

THE WRETCHED EMILY DERRINGER

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EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Holdenfield, Pennsylvania - 1960

A town deserted.

The shops are all closed, the doors are all locked, the lights are all out.

EMILY DERRINGER (13) walks down the street wheeling her BICYCLE beside her and her SACHEL dangling off her shoulder.

She's all alone. Until -

Her shadow looms as HEADLIGHTS shine against her back.

She turns, shielding her eyes from the brightness.

A CADILLAC slows to a crawl as it pulls up beside her.

FATHER BELL (60s) leans over from the driver's side.

FATHER BELL

Is that little Emily Derringer I see?

She keeps walking.

He follows.

FATHER BELL (CONT'D)

What are you doing out there in the dark?

She points to the rusted NAIL jutting from her front TIRE.

EMILY DERRINGER

My bike got a flat.

FATHER BELL

Let me give you a lift then.

EMILY DERRINGER

That's all right. I'm almost home.

FATHER BELL

Nonsense. I insist.

Emily stops walking. She looks around.

EMILY DERRINGER

I don't know...

FATHER BELL

Sweetie, it's too dangerous for a little girl to be out by herself.

He smiles, revealing a set of crooked yellow teeth.

He pops the TRUNK.

FATHER BELL (CONT'D)

Get in.

She scans her surroundings one more time.

Nobody else in sight.

Deep breath.

She wheels her bike to the trunk. Puts it inside.

Bell opens the passenger side door.

She hesitates.

EMILY DERRINGER

If it's all the same to you, I think I'll sit in back.

He pats the seat.

FATHER BELL

I won't bite.

Silence.

FATHER BELL (CONT'D)

Suit yourself then.

INT. CADILLAC

Emily climbs in and sits directly behind Bell.

He adjusts the REARVIEW to get a better look.

FATHER BELL

Tell me Emily - what's a sweet little thing like you doing out at this hour?

She pats her satchel.

EMILY DERRINGER

Tomorrow's the first day of school. I was buying supplies.

FATHER BELL

You shouldn't be out after dark.
Not these days.

He stares back at her. Grins.

FATHER BELL (CONT'D)

You've heard about the *murders*,
haven't you?

Emily gulps at the mention of the word.

EMILY DERRINGER

Only a little. From what the other
kids say. Ma and Pa don't talk
about those things around me - they
think I'll scare.

She looks ahead.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

You can take the right here.

Bell turns right, but his eyes stay fixed on Emily.

FATHER BELL

They're right to worry. "The Misfit
Butcher" - that's what the papers
are calling him. Grisly stuff.

EMILY DERRINGER

Turn left.

He does.

FATHER BELL

He's taken five victims this Summer
alone. Anyone could be next.

(beat)

Even little girls.

EMILY DERRINGER

Another right.

FATHER BELL

So you understand why I couldn't
leave you wandering by yourself
where any old maniac could snatch
you. That would be...

He trails off as he finally turns his attention back to the
road.

They've driven into an ALLEY.

A dead end.

FATHER BELL (CONT'D)

Wait.

He looks around.

As Emily opens her satchel.

FATHER BELL (CONT'D)

Where are we?

A BLADE wraps around his neck.

Behind him - Emily grasps the handles of the WIRE SAW.

She pulls as hard as she can.

EMILY DERRINGER

Where no one will see us.

She digs her feet into the back of his seat, wrenches it back and forth cutting deeper and deeper into this throat, until -

She severs his HEAD from his shoulders.

Blood sprays from his throat, splashing against the windshield.

Emily wipes the dripping mess from her eyes. Looks down at her stained dress.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

Nuts.

And now Ladies & Gentlemen - in a perfect world - this is where Phil Phillips croons "Sea of Love."

MAIN TITLE:

THE WRETCHED EMILY DERRINGER

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Emily crawls out of the car and over to a group of TRASH CANS.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)

Dear Diary - the night went splendidly.

From behind the trash cans she retrieves a new BICYCLE TIRE and a canister of GASOLINE.

LATER

Emily attaches the new tire to her bike, throws the old one in the backseat.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
Indeed, I'm tempted to throw
modesty to the wind and declare the
mutilation of Father Bell my best
work to date.

LATER

She opens the door to the Cadillac.

Bell's body slumps over, hitting the ground with a soft thud.

She readies the wire saw. Pulls it taut.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
Despite the ample competition.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE LOBBY, FLASHBACK - MORNING

A RECEPTIONIST enters the Doctor's office, turning on all the lights.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
There's of course Dr. Sorensen.

After taking off her coat, she sees the door to the EXAMINING ROOM is ajar.

INT. EXAMINING ROOM, FLASHBACK

The Receptionist pushes the door open, looks inside.

She screams.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
Like me, he learned that actually
no - tetanus shots hurt quite a
lot, thank you very much.

DR. SORENSEN lays dead on the EXAMINING TABLE.

Hundreds of HYPODERMIC NEEDLES protrude from his body.

INT. MOVIE THEATER, FLASHBACK - NIGHT

An elderly CUSTODIAN absentmindedly sweeps popcorn in a vacant theater.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 And silencing Chatty Kathy
 Beauregard was particularly
 satisfying.

He looks down when his BROOM hits something.

A woman's FOOT. He looks up to see -

KATHY BEAUREGARD (40s) sitting dead in her chair, her arms
 skewered to the armrests with KNIVES.

Her mouth is sown shut.

A CLOTHESPIN is clipped over her nose.

EXT. ALLEY

Emily - soaked in blood - closes the TRUNK.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 But a man of God?

She wipes her hands.

INT. CADILLAC

Emily drives the car, barely able to see over the STEERING
 WHEEL.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 That should get the citizens of
 Holdenfield, Pennsylvania shaking
 in their boots.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

A large OAK TREE grows from the center of Town Square,
 directly in front of TOWN HALL.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 Not that the hypocrite didn't
 deserve it.

The CADILLAC pulls up in front.

INT. CADILLAC

Emily's about to open the door -

Then stops.

Sinks down in her seat, out of sight.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 While I'm certainly no expert on
 the Bible, I'm pretty sure a Priest
 shouldn't be driving a Cadillac.

A POLICE CAR drives by.

After a moment, she peeks up again.

Coast is clear.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE

Emily douses the car with GASOLINE

EMILY DERRINGER
 And who knows? Maybe now that he's
 gone, we'll get some good books
 back in the library. I've heard
 good things about Naked Lunch.

When it's soaked, she stands back. Lights a MATCH.

LATER

FIRE TRUCKS roar to the scene.

The Cadillac is ablaze. Smoke pours into the sky.

FIREFIGHTERS leap from the trucks.

They all let out a collective gasp.

See the TREE, illuminated in the dark by the flames.

Hung from its branches are Bell's SEVERED REMAINS.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 Yes Diary - it's been a magical
 Summer.

They glow like Christmas ornaments.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sitting in bed, Emily closes her DIARY.
 She places it on her BEDSIDE TABLE next to her ALARM CLOCK.
 She pulls the BUTTERFLY SHEETS up to her chin.
 Closes her eyes. Smiles.

NEXT MORNING

The alarm clock shrieks.
 Her eyes shoot open.
 The smile's gone.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 Too bad it has to end.

EXT. DERRINGER'S FRONT YARD - MORNING

The DERRINGER'S HOUSE - like every other home on the block.
 White PICKET FENCE. Immaculately green LAWN. AMERICAN FLAG
 hanging by the door.
 A NEWSPAPER lands on the grass.

INT. DERRINGER'S KITCHEN - MORNING

THE MISFIT BUTCHER KILLS AGAIN!

So boasts the front page of the HOLDENFIELD BUGLE.
 It's read by DAVID DERRINGER (40) as he smokes his pipe at
 the KITCHEN TABLE.

DAVID DERRINGER
 Horrifying. Truly horrifying.

JUDY DERRINGER (30s, puts June Cleaver to shame) slaves over
 the STOVE, scrambling EGGS and cooking BACON to perfection.

JUDY DERRINGER
 What's that, dear?

DAVID DERRINGER
 Kennedy's up in the polls. He could
 win this thing, Judy.

She places a PLATE in front of him. Goes for a kiss.

He moves his head away.

DAVID DERRINGER (CONT'D)

This country's going to Hell and
the American people are weaving the
handbasket.

Defeated, she goes back to the stove.

JUDY DERRINGER

Eat your breakfast, dear. You'll
feel better.

DAVID DERRINGER

It's the children I'm worried
about.

JUDY DERRINGER

Speaking of, where is our little
darling?

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM

Dressed to the nines, Emily stands in front of her MIRROR.

She scrutinizes her reflection.

She smooths out her dress.

Adjusts the RIBBON in her hair.

Sighs. She's a harsh critic.

JUDY DERRINGER (O.S.)

(Shouting from down
stairs)

Emily! Breakfast!

She's about to head down, but catches something in the
mirror.

BLOOD - just a spot - below her ear.

She licks her finger. Wipes it away.

INT. DERRINGER'S KITCHEN

Trudging into the kitchen, Emily instantly brightens when she
sees the front page.

EMILY DERRINGER
It made the paper already?

She hangs her SACHEL off the back of her chair and takes a seat across from her father.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
Can I see?

He absentmindedly hands her the front page.

But Judy intercepts.

JUDY DERRINGER
Absolutely not.

She places a plate piled high with BACON in front of Emily.

JUDY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
That's not appropriate for
children.

Disgusted, Emily grabs the lone piece of TOAST and shoves the rest away.

EMILY DERRINGER
I'm not a child. I'm thirteen. You
know - a teenager?

Judy's not listening. Her focus is still on the paper.

JUDY DERRINGER
That poor Father Bell.

She shoves it in front of David's face.

It depicts a cartoonishly evil "Artist's Rendering" of The Misfit - a scruffy, rat-like hermit with drooling fangs.

JUDY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
To think, David - a man like that
roaming our streets. Goodness, the
whole thing gives me the willies.

Shaking her head, she tosses the paper into the TRASH.

Notices Emily's untouched plate.

JUDY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
Aren't you hungry dear?

EMILY DERRINGER
We've been over this. I do not eat
meat.

JUDY DERRINGER
 Don't be silly. Everyone likes
 bacon.

EMILY DERRINGER
 I'm not everyone. And I don't think
 I'm crazy for thinking a poor,
 innocent animal should not have to
 die to feed some...*person*.

David looks at his watch.

DAVID DERRINGER
 Shouldn't you be getting to school?

Emily gets up, slings the satchel over her shoulder.

EMILY DERRINGER
 And then sometimes, I envy swine.

Judy takes the plate, dumps the bacon on David's.

She washes it in the sink.

JUDY DERRINGER
 Don't be like that. First day of
 Middle School? That's when you meet
 all your new friends.

Emily doesn't dignify that with a response.

Instead, while nobody's looking, she opens the trash can.

She grabs the paper and stuffs it in her satchel.

EXT. FRONT PORCH

Emily opens the front door.

CRASH.

GLASS shatters and MILK splashes at Emily's feet, soaking her
 Mary Janes.

The dropped MILK CRATE lays overturned on the porch.

The MILK MAN - GARRET BLUESTONE (30) - clasps at his heart.

GARRET BLUESTONE
 Oh my goodness.

He starts picking up the broken glass.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)
I am so very sorry.

