own comment.

SAM (CONT'D)

I miss Austin though. I like it here, don't get me wrong. But I had to get out of Texas, for obvious reasons.

Beat. He looks at Oscar.

SAM (CONT'D)

And other reasons. I left a lot behind, but it was time for the bird to fly the coop, ya know? Got away from family, dropped friends I didn't need anymore, just start with a clean slate. A fresh start.

Sam's breath starts to become visible. He shivers, turns on the heater.

The same ROAD SIGN passes again. Sam watches it blur by.

He looks at the sleeping Oscar.

SAM (CONT'D)

Dude, wake up. We're going in fucking circles.

Oscar doesn't stir. Sam slaps his arm. He remains asleep.

Sam shivers again, CURSES under his breath as he turns the heat up.

Deep, heavy BREATHING fades in.

Sam looks over at Oscar, who breathes as he sleeps peacefully.

The ROAD SIGN passes by again.

SAM (CONT'D)

What the fuck...?

He pulls his phone out, but has no service.

SAM (CONT'D)

Shit.

OSCAR

You...can't...run...

Sam looks over at Oscar.

SAM

What?

The BREATHING gets LOUDER. Oscar remains still. Perplexed, Sam resumes to the road.

OSCAR

Say...it...

Sam looks back at Oscar.

SAM

Say what?

No answer from Oscar. The BREATHING continues. Sam takes a quick glance behind him at where the dead body lies. He looks back at Oscar.

SAM (CONT'D)

Very funny, dude.

Oscar remains asleep. Sam watches for a second, then resumes the road.

SAM (CONT'D)

That worked on 6-year-old me, but not now.

Oscar sleeps still.

Sam slaps Oscar's arm again.

SAM (CONT'D)

Dude, wake up.

THE DEAD BODY

(gruff)

NO.

Oscar's mouth doesn't move. Sam's face drops. He looks back at the road, confused yet afraid.

The ROAD SIGN passes by--

SAM

What the fuck is going on?!

He looks at sleeping Oscar--

THE DEAD BODY
There's no escape...

SAM
Who the fuck...?!

Sam attempts the brake pedal, but the van moves as if it has a mind of its own.

SAM (CONT'D)
Shit...the hell?!

THE DEAD BODY
Say it...

Sam looks up at the rear view mirror. Darkness engulfs the reflection.

THE DEAD BODY (CONT'D)
Don't look...

SAM
What?

Sam begins to look over his shoulder--

THE DEAD BODY
DON'T LOOK!

Sam snaps his gaze to in front of him.

SAM
Okay! Okay...

The heavy BREATHING fills the inside of the van.

SAM (CONT'D)
What's going on?

THE DEAD BODY
Say it...

SAM
Say what?! I don't know what you want!

THE DEAD BODY
You know...

SAM
No, I don't! Fuck me...

He looks over at Oscar, shakes him.

SAM (CONT'D)
Man, wake up! Fuckin' wake up,
please!

Oscar is dead asleep.

SAM (CONT'D)
Is this really happening?

THE DEAD BODY
Yes...

Tears well up in Sam's eyes.

SAM
(to the dead body)
Who are you?

No response.

SAM (CONT'D)
What do you want?

THE DEAD BODY
Say it...

SAM
What?! Say fucking what?

No response.

Sam struggles to think.

SAM (CONT'D)
Uh...okay...my name is Sam
Garfield. I'm twenty-two years old,
and I moved here from Austin--

THE DEAD BODY
NO!

SAM
Then what?! I don't...I don't know,
I need some sorta hint or
somethin'!

Sam BREATHES heavily. He BURPS, covers his mouth.

SAM (CONT'D)
God damn it, I'm so close to
vomiting right now.

THE DEAD BODY
October 26th, 2019.

SAM
What about it?

THE DEAD BODY
Say it...

Sam is now beginning to get frustrated.

SAM
Say what?!

THE DEAD BODY
YOU KNOW!

SAM
I don't! I...I...I was in college?
I was 18, about to turn 19. I was a
student, and worked at some crappy
hotel. That's it.

No response. Sam calms down slightly, wonders about the
silent response when--

THE DEAD BODY
There's more...

Sam thinks. Hard.

THE DEAD BODY (CONT'D)
Tell me...

SAM
I'm thinking!

Sam continues to think, BREATHES heavily. The same ROAD SIGN
passes by again.

SAM (CONT'D)
Are you doing this?

THE DEAD BODY
Say it...

SAM
I don't know...I...I need something
else. A name, a day, a place,
anything!

Beat. Sam sweats.

THE DEAD BODY
 Jamie...Peters...

SAM
 Who's that?

THE DEAD BODY
 You know...

SAM
 No. I don't.

THE DEAD BODY
 Yesssss...

Sam thinks. A moment passes by. He thinks harder...
 ...and STIFFENS up.

SAM
 What about her--?

THE DEAD BODY
 Say her name.

SAM
 Shit...what about Jamie Peters?

THE DEAD BODY
 ...Say it...

He GULPS.

SAM
 Okay, now I'm really going to
 vomit...

THE DEAD BODY
 Tell me...

SAM
 No...

Silence...

THE DEAD BODY
 Tell me.

Sam sweats even more.

SAM
 No.

THE DEAD BODY
TELL ME!

SAM
Why!?

THE DEAD BODY
You must...

SAM
This is fucked up--

THE DEAD BODY
SAY IT!

SAM
Alright! Alright!

Sam, shaky breathing that is still visible, hands gripped tight around the steering wheel, stares at the blizzard before the van.

SAM (CONT'D)
It was October 26th, 2019. A Friday night, I think. Maybe Saturday. Fuck, whatever. There was a party happening. A Halloween party. I don't know whose house it was, someone just invited me to go along. There was booze, of course, and I got pretty fucked up, and...and...I can't remember--

THE DEAD BODY
LIES.

SAM
I can't! I blacked out!

THE DEAD BODY
You know.

Tears well in Sam's eyes. He GULPS.

SAM
Why are you doing this to me?

The dead body remains quiet. Sam waits for a response he's not sure he'll get. He blinks his tears away, SNIFFS.

SAM (CONT'D)
Okay, okay...I remember seeing Jamie Peters.
(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

We sat next to each other in our psychology classes but didn't really talk except to shoot the shit. Fuck, anyway, she was dressed as Cat Woman. She and I kept making eye contact but we never talked. Later that night, I saw her on the couch, having a good time. Maybe too good of a time, spilling her drink and shit...I saw her stand and walk away...So I followed her. She stumbled up the stairs and tried the hallway bathroom but it was locked. She went into one of the bedrooms and used the bathroom in there...I remember peeking into the bedroom at one point and seeing her passed out on the bed. And that's it, I swear. I don't remember anything else.

THE DEAD BODY

Yes you do.

SAM

No, I don't.

THE DEAD BODY

You do.

SAM

I don't, I swear to God--

THE DEAD BODY

HE IS NOT HERE!

The steering wheel jerks by itself, swerves the van across the road. Sam throws his hands up in the air as the van CONTROLS ITSELF. He SCREAMS.

The van corrects itself, continues forward in the blizzard.

SAM

Shit! I'm sorry!

Sam is on the verge of tears.

SAM (CONT'D)

I don't know anything else! Please!
Don't do this to me...

Silence. It lasts a moment. And it's telling.

A train horn HONKS (O.S.). Sam looks over and sees a TRAIN in the distance, headlight glaring.

SAM (CONT'D)

Fuck...Okay...I...I walked into the bedroom...and I...I...

THE DEAD BODY

Say it...

SAM

I can't...

THE DEAD BODY

Say it...

SAM

Why are you doing this me?

THE DEAD BODY

Say it.

SAM

Who are you?

THE DEAD BODY

SAY IT!!!

The van suddenly SPEEDS FASTER by itself. Sam braces himself in fear.

In the distance is a railroad crossing, crossing signals down, lights flashing, alarms DINGING.

Sam's eyes grow wide. He looks over to the side of the road, sees the oncoming train.

He looks back at the crossing signals. The van isn't going to stop.

Sam SCREAMS.

The train SPEEDS CLOSER. He's not going to make it.

THE DEAD BODY (CONT'D)

SAY IT!!!

SAM

OKAY! I RAPED HER! I FUCKING RAPED HER!

The van SWERVES around the crossing signals, narrowly dodging the oncoming freight train.

Sam CRIES, from fear, from guilt.

SAM (CONT'D)
I fucking raped her...

He continues to SOB.

SAM (CONT'D)
I...I was drunk...

THE DEAD BODY
That is no excuse.

SAM
I wasn't thinking clearly!

THE DEAD BODY
You knew what you were doing.

SAM
Why is this happening?

THE DEAD BODY
Jamie Peters thought the same
thing.

SAM
Fuck!

The dead body begins to LAUGH.

Sam stops crying, looks in the rear view mirror at the darkness that engulfs the reflection.

THE DEAD BODY
Look behind you...

Sam's eyes grow wide. He GULPS.

He begins to slowly turn his head to look over his shoulder and into the darkness behind him--

AN EIGHTEEN WHEELER HONKS!

Sam SCREAMS, twists the steering wheel--

Oscar JOLTS awake, SCREAMS.

Sam attempts to regain control as the van SWERVES onto the INTERSTATE.

The eighteen wheeler ZOOMS past the van as it lays down the HORN.

Sam finally gains control of the van, steadies the vehicle into a lane.

OSCAR
What the fuck, man!?

SAM
What do you mean what the fuck!?
What the actual fuck!?

OSCAR
You nearly got us killed!

SAM
How the fuck did you sleep through
all that!?

OSCAR
All of what?

SAM
I shit you not, dude, the body
talked to me! I had a fucking
conversation with the guy!

OSCAR
What the hell are you talking
about?

Oscar stares at Sam, perplexed.

SAM
Man, I swear to...I mean...

OSCAR
Be honest with me...Are you high?

Sam just stares. He doesn't know what else to say.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Maybe I should drive...

Sam remains quiet. He stares at the blizzard in the headlights that shine along the rolling interstate.

Oscar stares at Sam a moment longer before he looks in front of him, weirded out.

SAM
(in a trance)
He talked to me...

The van continues down the interstate.

EXT. MORTUARY - NIGHT

The snow continues to fall outside of the old, brick building.

The van pulls up to the building, circles around the back.

INT. MORTUARY - FREEZER - NIGHT

The freezer door opens, and only Oscar rolls the dead body inside on a metal table.

He leaves the freezer, shuts the door.

CUT TO BLACK.

SUPER:

PART II: THE MORTICIAN

INT. MORTUARY - FREEZER - THE NEXT EVENING

The freezer door opens, revealing DEREK HALL (32), a handsome man with a soft face, dressed in a suit.

