

# **WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

**WRITTEN BY**

**ROSS LAZAR  
&  
SEBASTIAN SHEPARD**

Nick Hoagland  
WME Entertainment  
310.859.4256

EXT. PINYON STREET - DAY

A regal BLUEJAY, feathers the color of a submerged iceberg, sits on a reed-thin branch of an oak tree. The bird cocks its head, then suddenly flies off.

Its departure shakes the branch, causing a LEAF to fall.

We descend with it, gliding from side to side in the gentle breeze until finally we come to rest on the lap of a BABY BOY in a stroller.

The little lad blinks, startled by this new object. Then, because he's a baby, he puts the leaf in his mouth.

MARSHA (O.C.)  
Jackson! Give me that!

Wise to her baby, the woman pushing the stroller reaches into frame and liberates the leaf.

Mom's name is **MARSHA**. She's about twenty-five, no makeup, docile brown eyes, a chunky green sweater and sensible sneakers. She seems likable by dint of her averageness. She's been a bridesmaid a thousand times, but never maid of honor.

Marsha is pushing the baby down a tranquil residential street. Big leafy trees, cottages and bungalows and arts-and-crafts style homes.

Yes, the neighborhood is blue collar. Lawns are overgrown. Cars banged up. Houses in need a fresh coat. But it's shot in such a way -- saturated colors, gauzy light, slight slow motion -- that the locale appears a bit dreamy.

**SUPER: SOMEWHERE IN PORTLAND, 1993**

As she moves on through the charming little street, she waves at TOM -- sixties, "WW2 Veteran" hat and flannels, missing one front tooth -- who is walking his dog.

TOM  
Hey there, Marsha! How's little Jax doing?

MARSHA  
Hi, Tom! He's a handful!

Tom chuckles knowingly. He's raised a few himself.

TOM  
They all are, aren't they?

Marsha smiles good-naturedly. Keeps pushing the stroller along, spotting her neighbors. Smiling and waving at all of them. As she does, we see in DREAMY CUTS:

-A WOMAN, seventies, her hair in rollers, checking on her tomato plant in the front yard.

-A FATHER, thirties, purple polo shirt tucked into jeans, playing wiffle ball with his TODDLER DAUGHTER.

-A TEENAGE SON, gangly, red-headed, wearing a Clyde Drexler basketball jersey, washing his dad's Bronco in the driveway.

And everyone waves back. Exchanges pleasantries. Coos at baby Jackson. It's a tight-knit, grungy, Norman Rockwell place.

But Norman Rockwell paintings never had --

WOMAN'S VOICE

Oh please help me! Please will somebody HELP ME!

ANGLE: **A WOMAN** staggers down the stairs of a two-story colonial. Brown hair matted with sweat, eyes wide and bright with fear. Her wrists bound with duct tape. Blood drips down her arm and torso from a horrible bite wound in her shoulder.

The bleeding woman limps into the street. Makes a bee-line for Tom the dog-walker.

BLEEDING WOMAN

Please, they're coming!

Tom makes no effort to help. He doesn't even move.

No one does.

The whole neighborhood, everyone we saw, just stares. They say nothing. Do nothing.

The bleeding woman looks up at Tom's wooden face. Slowly it dawns on her that he isn't going to lift a pinkie to help.

BLEEDING WOMAN (CONT'D)

What is wrong with you? You've got to help --

Before she can finish, **TWO FIGURES** emerge from the colonial. They wear hazmat suits, rubber gloves, and gas masks with yellow face plates.

One of them spots the woman. Nudges his partner.

On seeing the Hazmat Guys, Bleeding Woman SCREAMS! She limps towards the teenager in the basketball jersey.

BLEEDING WOMAN (CONT'D)  
Please, you've got to help me!

The boy stares, face like a granite cliff.

**ANGLE:** Hazmat Guys advance with an easy gait. They know no one will help her.

Bleeding Woman limps on past the teenager, desperate to get away from the Hazmat guys. She moves on to Marsha.

BLEEDING WOMAN (CONT'D)  
Please...

Marsha scoops up Baby Jackson from his stroller, instinctively protective. Backs away. Jackson senses something is wrong. Begins WAILING, adding to the hellish cacophony of the scene.

MARSHA  
(scolding)  
You made him cry!  
(to Jackson)  
There, there.

Bleeding Woman stumbles to the ground. Tears stream down her face. She is utterly defeated, knowing this is the end.

BLEEDING WOMAN  
(softly)  
They're gonna kill me, don't you understand? They're gonna kill m-

**ANGLE:** Hazmat Guys are within arm's reach. They brace the Bleeding Woman and drag her back toward the colonial.

As they do, the woman unleashes a PRIMAL SCREAM!

The entire neighborhood looks on dispassionately.

As the screams and howls recede, Marsha begins rocking Baby Jackson. Singing him a song you may remember from your own childhood:

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

Once Hazmat Guys have got the woman in the house, the door slams shut. Bleeding Woman's screams are cut off. All we can hear is:

MARSHA (CONT'D)  
*And if that mockingbird don't sing,  
 Momma's gonna buy you a diamond  
 ring.*

The neighbors of this nightmarish place gradually resume their activities. Tom walks the poodle. The old woman goes back to her tomato plant. It's as if nothing has happened.

And we end on Marsha rocking Jackson back and forth:

MARSHA (CONT'D)  
*And if that diamond ring turns  
 brass--*

And off this we SMASH CUT TO:

**TITLE CARD: WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

CUT TO:

EST. HAIGHT-ASHBURY - DAY

Not what you think of when you say "The Haight". Beautiful Victorian houses painted a hundred different colors. Gleaming luxury cars under leafy trees. Yuppies walking big dogs, enthralled to their phones.

**SUPER: SAN FRANCISCO, 2018**

**PETER DANVERS-CHO**, early forties, Asian, jogs along a footpath in an Under Armor shirt. Yes, he takes running too seriously. He's blandly handsome, career-focused, conflict-averse. He disappears easily at dinner parties.

Peter checks his FitBit, then keeps jogging.

CUT TO:

INT. DANVERS-CHO HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

A mildly sweaty Peter enters via the front door and takes off his running shoes.

PETER  
 Hello? Marissa?

MARISSA (O.S.)  
 In here!

Peter moves on...

INT. DANVERS-CHO HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...through an oddly empty room. No art on the walls. No t.v. No stereo. The couch is wrapped in plastic.

This family is about to move.

INT. DANVERS-CHO HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

**MARISSA DANVERS-CHO**, late thirties, white, Patagonia vest, huge diamond ring on her finger, leans against the kitchen counter, flipping through something on her iPad.

A control-freak, everything about her seems perfect yet effortless -- hair, makeup, body. Naturally, she's a nightmare.

Peter enters --

PETER

Toldja I'd get my ten thousand steps in.

He comes over and gives her a kiss on the cheek. Then notices what Marissa is looking at.

PETER (CONT'D)

God, that water damage.

MARISSA

It's cosmetic. We'll put up a new wallpaper there. I'm thinking a jungle leaf print.

PETER

My co-workers think we're crazy for buying a fixer. We coulda gotten a place in much better shape.

MARISSA

Peter --

PETER

I know, I know. This was the arrangement. We move for my new job...

MARISSA

(nodding)

...if I get a blank canvas to work with.

(then)

(MORE)

MARISSA (CONT'D)

It might be a little dusty for a few months, but turning a toad into a prince is really going to help my brand. Once I get 30, 40 thousand followers, that's when the sponsorships come in.

She gets excited, imagining such a day.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

What if Jonathan Adler wanted a placement -- how amazing would that be?

Before Peter can respond to this, his smartwatch buzzes -- a text.

PETER

(reading)

Movers are confirmed for two.

MARISSA

I'll go see if Lyla's ready.

And as Marissa turns for the exit we hear:

GIRL'S VOICE (PRE-LAP)

Lick my taint, bitch.

INT. DANVERS-CHO HOUSE - LYLA'S ROOM - DAY

**INSERT:** A third-person shooter fills the frame. It's cartoonish, violent. If you don't recognize it, you're getting old. It's *Fortnite*.

The CHARACTER, a woman with purple hair, runs around a house with a sniper rifle. Suddenly she spots an ENEMY. Zooms in and headshots him.

GIRL'S VOICE

Ohhhhh, quickscope, motherfucka!

And now we see the gamer. Twelve, half-Asian/half-white, a streak of bubblegum pink in her hair, headset on. This is **LYLA CHO**. She's headstrong, has no filter, and is utterly fearless.

A combination that can rub some people the wrong way:

LYLA

Oh my god, do you have down syndrome or are you just fucking terrible at this game?

Lyla gleefully mashes buttons on her PS4 and gets another kill.

MARISSA (O.C.)  
Lyla! Was that swearing I heard?

All the joy vanishes from Lyla's face as she hears Marissa's PIERCING VOICE.

LYLA  
(muttering)  
Oh, shit.

**ON SCREEN:** Lyla's character is hit with an RPG and dies.

Marissa enters without so much as a knock. Looks around the room, dismayed at something:

MARISSA  
You haven't even started packing!

Lyla resumes playing. In part to antagonize her step-mom.

LYLA  
Marissa, it'll take two seconds.

MARISSA  
The movers will be here this afternoon!

With that, Marissa goes to the console and yanks out the power cords.

LYLA  
Hey!

MARISSA  
Shooting games don't stimulate neuron connections in adolescent brains. It's in all the literature.

Lyla glares. She hates this woman. And behind Marissa's high-minded paternalism, we sense the feeling is mutual.

LYLA  
You're an android, Marissa.

Marissa ignores the insult. Begins wrapping the cords.

MARISSA  
You know, you may find it easier to make friends if you toned down the hostility.

LYLA

So I can grow up to do weekly vegetarian dinners with women named "Zephyr"? Thanks for taking an interest in my social life. I'm doing fine.

Marissa smiles through bloodless lips.

MARISSA

Of course you are.

It's a bit of zinger, concealed just enough to be denied. But that's the type of passive-aggressive queen Marissa is.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

We're leaving at three. Try not to be later than usual.

She hands Lyla the cord. Turns for the exit.

As soon as the door closes, Lyla's face floods with pain. The barb about her friends stung.

LYLA

(muttering)

Bitch.

EXT. DANVERS-CHO HOUSE - FRONT STEPS - DAY

Later.

Peter and Marissa carry a large suitcase down the stairs of their Victorian house to a gleaming cherry-red Tesla Model S parked in the driveway. They're mid conversation:

MARISSA

It's not just a diet, Peter, it's a consciously chosen lifestyle. And I'm talking about a pattern, here. She's constantly rude. Constantly belittling.

PETER

I'm sure she didn't mean it. Besides, she's sensitive about the friends thing.

MARISSA

I was trying to be helpful. You told me she used to have lots of friends.

PETER

She did, it's just -- she changed a lot when...

Peter trails off. Whatever it is, it's hard to say.

MARISSA

I can't possibly understand how hard it was for her. Or you.

(then)

But that was four years ago. How much longer can we excuse her behavior? She needs to move on too.

We'll learn more about "four years ago" later. For now, Peter thinks, then nods in agreement.

PETER

Once we get to Portland, I'll sit her down. Talk about her attitude.

INT. DANVERS-CHO HOUSE - LYLA'S ROOM - DAY

Later that day. Most of the things in Lyla's room are now in cardboard boxes.

Lyla is now packing up the last shelf of her bookcase, reaching for her impressive collection of video games. She grabs a *Call of Duty*, a *GTA V* ...

And something slips from between the cases and flutters to the ground.

A PHOTO. One of those 4-part photo booth print-outs you do with friends at the mall. In it, a YOUNGER LYLA laughs with a few girls her age.

Lyla stares at it, looking like she might smile and cry at the same time. For whatever reason, seeing it is bittersweet.

This moment is interrupted by Marissa's shriek:

MARISSA (O.S.)

Lyla! Where are you? We're already seven minutes late!

EXT. DANVERS-CHO HOUSE - FRONT STEPS - DAY

Lyla comes out of the house with a small suitcase. She drags it down each of the steps -- CLUNK CLUNK CLUNK. Each one grates at Marissa.

MARISSA

Ready to go?

Lyla ignores Marissa. Puts the suitcase in the trunk and slides into the backseat. As she reaches for the door --

MARISSA (CONT'D)  
No slamming, please!

Lyla SLAMS the door shut with a grin, off which we go to...

I/E. PETER'S TESLA / PORTLAND ROADS - DRIVING - NIGHT

The Tesla motors along a busy thoroughfare through the heart of Portland. A "Feel the Bern" bumper sticker on the back.

In the distance we can make out the "White Stag -- Portland" sign and the "Old Town" water tower.

**IN THE CAR**

Peter drives; Marissa is flipping through photos on her iPad. Lyla sits in the back, staring out the window. The scene is mostly shot in her POV as we hear Marissa and Peter talk:

MARISSA  
Looking at these photos again, I think this house has great bones.

PETER  
I'm just glad we can stop renting.

Lyla looks out the window. As the world rolls by she sees hip coffee shops advertising pour-overs. Condos under construction. A gelato shop.

Signs of gentrification everywhere.

MARISSA  
Yeah it's a bit rough -- but remember, we're getting in at the ground floor.

Still in Lyla's POV we see a Lebanese fusion restaurant. Homes with those horizontal wooden fences. Homeless people outside their tents.

MARISSA (CONT'D)  
We can get an open-floor concept kitchen. Pergola in the yard.

PETER  
That's great, I like that.

Peter turns back to Lyla.

PETER (CONT'D)  
 What about you, kiddo? Excited for  
 the new house?

But something has caught Lyla's eye out the window. It's a big BANNER hanging outside a run-down apartment building:  
**"GENTRIFICATION IS URBAN COLONIZATION"**.

LYLA  
 Hey dad, what's gentrification?

Peter and Marissa exchange a look. *Where did she hear about that?*

PETER  
 Uh, it's --

MARISSA  
 PETER!!!

At that the camera CRASH ZOOMS IN on the figure of a man standing in the middle of the road. He's growing larger and larger through the glass, about to be hit --

PETER  
 Oh SHIT!

Peter SLAMS the brakes!

Lyla JOLTS forward --

Marissa's iPad goes flying into the windshield --

The man doesn't dive out of the way --

There's a horrible CA-CHUNK noise as the brakes struggle against the wheels --

And the car comes to rest a half a foot from the guy.

Inside the car, everyone breathes heavily. Peter turns to the backseat:

PETER (CONT'D)  
 You okay?

Lyla nods. Peter turns to Marissa, but before he can ask if she's okay --

VAGRANT (O.C.)  
 What the fuck man!

The guy they almost killed approaches Peter's window.

The VAGRANT is twenties going on fifties, mostly due to meth. Matted hair, missing one front tooth, a "Cut Here" tattoo across his neck. Someone you cross the street to avoid.

Peter looks around, frazzled by the whole experience.

PETER  
Tesla, roll down the driver's  
window.

On voice command, Peter's window rolls down. It seems to take a painfully long time to happen.

PETER (CONT'D)  
I'm so sorry, I didn't see you!

MARISSA  
You came out of nowhere!

VAGRANT  
I was right there the whole time!

He's getting in Peter's face. Aggressive. Scary.

VAGRANT (CONT'D)  
You can't just go wherever the fuck  
you want, man!

PETER  
I'm so sorry -- are you hurt? Can I  
... give you some money?