JUDY DERRINGER (O.S.)
What was that?

Judy comes swiftly to investigate the noise.

GARRET BLUESTONE
It's my fault, ma'am. I was making
my deliveries when your daughter
gave me a start.

When she sees Garret - with his boyishly handsome face and
sheepish smile - Judy melts.

She leans flirtatiously against the door frame.

JUDY DERRINGER
Oh my, my - who do we have here?

Emily looks at her mother with horror.

Garret stands, takes off his hat, and shakes her hand.

GARRET BLUESTONE
The name's Garret Bluestone, ma'am.
I'll be your new Milk Man.

This immediatly strikes Emily as odd.

EMILY DERRINGER
What happened to Mr. Gregory?

GARRET BLUESTONE
I'm afraid his mother took a turn.
Had to leave town to care for her,
the poor fella.

JUDY DERRINGER
Well it is a pleasure to have you
in his stead.
(beat)
Isn't it Emily?

Emily pushes past Bluestone.

EMILY DERRINGER
I'm going to be late.

After she's gone.

JUDY DERRINGER
Daughters.

Garret smiles.

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - MORNING

Hordes of students congregate outside the large, brick SCHOOLHOUSE.

Emily sits stationary on her bike, bracing herself.

She'd be more comfortable facing a cloud of mustard gas.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

A sea of students in various states of puberty roam the hallways.

Emily forces her way through the crowd, getting pushed and shoved as if she's not even there.

She clenches a SCRAP of PAPER designating her LOCKER NUMBER as she catches snippets of passing conversations.

Talk of the Misfit is on everyone's lips.

This alone brings a smile to her face.

But then she sees her LOCKER, and the smile disappears.

EMILY DERRINGER

No...

She checks the piece of paper again. This can't be right.

But it is. #248

Standing at #249 is PEPPER DEVONSHIRE (13).

She's blonde, she's beautiful, she's the fucking worst.

She's flanked on all sides by her adoring subjects, a pack of PREPPY GIRLS trying to match their leader's style and grace, but to no avail. There can be only one Pepper Devonshire.

Emily trudges towards the inevitable.

And is forced to stand awkwardly outside their group.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

The last night there, we watched the sunset and ate lobster rolls on his father's yacht.

They let out a collective "Awwwwwe."

ADORING SUBJECT 1
You're so lucky, Pepper.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
I know, isn't it the most? I'm
telling you girls, the boys here
have nothing on the boys in
Nantucket. I can't wait to go back.

Emily can't take it anymore.

She squeezes past them to her locker.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE (CONT'D)
Um, excuse me?

EMILY DERRINGER
You're excused.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
We were having a private
conversation.

EMILY DERRINGER
Then have it privately. You're
blocking my locker.

Pepper looks aghast.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
Um...what?

ADORING SUBJECT 1
Oh no.

ADORING SUBJECT 2
I think lockers go alphabetically.
Devonshire.
(Sneers at Emily)
And Derringer.

The BELL rings.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
Oh my God, you're telling me I have
to spend the whole school year with
my locker next to Emily "The Pig"
Derringer?

She leads her girls away.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE (CONT'D)
Somebody kill me.

As the hallway empties, Emily stands alone at her locker.

Seething.

She reaches into her satchel.

Grabs a BUTCHER KNIFE.

Starts after Pepper -

But stops herself.

EMILY DERRINGER
Not yet...

She puts the knife back in the satchel.

Returns to her locker.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
Pepper Devonshire. The scourge of
Holdenfield Township.

INT. MATH CLASS - DAY

A stuffy old MATH TEACHER drones on in front of a BLACKBOARD covered in algebra problems.

Sitting at the very back of the class, Emily scrawls furiously in her DIARY.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
Of all the residents of this town,
none is more repugnant, more
abhorrent, more vile, loathsome,
and foul than she.

A SPITBALL hits Emily's neck.

She frantically looks for the culprit.

A group of BOYS on the other side of the room stifle their laughter.

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

Wearing GYM CLOTHES, Emily hovers around the wall of the gym.

She's avoiding the DODGEBALLS torpedoing through the air.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 A narcissist since diapers, being
 the first in our class to grow tits
 only exasperated the problem.

She watches Pepper - at the other side of the room - flirting
 with two OLDER BOYS.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 Now she thinks she's Jayne
 Mansfield and the rest of the
 student body is all too willing to
 play along.

Emily takes a dodgeball to the face.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

LUNCH TRAY in hand, Emily navigates the unruly cafeteria.

She passes table after table of happy students.

No seats.

She spots Pepper holding sway over several tables - all the
 boys and girls enraptured by her every utterance.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 She will be my masterpiece. The
 Grand Guignol crescendo to my
 oeuvre.

She takes a seat at an EMPTY TABLE tucked away in the corner.

INT. AMERICAN LITERATURE - DAY

Pepper sits at the front of the class, brushing her hair to a
 captivated audience.

Emily walks in the door.

Pepper sneers at her before turning away.

Emily takes a seat at the very back.

She scribbles in her diary.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 Her death will be brutal. It will
 be public. It will be my proudest
 moment. A demise worthy of her -

The door opens.

Emily stops writing - looks up.

Her jaw drops.

MR. GOODWIN (30s) is skinny, bookish, and bespectacled.

He's the most perfect specimen Emily has ever laid eyes on.

Time slows down as he walks to the head of the classroom and smiles at his students.

MR. GOODWIN

Good afternoon and welcome to your
final class of the day, American
Literature.

He turns to the chalkboard.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)

My name is Mister...

Emily mouths the word as he writes.

EMILY DERRINGER

(Whispering)

Goodwin.

MR. GOODWIN

Goodwin.

And with that, Emily is on cloud nine.

Goodwin's still speaking, but all Emily hears is the music in her head.

It's not until the WHOLE CLASS is staring at her that the spell is broken.

EMILY DERRINGER

Huh?

Everyone laughs.

Goodwin smiles gently.

MR. GOODWIN

I presume you are Miss Derringer?

She goes red. Nods.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)

Excellent.

He goes on. Emily sinks into her chair.

Pepper looks back at her. Mouths the word "Freak."

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Pepper Devonshire?

Pepper spins right around and beams.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
Present!

MR. GOODWIN
Thank you, Pepper.

Emily scowls. She goes back to her diary.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
She's. Fucking. Dead.

LATER

Goodwin distributes a stack of BOOKS to the class.

MR. GOODWIN
As this is a literature class, we
will be reading. A lot.

Groans. Goodwin takes it in stride.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
I know I'm competing for your
attention against the handsome
likes of Dick Clarke and Nick
Adams, so I want to start the year
off with a writer I know will grab
you.

Emily gets her BOOK - its cover a portrait of a bizarre,
mustachioed man.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Edgar Allan Poe. Now -

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
Excuse me.

Emily shoots daggers at the back of Pepper's head.

Goodwin stops. He raises an eyebrow at Pepper.

MR. GOODWIN
...Yes?

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

I'm looking at some of these titles
- "Murders in the Rue Morgue,"
"Masque of the Red Death" - are
these scary stories?

MR. GOODWIN

The scariest.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Well, um, did you know there's a
killer on the loose?

MR. GOODWIN

I've heard mention of that, yes.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Don't you think this is a little
inappropriate then?

MR. GOODWIN

On the contrary. I believe reading
a master of the macabre like Poe is
incredibly appropriate for the
times we find ourselves in.

He addresses the rest of the class.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)

We mustn't turn away like shrinking
violets when confronted with evil,
but stare back into the darkness,
face it head on. To try and
comprehend the incomprehensible, to
make sense of the senseless.

Back to Pepper, who stares sulking with her arms crossed.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)

And do please raise your hand next
time.

He looks back to Emily, who is hanging onto his every word.

He smiles.

Her heart stops.

INT. ICE CREAM PARLOUR - EVENING

A BOOTH is filled to capacity with a group of KIDS seemingly
having the time of their lives.

The parlour echoes with their laughter.

Emily - sitting at the COUNTER and sipping from a CHOCOLATE MALT - watches them behind her from a MIRROR on the wall, her eyes just peering above the pages of her BOOK.

NANCY PACKER (50s) - SODA JERK and owner of the place - sidles over to her while drying a glass.

NANCY PACKER
What are you reading?

EMILY DERRINGER
"The Pit and the Pendulum." It's really good. I'm getting a lot of fantastic ideas.

NANCY PACKER
That for school?

Emily can't help but smile.

EMILY DERRINGER
Mr. Goodwin's class.

NANCY PACKER
I know that look. Goodwin, huh? Yeah, he's a cutie. Though a little too skinny for my tastes.

Emily scowls. Buries her face back in the book.

EMILY DERRINGER
He's perfect.

Nancy smiles, until her attention turns elsewhere.

NANCY PACKER
Ugh, this guy. Been here for hours, hasn't ordered anything but coffee.

She picks up the COFFEE POT.

Emily watches as she approaches a BOOTH in the back corner where -

GARRET BLUESTONE sits, staring down at the table.

Emily frowns. He seems different now. Agitated. Worried.

He doesn't even glance up as Nancy refills his MUG.

Instead, he appears to mumble to himself.

Concentrating on his hands underneath the table.

Emily leans over, attempts to see what he's doing when -

The BELL above the door rings.

Followed by PEPPER's awful cackle.

She and her lackeys spill inside.

Emily immediately goes back to her book, attempts to be conspicuous.

It doesn't work.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Oh look, The Pig's here.

They all laugh.

Nancy returns to the counter as a chorus of pig noises echo throughout the shop.

Emily glumly finishes her malt, pretending she doesn't care.

Nancy notices.

NANCY PACKER

Can I get you another, hun?

Emily packs up her things.

EMILY DERRINGER

I should go.

She starts counting her MONEY.

NANCY PACKER

Nah, this one's on the house.

Emily eyes her suspiciously.

Nancy shrugs, smiles.

EMILY DERRINGER

...Okay.

She hops off her stool, heads to the door.

Then remembers.

Stops, looks over at Garret still sitting at the booth.

She bends down, pretends to adjust her sock.

Looks over at Garret.

Underneath the table, he grinds a POCKET KNIFE into his hand.

LATER

It's dark.

The shop is empty except for Nancy -

And Garret.

He stares at his reflection on the stale coffee's surface.

Nancy turns off the lights.

NANCY PACKER

Closing time, buddy. Hit the road.

He snaps out of his daze.

GARRET BLUESTONE

Oh, yes - sorry.

He grabs a NAPKIN, sticks it to his bloody palm.

Nancy shakes her head as he shuffles past her out the door.

She immediately locks it behind him.

Breathes a sigh of relief.

EXT. MAIN STREET

The brisk air kicks up as Garret exits the shop.

He stares at the ground as he walks.

His breathing gets heavier. He grits his teeth.

He balls up his fist and smashes it repeatedly against his forehead.

GARRET BLUESTONE

No! No! No! No!

INT. ICE CREAM PARLOUR

Nancy wipes down the counter when she hears -

A KNOCK.

She looks up to see Garret silhouetted behind the glass door.
She lets out an aggravated sigh before walking over.
She doesn't open it.

NANCY PACKER
What do you want?

His body trembles and his voice shakes.

GARRET BLUESTONE
I left my jacket on the seat.

She looks over to his booth.

No jacket.

NANCY PACKER
It's not there. Night.

She turns away.