He rolls a metal table with a bagged body on top into the freezer and places it next to The Dead Body. He walks out of the freezer, shuts the door.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

FAITH OLSON (31) opens her locker.

She looks in the mirror hanging on the inside of the locker door, ties her brown hair up in a bun, allowing her resting bitch face to show.

She stares into her reflection's eyes for a moment.

She SHUTS the locker door.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Derek turns to see Faith walk down the hallway toward him in her embalming attire.

DEREK

Man, I love a woman in uniform.

Faith rolls her eyes, holds her hand out.

DEREK (CONT'D)

(re: her hand)

Want me to kiss it?

Faith smiles. Derek returns the smile, hands her a couple of forms.

She walks over to a counter and begins to sign the forms.

FAITH

Christine Smith. That name rings a bell.

DEREK

Sounds like a generic name to me.

FAITH
What's her story?

DEREK
Suicide. She hung herself.

FAITH
Hanged, Derek. You, of all people,
should know that.

DEREK
I don't think she cares anymore.

FAITH
How's your evening going?

DEREK
Better than hers, but still pretty
shitty. Today was supposed to be my
day off, but we're down a driver.
So there's that.

FAITH
What happened?

DEREK
Apparently he got spooked on a
call, nearly crashed the van with
his partner in the passenger seat.
Ended up quitting on the spot.

FAITH
What scared him?

Derek shrugs.

DEREK
Then I get this call. The girl's
real young. Depressing.

Faith hands the forms back to Derek.

FAITH
Death is always depressing.

DEREK
Why do you work with death?

FAITH
Job security.

Derek smirks. Faith puts on some rubber gloves, finishes
preparing.

DEREK

You the only one here?

FAITH

Yeah. Skeleton crew. Bob was supposed to come in this morning, but he called out. Luckily we're not in a rush.

DEREK

You ever have anything weird happen here?

FAITH

Besides whenever you come in?

DEREK

C'mon, you've had to have felt, I dunno, a presence or whatever at least once when you were working on a body.

FAITH

No. Have you?

DEREK

Well...no. But doesn't it get creepy when you're here by yourself?

Faith studies Derek, smirks.

FAITH

You're afraid, aren't you?

DEREK

I'm just sayin', opening a freezer door here at 3 AM and seeing it full of bodies just kinda creeps me out.

Faith studies Derek for a second longer, then opens the freezer to pull The Dead Body out.

FAITH

If I've learned anything from the dead since I'd started working in this industry, it's that there's nothing to be scared of. Have you ever looked in a dead body's eyes? There's nothing there. It's like they're looking right through you. Or not at all. Humans are just bags of meat.

DEREK

I'll bet whoever named you Faith feels silly.

FAITH

Do I believe in that religious bullshit? No. But it's not like I believe that the body is gonna sit up and ask me about the weather. Bodies are just that: bodies.

She shuts the freezer door.

FAITH (CONT'D)

Music also helps.

DEREK

Yeah? What kind of music do you like?

Faith rolls her eyes, wheels The Dead Body down the hallway. Derek follows.

DEREK (CONT'D)

Do you like live music?

FAITH

If I say yes?

DEREK

My buddy's playing at Bar Five downtown tomorrow night.

FAITH

Is he good?

DEREK

Maybe after a few drinks.

FAITH

And if I say no?

DEREK

I'll ask again after a few drinks.

Faith smiles. She stops at a doorway before turning to Derek.

FAITH

You can't be in here.

DEREK

So what do ya say?

FAITH
I say, let me do my job.

DEREK
I say, seven o' clock? I'll pick
you up.

Derek's phone BEEPS. He pulls it out.

DEREK (CONT'D)
Shit.

FAITH
Another call?

DEREK
Yeah.

FAITH
Saved by the text.

Derek looks at Faith, "Really?" before he backs away from her.

DEREK
I'll see you tomorrow.

FAITH
I never said yes.

DEREK
You just did.

Derek smiles, turns and walks away. Faith watches with a smirk before she turns and walks into the room with The Dead Body.

INT. EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT

Faith places The Dead Body beneath a hanging light fixture that shines brightly.

She pulls the sheet off, reveals The Dead Body's face. It's a very thin MAN (50s). He looks sickly. Terminally ill. Cancerous.

Faith stares at the man, studies him. Somewhere, a clock TICKS. She SIGHS.

LOUD KNOCKING comes from outside the room, at a door. Faith walks out of the embalming room.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The KNOCKING continues as Faith walks up to an EXIT. She opens the door.

FAITH

Did you forget some...

There's nobody at the door.

Faith looks around, but doesn't see anyone. Cautious, she slips back into the hallway and shuts the door.

Faith walks down the hallway toward the embalming room when she notices the freezer door cracked open.

Across the hallway from the freezer is a closet.

She walks to the freezer door, grabs the handle to shut it, but stops. She looks inside, at the only other dead body in there, in a body bag.

She stares at it for a moment before she shuts the door.

INT. EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT**BEGIN MONTAGE**

- Faith massages The Dead Body's arms and legs.
- She cleans the skin of The Dead Body.
- She shaves his face.
- She sticks eye caps on The Dead Body's eyeballs before pulling the eyelids shut.
- Faith works on the delicate process of sewing the jaw shut.
- She sticks a metal rod into The Dead Body. A tube attached to the rod loops to a machine, in which Faith turns on. It begins to pump formaldehyde through one tube.
- Blood oozes through another tube as the machine pumps it out of The Dead Body.
- A scalpel slices into the skin, makes a small incision.
- Faith slides a trocar into the incision.
- She applies makeup to The Dead Body's face. Over time, he begins to look more and more alive.

- She fits The Dead Body into a suit, the back of it cut open to easily slide it on him.

END MONTAGE

Faith applies the finishing touches on The Dead Body. It's very quiet, except for the TICK of that clock--

Faith spins around with a GASP. She grabs her shoulder, as if she's been touched.

There's nobody else in the room.

She reluctantly returns to The Dead Body.

INT. ANOTHER ROOM - NIGHT

Faith wheels The Dead Body into another room, next to a casket.

HOLD ON: The Dead Body, as Faith walks away and out of the room. She turns the lights off, then slowly shuts the door.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Faith sits at a desk, at a computer.

She looks at some paperwork, types on her keyboard.

She looks up from the computer, through her office door. She has a clear view of down the hallway and at the freezer door.

She stares for a moment, then resumes her work.

A few loud POUNDS suddenly RING through the air before stopping.

Faith looks up again, startled.

It's silent.

 FAITH
 (unsure)
 Hello?

No answer.

Faith wearily returns to her work before the POUNDING resumes. She stands when the POUNDING suddenly stops.

Faith moves around her desk, walks toward the doorway.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Faith walks down the hallway toward the freezer door.

Something on the other side of the door presses up against it, SLIDES down the metal. Something ALIVE.

Faith, still unsure, stands and stares before--

FAITH

Screw it.

She rushes to the freezer door, opens it--

Nothing, but the bagged body still on the metal table.

Faith SIGHS in relief, then LAUGHS at herself.

FAITH (CONT'D)

Seriously, Faith? C'mon...

Faith looks at the bagged body.

INT. FREEZER - NIGHT

Faith walks into the freezer and up to the body.

She slowly unzips the bag, its ZIP grinding and painful.

She pulls the bag apart to reveal the body.

A quiet moment passes before she GASPS, backs away with her mouth covered.

FAITH

Oh my God...

She turns away, but looks back at the body once more to make sure she isn't going crazy.

She SCRAMBLES out of the freezer, shuts the door.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Faith paces back and forth in the hallway. She holds her cell phone up to her ear as the other end RINGS.

DEREK (V.O.)

Hello?

FAITH

Hey! Hey...Um, I, uh...need to ask you about that body you brought in earlier. The girl?

DEREK (V.O.)

Yeah, what about her?

FAITH

Remember when I said her name rang a bell?

DEREK (V.O.)

Yeah. You know her?

FAITH

No. I mean, I do, but...

DEREK (V.O.)

Is she a friend's daughter?

FAITH

Do you remember the name of the neighborhood where you picked her up from?

DEREK (V.O.)

Shoot...Um, not really--

FAITH

Did you pick her up from Rolling Oaks?

DEREK (V.O.)

Oh, yeah! That is where I--

FAITH

Holy shit.

DEREK (V.O.)

What's wrong?

FAITH

Holy fucking shit.

DEREK (V.O.)

What? What is it?

FAITH

I don't know...I...I know this girl.

DEREK (V.O.)

How?

FAITH
Because I went to school with her.

Beat.

DEREK (V.O.)
She's thirteen, Faith.

FAITH
I fucking know that! I don't know
what's going on!

DEREK (V.O.)
Calm down. I don't understand, what
makes you think you know her?

FAITH
Because she's the fucking spitting
image of someone who I went to
school with!

DEREK (V.O.)
But as a thirteen-year-old?

FAITH
Yes! I mean, no--I mean...

DEREK (V.O.)
You're not making any sense.

FAITH
Hold on.

Faith rushes down the hallway to the office.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Faith walks inside and sits down at her computer. She pulls up the Internet, types in the name **CHRISTINE SMITH SUICIDE COLORADO**.

Multiple links pop up; she clicks on one, an online news article. It features a photo of CHRISTINE SMITH (13), a sweet, angelic teenage girl.

Faith's jaw drops, allowing her shaky breath to become audible.

DEREK (V.O.)
You there?

FAITH
It is her...

DEREK (V.O.)

Who?

FAITH

A girl, from my middle school. She lived in my neighborhood, in a cul-de-sac.

DEREK (V.O.)

The house we picked her up from was in a cul-de-sac...

FAITH

She committed suicide in seventh grade by hanging herself in a closet.

DEREK (V.O.)

That's where we found her body.

FAITH

I remember everyone thought she ran away or something because she didn't show up at school one day, and her parents didn't even know where she was. She'd been in her basement, in a closet for a couple days because they didn't bother to check inside there when they couldn't find her.

DEREK (V.O.)

Jesus.

FAITH

This isn't happening.

DEREK (V.O.)

Are you sure she doesn't just look like her?

FAITH

It's her, Derek!

DEREK (V.O.)

How is that possible?

FAITH

I don't know!

A loud metallic BANG from outside the office gets Faith's attention. She stares out the door and down the hallway.

FAITH (CONT'D)
What was that?

DEREK (V.O.)
What was what?

FAITH
Hold on...

Faith cautiously walks to the office doorway.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Faith peeks out of the doorway and down the hallway. Nothing in sight except for the long stretch of hallway and the closed freezer door.

DEREK (V.O.)
Everything okay?