If anything, this makes the vagrant angrier. He waves away the idea.

VAGRANT  
Oh, you fucking people -- I don't  
want your money!

The vagrant has had enough. He shuffles off, giving Peter the bird as he does. Peter exhales, relieved it's over.

Marissa glares at the vagrant. Lyla does too.

MARISSA  
Fucking street people.

PETER  
(re: Lyla, tone it down)  
Marissa.

Lyla chuckles. She's not used to hearing Marissa curse.

MARISSA

Let's go. The sooner we get off the road, the better.

After a beat, the Tesla silently accelerates.

Lyla looks back at the where the vagrant was. He's gone. Odd.

CUT TO:

E/I. PINYON STREET / PETER'S TESLA - EVENING

The Tesla swings around a corner and glides down the block.

Lyla's got her face pressed up against the glass, taking in the sights of her new home. And what she see is ... spooky.

The boughs of the trees loom, casting strange shadows. The houses seem to be decaying, overgrown with crawling vines. Rusty cars sit on cinder blocks in cracked driveways. Lawns are more like forests of weeds.

It all gives off the unsettling sense this place has been abandoned.

Lyla frowns. Peter and Marissa don't seem to share her concern.

PETER

Here we are, home sweet home!

The Tesla rolls to a stop in front of the two-story colonial from the cold open.

Lyla gets out. Regards the new house skeptically.

It's the worst of the lot. Paint falling off in long strips. Missing shingles on the roof. A damaged French window BANGS in the wind. Eerie.

LYLA

This is where we're living?

PETER

Yeah -- I mean, it's different than SF. But we have a yard. Four bedrooms. There's a park nearby.

LYLA

Are we in the ghetto?

Peter laughs -- too quickly.

MARISSA

It's up-and-coming, Lyla. The area is very unique, culturally.

Marissa spots husband-and-wife neighbors on a porch next door.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Like those people.

This is **RYAN** and **CHASTITY STUMP**. Both sixties, white, in flannel shirts, scowling. He wears thick aviator frames that make his eyes seem huge; she's got vivid red hi-lites that make her look even older.

Marissa gives them a little wave.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Hi, neighbors! We just moved in!

Ryan and Chastity don't wave back. They just stare. The Stumps go back inside without acknowledging Marissa.

**ANGLE:** Marissa furrows her brow. That's weird.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Not the friendliest bunch around here, are they?

Peter hasn't been paying attention to this exchange. He's been looking for a house key. He finds it.

PETER

Come on. Let's meet them later.  
(to Lyla, re: key)  
Do you want to do the honors, Ly?

Lyla takes the keys.

INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - EVENING

**FROM THE STAIRCASE:** Through the balusters, we watch as the large door creaks open. It's as if we're inhabiting the POV of someone on the stairs. Or the house itself.

Lyla, Peter and Marissa enter the dark home. It's stately -- bay windows, sweeping staircase. Yet devoid of all furnishings, it gives off crime scene vibes.

Peter flicks a switch. The lights turn on.

PETER

(on the bright side)  
The lights work.

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Later. The family moves through the unfurnished house. Lyla trails her dad and step-mom, playing *Fortnite* on her phone.

Marissa trailblazes ahead, yammering on a mile-a-minute as she envisions the house.

MARISSA

There's plenty of space for an island. Breakfast nook could go there. That windowsill is south-facing. Perfect for succulents!

PETER

Yeah. Or herbs.

MARISSA

I think succulents.

Lyla's game lags a bit. She dies.

LYLA

When are we getting wifi? The data here spews.

PETER

Um, I think the cable company is coming the day after tomorrow.

LYLA

Ugh.

PETER

I know. You might actually have to...

(fake gasp)

...go outside this summer vacation!

Lyla doesn't laugh at his "dad joke". But she doesn't teen-girl-roll-her-eyes at him either.

MARISSA

What about a breakfast cart over there?

PETER

Let's get our bags inside before we decide where the breakfast cart goes.

EXT. THE HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - EVENING

Marissa takes out a small suitcase from the back of the Tesla. Lyla has her backpack. Peter pops the trunk and goes for a box --

MARISSA

Leave that. The movers will be here in an hour.

PETER

It's not heavy.

MARISSA

It's what we pay them for.

Before Peter can protest, we hear:

BO (O.S.)

Hi there, folks!

**BO HARRIS** approaches from across the street.

Forties, paunchy, in Crocs and a ratty souvenir Disneyland t-shirt. Bo smiles constantly, flashing a thousand teeth capped with gold crowns. All this projects home-spun warmth and reassurance -- like a handyman you've known since forever.

PETER

Hello, there.

BO

I'm Bo Harris.

(pointing)

I live across the way there with my son, Desi. Welcome to the block!

Peter shakes Bo's hand.

PETER

Well, thank you. Pleased to meet you. I'm Peter Cho.

MARISSA

(correcting)

Danvers-Cho.

(then, offering a hand)

I'm Marissa. And this is Lyla.

Lyla acknowledges Bo with a nod of her head.

BO

Hi there, Lyla. How old are you?

LYLA

Twelve.

BO

That's my son's age -- he's around here, somewhere.

MARISSA

Well, that's great! Maybe we can do a little play-date one of these days!

LYLA

Yeah, a play-date sounds ... mature.

Peter gives her a warning look -- *be nice*.

Bo either doesn't notice or misreads Lyla's scorn.

BO HARRIS

That's super! Y'all're gonna hit it off real nice -- he's a great kid.

(then)

Listen, I saw your car pulling up and thought I'd offer a hand carrying some of your stuff in.

MARISSA

Oh, that's so kind of you. Are you sure?

Bo waves this off -- *it's what neighbors are for*. He and Peter go to the trunk. Lift the box and carry it up the stairs together. Marissa follows, offering emotional support.

Lyla stands out in the street with her bag. Looks around the neighborhood again and sees...

**ANGLE:** A NEIGHBOR, an older woman in a nightgown, staring at her from across the street in an upstairs window.

She glances around some more. Spots...

**ANGLE:** ANOTHER NEIGHBOR, a man in a wife-beater, also staring at her from his kitchen window.

Creepy.

And off an unsettled Lyla, turning back to the house...

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Peter and Bo set down the box. Marissa gives a clap of thanks.

MARISSA

Thank you. We just didn't trust movers not to break all our china, you know?

PETER

It's really nice of you to help.

BO

My pleasure. I was friendly with the previous owners, so I just wanna do my part and keep that tradition going.

PETER

What happened to them? The realtor said they disappeared years ago.

Bo runs his hand through his scraggly hair.

BO

Your guess is as good as mine, I'm afraid. We lost touch for a while, and then one day their car wasn't in the driveway. Up and gone.

(changing the subject)

So where do you guys come from? I spotted California plates.

MARISSA

San Francisco.

PETER

Please don't hold it against us.

Bo cackles like it's the funniest thing he's heard.

BO

Now why would I do that?

MARISSA

I get the feeling that some of the neighbors might not like us too much. I waved at the couple next door and they just stood there.

(then)

I mean I get it. California couple in a Tesla, buying up the real estate. The optics, you know.

Bo puts a reassuring hand on Marissa's shoulder.

BO

Folks around here can be like that. They get nervous when outsiders move in. Worried it'll mess up the charm of the place. But once people warm up to you, you'll fall in love with Pinyon Street as hard as we have.

PETER

Have you lived here long?

BO

Yessir. Whole life. My Daddy passed me the lease on that house, and I'll do the same for Desi.

MARISSA

Wow. Strong roots.

Before anyone can say anything else, we hear a HONK o.s.

PETER

That's the movers. Thanks again for helping, Bo.

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Later that day.

The movers have finished bringing in the big items but most of the boxes are unpacked.

Lyla is setting up her PS4 in the entertainment console. She reaches behind, grabs the TV's power cord and stretches it toward the nearest socket. It falls three feet short.

LYLA

Great.  
(then)  
Dad?

PETER (O.S.)

(to Lyla)  
Yeah?

LYLA

Where's the extension cord?

PETER (O.S.)

Try the basement. The plastic container with the red top!

INT. THE HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHTDarkness.

Into which light comes with a GROAN as a door opens, revealing Lyla standing in the frame. She reaches for a light switch -- nothing comes on.

LYLA  
Double great.

And so on comes her cellphone light, dim and blue and barely able to penetrate the gloom of the basement.

Lyla gingerly descends the stairs, the pale sweep of her phone light illuminating this large, dusty space filled with STACKS and TOWERS of cardboard boxes.

The flimsy wood steps CREAK with each of Lyla's footsteps.

Now in the basement proper, she searches among the boxes, barely able to see three feet in front of her. No plastic box with the red top.

She ventures further into the basement, and then at a far wall spots --

LYLA (CONT'D)  
Foundja!

The guilty party. Plastic box, red top.

Lyla opens it up, rummages through all the crap and, to her glee, finds an extension cord.

But as she slides the container back into place she notices something.

**CLOSE:** A piece of lint caught between the floorboards. Blowing in some breeze. There's an airflow down here.

Lyla is puzzled by this. She pans along the basement wall with her light. Every inch of the wall is sealed to the floor ... except now she notices a small grated CUBBY DOOR, just big enough for an adult to crouch through.

Naturally curious, she tries to pry it open. It doesn't give. She crouches down. Peers through. She can't make out anything but depthless black beyond.

And as Lyla tries yanking the door open again, we see...

**WIDE SHOT:** Of Lyla and her small light alone in the dark room. We suddenly become aware of the SILENCE of the place as she keeps trying to open it. And then...

Almost imperceptibly, we hear a **SCRATCHING** sound. Like a dog's nails on concrete. It's over before we can fully register it.

Lyla pops up. Turns behind her, thinking that's where the noise came from.

But there's just silence.

Beat, then the **SCRATCHING** again, from a new angle.

Lyla spins, trying to illuminate the basement with her feeble cellphone.

Another beat of silence.

Lyla is totally still now. Trying to control her breath. Trying to isolate the sound.

And then it happens again.

**SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH.** Louder this time. It's moving, too.

Lyla whirls, panicked.

And as the noise gets LOUDER and CLOSER, Lyla spins again, heart pounding and -- Lyla GASPS as she sees --

Marissa standing near the basement entrance.

Lyla breathes heavily. *Jesus.*

MARISSA

Lyla? Is that you?

Lyla looks around uncertainly. The scratching has stopped.

LYLA

Yeah, I'm here.

MARISSA

What are you doing?

LYLA

I was looking for the extension cord and then --

MARISSA

Well hurry up, please. Dinner is almost ready.

Lyla is shaken up. But she nods and follows Marissa up the stairs. As she does...

**ANGLE:** On the patch of light created by the open door, we see a SILHOUETTE OF A WOMAN on the wall of the basement.

Not Lyla. Not Marissa.

Someone else.

We catch of glimpse of this disturbing image for a short beat before Lyla closes the door, engulfing the room in darkness.

INT. THE HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Before the meal. Lyla and Peter sit at a cozy dining table. Through the kitchen door we see Marissa putting the finishing touches on their food.

LYLA

So I think there's an extra room  
down in the basement.

PETER

Yeah?

LYLA

(nodding)

I found this small door down there.  
I couldn't open it.

PETER

Huh. That's weird. There was  
nothing like that in the layout we  
saw, was there, sweetie?

MARISSA

Bonus square footage is always  
nice.

PETER

(to Lyla)

I'll check it out. See what we're  
working with.

Marissa enters and places three plates of pasta on the table. It's not like normal home cooking. It's a portion of weird brown noodles covered in some green sauce on a huge white plate. Fancy restaurant style.

Peter is about to dig in, but Marissa stops him.

MARISSA

Hold on, let me get a picture first.

Lyla smirks as Marissa holds her iPhone above the dish for the shot.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

There we go. Gorgeous isn't it?

PETER

Yeah, this looks ... what is this?

MARISSA

It's from "Plenty". Kelp noodle cacio e pepe.

LYLA

(terse)

Yum.

PETER

Smells delicious, honey.

MARISSA

I thought I'd do something special for our first meal in the new house!

Lyla takes a bite. Nearly gags. Neither Peter nor Marissa notice.

PETER

So the neighbors. They seem like a mixed bag, eh?

LYLA

What was with all the staring?

MARISSA

It's better than I expected. You have to be ready for it when you move into these neighborhoods.

LYLA

What do you mean, "these neighborhoods"?

Peter clears his throat. Figuring out how to say this so he won't look bad.

PETER

This neighborhood is, um ... honey, help me out here.

MARISSA

You know how in San Francisco  
there's Pacific Heights and the  
Tenderloin?

LYLA

(realizing)

I knew it! We did move into the  
ghetto!

PETER

It's not the ghetto!  
(searching beat)  
...It just hasn't reached its  
potential.

Marissa nods vigorously. *Yes, that's a great way to put it.*

MARISSA

And sometimes, when people like us  
move in, the people who were here  
before get scared.

LYLA

What are they scared of?

PETER

The G-word. *Gentrification.*

MARISSA

That it'll turn into Pacific  
Heights. That it will become too  
expensive for them. That they'll  
have to leave. So sometimes they  
act ... unfriendly.

LYLA

Like we're going to get a brick  
through the window? God damnit!

PETER

(language)

Lyla! We're not going to get a  
brick through the window.

But Lyla is already putting the power dynamics together:

LYLA

Oh, God! We're Columbus and they're  
the Native Americans.

Eager not to be thought of as a genocidal bastard, Peter  
waves this concern away a bit desperately.

PETER

No one's the bad guys in this situation. It's just ... the way the world works.

MARISSA

It's silly, really. Who would complain when your streets get cleaner, you finally get a decent coffee shop, and a SoulCycle opens up?

LYLA

I can't believe we're the bad guys!

Marissa and Peter exchange a smirk. *She's too young to get it, anyway.*

MARISSA

At least we know one neighbor doesn't see us as the enemy. Bo Harris seems very accommodating.  
(quickly)  
If a bit rustic.

PETER

Yeah. Amazing he's been here for so long.

MARISSA

(to Lyla)  
By the way, I went ahead and scheduled a little playdate for you and Desi next week.

PETER

You did?

LYLA

What the fuck? I'm not seven!

PETER

Hey! There's no need to shout. Or curse.

MARISSA

I thought I was being considerate.

LYLA

Don't be, please.

Marissa appears shocked, playing it innocent.

MARISSA

Did I do something wrong? I thought you'd've jumped at the chance to make an actual friend.

LYLA

(dry)

No. It's very ... thoughtful.

Lyla nods, then pushes away the mostly full plate of pasta.

LYLA (CONT'D)

Thanks for dinner, Marissa.

Lyla makes for the exit.

MARISSA

I try to do something nice.

Peter swallows something about. He's not looking for a fight on his first night.

PETER

(sotto)

I'll talk to her.

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Later.

Lyla plays *Call of Duty: WWII*, aggressively mowing down the bad guys from a turret gun. Peter enters gingerly, unsure of how to begin.

Lyla keeps playing, ignoring his entrance. He comes over and sits next to her. He just watches the TV for a beat --

**ON SCREEN:** Lyla's character is engaged in a brutal grappling match with an SS Captain. Lyla BRAINS him with a helmet. It is quite graphic.

PETER

Wow, this is -- did I buy this for you?

LYLA

I told you it was historically accurate.