GARRET BLUESTONE
Please! I'm sure of it. Look again.
It's so cold and I have a very long
walk ahead of me.

Nancy stares into his pleading eyes.

She shakes her head, but walks back to the booth anyway.

Upon closer inspection - it's there. Bundled up on the seat.

She grabs it, stomps back to the door.

Unlocks it.

NANCY PACKER
Here. Now please don't darken my
door --

He kicks the door open.

It slams into her face. She hits the ground hard.

Blood gushes from her nose as she looks up in total shock at -
Garret standing above her.

His eyes are wild, his teeth are clenched.

Tears stream down his face, he claws at his hair.

GARRET BLUESTONE

I don't want to, I don't want to, I
don't want to...

But he gets closer.

And closer.

And closer.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

SPLAT.

BOLOGNA hits the lunch table as Emily removes it from her
SANDWICH.

She examines her disappointing meal of mayo and bread before
taking a bite.

A JOCK approaches her table, grabs a CHAIR.

JOCK

Is anybody using this?

Her mouth full, he doesn't wait for an answer before taking
it.

Then, one-by-one, VARIOUS STUDENTS carry off all the
remaining chairs and bring them to their own crowded tables.

Emily stares dead-eyed debating how insulted to feel.

Takes another bite.

As she chews, she doesn't notice the CHEERLEADER rush into
the cafeteria and deliver news to her table of friends.

Gradually, the volume of the room rises until Emily is forced
to acknowledge the roar of students anxiously spreading
information to one another.

A wave of children form a mass exodus out of the cafeteria as
the ADULTS try in vain to corral them.

A BOY rushes past Emily's table.

EMILY DERRINGER

Hey!

He stops.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
What's going on?

BOY
The Misfit killed the ice cream
lady!

EMILY DERRINGER
What? But that's impo--

But he's already gone.

Emily attempts to wrap her mind around this.

She can't. She gets up from her table and joins the crowd.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Mortified ONLOOKERS surround the ICE CREAM PARLOUR.

Emily manages to squeeze her way to the front.

She sees Nancy's CORPSE draped in a WHITE SHEET being wheeled
away.

The windows of the shop are sprayed red.

The crowd is buzzing. Everyone speaks in hushed tones about
The Misfit.

Emily looks around in disbelief - could they really believe
this is *her work*?

Then she sees him.

Garret. Slowly driving past the crowd in his MILK TRUCK.

His face is as white as his vehicle.

CONCERNED CITIZEN (PRE-LAP)
We have got to do something!

INT. TOWN HALL - EVENING

A MAN stands up amongst a crowd of CITIZENS.

The Town Hall is packed to the brim. It appears the whole
town has turned up.

CONCERNED CITIZEN

Two murders in as many days? He's never done that before! How long before he kills us all?

His outburst is met with angered agreement from the horde.

THE MAYOR tries in vain to quell the uproar, while an embarrassed POLICE FORCE stands awkwardly behind him.

THE MAYOR

Ladies and Gentlemen, I assure you our boys are working day and night to catch this killer and bring him to justice.

An ANGRY WOMAN bolts up.

ANGRY WOMAN

Things are getting worse! Nancy Packer's death was The Misfit's most brutal yet!

Emily sits arms crossed between Judy and David.

This is torture.

THE MAYOR

I understand your concern, and we have been taking measures. We will be instituting a curfew --

A PANICKED MAN stands.

PANICKED MAN

I heard he had his way with her. You know - *biblically*.

SCARED WOMAN

I heard he drank her blood!

Emily can't take any more.

She jumps up in her seat.

EMILY DERRINGER

Excuse me!

The crowd goes silent.

David and Judy stare at her in shock.

THE MAYOR

...Yes?

EMILY DERRINGER

Does anyone think Nancy Packer was
not killed by The Misfit?

Crickets.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

I mean, when The Misfit kills
someone, it's done with finesse.
With a sense of showmanship.
Packer? That was amateur hour.

LUCINDA GRANT (O.S.)

Little girl?

Emily turns to see LUCINDA GRANT (38). She'd be a trophy wife
if she wasn't already a widow.

LUCINDA GRANT (CONT'D)

Are you really suggesting there are
two murderers in this town?

She chortles. The rest of the crowd joins her.

Emily glowers at the bitch until a mortified Judy pulls her
back down to her seat.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)

Dear Diary - the Widow Lucinda
Grant is now at the top of my list.

Lucinda addresses the crowd.

LUCINDA GRANT

As all of you know, my late husband
was Mayor, so I think my opinion on
the matter is of some
significance...

She keeps speaking, but Emily's too furious to listen.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)

That heart disease got to her man
before I ever could is still one of
my bigger regrets.

Next to Lucinda is her son, HAROLD (20), his mouth covered in
chocolate.

EMILY DERRINGER

Now it's just her and that imbecile
son.

Enthusiastic, Harold tries to stand, but Lucinda - not missing a beat - shoves him back down with a palm to the face.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
She'll be a most prized addition.

She starts paying attention again as Lucinda wraps it up.

LUCINDA GRANT
...with the can-do spirit that won
the war in Europe!

Whatever she said, it got the crowd going. She's met with thunderous applause.

Emily stews.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE

The meeting lets out.

Flanked by her parents, Emily sulks all the way down the Town Hall Steps.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
In the mean time, I have business
to attend to.

JUDY DERRINGER
Oh, Mr. Bluestone!

Emily snaps out of her trance to see her mother waving down -
Garret Bluestone, walking amongst the crowd.

The split-second look on his face betrays how little he wants to be spoken to, but he swiftly hides it behind a goofy smile.

GARRET BLUESTONE
Why hello there!

Judy pulls Emily and David over to Garret.

JUDY DERRINGER
Honey, this is Mr. Bluestone - our
new Milk Man.

DAVID DERRINGER
Ah yes, the one who spilled all
over my porch the other day.

GARRET BLUESTONE
Oh, I'm so sorry about -

DAVID DERRINGER
Nonsense. Put her there.

He puts out his hand.

Garret looks at it, then warily offers his own.

David grabs it, shakes it forcefully.

Garret winces in pain.

Pulls his hand back.

Emily eyes the BANDAGE stuck to his palm.

JUDY DERRINGER
Garret, what happened?

GARRET BLUESTONE
Just me being silly. Cut it on a
broken bottle. You've seen how
clumsy I am.

DAVID DERRINGER
That so? Well then tell me - how
are you covered on accident
insurance?

As David throws his arm around Garret and proceeds to pitch
him on insurance, Emily hangs back.

She keeps her eyes firmly on Garret.

He looks back at her.

The gears in her head turn.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN - NIGHT

A dirt trail leads up to a lonely, decrepit HOUSE and TOOL
SHED atop a hill.

INT. GARRET'S HOUSE, KITCHEN

The kitchen is filthy, covered in dust and spiderwebs.

Garret - wearing only his briefs - turns on the sink FAUCET.

The pipes groan before spitting a thick, brown liquid that eventually turns to water.

He fills a TEA KETTLE.

He then turns to the STOVE, turns on the GAS.

With a long MATCH, he lights the FLAME, places the pot on top.

Then - a KNOCK at the FRONT DOOR.

He jumps. Stares at the door. Waits.

Nothing.

Warily, he approaches the door.

Hesitates. Opens it.

Met with nothing but a cold gust of wind.

Darkness there, and nothing more.

A sigh of relief. He's about to close the door, when -

He notices a NOTE pinned to it.

He rips it off. Reads.

The blood drains from his face.

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

Mud sucks to Garret's shoes as he trudges through the thick WOODS.

Despite the cool air, he's sweating. Jumps at any sound.

Finally, he comes across the rotting remains of a TREE HOUSE.

He removes the crumpled note from his pocket, double checks it.

He's in the right spot.

GARRET BLUESTONE

Hello?

Only the wind through the trees. Then -

EMILY DERRINGER (O.S.)

Naughty boy, Garret.

He jumps.

GARRET BLUESTONE
Who said that?

EMILY DERRINGER (O.S.)
You've been up to no good.

Emily peers out from the tree house.

Garret's eyes go wide, but he hides behind a smile.

GARRET BLUESTONE
Little girl --

EMILY DERRINGER
Emily.

GARRET BLUESTONE
Emily - I don't know what you're
talking about.

She jumps, hitting the ground with a splat.

EMILY DERRINGER
It was you.

She creeps towards him slowly, menacingly.

He gulps.

GARRET BLUESTONE
Again, I'm afraid I --

EMILY DERRINGER
You were at the shop the night
Nancy Packer was murdered.

Closer.

GARRET BLUESTONE
I was. I enjoy a coffee after work.
That doesn't mean I...what exactly
are you implying?

Closer.

EMILY DERRINGER
According to the paper, her tongue
was ripped out of her head.

Closer.

GARRET BLUESTONE
If you're saying I was the one
who...I can assure you --

EMILY DERRINGER
The same tongue you have buried in
your shed.

He goes pale, much to her delight.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
If you're going to take trophies,
invest in a better lock.

Reveling in sadistic glee, she turns and moseys away, leaving
him shaking in his boots.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
I recognized something off about
you, Bluestone. Then again, I
thought you were just some run-of-
the-mill pervert - going to nudie-
cuties with holes in your pockets,
that sort of thing.
(beat)
But murder? That --

She spins to face him.

Freezes.

The barrel of a HANDGUN is aimed right at her face.

Was not expecting that.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

The gun shakes in Garret's hand, tears run down his cheeks.

GARRET BLUESTONE
I'm so sorry.

He cocks the hammer.

EMILY DERRINGER
Whoa! No, no, wait a second!

She backs away, but Garret follows.

He's losing it, can barely contain his sobs.

GARRET BLUESTONE
I am so, so sorry.

EMILY DERRINGER

Garret, put the gun down. You don't need to do this. You don't want to hurt me.

GARRET BLUESTONE

I don't want to hurt anybody!

He's having a full-blown meltdown, but the gun stays fixed on Emily.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)

For God's sake, do you think I want to be like this? I can't help it! Maggots eat at my brain and my eyes go hot and suddenly I'm home and I've got that poor lady's tongue in my pocket!

(wipes his tears)

And I was doing so good!

He regains some composure - steadies his aim.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)

And I'm not The Misfit! Not like everyone says. I swear I didn't kill those other people! How could I? I only just got here!

EMILY DERRINGER

Garret - *listen to me.*

GARRET BLUESTONE

But I can't start over. No, not again, not again.

He aims between her eyes.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)

Forgive me.

EMILY DERRINGER

Garret! Calm down for one fucking minute and listen to me. I'm not going to tell anyone.

He trembles, doesn't believe her.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

And you're not The Misfit. That I know for sure.

The look in her eye says it all.

It finally registers. He lowers the gun.

GARRET BLUESTONE

...You?

She nods.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)

But...

EMILY DERRINGER

So believe me when I tell you your secret is safe.

GARRET BLUESTONE

I don't understand, why bring me out here?

EMILY DERRINGER

Because you and I need to have a conversation.

(beat)

I have a reputation in this town. A reputation that was - until very recently - immaculate. I was proud of that reputation, Garret, and you stained it.

She steps forward - even at half his size, she's intimidating.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

So I'm only going to say this once: Leave.

They stare into each other's eyes. Then -

GARRET BLUESTONE

I can't do that.