FAITH
Yeah, just a sec...

She walks down the hallway toward the freezer door. She opens it slowly and looks inside--

CHRISTINE'S BODY IS GONE.

Faith backs away, reveals a FIGURE down the hall--

The lights suddenly SHUT OFF.

Faith GASPS.

She holds her phone up to her ear.

FAITH (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Derek? Derek, are you there?

No answer from Derek on the other end.

Faith fumbles with her phone, turns on the flashlight app.

She points the beam of white light in front of her, immediately looks in all directions.

She moves down the hallway, turns a corner to the nearest EXIT.

She grabs the handle, but the door doesn't budge.

She tries again, locked solid. She spins around and presses up against the door. The flashlight shines into the abyss before her.

She rushes down the hallway, turns another corner and walks down another hall toward a second EXIT--

No luck. That door is sealed shut too. She turns around, CURSES to herself.

She holds her phone in front of her, shines the flashlight in this pitch blackness. She reaches a corner, begins to turn.

The FIGURE stands at the end of the long hallway, barely illuminated by the light. But something's off about the figure. Its head hangs limp to the side.

It FLOATS quick toward Faith, flying into the beam of light, revealing a quick flash of horrific features!

Faith SCREAMS, turns and runs.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Faith scrambles into the office and SLAMS the door shut.

She cowers into the furthest corner of the room, HYPERVENTILATES as she shines the flashlight on the door.

BANG! Something RAMS into the door from the other side.

Faith JUMPS.

BANG! Another loud SMASH into the door.

Faith HYPERVENTILATES even more. The BANGING into the door continues.

She scrambles onto the floor and crawls beneath the office desk.

BANG!

Faith tries to calm her breathing.

BANG!

She fumbles with her phone, turns the flashlight app off.

SMASH!

The office door CRASHES open.

Faith covers her mouth.

The body of Christine Smith FLOATS into the office, but stops shortly past the doorway.

Her body slowly lowers to the ground where her pale, blood-pooled feet gently rest.

Christine BREATHES raspy. A windpipe, destroyed.

CHRISTINE SMITH

Faith...

Faith, mouth still covered, opens her eyes wide in complete FEAR.

Christine DRAGS one foot forward, then the other as she sluggishly walks into the office.

CHRISTINE SMITH (CONT'D)

I'm back, Faith...I've been waiting
a long time for you...

Her RASPY BREATHING continues as she walks through the office toward the desk.

CHRISTINE SMITH (CONT'D)

Lost and wandering in Hell, forever
and ever...

Faith realizes she's getting closer, silently crawls out from beneath the desk.

CHRISTINE SMITH (CONT'D)

The pain...the suffering...

Christine's body slowly walks around the desk while Faith makes her way toward the office doorway.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Faith sprints down the hallway, phone in front of her, flashlight shining before her.

She runs to one of the EXITS, tries with all her might to open the door, but with no luck.

CHRISTINE SMITH (O.S.)

(sotto)

Faith...

Faith spins around to see darkness before her.

FAITH

The fuck...the fuck you want!?

She stares into the darkness before she continues forward back down the hallway.

She reaches a corner, slowly peeks around with the flashlight.

There's nothing down the hallway.

She walks around the corner and starts her way down the hallway, not even sure what she's doing.

CHRISTINE'S BODY WALKS OUT OF THE OFFICE!

Faith covers her flashlight, spins around and runs into--

INT. EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT

The light above the embalming table shines down on it, as well as a small table of embalming tools, including a scalpel.

Faith runs to the back of the room, hides behind a large cabinet. She presses up against it, makes the cabinet door slowly open.

She calms her BREATHING, hushes herself when--

Christine sluggishly walks into the embalming room.

She walks over to the table of tools. Her dead hand grabs the scalpel.

HOLD ON: Faith, as she continues to hide, keeps herself hushed. The only sound in the room is the raspy BREATHING from Christine Smith.

It seems to last a moment--

Christine suddenly SLAMS the cabinet door shut! Faith JUMPS, but remains quiet.

Christine stands for a moment, BREATHES RASPY BREATHS, before she slowly turns and walks back toward the embalming room entrance, leaves.

Faith lets out a shaky breath. She peeks around the cabinet, sees Christine gone. She steps out from behind the cabinet, slowly makes her way toward the entrance of the room.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Faith peeks out of the room, shines her flashlight down both ways of the hallway. Christine is nowhere to be seen.

CHRISTINE SMITH (O.S.)
(sotto)
Faith...

Faith lets out another shaky BREATH, prepares herself before she suddenly SPRINTS down the hall and into the--

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Faith runs inside. She thinks, then climbs into a locker, closes the door.

Faith attempts to calm her breathing, turns the flashlight off, when...

Christine sluggishly walks into the locker room.

CHRISTINE SMITH
(sotto)
I know you're in here...come out,
come out, wherever you are...

Christine walks along the row of lockers, dragging the scalpel along the metal doors. It produces a teeth-grinding SCREECH.

She begins to open the locker doors, at random.

CHRISTINE SMITH (CONT'D)
You can't hide forever...

She opens another locker, but it's empty.

CHRISTINE SMITH (CONT'D)
I've got all night...

Faith covers her mouth to silence her BREATHING.

Christine opens yet another locker door, revealing nothing.

She walks in front of another locker.

Inside, Faith remains as still as a statue, as quiet as a mouse.

Christine, RASPY BREATHING, stares at the locker Faith's inside, takes a step closer.

She DRAGS the scalpel down the locker door, BREATHES HEAVY.

Faith's eyes are squeezed shut so tight, tears fall out.

Christine presses her hand on the locker door...

...before she takes it off and continues moving onward.

Faith uncovers her mouth, opens her eyes, silently releases her held breath in relief.

BRIIIINNNGGG! Her phone RINGS!

It's Derek.

Faith quickly SILENCES the phone, but it's too late--

Christine slowly turns around.

CHRISTINE SMITH (CONT'D)

Found you.

Faith closes her eyes, prepares herself.

Christine's shadowy form grows closer.

Faith holds her breath and--

The locker door opens! Faith SCREAMS, throws hands.

She CRACKS Derek in the face.

DEREK

Ow, fuck!

Faith calms down, realizes it's Derek; realizes the lights are back on, everything's back to normal.

DEREK (CONT'D)

What the hell! What are you doing in there?

Faith hugs Derek, who holds her tightly.

DEREK (CONT'D)

Is everything okay?

FAITH

Jesus, I don't know what's going on, but I need to leave. Now.

DEREK

Okay, okay, calm down...what happened?

FAITH
I'll tell you in your van, can we
please just go?

Faith moves to leave, but Derek stops her.

DEREK
Wait, grab your stuff.

FAITH
No, please, I want to leave. Now.

DEREK
What happened? What's wrong?

FAITH
I need to get out of here.

Derek studies her, then smirks.

DEREK
You're afraid.

Faith stares at him, dumbfounded at his poorly-timed comment.

FAITH
I want to go.

DEREK
Okay...Grab your things. C'mon.

Faith grabs her purse and jacket from her locker. They leave the room.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Faith and Derek walk down the hallway.

FAITH
How'd you get inside?

DEREK
Through the door?

He stops her.

DEREK (CONT'D)
You alright?

FAITH
I...I'm just happy you're here.

Derek smiles. Faith now notices his eyebrow is bleeding.

FAITH (CONT'D)
You're bleeding.

DEREK
Shit...I guess you don't know your
own strength.

Faith smiles. She looks down the hallway at the freezer door,
which is closed. She SIGHS, unsure. Finally--

FAITH
Go in my office. I'll clean that up
for you.

Derek turns for the office, while Faith looks back down the
hallway toward the freezer door.

She begins to approach toward the freezer, painfully slow.
She reaches the freezer door.

Across the hallway from the freezer is that closet. Next to
the closet door is a first aid station on the wall.

Faith opens the freezer door, looks inside.

Christine's body is bagged up inside.

Faith SIGHS in relief, shuts the freezer door. She opens the
first aid station door, grabs a kit.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Derek sits on the office desk. Faith walks in with a first
aid kit and stands in front of him. She begins to clean and
tend to his wound.

DEREK
I wasn't expecting to play doctor
tonight.

Faith remains quiet.

DEREK (CONT'D)
What were you doing in the locker?

Faith is reluctant to speak.

FAITH
You'll think I'm crazy if I told
you.

DEREK
You were hiding in a locker. I
already think you're crazy.

Faith stops cleaning the wound for a moment, looks at Derek.

FAITH
I'm just distracted. Christine
Smith.

DEREK
What about her?

FAITH
I don't understand. It's the same
girl, Derek. It doesn't make any
sense.

DEREK
It's just a coincidence.

FAITH
Pretty fucking coincidental.

DEREK
Is that why you're freaking out?

FAITH
I'm not freaking out.

DEREK
Your hands are shaking.

Faith stares at him before she returns to the wound, places
butterfly sutures over it with shaky hands and fingers.

FAITH
When I was in seventh grade,
Christine Smith--
(points outside the door)
--that Christine Smith, committed
suicide by hanging herself in her
closet, because...

Faith stops herself, stutters.

DEREK
Because what?

FAITH
Because...

DEREK
It was your fault. Say it.

This comment catches Faith off guard.

FAITH

What?

DEREK

Don't play dumb. You know.

Beat.

FAITH

Okay, stop--

DEREK

Go on, admit it. You were a cunt in middle school, weren't ya? And that's putting it nicely.

Faith stares in disbelief at Derek.

FAITH

Derek, what the fuck--?

Derek stands, causing Faith to step back. He begins to corner her.

DEREK

A bitch. A bully. Treating others like complete trash to get your way. The fact that you made it this far in life really surprises me, to be honest.

FAITH

You know, I thought you were a decent man--

DEREK

Just like how you thought you were a decent person? No. You knew what you were doing. You knew Christine was a weak individual and that you could do whatever you wanted to her. It broke her down until she was nothing. Such a sweet, angelic girl, bullied by such a sad, pathetic excuse of a human being. So, go on. Admit that you killed Christine Smith.

Faith stares in shock. Derek smiles sinisterly.

DEREK (CONT'D)
You really think you could get
away?

The lights suddenly SHUT OFF.

Faith GASPS, pulls her phone out and turns the flashlight on.

Derek is GONE.

A male CHUCKLE (O.S.) catches her attention. She spins toward the office doorway.

DEREK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(whisper)
Come on.

She walks to the doorway, peeks out.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Faith steps out of the doorway, looks down both ends of the hallway.

DEREK (O.S.)
Come on.

Faith spins to Derek's voice. It comes from a room down the hallway.

She cautiously walks toward the room. The room with The Dead Body.

