

BED REST

by
Lori Evans Taylor

July 17, 2015

OVER DARKNESS:

Labored breathing. Rumbling GROWLS of agony.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)
Come on Julie--- give me another.

SMASH IN ON:

INT. HOSPITAL - DELIVERY ROOM - DAY

A delivery in process. On the labor bed--

JULIE RIVERS (late 20s) writhing in pain. Dripping in sweat. WHITE-KNUCKLED HANDS gripping the bed rails.

A DOCTOR and TEAM OF NURSES hover in anticipation.

DOCTOR
You're doing great-- we're getting close.

On the swell of her next contraction, Julie gives it her all. Bears down hard.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Good--- keep going--

Unable to hold it, Julie collapses back, exhausted.

Her husband, DANIEL RIVERS, leans in for moral support, blotting off sweat from her head with a cool towel.

DANIEL
You've got this, Jules-- you're doing great, honey.

A NURSE takes note of a MONITOR. Urgently whispers something in the doctor's ear. The doctor's eyes fall to the monitor.

Face now filled with concern.

DOCTOR
Julie we need to do this right now. Give me everything you got.

The next contraction crests. Julie pushes--

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Come on Julie---

The team waits in anticipation--- but it's not enough.

Julie collapses back, wiped.

The doctor's eyes flash back to the monitor.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

We need another. Right now Julie. Give me
a good push.

Julie summons the strength for another go. Pushes hard.

Still not enough.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

You're right there-- you've got this--

Another go.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Come on, Julie---

And another. Sweat. Groans.

Julie grimaces, giving it all she's got, then--

--release!

Julie gasps in ecstasy as the baby emerges.

The doctors and nurses jump into action.

Julie falls back, spent. Relieved. Daniel kisses her.

DANIEL

You did it, baby.

Julie looks down, expecting to catch a glimpse of her newborn, but instead the team whisks the baby off to a corner.

A sense of alarm suddenly surges through her.

JULIE

He's not crying.

(to Daniel)

Why isn't he crying?

DANIEL

It's gonna be okay--

But Daniel's equally concerned face isn't reassuring.

In the corner, the team works frantically. Their backs to Julie and Daniel, shielding them.

A NURSE comes over--

JULIE
What's happening?

NURSE
Just try to relax.

JULIE
No, tell me what's going on. What's happening with my baby?

After a few moments of chaos and uncertainty, the doctor turns. Walks over. Solemn.

He leans over, pulls down his mask.

DOCTOR
We can't find a heartbeat.

Daniel and Julie stare at him in glazed disbelief.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Do you understand what I'm saying to you?

Julie just looks at him, stunned. Silent.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
(concerned)
Julie--?

Suddenly, Julie throws her head back, letting out a GUTTURAL SCREAM.

SMASH TO OVERHEAD POV OF THE ENTIRE HOSPITAL ROOM: The blood and afterbirth-drenched sheets. The team hovering above the motionless newborn. And Julie--

--SCREAMING HER FUCKING HEAD OFF.

SMASH TO BLACK:

BED REST

FADE IN ON:

A KALEIDOSCOPE OF SPARKLING GLASS

There's something beautiful about it. Something entrancing. It's as if we're staring through the prism of a dazzling diamond.

As we slowly pull back, we begin to recognize we're looking at the fragmented reflection of

JULIE (now THREE YEARS OLDER. New haircut)

She stares out a rain-drenched window. Thoughtful. Calm. Her dark hours now a thing of the past.

NURSE (O.S.)

Ms. Rivers?

PULL BACK TO REVEAL we're in the LOBBY of a DOCTOR'S OFFICE.

A NURSE stands in a nearby doorway. Chart in hand.

Upon hearing her name, Julie gathers her things and stands, revealing her burgeoning belly. ALMOST EIGHT MONTHS PREGNANT.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - EXAM ROOM - DAY

Julie now in a hospital gown. BABY MONITOR strapped to her belly.

The room is quiet except for the RHYTHMIC, HYPNOTIC ECHO of the baby's BEATING HEART.

CUT TO LATER:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

A private office. DR. MEADOWS (50s, OBGYN) sits behind his desk. Julie watches as he studies her patient file.

DR. MEADOWS

Looks like we got all your records.

(finally looking up)

Must be a culture shock moving out here.

JULIE

Slower pace, but my husband and I were ready to get out of the city.

He goes back to the file. Growing more serious--

DR. MEADOWS

How have you been feeling?

JULIE

Fine. Tired. But I guess that's to be expected, right?

DR. MEADOWS

(eyes back on the file)

I meant... well, it says here--

JULIE

I'm not the girl in that file anymore.

His eyes are on her. Lingering. Concerned. Prying for any hint of insecurity. But Julie offers none.

DR. MEADOWS

(letting it go)

Well then-- to second chances.

JULIE

To second chances.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

A large picturesque LAKE ensconced in thick trees. A thin ROAD winds around its perimeter.

EAGLE EYE VIEW of Julie's SUV as it weaves through the isolated terrain.

EXT. ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Julie's SUV slows as it reaches a DIRT DRIVEWAY carved in between a thicket of tall trees. A REAL ESTATE SIGN out front. A SOLD DECAL splashed across its face.

EXT. DRIVEWAY

The driveway snakes deeper and deeper into the woods, eventually opening up on--

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A beautiful two-story lakeshore home. Thick woods surrounding all sides. Breathtaking. But isolated.

Julie's car weaves down a STEEP DRIVEWAY. Parks at the bottom, alongside a WORK VAN.

As Julie emerges from her car she stops to regard the van. A plumbing decal running along its side.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - FOYER

An impressive foyer complete with an OPEN STAIRCASE and an opulent GLASS CHANDELIER. Stacks of UNOPENED BOXES line the walls. Clearly a very recent move.

As Julie enters, her eyes fall upon a GAPING HOLE IN THE CEILING exposing moist, rotted wood. A PLUMBER stands underneath, hacking away at the loose drywall with a hammer. He turns, sees Julie.

PLUMBER

Oh hey, you must be Mrs. Rivers.

Julie stares at the hole, aghast. This is clearly a new development.

JULIE

My husband around?

PLUMBER

Think I seen 'em upstairs.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Loud banging echoes down the hall.

Julie emerges from the stairwell, tracing the noise to--

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM

Julie pulls back a LOOSE FLAP OF PLASTIC shrouding the doorway to expose-- a bathroom in upheaval.

Chunks of drywall and floor tiles missing. THE CLAW TUB at the center of the bath now surrounded by a SEA OF EXPOSED, ROTTED WOOD.

A REMEDIATION WORKER clothed in a paper suit and disposable mask is busy at work, banging away the rot to the beat of a pop song on a portable radio.

JULIE

Excuse me?

The worker continues to bang away, unaware of her.

Julie takes a step inside. This gets his attention. He rips down his mask--

WORKER 2

Whoa-- ma'am, you shouldn't be in here.
Floor's not safe.

Julie quickly hops back out of the room. Resists the urge to ask questions. But as she starts to walk away, he stops her.

WORKER 2 (CONT'D)

By the way, we traced the source of your leak. Found this lodged in your drain.

He tosses over a GOLD CHARM BRACELET. Beautiful, but tarnished with age.

WORKER 2 (CONT'D)

I know how you gals get all sentimental about your jewelry.

He laughs, then slides the mask back over his face. Back to the rot.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A ROOMBA drones across a bedroom floor.

OPEN UP TO REVEAL a spacious master bedroom. Fireplace, hard-wood floors, and of course, more moving boxes.

Daniel Rivers paces the room. Earbuds nestled in his ear.

DANIEL

(on phone)

Well I got a baby coming in a month so I was hoping to get somebody out here sooner rather than later.

Julie enters, takes a seat on the bed. Her fingers playing with the bracelet as Daniel tries to keep his cool on the phone.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Then can you do me a favor and just have him call me? Daniel Rivers. Yeah like the Mississippi. Thanks.

He hangs up, yanking the earbuds from his ears.

JULIE

So we've got a hole in our ceiling.

DANIEL

Sorry, I was going to call you, but I've been caught up in contractor hell.

JULIE

Contractor hell... sounds promising.

DANIEL

Yeah, so that little drip, drip we've been hearing -- turns out not so little.

JULIE

How not little?

DANIEL

To quote our new plumber friends "years in the making".

JULIE

They didn't find any of this in the inspection?

DANIEL

Nope.

Julie sinks to the bed. At a loss for words.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

They assured me they can get everything restored before the baby comes, except for the floor. Apparently we need a structural engineer for that.

Julie falls back onto her back, aghast.

JULIE

Why can't anything be easy?

He lies down next to her--

DANIEL

I'm easy.

She looks at him--

JULIE

Our new home is disintegrating around us and you're cracking jokes?

DANIEL

Who's joking? I'm totally easy.

Julie only manages a slight smile. Feeling burdened.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Hey-- look at me.

(Sincere)

We'll get through this. We always do.

He kisses her lips. Then her forehead. Her nose. The last eliciting a much-needed smile.

This is a couple used to weathering storms together. A couple in love.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT - LATER

The lake house sits back against a dark velvet sky.

The elegant trills of CLASSICAL MUSIC echo from inside.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON A VINYL RECORD spinning under a needle.

Julie is busy unpacking a box of baby items. Onesies. Books. Then--

A SMALL WOODEN BOX.

This gives her pause. She runs her fingers over the intricate design carved onto the lid.

Whatever is inside holds great meaning to her.

Carefully she sets it onto the bedside table. Next to

THE CHARM BRACELET.

She picks it up. Clasps it around her wrist, getting a better look at the charms (A heart engraved with the INITIALS "MK", a crucifix, a set of baby shoes, and one that simply says MOM).

She admires the mom charm. *How sweet--*

Then suddenly-- a LOW GROWL.

Julie's attention now on a DARK DOORWAY. Curious, she walks over. Reaches in and flicks on the light switch.

REVEAL a sizeable MASTER BATHROOM. Glass shower. Sunken tub. And perched on the edge of the tub- Julie's CAT, LOU.

Glaring at the MIRROR above the sink. Rumbling.

JULIE

What's up with you?

Another low growl. Tail snapping the air.

Curious, Julie walks in. Regards the mirror.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Just a mirror, kitty-cat. Old age is making you paranoid.

Just then-- a VOICE from down the hall

DANIEL (O.S.)

Aye, Jules--

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NURSERY - MOMENTS LATER

A half-finished nursery.

Julie enters to see DANIEL proudly presenting a fully assembled CRIB.

DANIEL

Not too shabby, huh?

JULIE

Looks great.

DANIEL

And check it out--

He whips out an IPAD. Presses an ICON. LIVE VIDEO FEED of the crib pops up onto the screen.

He uses a CONTROL PANEL on the screen to move the camera side to side, allowing a larger view of the room.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

One hundred and eighty degree access.

(into mic)

And microphone. All controlled wirelessly.

The camera toggles to a stop. Now trained on them.

Julie stares at herself on screen. Looks up, tracing the angle back to a BABY CAM now anchored in the wall next to the crib.

JULIE

Pretty cool.

DANIEL

See, pays to be married to an engineer.

She gives him a congratulatory kiss.

JULIE

Then how about engineering me a changing table.

Daniel grabs his drill.

DANIEL

Step back, little lady. I'm about to get all manly.

He lasciviously revs his drill for added effect.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Julie steps back into the hall. About to head for the stairs, when she senses movement--

Turns, eyes finding the upstairs bathroom. Its DOORWAY now tightly sheathed in REMEDIATION PLASTIC. A zipper running up its face.

The plastic is rippling.

She watches, fascinated, yet unnerved, as it crinkles and jerks. *Something is moving it.*

Slowly she walks over. Examines the plastic. Its creepy translucence only offering teases of what might be lurking on the other side.

For a moment she considers opening the zipper. Then--

A LOW BOOM from overhead as the central heating shuts off.

Julie looks up. Relieved to spot an overhead VENT.

Must have been the air current.