EMILY DERRINGER

Garret.

GARRET BLUESTONE

I can't. Do you realize how many times I've uprooted myself over the years? How many times I've started over?

EMILY DERRINGER

Not my concern.

GARRET BLUESTONE

I have a job here. A home. It's when I don't, when I've got nowhere to go, nowhere to be, no distractions...that's when things get bad.

He wipes his remaining tears.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)

This was a relapse, that's all. Growing pains. I promise it won't happen again.

Emily searches for reassurance in his eyes.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)

I'm begging you.

She looks at the gun in his hand.

Only she seems to be aware of the uneven power dynamic.

Takes what she can get.

EMILY DERRINGER

I have your word?

GARRET BLUESTONE

Cross my heart and hope to die.

She stares him down. Is she really going to do this?

EMILY DERRINGER

Fine. It does not happen again.

She turns. Walks away.

Garret stands there, still in shock. He watches as she's about to disappear into the woods, when -

GARRET BLUESTONE

Why didn't you kill me?

She stops in her tracks.

EMILY DERRINGER

What?

GARRET BLUESTONE

If you are who you say you are - if you are really The Misfit - why go through all this trouble? Why not just kill me?

The question catches her off guard. Yeah, why didn't she?
She has to think a moment.

EMILY DERRINGER
I've never met anyone with the
same...proclivities. I guess I was
curious.

And with that, she takes her leave.

But the question still lingers in her mind.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE (PRE-LAP)
It's about guilt, obviously

INT. AMERICAN LITERATURE - DAY

Mr. Goodwin leans against his desk, looking at a Pepper.

MR. GOODWIN
Okay. Go on.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
That's it. Guilt. That's why he
hears the heart beat. He feels bad
about killing the old man.

Emily - in back - rolls her eyes.

Goodwin nods, unsatisfied with the answer.

He scans the rest of the class. He lands on -

MR. GOODWIN
Emily.

Her heart skips a beat.

EMILY DERRINGER
Yes?

MR. GOODWIN
Pepper believes "The Tell-Tale
Heart" is about guilt. Would you
agree?

Reveling in the chance to disagree.

EMILY DERRINGER
No. I would not.

He grins.

MR. GOODWIN
You have the floor.

She opens her book.

EMILY DERRINGER
I mean, the narrator doesn't sound particularly guilt-ridden. She just wants us to believe she's not crazy.

MR. GOODWIN
She?

EMILY DERRINGER
What?

MR. GOODWIN
You said "she" wants us to believe "she's" not crazy.

EMILY DERRINGER
Did I? Oh, um --

Fuck.

MR. GOODWIN
That's interesting. I never thought of it that way, but yes - the narrator could be a woman. No gender is ever specified. Very interesting, Emily. Please continue.

EMILY DERRINGER
...Okay.

Close call.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
Anyway, it says right here: "Object there was none. Passion there was none." She - or he - admits there was no reason to kill the old man. It was a completely irrational act. Is it then any surprise that the narrator would hallucinate a heart beat?

MR. GOODWIN
So it's not about morality, it's about insanity?

EMILY DERRINGER
 Yes, that's the downfall. Now, in
 "The Cask of Amontillado" -

MR. GOODWIN
 Reading ahead, I see.

She blushes, but continues.

EMILY DERRINGER
 Montresor gets away with it because
 he acts rationally. Fortunato -
 unlike the Old Man - deserved to be
 punished.

MR. GOODWIN
 Well, only if you believe Montresor
 is a reliable narrator. He claims
 to have suffered "a thousand
 injuries" at Fortunato's hand, but
 we don't know that. You're taking
 the word of a man who thinks
 nothing of imprisoning his friend
 behind a wall.

EMILY DERRINGER
 Yes, but --

MR. GOODWIN
 To me, that he acts with such
 conviction - that he never once
 questions his sanity - well, to me
 that makes him the craziest of all.

Emily tries to formulate a response, but is interrupted by -
 The BELL.

The whole class gathers their things and heads to the door.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
 Ah the bell, "What a world of
 merriment its melody foretells."
 "Amontillado." I want you all to
 read it tonight so you too can be
 party to this discussion.
 (beat)
 Emily?

Emily stops packing.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
 Could you stay for a minute?

She nods and waits for everyone to leave the room.

When it's just the two of them, she approaches his desk.

EMILY DERRINGER
Yes, Mr. Goodwin?

MR. GOODWIN
I have a feeling, Emily, that
there's more to you than meets the
eye. I think you have a secret.

Uh oh. She gulps.

EMILY DERRINGER
You do?

MR. GOODWIN
Yep. A deep, dark secret that you
don't think anyone could possibly
know...but I do.

Her mouth is arid, she can't speak.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
I think you...are a secret party
animal.

Her relief quickly turns to confusion.

EMILY DERRINGER
Huh?

He laughs.

MR. GOODWIN
I'll explain. With all
the...unpleasantness that's been
going on, the Mayor has made the
not entirely unreasonable decision
to cancel trick-or-treating this
Halloween.

EMILY DERRINGER
Okay.

MR. GOODWIN
So, instead, the school board wants
to host a party in the gymnasium -
a sort of "safe alternative," you
understand? And I'm the schmuck
they chose to organize the damn
thing.

(beat)

(MORE)

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Fortunately, they said I could
enlist some students to help.
That's where you come in.

She's still a little flabbergasted.

EMILY DERRINGER
Thank you, but I really don't know
anything about parties.

MR. GOODWIN
Neither do I. That's what I told
them, but they insisted so now I'm
trying to rope in a fellow weirdo.
What do you say?

His smile melts her like butter. Her cheeks go red and she
can't help but smile back.

EMILY DERRINGER
Halloween *is* my favorite holiday.
(beat)
I'll do it.

MR. GOODWIN
Excellent. We'll start meeting
after school every Friday in the
gym. Start thinking of ideas, all
right?

EMILY DERRINGER
All right.

She practically floats out of the room.

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

Emily sits on the BLEACHERS, her DIARY open on her lap. It's
pages are filled with party ideas.

She taps her foot impatiently, until -

The door to the gym opens.

Goodwin walks in wheeling a portable CHALK BOARD.

She beams. But her smile evaporates when she sees who is with
him.

Pepper. Fucking. Devonshire.

Goodwin looks up at Emily, waves.

Emily waves back, but is barely able to shroud her fury.

EMILY DERRINGER

I didn't know Pepper was going to be here.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Why wouldn't I be here?

MR. GOODWIN

Pepper very graciously offered her services when she heard about our undertaking. And because she has the most school spirit of anyone I know --

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

I actually get invited to parties. Why are you here?

Either Goodwin is oblivious to their mutual contempt, or he's ignoring it.

He picks up a piece of CHALK and goes to the board.

MR. GOODWIN

So, ideas - what have we got?

Pepper confidently unveils her notebook, but Emily beats her to it.

EMILY DERRINGER

I have a few.

MR. GOODWIN

Excellent, Emily - let's hear them.

Emily shoots Pepper a victorious grin, then opens her diary.

EMILY DERRINGER

I think it would be fun to turn the whole gymnasium into a graveyard scene. All the tombs could have the names of different students and faculty, and -

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Ew! What is wrong with you? Why would we ever do something like that?

EMILY DERRINGER

Because it's Halloween?

MR. GOODWIN

Unfortunately Emily, I'm afraid Pepper's right. What with The Misfit and all, the higher ups have made it clear they want a wholesome affair. Less "Day of the Dead," more "Fall Harvest," you understand?

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Yeah, creep.

That does it.

Emily grips her pencil tight -

And STABS it into Pepper's JUGULAR.

BLOOD soaks Goodwin as she plunges it over and over into Pepper's soft flesh.

Except...No she doesn't.

END FANTASY

No, Emily simply sits on the bleachers, imagining Pepper's doom.

But then...a change.

A small, genuine smiles creeps up on Emily, and she sends it Pepper's way.

EMILY DERRINGER

You're absolutely right. We need to be sensitive. Of course.

She rips out the pages of ideas.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

How about bobbing for apples?

MR. GOODWIN

Perfect.

As Goodwin writes "Bobbing for Apples" on the board, Emily opens to a fresh page.

At the very top, she writes:

"PEPPER DIES ON HALLOWEEN"

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Emily rides her bike down sunny Main Street.

Dead LEAVES dance in the wind.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
Diary - there's nothing quite like
the feeling of inspiration.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Pepper puts her books in her locker.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
Of course. Halloween.

She closes the door -

To find Emily staring at her. Smiling.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
The perfect setting for my
masterwork.

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

Goodwin and Pepper cut construction paper leaves.

Above their heads, Emily watches from the RAFTERS.

EMILY DERRINGER (O.S.)
For the first time, my public will
be treated to a live performance.

EXT. DERRINGER'S FRONT YARD - MORNING

As Emily wheels her bike down the driveway -

A NEWSPAPER lands at her feet.

"TOWN TERRIFIED AS MISFIT STILL AT LARGE"

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
My only concern now is living up to
the impossibly high expectations
I've created for myself.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Emily peruses the GARDENING TOOLS section with a spool of ROPE slung over her shoulder.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
But that's why we have preparation.

She stops when she sees a SCYTHE hanging on the wall.

She reaches for it, but it's just out of grasp.

Tippy-toes. No dice.

HAROLD GRANT (O.S.)
Help?

Emily turns to see Harold Grant standing there with a big, goofy smile on his face.

He's licking a LOLLIPOP the size of his head.

EMILY DERRINGER
Um. Sure.

Rather than grab the scythe himself, Harold picks Emily up off the ground.

She gets the scythe, he puts her back down.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
Thank you.

He thrusts the lollipop at her.

HAROLD GRANT
Lolly?

It glistens with saliva.

EMILY DERRINGER
Rain check.

They stand there a while. Then -

HAROLD GRANT
Okay. Bye.

And with that, Harold continues on his way leaving Emily alone in the aisle.

She runs her finger against the blade, unsure of what to make of this interaction.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Emily walks into the kitchen lugging a heavy DUFFLE BAG.

As per usual, David is hidden behind the PAPER, Judy is slaving over the stove.

Emily removes the lone piece of toast off her plate of sausage, then heads back out.

EMILY DERRINGER

Bye.

David grunts.

JUDY DERRINGER

By dear, be home by four.

Emily stops.

EMILY DERRINGER

What? Why?

JUDY DERRINGER

The party.

Not registering.

JUDY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

Emily, I've been telling you this for weeks. We're having a party tonight for all your father's clients.

EMILY DERRINGER

Why do I need to be there?

DAVID DERRINGER

Because people want to buy insurance from a family man.

JUDY DERRINGER

We want to make a good impression.

EMILY DERRINGER

But I've got Halloween Planning after school. Can't I be your prop when that's over?

JUDY DERRINGER

I need you to help get things ready. Your teacher will understand.

EMILY DERRINGER

But--

DAVID DERRINGER

No "buts" young lady.

Emily fumes. She stamps her feet.

No reaction from her parents.

In a huff, she drags her duffle bag of deadly weapons out the door.

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

Emily sits in the bleachers stuffing STRAW into a STOCKING and molding into the shape of a SCARECROW'S HEAD.

Meanwhile, Goodwin is crucifying a straw-filled flannel COAT and Pepper decorates a hat.

Emily looks up at the CLOCK on the wall. It's almost 4.