FAITH
Derek?

She walks toward the dark room. Even the flashlight is too dim to illuminate the entire room, as if darkness swallows it whole.

Inside the room is The Dead Body, still lying on the table. Next to it is Derek, standing in a wide stance.

DEREK
(distorted)
Come on...

Faith is uneasy. She backs away from the room, leaving Derek and The Dead Body in the dark.

Behind her, down the hall, one light flickers on, above the freezer door, which is OPEN.

Faith slowly turns around, notices the light. She creeps toward the freezer.

She looks inside. Christine's body is gone.

CHRISTINE SMITH (O.S.)
(sotto)
Faith...

Faith perks up, slowly turns around to...

...the closet across the hallway from the freezer door. Something's inside. Or...someone...

Faith inches toward the closet door.

The fluorescent light above her shines down on her like a spotlight.

She reaches out with a shaky hand, places it on the door handle.

She takes a deep, shaky BREATH and--

SWINGS THE DOOR OPEN!

HOLD ON: Faith, as she suddenly SCREAMS in absolute TERROR at whatever's inside the closet. She stumbles backward and into the freezer where she falls to her ass, still SCREAMING hysterically. The freezer door SHUTS AND LOCKS BY ITSELF, muffling Faith's SCREAMS that ECHO through the dark, empty mortuary.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. MORTUARY - DAY

It's an overcast morning. Quiet and still. Not a single bird chirps.

A mortuary transport van circles around back.

INT. MORTUARY - HALLWAY - DAY

Derek enters the mortuary with a body on a stretcher.

He rolls it down the hall, turns the corner, approaches the freezer.

He opens the freezer door--

FAITH'S HAND GRABS HIS ANKLE.

Derek SCREAMS.

Faith struggles on the floor at the entrance of the freezer, pale and blue, nearly frozen to death, but ALIVE.

EXT. MORTUARY - DAY

An ambulance leaves the mortuary, SIRENS blaring. Two police vehicles sit in front of the mortuary.

A hearse drives past the police cars, circles around back.

Derek stands with a police officer as the hearse drives past.

DEREK

...claimed I was here, but I've
been out on calls all night. I
haven't spoken to her since I left
here yesterday evening after
dropping a body off...

The hearse pulls up to a garage door, parks and shuts off.

The door opens, and polished black shoes step out. A cigarette falls to the ground, and one of the shoes snuffs it out.

Black slacks rise up to the suited MAN who SPEAKS on his cell phone angrily, CURSING at the receiver before hanging up.

This is ED ANDERSON (45).

SUPER:

PART III: THE DIRECTOR

INT. MORTUARY - HALLWAY - DAY

Ed enters the mortuary and walks down the hallway, turns the corner to see MORTON (60s) a mortician wheeling a casket toward him.

ED
Morton.

MORTON
Hey, Ed.

ED
What's with the ambulance and
police?

MORTON
Oh, it's just awful. One of the
transport technicians found Faith
in the freezer. She somehow managed
to lock herself inside.

ED
Christ. What happened?

Morton shrugs.

MORTON
She was speaking all sorts of
nonsense when they found her. They
said she looked scared half to
death.

ED
She alright?

MORTON
She'll be okay, I suppose. Good
thing the kid found her when he did
or she'd end up becoming her own
client.

ED
(re: The Dead Body)
I'm assuming that's the poor
bastard I'm here to pick up.

Ed opens the casket, admires The Dead Body. Morton watches Ed admire him.

MORTON
Whaddy think?

ED
Looks good.

Morton hands Ed some paperwork. Ed signs a sheet, hands it back to Morton.

MORTON
The family doing well?

ED
Not sure. The ceremony is at 1:30
so I'll find out then.

MORTON
I meant yours.

ED
Oh. Yeah. They're fine. Parents are
in Florida for the week, and Jeremy
and Claudia have a birthday to
plan. Gregory is going to be nine
next week.

MORTON
They grow up so fast.

ED
Unfortunately.

MORTON
(re: The Dead Body)
Did this guy here have any kids?

ED
Yeah. All girls.

MORTON
I've always wanted a daughter.
Kevin is good enough, I suppose.

Morton winks. Ed smirks.

MORTON (CONT'D)
(re: The Dead Body)
I'll help ya load him up.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

A standard building, nothing ornate or macabre about it.

The hearse drives around to the back of the funeral home, enters a garage.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - BACK HALLWAY - DAY

Ed wheels the casket into the back hallway and parks it along the side against the wall.

He sets the paperwork on top of the casket.

Ed walks over to a large, long whiteboard marked with a table filled with various information: names, times, locations, etc.

He writes a time in a table cell, steps back and looks at the whiteboard information.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Soft MUSIC plays overhead in the bland lobby area.

A clock reads 12 PM.

HUNTER WALLACE (23), the receptionist, sits at the front desk. He SPEAKS on the phone to a guest.

Ed walks MARGARET PETERS (80s) out of an arrangement room and to the front entrance of the funeral home.

ED

Again, Mrs. Peters, I believe what you're doing is a good idea. Planning your own funeral will save you and your family plenty of stress. I do apologize that my sales representative wasn't here today to help get you set up with the ceremony accessories, but you are always welcome to make another appointment whenever you're ready.

MARGARET

Yes. I've got time. Not much more, but I've still got it.

She CHUCKLES with her soft smile. Ed forces a CHUCKLE himself.

ED

You take care, Mrs. Peters.

MARGARET

Thank you.

Margaret leaves the funeral home. Ed's smile suddenly disappears, and a look of disgust overcomes his face.

He walks over to the front desk where Hunter stands and slides a bag over his shoulder.

ED

What a bitch.

HUNTER

Women are poison.

ED

Right, can't live with 'em, can live without 'em.

HUNTER

I was joking.

ED

Off to lunch?

HUNTER

Yep. I'll be back in an hour.

ED

We should get lunch sometime. If ya want.

Hunter looks at Ed for a moment, then SNICKERS.

HUNTER

Right.

ED

C'mon, we can go to a bar, grab a beer.

HUNTER

I'll be back later.

Hunter leaves. Ed watches with a sly smirk.

He stands in the middle of the lobby, alone. The SOFT MUSIC continues to play overhead.

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

Ed wheels The Dead Body's casket into the chapel from a side door. He sets him up in front of rows of pews.

He opens the casket to show The Dead Body.

Ed removes a piece of lint from The Dead Body's suit, straightens the tie, brushes the collar lightly.

Ed sets up bouquets of flowers in various areas of the chapel.

He steps back from one bouquet, steps forward to straighten it by an inch, then steps back again to admire it.

Ed slides the dimmer light switches upward, then taps them down a tad, taps them up a bit, until they're just right.

He flips a switch, and the blinds to the massive windows at the front of the chapel slide upward. The view reveals a beautiful, mountainous view of grand ol' Colorado.

Ed lights multiple candles around the chapel.

He flips another switch, and a projector screen lowers from the ceiling.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Just outside the chapel, Ed sets up photos of The Dead Body's life when he was alive:

Photos of him on lavish vacation spots with his wife, kids, family. Photos of him in fancy cars, dressed in nice suits with beautiful people, a man who's lived a life of fortune.

As well as photos of when he was a kid. Not many, but they're there.

Ed admires the photos, admires The Dead Body's living past.

Then, he diverts his eyes to the photos of when The Dead Body was a young boy.

Ed stares. A moment of silence.

LATER

(O.S.) The muffled sound of a toilet FLUSHING.

Ed walks out of the hallway bathroom with the child photo of The Dead Body, adjusts his crotch.

He sets the photo back with the rest. He walks down the hallway, passes by the chapel entrance.

Unbeknownst to Ed, The Dead Body sits in one of the pews in the chapel, faces the empty casket.

Ed walks through the LOBBY when--

The front desk phone RINGS.

Ed walks up to the phone, answers it.

ED
Grant Funeral Home.

Heavy STATIC CRACKLES on the other side.

ED (CONT'D)
Hello?

The STATIC continues to CRACKLE through the receiver.

A child's GIGGLE slips through the STATIC--

Ed looks up, catches the tail end of a child running into the chapel.

He hangs the phone up, runs down the hallway toward the chapel.

ED (CONT'D)
Hey! Hey, get back here!

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

Ed runs into the chapel--

ED
You can't be in...here...

--to find nobody in there.

Ed looks around the empty chapel. He shakes his head, smirks at his own mind playing tricks on him.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

INSERT: the clock. It reads 12:35 PM.

INT. ED'S OFFICE - DAY

Ed sits at the desk as he writes on a form.

On his desk is a picture of GREGORY (6), with a big smile that reveals a missing tooth.

Ed sets the form aside, turns to his computer. He types, before stopping, looks at the photo of Gregory.

He resumes to his computer when the front desk phone RINGS (O.S.).

Ed SIGHS, walks out of his office.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Ed walks down the hallway toward the lobby as the phone RINGS persistently.

He reaches the phone when it stops ringing.

Ed shrugs, turns and begins to walk back to his office when the phone RINGS again.

He walks back to the phone, answers it.

ED
Grant Funeral Home.

STATIC on the other end. No answer.

ED (CONT'D)
Grant Funeral Home?

More STATIC.

Ed hangs up, walks back down the hallway toward his office.

He reaches his office, but stops when he finds his office door CLOSED.

Ed looks down at the crack at the bottom of the door. A shadow moves slightly on the other side of the door, and a deep, heavy BREATH corresponds with the moving shadow. Someone's in there.

Ed watches cautiously before he walks up to the door and opens it.

INT. ED'S OFFICE - DAY

Nobody is in the office.

Ed looks around before he notices the photo of Gregory face down on the floor.

He picks up the photo and turns it over to find the photo CRACKED, the crack splitting Gregory's gap-toothed smile in two.

Ed sets the photo on his desk, rushes out of his office.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Ed walks down the hallway to the lobby. He stops in the middle of the lobby, furious.

ED
Whoever's here needs to show
themselves now.

His voice RINGS through the quiet funeral home. It's noticeable now that the music is off.

VOICES (O.S.) catch his attention, from the chapel.

ED (CONT'D)
Who's there?

The VOICES continue. A MAN and WOMAN'S VOICES.

Ed cautiously walks toward the chapel.

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

The window blinds are down, darkening the chapel.

Ed slowly walks inside, but stops when he notices The Dead Body sitting in one of the pews, facing the empty casket. The suit on The Dead Body is not cut up in the back, as if sewn together.

Ed then looks up at the screen.

A VIDEO projects onto the screen, of a man, JEREMY (30s), and a woman, CLAUDIA (30s). They smile at the camera as they prepare to leave a house.

JEREMY
We'll be gone for an hour or two.