Satisfied, she pulls herself away, walking towards

INT. LAKE HOUSE - FOYER/ TOP OF STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Julie descends the stairs.

Halfway down-- a TINY KICK. Hands embracing her tummy.

JULIE

Hey, little lady. You stretching in there?

Then-- THE TICKLE OF GLASS

Julie stops. Looks up to see the GLASS CHANDELIER gently quavering. *That's curious.*

Then-- GROWL

LOU now standing behind her. Arching his back, rumbling at the chandelier.

He lets out a HISS then darts passed Julie's feet.

Julie steps back, trying to avoid him. Foot missing the step, throwing her off balance. Her OTHER ANKLE BUCKLING beneath her, spilling her forward.

A desperate grab for the HANDRAIL-- MISSES.

By instinct, she curves her body, hitting the stairs sideways. Sliding towards

THE PARQUET FLOOR

The back of her head hits with a THUMP.

SILENCE

Eyes blinking upwards in shock. Not moving.

In the background we hear Daniel's panicked voice--

DANIEL (O.S.)

Jules--? JULES?!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - HALL - LATER

A flurry of E.R. DOCTORS and NURSES wheel the injured Julie through the emergency room halls.

NURSE
BP is 80 over 60.

ER DOCTOR
We need oxygen and an IV.
(to EMT)
How far along?

EMT
Eight months.

The DOCTOR leans over Julie.

ER DOCTOR
Ma'am, can you hear us?

Focus on Julie. Her eyes glazed.

DOCTOR
Ma'am?

But no answer.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Julie lays in a hospital bed. Quiet. Asleep.

Her eyes slowly flicker open.

Daniel sits in the chair next to her. Upon seeing her awaken, he moves closer.

DANIEL
Hey baby--

Julie takes in her surroundings. The monitors. IVs. Tries to comprehend.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
You're in the hospital. You had a bad fall.

Julie tenses as she suddenly realizes--

JULIE
Our baby...?

Daniel takes her hand. Tries to calm her.

DANIEL
She's okay. Our baby's okay.

But something in his face isn't wholly convincing.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

DR. MEADOWS
You suffered what we call a partial
placenta abruption.

Dr. Meadows is pointing to an ULTRASOUND PHOTO on a
portable COMPUTER SCREEN.

JULIE
Abruption?

DR. MEADOWS
It's when the placenta becomes partially
detached from the uterine wall.

DANIEL
Is that dangerous?

DR. MEADOWS
It can be life-threatening if the
placenta fully separates. But as you can
see--
(pointing to U/S)
--the tear appears fairly minimal. So far
the situation has stabilized. The
bleeding's stopped and your baby's got a
good strong heartbeat.

Julie looks to Daniel. He gives her hand a relieved
squeeze.

DR. MEADOWS (CONT'D)
However, it's standard practice to
exercise caution.

JULIE
What does that mean?

DR. MEADOWS
It means I want you on bed rest, strict
bed rest, for the duration of your
pregnancy. No driving. No lifting. No
cooking.

(MORE)

DR. MEADOWS (CONT'D)
 Other than the occasional trip to the bathroom, you need to be in bed. Idle.

Julie takes this in. So does Daniel.

DR. MEADOWS (CONT'D)
 Do you have any family or friends in the area who can help you out?

JULIE
 Not since the move.

DR. MEADOWS
 If you need support, we'd be happy to offer some referrals.

Silence as Julie and Daniel consider their new normal.

DR. MEADOWS (CONT'D)
 Do you have any other questions?

A beat. Then Julie looks up. Resolute.

JULIE
 When can I go home?

EXT. LAKE / INT. CAR - DAY

The SUV snakes along the lake road.

INSIDE

Julie in the passenger seat. Head pressed against the glass. The reflection of the trees dancing across her face.

Dr. Meadows' voice rings through her head--

DR. MEADOWS (V.O.)
 To avoid pre-term labor, you need to follow a few simple rules--

FLASH BACK TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Dr. Meadows prepares Julie for her discharge.

(**INTERCUT** THE FOLLOWING DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE HOSPITAL AND THE DRIVE)

DR. MEADOWS

One, you need to remain in bed twenty-four hours a day.

The SUV pulls onto the dirt driveway.

DR. MEADOWS (CONT'D)

Two, you're allowed brief trips to the bathroom and one ten-minute bath every three days. No more.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE

The car pulls to the bottom of the steep driveway.

DR. MEADOWS (V.O.)

And finally, the most important rule-- avoid stress. Anything that raises your blood pressure puts you at risk of premature birth. My advice to you, enjoy the R&R.

Daniel gets out and circles around the car, helping Julie into a wheelchair.

As she settles into the chair, she looks up at the house. Now cast against the gray overcast sky.

It feels darker somehow.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel carefully wedges Julie's wheelchair through the front door.

DANIEL

Watch your fingers.

Inside - the moving boxes now gone. THE HOLE IN THE CEILING now enshrouded in plastic.

Daniel wheels her to the staircase. *Such a long way up.*

DANIEL (CONT'D)

You ready?

Julie nods.

She reaches out and grips the bannister, struggling to find her balance. As she does, she takes a deep, steadyng breath.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
We'll take it slow.

Gradually they scale the staircase. Step by step.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Finally making it the last step. Julie leans back against the wall. Out of breath.

DANIEL
Gonna grab the chair. You okay for a sec?

Julie nods. Steadies herself as Daniel sprints back down the steps.

As she waits, her attention falls to the BATHROOM DOORWAY. Still sealed in plastic. Her eyes linger for a moment. There's something unsettling about it.

DANIEL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Julie?

Julie snaps back to the moment. Turns to see Daniel offering the wheelchair. Carefully she eases down into the seat.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel wheels Julie into the bedroom. The king-sized bed staring back at her.

Her prison for the upcoming weeks.

They roll to a stop next to it.

DANIEL
On three--

Julie prepares herself--

DANIEL (CONT'D)
One, two-- and up.

Daniel helps Julie from the chair, guiding her onto the mattress. She settles back onto a mountain of pillows.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
So I got you all hooked up--
(pointing to bedside table)
(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)
 Pens, lotions, prenatales, trashy
 magazines, claw grabber, iPad, and--
 (doing his best Vanna White)
 --mini-fridge. Stocked with all kinds of
 awesome shit cause that's the kind of
 husband I am. Oh, and check it, the best
 part--

Daniel pulls out a couple of TWO-WAY RADIOS.

JULIE
 Walkie-talkies?

DANIEL
 So we can communicate throughout the
 house. Eighteen channels. Twenty-three
 mile radius. Sick, right?

JULIE
 You're totally just reliving your
 childhood right now, aren't you?

DANIEL
 Pretty much.

Daniel turns on the radio, but the loud scratches of an
 EMERGENCY SCANNER echo out instead.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
 Shit--

Daniel quickly syncs the channels. Tries again.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
 (into walkie)
 Breaker, breaker-- This is Big Daddy. Got
 any requests, Little Mama?

Julie presses the button-- playing along.

JULIE
 Sure could use a cup of tea, Big Daddy.

DANIEL
 Shot a 'liquid lightning heading your
 way, Little Mama. Over and out.

Daniel jumps into action. But just before he gets to the
 door, he spins back around--

DANIEL (CONT'D)
 (through walkie)
 Now don't you go anywhere--

He playfully winks back at her, then exits.

She smiles at their reparte', but her joy quickly fades. Replaced with the inevitable feeling of isolation.

FADE TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - NEXT MORNING

A cool wind is setting in.

An old TREE SWING gently creaks in the breeze. WIND CHIMES CLINK on the porch.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Julie flips through the litany of morning NEWS PROGRAMS as Daniel whips in from the bathroom. Dressed for work. Clearly a bundle of nerves as he noodles over the last minute details.

DANIEL

Okay--- I got my cell phone if you need me. Lunch and drinks are in the fridge. Remote. iPad-- what am I forgetting?

His anxious fingers fumble with his neck tie.

Julie lovingly summons him with a finger.

As he takes a seat next to her, she calmly reaches up, spinning the tie into a perfect knot.

JULIE

I'll be fine.

Her eyes find his. Comforting. Relaxing him.

JULIE (CONT'D)

I've got Steve Harvey and a fridge full of snacks. What more can a girl ask for?

CUT TO LATER:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

Cold. Dreary. Bored trees tottering in the wind.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

WE FLOAT EFFORTLESSLY down the hallway towards

THE MASTER BEDROOM DOORWAY

An unusual thrumming sound grows louder as we draw closer.

The slightest crack teasing what's inside.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

An irritatingly efficient ROOMBA hums across the floor. THUNKS into a wall, recalculating itself.

On the bed-- Julie. Working through a half-finished crossword puzzle.

The monotony of bed rest has begun.

As she fills in a new letter, the pen's ink runs out. She scribbles the tip over the paper to get it going again-- no dice.

Looks for a new pen on the bedside table. Can't find one. Spots one on the bureau-- all the way across the room.

Now nothing is simple.

Sighing her frustration, Julie tosses the empty pen and crossword aside. Turns her attention to the bedside table, contemplating her next distraction.

QUICK CUTS AS JULIE:

-Plays around on her iPad.

-Flips through the endless selection of afternoon talk shows and reality trash.

-Rolls over, trying to find a more comfortable position.

-Scans over the bed rest literature. Zeros in on the exercises.

-Works through a set of pre-approved leg stretches. Gives up.

-Tests out the CLAW GRABBER. Clenches a bottle of water from the mini fridge.

-Thumbs through a trashy magazine.

Her boredom clearly kicking into overdrive.

She scans the bedside table for a new distraction.

Spots the WOODEN BOX. Her eyes grow still. A lump growing in her throat.

She considers opening it-- but then

A TINY WOMB KICK.

JULIE

Hey you--

She smooths her nightgown, watching with pride as her belly rolls and pops.

JULIE (CONT'D)

I know, this bed rest business is a real drag, huh? Don't worry. We're gonna get through it you and me. I promise.

One last gentle caress. Then--

JULIE (CONT'D)

Although if you wouldn't mind laying off the bladder, I'd appreciate it.

Julie shifts to the edge of the bed. Toes finding the floor.

Glances over at the bathroom door. *Here goes nothing--* as she very delicately hoists herself to her feet.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

THE FLUSH OF A TOILET.

CLOSE ON A HAND TURNING ON A SINK FAUCET.

Julie leans on the counter, practically out of breath from her short journey.

She examines her tattered reflection in the mirror. The dark trails of pregnancy insomnia painted under her eyes.

She splashes handfuls of cool water over her face, enjoying the sensation. *The highlight of her day.*

Reaches for a towel. Buries her face inside. When suddenly--

A BABY'S CRY

Echoing from beyond the bathroom door.

RACK FOCUS TO Julie. Face rising from the towel.
Unsettled.

Did she really just hear that?

There's something deeply personal about her reaction. As if the sound has hit some kind of raw nerve.

Julie listens. Guard up.

Then-- another CRY.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The bathroom door creaks open, revealing--

Julie. Skeptical eyes dissecting the room. Waiting.
Listening.

Only hearing the hypnotic drone of that damn Roomba. Now assaulting the foot of the bed.

She reaches for the Roomba remote. Turns it off, casting the room into complete silence.

Waiting and listening some more.

But the cry never returns.

Shaking it off, Julie starts her journey back to the bed, but then--

THUNK.

Like an object knocking against wood.

Julie stops. *What was that?* Considers it for a brief second, about to disregard it, then-

THUNK. It happens again.

Coming from the CLOSET.

Five feet away. Outside of her path.

She glances back to the bed, acutely aware she shouldn't be on her feet much longer.

THUNK... THUNK

Now it can't be ignored. Julie's curiosity heats up. So do her nerves.

She takes a careful step towards the closet. Hands finding the bureau for security. Inching her way closer.

THUNK.

Anxious eyes zero in on the slight crack in the doorway. Only a couple of feet away now.

Julie reaches out. Fingertips tickling the edge of the doorknob. A last steadyng breath as they find leverage.