EMILY DERRINGER

Mr. Goodwin?

MR. GOODWIN

Emily - it's been almost two months now. You can call me Tom.

(beat)

Outside of class.

She blushes.

EMILY DERRINGER

Tom - I have to leave early today.

MR. GOODWIN

Shucks - I was planning on taking you girls out for burgers after this.

No.

EMILY DERRINGER

Oh, well, I mean --

MR. GOODWIN

Looks like it's you and me, Pepper.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Splendid, Tom.

Emily's heart is breaking.

EMILY DERRINGER
I think, though, that--

MR. GOODWIN
Dratz.

Goodwin motions to his scarecrow.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
I left the pants in my car. I'll be
right back.

He leaves. And then there were two.

They work in silence, but the tension is palpable.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
Why would you get burgers, anyway?
I thought you didn't eat meat.

Emily stops what she's doing.

Okay, so they're doing this.

EMILY DERRINGER
I suppose I have you to thank for
that.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
It was a pig roast. What did you
expect?

EMILY DERRINGER
I don't know - I was nine. I had no
idea where ham came from, but I did
not expect to see some poor piglet
stuck through with a spit. It was
horrifying.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
You didn't have to freak out about
it. You ruined my birthday party.

EMILY DERRINGER
You laughed at me. You were my
friend.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
Yeah, your only friend. "The
Gruesome Twosome"

(beat)

(MORE)

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE (CONT'D)
 But I wasn't you, Emily - I didn't
 like everyone hating me all the
 time.

EMILY DERRINGER
 I--

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
 It was my birthday. The other kids
 were finally starting to treat me
 like one of them - like I wasn't an
 outcast, and you know what? It was
 nice.

(beat)
 But then you start screaming and
 crying because of a pig on a
 barbecue. What was I supposed to
 do? People laughed, and for the
 first time I didn't want them
 laughing at me, too. So I chose a
 side.

Emily stares at her, trying to formulate the words. Finally -

EMILY DERRINGER
 Well you really opened my eyes that
 day. Between you and the pig, I saw
 how ugly humanity can be. Thank you
 for that.

Silence.

They go back to work.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
 It's not like I didn't feel bad
 afterwards.

Emily opens her mouth to say something -

When Goodwin returns with the PANTS.

Emily stands.

EMILY DERRINGER
 I have to go.

She passes Goodwin, who then looks to Pepper.

She shrugs.

INT. DERRINGER FAMILY ROOM - EVENING

Drunk ADULTS cha-cha to the Martin Denny record playing on the STEREO.

Emily sits arms crossed in the corner of the room.

She watches as her mother schmoozes with guests - a giant, plastic smile plastered on her face.

While listening to a BOORISH MAN speak way too closely, Judy looks over to Emily.

She snaps her fingers, waves Emily over.

With a heavy sigh, Emily joins her mother.

JUDY DERRINGER
(Whispering)
Would it kill you to socialize?

EMILY DERRINGER
Kill *me*? No.

Judy turns to the Man.

JUDY DERRINGER
This is our Emily. Emily - Mr. Doddsworth.

DODDSWORTH
What a little cutie she is.

Emily winces at the alcohol on his breath.

EMILY DERRINGER
Pleasure.

JUDY DERRINGER
Why don't you get Mr. Doddsworth another drink?

EMILY DERRINGER
Whiskey?

DODDSWORTH
She's got a good eye, this one.

EMILY DERRINGER
A better nose. Excuse me.

Emily worms her way through the forest of bodies to the BAR.

She picks up an empty GLASS. Spits in it.

Pours a drink.

LUCINDA GRANT (O.S.)

I know you.

Emily looks over to see Lucinda Grant standing next to her holding a giant glass of RED WINE.

She takes a swig, downing half the glass.

As she goes to refill -

LUCINDA GRANT (CONT'D)

You're the little opinionated one,
aren't you?

She takes another drink and leans down close.

LUCINDA GRANT (CONT'D)

Want my advice?

She jabs at Emily with the glass, the swishing wine precariously close to spilling.

LUCINDA GRANT (CONT'D)

You'll never nab a husband if
you're always flapping your trap.
Little girls should be seen and not
heard.

She takes another self-satisfied sip.

Emily looks up at her. Grins.

EMILY DERRINGER

Thank you Ms. Grant. I can assure
you, you will neither see me nor
hear me when I come for you.

LUCINDA GRANT

What --

The FRONT DOOR opens.

DAVID DERRINGER (O.S.)

Look who I found.

Mr. Derringer stands in the door frame with a paper BAG of newly purchased LIQUOR under one arm.

His other arm is thrown around the shoulder of -

Garret Bluestone. He's never looked this uncomfortable.

Judy's thrilled.

JUDY DERRINGER (O.S.)

Garret!

Emily spins.

Seeing Garret - his sheepish face - she jumps backwards -

Smashing into Lucinda.

Red wine spills all over Emily.

Everyone looks over.

JUDY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

Emily!

Lucinda surveys the damage - she barely has a drop on her.
But that's enough.

LUCINDA GRANT

Oh, you stupid brat.

Soaked, Emily looks around in disbelief.

She hightails it out of there.

INT. DERRINGER'S KITCHEN

Emily marches to the PANTRY, grabs SALT, goes to the SINK.

She removes her dress, leaving only her SLIP.

She holds the dress under the tap and soaks it in cold water.

She angrily scrubs.

She doesn't realize Garret is standing at the kitchen door.

He knocks on the wall. She turns, sees him, then turns back.

EMILY DERRINGER

Why are you here?

He doesn't move.

GARRET BLUESTONE

Your father saw me at the liquor
store. Said he was restocking for a
party. Insisted I come.

(beat)

He was very aggressive.

She keeps scrubbing, pretending he's not there.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)
And, well - I thought we could
talk.

He approaches. Slowly.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)
I always use peroxide.

EMILY DERRINGER
Peroxide bleaches fabrics. A salt
paste works fine.

GARRET BLUESTONE
Yes, but --

EMILY DERRINGER
I know how to deal with red stains.

Garret backs off.

GARRET BLUESTONE
I don't want there to be any
hostility between us, Emily. We
should stick together.

Scrubs harder.

EMILY DERRINGER
Oh, and why's that?

Scrubs harder.

GARRET BLUESTONE
Because...

EMILY DERRINGER
What? You want to be friends? Is
that it? Listen - I don't have
friends and I don't want friends -
I don't need a friend.

Her scrubbing is futile.

She throws her dress down.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
Shit!

She stomps out of the kitchen.

Garret picks the sopping dress up off the floor.

LUCINDA GRANT (O.S.)
 Garret, is it?

Garret turns to see Lucinda leaning against the wall.

She bats her eyelashes.

He gulps.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Emily slams her bedroom door closed.

She goes to her bed, sits on her butterfly bedsheets.

Lifts up the mattress, removes her DIARY.

Starts scribbling.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 Dear Diary - I think I've laid low
 long enough. Time to relieve a
 little stress.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Wearing a fresh outfit, Emily tiptoes out of her room.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 After all, I wouldn't want to be
 rusty on Halloween.

She peers into her parent's BEDROOM.

Judy lays snoring on top of the bed, David is passed out on the floor.

EXT. THE GRANT HOUSE - NIGHT

Emily rides her bike past a "GRANT" adorned MAILBOX.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
 And I know just how to flex my
 muscles.

She rides up the long driveway leading to Grant's large HOUSE.

INT. THE GRANT HOUSE, FOYER

The LOCK is picked.

The HANDLE turns, the FRONT DOOR opens.

Emily creeps inside, greeted by the sound of music playing from another room.

Following it, she tip toes down the -

HALLWAY

Past various paintings, sculptures, and ornamental vases into the -

DINING ROOM

Slinking past the long TABLE and velvet-lined CHAIRS.

The music gets louder and louder and she approaches the -

LOUNGE

Before her - the back of a large cushioned CHAIR.

Only Lucinda's HAND - gripping a MARTINI GLASS - can be seen.

The RECORD PLAYER blares, obscuring the creak of the floorboards that groan with Emily's every step.

An eager grin spreads over Emily's face as she delicately removes the BUTCHER KNIFE from her SATCHEL.

As she raises the knife above her head -

The music stops. The record's over.

She watches as the NEEDLE rises and returns to its post.

Takes another step -

Slips.

Crashes to the floor. The whole room quakes.

She looks down.

A PUDDLE. It's red.

She looks over to Lucinda.

Her DEAD BODY slumps over to the floor.

Her JAW has been torn from her face.

Emily fights against the floor's slick surface to scramble to her feet.

HAROLD GRANT (O.S.)

Mommy?

Panic in Emily's eyes as she looks to the doorway to see -
Harold walking in, yawning and rubbing his eyes.

HAROLD GRANT (CONT'D)

I heard a loud -

He stops.

Sees his mother.

Sees Emily.

Sees blood.

HAROLD GRANT (CONT'D)

Gosh...

He turns. Runs.

With no time to think, instinct kicks in.

Emily hurls the knife.

The blade plunges into the back of his neck.

He flies forward. Hits the ground hard.

Emily stands tense and grimacing as poor Harold lays twitching on the floor.

This was not how things were supposed to happen.

She cautiously approaches his convulsing body and takes hold of the knife's handle.

She readies herself. Then -

Wrenches the blade. Back. Forth. Jerks it out.

The twitching abruptly ends.

She takes in the whole gruesome scene.

EMILY DERRINGER

Shit.

EXT. WINDING ROAD - NIGHT

Soaked in Lucinda and Harold's blood, Emily furiously pumps the pedals of her bike.

She races down the secluded road, lit only by moonlight.

EXT. GARRET'S YARD - NIGHT

Garret - stripped to his underwear - trembles as he pours LIGHTER FLUID over an already raging FIRE of BLOODY CLOTHES.

He doesn't realize Emily is speeding down the dirt road towards him until -

EMILY DERRINGER

Bluestone!

He drops the lighter fluid when he sees her. He backs away.

GARRET BLUESTONE

I'm sorry!

Emily flies off the bike, storms over to Garret wielding the knife.

EMILY DERRINGER

You gave me your word, Garret! Your word!

GARRET BLUESTONE

It wasn't my fault! I just wanted her to leave me alone. But she was drunk! She said I needed to drive her home! And the next thing I know...

The tears start pouring.

He stops trying to get away. He collapses to his knees.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)

I don't want to be like this anymore!

Emily remains unfazed.

EMILY DERRINGER

No. That's not good enough, not this time. Lucinda was mine! Because of you, I had to kill her son. He...

She tries to find the words.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

He...

She's racking her brain. Finally -

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

He didn't deserve that.

Garret stops his sobbing. He lifts his head.

GARRET BLUESTONE

What?

(beat)

Emily - none of them deserve it.

Before she can respond -

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)

Christ - is that what you think?
That there's something riotous in
all of this? No. You and I? We're
monsters. If anyone deserves death,
it's us.

And for just a second, something clicks in Emily's brain.

But she buries it fast.

She points the knife at him.

EMILY DERRINGER

This isn't over.

She jabs at him one more time for emphasis, then storms off to her bike.

Garret watches as she rides off.

He wipes his tears.

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

Emily sits on the bleachers with her DIARY open atop her lap.

She's written "DEAR DIARY" at the top of the page, but nothing else.