CLAUDIA
Thanks for taking care of him.
(to Jeremy)
Ready?

JEREMY
Yeah.

They walk out of the front door of the house.

THE DEAD BODY

Sit.

Ed looks at The Dead Body, then back at the video.

The camera swings around and focuses on a boy, GREGORY (6).
He plays video games on the sofa.

Ed's face drops.

THE DEAD BODY (CONT'D)

Sit.

ED

Who are...? What is this?

THE DEAD BODY

You know.

Ed looks back up at the video. The camera maneuvers next to Gregory on the sofa. It's apparent now that we are watching the POV of someone.

ED

No...

THE DEAD BODY

Sit.

ED

How is this possible? How...How are
you possible?

THE DEAD BODY

Sit.

ED

No--

THE DEAD BODY

I SAID SIT!!!

Ed is suddenly YANKED by invisible forces onto a pew a couple rows behind The Dead Body. He SLIDES down the pew to the center, becomes FORCED to the seat.

ED

Holy shit!

His head suddenly snaps forward as if invisible hands hold his gaze in front of him.

The candles EXTINGUISH THEMSELVES and the chapel grows darker.

He watches the VIDEO.

INSERT: the video--

This POV reaches out to Gregory and ruffles his hair. Gregory doesn't take his eyes off the video game.

ED (V.O.)
(in video)
You wanna do something else?

GREGORY
Like what?

BACK TO SCENE

Ed's eyes grow wide. It's him in the video.

ED
What the fuck? What...what the fuck
is going on?

He can't help but continue watching the video.

INSERT: the video--

ED (V.O.)
(in video)
We can play together. How about we
take a bath.

Gregory's eyes remain on the video game.

GREGORY
It's not time to take a bath yet.

ED (V.O.)
Nah, think of it more as swimming.
C'mon, pause the game.

Gregory reluctantly pauses the game, looks up at the camera.

GREGORY
I don't wanna take a bath.

ED (V.O.)
How about we pretend we're pirates?
Going on a treasure hunt. C'mon,
let's go.

Ed stands up, grabs Gregory's hand and prompts him to stand.

They walk through the house and into a BATHROOM.

BACK TO SCENE

Ed watches in shock.

ED
What the fuck is this?

The Dead Body remains silent.

Ed squeezes his eyes shut to avoid watching the video--

His eyes are FORCED OPEN by invisible fingers.

ED (CONT'D)
Jesus fucking Christ! Help me!

INSERT: the video--

Ed turns on the bathroom light, immediately reveals his REFLECTION in the bathroom mirror. He looks a bit younger, but not by much.

He guides Gregory to the bathtub, shuts the bathroom door.

Ed looks at Gregory for a moment, as if he is admiring him. Gregory looks back, confused.

GREGORY
What?

ED (V.O.)
Here, let me get the water running.
How hot do you like it?

GREGORY
Not too hot.

Ed reaches out and twists the faucet knobs, releases the water.

BACK TO SCENE

Ed watches in HORROR.

ED
This isn't happening...This...This
is impossible!

THE DEAD BODY
This is what you wanted. Your
fantasies. Your desires.

INSERT: the video--

Ed's hands pull Gregory's shirt off.

BACK TO SCENE

CLOSE UP: Ed's eyes tear up as he WHINES helplessly.

INSERT: the video--

Ed's hands unbuckle his own belt.

BACK TO SCENE

Tears flow from Ed's eyes.

ED
This is fucked! This never
happened!

The Dead Body LAUGHS.

HOLD ON: Ed, as he watches the video unfold.

Water SPLASHES (O.S.).

ED (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(in video)
C'mon. The water feels really good.

GREGORY (O.S.)
I dunno, Uncle Eddie...

ED (O.S.)
(in video)
Call me Captain Eddie. Argh, matey!
I be after yer booty!

Gregory GIGGLES (O.S.).

ED (O.S.) (CONT'D)
C'mon, get in.

Beat.

GREGORY (O.S.)
Okay.

More water SPLASHING (O.S.). Gregory GIGGLES (O.S.).

GREGORY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
That tickles!

ED (O.S.)
Yeah? Does this tickle?

Gregory LAUGHS (O.S.). Water SPLASHES (O.S.).

Ed, eyes wide not only from force but from horror as well, continues to watch. He STRUGGLES as he attempts to break free from this invisible force, but can't move.

ED (CONT'D)
NO!!!!!!

INT. LOBBY - DAY

INSERT: The clock, which reads 12:45 PM.

Ed's CRIES echo through the quiet funeral home.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Ed's SCREAMS and PLEAS travel down the hallway.

INT. ED'S OFFICE - DAY

Ed's YELPS are still audible.

Gregory's cracked photo sits on the desk.

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

Ed continues to SCREAM, eyes wide open, tears flowing.

ED
It never happened!

THE DEAD BODY
But you wanted it to.

ED
I never acted on it!

THE DEAD BODY
Oh really?

Ed is suddenly RELEASED from the invisible force, and can now move. He stands and rushes out from the pew, but stops and looks at the screen.

The video suddenly minimizes, and reveals a COMPUTER DESKTOP being projected onto the screen. Ed's computer desktop.

A mouse cursor opens an email application, composes a new email.

Ed watches, curious and in shock.

The mouse cursor selects a whole list of recipients and inserts them into the "TO:" field of the email.

It then DRAGS THE VIDEO FILE INTO THE EMAIL.

Ed's eyes grow wide.

He backs away toward the entrance of the chapel, watches in horror before turning and sprinting out the doorway.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Ed RUSHES down the hallway, runs as fast as he can toward the other side of the funeral home.

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

INSERT: the screen--

In the "SUBJECT:" field, **URGENT - OPEN IMMEDIATELY!!!** is written.

INT. ED'S OFFICE - DAY

Ed BURSTS through the doorway. He DIVES for the computer cord just as the mouse cursor hovers over the **SEND** button!

He YANKS the cord and unplugs the computer.

Ed looks at the cord, LAUGHS in accomplishment. He SIGHS in relief, stands.

Just to be sure, he turns the monitor around.

THE COMPUTER IS STILL ON. AND THE EMAIL HAS BEEN SENT.

Ed looks at the cord. It's the right cord, still attached to the computer, but unplugged.

ED

No...That's not possible...

He spins toward the office entrance.

ED (CONT'D)

How the hell are you doing this!?

He rushes out of the office.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Ed rushes toward the lobby, stops and SCREAMS:

ED
What do you want!?

HUNTER
The hell are you talking about?

Ed spins around and sees Hunter. He sets his bag down, pulls his office chair out to sit.

ED
I...I...uh...did you just get back?

HUNTER
Yeah. Everything okay?

Hunter sits and turns to his computer, logs in. Ed lunges forward toward the front desk counter.

ED
Wait!

Hunter moves away from the computer.

ED (CONT'D)
Don't open the email I sent.

Hunter looks at Ed, confused, then turns to his computer and opens the email application.

Ed gulps.

HUNTER
There's no email.

ED
There isn't?

HUNTER
Nope.

Ed SIGHS heavily in relief.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
The next ceremony is in thirty minutes. Are you sure you're okay?

ED
Yeah...yeah, I'm fine...I'm fine...

Ed cautiously backs away from the front desk, turns and heads for the chapel.

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

Ed walks inside to find everything back to normal. The blinds are up, the candles are lit, the dimmer lights are at their set level. The screen remains blank as nothing is projected on it.

Ed SIGHS in relief, but it's stopped short when he sees the casket.

He walks further into the chapel, down the aisle and toward the casket. Gets a closer look...

Inside is six-year-old Gregory in a suit. Asleep. Or possibly dead.

Ed's jaw drops, walks closer.

ED
Greg...Gregory?

He stares at Gregory for a moment longer, then looks up, looks around.

ED (CONT'D)
How are you doing this?

He looks back at Gregory.

ED (CONT'D)
Why are you doing this?

Ed admires Gregory.

ED (CONT'D)
God, you were always such a good looking boy.

He CLEARS his throat.

ED (CONT'D)
...Sorry, a good looking man.

Ed smirks at his comment, stares at Gregory longer.

He fixes a stray strand of hair. Caresses Gregory's cheek.

Ed stares a moment longer, before he SIGHS and turns away. He walks away from the casket...

...but stops, looks back. He admires Gregory from afar before he SIGHS again.

ED (CONT'D)

It's not real.

He turns and heads for the chapel entrance when--

GREGORY (O.S.)

Uncle Eddie?

Ed stops, spins around to find everything quiet and still. Gregory still lies in the casket, hasn't moved.

Ed cautiously walks back toward the casket, looks at Gregory inside.

He admires Gregory stronger this time. Maybe even licks his lips...

With a small, shaky SIGH, Ed slowly begins to bend over, his gaze set on Gregory, on his LIPS...

Ed's face grows closer to Gregory's, eyes closing, lips ready for contact...

And he KISSES GREGORY ON THE LIPS. Kisses, for an uncomfortably long amount of time, more and more passionate, a sudden slip of the TONGUE--

CUT TO:

SECONDS EARLIER

Ed stares at Gregory's body. Then, he takes a couple steps back.

ED

No...

Gregory's body slowly transforms into The Dead Body.

Ed SIGHS, backs away.

The entrance doors SLAM SHUT. Ed JUMPS, spins around--

Other doors SLAM shut, trapping him inside the chapel.

The blinds DROP DOWN quickly. The dimmer lights dim down to darkness.

The candles are the only light illuminating the inside of the chapel.

Ed runs toward the chapel entrance, tries the doors, but they're locked shut.

He spins back to face the casket. Inside lies The Dead Body...

...who slowly SITS UP.

Ed's eyes grow wide.

The Dead Body turns to face Ed before he CLIMBS OUT OF THE CASKET.

Ed begins to SLAP the entrance.

ED (CONT'D)

Hunter...

The Dead Body, now out of the casket, slowly WALKS toward Ed. Impending DOOM and DREAD...

Ed POUNDS on the door.

ED (CONT'D)

Hunter!?

He RAMS into the door in an attempt to open it.

The Dead Body stalks closer. Closer. CLOSER.

Ed SHOVES his shoulder into the door, which suddenly SWINGS open.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Ed falls to the floor.

Even though it's daytime, the inside of the funeral home looks like it's CLOSED for the NIGHT. Barely any lights on, and empty, dark, haunting.

Ed looks back at the chapel. The Dead Body is mere FEET from him!

He scrambles to his feet and SLAMS the chapel door shut.

Ed looks down the hallway and catches the tail-end of a GHOSTLY CHILD, who SCREAMS as he runs around a corner of the hallway.