Peter smiles. He likes seeing his daughter's cunning, even at his own expense. Then he gets serious.

PETER

Can I talk to you about something?

LYLA  
Is it about "Melania?"

PETER  
Can you at least call her "her"?  
(then)  
Marissa doesn't have her own kids.  
She doesn't know anything about  
them. Yesterday she asked me if  
three year-olds can walk. But she's  
trying.

Lyla isn't so sure. Says nothing.

PETER (CONT'D)  
I know the last three years have  
been tough.

LYLA  
Awful.

PETER  
(agreeing)  
Awful. First Mom's diagnosis, then  
living with that over our heads...  
(emotional pause)  
...then a new woman moves in, the  
marriage seems fast -- I get it.

Lyla stares ahead, still playing.

PETER (CONT'D)  
Hey, we're all figuring out how to  
do this. Including Marissa.  
(then)  
Look at me.

Lyla pauses the game. Turns to her dad.

PETER (CONT'D)  
Do me a favor, okay? Just hang out  
with the neighbor kid. It'll make  
Marissa feel like she knows what  
she's doing. If you don't like him,  
you never have to see him again,  
okay? Can you do that for me?

LYLA  
I can do that. If you answer a  
question.

PETER  
Shoot.

LYLA  
Do you like the weird vegetarian  
cooking?

Peter pauses, then mouths the word "No".

Lyla grins. Peter grins back. Holds up a finger in front of his lips -- *our secret*.

And off Peter, bringing his daughter in for a kiss on the forehead...

EXT. THE HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

The next day. Lyla emerges from the house holding the compost bag. She trots down the back steps and makes for the green bin pushed up against the side of the fence.

But then she stops, noticing something in the grass. Lyla's face scrunches up in disgust as she sees:

**ANGLE:** Lying in the grass is a RABBIT on its back, four paws in the air, entrails spilling out of its stomach. Eyes glazed over in death.

Lyla drops the bag.

LYLA  
Oh, what in the motherless fuck!

A beat later, Peter comes POUNDING out of the house --

PETER  
What is it -- oh.

He crouches down, putting on the part of "brave Dad" for his daughter. Truth is, he's a bit queasy.

**ANGLE:** And we PUSH IN on the corpse of the rabbit. CAMERA holds here for an uncomfortable length of time.

PETER (CONT'D)  
Must of been got by a coyote or something.

Lyla studies the corpse.

LYLA  
Then why isn't it eaten?

Peter doesn't have a good answer for that eminently reasonable question.

PETER

Get the shovel from the basement.  
I'll clean this guy up.

Lyla does so. And off Peter, staring down at the carcass...

INT. THE HOUSE - LYLA'S ROOM - DAY

Later on that week.

Lyla is lounging on her bed, reading the comic *Saga* when there's a knocking at the door.

MARISSA (O.C.)

Lyla? Your friend is here.

Lyla doesn't know what she's talking about. With a puzzled look on her face, she rolls off the bed and opens the door to see...

Marissa standing beside a twelve year-old boy.

This is Bo's son, **DESI HARRIS**. With a bowl cut and oversized "Kid Rock North America Tour '99" shirt, he seems younger than his years. Doesn't help that he's shy, usually spending conversations staring at his toes.

But right now he's staring ga-ga eyes at Lyla. He's never seen anyone quite so...punk. Certainly not a girl his age.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Lyla, this is Desi Harris.

Lyla is not returning the open-mouth heart-eyes stare. She's looking at him skeptically.

LYLA

Hey. I'm Lyla. Obviously.

It takes a beat for Desi to recover.

DESI

Hi. I'm Desi.

LYLA

Yeah, I picked up on that.

Lyla is not thrilled that she has to do this. There's an uncomfortable beat of silence, then Marissa claps.

MARISSA

Okay, I'll let you two "chillax" as they say.

As Marissa goes, she mouths at Lyla "be nice". Ugh.

There's another beat. Then:

LYLA  
So, dude. Do you play any games?

DESI  
I mean I used to play *Left 4 Dead*,  
but then my controller broke --

LYLA  
That'll work.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

The same day.

In the gloom of the basement the little cubby door Lyla found is illuminated by the spotlight of Peter's flashlight.

He tries to open it with his hands. No dice. Peter puts down the flashlight and pulls a flathead screwdriver out of his pocket. He sticks it between the jamb and the frame. Pushes.

The wood CREAKS, splintering under his effort.

**UNKNOWN POV:** As it does, CAMERA goes behind Peter. Handheld. As if we're someone else in the room. We draw CLOSER and CLOSER in jagged, shuffling footsteps. And then we hear that same **scratching sound**. Too soft for Peter to notice.

Peter strains to open the door as...

**UNKNOWN POV:** A ghastly HAND enters frame, reaching for Peter. More claw than hand. Nails long and cracked and blackened. Skin covered in boils and the color of ink. And as we REACH for Peter --

Peter BUSTS the door off its hinge!

**OVER HIS SHOULDER:** No one is there.

Peter pants from effort, then grabs the flashlight, gets on his knees and crawls through the cubby door, dropping into --

INT. THE HOUSE - SUB-BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

**DARKNESS.**

Peter rakes his flashlight about. Discovers he's in a good-sized room. Big enough to fit ten people easily.

In the middle is a wooden column rising to the ceiling.

He keeps sweeping the light about, finding...

Cobwebs in the corners. Nothing on the walls. On the floor, lots of bugs retreating from the light's harsh glare.

But nothing unusual. Nothing scary.

He lights up the floor near the column. He clammers down the slope, having spotted something. He crouches, picking up...

A burned-up match.

And off Peter, not sure what to think of it...

LYLA (PRE-LAP)  
Dude, stop being trash.

INT. THE HOUSE - DEN - DAY

Back to Lyla and Desi's "play date".

**ON SCREEN:** Lyla and Desi are playing *Left 4 Dead*, a cooperative zombie shooting game.

It's later. Lyla and Desi are sitting on the floor cross-legged. Lyla's tongue is out like some gamer-chick Michael Jordan. She's in the zone, mashing buttons, having a blast.

LYLA  
No, don't get too close to The Witch --

**ON SCREEN:** Desi's character gets too close to The Witch, who utters a BANSHEE HOWL and kills Desi.

Desi grimaces. The whole afternoon has been like this.

Lyla scowls in frustration.

LYLA (CONT'D)  
I thought you'd played this before!

DESI  
I had but my controller broke and I haven't gotten a new one --

LYLA  
Great, now I have to fight everyone off myself.

Lyla mashes buttons for a beat. Desi just watches.

DESI  
Can you come resurrect me?

LYLA  
Can you not be such a pussy? BOOM!  
Yes, die zombie bitch!

**ON SCREEN:** Lyla keeps playing. Desi keeps being dead.

And after another beat, he tosses his controller. He's had more than enough.

LYLA (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?

DESI  
Yeah, I think I'm done.

LYLA  
Come on, because of some trash talk?

DESI  
I've been dying for like 30 minutes and you won't help me. I don't wanna do this anymore.

He rises. Makes for the exit.

LYLA  
You're seriously leaving because of a game?

DESI  
No, I'm leaving because this is supposed to be fun. This is ... the opposite of that.

Desi is legit upset. And seeing that, it dawns on Lyla how harsh she's been.

DESI (CONT'D)  
I'll see you around.

At that Desi heads out, downcast.

And off Lyla, a sense of guilt gnawing away at her...

EXT. THE HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

We're CLOSE on roughly-hewn strip of wood. A BRUSH enters frame and paints the fence, leaving it a deep shade of brown.

REVEAL that Marissa is staining a freshly-built wooden fence. You know, the type with horizontal slats and sans serif numbering. The ubiquitous gentrification fence.

She turns and faces an iPhone that's been set up on a tripod.

MARISSA

Now the stain I'm using is walnut. It's a nice dark color that will bring some of those warm yellow highlights out in the ash wood. Of course, I'm a huge believer in sustainability, so the wood is 100% reclaimed. See how pretty it is?

Marissa strikes a pose for a beat, then grabs the iPhone off the tripod. Studies the footage she's just shot. After some minor editing...

...Desi emerges from the house, visibly upset by his playdate with Lyla.

Marissa watches him go briefly, then turns her attention back to her video. As she starts to upload it to Instagram....

INT. THE HOUSE - DEN - CONTINUOUS

From a bay window, Lyla watches Desi cross the street to his house, her guilt curdling into shame and sadness...

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Later that week. The house is looking better. More done up. The kitchen isn't quite "Architectural Digest" but it's getting there.

Marissa is chopping vegetables as she listens to music, headphones in.

We can hear the tinny sound of Kendrick Lamar's "Humble" coming out of her earbuds.

And as Marissa cranks up the volume the music **DROWNS OUT ALL OTHER SOUND**. She begins rapping along:

MARISSA

(bad rapping)

*Get the fuck off my stage, I'm the  
Sandman / Get the fuck off my dick,  
that ain't right / I make a play  
fucking up your whole life...*

Marissa then proceeds to open the drawer beneath her. Then another. Then another on the other side of the kitchen. Whatever she's looking for, she can't find it.

INT. THE HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Marissa dances into the hallway holding her iPhone, grooving to the music and rapping along.

She's apparently headed for the basement.

**NEW ANGLE:** CLOSE on the basement door handle. It's TURNING.

Marissa is totally oblivious. Her eyes are closed. Rapt. Or she is until she drops her iPhone and the MUSIC CUTS OUT.

MARISSA

Shit.

She crouches down to pick it up, her back to the basement door...

...which we now see is OPENING. Out of the gloom a FIGURE materializes...

**ANGLE:** Marissa inspects the iPhone for damage. No cracks on the front. *Phew.*

But the relief is momentary. Because she's startled by the sudden creaking of footsteps behind her. She turns and looks up and --

MARISSA (CONT'D)

HOLY FUCKING SHIT!!!!

She jumps back, horrified to see...

Ryan Stump, the creepy neighbor with the aviator glasses from earlier. He's just standing there in overalls like this is the most normal thing in the world.

RYAN STUMP

Sorry, sorry, sorry! Didn't mean to scare ya.

And Marissa was very scared. Still is, actually. There's a strange man in her house --

MARISSA

Who the fuck are you?

Ryan doesn't appreciate the language.

RYAN STUMP

Apologies, ma'm. My name's Ryan Stump. My wife and I live next door. I think we saw each other when you moved in a week back.

MARISSA

Why are you in my basement?

Ryan reaches into his back pocket. Produces a mouse trap.

RYAN STUMP

Neighborly courtesy. The previous residents gave me a spare key so I could maintain these. I was planning on extending you the same.

MARISSA

You could've asked me first -- Jesus H Christ...

Ryan frowns at her blasphemy.

RYAN STUMP

I tried to call out to ya. But I guess those headphones must be pretty dang good.

Ryan laughs, Marissa doesn't. She's still shaken up.

MARISSA

If you don't mind, I'd like your key to this house. I'm not comfortable giving strangers access to my home.

RYAN STUMP

Well, golly, we aren't strangers. I live right next door.

MARISSA

The key, please.

Ryan is miffed.

RYAN STUMP

I was just trying to save you the expense of an exterminator.

Reluctantly, Ryan produces the key. Holds it out on his palm.

RYAN STUMP (CONT'D)

You know, we look out for each other in this neighborhood.

(MORE)

RYAN STUMP (CONT'D)

That's part of our values. If you can't reciprocate ... you won't fit in.

Marissa doesn't like the veiled threat. Swipes the key off his palm.

MARISSA

I'd like you to get out of my house right now. Please.

Ryan smiles unpleasantly.

RYAN STUMP

Nice to meet you too. Neighbor.

Marissa stands there until she hears the door close.

INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Later that night.

Peter plays NBA2K18 on the iPad in bed; Marissa stands at a dresser applying various lotions to her face. She's agitated:

MARISSA

And he was just there, like it was the most normal thing in the world!

PETER

It's really creepy. We can get the locks changed.

MARISSA

And what about, "You won't fit in"? What do you think that means? They're trying to intimidate us. The staring, coming onto our property.

Peter puts down the iPad. Sighs a little, on the inside. His small joy at the game extinguished.

PETER

Why would the neighbors want to intimidate us?

MARISSA

Don't be naive. These rubes see a bi-racial couple from San Francisco drive up in a Tesla and they think Blue Bottle is right around the corner, and then they'll be evicted when the property values go up.

Marissa goes to the window and throws back the curtains. She peers out.

**MARISSA'S POV:** A beat-up HATCHBACK idles across the way. Lights off. A FIGURE in the front seems to be staring at the house.

Marissa squints. *Is he watching us?* She can't tell.

PETER

(beat)

I don't think they know what Blue Bottle is.

She turns back to Peter, regaining her train of thought.

MARISSA

You know what I mean. They want us out, Peter.

Peter rises and goes to her. Puts soothing hands on her hips.

PETER

(conceding)

They could be a little worried about what we mean for the neighborhood. But if we give 'em enough time, they'll see that we're more like them than not, and they'll leave us alone.

He tries to kiss her. Marissa evades him, not at all convinced by his words:

MARISSA

The cream needs to dry.

Peter pouts, then shuffles back to bed. And as he does, Marissa takes another look out the window.

**ANGLE:** The hatchback is gone.

And off Marissa's face, etched with concern...

INT. THE HOUSE - LYLA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Another night.

Lyla lies on her bed, scrolling through Instagram.

**CLOSE ON HER PHONE:** The same three friends we saw earlier in the 4x4 photo booth shot now pose on a pier on a lake.

Without Lyla. The caption: *how did i get so lucky w these friends [heart emoji]*

Something about their joyous smiles stings Lyla. Even if she's too tough to admit it, their friendship is something she misses.

And by chance she looks out her window and sees...

**ANGLE:** Desi sitting in his room, nose buried in a book. He looks lonely. A bit sad, honestly.

Her mind doesn't want to go to how she treated him, but it does anyway.

As she looks at Desi she sighs, taking us to...

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE - DAY

The next day.

Lyla stands on the Harris' rundown porch, a small box in her hands. She rings the doorbell, then waits. She taps her feet. Nervous.

After a beat, the door opens. It's Desi. His face falls on seeing Lyla. Still hasn't gotten over the video game incident.

DESI

Oh.

LYLA

Well, hello to you too.

DESI

Hey, I didn't complain to your mom about --

But before he can finish, Lyla hands him the box.

Desi opens it cautiously, as if it might be a novelty snake-in-a-can trick. But to his surprise it's...

DESI (CONT'D)

A new controller?

Indeed. Inside is a banged up Playstation controller.

LYLA

I figure because you suck so bad you might wanna, you know ... practice.

Ah, Lyla's delicate bedside manner. Still, Desi is thrilled.

DESI  
Wow, I mean. It's super nice.

LYLA  
The "A" Button is a little wonky...

DESI  
Thank you.

An awkward pause, then:

LYLA  
Okay then.

At that she turns back to her house. But then she stops.  
Realizing she had something else to say:

LYLA (CONT'D)  
Um, and I'm sorry.  
(beat)  
For being such a douche yesterday.

DESI  
Oh. No, it's cool. You weren't --

LYLA  
Yeah, I was. I'm sorry.

Desi nods. *Might as well admit it.*

DESI  
Thanks. It's cool.

Beat. Lyla stubs the ground with her toe. Desi chews on his lip nervously. These two are pros at communication.

LYLA  
All right. So. See ya.