FLIPS the door OPEN TO REVEAL--

-- *nothing*. Just the jingle of HANGERS.

Julie gives it a last once-over. Still puzzled. But satisfied for now.

CUT TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Julie eats a bowl of ice cream while watching the late night news.

ON THE SCREEN... a WEATHER GIRL gesticulates towards a nasty looking patch of clouds on the DOPPLER RADAR.

Daniel strolls in wearing pajama bottoms. Ready for bed.

DANIEL

(re: TV)

Whoa... what's going on there?

JULIE

Got some weather rolling in.

He flops onto the bed--

DANIEL

Oooh, maybe I'll get iced in and we can bed rest it together. What do you think? Binge watch Grey's Anatomy? Eat our weight in popcorn?

JULIE

Let me tell ya, it's not all it's cracked up to be.

(off Daniel)

What? It's exhausting lying in bed all day.

He cracks a smile.

JULIE (CONT'D)

I'm serious. It is.

He leans over, loving--

DANIEL

Thank you for doing this for us.

Kisses her. Then focuses on her belly.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

And thank you for being on your best behavior. Your mommy and I appreciate it.

He kisses the belly, prompting a smile from Julie. *He's gonna be a good dad.*

Daniel snuggles under the covers. As he reaches to turn off the bedside light...

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I still think we should binge-watch Grey's Anatomy.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

An intimidating CRACK OF THUNDER as a STORM rumbles and flashes in the night sky.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daniel sleeps like a cozy pussycat, but next to him, Julie battles pregnancy insomnia.

A FLASH OF LIGHTNING illuminates the room. Seconds later an explosion of THUNDER.

Not helping.

Julie readjusts the mountain of pillows surrounding her-- *Could this be any more hopeless--* finally managing a semi-comfortable position.

She rests her eyes, blocking out the storm. But as she starts to drift--

THUNK

Julie's eyes snap open. The closet noise is back.

She peers over the top of the covers, anxiously awaiting the next--

THUNK

Concern now growing, Julie slides up in bed. Eyes finding the CLOSET. She listens hard, now detecting--

THE HINT OF WHISPERS

ANOTHER FLASH OF LIGHTNING

Julie steels. Eyes zeroing in on the CRACK in the CLOSET DOORWAY. *Just enough to offer a tantalizing glimpse of what's inside.*

She leans forward. Eyes squinting. Adjusting to the darkness. Making out what seems to be a shape--

Suddenly-- the SHAPE moves! Followed by a CLAP OF THUNDER!

Julie gasps. Immediately slaps at Daniel.

JULIE

Daniel-- wake up! Wake up--

Daniel stirs, groggy.

JULIE (CONT'D)

There's someone in the closet.

Daniel's eyes snap to the closet. Suddenly on high alert.

He springs from the bed. Fueled by adrenaline. In one fell swoop he flicks on the overhead light and grabs a POKER from the fireplace.

Stalks to the closet. Both of their hearts beating wildly as he grabs for the knob.

YANKS OPEN THE DOOR

But the closet is empty.

Daniel slumps. Relieved. He pulls the chain light. Giving the closet a last once over. Then steps back allowing Julie a look.

DANIEL
Scared the shit out of me--

Julie just stares at the empty closet. *Was it all in her head?*

Daniel flips off the light. Adrenaline finally dissipating. He flops back onto the bed. Spent.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Probably just your sleep mind, baby. Try to get some rest.

But Julie still stares at the closet. Unsettled.

CUT TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

CLOSE ON THE TV - An item is up for bid on the PRICE IS RIGHT.

Julie nibbles from a breakfast tray as the last CONTESTANT solicits help from the audience--

JULIE
One dollar--

The contestant considers his bid, goes high.

DREW CAREY
You've all overbid-

Julie shakes her head, knowingly.

JULIE
Idiots.

As the contestants start a new round of bidding, Julie's eyes can't help meandering to

THE CLOSET

She sizes it up. Still skeptical of her experience from the night before.

Eventually she shakes it off, turning her attention back to the TV. Tired of the Price is Right she grabs the remote. Flips through more channels, eventually finding

A TALK SHOW

A MOTHER and FATHER discuss the challenges of raising QUINTUPLETS.

Out of the corner of her eye-- MOVEMENT.

Julie turns to the WINDOW. Through it-- a LITTLE BOY (3 or 4) crouching behind a tree. Alone.

Curious, Julie leans over, raising the window. The noise garners the boy's attention. He looks up, revealing a cherubic face.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Hey there. Whatcha doin'?

He presses a finger to his lips. Crouches lower.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Hide and seek?

He nods.

JULIE (CONT'D)
That's fun.
(scanning the woods)
Where's your mommy?

A mischievous smile spreads across his face. He raises a finger, pointing to the bedroom window.

MATCH CUT TO THE BOY'S POV: Julie in her window. And looming behind her--

A SHADOWY SILHOUETTE!

Julie turns around--

-- but the room is empty. Only the TALK SHOW playing out on the TV.

She turns back to the window.

The boy now nowhere to be seen.

JULIE (CONT'D)
(searching)
Hello...?

Silence. Then--

BAM! The WINDOW FRAME crashes down in front of her, its pane splintering like a spiderweb.

Julie's heart leaps. She takes a deep breath, staring at the window. At her NOW-CRACKED REFLECTION.

She shakes it off. Buzzing in her own skin.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Get it together, girl.

One last look for the boy. Gives up, rolling back down into bed.

The quintuplets are crying now.

The last thing she needs. Without hesitation, she raises the remote. Clicks MUTE--

-- but a BABY'S CRY continues for a few seconds more.

A surge of adrenaline pulses through Julie's body. She springs to attention.

Carefully listens. Secretly hoping there won't be an encore. But then--

ANOTHER CRY

It's coming from down the hall!

Julie's eyes fall to the BEDROOM DOORWAY. Its angle not offering any kind of view.

She spots the TV, directly across the room from the door. Getting an idea, she grabs the remote. Turns off the TV. The BLANK SCREEN reflecting a partial view of the hall.

Julie watches with bated breath.

Then-- a SHADOW crosses in and out of sight.

Julie barely breathes. Considers her options. Remembers
THE BABY CAM

Julie grabs her iPad. Fumbles through the home screen until she finds the CAMERA ICON. Clicks it, bringing up

THE NURSERY WEBCAM - ANGLE ON THE CRIB.

The wireless feed still up and running.

She finds the CAMERA CONTROLS. With trembling fingers she toggles the camera up, revealing a larger view of the room.

It's empty. Nothing seems out of place.

She toggles to the left, getting a thorough view of the far end of the room. The door. The bookcase.

Nothing.

Toggles right. Across the dresser, the changing station, towards the window.

THEN-- A FLASH AS SOMEONE MOVES QUICKLY ACROSS THE FRAME! Indiscernible but most definitely a person!

Julie freezes. Terrified.

Someone is in the house!

Her mind whirls. She fumbles for her cell phone. Dials.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
911, what's your emergency?

Julie-- still as ice. Whispering.

JULIE
I need help. There's someone in my house.

Julie's eyes pinball back and forth between the iPad and the reflection on the TV. Bracing for another sighting.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
What's your address, ma'am?

JULIE
8317 Lake View Drive. Please hurry.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
We have a unit on the way, ma'am. Are you in a safe place?

JULIE
I'm in my bedroom. I'm not supposed to move. I'm on bed rest.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
And where is the intruder?

JULIE
Down the hall.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
Is your bedroom door locked?

JULIE
No.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
Ma'am can you get to the door?

Eyes on the door.

911 OPERATOR (CONT'D)
Ma'am?

She has to try--

JULIE
Yes.

Julie slides to the edge of the bed. Quiet. Careful not to make a sound.

Tests a foot on the hardwood floor-- CREAK.

Shit.

Eyes back on the TV. Still no movement in the hall.

The coast clear, Julie pushes off-- finding her balance. Takes a nervous step. Tries to keep calm.

But then-- HEAVY FOOTSTEPS. Echoing down the hallway.

Whoever it is-- they're coming!

Panic setting in, Julie lurches towards the door. But in her frenzy, loses her footing.

With a last final effort, she strains for the door. Swats it shut. Locks it.

She scrambles backwards. Sandwiching against the wall. Panicked breaths.

The FOOTSTEPS getting louder. Closer.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
Ma'am are you still there?

But Julie doesn't respond. Her terrified eyes glued to the door.

Waiting for the person to make their move.

911 OPERATOR (CONT'D)

Ma'am?

Then the footsteps stop. DEAFENING SILENCE as Julie waits. The seconds ticking away like years.

Then out of the quiet-- GRINDING GRAVEL.

911 OPERATOR (CONT'D)

Ma'am the officers are on scene.

Her words shaking Julie back to reality.

Julie slides to a window. Sees TWO COPS springing from their SQUAD CAR. Hands on their pistols.

Julie slips back down to the floor. Her panicked breaths finally slowing in relief.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - EVENING

The squad car still parked in the driveway. Daniel's SUV pulls up alongside.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM

A COP finishes some last paperwork as Daniel charges through the door. He races to Julie's side, embracing her.

DANIEL

You okay?

She offers a nod.

COP

You her husband?

DANIEL

Yes. What happened?

COP

Your wife thought she saw someone in the house.

DANIEL

The security system-- I armed it this morning.

COP

We did a sweep of the property. Checked the alarm. Didn't turn up anything.

This gives Daniel pause. He turns to Julie.

DANIEL

Did you get a look at the guy?

Julie shakes her head.

COP

(off report)
Didn't turn up a baby either.

This stops Daniel in his tracks.

DANIEL

A baby?

COP

Your wife also thought she heard a baby crying.

Daniel's eyes flash to Julie, now hot with concern. She can't bring herself to look at him.

The cop gathers his paperwork.

COP (CONT'D)

Looks like we got what we need on our end. If there's anything else we can do for you, just give us a call.

Concerned eyes still on Julie--

DANIEL

Of course, thank you, officer. Here, I'll walk you out.

Daniel escorts the cop away, leaving Julie to stew in her own embarrassment and self doubt. She looks out the window--

POV THROUGH WINDOW as Daniel and the officer share one last word in confidence.

Julie watches them like a hawk. Reading their body language.

The way Daniel shakes his head. The way he apologetically gesticulates. The way the cop nods and sneaks a quick peek back up to Julie's window.

They're doubting her story.

CUT TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Julie clicks through the endless litany of channels. Not really paying attention.

Daniel reenters. Takes a seat across from her. Loaded silence between them.

JULIE

Go ahead, say what you want to say. I know you're thinking it.

Beat. Afraid to even ask--

DANIEL

Should I be worried?

His insinuation like a dagger to her heart.

JULIE

It was just a misunderstanding.

But Daniel doesn't look satisfied.

JULIE (CONT'D)

You don't believe me.

DANIEL

What am I supposed to think, Jules? The mental dissociation-- fixation on a child-

JULIE

I saw something-

DANIEL

--which wasn't there!

Julie goes quiet. Stung.

Daniel takes a seat next to her. Careful.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

We're on the verge of something here, Jules.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

On the verge of the life we always wanted. I just need to know the past is behind us.

(beat)

I need to know you're not slipping on me again.

Beat

JULIE

(defiant)

It's not like last time.

DANIEL

(hesitates, then)

I hope you're right.

Silence. Both at an impasse.

Daniel stands. On his way out the door--

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(decisive)

I'm calling your doctor. We're bringing someone in.

JULIE

I don't need a baby sitter.

DANIEL

Not for you--

(eyes on her belly)

For her.

Julie considers a fight as Daniel leaves. Lets it go.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

A cold wind blows through the barren winter trees. Choppy waves lap at the lake shore.

A wicked chill is setting in...

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

REVEAL JULIE lying in a fetal position. Eyes riveted on

THE WOODEN BOX.

Beckoning her to pick it up.

Unable to resist, she reaches over. Slides the box onto her lap. Lifts the lid.