Ed GASPS, but it's cut short when another childish GIGGLE causes him to SPIN AROUND--

--to catch another YOUNG GHOSTLY CHILD slip behind a doorway. Ed SPINS AROUND once again--

--another GHOSTLY KID slips behind a wall as he CRIES OUT IN FEAR--

Ed spins around in circles, where everything becomes one big BLUR to him.

More glimpses of GHOSTLY CHILDREN as they just escape his glimpse, as if he's seeing them out of the corners of his eyes.

CHILD #1

No!

CHILD #2

Don't!

CHILD #3

What are you doing?

CHILD #4

Please stop!

Ed continues to stumble around in circles as these GHOSTLY KIDS SCREAM at him the same cacophony--

CHILD #5

Don't do this!

CHILD #6

Stop it!

CHILD #7

No!

CHILD #8

Please stop!

The CRIES get LOUDER--

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

The blinds are open. The lights are on. The candles are lit.

And Ed stands at the casket, bent over, KISSING THE DEAD BODY.

JASON (O.S.)

STOP!!!

Ed opens his eyes, suddenly realizes--

He snaps upward, spins around to see:

The Dead Body's FAMILY, all standing before him in complete and utter SHOCK. Beyond them, Hunter stands at the chapel entrance.

JASON CUNNINGHAM (late 20s) stands at the head of The Family.

JASON (CONT'D)

What the fuck!?

CUT TO BLACK.

SUPER:

PART IV: THE FAMILY

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

The chapel is sparsely filled with just THE FAMILY who all sit in different rows:

DEBRA BULLARD (50s), The Dead Body's wife. She sits at the front row, eyes red from crying.

Sitting with Jason is STEVIE CUNNINGHAM (8), his son. He looks up at Jason.

STEVIE

Where is everyone, Dad?

Jason gently SHUSHES Stevie.

COURTNEY BULLARD (early 30s), middle daughter of The Dead Body, sits in a separate row.

NICK DANIELS (early 30s), Courtney's boyfriend, sits next to her, who holds onto him tightly.

STACEY BULLARD (late 20s), the youngest daughter of The Dead Body, sits in the back row. She looks like a complete wreck but tries her best to look publicly decent.

They all sit in silence in the chapel. The Dead Body lies in the casket at the front.

The doors to the entrance of the chapel open, and MEGAN CUNNINGHAM (mid 30s), Jason's wife and oldest daughter of The Dead Body, walks in, solemn.

She stops shortly after walking into the chapel and looks at everyone.

Debra looks on with tears in her eyes.

DEBRA

Well?

Megan hesitates, then--

MEGAN

The funeral director won't be joining us for the ceremony. He, uh...he told me what happened.

COURTNEY

What do you mean what happened? Did something happen to him, too?

Megan doesn't say anything. She avoids eye contact with everyone.

MEGAN

The officiant won't be coming, either. Car accident, while on his way over here.

COURTNEY

So we're doing this on our own?

Megan nods.

MOMENTS LATER

Megan steps to a podium next to the casket to give a eulogy.

MEGAN

I rewrote this on our way over here.

She CLEARS her throat.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

If you asked me if I knew Dad, I would tell you, yes, I knew him. What he loved, what he didn't; how he lived, and how he worked his way to that living; even the tiny things that got on his nerves, yet he still loved every one of us, and made sure we had the best life he could provide.

(beat)

But I didn't know him. And you didn't either. Dad was a very private man, and much like everyone else, he had a secret. One he was very good at hiding, for good reason. But now we all know who Dad really was, and we're all taking that secret to the grave, just as he had himself.

(beat, looks up)

After today, we're never speaking of what happened that night again.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. MANSION - BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Sheets are lowered down over The Dead Body by GRACE (40s), the caregiver.

The Dead Body lies in a bed surrounded by hospital equipment, tubing, and wiring.

Debra sits next to him as she SOBS and holds his hand.

Next to Debra is Stacey, who is a total mess.

STACEY

Daddy...

She buries her face into Debra's shoulder.

Looking out a window nearby is Courtney. She watches the snow fall.

Nick walks up to Courtney, caresses her shoulder.

COURTNEY

Thanks for coming over so late.

Nick kisses her head, looks out the window with her.

Jason stands at the doorway and watches the scene. He turns away.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

A long hallway with bedrooms and bathrooms and closets and decorated walls all along the way toward the end.

Jason steps away from the bedroom, turns to Megan who hangs up her cell phone.

MEGAN

Alright. They're sending someone out to come get Dad.

JASON

How long?

Megan shrugs, looks down the hallway.

MEGAN

Well. Do we tell him?

JASON

He probably already knows.

Jason walks down the long hallway. Megan follows.

MEGAN

How? This is a big deal.

JASON

He's eight years old, he's seen it happen to animals, he's seen it happen in movies--

MEGAN

But his grandpa? My Dad was only in his fifties, for Christ's sake.

JASON

He's watched your dad die for the past six months. Do you really think he doesn't understand the concept of death? The only way we can find out how he's doing is by asking.

Jason stops at another bedroom doorway, prompts Megan to go inside.

INT. BEDROOM #2 - NIGHT

Jason leans against the doorway as Megan walks up to the bed where Stevie plays with a video game console.

Megan sits down, ruffles Stevie's hair.

STEVIE

Mom!

MEGAN

What, am I gonna make your video game character die?

Megan CRINGES at her comment, looks at Jason, who motions to her to keep going.

Stevie ignores her, too immersed in the game.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Hey, you know how your character always comes back whenever a bad guy kills you?

Stevie doesn't respond as he continues to play.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Well, when it comes to people in real life, like you and me, we don't always come back.

Stevie pauses the game, looks at Megan.

STEVIE

Mom, I know what happened to Grandpa. The same thing happened to Ian's grandma. Cancer's a bitch.

Megan's jaw drops. Jason SNORTS suppressed LAUGHTER.

Megan looks at Jason in disbelief.

MEGAN

Are you seriously encouraging this right now?

JASON

Encouraging what?

MEGAN

Do you want him using that kind of language?

Stevie rolls his eyes, stands and walks out of the bedroom.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Stevie walks down the hallway as his parents continue to bicker (O.S.).

JASON (O.S.)

It was funny!

MEGAN (O.S.)

It was highly inappropriate, and--
 (to Stevie)
 --hey, honey! Get back here!
 (to Jason)
 Will you go get your son?

JASON (O.S.)

Oh stop it, he's eight.

MEGAN (O.S.)

Don't tell me to stop. That doesn't mean anything.

JASON (O.S.)
He'll be using worse language in,
like, two years...

Stevie continues down the long stretch of hallway, back to where The Dead Body is.

A WHISPER catches his attention. He spins around to look down the hallway.

In the darkest of corners stands a FIGURE. It doesn't look human--

Megan steps out of the bedroom, blocks Stevie's view of this FIGURE. He attempts to peek around her. Megan looks behind her, sees nobody down the hallway.

Megan looks back at Stevie, smiles. She holds her hand out.

MEGAN
C'mon honey. Let's go be with
everyone else.

Stevie remains distracted by whatever was down the hallway. Megan turns him around, guides him down toward the bedroom with The Dead Body. Jason follows.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
I don't want to hear you using that
kind of language again, okay?

STEVIE
Mom, is Grandpa gonna become a
ghost now?

MEGAN
A ghost? What makes you say that?

INT. BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Megan and Stevie walk into the bedroom, while Jason follows inside.

STEVIE
Well, ghosts are dead people. And
Grandpa's dead. So is he a ghost
now?

Megan looks at Stevie, then up at Jason, who shrugs.

Grace, the caregiver, steps in.

GRACE
Stevie, come over here.

Stevie looks at Grace, then at Megan, who prompts him to step forward.

Stevie steps toward Grace.

GRACE (CONT'D)
My name's Grace. I've known your grandpa for a long time. Since before you were born. I promised to take care of him when he got sick.

Megan turns to Jason.

MEGAN
I wasn't prepared for any of this.

JASON
You're doing fine.

Courtney walks up to Megan.

COURTNEY
Can I talk to you?

Megan nods. Courtney looks at Jason, who watches the two.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
(to Megan)
Alone? Out in the hall.

Courtney and Megan leave the room.

Jason watches, then looks over at Grace kneeling next to Stevie.

GRACE
(to Stevie)
Have you seen your grandpa yet?

Stevie shakes his head "no."

GRACE (CONT'D)
Do you want to?

Stevie shrugs.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Why not?

STEVIE
What if he becomes a zombie?

JASON

Stevie!

GRACE

No, it's okay.

(to Stevie)

I can promise you he won't come back as a zombie. Trust me.

Grace smiles, then removes the sheet from The Dead Body's face.

STEVIE

He looks like he's sleeping.

GRACE

See?

STEVIE

So...is he a ghost now?

Grace pulls the sheet back over The Dead Body's face.

GRACE

Some say that the soul hangs around the body until they're laid to rest. Which is why we always show respect for the dead. They could be listening.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Megan leans against the wall and bites her thumb. In her hand is a piece of paper.

Courtney stands in front of her. She looks stressed, yet amped up.

MEGAN

And you found this where...?

COURTNEY

I stepped into Dad's office for some privacy. It was right there, on his desk.

Megan looks at Courtney for a moment, studies her.

MEGAN

Bullshit.

Courtney reacts offended.

COURTNEY
You don't believe me?

MEGAN
Why should I?

COURTNEY
You seriously think I'd--

MEGAN
Yes, I'd seriously think you'd do something as stupid and disrespectful as actively looking for Dad's will. I'd seriously think you'd find any way to get to Dad's hard-earned money as quick as possible. So quick, you didn't allow him to die first--

COURTNEY
Oh fuck you--

MEGAN
Shut up, Courtney. You don't think I wouldn't suspect the former drug addict of the family to immediately try and get her grubby hands on her cut the moment he died? You went searching for this, didn't you?

Courtney reaches for the paper.

COURTNEY
I shouldn't have brought this up--

Megan yanks the paper out of Courtney's grasp.

MEGAN
You're goddamn right, you shouldn't have. Dad is dead. And you're worried about getting a chunk of change? Did you go searching for this?

COURTNEY
What does it matter?

MEGAN
Did you tell Nick?

COURTNEY
No.

Megan studies Courtney for a moment. She holds the paper out to Courtney.

MEGAN

Put this back where you found it.

Megan turns and walks back into the bedroom. Courtney bites her tongue, twists her lips.

Courtney turns the opposite direction and begins her trek down this long hallway.

She reaches a corner, turns, and walks down another long hallway toward another wing of the house.

This mansion is a maze.

She passes by an opening to an overlook above the foyer where a large chandelier hangs.