Now Lyla turns around for real. Starts back for the house.  
But stops when she hears:

DESI  
So what are you doing now?  
(holds up controller)  
Wanna play?

INT. HARRIS HOUSE - DESI'S ROOM - DAY

Later.

Lyla and Desi sit at the foot of Desi's bed, playing co-op on a small boxy tube.

They're having a much better time than earlier -- smiling as they mash buttons, howling as they avoid digital death.

As they play, we get a sense of Desi's room -- it's the love child of a horror enthusiast and a paranormal detective cosplayer.

WE SEE: A bookcase filled with horror comics, histories of the Salem Witch Trials, pamphlets on "How To Find Real Vampires", crystals and dreamcatchers on the shelf, and a Ouija board poking out from under the bed.

If it's occult, he's got it.

Even as she plays, Lyla can't help but notice all the strange stuff around the room. Her attention drifts to a STUFFED OWL in a bell jar.

DESI

Yo! I'm getting hammered over here  
-- darnit!

**ON SCREEN:** Desi's character dies.

LYLA

Sorry, I got distracted by all  
your, uh, creepy stuff.

Desi flushes pink, called out on his hobby.

LYLA (CONT'D)

So what's the deal with it? Are you  
like Kirkland-brand Harry Potter or  
something?

DESI

I dunno, I just kinda like it.

LYLA

Yeah. Why?

DESI

Um...

Desi pauses, unsure how to answer. He seems to be on the verge of saying something, then:

DESI (CONT'D)

I just got into it, I guess. I  
don't remember.

Lyla studies him. There seems to be something more going on here, but she doesn't want to press.

LYLA

All right.  
 (then, re: game)  
 Lemme come resurrect you. What  
 room'd you die in?

Desi nods eagerly, happy to be off that topic.

And off the two of them playing, becoming fast friends...

INT. THE HOUSE - LYLA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Later that night.

Lyla watches "Rick and Morty" in bed on her laptop. She finishes an episode, closes the computer and rises.

INT. THE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lyla brushes her teeth, staring at herself in the mirror. She hums the R+M theme song.

And then the overhead light FLICKERS. Once, twice, and ...

**BLACKNESS.**

We can just make out Lyla's face in the dark. She glances about, unable to see anything.

And then we hear that SCRATCHING again. Long talons dragged along concrete.

LYLA

Hello?

The noise grows LOUDER. Nearer.

Lyla spins, terrified.

LYLA (CONT'D)

Hello?!

And as the sound approaches and gets RIGHT NEXT TO LYLA --

The lights FLICKER BACK ON, and in those STROBING FLASHES we catch a GLIMPSE of a monstrous WOMAN IN BLACK. Too quick of a flash to see many details, but everything about her was wrong. (We'll see more of her later).

Lyla's heart beats like a jackrabbit. She looks around the bathroom. Empty.

She pulls aside the shower curtain. Nothing there.

Lyla is befuddled. *Did she see what we saw?*

We don't know.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

The next day. Peter sips coffee and reads the news on his tablet. Lyla enters, bleary-eyed from last night's unsettling events.

PETER  
Morning, Ly. How'd you sleep?

LYLA  
Meh.

PETER  
Something wrong?

LYLA  
I keep hearing these noises in the house -- like scratching.

PETER  
Could be bugs. Rats. We didn't find anything when we did the inspection, but a lot can happen in six weeks.

Lyla reaches for a slice of toast.

LYLA  
It's probably nothing.

PETER  
I can check it out --

Peter's smartwatch DINGS. It's a package update: **"Your Amazon order #6655321 has been delivered."**

PETER (CONT'D)  
Hey, can you get the thing from the front door?

INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - MORNING

Lyla pads her way down the stairs and opens the front door...

EXT. THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

...where an Amazon package sits. She grabs it, curious, and begins to open it up. Inside is a Magic Bullet -- you know, those juicers everyone has?

Then she glances up and notices Ryan Stump looking at her from the front porch. She waves. He doesn't wave back. *Whatever.*

Lyla turns around and sees (NOTE: we haven't seen the front of the Danvers-Cho house at all this scene) ...

In DARK RUSTY PAINT on the new mint green door, a CROSS INSIDE A CIRCLE. Like a sniper scope. Or the Zodiac Killer's symbol.

She studies it. It looks like it's still a bit wet.

And that's when Lyla puts her finger to paint ... it comes off FRESH and BRIGHT. The color of blood.

HOLD on Lyla standing before the desecrated door...

EXT. SHERIFF STATION - DAY

A small, low-slung building with a single sheriff's car out front. The Tesla pulls in next to it.

Above the double doors a sign reads: "Multnomah County Sheriff's Department -- Northeast Substation".

INT. SHERIFF STATION - ENTRY - DAY

Peter and Marissa enter, mid-conversation:

PETER

...we'll just tell them the facts  
and they'll help us out, okay?

MARISSA

Like in San Francisco when that  
street person kept using my  
planters --

She cuts herself off because she realizes ...

There's no one inside. The front desk is empty.

And there's no noise coming from within, either. It's so quiet the HUMMING of the fluorescent lighting feels LOUD.

They trade looks. Odd.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Hello?

Beat. Nothing.

He knocks on the desk.

PETER

Hellooooo?

The lights HUM in response.

INT. SHERIFF STATION - HALLWAY - DAY

Moments later.

Peter and Marissa walk through the empty precinct accompanied by the relentless DRONE of the lights and their shoes slapping a beat against the two-tone floors.

MARISSA

Is anybody here?

INT. SHERIFF STATION - BULLPEN - DAY

The bullpen has a small town vibe -- just four desks. Peter and Marissa enter and are dismayed to find them all empty.

They trade another unsettled look -- *what sort of police station is empty at eleven am?*

SHERIFF ROBERTS (O.S.)

Sorry, folks!

They both give a start as they turn and see **SHERIFF ROBERTS** zipping up his fly as he enters behind them.

SHERIFF ROBERTS (CONT'D)

Our desk girl's youngest went into labor this morning and Sheriff Toole came down with the flu, so it's just me until the noon shift.

He's forties, stocky, clean-shaven. A terrific head of black hair keeping him looking young.

Sheriff Roberts grins, realizing he gave them a bit of a fright.

SHERIFF ROBERTS (CONT'D)

What can I help you with?

INT. SHERIFF STATION - BULLPEN - DAY

Later.

Peter and Marissa sit opposite Roberts. She's in the middle of their story:

MARISSA

It's a pattern -- it's not just the bullseye. They're intimidating us!  
(realizing)  
And Christ, I just painted that door!

SHERIFF ROBERTS

Mrs. Cho --

MARISSA

(correcting)  
Danvers-Cho.

SHERIFF ROBERTS

Yes. It's extremely upsetting to you, no doubt.

PETER

Not to mention Lyla -- having to see that? Having to explain it to her?

MARISSA

(quickly)  
And that too!

SHERIFF ROBERTS

I assure you, this sort of thing doesn't happen in that neighborhood.

PETER

You're familiar with it?

SHERIFF ROBERTS

My mother lives in the area.

Sheriff Roberts thinks.

SHERIFF ROBERTS (CONT'D)

Have you two had any other threats since moving in?

MARISSA

A man named Ryan Stump came into our house last week. Unannounced.  
(MORE)

MARISSA (CONT'D)

He's the one who did the door, I'm sure.

PETER

Sweetie, we don't know --

MARISSA

It's him.

SHERIFF ROBERTS

He made a threat?

PETER

Not threats, per se --

MARISSA

He had a key -- he was snooping around the basement and snuck up on me. It was scary too, like he wanted to frighten me. When I asked him to leave, he got offended and sort of told me to watch out.

For the first time, Roberts likes what he hears. Nods and starts scribbling down notes.

SHERIFF ROBERTS

Ryan Stump did that?

MARISSA

(nodding)

I think he wants to chase us out of the neighborhood.

SHERIFF ROBERTS

Any reason you have this suspicion?

Marissa looks to Peter. He gives a go-ahead nod -- *tell him.*

MARISSA

Sergeant, I've been getting the sense that people in the area ... well, how do I put this...

PETER

They don't like, um...

Awkward pause.

SHERIFF ROBERTS

...Yuppies?

Peter reddens. He thinks of himself as a "cool yuppie", not like those other yuppies.

PETER

That's one way to put it, yes.

Roberts breaks into a smile.

SHERIFF ROBERTS

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to offend. It's just that Portland has changed a lot in the last ten years. Most parts are unrecognizable. Except for the North Union area.

PETER

North Union? The realtor told us it was called Glenoak Gulch.

SHERIFF ROBERTS

In fact, all the residents I'm aware of grew up there. Inherited their houses from their parents, and so forth and so on. It's very blue collar.

MARISSA

(and bad)

Yes. Very.

SHERIFF ROBERTS

It's a miracle it's held out as long as it has. But now that folks like you are discovering it, I suppose they'll have to make do like everyone else.

(then)

Listen, I'm going to type this up and have you sign it for me. That way, if Mr. Stump does anything else, it'll be easier if you want to do something like get a restraining order. Sound good?

And off Peter and Marissa, greatly relieved...

EST. PINYON STREET - DAY

Back to the weird Zodiac/bullseye symbol on the door of the Danvers-Cho house.

After a beat the camera WHIP-PANS 180 degrees across the street to the Harris house.

LYLA (PRE-LAP)  
 Thanks for letting me wait here  
 while my parents talk to the cops,  
 Mr. Harris.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Lyla and Bo are seated across from each other on this  
 scratched up, 70's style island. A plate of hush puppies sits  
 between them, beckoning.

BO HARRIS  
 Call me Bo. And it's no problem --  
 I'm awfully sorry over what  
 happened to your house.

LYLA  
 It's just blood.

BO HARRIS  
 (shaking his head)  
 Probably some kid watching too many  
 movies, is my bet. Some folks just  
 don't accept change.

Lyla reaches for the hush puppies. Looks to Bo -- *may I?*

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)  
 Go ahead.

Lyla takes one. Bites in and ... *ohmygod*. Heaven.

LYLA  
 (mouth full)  
 This is delicious.

BO HARRIS  
 Old Harris family recipe going way  
 back. Only thing I can cook, to be  
 honest. Have another.

Lyla does.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)  
 Your daddy ever cook?

LYLA  
 He can order GrubHub, that's about  
 it. My mom could cook though. She  
 made the best spare rib ...

She trails off, thinking about her Mom.

Bo senses the subject is touchy.

BO HARRIS  
Everything sorted out with y'all  
after the move?

LYLA  
I guess. I mean, I think my dad's  
company took care of a lot of it.  
He moved for a new job.

BO HARRIS  
That's the modern world. People  
move all the time now. I'm hoping  
Desi won't have to do that, but  
what do I know?

Bo pops a hush puppy in his mouth.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)  
I'm glad you two became friendly.  
Shows the idiot who did this to  
your door it doesn't have to be so  
hard.

LYLA  
What do you mean?

BO HARRIS  
Well, in the past there's been  
friction when new folks come to the  
block...  
(changing subject)  
I'm just sayin' you two getting  
along sets a good example.

At that, we hear the sound of the door opening. Desi enters,  
holding a paper bag full of groceries.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)  
There he is! They have frozen peas?

DESI  
Yup.  
(noticing)  
Hey, Lyla. What's up?

INT. HARRIS HOUSE - DESI'S ROOM - DAY

Later.

Lyla spins in Desi's desk chair, devouring another hush  
puppy. Desi sits on the ground, more contemplative.

DESI

This blood on the door thing is strange. Very ritualistic.

LYLA

Marissa called it domestic terrorism.

DESI

(admitting)

I mean it could be a bullseye. It could also be Celtic. The symbol is way older than Christianity. Caesar mentions it in his writings--

LYLA

I'm glad you find this interesting.

DESI

Just saying. There's something about it that's kinda...

Lyla gestures around at all the occult stuff in the room.

LYLA

Paranormal?

DESI

(very funny)

Weird. Alright, weird?

LYLA

You don't buy Marissa's evil neighbor theory?

DESI

Ryan Stump is like eighty years old and walks with a limp. What, he just went to the "blood store" and bought ten gallons and painted a bullseye on your door in the middle of the night? Nah.

Lyla thinks. It does seem difficult, now that he mentions it.

She tosses up a final hush puppy like a grape. Catches it in her mouth. As she chews:

LYLA

Honestly, I don't care what it is as long as it freaks out Marissa.

(off Desi)

What?

DESI  
Do you really hate her that much?

LYLA  
She's a bitch. Acts all innocent  
around my dad but she sucks. She's  
had it out for me since --

Lyla stops herself from saying it. It's part of a self-defense mechanism. But Desi, to his credit, understands.

DESI  
You don't have to talk about it if  
you don't want.

Lyla pauses. She's told no one what she's about to say.

LYLA  
My real mom died four years ago.  
(beat, hard to say)  
Cancer.

She turns to look at Desi.

LYLA (CONT'D)  
After she died everyone kept coming  
up to me asking how I was doing. I  
stopped being a person -- I was  
just a ... like a victim. So I  
stopped talking to people. Stopped  
hanging out with friends. To stop  
having to deal with it all.  
(then)  
I guess that's why I like video  
games so much. Nobody asks you how  
you're feeling. Because you can  
just focus on the game.

TEARS have formed in Lyla's eyes. Embarrassed, she wipes them  
away hurriedly.

LYLA (CONT'D)  
Fuck, I'm sorry. I usually don't do  
this.

DESI  
It's okay -- I get it. I  
understand.

And he does -- we'll learn more about that later.

Impulsively, Desi hugs her. To her surprise, perhaps, she hugs him back.

CUT TO:

I/E. PETER'S TESLA / PINYON STREET - DRIVING - DAY

The same day. Peter and Marissa are driving back from the sheriff's station:

PETER

Well I thought that was very positive, honestly. Sheriff Roberts seems on top of it.

As they turn a corner onto Pinyon Street, Marissa clocks...

**ANGLE:** Down the block, Ryan Stump speaks into the passenger window of a hatchback. The driver's tinted window is rolled up. We can't see who is inside.

Ryan Stump spots the oncoming Tesla and taps the hood of the car as if alerting the driver. The hatchback guns to life and pulls a U-y, driving away from them.

Marissa watches it go, gripped by doubt. *Is it the same car? Is she being paranoid?*

MARISSA

Peter --

Peter HONKS the horn, interrupting Marissa.

PETER

(to Harris house,  
shouting)

Lyla! We're here!

(to Marissa)

I'm sorry, what were you about to say, honey?

Marissa gazes after the hatchback. It's turned a corner and is gone.

MARISSA

Nothing.

EXT. THE HOUSE - FRONT YARD - EVENING

Peter is on his hands and knees, scrubbing the blood out of the door. He looks up to the Stump house -- and sees no one watching.

He resumes scrubbing.

MARISSA (PRE-LAP)  
 Last time I showed you how banged  
 up the old floors were...

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

**ON AN IPHONE:** We're looking at the tips of Marissa's boots standing on immaculately polished, reddish-brown floors.

(Until mentioned the whole scene will be shot on the iPhone.)

MARISSA (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
 And here are the new floorboards!

Marissa advances through the living room.

MARISSA (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
 The wood is Johnson Cherry, which I love for its deep henna hues that instantly make any room look a touch more refined. We're using it throughout most of the house, including the kitchen...