INSIDE-- relics of her last pregnancy

A SERIES of BELLY PICTURES documenting the nine month journey. Julie beaming from ear to ear in each.

ANOTHER PICTURE-- this one of Julie proudly holding a paintbrush, presenting a freshly painted nursery. The name "Andrew" painted on the wall.

Then a LAST PHOTO-- Julie at a cemetery. Her hand stroking a tiny headstone. A candid moment captured in the elegance of black and white.

Tears now starting to brim in her eyes. She reaches into the box and finds the last item--

-- a small BLUE WOODEN CAR. The words "*It's a boy*" painted on the back.

Julie snuggles down into bed, clenching the car to her chest. Tears flowing. Her tortured mind running through her past like a needle skipping on a record.

She closes her eyes.

A BARRAGE OF IMAGES WHIRLING THROUGH HER HEAD:

-Julie in a bathroom smeared with blood.

-Sirens.

-Bandaged wrists.

-Julie huddled on a small twin bed. In an institutional setting. Fifty mile stare.

-Daniel's voice "Julie, do you hear me? Julie?"

The images flash faster. Out of control. Morphing into a final vision...

... the UPSTAIRS CLAW TUB. Starting to overflow. Not with water.

With BLOOD.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING (**PRESENT**)

Julie's eyes snap open. Out of breath. Heart thumping.

She snuggles in tight under the covers. Like a protective cocoon.

Curling her hands up against the pillow. Eyes naturally falling to her WRISTS.

For the first time we notice the CUT MARKS. She runs her fingers over one of the scars. A *reminder of the past*.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

CLOSE ON A BLOOD PRESSURE CUFF AS IT INFLATES.

Julie's new doula, DELMY (middle-age) listens to a stethoscope. Julie studies her, trying to get a read. She seems kind and protective, but also quietly stern.

The cuff HISSES as it lets out its air.

DELMY
117 over 80. Good.

Delmy wraps up the cuff. Slides it back into her bag. Pulls out a PORTABLE ULTRASOUND.

As she does, Julie's eyes fall to a HOSPITAL BADGE clipped to the bag. On it-- Delmy's name and photo.

DELMY (CONT'D)
(re: Julie's belly)
May I?

Julie raises her shirt and Delmy adds a dollop of gel to her exposed belly. Lowers the Doppler wand--

DELMY (CONT'D)
Let's see what we have...

THE SCRATCHY CADENCE OF THE BABY'S HEARTBEAT echoes over the room.

THUMPING. HYPNOTIC.

As Delmy watches the results on the monitor--

A CREAK. Coming from above.

Julie looks up to see the LIGHT FIXTURE subtly swaying.
Moving in perfect time with the baby's heartbeat.

Julie watches, mesmerized. Troubled.

But Delmy doesn't notice.

DELMY (CONT'D)
140. Perfect.

Delmy removes the wand from Julie's belly. The cadence abruptly ceases.

So, too, does the flux of the light fixture.

DELMY (CONT'D)
How are you sleeping?

Her words snapping Julie back. She shrugs.

DELMY (CONT'D)
The irony of bed rest. All the time in
the world to sleep, and unable to do it.

Delmy packs up her kit. Julie watches her. Intrigued.

JULIE
Do you have kids?

DELMY
(strangely cool)
My husband and I tried-- my body just
wasn't equipped for it.

JULIE
I'm sorry, I shouldn't have--

DELMY
No, please-- sharing my journey is
important.
(beat)
In my experience, there's no one path to
motherhood. For me-- I consider myself a
proud mother to the countless babies I've
helped bring into this world.

Beat.

JULIE
Have you ever lost one?

DELMY
No.

Beat. As Delmy builds her courage--

DELMY (CONT'D)
Daniel told me about your son.
(digging deeper)
He also told me about Oakview.

Julie grows quiet.

DELMY (CONT'D)
How long were you there?

JULIE
Three months.

DELMY
Postpartum depression?

JULIE
Postpartum psychosis.
(beat)
My mind wasn't ready to let go.

Silence, then--

DELMY
Look Julie, I know it's difficult
allowing a stranger to live in your home
like this. But I just want you to know
that I'm here for you. Whatever it is
you're feeling, whatever it is you
are experiencing-- you can trust me.

Julie searches her eyes. *Can she really?*

Forges a small smile.

JULIE
I appreciate that.

Beat.

DELMY
You should get some rest.

As Delmy leaves, Julie watches her. Not ready to let her guard down completely with this new stranger.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

Cold wind whips through the trees. The hand of an outdoor THERMOMETER points to the Mid-30s.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

WE'RE ONCE AGAIN FLOATING down the dim hallway--
-- towards the master bedroom doorway.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM

Julie curled up in bed. Trying to soak up some much-needed sleep.

The room is quiet. Then out of the silence--

GROWL

Julie peeks over the covers. Sees Lou the cat crouching on the bedroom floor. Body postured.

JULIE
Give it a rest, cat.

She nestles back under the covers. Trying to block him out.

ANOTHER GROWL

JULIE (CONT'D)
Seriously, Lou I'm really not in the mood
for--

She stops. Realizing Lou's eyes are glued to
THE UNDERSIDE OF THE BED. *There's something under there.*
Fuck.

Julie takes an unsettled glance over the edge. Can't see anything from her vantage.

Getting an idea, she grabs the CLAW from the bedside table. Slides a COMPACT MIRROR into its grip.

Slowly and deliberately she lowers the mirror over the edge, angling it under the bed.

Holds her breath as she tilts it to the left, to the right.

All seems clear.

THEN A FLASH-- a CHILD. Quickly slithering out of view.

Julie gasps. Looks up just in time to see the BATHROOM DOOR FLAPPING OPEN by itself.

She spots the walkie sitting on the bedside table. Grabs for it, but it tumbles to the floor. Out of reach.

For a second, Julie stares at the door. Chest heaving. Waiting for something more to happen.

But it never does.

She takes a breath, collecting herself. Then--

Growl. Looks down to see Lou slinking towards the door. Cautious. Sniffing at the air.

Julie's mind whirls with sudden clarity. The realization whispering from her lips.

JULIE (CONT'D)
You see it too...

SMASH CUT TO:

Julie's fingers tapping like wildfire on her iPad. A *woman on a mission.*

ON THE IPAD SCREEN: A search for *HAUNTINGS*

Julie surfs through a slew of websites on the paranormal. A treasure trove of NIGHT VISION PHOTOS and personal accounts.

She nibbles on a hangnail, absorbing the material. Clicks on a YOUTUBE VIDEO--

PARANORMAL SPECIALIST
(on video)
A spirit is essentially "energy". An energy that attaches to a place, an object, or even a person. The most common being home hauntings.

This sparks an idea. Julie types in a new web search: 8317 LAKE VIEW DRIVE.

Presses RETURN.

Only a collection of real estate links.

Julie tries again. Types: 8317 LAKE VIEW DRIVE. DEATHS.

Presses RETURN.

No hits.

But another LINK catches her interest... "WANT TO KNOW IF SOMEONE DIED IN YOUR HOUSE?"

Julie clicks on the link bringing up DEATHINHOUSE.COM.

"...How much do you really know about your home's history? Let our research experts unearth the truth about your property."

Curious, Julie clicks on the information tab. Eyes skimming over the FAQs.

JULIE
Receive results in as little as forty-eight hours.

Without hesitation Julie grabs her credit card. Starts filling out the form.

Name... address... billing.

But then-- FOOTSTEPS in the distance.

Julie's eyes flash to the TV. Finding Delmy's reflection. She's coming down the hall.

Julie's fingers blaze through the numbers of the credit card. The expiration.

She presses SUBMIT and discreetly exits the site just as--
--Delmy walks inside. A tray in hand.

DELMY
Lunch time.

As Delmy lays the tray on the bed, Julie surreptitiously slides her credit card back in her wallet. But then--

DELMY (CONT'D)
I'm onto you--

Julie looks up to see Delmy staring at her. She tenses.

JULIE
(playing dumb)
Sorry--?

Delmy's eyes drop to the wallet in her hand.

DELMY

Online shopping? Something tells me bed rest is about to get expensive.

Julie breathes a sigh of relief. Goes with it.

JULIE

Well, my doc *did* suggest a hobby.

She seems to buy it.

As Delmy disappears back into the hall, Julie's plaster grin fades. Finally breathes a sigh of relief.

CUT TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Daniel snoozing soundly. And next to him-- Julie. Nestled under the covers. The glow of the IPAD on her face.

ON THE IPAD: NIGHT VISION FEED FROM NURSERY CAM.

Blue hues set against the dripping black darkness.

Julie watches. Tired. But obsessed.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - MORNING

An oppressive gray sky. Not a hint of sun.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - MORNING

Delmy helps Julie ease into a warm BUBBLE BATH.

DELMY

Easy, easy-- there you go.

Julie carefully sinks down into the suds, the warmth immediately overtaking her. Like an emotional Baptism.

She looks up to see Delmy, still sitting on the edge of the tub.

DELMY (CONT'D)

I can wash your hair if you'd like.

Seems friendly enough, but Julie can't help feeling uncomfortable.

JULIE
I can manage, thanks.

But Delmy still isn't moving from her perch.

Another awkward beat. Then finally getting the hint, Delmy lays the walkie on the edge of the tub.

DELMY
I'll be in the other room if you need me.

She gets up and leaves, allowing Julie her privacy.

Julie closes her eyes. With every breath her body begins to relax. The pent-up anxiety dissipating like water after a rain storm.

Drip-- Drip. Droplets of water fall from the tub faucet.

Then-- out of the silence.

CHILDLIKE VOICE (O.S.)
Baby sister coming--

Julie's eyes snap open to see

THE LITTLE BOY

In the corner. Pale. Soaking wet. Smiling and pointing towards Julie's belly.

Julie gasps. In a mad panic, she scrambles over the side of the tub. Falling painfully to the floor. Belly tightening.

Fingers fumbling for the WALKIE.

JULIE
Delmy!

She grabs a towel. Eyes darting back to the corner.

THE BOY NOW GONE

Julie's mind spins in confusion. Her eyes staccatoing around the room.

Delmy races in.

DELMY

You okay?

JULIE

(pointing)

There was a boy. There--

Delmy masks her concern. Playing her part, she quickly searches the room. Finds nothing.

JULIE (CONT'D)

He was just here. He--

But before she can get the words out--

A CONTRACTION

rocks through her abdomen. It hits hard, sending Julie doubling over in pain. Roaring through gritted teeth.

DELMY

Julie?

As Julie writhes in pain, the BATHROOM MIRROR subtly trembles above her.

She grips the side of the tub for support. Contraction building.

As it reaches its painful crescendo-- Julie HOWLS.

AND THE MIRROR CRACKS.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - LATER

FOREBODING CLOUDS hover over the horizon.

DELICATE DROPS OF RAIN tickle a LEAF.

A moment later the sky opens up. A *storm has begun...*

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM

CLOSE ON A PORTABLE ULTRASOUND. A healthy fetus nestled in a womb.

Reveal Dr. Meadows working a doppler wand over Julie's ripe belly. RAIN pounds against the windows.

DR. MEADOWS
Probably just a Braxton Hicks contraction.

Daniel and Delmy hover nearby. Relieved.

DANIEL
Is that common?

DR. MEADOWS
Just the body's way of preparing for birth.

But Julie's eyes are still glued on the monitor.

JULIE
But she's alright?

DR. MEADOWS
Your baby is fine. To be honest it's you who I'm concerned about. I hear you've been having some... experiences.

They're all staring at her now. Julie goes quiet. Masking her resentment.

JULIE
It's nothing. Just the insomnia messing with my head.

But something about his face betrays skepticism.

DR. MEADOWS
Tell me about the boy.

Julie's eyes flashing to Delmy. She ratted Julie out.

DR. MEADOWS (CONT'D)
How old was he?

JULIE
I don't know. Three, maybe four.

DR. MEADOWS
The age your son would be now?