The tip of the pen rests at the ready, but the words aren't coming.

Her trance is broken when Goodwin and Pepper walk in.

Both carry stacks of BOXES.

As they set them down -

EMILY DERRINGER
What are those?

MR. GOODWIN
Board games. Pepper and I thought
we could set up a table in the
back.

Pepper picks one up.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
Oh, this would be perfect.

She flips it around.

A OUIJA BOARD.

Goodwin chuckles.

MR. GOODWIN
A Ouija Board might be too "occult"
for this town's sensibilities.
(beat)
However...

He takes it from her and examines it himself.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
That doesn't mean we can't take it
for a spin. Emily? What do you
say?

Emily's still miles away.

EMILY DERRINGER
Huh? Oh, um...

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
She's too scared.

MR. GOODWIN
Come on, it'll be a rowdy dow.

EMILY DERRINGER
Fine. Okay.

LATER

Emily and Pepper sit with the Ouija Board between them while
Goodwin improves the ambiance by shutting off the lights.

MR. GOODWIN

Perfect.

He sits down and joins them.

He rests his hand on the PLANCHETTE. Pepper follows his lead. Emily is hesitant, but gives in.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)

Well, what should we ask?

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Ask if there's anyone here with us.
Like a spook or a spectre.

Goodwin smiles, then closes his eyes. The girls follow suit.

MR. GOODWIN

Spirits - are there any of you with us today?

Nothing for a few pregnant moments, then -

The planchette drifts towards "YES."

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

I just got chills.

MR. GOODWIN

Spirit - have you been deceased long?

"No."

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)

So it was a recent death?

"Yes."

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)

Did you die peacefully?

"NO."

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)

Spirit - how did you leave this mortal coil?

Emily watches with horror as the planchette spells out -

"M-U-R-D-E-R"

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Spooky.

Goodwin's having a blast, doesn't notice Emily's revulsion.
He goes in for the kill.

MR. GOODWIN
Spirit - is the killer with us in
this room?

As the planchette makes a deliberate line towards "YES" -
Emily flips the board.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
What the fuck?

MR. GOODWIN
Pepper.

Emily jumps to her feet and beelines it towards her things at
the bleachers.

EMILY DERRINGER
This is stupid. There's no such
thing as ghosts.

Goodwin instantly regrets the last few minutes.

MR. GOODWIN
No Emily, of course not. It's just
a stupid parlour trick. I'm sorry.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
Yeah, stop being such a baby.

He gives Pepper a scolding look then places his hand
reassuringly on Emily's shoulder.

MR. GOODWIN
I promise, it's just us in here.
There aren't any spirits. There's
no killer.

Emily looks him in the eye.

How wrong he is.

She breaks away. Shoves her diary into her satchel and storms
out the door.

Goodwin stands there rattled. Finally he turns to Pepper.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Just to be safe, let's not have
Clue either.

INT. DERRINGER'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Emily pushes her food around her plate as David and Judy eat their dinner in silence.

Then -

EMILY DERRINGER
There's no God, right?

David chokes on his food.

JUDY DERRINGER
What?

EMILY DERRINGER
God. He's not real, is he? And Heaven and Hell - they're all just made up?

DAVID DERRINGER
See Judy, this kind of thing is only going to get worse with a Catholic in the White House.

JUDY DERRINGER
Of course there's a God, honey.

EMILY DERRINGER
Then why do we only go to church on Christmas and Easter?

The parents exchange looks - Judy takes this one.

JUDY DERRINGER
Because your father works hard all week and likes to sleep in on Sundays.

DAVID DERRINGER
God understands.

EMILY DERRINGER
Fine then. God's real. What about Good and Evil?

JUDY DERRINGER
How do you mean?

EMILY DERRINGER
Is something "good" only because God says it is, or is "good" good inherently?

(MORE)

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
Is "evil" nothing more than the
breaking of an arbitrary rule?

JUDY DERRINGER
Why are you--

EMILY DERRINGER
And why does God get to decide
what's good and bad? Because he's
"in charge?" What does that even
mean? What if you disagree with
him? Isn't it worse to not follow
your conscience? He says "Thou
Shalt Not Kill" but don't some
people deserve to die? Don't we
fight wars based on that principle?
Doesn't God kill people all the
time?

JUDY DERRINGER
Yes, but --

EMILY DERRINGER
And what if God *isn't* real? It
makes a lot more sense that he's
not, doesn't it? Does that posit
existence is meaningless? If life
has no purpose, than how can
morality exist? How can something
be right or wrong, when Existence
is a cold, uncaring void? How can
any action be objectively better or
worse than another when in the end,
we're all going to rot, the Sun's
going to explode, and any trace
that we were ever here will cease
to exist?

She looks to her parents, but they stare dumbfounded at each other.

Finally -

JUDY DERRINGER
Eat your meatloaf, dear.

They go back to shoving food in their mouths, a little more urgently now.

Emily sighs, shoves her plate away, and leaves the table.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM

Emily walks into her room and softly closes the door behind her. She then sits on her bed.

After several moments accompanied only by the sound of her ticking clock, Emily pulls back her butterfly bedsheets revealing her DIARY.

She opens it, and begins writing.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
Dear Diary...

EXT. DERRINGER'S BACK YARD - NIGHT

FIRE rages within Mr. Derringer's BARBECUE.

EMILY DERRINGER (V.O.)
Goodbye.

Emily drops the diary into the flame and watches as the pages burn.

She wipes away a tear.

As the paper turns to ash, Emily reaches into her pocket.

She pulls out a NICKEL.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

A young POLICE OFFICER sits at his desk filling out paper work.

His PHONE rings. He answers.

OFFICER
Holdenfield Police Department.
(Listening)
Could you repeat that, Sir? Your
voice is a little muffled.
(Listening)
What?

This call just got urgent. He grabs a pen.

OFFICER (CONT'D)
Say that again...

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

Emily - holding a RAG to her mouth - hangs up the PHONE.

The deed is done.

EXT. GARRET'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The peaceful stillness of Garret's yard is broken when two POLICE CARS drive up the dirt trail.

They park by the SHED.

Four OFFICERS exit the vehicles - GUTTENBERG, WINSLOW, BAILEY, and CATRALL.

GUTTENBERG

We positive this isn't a Halloween prank?

BAILEY

Halloween's tomorrow.

GUTTENBERG

Mischief Night, then. Anonymous tip? That sounds too easy.

WINSLOW

Legit or not, we have to check it out.

INT. GARRET'S HOUSE, KITCHEN

Garret fills a TEA KETTLE at the sink.

Brings it to the STOVE. He turns on the GAS.

Lights a MATCH -

KNOCK KNOCK

He DROPS the match. Looks to the door.

Waits.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

GARRET BLUESTONE

...Hello?

GUTTENBERG (O.S.)

Police. Open up.

The color drains from Garret's face.

EXT. GARRET'S HOUSE, PORCH

Guttenberg and Winslow wait as Garret unlocks multiple LOCKS.

The door cracks open.

A final LATCH remains. Garret peers out.

GARRET BLUESTONE
How may I assist you, gentlemen?

WINSLOW
You could open the door.

He hesitates.

GARRET BLUESTONE
Oh. Yes...

He removes the chain.

SHED

Bailey and Catrall lean against their cars.

Bailey whistles to himself, absentmindedly letting his eyes wander.

He looks down at his shoe. Notices something.

A trail of RED DIRT.

Leading to the SHED.

He nudges Catrall.

PORCH

A bead of sweat crawls down Garret's forehead.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)
But I don't understand. I haven't done anything.

WINSLOW
Regardless, we'd like to bring you in and ask you a few questions.

GARRET BLUESTONE
Am I under arrest?

WINSLOW

No, but--

GARRET BLUESTONE

So I don't have to go with you.

The officers exchange looks.

GUTTENBERG

Don't make this more difficult than
it has to be.

SHED

Bailey and Catrall follow the red trail to the shed's door.

It's slightly ajar.

Bailey pushes it open.

LUCINDA'S HEAD falls into his arms.

They both scream.

PORCH

Winslow and Guttenberg look back.

Garret takes his chance.

He grabs the HANDGUN tucked behind his back.

FIRES.

Guttenberg's face explodes.

FIRES.

Winslow's chest bursts open.

He slams the door closed.

INT. GARRET'S HOUSE

He bolts the DEAD LOCK, chains the LATCH.

A BULLET HOLE erupts through the wood, just missing his arm.

He screams.

Shoots back wildly.

SHED

Bailey and Catrall dive behind their cars.

Fire back.

HOUSE

Garret slithers below the BULLETS flying through the house.

GARRET BLUESTONE

No, no, no, no, no.

Repeating the mantra, he reaches up to a set of drawers.

He pulls it to the ground, spilling everything.

He searches through the clutter until he finds -

AMMUNITION.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)

Not again, not again, not again...

He reloads.

Shimmies to a WINDOW.

Pops up. Fires.

SHED

Shots hit the cars.

Catrall reaches inside, grabs the RADIO.

HOUSE

CLICK

Garret ducks below to reload.

Stops.

Sniffs.

Looks to the kitchen.

The GAS is still running.

A BULLET flies by his head.

Hits the STOVE.

KA-FUCKING-BOOM

SHED

Catrall and Bailey hit the dirt.

A FIRE rages from the remains of the kitchen.

Swiftly consumes the rest of the house.

And they watch it burn.

LATER

COPS, PARAMEDICS and the entire FIRE DEPARTMENT crowd around the smoldering husk that was Garret's home.

Bodies are wheeled away.

A FIREMAN searches through charred wood.

He moves debris.

Reveals the blackened SKELETON underneath.

FIREMAN

I found him!

He spits on the skull.

As a crowd forms around the fallen killer, nobody suspects that off in the distance, somewhere in the trees -

They're being watched.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The morning sun shines brightly on Emily's face.

She stares at the ceiling. Hasn't slept a wink.

JUDY DERRINGER (O.S.)

(From downstairs)

I don't believe it!

It starts.

INT. KITCHEN

David reads the paper in disbelief.

Judy is having a full blown panic attack.

She hyperventilates as she pours MILK down the drain.

JUDY DERRINGER

He came here every morning, David!
He knew where we lived. God, he was
in our house!

DAVID DERRINGER

I made him an old fashioned.

Emily trudges into the kitchen.

JUDY DERRINGER

Emily! You won't believe it. You'll
never believe it.

EMILY DERRINGER

Bluestone was the The Misfit.

She sits at the table.

JUDY DERRINGER

Yes! I feel faint. David, I'm going
to faint.

She faints.

EMILY DERRINGER

Could you pass the butter?

He does. Emily spreads it on her toast.

DAVID DERRINGER

It's a shame they killed him. Would
have loved the chance to see him
squirm at the end of a noose.
That's the American way.

EMILY DERRINGER

Wait. He's dead?

DAVID DERRINGER

Burnt crispy by the sound of it.

She bites her TOAST, unsure how to feel about this
development.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MORNING

The Hallway is plastered with decorations.

BANNERS and POSTERS all say the same thing:

"SAFE HALLOWEEN PARTY TONIGHT"

But no one cares about that.

No, everyone's talking about The Milk Man.

Emily walks with her eyes firmly on the ground.

It's impossible to ignore snippets of conversations, all about Garret's horrifying deeds.

Emily's dying inside.

