

THE KNOCK

FADE IN:

EXT. ORCHARD STREET – HALLOWEEN NIGHT, 1963 – DUSK

Rain drizzles over a quiet Illinois neighborhood. Porch lights glow amber through fog. Children in homemade costumes dash between houses, laughter threading through thunder.

INT. MOIRA FOX'S HOUSE – STUDY – CONTINUOUS

A small TYPEWRITER clacks beneath MOIRA FOX (30s), cigarette burning low. A mug of cold tea sits beside her.

INSERT – TYPEWRITER PAGE

“She told herself the knocking was wind. But wind doesn't wait for an answer.”

She frowns, backspaces. A cough drifts from down the hall.

INT. JULIA'S BEDROOM – EARLY EVENING

JULIA (7) sits propped in bed, cheeks fever-flushed. Her walls are filled with PAPIER-MÂCHÉ MASKS—crooked smiles, uneven eyes.

MOIRA

Doctor's orders, miss. Back under the covers.

JULIA

Maybe the monsters will need ideas.

MOIRA

Then charge admission.

They share a grin.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

INT. FRONT HALL / PORCH – CONTINUOUS

Moira opens the door to a cluster of soaked TRICK-OR-TREATERS.

MOIRA

All right, grab and go before you melt!

Candy drops into sacks. The kids scatter. When she shuts the door, the house exhales—quiet again.

INT. STUDY – MOMENTS LATER

The RADIO hums a cheery announcer.

RADIO (V.O.)

Perfect trick-or-treating weather across Russellville County!

Moira smirks and types.

TYPEWRITER PAGE

“Fear begins at the doorstep.”

Another DING-DONG. She sighs, heads for the door.

INT. FRONT HALL – CONTINUOUS

CHARLIE BOWLES (30s) and MARLA BOWLES stand with two costumed kids.

CHARLIE

Evening, Moira. Rain’s winning this year.

MOIRA

If the flu doesn’t get us first.

Julia wanders out, blanket-cape dragging, clutching one of her MASKS—crude, uneven, faint blue cheeks and a red grin.

MOIRA

She’d love it if someone wore it.

CHARLIE

Can’t say no to that.

He slips it on. Lightning flares—the smile gleams wet. Julia giggles, then coughs hard.

MOIRA

That's enough excitement for tonight.

CHARLIE

Tell her she's got talent. I'll show it off.

He waves, mask dangling, and the family disappears into mist. Moira shuts the door.

A TYPEWRITER DING echoes from the study, though she isn't there.

INT. KITCHEN / STUDY – LATER

Neighborhood noise fades. Moira writes by lamplight, the typewriter steady over rain.

TYPEWRITER PAGE

"The stranger's knock came once. Twice. Then silence
so loud it filled her head."

The POLICE RADIO crackles.

WALT (V.O.)

Unit Three at the bridge—minor pile-up, no injuries.
You still alive, Miss Bestseller?

MOIRA

Barely. Julia redecorated the candy bowl again.

WALT (V.O.)

She's got your sense of spectacle. Save me a chapter tonight.

MOIRA

Only if you promise not to solve it first.

Static swallows him. She returns to her work.

INT. JULIA'S ROOM – SAME TIME

Julia drifts in syrup fog. The RADIATOR HISSES, vibrating the masks so they BOBBLE gently—an audience of faces behind her.

Through fogged glass outside—CHARLIE BOWLES crosses his yard to the shed.
Lightning: a HACKSAW gleams in his hand. He disappears into darkness.

JULIA
(whisper)
Mom... he took my mask.

THREE-WAY INTERCUT – MOIRA / CHARLIE / JULIA

MOIRA types her climax.
CHARLIE commits his murders with mechanical calm.
JULIA watches, half-asleep, surrounded by nodding masks.

Typewriter CLACK-CLACK-DING becomes hacksaw SCREECH-PULL.
Radiator POPS keep time.

TYPEWRITER PAGE
“He arranged them so they’d never leave again.”

Charlie hauls bodies into dining chairs. Julia blinks; lightning flickers
across her walls. The masks sway, smiling.