This stops Julie in her tracks.

DR. MEADOWS (CONT'D)
Perhaps your mind remains unwilling to let go, even after all these years.

The implication weighs heavily upon her.

Dr. Meadows turns to Daniel and Delmy.

DR. MEADOWS (CONT'D)
Mind giving us a moment?

They take their orders. Upon their exit--

DR. MEADOWS (CONT'D)
Julie, no one said bed rest was easy.
More often than not, the psychological
challenges outweigh the physical ones.

JULIE
(challenging)
Especially for someone like me.

Dr. Meadows says nothing. His silence confirmation enough.

DR. MEADOWS
If you'd prefer a change in setting, I
could arrange for a hospital room--

JULIE
No.
(then softer, tortured)
No more hospitals.

Beat.

DR. MEADOWS
Just remember-- it's not just you that
you need to consider. There's a little
baby in your belly relying on you. On the
choices you make.

Dr. Meadows grabs his bag and walks towards the door.

DR. MEADOWS (CONT'D)
Try and get some rest.

As he exits, she can see the reflection of Daniel and Delmy waiting at the end of the hall. Dr. Meadows closes the door behind him.

Commence secret pow-wow behind her back.

Julie grabs her iPad, calling up the NURSERY CAM

The angle offering a partial view of their whispered conversation.

We hear their distorted voices through the mic.

DR. MEADOWS (V.O.)
 (CONT'D)

It could be an isolated incident.

DANIEL

Or?

DR. MEADOWS

*Or it's a precursor to a more significant
 psychological break. She clearly has
 unresolved feelings about your first
 child--*

Julie terminates the feed. Sick to her stomach.

Feeling more isolated than ever.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

FREEZING RAIN still coming down. ICE now setting in like
 a second skin.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The ROOMBA drones its way into the room.

Bouncing and spinning off the door frame. Finally
 anchoring back into its home base. Powering down into
 sleep mode.

REVEAL JULIE. Huddled in the bed. Eyes on the wooden box.
 Feeling the weight of her past.

Julie closes her eyes, trying to shut it all out.

Then-- the SLIGHTEST SQUEAK. Rhythmic. Undulating.
 Coming from above.

Curious, Julie glances up.

Sees a little BLUE CAR rolling across the ceiling. By
 itself.

Julie's breath catches in her throat. *Is she really
 seeing this?*

It slowly works its way across the ceiling, towards her.

Julie's neck arching back, as the car makes its way directly above her.

Then-- a LITTLE HAND. Swooshing in and snapping up the car.

Julie jerks back. Suddenly terrified. Eyes locking in on THE LITTLE BOY

Lying on the ceiling. Staring down at her.

BOY
Can baby sister come out and play?

The boy releases the car, letting it fall to the bed. Then flips over and scampers away like a bug on the ceiling. Disappearing into the hallway.

Julie freezes. Stunned.

Her eyes land on the little blue car. Laying atop the comforter.

She reaches out, carefully picks it up. Along the side, the words "*It's a boy*".

How could that be?

Julie grabs for the wooden box. Yanks off the cover.

The little car is missing.

Julie's trembling fingers land on the top PHOTO. *Julie in the freshly painted nursery.*

Her eyes zero in on Andrew's name painted across the wall.

Everything now coming into laser focus.

JULIE
(whispering from her lips)
Andrew...

Julie grabs the IPAD. Her hopeful heart thumping away in her chest as she pulls up the NURSERY CAM.

NIGHT VISION FEED OF THE EMPTY NURSERY.

JULIE (CONT'D)
(through mic)
Andrew...baby, is that you? It's mommy.
Can you hear me?

She toggles over the room. Praying for movement.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Please come back. Come back, sweetie.
(hopeful)
Andrew...?

But then--

DANIEL (O.S.)
Jules?

Julie looks up to see Daniel standing in the doorway.
He's been watching.

For a second she considers damage control, but she's too
caught up in the joy of the moment.

JULIE
It's him.

DANIEL
(concerned)
What are you talking about?

JULIE
The boy I've been seeing. It's our son.
It's Andrew.

Daniel goes quiet-- the wind sucker-punched out of him.
But Julie's picking up steam.

JULIE (CONT'D)
I know it sounds crazy, but I think he
senses his sister is coming. I think he's
reaching out--

DANIEL
Please don't do this--

JULIE
It all started after the move. Maybe it
has something to do with the house--

DANIEL
Jules--

JULIE

Or even the fall. Maybe when I hit my head, it opened up some kind of connection--

DANIEL

GOD DAMMIT, JULIE, OUR SON IS DEAD!

Beat, then--

JULIE

You think I don't know that?! You think that fact doesn't burn a hole through my heart every God damn day?!

A KNOCK at the door. Delmy peeking in from the doorway in a robe.

DELMY

Everything okay?

JULIE

We're fine.

But not completely satisfied, she waits for Daniel--

DANIEL

We're fine, thanks Delmy.

Delmy lingers a second longer--

DELMY

Alright then. Good night.

-- then retreats.

DANIEL

This is not healthy-- it's borderline obsessive--

JULIE

I know how it looks. And believe me, I'm well aware what you all think of me. I hear the whispers. I see that sick mix of pity and fear in your expressions. You think I'm cracking. That I'm on some hormonally-fucked downward spiral. And I get it, I'm sure if I was standing in your shoes I would be on the verge of hospitalizing me too.

(beat)

But it's not in my head.

(MORE)

JULIE (CONT'D)

And if you just listen to me-- just give
me the benefit of the doubt for two
minutes--

(picking up iPad)
--then I can prove it. I can show you.

Julie holds out the iPad.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Please--

Daniel is silent. As if he's weighing her argument.

Suddenly he exits-- *where is he going?*

Julie's eyes fall to the IPAD.

NURSERY CAM POV: Daniel entering the room. Charging directly for the camera. Reaching for it.

JULIE'S SCREEN SUDDENLY GOES BLACK.

He's unhooked the camera.

Julie slumps. *Her lifeline to the nursery severed.*

Seconds later, Daniel returns. Camera in hand.

DANIEL

I'm sorry, Jules-- but I can't let you do
this to yourself.

He dumps the camera on the bureau and walks out.

Julie stares at it. Empty.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - DEEP NIGHT

The onslaught of freezing rain continues.

A COAT OF ICY ARMOR growing steadily over the house and trees.

JAGGED ICICLES hang from the roof like foreboding daggers.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

WE'RE FLOATING THROUGH---

--The empty foyer

--The quiet upstairs hallway

A flicker of light under the bedroom door.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Light from a late night informercial teases the room.
Volume low.

On the bed, Julie and Daniel. Backs to each other. Both
unable to sleep. The inches between them feeling more
like miles.

Needing his space, Daniel gets up. Grabs his pillow.

Julie turns just in time to see him slip out of the room.
She rolls back over. Huddling in the dark. Alone.

Moments later-- she hears echoing from the hall.

CHILDLIKE WHISPERS

Julie springs up. Nervous, but invigorated.

She grabs the TV remote. Turns it off.

JULIE
(whispering)
Hello---

Listens hard. Barely making out a voice from the hall.

CHILD VOICE (O.S.)
Shhh... don't wake mummy.

Julie's adrenaline surges.

JULIE
Andrew?

Without hesitation she grabs her iPad, starts to call up
the nursery cam. But the BLANK SCREEN quickly reminds her
Daniel unhooked the camera.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Shit.

There's gotta be a way to see down the hall... *but how?*

Her eyes catch on something in the room-- sparking an idea

SMASH CUT TO MOMENTS LATER:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

CLOSE ON THE BEDROOM DOORWAY. FLOOR LEVEL.

We can make out a FAINT, MOTORIZED BUZZ coming from the bedroom.

THE ROOMBA

revs through the doorway. JULIE'S CELL PHONE STRAPPED TO THE TOP. Secured with knitting yarn.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

BACK ON THE IPAD: The ROOMBA POV broadcasts in NIGHT VISION MODE. Live to Julie's SKYPE.

ROOMBA POV: Floor level view of the empty hall.

Julie presses a button on the remote, sending the Roomba humming down the hallway--

--Past Delmy's door--

--to the NURSERY.

Steering it to a stop in the doorway.

ROOMBA POV: A wide view of the nursery. Floor level.

It seems quiet.

Julie turns up the volume. White noise crackling from the speaker. She listens.

Then out of the static... a WHISPER.

Julie's heart beats faster. It's now or never.

JULIE

Hello? Andrew?

SKYPE: No movement. The whisper now gone.

JULIE (CONT'D)

I know you're in there. Can you come out?
Can you come see Mommy?

SKYPE: Still nothing.

Getting an idea--

JULIE (CONT'D)

Olly-olly-oxen free.

SKYPE: Suddenly a PAIR OF GLOWING EYES peek out from behind the DRESSER.

Julie's breath catches. Stunned. But heart swelling.

He's responding to her!

The little boy takes a cautious step out. Curious eyes on the Roomba.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Come out, sweetheart. I won't hurt you.

The boy takes another step. Julie about to burst with emotion.

But then suddenly-- MORE GLOWING EYES!

Emerging from behind the nursery furniture. About a HALF DOZEN CHILDREN now peeking out. Like a pack of curious jackals.

RACK FOCUS TO JULIE. Reeling. Not expecting this. Joy turning to fear.

Then-- THE ECHO OF FOOTSTEPS.

Heavy. Almost otherworldly.

ROOMBA POV: The children hear the footsteps too. Quickly scurrying like nervous bugs back to their hiding places.

Just then-- the BUZZ of a POWER SURGE. The IPAD GOES BLACK, casting the room into total darkness.

Julie looks to the bedside table. The alarm clock now dark as well.

THEY LOST POWER.

Icy rain patters outside. *Could have been the storm.*

Julie reaches over and fumbles through the bedside table, finding a CANDLE and a BOX OF MATCHES. Strikes one on the box.

ITS HEAD IGNITES AND SIZZLES.

She lowers it to the candle's wick. A CREPUSCULAR GLOW gleams from the candle, casting a shadowy pall over the room.

The PHANTOM FOOTSTEPS pick up again in the distance. Growing louder.

Whatever it is, it's closing in on Julie's bedroom!

Suddenly... the bedroom DOOR CREAKS OPEN a few inches.

Julie sits frozen. Terrified, but unsure how to respond.

For a moment the room is completely still. Then--

A RUSTLING AT THE END OF THE BED.

What the fuck is it?

Suddenly-- A BUBBLE EMERGES UNDER THE COMFORTER. Deliberately creeping from the end of the bed towards Julie.

Pulsing with fear, Julie throws off the comforter, revealing--

A PAIR OF GHOSTLY HANDS UNDERNEATH HER NIGHTGOWN, PALMING HER BELLY.

Julie gasps. Frantically shaking out her gown.

THE HANDS QUICKLY VANISH.

As they do-- a WINDOW PANE CRACKS. A PICTURE FRAME tumbles from the mantel.

Julie's terrified eyes dart around the room. Defensive.

Suddenly-- ANOTHER CONTRACTION.

Vicious. Julie doubles over, the breath sucked right out of her.

Her clumsy fingers paw towards the WALKIE. Screaming into its mic.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Delmy-- need help--

She drops the walkie. Weathering the surge of pain.

Seconds later, Delmy barrels through the door.

DELMY
What is it? Contraction?

Julie can only manage a nod. Just sits stunned, holding her belly. Eyes skimming wildly around the room.

JULIE
Something's not right--

Daniel barrels through the doorway. FLASHLIGHT in hand.

DANIEL (O.S.)
What happened?

DELMY
She's having contractions.

Daniel streaks to Julie's side.

DANIEL
You okay?

But Julie doesn't answer. Still on edge.

DELMY
How many have you had?

JULIE
Just the one.

DELMY
How long?

JULIE
Twenty, thirty seconds.

DANIEL
What do we do?

For a second, Delmy sizes up Julie. Her behavior now verging on unsettling.

DELMY
It's still early but we should probably get to a hospital.