She gets to her locker where two GIRLS are whispering.

GIRL 1

The Milk Man - that's what they're calling him now.

GIRL 2

That's so much better than The Misfit.

GIRL 1

I know. My Daddy says he's going to go down in history.

GIRL 2

Of course. There's never been a killer more diabolical than Garret Bluestone.

Emily slams her locker closed.

The two girls watch her stomp away.

INT. GIRL'S BATHROOM - DAY

Emily kneels in a STALL with her head in the TOILET.

Her retching echoes through the bathroom.

She spits. Flushes.

Exits the stall.

Freezes.

Pepper is at the MIRROR applying lipstick.

She grimaces looking back at Emily.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

What's your problem?

Emily goes to the sink, washes her hands.

EMILY DERRINGER

The Misfit -

(sighs)

I mean The Milk Man. The things they say he did...

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Ugh, I know. Like the way he cut up that man into chunks and hid them around town.

EMILY DERRINGER

Drawn and quartered.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Huh?

EMILY DERRINGER

Drawn and quartered. It was really popular in Medieval England. The guy's name was Henry King, so you know - a pretty clever reference.

(beat)

But anyway, yeah. Terrible.

She dries her hands.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

At least now everyone can stop thinking about all that scary stuff.

EMILY DERRINGER

Yeah. Just in time for Halloween.

She goes to the door.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

That's right, tonight's the big party.

(beat)

It's been fun.

Emily stops.

EMILY DERRINGER

What?

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

I mean working together. I didn't hate spending time with you as much as I thought I would.

Emily is dumbfounded.

Unable to respond, she walks out the door.

MR. GOODWIN (PRE-LAP)
Death is inevitable.

INT. AMERICAN LITERATURE - DAY

Goodwin looks out at his pupils, holds his BOOK open.

MR. GOODWIN
And it's a fool's errand to try and
hide from it.

He moves across the room, crossing a blackboard reading:

"THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH"

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Prospero believed that by shutting
he and his guests in the abbey,
they were free from the inevitable.
But rather than create a sanctuary,
he built his own tomb.

He looks out over the bored, disinterested faces.

Smiles. Closes his book.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
You know, I think we've heard
enough from our friend Mr. Poe.

A smattering of applause breaks out.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Yeah yeah, well buckle up. Next up
is Flannery O'Connor.

Looks at the clock.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
But I think she can wait until
Monday.
(beat)
I'll see you all tonight at our
Halloween party, then? Pepper and
Emily have cooked up something
pretty special. I think you'll be
impressed.

He winks at Emily.

She forces a weak smile back.

The BELL rings. The students gather their things and leave.

As Pepper passes Goodwin -

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
See you tonight, Tom.

MR. GOODWIN
Bye Pepper.

He goes to his desk, packs his briefcase.

Realizes Emily is still seated, slumped over on her desk.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Emily? You all right?

She rouses herself.

EMILY DERRINGER
Yeah. Just tired.

MR. GOODWIN
Well you better rest up - big
night, after all.

She hesitates.

EMILY DERRINGER
I'm not going.

MR. GOODWIN
You're kidding.

She's not.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
That's crazy. After all the work we
put in? Don't you want to enjoy it
with all your friends?

EMILY DERRINGER
Mr. Goodwin - I don't have any
friends.

MR. GOODWIN
That's not true.

EMILY DERRINGER
Yes. It is.

She stares down at her desk.

Goodwin rests his hand on your shoulder.

MR. GOODWIN
But I'm your friend.

She looks up at his gentle smile.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Come for me.
(beat)
Please.

She stops breathing. Can't speak.

She nods. "Okay."

And then, at the WINDOW -

BLUESTONE.

Covered in burns. Glaring at her.

She SCREAMS - jumps from her desk.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Whoa!

She hits the floor as Goodwin turns to the window.

Nothing.

He looks back at Emily terrified on the floor.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
What happened?

He helps her up.

She has to catch her breath. She looks back at the window.

Did she imagine it?

EMILY DERRINGER
I thought I saw...I mean...

Shakes her head.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
Nothing. I'm all right.

MR. GOODWIN
Are you sure? You're scaring me.

EMILY DERRINGER
Yes, yes I'm okay.

Shaken and embarrassed, she gathers her things and darts out of the classroom.

Goodwin is left scratching his head.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Emily stands outside the window to the classroom.

She desperately searches around.

Sees nothing.

EXT. DERRINGER'S HOUSE - DAY

A MILK TRUCK idles outside the Derringer's home.

The door to the truck opens...

Shoes hit the pavement.

They approach the front door...

The front door opens.

Judy SCREAMS.

FRANK - the replacement Milkman - stumbles back horrified.

When Judy sees who it is - that it isn't Garret - she immediately calms down.

But is still pissed.

JUDY DERRINGER
Frank!

FRANK LEVINE
I'm sorry, Judy, sorry!

JUDY DERRINGER
Are you bonkers wearing that?

FRANK LEVINE
It's the uniform.

He picks up the MILK CRATE sitting on the porch.

FRANK LEVINE (CONT'D)
Just grabbing all the empties that
didn't get picked up this morning
for - you know - obvious reasons.

JUDY DERRINGER
You scared me half to death.

FRANK LEVINE
Well until I find a new guy, you're
going to be seeing a lot of me.

JUDY DERRINGER
Won't Mr. Gregory be returning?

FRANK LEVINE
Gregory? Unlikely. I haven't heard
from that guy in months.

JUDY DERRINGER
No?

FRANK LEVINE
Bastard didn't even bother to quit
to my face. I show up to work and
there's a note pinned to the door
saying he's taken off. Didn't even
leave an address for his last pay
check.

JUDY DERRINGER
That's...peculiar.

FRANK LEVINE
You're telling me. Luckily - or so
I thought at the time - Bluestone
showed up that same day looking for
work. How's that for a kick in the
teeth? First guy's a bum, second's
a lunatic.

He starts to leave.

FRANK LEVINE (CONT'D)
I oughta put an ad in the paper -
seeking Nazi War Criminal for
immediate employment.

Judy watches Frank return to his truck as what he said
percolates in her mind.

She's about to put the pieces together, to reach a
conclusion...

Then shrugs.

INT. DERRINGER'S HOUSE

Judy closes the door.

Emily appears at the top of the stairs. She's holding a BLACK JACKET.

EMILY DERRINGER
What was that?

JUDY DERRINGER
Nothing.

Emily lets this go.

EMILY DERRINGER
Where's Dad's old taxidermy stuff?

JUDY DERRINGER
In the attic, why?

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - NIGHT

A RAVEN.

Dead, stuffed, and perched on Emily's shoulder.

She's dressed in ornate black clothing, hair combed over to the side, and a MUSTACHE drawn above her lip.

She's the spitting image of EDGAR ALLAN POE.

She walks with purpose through the empty hall to a set of closed doors.

She readies herself.

Pushes them open.

INT. GYMNASIUM

Emily takes in the sight of the PARTY.

STUDENTS and FACULTY - all wearing COSTUMES - pack the gym. They play the games, admire the decorations, and dance to the music playing from the PA system.

Despite their modest work-force, Goodwin, Pepper, and Emily managed to pull it off.

Emily scans the crowd before she spots who she's looking for.

Mr. Goodwin - dressed as MARK TWAIN - pours TWO CUPS of PUNCH with his back to her.

Emily sidles up behind him and patiently waits for him to turn around.

When he does, he jumps - startled by her unexpected presence.

MR. GOODWIN

Emily? Is that you? Wow, you look fantastic.

EMILY DERRINGER

I hoped you would like it.

MR. GOODWIN

(Gesturing to his own costume)

Clearly you know my taste. How about some punch?

EMILY DERRINGER

Thank you.

She reaches for one of the cups, but he jerks it away.

MR. GOODWIN

Actually, these are spoken for.

Emily doesn't have time to register this as odd before Pepper - dressed as a COWGIRL - appears next to them and takes her drink.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Thank you, Tom.

Emily rolls her eyes as Goodwin pours another one.

Pepper looks over Emily's costume.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE (CONT'D)

Of course you dressed as a boy.

Emily bites her tongue. Hard.

Tries something different...

EMILY DERRINGER

You look pretty, Pepper. I like your costume.

Disarmed.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Oh, um. Thanks.

(beat)

You look good with a mustache is
all I meant.

She'll take it.

Goodwin turns back around.

MR. GOODWIN

Well, we did it.

He hands Emily her cup, then raises his own. The girls follow
suit.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)

To a successful party, and the two
best girls I know. We make a
fantastic team.

They all drink.

Though hidden behind the cup held to her lips, Emily smiles.

INT. DERRINGER'S HALLWAY, UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

Judy walks down the hallway holding a LAUNDRY BASKET.

As she's about to descend the stairs, she hears a -

THUMP coming from Emily's room.

She stops, turns towards Emily's closed DOOR.

She gently knocks.

JUDY DERRINGER

I thought you left for the party
already.

No response.

JUDY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

Emily?

Judy puts the basket down. Then, upon readying herself -

She opens the door...

SCREAMS.

INT. GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

The party is in full swing.

The dance floor is packed with MOVIE STARS, SPACE MEN, MONSTERS, and all other sorts of costumes bopping to the music blasting from the sound system.

Emily watches it from the sidelines, in a row of unoccupied chairs lining the wall.

She sips her punch.

The song ends.

"Earth Angel" begins.

MR. GOODWIN (O.S.)
May I have this dance?

Emily looks up to see Goodwin standing above her with his hand outstretched.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
You can't leave me stranded during a slow song. What would people think?

Emily smiles.

She takes his hand.

He leads her to the center of the dance floor.

He takes her other hand and the two sway to the music.

It's innocent - like a father and daughter - but to Emily?

This is the most magical moment of her life.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Aren't you glad you came?

EMILY DERRINGER
I am. I mean, I definitely don't fit in. Not like Pepper, anyway.

She gestures over to Pepper surrounded by her adoring fans and chugging her punch.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
But this is nice.

MR. GOODWIN

You don't want to be like Pepper.

EMILY DERRINGER

Why? Everyone else does.

MR. GOODWIN

Kids flock to Pepper because she's pretty, and she's fun - because when they look at her, they see what they themselves want to be. But you know what they see when they look at you?

What?

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)

They see someone they could never be, no matter how hard they tried. Pepper's aspirational - but you are *exceptional*.

Emily doesn't know what to say. So she doesn't say anything.

She hugs him. Hard. And he lets her.

She needs this. She needs this a lot.

And there underneath the lights, with the music playing and her face buried in Tom's silk vest -

She's not alone.

But everything dies, and this moment is no different.

Emily opens her eyes.

And sees a GHOST.

At the far end of the gym - standing in the doorway - is a MAN draped in a sheet.

A BUTTERFLY BEDSHEET.

Her bedsheet.

Reflexively, Emily pushes away from Goodwin.

MR. GOODWIN (CONT'D)

Emily...?

Two vacant eyes cut into the cloth watch her.

Emily moves closer, tries to get a better look -

But DANCERS block her, obscure the view.

She pushes past them.

The Ghost is gone.

She spins around, her eyes dart in all directions.

No sign.

Goodwin - left stranded on the dance floor - watches baffled as Emily darts out into the hallway. Then -

Pepper stumbles over to him.

Practically falls into his arms.