Marissa enters...

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

**STILL ON THE IPHONE:** Marissa keeps talking.

MARISSA (O.C.)  
 It's a great wood for families, because its dark stain can hide messes --

She cuts off, noticing that Lyla is in the shot. Standing at the sink, washing the dishes.

MARISSA (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
 Ugh! Lyla! What are you doing?

Here we EXIT the iPhone footage and resume normal camerawork.

LYLA  
 You told me to wash the dishes!

MARISSA  
 You ruined my shot!

Marissa is suddenly very upset. Lyla's mere presence can just push all her buttons.

LYLA

You told me you didn't want to see them in the sink tomorrow morning, you said --

MARISSA

You just have mess everything up, don't you?

Lyla is taken aback. She's not used to such vitriol, seemingly unprovoked.

LYLA

What did I do?

MARISSA

Of course you don't think to apologize, either. Typical self-centered, single-child, bratty behavior.

LYLA

What?!

Marissa, sensing she's gone too far, puts her anger back in the bottle.

MARISSA

Just go to your room, Lyla. I need to get this done.

Lyla turns and goes, shaking her head at Marissa's outburst...

INT. THE HOUSE - LYLA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Moments later.

Lyla enters her room and plops down on a bay window seat and fires up a YouTube video.

After a beat, something in the corner of her eye makes her turn her head toward the front yard, where she sees...

**A WOMAN** standing there.

From Lyla's vantage, it's hard to make anything out. The yard is dark. There are no streetlights. The Woman wears dark clothes. A hood over her head, like the Nazgul in Lord of the Rings.

Lyla squints. *Who is she?* It's unsettling, to say the least.

We know who she is: The Woman In Black.

Almost as if she knew she was being surveilled, the W.I.B. cranes her neck and looks up at the window where Lyla sits.

We still can't see the her face from under the hood, but she's staring right at Lyla.

A sense of dread grips our hero.

LYLA

DAD! I think there's someone at the door!

MARISSA (O.S.)

Your father's in the shower.

Lyla stares down at the Woman.

LYLA

Can you see who it is?

MARISSA (O.S.)

Lyla, you're ruining my audio!

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Lyla approaches the front door tentatively. She's no pushover but there's something about the Woman that makes her nervous.

Lyla grips the door knob. Turns it.

LYLA

Come on, dummy. What are you afraid of?

She swings open the door --

And nothing is there. The front yard is empty. Lyla cranes her head outside --

**LYLA'S POV:** We PAN from left to right as we look around. It is utterly empty. Just the Danvers-Cho house's immaculate yard, and the much less immaculate yards of the neighbors.

Lyla turns back inside and --

Holy shit! The W.I.B. is inside the house! How did she get there? We have no idea. We're not going to worry about that now, because...

The Woman reaches out toward Lyla and utters an unnatural, frog-croak WAIL.

It's the first time the woman has made any noise other than that scratching sound, and boy is it unnerving. Like the death rattle of a thousand animals.

Lyla jumps back. Gives a strangled CRY.

W.I.B. takes a step forward, and we see her closely for the first time. Her clothes filthy, stained with what seems like centuries of grime and oil. Her hair is matted and dark.

But that's not the worst part. Her toenails are long talons. Her skin is cracked in dozens of places, all seeping out a dark pus.

With each step she takes revolting COCKROACHES slip out of her dress and land on the floor by her feet, squirming and writhing. SPIDERS crawl out of her sleeves onto her hands.

And her eyes ... there's nothing there. Just pallid skin where her sockets should be. Terrifying.

LYLA (CONT'D)  
Jesus fucking Christ!

The monster steps forward, SCRATCHING the floor with its long nails.

Lyla moves back -- right into the door. She reaches for the handle frantically, but her hand keeps slipping. She can't take her terrified eyes off the monster...

The woman reaches out a CLAW, long grimy blades for nails, a centipede crawling draped along its knuckles like a ring. It's inches from Lyla's quivering face...

Lyla again reaches for the door knob. Tries to turn it --

The Woman takes another step forward, leaving a grimy FOOTPRINT and a BLOODWORM on the floor.

Lyla shuts her eyes. SCREAMS.

The Woman's nail rakes Lyla's cheek...

PETER (O.C.)  
Lyla?!

Lyla opens her eyes. The woman is gone.

The door is open behind her, letting in a small gust of wind. There at the top of the stairs, in a bathrobe, is her dad.

PETER (CONT'D)  
Jesus, what's wrong!?

Peter rushes down the stairs and grabs her by the shoulders.

PETER (CONT'D)  
You're white as sheet -- what's  
wrong? You shouted...

Lyla looks around. There's nothing. She touches her face  
where the Woman grazed her.

LYLA  
There was a woman -- right here.  
She was ...

Lyla looks to the spot where the woman was. No footprint.

LYLA (CONT'D)  
What the?

**ANGLE:** Marissa pops out of the kitchen where she was filming.  
Regards the two of them.

Peter presses his hand to Lyla's forehead.

PETER  
You're not running hot...are you  
feeling okay?

Lyla shakes her head.

LYLA  
...Yeah. Yeah. I just -- I thought  
I saw a woman by the door. But I  
guess it was my imagination.

PETER  
If something's going on, you can  
always talk to me about it. You  
know that, right?

Lyla embraces her dad. He's provided her with some comfort.  
And she's not even sure what she saw was there.

LYLA  
Thanks, Dad.

And off Marissa, regarding this all skeptically...

INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Later that night.

Peter works on his iPad in bed. Marissa stands in the  
bathroom doorway, adding rollers to her hair.

MARISSA

Attention-seeking behavior is typical of girls her age. Especially in these circumstances. But Dr. Connor says we can't indulge it.

PETER

Sweetie, what are you talking about?

MARISSA

Her Electra complex! Lyla made up this fantasy about seeing this woman to manipulate us.

PETER

Electra complex? She just got a bit shook up after the graffiti on the door today.

MARISSA

It starts with "just a bit shook up" and then it goes to "anxious" and soon it becomes "we need to move back to San Francisco."

Peter glances up at his wife.

PETER

I don't think that's what this is.

MARISSA

The move represents the new -- new job, new house, and, I hate to say it, a new family. She resents the new mother. She wants to kill her and sleep with the father.

PETER

That's disgusting!

Marissa goes to the window, unperturbed. She reaches for the curtains to close them.

MARISSA

Metaphorically -- honestly, you're so literal sometimes! It's about returning to the idyllic past.

Peter gives Marissa a flat look. He puts down his iPad.

PETER  
Can we just put today behind us?  
(beat)  
Sweetie?

But something out the window has caught Marissa's eye.

**ANGLE:** The hatchback from earlier is once again idling out front. The DRIVER is again obscured, but seems to stare right at their window.

Peter clocks Marissa's concern --

PETER (CONT'D)  
Something wrong?

MARISSA  
There's a car out there. I've seen him a couple times now -- earlier today, with Ryan Stump.

**ANGLE:** We PUSH IN on the driver. Still just a dark outline, faintly backlit by the green glow of the car console. The Driver's anonymity is somehow ominous.

MARISSA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
I think he's watching us.

Peter rises. Makes for the window.

But just as he does, the hatchback's engine sputters to life. The car slowly drives away.

Peter arrives in time to watch it go.

PETER  
Looks like they're not sticking around.

MARISSA  
You're not gonna do anything?

A beat. Peter senses this is a test.

PETER  
If he comes back, I'll call the Sheriff.  
(beat)  
What else do you want me to do?

Marissa searches her husband's eyes. Shakes her head. He's not taking it as seriously as she is. She brushes by him.

And off Peter, unsure of what he did wrong...

EXT. PINYON STREET - MORNING

The next day. The sun rises over the tree-lined street. Beautiful, calm.

We PRE-LAP a BUZZING...

INT. HARRIS HOUSE - DESI'S ROOM - MORNING

It's almost mid-morning, but Desi slumbers away on his bed, drooling a bit.

**ANGLE:** Desi's cell phone, an old Samsung, BUZZES on his desk. Then again. Then again.

Desi stirs. Shuffles out of bed and stumbles toward the desk. He picks up his phone. Sees he has **7 new messages** from "cute neighbor girl".

He opens it. We catch GLIMPSES of the texts: "*im freaked out*" & "*something weird is going on*" & "*we need to talk*".

And off Desi, growing more concerned as he reads the texts...

EXT. MT. TABOR PARK - DAY

More forest than park. Lyla and Desi stroll among towering pines and evergreen trees. She's at the tail-end of her story:

LYLA

...You probably think it's bullshit. Seeing a ... whatever I saw. Even I think I'm crazy.

DESI

No, I don't. I believe you.

LYLA

Why?

DESI

You've seen my room.

Lyla considers. Doesn't buy it.

LYLA

Nah, come on.

Desi thinks for a beat. Debating whether to do this.

DESI

Remember when you told me about your mom, and I said I understood?

LYLA

Yeah?

Desi reaches into his wallet. Produces a crumpled photo.

**CLOSE:** The photo is a EIGHT YEAR-OLD DESI and his MOM before a Christmas tree. She beams at her little angel. He smiles, missing several of his teeth.

DESI

Me and my mom. At our last Christmas. A drunk driver hit her when she was coming home from the hospital.

LYLA

Jesus. I'm sorry. She was a doctor?

DESI

Nurse.

(then)

After, you know ... *it* ... I just wanted to talk to her. I missed her, you know? I got an Ouija board, just to see if I could say hi. Then I tried like a seance, a buncha other things.

(beat)

That's the real reason I got into all the stuff. That's why I believe you.

LYLA

And I thought you were just super creepy.

DESI

Thanks.

LYLA

Sorry. I shouldn't be joking about stuff like that.

DESI

Nah, it's cool. I'd rather be creepy than haunted.

Beat. Then Lyla laughs, thrilled her friend is learning the art of trash talking. Desi chuckles too.

Lyla reins it back in:

LYLA

So what do you think? Did we move to an Indian burial ground? Am I cursed by some evil spirit?

Desi thinks. Kicks a pebble on the path.

DESI

Not that I know of. But lemme look into it. Don't worry, we'll figure out what this thing is.

LYLA

Okay --

Lyla's phone DINGS. A text from Marissa: "*Did you leave the dishes in the sink?*" Marissa uses proper punctuation in texts. Another DING: "*Please get back here and clean this up.*" DING: "*Now.*"

Lyla ignores it.

LYLA (CONT'D)

Hey -- thanks for helping. And for believing me.

Suddenly overcome by genuine gratitude, she gives him a hug.

And off the two of them embracing...

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Later that week.

Soul-deadening MUZAK is pumped out over speakers.

Marissa stands before an aisle of bizarre "snacks". Whole-grain Iranian crackers. Unleavened Latvian potato crisps. She chooses a box, dragging her finger down the Nutritional Information to...

**CLOSE:** Her finger stops on "**Sugar - 11g**".

*Ugh, unhealthy.* Marissa makes a face. Puts it back.

E/I. GROCERY STORE PARKING LOT / PETER'S TESLA - DAY

After the shop.

Marissa sits in the front seat, scrolling through an app on her phone, making sure she got everything:

MARISSA

Asparagus, tabbouleh, bell peppers--

This quiet moment is interrupted when a hand SLAMS down on the windshield, SHOCKING Marissa.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

FUCK!

She drops her phone. Then sees the hand left a FLIER on the windshield.

She takes a beat to recover her nerves, then gets out and looks at it:

**CLOSE:** It's a variant on the sign Lyla saw when they were driving into Portland - "**GENTRIFICATION KILLS -- KEEP PORTLAND ALIVE**" and on it, scrawled in caps, a personal touch: "**YUPPIE SLUT GO BACK TO FRISCO**".

Marissa looks around to see who slammed it and catches sight of the back of a strapping YOUNG MAN hurrying through the parking lot, hoodie concealing his identity.

He's too far away to do anything.

Off Marissa, heart still hammering in her chest...

MARISSA (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

Now they're not content just  
graffitiing our home -- they're  
following me to the store!

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Peter sits on the couch, a concerned look on his face as he scrutinizes the crumpled up anti-gentrification flier.

Marissa paces before him, a ball of nerves and anger.

MARISSA

This has gotta stop, Peter. We  
can't let Ryan Stump terrorize us  
just because we have money.

PETER

Sweetie, we don't know this was  
Ryan Stump. You said the guy looked  
young.

MARISSA

Ryan Stump, or someone working with  
him. How else would they know to  
put "Frisco" on it?

Peter rises. Tries to put comforting arms around Marissa.

PETER

Maybe they saw the dealer plates...

She shakes him off, steamed up.

MARISSA

Open your eyes, Peter! It's the same people who did the door, the same people watching us at night! It's a campaign -- well, I'm not gonna let them. Their shitty little neighborhood is gonna change, and they're just gonna have to live with it!

(then)

In fact, that's what I'm going to tell Ryan Stump right now.

Marissa exits the living room and heads into the foyer.

PETER

Marissa! Hey --

As Peter follows...

INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Marissa heads to the front door; Peter is hot on her heels.

PETER

Sweetie, they're our neighbors. We can't just declare war on them!

MARISSA

Like they've done to us?! You can sit here and stew, but I'm not gonna let them terrify us!

And with that, she turns the handle, swings the door open, and GASPS as she sees on the porch...

Marsha, the woman with the baby from the cold open, now twenty years older. She's with JACKSON (25), the baby -- now a man.

Jackson is fit, tall, and has sandy blonde hair. With his neon yellow trucker hat, fake diamond earrings in both ears, and a retro Trailblazers jersey, he projects a kind of arrogant frat boy energy.

Behind them stands Bo Harris.

BO HARRIS

Peter, this is Marsha Kovacs and her son Jackson. They live down the way, family's been here a long time.

Peter nods politely, but doesn't know what this is about.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)

Marsha here found a bucket of something that sure looked like blood in her back yard, and, aw hell -- I better let them speak.

Marsha nudges Jackson with her elbow. He blushes.

MARSHA

Go on.

JACKSON

Mr. Cho, I was the one who painted your door. It was a prank meant to scare you because you're new here.

Marsha nudges him again.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

I am very sorry. If you need any rooms in the house painted -- or a cabinet built or anything like that, I'd be happy to do that for you.

BO HARRIS

Jackson's pretty handy, so be sure to take him up on that.

Marsha takes Peter by the hand. Entreating him --

MARSHA

I didn't raise him like this. This is -- uncharacteristic. I'm terribly sorry as well.

PETER

Well, I don't know what to say. I appreciate you coming clean.

BO HARRIS

Listen -- Sheriff Roberts from down at the station told me y'all had some suspicions about Ryan Stump. You were worried he was trying to run y'all out of town?

PETER

Should he have divulged that?

BO HARRIS

(ignoring)

So I figured it was time to get everyone off on the right foot. Get us together like a neighborhood should.

(then)

We'd like to have everyone over this weekend for a little barbecue. We'll introduce you to neighbors. Show you what this community is all about. Waddya say?

And off that question hanging in the air...

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

A BBQ in full swing. Twenty-five GUESTS, including Ryan and Chastity Stump, and Marsha and Jackson, amble around the expansive but unkempt backyard.

(**Note:** very savvy viewers will spot some of the people from the cold open. They're 20 years older, but still living on Pinyon Street.)

Bo mans a grill, flipping burgers and laughing.