Daniel's mind jumps into calculation mode.

DANIEL

The driveway's iced over pretty good.
I've got some salt and sand in the shed--

DELMY

How long will it take?

DANIEL

Maybe fifteen minutes.

DELMY

Go ahead. I'll stay with her.

Daniel leaps into action. Takes a walkie, then disappears down the hall.

DELMY (CONT'D)

Do you have a bag packed?

Julie still stares into space. Clearly on edge.

DELMY (CONT'D)

Julie?

Delmy's voice snaps her back. Julie points to the closet.

Delmy slides a small black carry-on onto the bed. Unzips it.

DELMY (CONT'D)

Take a look inside. Make sure you don't need anything else.

Delmy grabs another candle, lighting it against the first. Starts for the door--

JULIE

Wait--

DELMY

I'm just going to throw some clothes on.

JULIE

Please don't leave me--

Delmy consoles her.

DELMY

It's okay. Just breathe. Breathe--

Julie does. Centering herself.

DELMY (CONT'D)

There's nothing to fear. It's a beautiful day. You're bringing a baby into the world.

Delmy squeezes her hand.

DELMY (CONT'D)

I'll be right back.

Delmy disappears into the hallway.

For a second Julie sits quietly. Continuing her breathing. Then slowly anchors back into her purpose.

She flips open her bag, giving it a last once-over.

Grabs her IPAD. Closes down the Skype app.

UNDERNEATH--- HER OPEN INBOX

She's about to close the window, when an UNOPENED EMAIL grabs her attention.

Subject line... *8317 Lake View Drive*

Sender... *DEATHINYOURHOUSE.COM*

This stops Julie in her tracks. She looks at the time stamp. It came in hours ago.

Without hesitation, she opens the email. Clicks on the ATTACHMENT.

Up pops a RESULTS DOCUMENT. *5 Incidents Found*

Julie's heart skips a beat. She scrolls down the report. Eyes pinballing over a list of names and death certificates:

2005 - PETERSEN, LOGAN. AGE 8 MONTHS. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

1997-- JACOBS, ABIGAIL. AGE 7. ASTHMA ATTACK.

The results keep coming... *SUICIDE....DROWNING... INFLUENZA.*

All children.

She reaches the final result.

1961 - KINSEY, MELANDRA. AGE 29. KINSEY, MICHAEL. AGE 3.

A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE imbedded underneath. "Tragic Murder-Suicide Stuns Lakeside Community".

A sick wave passes over Julie as her eyes scan through--

--"three year old son found drowned in bath tub"--

--"wife discovered with self-inflicted stab wounds...an apparent attempt to cut out her own fetus" --

--"Note left at the scene... The children are mine"--

Julie reels in disbelief. Finds the end of the article.

A FAMILY PHOTO (60s, portrait style). A MOTHER, FATHER AND A YOUNG BOY (3).

Julie hones in on the boy's face. More than familiar.

It's the little boy she's been seeing.

Next to him. His smiling mother. The murderer.

JULIE
(reading the caption)
Melandra Kinsey...

Mind now connecting the dots, Julie glances down at the charm bracelet encircling her wrist. Finds one charm in particular--

THE INITIALS "MK"

Eyes now back on the picture. On Melandra's wrist--

THE SAME CHARM BRACELET.

DELMY (O.S.)
Heck of a night to lose power.

Delmy is reentering. Trying to make light of the situation.

DELMY (CONT'D)
You'll be telling this story for ages.

But Julie says nothing. Still shellshocked.

DELMY (CONT'D)
You alright?

JULIE
We have to get out of here--

DELMY

There's no need to rush-- you're still in
very early labor--

JULIE

No-- we have to get out of here now.
Right now!

Panicked, Julie tries to scramble off the bed--

DELMY

Whoa-- Hold on--

JULIE

Let go of me--

DELMY

Julie you need to slow down--

Julie fights against Delmy's grip. Alarmed, Delmy grabs
the walkie.

DELMY (CONT'D)

Daniel-- I need some help up here--
(to Julie)
Julie, I need you to calm down. It's very
important you listen to me.

But Julie resists--

JULIE

It's not safe--

DELMY

Are you having pain?

JULIE

Let me go--

DELMY

Was it another contraction?

JULIE

Don't you see? They all die here!!

This stops Delmy in her tracks. A mixture of confusion
and horror.

Julie once again fights to escape. Just then-- Daniel
bombs through the doorway. Beelines to her.

DANIEL
(to Delmy)
What happened?

Delmy just shakes her head. Bewildered.

Daniel lays the walkie on the bed. Hands gripping Julie.

JULIE
We've gotta get out of her--

DANIEL
We will, honey. But you have to take it slow.

JULIE
There's no time-- she's coming!

Daniel and Delmy trade a glance. Thrown.

Suddenly-- Julie rears back. SCREAMS.

ANOTHER CONTRACTION thunders through her abdomen. She doubles over, wincing in agony.

DANIEL
Jules!

As the contraction crescendos-- a strange RATTLING OVERTAKES THE ROOM.

PICTURE FRAMES, LAMPS, FURNITURE-- Everything in the room is shaking.

It's as if the house is contracting with her!

Daniel and Delmy glance around them. *What the fuck is going on here?*

As the contraction subsides, so too does the rattling. The CANDLES FLICKER, then extinguish entirely, casting the room into total DARKNESS.

Silence. All three speechless. Completely blindsided by what just happened.

THUNK... THUNK

Coming from the closet.

Daniel grabs the flashlight. Whirls the BEAM around, illuminating

A LITTLE GIRL

sitting inside the closet. Indian-style. Playing a game of JACKS. Each bounce of the ball making a THUNK sound on the hardwood floor.

She smiles at them.

GIRL

Better hide--- mommy's coming.

She explodes upwards with a burst of speed, SPIDER CRAWLING up the closet wall, disappearing from view.

DOOR SLAMS. GIGGLES FROM OVERHEAD.

Daniel spins, trains the LIGHT BEAM upwards just in time to catch ANOTHER CHILD scurrying across the ceiling.

DANIEL

Jesus!

All three frozen with fear.

Daniel heaves-- trying to catch his breath. Decisive.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

We're getting outta here.

Delmy leaps into action. Grabs the wheelchair.

But as she wheels it towards Julie--

A FORCE CATAPULTS THE WHEELCHAIR up into the air, SMASHING it against the wall.

Daniel and Delmy freeze. Suspended in stunned silence.

But for Julie it's clear.

JULIE

She won't let me leave.

(beat)

She wants my baby.

All eyes on Julie as they digest the implication.

DELMY

Can you walk?

Julie considers, then nods.

DELMY (CONT'D)
I'll help you.

Delmy offers Julie her hand. But just as their fingers touch--

Delmy JOLTS back a few inches.

She and Julie lock eyes-- *what the hell just happened?*

Then-- Delmy BLASTS ACROSS THE ROOM!

An INVISIBLE FORCE hurling her backwards. Her body SMASHING through the BEDROOM WINDOW at full speed.

JULIE
Noooooooooooo!!!!!!

Daniel grips the bureau for support. Barely breathing. Trying to comprehend what he's just seen.

EERIE SILENCE

The curtains crack like whips in the wind. The BROKEN SHARDS OF GLASS now encircling the frame like snarled teeth.

Daniel builds his courage. Creeps towards the window. Looks out

THROUGH WINDOW

Delmy's motionless body lays on the patio below. A crack in the ice under her. Blood pooling beneath her head.

Her eyes are open, staring up at Daniel. Vacant.

Julie watches Daniel's face. His expression all the answer she needs.

Suddenly ANOTHER CONTRACTION.

Julie crumples as the house once again ROARS TO LIFE! Trembling around them like some kind of otherworldly earthquake.

Daniel braces himself. Watches helplessly as his wife weathers this latest storm.

It eventually recedes, leaving Daniel and Julie to take stock of their situation.

DANIEL

What do we do?

Julie thinks. Then carefully begins to slide off the bed. As Daniel reaches to help, Julie throws up a hand.

JULIE

Wait--

But it's too late-- Daniel is FLUNG across the room. Violently hits the wall.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Daniel!

He looks up at her. Okay, but shaken. For a moment they're silent. Both absorbing the implication.

Then Julie tests the waters herself. Slides completely off the edge of the bed. Finding balance on unsteady legs. *So far so good.*

She looks to Daniel--

JULIE (CONT'D)

I'll follow you.

Daniel grabs his flashlight and leads the way.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Daniel edges through the doorway. Followed by Julie. The beam of his flashlight cuts through the darkness.

Together they creep down the hall. Cautious. Eyes trained on the stairs at the other end.

A CHILD-SIZE SHADOW darts across the hall!

They both steel. Terrified. But with no other choice they forge ahead.

As they reach the nursery, Julie glimpses her IPHONE still atop the Roomba.

JULIE

My cell--

Daniel spots it. But as he starts to make a move, the ROOMBA zips away on its own.

BAM! The nursery door SLAMS SHUT. Securing the phone inside.

Just then-- A CHILD'S WET HAND springs out from the bathroom across the hall! From under the remediation plastic!

Julie and Daniel lurch backwards, pressing themselves against the wall, out of reach.

The fingers CLAW at the hardwood in front of them, then lose their grip as a FORCE DRAGS THE CHILD back into the bathroom.

Julie turns away--

JULIE (CONT'D)
Keep going!

They do. Together closing in on--

INT. LAKE HOUSE - FOYER/ TOP OF STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Julie peers down the length of the STAIRCASE. Daunted. *It seems endless.*

DANIEL
I've got you--

Daniel leads the way. But as Julie reaches for the handrail--

ANOTHER CONTRACTION

She tenses as it shockwaves through her body.

Again, the HOUSE TREMBLES with her.

FURNITURE, DOORS, THE OVERHEAD CHANDELIER-- it's all rattling around them! GLASS PICTURE FRAMES CRACK AND SPLINTER.

Daniel braces himself against the rail, horrified, waiting for it to pass.

Moments later, the shaking subsides. As does Julie's contraction.

Julie waves Daniel on.

JULIE
Go. Before it happens again.

He takes his marching orders and leads the way.

Julie manages a breath, trying to settle her nerves.
Follows him. Carefully sliding herself down the stairs--

Step... by step....

THUNDERING FOOTSTEPS now closing in from the upstairs
hallway.

She slides faster, eventually making it to

THE FLOOR OF THE FOYER

Their eyes now trained on the FRONT DOOR. Only ten feet
away.

DANIEL

You ready?

Julie nods.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

On three-

She wraps one arm underneath her belly for support.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

One-- two--

Julie takes a deep breath. Preparing herself.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Three!

They make a break for it! Julie fights through the pain.
Her life depends on this. So does her child's.

Daniel reaches the door first, flings it open. But then--
BAM! IT SLAMS SHUT BY ITSELF.

He tries again, but the door fights back! Demanding to be
shut.

He pulls with all his might -- mustering a few inches.
But can't hold it. BAM! The door once again claps shut.

Melandra's presence is refusing to let them leave.

Daniel quickly scans the room.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

The window--

Together they race towards it. Daniel's fingers desperately yank at the frame, but the pane is iced shut.

THROUGH THE WINDOW - THEIR CAR

Escape is less than thirty feet away!

But then-- a NOISE BEHIND THEM.

Julie turns to see a WOODEN CHAIR hurling towards them!

JULIE

Watch out!

They rear back just in time as the chair SMASHES against the wall, missing them by inches.

This gives Daniel an idea.

DANIEL

Stand back.

He grabs the chair. Hauls back with every ounce of his strength and smashes the chair through the window. Glass shatters everywhere.

THE WHOLE ROOM is violently shaking now. Cursing their every move.

Moving boxes suddenly BURST open. Their contents-- CHINA, LAMPS, FIGURINES-- all hurtling through the air towards Julie and Daniel.

A full-on air assault.

Daniel braces himself in front of the window, positioning his body as a human shield.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Go!

Julie watches as Daniel's body withstands blow after blow.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

GO NOW!