Charlie lifts Julia’s MASK, studies it, presses it to his face.
Behind the eyeholes—nothing.

He sits among his family’s bodies. Still.

Moirs strikes a key too hard—CLACK!
Charlie’s saw jams—SCREECH!
Julia gasps; the radiator spits; the masks nod faster.

Lightning—Charlie frozen at the table, mask on.

INT. STUDY – SAME MOMENT

Moirs stops typing, ribbon torn. Reads her last line.

TYPEWRITER PAGE
“And in the house across the way, someone decided
the story wasn’t over.”

The rain outside slows. The radiator sighs, goes quiet. Across the street, the Bowles porch light flickers out.

JULIA (O.S.)
He's wearing my mask.

Typewriter DING morphs into a SLOW, DELIBERATE KNOCK downstairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM – LATER

The RADIO is now just static ambiance. Moira turns off her lamp, finished for the night.

She moves through the hall, checking on Julia—the girl sleeps. The masks hang still now. Safe.

Moira rinses a cup, straightens her stack of pages. Outside, rain hammers the porch. Thunder rolls—then a GUST rattles the front door.

Just wind.

TIME CUT – 8:47 P.M.

Moira dozes on the sofa, book on her chest.

THUMP.

Her eyes open.

THUMP-THUMP.

Louder. Frantic. Not wind.

She stands. The sound builds—BANGING against the storm.

INT. FRONT HALL – CONTINUOUS

Lightning flashes through frosted glass—a FIGURE outside, jerking with every hit.

MOIRA
Walt?

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Please! Somebody's in my house!

MOIRA
Charles?

CHARLIE (O.S.)
He killed them! My wife—my kids—please!

She hesitates, looks toward Julia's room—then unlocks.

CLICK. Lightning floods the room white as she opens the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM – CONTINUOUS

CHARLIE stands soaked, mask on, fists dripping. He collapses inside.

MOIRA
Charles! You're bleeding—

She pulls the mask off. Underneath: blank, trembling, eyes hollow.

She grabs a towel and first-aid kit, kneels beside him.
Pulls his sleeve back—NO WOUNDS. Just dried blood.

MOIRA
Where are you hurt?

No reply.

The TELEPHONE RINGS.

Charlie jerks upright, sudden and violent. The table rattles. His eyes wild, unfocused.

MOIRA
It's okay—it's just the phone.

CHARLIE
Don't let him in... not again...

Then collapses, sobbing.

MOIRA (soft)
I'm just going to answer. Stay right here.

INT. HALLWAY – CONTINUOUS

She moves with the long PHONE CORD stretched taut.

MOIRA
(into phone)
Walt—thank God. Charles Bowles just showed up here.
He's covered in blood, says someone's in their house.

WALT (V.O.)
Slow down. I'm hearing chatter out of Haddonfield—
some kid killed his sister. Name sounded like Myers.
Probably Halloween nonsense. Just stay put and lock up.

MOIRA
A kid...?

WALT (V.O.)
Yeah. Myers, I think. Michael Myers. Can you believe that?

Static drowns him.

MOIRA
Walt?

Dead line.

INT. LIVING ROOM – CONTINUOUS

Moirra returns. Charlie sits upright now, perfectly still. The towel lies untouched on the floor. The MASK rests in his lap.

MOIRA
Walt's coming. Everything's—

She stops. The blood on his sleeve is brown. His expression blank, breath slow.

A long silence.

CHARLIE
(quiet)
Is Julia home?

Moira stiffens.

MOIRA
She's asleep. You just rest now.

He nods once, fingers tightening around the mask.

Behind him, the RADIO sputters.

RADIO (V.O.)
...victim identified as Judith Myers, seventeen...

MOIRA
Charles...?

He raises the mask, presses it to his face.

A FLOORBOARD CREAKS UPSTAIRS—Julia's room.

Moira looks up—then back to the chair.

CHARLIE IS GONE.

Wet FOOTPRINTS trail toward the stairs.

The RADIO spits one final burst through static.

RADIO (V.O.)
...reports of another incident in Russellville—

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END