She reaches the top of a staircase, begins her descent. She reaches the bottom of the stairs.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Courtney walks through more corridors as the hallways get narrower, tighter.

She reaches the end of the corridor, opens the door.

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

A large room with walls of shelves bearing books. A large window overlooks dark skies, and before it a mahogany desk with a fancy desktop computer.

A pool table stands before the large desk. A bear statue stands in the corner. A grand fireplace sits unlit on one wall. The chimney leads up to a mirrored ceiling, opening up this cold, dark void.

Courtney walks over to a file cabinet and opens up one of the drawers.

She shuffles through the dozens of folders within the drawer until she sticks the will back in the correct sleeve. Beyond the sleeve is another section titled **FINANCES**.

Courtney looks at the section tab before she shuts the drawer.

She walks over to the fireplace, sits in one of the large leather chairs beside it. And thinks...

...and CRIES softly.

The fireplace ROARS to life!

Courtney YELPS. She quickly rushes out of the study, SLAMS the door shut.

INT. BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Courtney walks into the bedroom. Megan kneels next to Stevie.

STEVIE
I wanna go home.

MEGAN
We'll leave in just a little bit,
okay? Give us some time.

Megan looks up at Courtney. She stands.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
Did you...?

COURTNEY
Yes.

MEGAN
Everything okay?

Courtney gives an unsure nod. She walks over to Nick, who still stands at the window. He puts his arm around her.

NICK
Thank God you're back. I've been
standing here like an ass the whole
time.

COURTNEY
Shut up. You didn't say anything,
did you?

NICK
No. Why would I bring it up during
a time like this?

Megan takes a step forward. She CLEARS her throat, gets everyone's attention.

MEGAN

There will be some people coming for Dad soon. If anyone wants to join us in the living room while we wait for them, you can. Or if you want to spend more time in here...

STACEY

I want to be with Dad.

Megan nods at Stacey.

MEGAN

That's fine.

The lights in the room FLICKER silently. It catches everyone's attention.

Megan returns to everyone.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

The funeral home should know by morning. I'll call first thing when they open, schedule the ceremony.

Stevie SCREAMS as he points at the closet across the room, the door ajar. He backs into Jason, hides behind him.

STEVIE

Dad! Dad! In the closet! I saw it!

JASON

Woah, saw what?

Everyone's attention is on Stevie now.

STEVIE

A face! I saw a face! It's in the closet!

Stevie WHINES as he continues to hide behind Jason, who looks up at the closet.

He looks at everyone, who stare back, prompting him to step forward and look.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

I swear...I saw something in the closet...

Jason rolls his eyes.

JASON

Jeez, Stevie.

Megan walks over to Stevie and holds on to him as Jason walks to the closet.

He looks back at Stevie.

JASON (CONT'D)
There's nothing in here.

Jason grabs the closet door handle--

The lights suddenly go out.

OVER BLACK

Stacey SCREAMS.

JASON (V.O.)
Calm down, it's just the snow storm.

The bedroom door SLAMS shut. More SCREAMS.

The heavy BREATHING from everyone freaking out.

Megan tries the bedroom door knob.

MEGAN (V.O.)
The door's locked!

STEVIE (V.O.)
Mommy, I'm scared!

COURTNEY (V.O.)
What the hell is happening?

Grace SHUSHES everyone.

GRACE (V.O.)
He has come...

JASON (V.O.)
What are you talking about?!

STEVIE (V.O.)
I wanna leave!

THE DEAD BODY (V.O.)
SILENCE!

Another SCREAM. Stevie WHINES.

COURTNEY (V.O.)
Who was that?!

THE DEAD BODY (V.O.)
Give...me...the boy...

More HEAVY BREATHING from the group.

THE DEAD BODY (V.O.)
Fulfill the deed...to bring him
back...

GRACE (V.O.)
Yes, Your Holy One.

NICK (V.O.)
What the fuck is going on!?

THE DEAD BODY (V.O.)
ENOUGH!

Someone SCREAMS.

THE DEAD BODY (V.O.)
Kill the boy. Kill the boy. Kill
the boy...

STEVIE (V.O.)
Daddy!

STACEY (V.O.)
Turn on the lights!!!

The lights suddenly BUZZ ON.

The Dead Body falls to the floor in front of the group as if he had stalked toward them in the dark.

Everyone stares in shock, in silence, for one moment. Then--

Stacey SCREAMS in complete fear.

Everyone SCRAMBLES out of the bedroom, except for Grace, and Debra and Stacey, who cower in the bedroom as they CRY.

Grace slowly turns to Debra and Stacey.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Megan and Jason run down the hallway with Stevie. Behind them are Courtney and Nick. Courtney looks behind her, stops.

COURTNEY
Wait! Mom! Stacey!

Megan and Jason stop and turn to Courtney while Stevie continues running. Jason notices.

JASON
Hey, Stevie! Wait!

Megan turns to Jason.

MEGAN
Go get him, get out of here. I gotta get Mom and Stacey.

JASON
After what happened in there--?

MEGAN
(harsh)
Go get him!

Jason nods, turns and runs in the direction Stevie went. Megan walks back down the hallway toward Courtney.

Nick runs past her, stops and turns around.

NICK
What are you doing?

COURTNEY
Did that really happen?

Megan ignores both of them, looks down the hallway toward the bedroom with The Dead Body.

MEGAN
Mom?

INT. BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Grace pulls out a rolled up red cloth from her purse. She unravels it, reveals an ornate SACRIFICIAL KNIFE.

Grace kneels down in front of Stacey, who CRIES in fear. Debra holds onto her as she SOBS.

Grace holds the knife up to Stacey.

GRACE
You know what to do, sweetie.

Stacey stares at the knife, then Grace.

STACEY
(confused)
What?

GRACE
Do you want to bring your father
back?

Stacey stares in shock.

GRACE (CONT'D)
You know what to do. Kill the boy.

DEBRA
Leave my baby alone.

GRACE
(to Stacey)
Kill the boy, and you can have your
father back.

STACEY
Daddy?

GRACE
Yes.

Grace holds the knife out to Stacey, who stares at it in
horror.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Go on. You can bring him back, and
end this all.

DEBRA
Stop it--

Grace SLAPS Debra across the face.

GRACE
Do not interfere.
(to Stacey)
Take this. Go find the boy. Bring
your father back.

Stacey holds her stare on the knife.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Megan cautiously walks toward the bedroom, while Courtney and
Nick stand in the distance.

MEGAN

Stacey?

Megan nears the bedroom, reaches the doorway--

GRACE RUNS OUT OF THE BEDROOM SCREAMING LIKE A BANSHEE!

She TACKLES Megan, SLAMS her against the wall before taking her to the floor.

Nick and Courtney run to assist Megan when Stacey rushes out of the bedroom with the knife in hand.

She passes by Nick and Courtney, who see the knife, step aside.

NICK

Shit!

COURTNEY

Stacey?!

Stacey turns around, knife pointed at them. She looks like a madwoman.

STACEY

I have to bring Dad back...

Stacey backs away.

STACEY (CONT'D)

Don't stop me...

She spins around, rushes down the hallway.

Courtney and Nick run to Megan. They grab Grace, who SWINGS BACKWARD, clocks Nick in the face. He falls back, hand to his nose in pain.

Courtney YANKS Grace off Megan. They fall over as Courtney struggles with Grace.

Megan scrambles to her feet and RUNS.

COURTNEY

Megan! Run! Save Stevie!

Grace overpowers Courtney before Megan runs around a corner and leaves them.

Megan runs down another hallway, toward another wing.

She reaches an overlook to the foyer.

MEGAN

Stevie!

Her voice ECHOES through the large mansion. Silence.

She runs further down the hallway.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

It's a lavish kitchen fit for a cooking show. A large island counter, storage spaces everywhere, a dining nook built into the kitchen, atmospheric lighting, the works.

Stacey BARGES into the kitchen before she stops and investigates around the room.

She walks around with the knife in hand, BREATHES heavy either out of fatigue, or anxiety.

INT. PANTRY - NIGHT

Stevie peeks through the pantry door as he watches Stacey stalk around the island counter.

She rounds the counter, nears closer to the pantry.

Stevie backs away deeper into this large walk-in pantry.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Stacey stalks closer toward the pantry door. She sees it cracked open.

MEGAN (O.S.)

Stevie!

Stacey turns to the sound of Megan shouting.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Megan walks down the grand staircase as she SHOUTS:

MEGAN

Stevie!

She reaches the bottom of the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Grace shoves herself off of Courtney. She runs down the hallway, while Nick stands, nose bleeding profusely, and runs after her.

Courtney stands, runs for Grace as well.

Grace nears the end of the hallway before Nick tackles her to the floor. He manages to grab her arms and pull them behind her back, pin her down with his knee.

Courtney runs up to his aid.

NICK

Go get something, rope, a cord,
anything.

Courtney runs back down the hallway toward the bedroom with The Dead Body.

INT. BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Courtney rushes inside to find Debra grieving over The Dead Body.

COURTNEY

Mom...

Debra looks up with nothing but sadness, before she continues to CRY over The Dead Body.

NICK (O.S.)

Courtney!

Courtney rushes over to the bedside table, snatches a long phone charger.

She moves over to Debra, grabs her.

COURTNEY

Come on, Mom.

DEBRA

No...

COURTNEY

Come on. There's some really fucked
up shit happening here.

Courtney stands Debra up, guides her out the door and leaves The Dead Body on the floor.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Stacey continues to listen for more shouting from Megan, but there's silence.

She returns her attention to the pantry, nears it even closer.

INT. PANTRY - NIGHT

Stevie cowers in the corner.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Stacey is about to grab the door handle to the pantry door when Megan rushes into the kitchen. She spots Stacey.

MEGAN

Hey!

Megan moves around the counter, but Stacey moves the opposite way, playing a game of chicken around the counter.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Think about what you're doing--

STACEY

I know what I'm doing! I'm bringing Dad back!

Stacey holds the knife out.

Megan looks up at pots and pans hanging from a pot rack above the island counter. She grabs a large pan.

STACEY (CONT'D)

I just want this all to stop!

Stevie BARGES out of the pantry door and RUNS out of the kitchen.

MEGAN

Stevie!

Stacey chases after him. Megan notices, chases after Stacey.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Stevie runs down the long downstairs hallway.

Stacey runs into the hallway and chases after him. Megan shortly follows.

Stevie turns a corner but slips on the tile floor, falls.

He looks over at Stacey who closes in fast, knife raised.

He SCREAMS.

Megan LUNGES for Stacey, TACKLES her to the floor.

The knife flies from Stacey's grasp. Megan's pan slides across the floor.

Stevie stands, runs away.