Julie turns to the window. Pure focus. Finagles her body through the pane out to

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - PORCH - CONTINUOUS

A polar blast of cold air hits her face. *It feels like freedom.*

She looks up just in time to see Daniel tumble from the window. Battered. Clearly shaken.

Concerned, she reaches out to him.

JULIE

Daniel--

But he wastes no time. Grabs her hand.

DANIEL

Come on--

Together they clamber towards the car. Julie's weak and unsteady legs fight for traction on the icy path.

She slips, falls to one knee. Daniel quickly jumps in, helping her back to her feet.

They make it to the car.

Daniel's hands fumble with the keys, finally getting the passenger door open.

INSIDE CAR

Julie slides inside. Foggy clouds swirling from her every breath.

Daniel climbs into the driver's seat. Jams the key into the ignition. Tries the engine.

At first it sputters--

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Come on--

Julie watches, as if willing the car with her eyes.

The engine finally catches. Roars to life.

Daniel and Julie trade a relieved glance. He puts the car in gear, backing out of parking spot. But then

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD... the STEEP DRIVEWAY ahead of them. Still covered in ICE.

JULIE
The ice is too thick--

Daniel thinks. Has an idea.

He puts the car in gear, then steers it around so the rear of the car is facing the hill.

DANIEL
Hold on--

Julie grips the door as Daniel yanks the gear into reverse. His foot bares down on the accelerator.

OUTSIDE

The car surges up the INCLINED DRIVEWAY.

Makes it about two-thirds of the way up-- but then its tires lose traction, spinning on the ice.

INSIDE

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Come on!

He keeps his foot firmly planted on the accelerator.

The wheels continue to spin wildly. The car is losing traction--

JULIE
We're not gonna make it--

But Daniel is determined. Gives it even more gas. Rotates the wheel--

DANIEL
Come on, Goddammit!!!!

The car makes it up another foot--

They might actually make it!

But then-- the wheels once again lose their grip.

The car starts to slide. Gaining momentum. Daniel no longer able to control it.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Hold on!

The car fishtails. Careening out of control towards

A LARGE TREE

Julie braces herself.

SMASH! The front corner of the car collides with the trunk.

OUTSIDE

Everything is still.

HOT SMOKE SIZZLES FROM THE GRILL OF THE CAR

The incessant blaring of a HORN.

INSIDE

Julie's head bobs up. Takes a second to get her bearings. She's jostled, but okay.

Sees the ACCORDIONED HOOD... SHATTERED WINDSHIELD...

Then looks over to Daniel. Slumped on the steering wheel. Motionless.

JULIE

Daniel?

She reaches over, pulling him up. He slumps back onto the seat. Bloody gash on his forehead.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Daniel!!!

She shakes him. But there's no response. Tears now forming in her eyes.

She looks around. Mind whirling through her options.

Reaches over and tries the engine--

JULIE (CONT'D)

Come on--

But it won't catch.

JULIE (CONT'D)

God dammit!!!

Out of frustration, she pounds her fist on the dashboard. Screams. Then--

--stops suddenly. Eyes wide with concern.

Looks down to see a WET SPOT pooling on the front of her nightgown.

HER WATER HAS BROKEN

Julie's hands tear at the wet nightgown.

JULIE (CONT'D)

No--- no, no,no---

For the first time, a hint of defeat in her eyes. She's running out of options.

She looks around-- only thick woods.

Frantic, she pounds on the horn. Over and over.

But then stops. *Who is she kidding? No one can hear her out here.*

Refusing to give up, Julie yanks at the door handle. Pushes it open.

OUTSIDE

Julie slides from the car onto the ice.

For a moment, she sits. Out of breath. Contemplating her options.

Her eyes fall onto something in the distance.

THE LAKE

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Julie staggers through the backyard towards the lake.

Her eyes skim the lakeshore. Quiet. Dark. No neighbors in sight.

But in the distance

ONE SMALL LIGHT

Someone's out there.

She scrambles to the edge of the lake. Using her last ounce of energy, calls out--

JULIE

Help-- I need help. Please-- somebody--

She waits, hoping for a miracle.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Somebody-----!!!

But there's no response.

Defeated, Julie sinks to the ground. Body exhausted. Sobbing. Shivering uncontrollably in the bitter cold.

She blows warm air into her frostbitten hands. It does little to ward off the cold.

There's no way she'll last much longer out here.

Her eyes fall to her belly. *The baby she so desperately wanted.*

She wraps her protective arms around it. Tears flowing.

Closes her eyes. Taking one last moment of peace with her child. Their fates entwined.

Silence. Only the subtle whisper of the wind.

But then-- a CRACKLE.

What is that?

Julie slowly turns, tracing the sound to

Delmy'S DEAD BODY

Crumpled and broken on the icy patio. But peeking out of her pocket--

THE WALKIE TALKIE.

Julie surges with renewed energy. She scrambles her way over to the body.

Delmy's bloodshot eyes stare up at her. The blood under her head now beginning to coagulate and freeze.

The sight sends Julie into a wave of nausea. But she fights it off.

Stay focused.

She grabs the walkie. Slides back, away from the body.

Her trembling fingers toggle through the channels.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Can anyone hear me?!! Hello??

But the walkie just spits and crackles.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Anybody??!!

It's no use. It's too damaged from the fall.

But then she notices a RED BUTTON on the side of the walkie. Presses it. In the distance she hears a faint BEEP.

She tries the button again.

Another BEEP.

Julie looks up, tracking the sound to the upstairs bedroom.

The walkie is summoning its mate.

THE OTHER WALKIE IS IN THE BEDROOM.

Julie's mind whirls. *Does she dare go back in?*

Suddenly-- ANOTHER CONTRACTION.

Longer. Stronger. Time is running out.

Julie reconsiders her alternatives.

The car-- smashed.

The walkie-- broken.

And her hands-- steadily being devoured by frostbite.

Her only chance of survival lies in the house.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

Julie eases back onto the front porch. One last glance at the car-- still no movement from Daniel.

Her eyes now fixed on the front door.

She slides over to it. With trembling fingers she reaches out for the knob---

BUT THE DOOR OPENS ITSELF

Melandra is inviting her back in.

Julie stares through the doorway into the dark foyer. Hollow and cold. Every inch of her soul pleading not to go back in.

But the other walkie is her last hope.

Remembering her purpose, she inches inside.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - FOYER

Eyes trained on the stairs, Julie crawls through the foyer.

There's something determined about her now. A woman pushed to the brink.

BAM! The door slams shut behind her.

Fear boils inside her, but she casts it aside. Reaches the staircase.

She takes one last courage-building breath--

-- then begins crawling up the stairs on all fours. Like a bloodied lioness bent on survival.

Slowly she stalks upwards. Step by painful step.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Julie reaches the top of the stairs. Collapses against the wall, catching her breath.

Her eyes scan the length of the hall. Dark and foreboding.

ANOTHER CONTRACTION

Vicious this time.

Julie screams. Almost too spent to move. *But there's no giving up now.*

She slides herself to her knees, crawling on all fours down the hallway.

FOOTSTEPS echo from the rooms.

But Julie's eyes remain fixed on the master bedroom doorway.

Finally reaching it---

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is dark. Still.

With resolute focus, her hand finds the bedside table. Feeling around--

But the walkie isn't there.

She scrambles to find it. Looks under the bed. In the drawers. Around the floor.

Frantically, she pulls at the bed coverings. Sees it-- wrapped in a sheet. Relief washes over her.

Now please God work.

She starts to toggle through the channels.

Suddenly-- the WALKIE jerks in her hand.

The FORCE is PRYING it from her grip!

Julie fights to hold on. Clutches it close to her chest. Desperately dials, eventually finding the hiss of the EMERGENCY SCANNER. Presses the talk button.

JULIE

Hello? Hello? Can anyone hear me?!

A GARBLED STATICY RESPONSE.

The walkie slips further from her hand. *She won't be able to hold it much longer.*

JULIE (CONT'D)

If you can hear me, my name is Julie Rivers, I live at 8317 Lake View and I need help. I am in labor and--

Suddenly-- THE WALKIE IS RIPPED FROM HER GRASP! It flies through the air, smashing into the wall and bursting into pieces.

Her last lifeline now in fragments on the floor.

JULIE (CONT'D)
FUCK!!!

Then-- another CONTRACTION. Body-breaking. Julie leans back, wails.

As it subsides, her rage devolves into exhaustion.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Please, just let us go. I'm begging you--
mother to mother, let me have my
daughter. Let us leave and I promise you,
we will never come back.

Silence. Then...

CHILD'S VOICE (O.S.)
Silly you, she won't let you go.

Julie looks up to see the BOY standing in the corner.

BOY
She takes all the children.

All the children now emerging from their hiding places.
Expectant eyes trained on Julie and her belly.

Julie reels.

JULIE
No...no, no, no, no...

Suddenly Julie's body WHOOSHES across the floor towards the door. Driven forth by an invisible force.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Julie's body whizzes down the length of the hallway.

BEHIND HER-- all the children curiously peek through the doorway as Julie slides away, skidding to a stop in front of

THE PLASTIC-WRAPPED BATHROOM

The sinister drip of water echoing from behind it.

Terrified, Julie climbs to her feet. Tries to escape. But before she manages a step--

-- the invisible force YANKS HER backwards into--

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Julie's body blasts though the doorway, tearing away the plastic and falling backwards into

THE CLAW TUB

Lands with a splash.

For a moment she's stunned. Looks around, finding herself in a shallow pool of MURKY WATER.

Bloody drops trickle from the faucet. *Drip... drip...*

Julie's eyes shoot to the door. But before she can even consider escaping--

THE DOOR SLAMS SHUT BY ITSELF.

She scrambles, trying to escape the tub, but the PRESENCE forces her back down.

ANOTHER CONTRACTION

This one fucking rocking her world.

She leans back, letting out a GUTTURAL SCREAM

INT. LAKE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Her scream echoes throughout the house---

Through the hallways--

Through the foyer--

Then eventually... silence.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM

Julie lies still in the tub. Defeat taking hold.

She seems glazed-- almost delirious.

A voice echoing in her mind's eye:

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

Okay, now give us a push.

FLASH TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DELIVERY ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

We're in Julie's previous labor. Sweat dripping from her brow. Feet in stir-ups. White knuckles gripping the bed rail. The team of doctors and nurses around her.

(THE ENTIRE MEMORY IS SEEN FROM JULIE'S POV)

DOCTOR

Almost there Julie, just give us another push.

The NURSE urgently whispers in the doctor's ear.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Come on Julie, we gotta do this.

On the swell of her contraction, Julie pushes--

MATCH TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM

Julie weathers another contraction.

Sweat beads on her forehead. Her body trembles.

Her mind stuck in the memory:

DOCTOR (V.O.)

Come on Julie-- you've got this.

FLASH TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DELIVERY ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The team of doctors and nurses hovering over her.

Julie pushes.

DOCTOR

Right there, Julie---one more.

She gives a hell of a push.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Good, good--

Then-- relief as the baby is born.

BACK TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM

Julie is fully enveloped in the memory now.

The words slipping from her lips--

JULIE
I don't hear him--

FLASH TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DELIVERY ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The doctors and nurses work frantically

JULIE'S VOICE
I don't hear him. Why isn't he crying?

BACK TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM

Tears now forming in Julie's eyes.

JULIE
Why can't I hear him? Daniel?

FLASH TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DELIVERY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The doctor comes over. Pulls down his mask.

DOCTOR
We can't find a heartbeat. Do you understand what I'm saying to you?

Beat.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
(concerned)
Julie?

Julie rears back, letting out a GUTTURAL SCREAM.

MATCH TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM

Julie's guttural scream as a FINAL RAGING CONTRACTION rips through her body.

Then--- a sudden dizzying release.

Julie's body goes limp. As she lays frozen in the tub, we hear

THE CRY OF A NEWBORN.

In shock, Julie looks down, sees a TINY FORM at the bottom of the tub.

