

The condition

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INT. SCHOOL DINING HALL - DAY

A bunch of boisterous students eat lunch.

FAY (14, cute girl, funny face, dress code slightly emo), stands with her tray, scanning her surroundings. Her eyes find their target...

It's LOWELL (14, skinny boy with shaggy hair, eyeglasses, conservative style but with a dark vibe). He eats alone.

She heads his way, joins him.

FAY

Hey there!... How's my favorite nerd?

Lowell looks around him, intimidated and a bit incredulous.

LOWELL

Um... I'm good... And you?...

FAY

What are you doing this week-end?...

LOWELL

Me?... Um... Well, nothing much...

FAY

OK, you're coming to my place then. I'm hosting a sleepover for my birthday.

LOWELL

A what?... Sleepover?...

FAY

Yea. It's like a party, with booze, music and all, obviously without the parents, and after that you sleep wherever you want: the couch, the carpet, the swing... You pick.

LOWELL

Oh... Wow... Well no, I... I don't think I can make it...

FAY

Why the Hell not?... What else do you have, seriously?

LOWELL

Nothing!... But, my mom... She's not a big fan of me sleeping outside...

FAY

Your mom?!... Come on, Lowell! We're fourteen, for Chris-sake!...

LOWELL

No, no, she's very strict about that; no sleeping outside the house... Especially not this week-end...

FAY

Why, what happens this week-end?...

LOWELL

Well... You see, I have this... condition...

FAY

What condition?...

Lowell sighs... He looks around, makes sure no one's nearby, then goes on...

LOWELL

I have a chronic sleepwalking condition... Severe sleepwalking... And we're expecting an episode this week-end...

Fay is expressionless... Then she bursts out laughing.

FAY

Sleepwalking!?!... Are you shitting me, Lowell?

LOWELL

(dead serious)

No, no, it's true! I sleepwalk... I have no recollection of what happens afterwards, but it seems I'm very agitated... I even have to sleep in restraints... Otherwise I could harm myself, or my mom...

Fay's jaw drops, as she stands aghast...

FAY

Holy shit, you're serious... How often does that happen?

LOWELL

Around once a month...

FAY

Wow...

LOWELL

The good thing is it's almost predictable; so a couple of days before it happens, I tie myself to the bed before I sleep, and my mom locks the door from the outside, so I don't run out...

FAY

That is so fucked up... On so many levels... And what do the doctors say? What's the solution?...

LOWELL

There's no doctors, we're not consulting... My mum says it's hereditary; I got that from my father...

FAY

That's fucking crazy, man! You should get a shrink, or seek medical help... And you should sue your mum, by the way: what, she ties up her son, makes him sleep in some kind of dungeon?... That's fucking crazy!

LOWELL

Well, she's doing her best...

FAY

Look, just come over: I'm sure nothing's gonna happen. You'll be surrounded with friends, so if you get really agitated in your sleep, we'll just wake you up... Besides, no one's really gonna sleep; we're gonna be partying all night!

Lowell thinks about it...

INT. LOWELL'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

MRS GRAY (Lowell's mom, 40's, slim and nervous woman, conservative clothing) shakes her head while talking to her son.

MRS GRAY

Absolutely not, Lowell!

LOWELL

But mom, please...

MRS GRAY

No, sweetheart, especially not this week-end! You know very well it's gonna occur this couple of days...

Lowell grinds his teeth.

LOWELL

No mom, I dunno what's gonna occur this couple of days...

MRS GRAY

(impatiently)

Lowell...

LOWELL

Seriously mom, what's wrong with me?... I can't find anything about this affliction on the internet, or anywhere!... Does it even exist?... Why can't we see a doctor?!...

MRS GRAY

Lowell, we talked about this...

LOWELL

Well, not enough!... This is not normal, mom! Our life is not normal!... No one else in my class sleeps locked up in the basement!...

Mrs Gray has a sad smile. She strokes his face softly and holds him by the shoulders.

MRS GRAY

I'll tell you everything about it tomorrow, sweetheart, I promise... For now it's getting late, you should be heading to bed.

Lowell, still pissed, agrees with a nod.

INT. LOWELL'S BASEMENT - EVENING

Lowell and his mom come down from the stairs, and get to a kind of lobby.

There's a concrete wall with a heavy steel door.

Mrs Gray opens the steel door with a key, peers inside.

LOWELL
I'll tie up the restraints myself
mom, just lock the door...

She kisses him on the cheek.

MRS GRAY
OK. Goodnight sweetheart!

He goes in. She closes the door behind him, locks it, takes away the key and leaves...

A while passes...

Then a slow scraping sound is heard, and the door unlocks...

Lowell opens it carefully with a key, tiptoes outside...

EXT. SUBURBAN AREA - NIGHT

Lowell walks along the road, following his phone's GPS...

In the sky, there's a full moon...

INT. FAY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A typical teenage party: loud music, drinks, young couples dancing, kissing, making out...

Lowell, a carton cup in his hand, deafened by the loud music, tries to mingle...

He seems uneasy, scratches his forehead in pain... Then he touches his nostrils... He's bleeding from the nose...

INT. FAY'S HOUSE, TOILET - NIGHT

Lowell, face still wet, gazes at himself in the mirror...

While gazing pensively, there seems to be stroboscopic flashes, showing a different reflection... Some kind of monstrous beast...

The flashes intensify, then...

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - MORNING

Lowell sleeps deeply...

He wakes up suddenly with a jolt, looks around him... His face is dirtied with brownish red stains...

He looks at his clothes: they're all torn, drenched in half-coagulated blood...

He stands up in panic, runs towards what seems to be a footpath. He seems to find his way, and goes running...

From afar, police sirens can be heard...

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

A worried Mrs Gray paces nervously, cellphone to her ear, waiting for someone to pick up... The TV speaks loudly...

Someone knocks!

She jumps to the front door, rips it open... It's Lowell!

MRS GRAY
Where the Hell where you?!...

A distraught Lowell comes in...

LOWELL
Mom... What on Earth is going on?...
What's happening to me?...

He peers at the TV... It shows police cars parked outside a house, a reporter speaking in the foreground...

REPORTER (O.S.)
... the survivors of the tragedy claim to have been attacked by an unidentified large beast, which looks like a wolf. Although there hasn't been any reports of canine attacks in the area...

He gazes incredulously at the TV...

His mom turns it off, looks him straight in the eyes.

MRS GRAY
Lowell... There's something you need to know... About your condition...

THE END.