The Danvers-Cho clan arrives. Looks around uncertainly. Bo spots them and gives them a big wave.

BO HARRIS

Peter! Marissa! Get over here!

Lyla taps her dad on the arm.

LYLA

I'm gonna go find Desi.

Peter nods. The adults make their way through the party. Bo greets them with a warm handshake.

BO HARRIS

So glad you could make it!

(gesturing)

Now this is how Pinyon Street does a block party.

Marissa looks around at the group of overweight, older white people eating slaw, mac'n'cheese, burgers, and potato salad. She suppresses a smirk.

MARISSA

It's quite charming. Very, uh, homey.

Bo doesn't clock her condescension. Peter does. Gives her a warning look -- *play nice*.

BO HARRIS

Peter -- beer?

PETER

Sure, why not?

Bo reaches into a cooler and pulls out a Bud Light. Instead of handing it to Peter, he pours it into a "Prince William and Princess Kate Wedding" beer mug.

BO HARRIS

You're the guest of honor. You want the special mug?

PETER

Uh ... sure!

We GO CLOSE on the mug being handed off. Stay close as Peter brings it to his LIPS. Drinks. This weird close-up will make sense later.

BO HARRIS

(then)

Drink for you, Marissa?

MARISSA

I'm fine, thank you, Bo.

BO HARRIS

What about a burger? It's my granddaddy's special marinade.

MARISSA

Oh, I don't eat meat.

BO HARRIS

(pause)

I should've guessed that. Well, don't you worry, there's plenty of fixings for you around here, and the dessert -- Chastity Stump's ice cream cake -- all handmade. You've got to try it.

Marissa's lips thin. She couldn't imagine anything worse.

MARISSA  
That sounds delightful.

CUT TO:

INT. HARRIS HOUSE - DESI'S ROOM - DAY

**CLOSE ON:** Various newspaper clippings dating from the 1930s up to the 1990s. The headlines share a dark theme: **"Newlyweds missing from North Portland" -- "Portland resident feared dead" -- "Where are the Lathams?" -- "No bodies found after police dredge Willamette"**.

PULL BACK and reveal the articles are arrayed on Desi's bed.

Desi shakes his head as Lyla reads one.

DESI  
I can't believe something like this  
was happening right across the  
street and I didn't know it.

Lyla puts down her clipping, shocked and having a tough time processing the info.

LYLA  
How many have there been?

DESI  
At least five, going back to like,  
the twenties. And that's just what  
I could find in the library --  
there was one in 1993, another in  
2006, and now this.

LYLA  
(thinking)  
Every thirteen years. So what do  
you think it means?

DESI  
I don't know. We just have to  
figure out what the woman wants,  
why she's there, why she...

LYLA  
...killed the other people?

Desi doesn't want to voice those fears. Ignores it.

DESI  
There's always a reason for this  
stuff. It's never a random  
haunting.

(MORE)

DESI (CONT'D)  
Spirits don't just terrorize  
people.

(beat)  
...From what I've read.

LYLA  
What have I done?

DESI  
I'on'know. That house was empty for  
as long as I can remember growing  
up. Like ... no one lived there. No  
one played there. Maybe you moved  
in and like ... made it angry.

Lyla looks helpless, hearing all this mumbo-jumbo. Desi  
senses it. Takes her by the hand.

DESI (CONT'D)  
Hey, don't worry. We'll figure this  
out.

(off Lyla's nod)  
In the meantime maybe you and your  
family should stay at a hotel or  
something.

LYLA  
Yeah, like Marissa will give up her  
Insta-dream-house-project.

DESI  
Do you really think it's safe for  
another night?

Before Lyla can answer we hear a faint RINGING from the yard.  
Desi goes to the window.

DESI (CONT'D)  
They're serving cake!

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

Later.

Chastity is serving slices of her ice cream cake to a small  
line of guests. Those who have it are standing around,  
polishing it off with relish.

Lyla downs her portion like a POW. She finishes off the last  
bite. Desi stands next to her, doing the same.

LYLA  
But damn, this is bomb.

DESI

Toldja.

LYLA

I'm gonna put my plate inside --  
want me to take yours?

DESI

Nah, I'm getting seconds.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Even though the party is right outside, inside the house is gloomy and quiet.

The hall is cluttered and claustrophobic. Lyla pads along towers of cardboard boxes labeled "Photos" and "Books" and "Videotapes". Bo is a bit of a hoarder.

As Lyla passes the dining room she sees --

**THROUGH THE DOOR:** The Woman In Black.

Standing at a cabinet full of china. Her back turned to Lyla.

Lyla reels, gripped by fear. She's about to bolt when The Woman In Black turns ...

And it's not T.W.I.B. at all. It was just a PARTY GUEST (40s) with black hair, in a black dress. A trick of the eye.

The Party Guest smiles at Lyla.

PARTY GUEST

Hi, honey.

Lyla takes a beat to recover her words. She blinks, making sure the guest doesn't somehow transform back.

LYLA

...hi.

PARTY GUEST

Whatcha doing inside?

LYLA

I'm just -- putting this plate in  
the sink.

MARSHA (O.S.)

I'll take that for you.

**ANGLE:** Marsha has emerged from the kitchen, hands in sud-covered, bright yellow rubber gloves.

LYLA  
Um, okay. Thank you.

Like Peter's beer mug, we GO CLOSE on Lyla handing off a floral-patterned plate to Marsha.

MARSHA  
Sure thing, dear.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE - YARD - DAY

Later.

Bo, Ryan Stump, Peter, and Marissa stand in their own group. A savvy viewer will note that Marissa hasn't touched her cake. We're in the middle of a Ryan Stump story:

RYAN STUMP  
I told 'em -- I'm not the one in a dress!

Laughter from Bo and Ryan. Polite chuckles from Peter. Marissa is aghast.

BO HARRIS  
Well, Indians are funny people.  
(noticing)  
Marissa, ain't you gonna have a bite of cake?

MARISSA  
I'm not very hungry. All that ... macaroni salad.

RYAN STUMP  
It's my wife's specialty. It'd be nice if you showed your appreciation with a bite.

Marissa looks up. Ryan is staring at her with particular intensity. As are a few of the other guests.

As if everything depends on Marissa trying the cake. It's unsettling.

Peter is worried she's insulting the Stumps. Intervenes:

PETER  
(too cheery)  
It's real good, honey!

Beat. Marissa takes in the stony gazes of the Pinyon Street neighbors.

MARISSA  
Fine. Whatever.

Marissa cuts a bite off and we again GO CLOSE as she brings the ornate bronze fork to her lips.

Ryan Stump seems to relax. The chatter of the other partygoers picks up.

Bo claps Marissa on the back.

BO HARRIS  
So waddya think? Good, no?

Marissa hates it.

MARISSA  
Mmmmmmmmm!

EXT. PINYON STREET - DAY

After the party. Marissa, Peter, and Lyla cross the street to their house. Marissa is very worked up.

MARISSA  
What the hell was that -- making me eat cake!

PETER  
I think they just wanted you to, you know, be a part of the group.

MARISSA  
And you were the "Guest of Honor" and I was just "Marissa". Fucking sexists.

LYLA  
The cake was good.

They get to the front porch. Marissa turns to them, as if she's about to say something serious.

MARISSA  
It's full of transfats.

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Some days later.

Peter is filling out some official looking forms when Lyla enters. She clocks the title: "**Portland Public Schools - Ranked Choice**".

LYLA  
What's that?

Peter keeps filling out the form as he talks:

PETER  
It's for your school next year.  
There's some really good options in  
this part of town. Surprisingly.  
(beat)  
Ninth grade! You're growing up so  
fast.

LYLA  
"Shorter of breath, one day closer  
to death."

PETER  
Please avoid saying such depressing  
things to your dad.

LYLA  
I learned it from your songs.

PETER  
(correcting)  
Albums, kiddo. Pink Floyd did  
albums. One of the great losses for  
your generation is the inability to  
distinguish the difference.

Peter slides the form into a manilla envelope.

PETER (CONT'D)  
Will you take this to the mail box?  
(bribing)  
I'll order pizza later. We won't  
tell Marissa.

EXT. PINYON STREET - DAY

Moments later.

Lyla drops the manilla envelope into the mailbox, lets the  
slot slam shut with a satisfying CLANG!

She turns and starts walking back to the house.

**UNKNOWN POV:** we watch as Lyla continues her little trek. And  
then we start to follow her. Slowly. Methodically. We hear  
the RUSTLE of clothes as we walk -- a woman's dress perhaps?

Lyla continues walking, blissfully unaware. Pinyon is utterly empty. No one out walking their dogs. No kids playing in the street.

**UNKNOWN POV:** We get closer and closer to Lyla.

She still doesn't notice.

**UNKNOWN POV:** We're within touching distance now as we hear the strange SCRATCHING noise and with that Lyla turns...

...and SCREAMS, seeing **The Woman In Black** right behind her!

She hoofs it hard down the street, burning up pavement.

T.W.I.B. moves like a damn arachnid, taking long, shuddering steps on long, spindly legs. And with each step, she leaves a trail of writhing bugs on the ground behind her.

Even though Lyla is running, she doesn't seem to be losing any ground.

Terrified, Lyla looks ahead. She's almost home. She sprints through the yard, knocking over one of Marissa's succulents, reaches for her keys, but drops it! *Fuck*.

She glances back -- bad idea. The woman is entering the yard. She scrambles for her keys, picks it up and turns the lock --

INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Lyla SLAMS the door shut and leans against it, panting.

Peter emerges from the kitchen, his face etched with concern.

PETER

Lyla, what's wrong?

LYLA

There's, uh --

Before she can finish, Marissa appears from within the kitchen as well.

PETER

There's a what?

Lyla looks through the eye-hole: the yard is empty.

Lyla doesn't know what to say. *Is she going crazy? Is this real?*

LYLA

A dog. It chased me.

Peter crouches down. Gives his daughter a hug.

PETER

Oh, honey. I'm so sorry.

Marissa shakes her head.

MARISSA

These people are reckless. Who keeps a dog off-leash? It can kill, you know.

And off Lyla, still breathing heavily...

INT. THE HOUSE - LYLA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Moments later.

Lyla lies on her bed, staring up at the ceiling. Trying to calm herself down by breathing in and out.

She's genuinely frightened. Half afraid of the woman, half paranoid her sanity is slipping.

And just as she's breathed herself into a semi-calmer state...

**LOW ANGLE ON:** The closet door. It opens SILENTLY. For a moment all we can see are the bottoms of pants and dresses. And then the clothes give way and out come one of T.W.I.B.'s feet -- blackened with filth and grime, accompanied by its usual retinue of creepy-crawlies. Disgusting.

Lyla glances up, having heard something.

**T.W.I.B.** takes another step.

Lyla's eyes go wide as dinner saucers.

**T.W.I.B.** is right there. Eyeless face gazing directly at Lyla. A few feet away.

But Lyla doesn't run this time. There's some courage left in her.

LYLA

What do you want with me?

Instead of responding, the woman opens her mouth. In the place of normal teeth are long, slender blades -- like the teeth of an angler fish. No tongue. And worst of all, crawling out of this horrible maw is a gaggle of centipedes.

Lyla's courage evaporates. She tries to run --

But one of T.W.I.B.'s long, slender arms SHOOTs OUT and grabs Lyla by the hair.

She cries out in pain as...

**CLOSE:** Her hair TEARS at the root, near the temple.

The hair RIPS out as Lyla breaks free -- but she stumbles in the process, and T.W.I.B. grabs onto her ankle.

We're CLOSE on Lyla's terrified face, tears streaming down her cheeks, bleeding from her temple, mouth open in a rictus of horror as she is dragged back toward the monster and...

INT. THE HOUSE - LYLA'S ROOM - DAY

Lyla SLAMS up, covered in sweat.

It was a dream.

She gets out of bed. Goes to the closet and throws open the door. She rifles through the dresses, the hanging pants -- just to be sure. There's nothing there.

Lyla smiles, suddenly relieved. She falls back on her bed. But her smile is short-lived.

Because when she touches the side of her head, she brings back her finger, wet with blood.

And off this we hear:

PETER (PRE-LAP)  
A woman did this?

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Peter is dabbing a cotton ball with rubbing alcohol. Marissa looks on skeptically. She doesn't like what she's been hearing.

Lyla nods in response to his question. Peter dabs at the hair; she fidgets.

PETER  
Hold still.

LYLA  
I know it all sounds ...

MARISSA  
...fantastical.

LYLA

But this woman, or thing, I've seen her twice now. Remember when I saw someone out on the porch and freaked out?

(off Peter's nod)

That was her. And now today ... I was having this dream, and she was in it.

MARISSA

So it was a dream.

Peter glances Marissa's way -- *let her talk.*

LYLA

And when I woke up, my hair was pulled out. Just like it was in the dream.

Peter stares at his daughter, worried.

PETER

What does she look like?

Marissa leans back against the door jamb, exasperated that he's indulging Lyla.

LYLA

She's dressed in black. She has ... long nails. Like, overgrown. And no eyes. It's just skin. And her teeth...

(shudders)

They're like knives.

Lyla looks at her dad, scared now that's she's voiced it. Somehow it's become more real.

LYLA (CONT'D)

Dad, Desi found things out about this house. People disappear from here -- it's not safe.

(then)

I don't want to be here anymore.

Peter nods. Hugs his daughter tight.

Over her shoulder, he sees Marissa giving him a look -- *I told you this would happen.*

EXT. PINYON STREET - DAY

A bit later.

Lyla emerges from the house and heads over to the Harris residence.

**ANGLE:** on a bay window in the living room where...

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

....Peter and Marissa watch Lyla cross. Peter turns to his wife.

PETER

It'll be good for her to hang out with her friend. Clear her head.

Marissa judges him silently.

PETER (CONT'D)

What?

MARISSA

It's exactly what I told you -- she's manipulating us with these fears, and visions.

PETER

You don't think it's alarming!?

MARISSA

I think she's making it up!

PETER

Lyla wouldn't lie. And Desi -- what about these disappearances?

MARISSA

Desi is the 12 year-old son of some illiterate Sam's Club member! And Lyla -- face it, Peter: she's a brat! She'd happily lie to get her way.

Peter glares. He's a placid guy on the surface, but there's anger beneath. Marissa quickly retreats --

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Fine, then let's assume she's not lying. Let's assume I'm wrong. What do we do now? We've finally settled into the house I've spent weeks and weeks slaving over, the neighbors don't hate us -- and you want to leave? Because your daughter -- your *almost teenage* daughter -- is seeing a monster in her closet?

(MORE)

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Because her on-the-spectrum friend  
thinks our house is haunted?

Peter is a bit brow-beaten here. He knows Marissa is right,  
intellectually, but in his gut he's siding with Lyla.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

If we agree that's out of the  
question, then Lyla needs to go see  
somebody.

Peter doesn't like it. Marissa softens her tone here --

MARISSA (CONT'D)

She's your little girl. She needs  
help, not indulgence. She's  
hallucinating. It's not normal,  
even after a big change.

Peter hesitates, then nods in agreement.

PETER

I'll look into some names. See  
who's on our network.

Marissa nods. Happy Peter has been won over to her side. And  
off her giving him a tender kiss...

LYLA (PRE-LAP)

And now she's in my fucking dreams!