She looks up and smiles. Her mouth is stained red from punch.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE

Hello.

Goodwin smiles back.

MR. GOODWIN

Hi there.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

Emily marches down the hallway.

She looks down every hall, inside every empty classroom, but sees nothing.

With every step, her desperation grows.

Then, she turns the corner -

And stops.

She slowly approaches her LOCKER. Processes what she's seeing.

It's coated in BLOOD.

She turns around, scans the hallway one more time.

No sign of anyone else.

She opens her locker. Inside -

Her DIARY.

It's scorched beyond recognition.

But it has been salvaged nonetheless.

She clutches it to her chest.

EMILY DERRINGER
Welcome back.

INT. SUPPLY CLOSET

The door to the supply closet flies open and Emily bounds inside.

She heads immediately to the back and pushes aside a pile of old BOXES.

Unearthing her DUFFLE BAG.

INT. GYMNASIUM

Bag slung over her shoulder, Emily rushes back into the Gym where the party is still in full effect.

She scans the crowd.

EMILY DERRINGER
(Calling out)
Mr. Goodwin?

She goes in deeper. She grabs ZORRO's arm.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
Have you seen Mr. Goodwin?

He shakes her off. She moves on. Accosts a DOROTHY.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
Mr. Goodwin - do you know where he
is?

Dorothy shakes her head, goes back to speaking with a MUMMY.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
(Calling)
Tom!

She searches all around, but it's no use.

He's nowhere to be found.

Doesn't know what to do. But -

An idea.

She turns and heads for the door.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY, AMERICAN LIT

Emily tries the door to the American Literature classroom.

Locked.

She pounds the door.

EMILY DERRINGER

Mr. Goodwin!

A SHADOW moves behind the door's FROSTED GLASS WINDOW.

He's inside.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

Mr. Goodwin! Please open the door.

She hears a muffled voice.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

Tom! Please!

Finally, Goodwin opens the door a crack.

She tries to push it open.

But he stops it with his foot.

MR. GOODWIN

Emily, what's wrong?

EMILY DERRINGER

He's come back! He isn't dead and now he's back!

Goodwin is distracted, only half listening

MR. GOODWIN

Who's back? What are you talking about?

EMILY DERRINGER

I'm a bad person. I've done bad things, *really* bad things and now because of me it isn't safe for you here.

Goodwin doesn't have time for this.

MR. GOODWIN
Emily, go back to the party.

EMILY DERRINGER
No, you have to leave. Now!

She shoves hard against the door.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
Why won't you let me--

She shoves with all her might.

INT. AMERICAN LITERATURE

She tumbles inside, falls to her knees.

The duffle bag slides across the floor.

Then, from the ground, she looks up at his DESK.

EMILY DERRINGER
Pepper?

Pepper sits slumped in Goodwin's desk chair.

She's barely cognizant. Her shirt is half open.

Goodwin stands paralysed by the door.

MR. GOODWIN
You need to leave, Emily.

Emily slowly rises to her feet.

EMILY DERRINGER
What is...I don't...

Her voice cracks.

The world shifts beneath her feet.

Her eyes water.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)
Pepper?

MR. GOODWIN
I know what this might look like,
but -
(beat)
Pepper was feeling sick, she asked
if she could lay down.

EMILY DERRINGER

Pepper?

MR. GOODWIN

Okay, calm down. Let's just take a second. There's no reason to get upset.

EMILY DERRINGER

She's thirteen.

MR. GOODWIN

Fourteen in January. And we can both admit she's very mature for her age.

EMILY DERRINGER

You got her drunk.

MR. GOODWIN

Hey now! That's not fair. She asked *me* for liquor. I never ever would have suggested it myself.

It's all too much. Her shoulder's sink.

EMILY DERRINGER

After everything you said to me...

MR. GOODWIN

It's all true. You're a very special girl, Emily. And you're my friend, remember that? We're friends and friend's don't tattle. Please don't tell anyone about this.

She looks into his pathetic, pleading eyes.

She shakes her head, unable to comprehend the betrayal.

EMILY DERRINGER

(Whispering)

You were supposed to be different.

She averts her eyes, can't bare to look at him any longer.

She stares at the ground.

Finally, she wipes away her tears.

EMILY DERRINGER (CONT'D)

I won't tell.

The relief on Goodwin's face is revolting.

MR. GOODWIN
No? You won't?

She walks to her duffle bag.

EMILY DERRINGER
No one needs to know what happened here.

MR. GOODWIN
Thank you! Thank you, thank you, thank you Emily. I promise, it will never happen again.

EMILY DERRINGER
Yeah. I've heard that before.

She unzips it.

MR. GOODWIN
What are you--

EMILY DERRINGER
I had big plans for tonight, Mr. Goodwin. I abandoned them.
(beat)
You, however, have inspired me.

INT. GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

The Ghost in Butterfly Sheets wanders the Gym.

Slowly, taking his time, he moves past the partiers enjoying their festivities.

Adults and Children alike, unaware that Death moves amongst them.

No one notices the KNIFE glistening in his BURNED HAND.

Then, through the crowd, Garret sees his prey.

The black jacket, the dark hair - Emily.

Her back is turned to him.

He glides like a spectre, raises his knife -

The child turns around.

A BOY, dressed as DRACULA.

Garret stops himself. Then -

A SCREAM.

Garret turns to see MARILYN MONROE shrieking and pointing to the RAFTERS.

Like everyone else in the Gym, he follows her gaze.

More screams.

Up in the rafters -

GOODWIN.

A NOOSE around his neck.

He's pushed.

The crowd erupts as Goodwin plummets.

The ROPE snaps tight.

Goodwin's ENTRAILS spill from the GASH in his STOMACH.

ORGANS rain down on the party.

CHARLIE CHAPLAIN - his head submerged in the APPLE BOBBING TANK - emerges from the water with Goodwin's LIVER in his mouth.

The eviscerated body swings back and forth above the crowd as a mass exodus hurdles towards the doors.

The MUSIC cuts off.

Emily's voice bellows from the PA system.

EMILY DERRINGER (O.S.)
Dear Holdenfield, I - The Misfit
Butcher - have risen from the dead.
(beat)
Garret - come find me.

Garret - his eyes still focused on Goodwin's corpse - rips off the sheets.

Burns cover his whole body.

A deformed shell of his former self.

And though there's fury in his eyes and revenge in his heart -

He almost looks frightened.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

Garret storms through the Halls, pushing against the current of PEOPLE swarming to leave.

EMILY DERRINGER (O.S.)
I must admit, Bluestone - you are certainly full of surprises.

The Halls are empty now, save for a few stragglers who rush past Garret.

EMILY DERRINGER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'm pleased to see you embracing some theatricality. A vast improvement over your usual modus operandi.

He kicks open a classroom door.

Empty.

EMILY DERRINGER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
And faking your death? Very impressive.

He opens a closet.

Finds nothing.

EMILY DERRINGER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Or did you? Are you actually a ghost here to haunt me from beyond the grave?

His search is getting more and more frantic, Emily's taunts stoking the fire.

EMILY DERRINGER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
No, that I won't buy. Not boring ole Garret Bluestone the neighborhood Milk Man.

He can't find her. But then -

Of course.

He changes direction.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY, AMERICAN LIT

His target in sight, he makes a dash for the American Lit room.

EMILY DERRINGER (O.S.)
Will you please hurry it up?

He kicks the door open.

Emily goes silent.

Bingo.

INT. AMERICAN LITERATURE

He surveys the empty classroom, rubs his thumb against the blade.

A THUMP.

It came from the CLOSET at the back of the room.

GARRET BLUESTONE
I didn't want this, Emily.

He approaches the door.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)
But you couldn't let me be. Now I
have nothing left, nothing to hold
on to.

Closer.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)
I've never liked killing anyone.
Every death was a nightmare.

Closer.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)
But for the first time, here with
you...

He grabs the KNOB.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)
I might enjoy this.

Opens the door.

PEPPER - bound and gagged. Terrified.

A WIRE's tripped.

An AXE swings at his head.

Garret dodges it.

Emily pounces from behind. Swings the SCYTHER.

Garret spins. Elbows her in the face.

The scythe cuts across his chest as Emily falls backwards.

He cries out in pain, drops the KNIFE.

It lands by Pepper.

Emily scrambles backwards as Garret recovers.

He lunges.

Lands on top of her.

Wraps his fingers around her throat.

A man strangling a little girl.

Her eyes bulge, her face turns red.

Pepper stretches with her bound hands. Grabs the knife.

Garret digs his fingers deeper and deeper into Emily's neck.

He's frothing with rage.

GARRET BLUESTONE (CONT'D)

You made me do this!

Emily claws at his face, but it's no use.

He throttles her, smacks her head against the ground.

Emily's eyes roll back into her head.

It gets dark...

Then...

SPLASH

Emily's eye's shoot open as she's baptized in -

Garret's BLOOD pouring from the -

GASH in his throat.

He looks just as surprised as she does.

His grip loosens.

He collapses, lands next to Emily.

DEAD.

And standing above him, face drained of color -

Pepper. The bloody knife in her hand.

Still struggling to breathe, Emily climbs out from under Garret. She clasps at her bruised throat.

Pepper looms over her kill, the shock rendering her motionless.

Eventually, she falls to her knees, rests on her feet.

The two girls, both covered in Garret's blood, sit silently on the floor, neither looking at the other.

Finally, Pepper looks at Emily.

Emily looks back.

The Gruesome Twosome.

EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Emily glides down Main Street on her bike.

SIRENS WAIL in the distance.

The cold wind blows through her hair.

EXT. SCHOOL - NIGHT

POLICE CARS, FIRE TRUCKS, AMBULANCES all come racing to the scene.

Pepper sits hugging her knees on the steps to the school.

EXT. DERRINGER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Emily walks her bike to the front door.

Lets it fall to the ground as she reaches her front door.

Walks inside.

INT. DERRINGER'S HOUSE

Emily steps into a puddle of BLOOD pooling at the bottom of the STAIRS.

It drips down from the top step.

JUDY lays dead at the landing, her lifeless eyes staring down at her daughter.

Emily keeps walking.

INT. DERRINGER'S KITCHEN

She stops for a moment to observe David crumpled on the floor.

She goes to the CABINET and takes out a box of CEREAL. Rests it on the TABLE.

She steps over her father's body to get to the SINK. She grabs a BOWL and a SPOON, then a bottle of MILK from off the COUNTER.

She sits down at the table.

She pours the cereal in the bowl, is about to douse it with MILK.

Takes a look at the bottle.

Thinks better of it.

She takes a bite of dry cereal.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Pepper sits in the back of an open ambulance gripping a cup of hot chocolate and a blanket wrapped around her shoulders.

A POLICE OFFICER stands above her.

She hands the Officer the DIARY.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE
She told me to give you this.

INT. DERRINGER'S FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

As POLICE SIRENS approach -

Emily sits in a CHAIR facing the FRONT DOOR.

She twiddles her thumbs.

RED and BLUE LIGHTS flash outside the windows.

And as she hears the thunder of BOOTS storm up her porch -

She smiles. She's ready for this.

But upon reaching the front door -

The MEN on the other side hesitate.

As if terrified by what they'll encounter.

PEPPER DEVONSHIRE (V.O.)
Emily Derringer is the Misfit.

THE END