Stacey overpowers Megan, pins her down. She reaches for the knife nearby. Eventually, she grabs the knife.

Megan stares in horror as Stacey raises the knife above her head, ready to strike.

MEGAN

Stacey...

Jason suddenly flies into view, TACKLES Stacey to the floor.

He rolls one way, while Stacey rolls another way. Jason sits up, looks at Megan.

JASON

Go find Stevie!

Megan stands, runs in the same direction Stevie went.

Stacey scrambles toward the knife. Jason notices, crawls toward the knife too.

He's about to grab it--

Stacey snatches the knife. She stands as Jason stands, and she SWIPES the knife at him, cutting his chest.

Jason SCREAMS in pain, stumbles backward with his hand to his chest.

Stacey steps back, stares in horror at what she just did. Then stares at the knife.

She looks back where Stevie and Megan ran, then back at Jason, who looks at her pleadingly.

JASON (CONT'D)

Don't...

Stacey steps back with the knife out.

STACEY
Stay back...I...I have to do
this...

She backs further way before turning around and rushing down another hallway.

Jason looks down at the cut on his chest.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nick ties the phone charger cord around Grace's hands behind her back.

He flips her over onto her back.

NICK
What the fuck is going on?!

GRACE
He is here.

NICK
Who?

GRACE
Your father made a deal with Him.
And now He's here. He wants the
boy.

COURTNEY
The fuck do you mean, made a deal?

GRACE
For ever-lasting fortune. A life
for his soul.

COURTNEY
Who did he make the deal with?

Grace stares into Courtney's eyes for a moment.

GRACE
The Dark Lord.

She smiles.

GRACE (CONT'D)
That boy's going to die tonight.

Grace begins to LAUGH.

Courtney stares at Grace, while behind her, Debra listens in horror.

NICK
 (to Courtney)
 Grab her legs.

Courtney grabs Grace's legs. Nick Grabs her torso, and they pick her up.

They carry her down the hallway.

GRACE
 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

NICK
 (over Grace)
 So does this happen with every guy you bring home to the family?

Courtney gives him a death glare, "Now's not the time."

COURTNEY
 (over Grace)
 Where are we taking her?

NICK
 (over Grace)
 A bedroom? A closet? Anywhere?

Courtney nods toward a pair of doors.

COURTNEY
 Here.

They set Grace down and open the doors. It's a closet. They toss Grace into the closet as she continues to babble Bible verses.

They shut the closet doors.

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

The fire continues to burn in the fireplace.

Megan rushes into the study. She looks around as she walks deeper into the room.

MEGAN
(whisper)
Stevie?

She walks around the pool table, looks around the desk. No luck.

She turns around to see Stevie hiding behind the bear statue.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
(relieved)
Stevie...

She rushes over to Stevie, who walks out from behind the bear.

STEVIE
Mommy...

They hug quick before Megan pulls herself away.

MEGAN
Stacey's following us. We have to hide.

STEVIE
I'm scared.

MEGAN
Me too. I know where we can hide.

She grabs his hand, walks him across the study room to a back corner where a large bookcase stands.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
I used to hide here when I played hide and seek growing up.

She grabs a book and pulls it outward, but it gets STUCK. There's a loud CLANK before the bookcase OPENS.

It's a secret stairwell, the walls and steps made of stone. Medieval. Archaic.

Megan looks back at Stevie, who stands a few feet away, uncomfortable.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
Come on.

Stevie stares at the stairwell that leads to darkness. Megan holds her hand out.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
Hurry. We have to hide.

Stevie looks from the stairwell, to Megan.

STEVIE
I dunno.

MEGAN
She's coming, Stevie. We have to go, now.

Stevie looks back at the stairwell, takes a step forward slowly.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
Come. You must.

Stevie hesitates, looks at Megan, at her outstretched hand.

He then takes a step backward, cautious.

Megan continues to stare, unfazed, with her hand still out toward Stevie.

Stevie steps back further. He looks up at the mirror ceiling and catches the reflection of Megan's outstretched arm--

It's burnt to a crisp. The fingers are long and jagged.

MEGAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Stevie!

Stevie suddenly spins around to see Megan standing at the entrance of the study.

Stevie looks back at the bookcase corner. Nobody stands there. The bookcase isn't even open.

Megan rushes over to Stevie, but he backs away, afraid.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
Honey, Stevie, it's me.

STEVIE
How do I know it's really you!

MEGAN
Baby...It's me, I promise!

He takes another step back, unsure.

INT. BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Courtney walks to the bedroom doorway but stops immediately.

COURTNEY
Uh...guys...?

Nick and Debra peek into the room.

The Dead Body is GONE.

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

Megan and Stevie embrace.

STEVIE
I wanna go home!

MEGAN
Me too. Let's go.

She picks him up, turns around--

Stacey stands at the entrance to the study, knife in hand.

Megan freezes.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
Stacey...

Stacey slowly maneuvers her way toward Megan and Stevie.
Megan backs away.

STACEY
Give him to me.

MEGAN
You must be out of your mind--

STACEY
GIVE HIM TO ME!

MEGAN
Stacey, look at yourself!

STACEY
It needs to stop. I need to make it
all stop. I need to bring Dad back.

MEGAN
Dad isn't coming back. He's dead.

STACEY

No he's not! He spoke to us--!

MEGAN

That wasn't him!

STACEY

Just...let me do this...Let me
bring Dad back...

MEGAN

For Christ's sake, Stacey...He's my
son!

STACEY

I'm sorry...

She walks forward, cornering Megan and Stevie.

MEGAN

Stacey...Stacey...!

Stacey holds the knife up as she continues toward Megan and Stevie. Megan backs against a wall, stumbles, slides to the floor as she hugs Stevie.

Stacey raises the knife. Megan throws her hand up in any attempt to protect she and Stevie.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

No! Don't!

THUNK! Jason WHACKS the kitchen pan across the back of Stacey's head.

She falls to the floor, stunned, and drops the knife.

Jason hugs Megan and Stevie. They stare at Stacey, who GROANS in pain.

JASON

Get Stevie out of here. I'll take
care of her.

He kicks the knife away from Stacey.

Megan stands and carries Stevie with her toward the study entrance.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Megan walks through the door but stops shortly.

At the other end of the dark hallway is The Dead Body, covered in the sheet, FLOATING.

The door behind Megan SHUTS by itself. She tries the handle, but the door is locked.

The Dead Body begins to float down the hallway toward Megan.

She holds on tightly to Stevie, covers his eyes and pushes his gaze away from the impending doom.

MEGAN

You can't have him...

The Dead Body grows closer, faster.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

You can't have him!

The Dead Body gets closer. Closer. CLOSER.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

You can't have him! You can't have him! YOU CAN'T HAVE HIM!!!

The Dead Body floats quicker, RUSHES UP TO MEGAN!

She SCREAMS--

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

The large estate sits in the dark middle of nowhere. Heavy snow falls down onto the land.

Silence, except for the cold, ghostly MOAN of the wind...

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

Courtney walks up to the file cabinet. She grabs a drawer handle, looks behind her to check and see if anyone else is around.

Courtney opens the file cabinet drawer and flips her fingers through the sleeves until she reaches the **FINANCES** tab.

She pulls out the sleeve. An envelope falls out of the sleeve.

She picks it up. Written on the front is:

TO MY FAMILY

MY LIFE

MAY 3, 1980

INT. BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Megan, Jason, and Nick carry The Dead Body back over the bed and set him down gently. They tuck him into the bedsheets.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Courtney reaches the top of the stairs, begins her trek through the maze of a mansion with the envelope in hand.

MEGAN (V.O.)

He appeared in a dream all too
real. A realm where time itself
didn't exist...

(beat)

...It was Hell...

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Nick cleans his face, washes the blood off his busted nose.

MEGAN (V.O.)

...I spent a thousand years there,
but when I awoke, only five minutes
had passed as I slept, and the
agreement had been made...

INT. BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Debra hugs on Stacey, who holds a bag of ice to her head.

MEGAN (V.O.)

...The fortune had begun almost
immediately. It is mine, now ours,
to keep until the end. Even after
I'm gone, in return for my life,
you'll be taken care of...

Courtney walks into the room, up to Megan. She hands her the envelope.

MOMENTS LATER

Megan stands at the foot of the bed, facing away from The Dead Body.

She faces the rest of the family who stand and watch her read from a paper.

MEGAN

...And upon writing this, I am not sure where I will be in life once it ends. My life is in His hands now. To my family, whomever it ends up being, I apologize in advance for any troubles I cause with this decision. But do not worry, for your life--your soul--will not be affected. A husband's love, a father's affection, is as infinite as the mother's. I want the best for my wife and my children, even if I sacrifice my own life to provide an even better one for you...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Slowly tracking down the long, dark hallway:

MEGAN (V.O.)

...I know there's a catch, there's always at least one, but as long as I am happy, and that my family is happy, that's all that matters to me...

(beat)

...He had mentioned a woman named Grace will be my caretaker for when it's time. Consider her His assistant. A watcher. An Angel of Darkness. Devoted to serving Him and fulfilling His deeds. She's basically powerless, but when I'm gone, she will move on to the next soul...

The closet doors open and reveal--

NOBODY. Grace is GONE. The phone charger cord remains in tangle bundle on the floor.

INT. BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Megan CRIES as she continues to read:

MEGAN

...And if things become too bad when I finally pass, just remember that I will still always be with you. I may not know you yet, but I will. And they'll be the happiest days of my life. To me, this is worth it all. I hope it is for you, too. I love you, now and always. From your husband, your father.

She SNIFFS, folds the paper up.

Beat. Everyone remains quiet.

DING-DONG! The doorbell RINGS. Everyone looks toward the bedroom door.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

That must be the people here for Dad.

(to everyone)

Nobody will speak of this. Ever. Okay?

Everyone nods.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Anyone want to say goodbye to him one last time?

The Family remains in their place, silent.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Sam and Oscar wheel The Dead Body toward the estate entrance.

The Family follows.

Megan opens the front door, and Sam and Oscar wheel the body out into the snow storm.

The Family watches them walk down the walkway toward the van.

They look terrified.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A snow-covered cemetery littered with headstones.

The Dead Body's casket sits above the hole dug at the gravesite.

The casket is lowered into the hole while The Family watches.

CASKET POV:

The Family stares down the hole as the casket drops lower and lower into the ground.

The casket reaches the bottom.

The Family stand around the border created by the wall of dirt of the gravesite hole.

Then, one by one, they walk away from the site.

The last to remain is Stevie.

 MEGAN (O.S.)
 Come on, Stevie.

Stevie looks to Megan and runs away from the hole.

All that's left is the open sky.

FADE OUT.

THE END.