INT. HARRIS HOUSE - DESI'S ROOM - DAY

Lyla sits on Desi's bed, drinking a Diet Coke. Desi is  
listening to the tail-end of her story:

LYLA

You know what I used to love more  
than anything? Sleep. I slept like  
a baby. Every night, no dreams, no  
nightmares, definitely no shit that  
messes with me in the real world.

(beat)

I swear to God, if this monster  
ruins sleep for me, I'm gonna punch  
her fucking tits off.

Desi is thinking it over:

DESI

It could be a spirit. There's  
plenty in folklore that cross over.  
*Baku* in Japan. Of course, *incubi* in  
Western demonology.

Lyla shakes her head. Can't believe this is happening to her.

LYLA

This whole move has been fucked -- ever since we drove up here. The dead rabbit, the fucked up room in the basement, then the blood on the door.

Desi does a double-take. His memory jotted by something.

DESI

What did you say?

LYLA

I told you about the basement, with the weird crawly door --

DESI

No, about the rabbit.

Lyla doesn't know where this is going. Shrugs.

LYLA

Oh, I dunno. I found a dead rabbit the first morning here. Torn up. It had been got by a coyote, I think.  
(then)  
Why do you look like you're taking a shit?

Desi does, in fact, look a bit constipated. But in truth, his gears are turning.

DESI

Where did you find it?

LYLA

The back of the house. Why?

And off Desi, making a connection...

### **MOMENTS LATER**

A YOUTUBE VIDEO fills the screen:

A STREAMER, male, skinny, early twenties, gelled blue hair and in an Iron Maiden shirt, addresses the camera:

NORM NOT NORMIE

Ay, waddup!! It's your boy Norm Not Normie here and you're watching "Astral Frequencies & Paranormal Beasties".

Norm "Not Normie" sits in a room similar to Desi's -- ferret skeletons in bell jars, dreamcatchers dangle from windowsills, pentagrams adorn the walls.

The video is edited in the meth-addled, jump-cut style so beloved by YouTubers.

NORM NOT NORMIE (CONT'D)

Today we're going to be talking about one of my absolute favorite Dukes of Hell ... The Liiiiiiiittle Maiiiiiidennnnnnn!

Obnoxious DJ airhorns BLARE. Despite the subject matter, Norm speaks in the relentlessly peppy, cheerful style of all YouTube hosts.

NORM NOT NORMIE (CONT'D)

I'm excited to dive in, but first, if you love this content as much as I do, please like and subscribe!

**IN DESI'S ROOM:** Lyla and Desi watch this ridiculous video. She turns to Desi, not quite believing what she's seeing.

LYLA

I can't believe there's a YouTube channel for this.

DESI

Keep watching. I'm pretty sure this is it.

And off this...

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

**THROUGH THE OVEN:** Marissa checks in on some BREAD PUDDING she's baking in a teal pan.

She smiles, removes it from the oven and takes a big whiff.

She snaps a picture of the bread pudding on her phone, posts to Instagram, and then plugs in her phone to the outlet.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - BATHROOM - DAY

Peter shaves in the mirror. He's meticulous. Even number of strokes for each cheek.

Marissa enters the bedroom from the hallway. Pokes her head in the door.

MARISSA

I made some bread pudding. The recipe is from The Food Lab!  
(fishing for compliment)  
Doesn't it smell good?

Peter stares ahead, still shaving.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

PETER

I was just thinking -- none of this was happening in San Francisco. With Lyla --

MARISSA

She was plenty snotty there, too.

Peter finishes shaving. Washes off and heads into...

INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

...the bedroom, where he goes to his closet. Pulls on a sweater. He turns to Marissa.

PETER

Yeah, she's been fussy, but you haven't been great at extending the olive branch.

MARISSA

Excuse me? I've tried to bond with her plenty of times! I invited her to the Dan Hoyle one-man show, the lecture on vegetarianism and climate change at the De Young --

PETER

That's not what I mean.

MARISSA

What do you mean?

PETER

We're getting off topic. I only meant -- if all it takes to end this is moving back, why wouldn't we? I can get a job somewhere else.

MARISSA

Peter, your new job is a big deal. You're a founder now!

PETER

Of the Portland office. We have 28  
around the world.

MARISSA

How is it going to look if you just  
leave?

Peter bites his lip, thinking. And then, realizing it as he  
says it out loud:

PETER

I guess it looks like I don't care.  
And I don't.

Marissa isn't used to this. Usually Peter just rolls over.

But Peter is set on it. Without another word, he exits  
into...

INT. THE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

...the hallway. He makes for the staircase. Marissa follows.

MARISSA

Hey! This is a serious  
conversation, Peter. You can't just  
walk away.

PETER

I'm choosing my daughter over my  
career, Marissa. Is that so hard --

We'll never know what Peter is about to say next, because the  
door to the Lyla's bedroom BURSTS OPEN and in SHUDDERING  
ARACHNID STEPS comes ... The Woman In Black.

The monster gives no warning this time. No scratching. No low  
wail. There's not enough time for Marissa to scream as  
T.W.I.B. lashes out with a one of her filth-covered claws and  
grips Peter's shirt and drags him toward ...

**ANGLE:** That awful, bug-filled maw. Saliva and beetles and  
gristle of some unfortunate souls dangle from the long thin  
teeth like a cannibal's Christmas tree.

Now Marissa screams. Peter screams. Hell, if you're in the  
audience, you're probably screaming.

Peter pulls away desperately but...

Those disgusting, rotted, monstrous teeth draw closer...

T.W.I.B.'s vise-like grip on the collar of his shirt is too strong...

He's inches away from her kisser when...

Peter's shirt collar RIPS and he goes TUMBLING down the flight of stairs. There's a nasty CRACK as he hits the landing.

Peter cries out in agony. He reaches for his ankle, which is twisted at a highly improbably angle. It's definitely broken.

He looks up at the top of the staircase ... and T.W.I.B. is gone. In her place is ...

Marissa. She stands at the top of the stairs, a shocked look on her face.

Neither of them quite knows if what just happened, happened.

PETER (CONT'D)  
...did you see that?

MARISSA  
...I don't know.

Peter looks down at his shirt collar. It is unbroken.

CUT TO:

INT. HARRIS HOUSE - DESI'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

**ON SCREEN:** We're back to "Norm Not Normie" and his video on "The Little Maiden".

NORM NOT NORMIE  
So! One of the reasons I love "The Little Maiden" is she's actually a helpful demon. You summon her, and she protects you from invasion, harm, and exile for thirteen years! Which, if you know anything about demons, is really good bang for your buck.

Various old time-y WOOD ENGRAVING images of T.W.I.B. slaughtering KNIGHTS and SARACENS flash across the screen.

**IN DESI'S ROOM:** Desi and Lyla keep watching.

LYLA  
That's her! That's who I keep seeing!

She's excited by the breakthrough -- finally, some answers. Desi is not smiling. Lyla clocks this:

LYLA (CONT'D)  
 This is good, right? Now we can  
 like, stop it or whatever?  
 (then, realizing)  
 Why isn't this good?

As if to answer, we go **BACK TO THE YOUTUBE VIDEO:**

NORM NOT NORMIE  
 Now, she does this with some  
 methods that wouldn't exactly be  
 endorsed by Mr. Rogers, but more on  
 that later. First, let's find out  
 how it works!

Another DJ airhorn BLARES as a badly animated **title card** zooms across the screen: "The Summoning!"

NORM NOT NORMIE (CONT'D)  
 Summoning The Little Maiden is a  
 four part-process. First, you  
 invite your enemies to parley under  
 a banner of truce, which, *spoiler*,  
 is bullshit. Then, you mark the  
 north and southern bounds of the  
 site with the blood of an animal  
 and your own blood.

VARIOUS illustrations of the ritual POP UP as he talks.

NORM NOT NORMIE (CONT'D)  
 Now, at each step of the summoning,  
 the Maiden's grip on our plane  
 grows stronger, so it's better to  
 do the whole process as quickly as  
 you can, as you don't want to deal  
 with a half-summoned Maiden --  
 she's known to use teeth!

An ILLUSTRATION of the Maiden's terrifying chompers POPS UP and we hear a RIMSHOT at this intentionally bad joke.

NORM NOT NORMIE (CONT'D)  
 Now that last part is where things  
 get tricky. You need to collect the  
 essence of your enemies -- DNA,  
 basically. Why? Because that's how  
 the Little Maiden knows who is  
 friend and who is foe.

**IN DESI'S ROOM:** Lyla turns to Desi, the gravity of the situation dawning on her.

LYLA

So someone is summoning her ...  
because they think my family's a  
"foe".

Desi nods gravely.

LYLA (CONT'D)

(beat)

What does the Maiden do to foes?

And off this question, hanging in the air...

INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Peter, using the handrail and Marissa as support, tries to rise.

MARISSA

Come on, we'll get you to the car  
and take you to the ER.

Peter pulls himself up gingerly. Takes a step down -- and then falls! Pain shoots through him -- he screams, grabbing his messed up ankle.

PETER

FUCK!

MARISSA

I'll just call 911.

PETER

No, I can make it. Just give me a  
minute.

As Peter sits on the stairs, collecting himself, we hear an old folksy VOICE:

BO HARRIS (O.S.)

Is everything all right?

Marissa opens the door. It's their friendly neighbor Bo.

He looks past Marissa. Sees Peter seated on the floor in obvious pain.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)

I was passing by and heard  
hollerin'. Wanted to make sure you  
all were fine.

MARISSA

Peter fell down the stairs.

BO HARRIS

Oh, that doesn't sound too good --  
mind if I come in and check it out?

MARISSA

(nods)

Can you dial the hospital -- have  
them send an ambulance?

Bo enters the house. Comes over and crouches by the ankle.

PETER

Marissa, I can make it to the car.

BO HARRIS

You never want to be too careful  
with bones, Pete. An acquaintance  
of my brother sprained his ankle  
years back, never went to see a  
doctor. Fifteen years later, he had  
to get it amputated. Turns out he  
was grinding down the joint the  
whole time, and one day his foot  
just quit on him.

Marissa has grown impatient.

MARISSA

Bo, the hospital?

Bo fake slaps his forehead -- *duh*.

BO HARRIS

I'll get right on that.

Bo produces his cell phone. Dials and heads into the kitchen.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)

(to phone)

Yeah, I'm at the Cho residence --

MARISSA

Danvers-Cho!

Bo ignores this.

BO HARRIS

We've had a bit of an accident.

Bo wanders out of earshot. Peter glares at Marissa.

MARISSA  
What? You wanted me to just let you  
limp over to the car?

CUT TO:

INT. HARRIS HOUSE - DESI'S ROOM - DAY

The video is over.

We don't fully know what Lyla and Desi have seen, but they're both speechless.

After a beat, Lyla gathers her wits:

LYLA  
We have to show this to my Dad.  
It's all there -- he'll believe me.

And off Desi's nod...

INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Marissa pops open a La Croix. Hands it to Peter. In the background we can hear the murmur of Bo talking to the 911 operator.

MARISSA  
How are you feeling?

Peter taps his ankle experimentally.

PETER  
It doesn't hurt.

MARISSA  
That's not good. If it hurts, it means it's not broken. If it doesn't, your body is flooding you with adrenaline to dull the pain.

Peter looks down at his un-ripped shirt. Back up to Marissa.

PETER  
You saw it, right? That ... thing?

MARISSA  
I don't know. I think I did, but it was only a second.

PETER  
It was just what Lyla described.

At this, Bo's voice grows louder and we catch the tail-end of the call. As he re-enters:

BO HARRIS  
That's right, 48 North Pinyon. P-I-  
N-Y-O-N. Please hurry.  
(beat)  
Thank you, God bless.

Bo hangs up. Smiles cheerfully.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)  
They're on their way. I'll keep you  
company while you wait.

Bo looks around the foyer admiringly. He nods with his head back to the kitchen.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)  
You know, when I was on the phone,  
I couldn't help but admire what  
you've done with the place. Subway  
tile back splash in the kitchen.  
Recessed lighting. The fence --  
it's all so tasteful.

Marissa isn't really paying attention. She's tending to Peter's ankle.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)  
Did you hear what I said?

MARISSA  
I'm sorry -- what was that?

BO HARRIS  
That's one of the problems with  
people like you. You never listen.  
Even when it's for your benefit.

Bo says all of this with a smile, which makes it very disarming.

MARISSA  
Excuse me?

BO HARRIS  
I said, I admire the improvements  
you made to the house.

Peter is sweating profusely. He mops his brow.

PETER  
Thank you, Bo.

BO HARRIS

'Course there's been more than a king's share of people who've moved into this house over the years. And they've all brought their own style. Added personal touches. And one by one, after they move on, we always restore her to her former glory. We'll do the same thing once you leave.

His tone is still sunny as ever, but by now Marissa and Peter realize that something is wrong.

MARISSA

Bo ... who says we're going anywhere?

Bo doesn't say anything. He just smiles at them. Smiles and smiles and smiles. It's incredibly unsettling.

Now freshly terrified, Marissa tries to help Peter up --

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Come on, Peter. You're in too much pain. We're going to drive to the hospital after all.

Very nonchalantly Bo pulls out a .357 REVOLVER from his belt loop. Aims it at Marissa's head.

BO HARRIS

Sit down, bitch. You ain't going anywhere.

EXT. PINYON STREET - DAY

Desi and Lyla exit from the Harris house and cross the street at a quick walk. They enter the front yard, crushing one of Marissa's perfect plants.

Then approach the door, which they now notice is open.

Desi and Lyla exchange an uneasy look. They pad forward cautiously, entering...

INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

...and see nothing. Marissa and Peter and Bo are no longer there. *Has the T.W.I.B. taken them? We'll see.*

Lyla hears some faint noise coming from the kitchen.

BO HARRIS (O.S.)  
Oh, I can't wait to try this...

She motions to it. She and Desi push open the door and see...

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A strange, horrific tableaux.

Five people in the same Haz-Mat suits as the cold open -- Bo, Ryan, Chastity, Marsha and her son Jackson -- sit around the kitchen island eating Marissa's bread pudding.

Leaning up against the island like an umbrella is **12-gauge shotgun**.

Gagged and duct-taped to a pair of chairs are Peter and Marissa. Their wide eyes scream silently as they see the children enter.

Bo is bringing a bite up to his mouth when he hears a noise. Sees the two kids in the doorway.

DESI  
Dad?

A long beat.

BO HARRIS  
Son, we're going to need to have a talk.

At this, Ryan Stump puts down his spoon and picks up a tranquilizer gun that's been sitting on the kitchen table.

He shoots Lyla. The dart buries itself in her thigh.

He shoots Desi.

Lyla pulls out the dart just before losing consciousness, taking us to...

**BLACK.**

Over which we hear MUFFLED CONVERSATION.

Then we FADE IN on a **GAUZY, BLURRY POV** that gradually gains focus and becomes...

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Two men in Haz-Mat suits having a heated conversation before us. It takes us a minute to realize it's Bo and Jackson.

JACKSON  
 ...it's kinda brutal, Bo.

Our POV moves around and finds Marissa and Peter next to us, bound to their chairs with rope, mouths stuffed with dish rags and bound with duct tape.

We're in Lyla's POV. We turn back to Jackson and Bo. A look of anguish and guilt on the younger man's face.

BO HARRIS  
 You wanted to take part in your first ritual, this is what it is!