With trembling, frantic hands she reaches down and scoops up HER BABY.

The little girl lets out a soft cry.

Julie can hardly contain herself. Tears roll down her cheeks as she clutches the baby to her chest.

But then-- THE DOOR KNOB.

It's turning.

Julie watches with terror as the knob spins and jerks. She braces herself for yet another horror.

Then BAM!

The door flies open, revealing

DANIEL

Bloody and dazed. But on his feet.

In a split second he's at her side, wrapping his arms around her. Sees the baby.

DANIEL

Oh my God--
(pride, then fear)
--is she?

JULIE

She's okay.

Tears. Relief.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Gotta get her out--

Daniel jumps into action, rolling up his sleeves. Just as he does--

MORE RATTLING-- the faucets. The medicine cabinet.

JULIE (CONT'D)
She's coming.

Daniel casts it from his mind. Reaches into the tub. But just before he reaches the baby, his BODY IS LAUNCHED BACKWARDS THROUGH THE DOORWAY, smashing into the hallway wall. He crumples like a rag doll.

Motionless.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Daniel!!!!

The bathroom door SLAMS SHUT. Trapping Julie inside.

She grips the tub, frantically tries to heave herself to freedom. Eyes catch her reflection in the FULL LENGTH MIRROR hanging on the back of the door.

The surface of the mirror is RIPPLING. The OUTLINE OF A HAND becoming visible.

What the fuck?

Suddenly-- IT REACHES out from the surface of the mirror.

ANGLE ON JULIE: Eyes like saucers. Breath catching as AN ENTIRE ARM EMERGES. Then a LEG. Followed by a body.

Dawning in front of her-- the SILHOUETTE OF A WOMAN.

MELANDRA KINSEY

Ghostly pale. Face full of wicked intentions. Her eyes fall to the baby.

She's come to claim what is hers.

Melandra draws in a deep, wheezing breath.

Immediately-- a COUGH. Julie looks down at her newborn. The breath literally being sucked from her tiny lungs.

She's killing her!

Mad and desperate for escape, Julie fights against the tub.

The baby's breath now flowing faster. Like a smokey current feeding Melandra's soul.

Julie thrashes harder. That's when--

The floor creaks underneath her.

The sound stops her in her tracks. She looks down and sees

THE ROTTED FLOOR

Infused with new determination, Julie grips the edge of the tub. Rocks it side to side. The floor creaks. Louder with every try.

More breath. The baby growing weaker.

But Julie thrashes harder. Mad. Investing every bit of strength she can muster.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Come on--

The floorboards splint and crack.

The baby's final breaths just beginning to escape her lips.

Julie glares at Melandra. Defiant.

JULIE (CONT'D)

You don't get this one, bitch!

One last jerk. Suddenly... *a loud crack.*

Julie braces herself as--

THE FLOOR GIVES WAY!

INT. LAKE HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

THE PORCELAIN TUB PLUMMETS THROUGH THE ROTTED CEILING

SMASH!

It hits the foyer floor, exploding into pieces.

Julie's body jolts on impact.

SILENCE

Except for the FLOOD OF WATER pouring down from the burst bathroom pipes.

It fills around Julie, who lies motionless atop the wreckage. Bloody from porcelain cuts. Nightgown soaked in bloody water. Baby still clutched tightly to her chest.

Another beat, still no movement.

Then, a flicker in Julie's eyes. A *sign of life*.

She takes a few raspy, belabored breaths.

Through dizzying focus, she finds the gaping hole in the ceiling above. The shattered porcelain. And--

HER BABY.

Still clutched to her chest. *Alive*.

DANIEL (O.S.)

Jules--

Daniel races down the stairs. He splashes through the water, towards her.

But as he reaches Julie, emotion rolls over him as he takes in her limp body. Eyes swollen with tears.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Oh baby-- no--

He caresses her face. Kisses her.

JULIE

(gentle whisper)

Gotta get out of here now--

But he doesn't seem to be listening to her. Instead his eyes are fixed on the water gushing around them.

Filled with purpose, Daniel rips off his jacket and secures the baby in one arm. Weaves the other under Julie's body, trying to pull her to safety.

That's when Julie sees

MELANDRA

Lording over the top of the stairs. She won't be denied.

JULIE (CONT'D)
(to Daniel)
Take the baby and get out of here.

But Daniel continues to struggle towards the door, not listening. One arm around the baby, one around Julie.

Suddenly Julie's wet body slips from his clutches, splashing back down into the water.

For a moment Daniel falters, but keeps firm hold of the child nestled in his arms.

MELANDRA STALKS CLOSER.

She reaches the bottom of the stairs. Her pale face dripping with evil determination.

Daniel frantically reworks his grip. But it's no use.

He can't get them both.

JULIE (CONT'D)
(raspy)
Take the baby-- get out--

For a second, Daniel hesitates, thinking. Then running on instinct, relinquishes his hold on Julie. Races to the door, baby in hand.

He grabs the doorknob, yanking with all his might. But it won't give.

Julie watches in horror as Melandra creeps closer. But upon reaching Julie, she continues past her--

--HER EYES FIXED ON THE BABY.

Daniel kicks at the door over and over, trying to break through.

MELANDRA SLINKS UP BEHIND HIM. Her needy fingers stretching for the child.

Then in the B.G.-- a SILHOUETTE RISES behind her.

REVEAL JULIE in her blood and water stained nightgown. Summoning new strength.

JULIE (CONT'D)
You don't touch her.

There's fury in her eyes now.

Melandra stops, slowly turns back to Julie. Almost entertained that Julie would be so bold as to challenge her.

With lightening speed, Melandra launches herself towards Julie--- but just as quickly, Julie intercepts her. Her hand finding Melandra's THROAT.

CLAMPING DOWN HARD IN A TIGHT CHOKE HOLD.

Melandra seizes and gasps. Both women stunned by Julie's grip-- *how is she holding on? How is she bridging the gap between the living and the dead?*

Melandra thrashes and flails, but Julie holds fast. Determined.

JULIE (CONT'D)
THIS... IS... MY... CHILD!

Julie's voice roars through the house. SHAKING WALLS. RATTLING FURNITURE. POPPING AND SHATTERING GLASS.

Daniel cowers, shielding the baby with his body.

Suddenly the front door blasts from its hinges. Daniel and the baby fall to freedom as an ice cold wind whips through the gutted doorway.

Now it's just Julie and Melandra. And the look on Melandra's face says it all--

She's intimidated.

Julie tightens her grip. Leans in. And with newfound confidence, simply whispers--

JULIE (CONT'D)
Get out.

With that, Julie releases her grip on Melandra's throat. Instantly, Melandra is whisked backwards, sucked through the doorway into the ether.

Banished.

Julie stares at the doorway. Processing what's just happened.

For a moment she savors her victory. Then-- looks up and sees...

Daniel cradling their newborn on the porch. Wracked with emotion.

Julie stumbles to the door.

JULIE (CONT'D)
We did it. Daniel, we did it.

But Daniel doesn't answer.

His lack of response sends a sting of alarm through her.
Is the baby okay?

JULIE (CONT'D)
Daniel...?

SIRENS ECHO FROM THE DRIVEWAY

Julie turns to see the glow of RED LIGHTS dancing across the trees.

JULIE (CONT'D)
The walkie--- the message must have gone through.

Daniel staggers to his feet. Calls out for help--

DANIEL
Please help me. My wife's in here. She's hurt.

Daniel staggers back to the doorway. His eyes, fraught with emotion, locking on something in the middle of the room.

Julie traces his stare and for the first time sees
A LIFELESS BODY

laying on the flooded floor. Surrounded by broken shards of porcelain.

A cold realization overtakes her as she recognizes the nightgown. The face.

It's her.

Julie goes cold.

This can't be.

She rushes over. Stares down at her own body. Sees the empty eyes. The pale face. And the DEEP SHARD of porcelain imbedded in her side.

Julie reels at the revelation. Falls back against the staircase, dizzy. World spinning out of control.

FIREMEN and PARAMEDICS burst through the doorway.

Finding Julie's body, they initiate CPR.

PARAMEDIC
We need oxygen and paddles.

It's a whirlwind of commotion as the team frantically tries to save Julie's life. Her body jolting and thumping under each attempt.

Julie watches from afar. As if it's all some sort of wicked dream.

PARAMEDIC (CONT'D)
Sir, we need you to come with us.

Daniel's emotion-filled face is still fixed on Julie.

DANIEL
My wife--

PARAMEDIC
Sir, we need to get you and the baby in the ambulance.

Julie's eyes fall to her baby girl. Crying. *But alive.*

Bittersweet tears now swell in Julie's eyes. Her baby survived--

--*but the life she dreamed of is now slipping away.*

Heart breaking, she watches as Daniel and the child are whisked out the door towards an ambulance.

They're followed by her body, now splayed across a stretcher.

Julie sinks to the staircase steps.

For a moment she takes in the room. The home she thought would be her future. The place she was going to raise her family.

Unable to stem off the swell of emotion, she breaks down.

Body trembling. Hard tears flowing down her cheeks.

The heartache unbearable.

Then--

A BABY'S CRY

Coming from upstairs.

Julie closes her eyes. Doing all she can do block it out.

THE CRY GETS LOUDER

Its sound churning something deep down in her.

But this cry is different. A different sound. A different cadence.

Almost by instinct, Julie rises. Listening.

Driven by instinct, she charges up the stairs.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NURSERY - MOMENTS LATER

Julie barrels into the nursery. Eyes wide on

THE CRIB

Inside, a wiggling, crying NEWBORN BABY BOY.

A rush of emotion overtakes her.

JULIE

Andrew...

Julie reaches down and gathers the baby, cradling him in her arms. *The moment she was robbed of long ago.*

She soothes the child.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Shhhh.... Mommy's here now.

Julie takes a seat in the nearby rocker. Rocks the child back and forth.

Begins to sing--

JULIE (CONT'D)

*Hush little baby, don't say a word,
mama's gonna buy you a mockingbird.*

(MORE)

JULIE (CONT'D)

*And if that mockingbird don't sing,
mama's gonna buy you a diamond ring. And
if that diamond ring turns brass--*

Her song continues as we--

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NURSERY (**ONE YEAR LATER**)

A squirmy little ONE-YEAR OLD BABY GIRL sits inside the nursery crib. She smiles and laughs as she hears--

BOY'S VOICE (O.S.)

Peekaboo!

Reveal the LITTLE KINSEY BOY sitting next to the crib, engaging the baby in a game. Alongside him, some of the other CHILDREN, also enjoying the show.

BOY

Peekaboo-- I see you.

The baby girl giggles from the crib.

ANGLE ON THE CORNER OF THE ROOM... Julie watches lovingly from the rocking chair. Andrew asleep in her arms.

Lou the cat blissfully snoozing at her feet.

They're all one big happy family.

Wanting to get in on the game, Julie slides down onto the floor next to the boy.

JULIE

Peekaboo--

The baby girl coos in approval.

JULIE (CONT'D)

You see me? You see your Mama?

Another coo.

DANIEL (O.S.)

Look who's up.

REVEAL DANIEL standing in the doorway.

As he walks over to his baby girl in the crib, we follow him, getting a full view of the nursery.

No trace of Julie or the other children.

Daniel leans on the crib. Watches as the baby giggles and squeals at something on the other side of the bars.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Whatcha laughing at?

The baby girl coos, then--

BABY GIRL
Ma-ma.

It's enough to suck the wind right out of him.

He follows the baby's gaze to an empty space next to the crib. For a second he allows his mind to go to that place

Could it be?

He'll never know. But he can hope.

He reaches down and plucks the baby girl from the crib.

DANIEL
What do you say we have a little lunch?
Some sweet potato-- a little banana?
How's that sound?

As Daniel exits with the baby, we stay focused on the room.

It's still quiet. Empty.

But then-- in the corner-- the ROCKER begins to rock.

By itself.

CUT TO BLACK:

THE END