JACKSON  
 I thought it was just the parents -- she's a little girl -- she hasn't done anything --

Bo claps Jackson on the shoulder. *Buck up.*

BO HARRIS  
 I know it ain't easy. It wasn't my first time. But trust me. This is the only way -- the goddess needs three victims.

Jackson is having a hard time coming to grips with this.

JACKSON  
 We can't find ... I don't know, someone else?

BO HARRIS  
 It's for the community, Jackson. You see that, don't you?

Jackson hesitates a beat, very torn. Then he nods.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)  
 Good. Take the generator to the basement. Make sure the lights are on.

Jackson exits.

Bo clocks Lyla watching this conversation. He gets down in her (our) face.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)  
 I'm sorry, Lyla. I actually liked you. This'll all be over soon.

And off this, our POV once again **FADES TO BLACK.**

Beat. Then we hear Marissa's SCREAM:

MARISSA (O.S.)  
This is trespassing!

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Later. Lyla's eyes SLAM OPEN as she comes out from under sedation. Peter and Marissa have been ungagged.

BO HARRIS (O.C.)  
I know, and it's actually a lot more crimes than trespassing. There's false imprisonment, maybe battery, and capital murder.

Joining Bo in the room are Ryan and Chastity, Marsha and Jackson. Faces cold and detached behind their YELLOW FACEPLATES of their gas masks.

Except for Jackson. His eyes shift back and forth nervously.

PETER  
What is this? Why are you doing this?

Bo pulls up an ottoman. Sits right opposite them, like he's delivering a fireside chat.

BO HARRIS  
But our laws are funny. It's illegal to set off fireworks, but if you move into a neighborhood and chase away everyone who lived there, it's called progress.  
(then)  
We decided we weren't going to let that happen here.

PETER  
Jesus Christ -- if you don't want us here, we'll move!

BO HARRIS  
It's much bigger than just you, Pete. In every city, every town, you see the same thing. Rich come in, poor go out. It's been happening in this town since the 30s when the timber industry collapsed. Well, we figured out a way to stop all that.

PETER

So why ... what will killing us do?

Bo gives them an astonished look. A fat, crooked grin spreads across his face.

BO HARRIS

Sorry, folks! I didn't mean to scare you! We're not going to kill you -- we're going to sacrifice you to the Goddess.

MARISSA

...the Goddess?

BO HARRIS

She's our protector. She makes sure our neighborhood stays just the way it is. But she has *demands*. She has *needs*.

PETER

This is fucking nuts.

BO HARRIS

Every thirteen years, she calls for blood.

PETER

You're sacrificing us because we're gentrifiers?

BO HARRIS

Hell no! We're sacrificing you so we don't get any gentrifiers!

MARISSA

... this is crazy ... you can't do this... it's impossible ...

BO HARRIS

We're sacrificing you to SAVE the neighborhood, don't you get it!?

The cultists murmur in assent.

RYAN STUMP

Bo, we've wasted enough time. Let's get this show on the road.

BO HARRIS

(nodding)

You're right.

(MORE)

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)  
 Chastity, Ryan -- you keep an eye  
 on the proceedings up here.  
 (then)  
 Marsha 'n' Jackson 'n' I'll start  
 with the bitch. I've heard enough  
 of her yapping to last a lifetime.

Jackson and Bo grab Marissa. Brace her and force-walk her out  
 of the room.

MARISSA  
 Heeellllp!! HEEELLPP!!!!

The cultists chuckle.

BO HARRIS  
 Holler all you want. The whole  
 neighborhood is in on it.

Marissa blubbers and screams as the cultists drag her away.

PETER  
 No, take m--

Peter struggles against his bonds. Gets CRACKED on the temple  
 by the butt of Ryan's shotgun for his troubles.

Lyla cries tears of rage, seeing her dad get hit.

Chastity and Ryan watch her squirm for a beat, then trade  
 glances -- *dumb yuppies*.

CHASTITY STUMP  
 Check on the boy. I got these two  
 here just fine.

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Desi lies on the kitchen floor, bound at his ankles, wrists  
 behind his back secured by duct tape. Out cold.

Ryan enters. Gives the boy a glance, then notices the small  
 kitchen TV. He grabs the remote and settles into a chair.  
 Flips through a few channels until he finds --

*Wendy Williams?* That's right. Ryan is a fan of daytime t.v.

He gives another look to Desi, then turns it up to a LOUD  
 VOLUME (he's old).

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - SUB-BASEMENT - NIGHT

The sub-basement is utterly transformed.

Work lights on bright yellow tripods have been set up in the corners, powered by the generator. They illuminate the walls, which are covered in freshly painted SYMBOLS.

In the middle of the room, at the base of the wooden pole, is a **black wooden box** filled with ash.

Bo and Jackson and Marsha arrive with Marissa. They shove her towards the pole and start to tie her up.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Desi's eyes flicker open to the sound of the *Wendy Williams* studio audience clapping along to some point that the host has just made.

It takes him a moment for him to come to his senses and clock Ryan Stump watching the TV.

WENDY WILLIAMS (ON TV)  
*Now you all know the actor Ryan  
 Gosling --*

Ryan nods like he's in the audience.

RYAN STUMP  
 Good actor. Very good actor.

Seeing Ryan is distracted, Desi sits up silently and scoots over to a cabinet.

He sits with his back against the corner of the cabinet and runs his wrists up and down along the edge.

**CLOSE:** The tape begins to abrade.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - SUB-BASEMENT - NIGHT

The CAMERA circles around THREE CULTISTS as they chant in an hushed, ELDRITCH TONGUE.

At the center of that circle, bound to the pole with leather straps around the neck and waist and legs is Marissa. Bug-eyed with fear. Sweating madly.

Bo is the master of ceremonies. He stands above the box holding a vial of blood.

BO HARRIS

Oh Maiden, accept essence of your  
supplicant, willingly offered.

Bo pours the vial of blood into the box. It seems to rock and shake as the chanting grows louder.

Bo pulls out a match. Strikes it.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)

Oh Maiden, accept fire to bind our  
covenant.

He drops the match into the black box. Something in it catches fire.

The chanting grows louder.

Bo retrieves a gold fork in a plastic baggie.

**CLOSE:** There are some crumbs on it. We might remember it as the fork Marissa used during the barbecue.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)

Oh Maiden, accept essence of your  
sacrifice, unknowingly taken.

The chanting grows louder.

Bo drops the fork in the black box.

All chanting stops. There is silence.

Suddenly the box emits that eerie wailing.

Marissa's eyes dart from side to side, horrified.

The wailing increases in volume, growing louder and more terrifying and as the CAMERA circles the cultists we WIPE FRAME with one of their heads and when we come out the other side...

THE LITTLE MAIDEN looms before Marissa, somehow larger than we've seen her before. She sniffs. SNIFFS. A blind hunter searching out its prey.

The chanting resumes, minus a voice.

**ANGLE:** Jackson is speechless by his first sight of the Maiden. A combination of awe and terror.

MARISSA

You're not real. None of this is real.

The Maiden draws nearer. SNIFFING.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Peter's shirt didn't rip. You can't hurt me.

Marissa raises her hand to the Maiden. She wants to touch the Maiden. Prove that she's an illusion.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

You're just a vision. Y--

Sniff.

Then the Maiden's jaw comes unhinged like an viper's and in one motion bites off Marissa's hands! Marissa SHRIEKS as the Maiden's mouth tears away, revealing bloody stumps.

Bo and Marsha look on passively as Marissa screams.

Jackson is aghast by the blood and carnage, looking like he might puke. As if the brutality of their actions suddenly make him a normal young man, not an evil cultist.

The Maiden finishes chewing the hands and turns her attention to Marissa again. The Maiden opens her terrible maw and...

Jackson turns his face away from the horrible spectacle, unable to bear looking any longer.

And off Bo and Marissa, looking on stoically as we hear TEARING OF FLESH and SCREAMS of Marissa...

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Peter and Lyla sit next to a third, empty chair. Chastity Stump sits across from them.

Marissa's faint SHRIEKS are audible from downstairs.

PETER

Please. You don't have to do this --

CHASTITY STUMP

D'you think we like doing what we do? You think we get off on it? This is about survival, idiot.

PETER

You can let Lyla go. She's a kid --

CHASTITY STUMP

You really don't understand, do you?

LYLA

I understand you're a fucking cunt.

Chastity is taken aback by Lyla's fierceness. She's about to retort when they hear a final SCREAM from downstairs.

She leers down at Peter. Nods in the direction of the sound.

CHASTITY STUMP

I'd tell you to raise your children better, but in a few minutes that won't matter, now will it?

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

THRWAAAAP! Desi saws through the final sinew of duct tape using the cabinet corner.

**CLOSE:** Ryan is totally oblivious. He claps along with audience. The TV glowing in his eyes. Until --

His body CONVULSES -- eyes rolling in their sockets -- and he SLUMPS out of the chair, revealing A KITCHEN KNIFE in his back...

...and Desi standing behind him, the assassin. He's breathing hard, trembling. His nerves wracked.

Beneath him, blood pools and drips out of Ryan's Hazmat suit.

Then he hears his dad's booming voice getting louder, off which we go to...

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Peter and Lyla watch as Bo and the cultists enter. To their horror, the Hazmat suits are flecked with blood.

Jackson looks shell-shocked, but Bo moves around like a foreman at a construction site.

BO HARRIS

All right, one down, two to go.  
Let's do Peter next and get on outta here.

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Crouching by the kitchen door, Desi listens to dad. Heart hammering in his chest.

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As the cultists untie Peter, he turns to Lyla, face stricken with panic.

PETER

Whatever happens, I love you.

Tears shine in Lyla's eyes but her voice doesn't break.

LYLA

I love you too, Dad.

The cultists grab Peter's arms and stand him up. He winces as they force-march him out of the room, pain shooting through his broken ankle.

LYLA (CONT'D)

Dad --

And now Lyla's voice does break as her Dad disappears from view. Now the tears stream freely down her face.

Chastity sneers.

CHASTITY STUMP

You cry, only now thinking of other people. But for your whole lives, you think nothing of others. Nothing of people like me. Like my family.

Chastity looms over Lyla, dominating the frame.

CHASTITY STUMP (CONT'D)

Just be honest, you hate us just as much as we hate you. Maybe more. But--

**CLOSE:** A hand gripping an Amazon Alexa.

**ANGLE:** Desi SMASHES the Alexa on top of the woman's head. She goes down in a heap, groaning.

CHASTITY STUMP (CONT'D)

Motherfucker.

The illuminated ring at the top of the Alexa BLINKS.

ALEXA

*I'm sorry. My mother always taught me not to use curse words.*

Chastity Stump continues to writhe in pain --

CHASTITY STUMP  
Stupid fucking yuppie shit --

ALEXA  
*I'm sorry if I disappointed you in any way. You have a right to be angry.*

Desi brings the Alexa down on Chastity again, knocking her out. He then goes to Lyla and undoes her bonds. When they're free she hugs him.

He takes her by the hand.

DESI  
We have to go.

Lyla doesn't move with him. Pulls her hand away.

LYLA  
I can't leave my dad.

DESI  
There's three people down there.  
Plus the Maiden!

LYLA  
I know, I just can't.

DESI  
This isn't a game, Lyla. We can't  
just shoot them all!

Lyla thinks for a beat, then:

LYLA  
Why not?

And off Desi, wondering what she means...

INT. THE HOUSE - SUB-BASEMENT - NIGHT

Mid-ritual. The floor of the basement is now SLATHERED in fresh blood. The Maiden is not a neat eater.

She stands next to Peter, head bowed. Like a robot who has been powered off.

Peter is strapped to the column and gagged at the mouth. The cultists are in a semi-circle around him, backs to the door.

Bo brandishes the Prince William and Princess Kate beer mug that Peter drank from at the barbecue.

He leers at Peter through the yellow face-plate.

BO HARRIS

When you get to the next life and  
people ask what happened, just tell  
'em you had one drink too many!

Bo laughs very hard at his own joke. Jackson does not.

Then, suddenly gaining solemnity, Bo hoists up the mug as if  
to throw it into the box:

LYLA (O.S.)

Hey, fuck sticks!

The cultists turn and see Lyla and Desi standing at the  
entrance to the room.

In Lyla's hands is the **12-gauge pump-action**.

LYLA (CONT'D)

Here's what's gonna happen: you  
untie my dad, or I'm gonna blow  
your fucking heads off. How's that  
sound?

Nobody moves for a beat. A standoff.

Then Bo turns to Desi.

BO HARRIS

I don't know, son. How does that  
sound to you -- your dad dead?

DESI

Just do what she says, Dad. No one  
else needs to get hurt.

Bo trades looks with Jackson, the cultist nearest to Lyla.

Jackson nods imperceptibly.

BO HARRIS

Son, we're doing this for you,  
don't you understand? It's for the  
future generations. So a Harris can  
always live on Pinyon Street.

Lyla clocks Bo edging closer.

LYLA

Back up.

BO HARRIS  
 (re: gun)  
 Do you even know how to use that  
 thing?

Lyla pumps the action bar back. Aims it. *Yeah, she does.*

LYLA  
*Call of Duty, bitch.*

Desi glances back and forth between Lyla and his dad...

BO HARRIS  
 You're not gonna shoot anyone,  
 Lyla.  
 (then)  
 Jackson, take that gun off her.

Lyla aims the gun at Jackson.

Jackson doesn't move.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)  
 Jackson, I said take the gun!

Jackson still doesn't move. He can't bring himself to.

And Bo senses this. With a look of disgust he dives at Lyla --

She turns the gun on him but he's too fast -- he tackles her  
 and as the gun hits the ground --

**BLAM!**

Martha's head EXPLODES in a mist of blood and brain matter!

Jackson's face twists from disbelief to anguish to spitting  
 rage.

JACKSON  
 Mom!

Seemingly gone mad, tears streaming down his face, he  
 scampers across the ground for the shotgun. Picks it up and  
 with a snarl, aims at Lyla --

**DESI** impulsively rushes Jackson --

**JACKSON** sees him coming. Swings the butt of the shotgun into  
 Desi's jaw --

**EXTRA CLOSE:** A tooth flies out of Desi's mouth, soars through  
 the air ... and lands in the Maiden's box.

*Oh, fuck.*

**ANGLE:** The Maiden slowly raises her head, as if activated by the tooth.

We CRASH ZOOM on Bo, still on the ground, as he realizes what's happened.

BO HARRIS

Oh, no.

Everyone stops their various struggles.

Lyla on the ground. Jackson standing above with his gun. Desi clutching his jaw. Peter bound to the pole.

The Maiden sniffs the air for the scent, then turns onto Desi like he's a homing beacon.

As she moves toward him...

**ANGLE:** Bo is horrified for his son. Horrified that it could all go so wrong. He pulls his pistol out of his pocket and UNLOADS all six shots into the Maiden.

She absorbs the bullets like they're drops of water.

And just as the Maiden draws near to Desi, lying helplessly near Jackson and Lyla...

**ANGLE:** Lyla reaches up and RIPS Jackson's fake diamond earring from his lobe.

Jackson grabs at his bleeding ear in pain:

JACKSON

Arrgghhhhhh!

Lyla tosses the earring in the box. Two points!

The Maiden stops reaching for Desi. Turns to Jackson.

Grimacing, Jackson aims the gun at Lyla --

**ANGLE ON:** Lyla's face as it is suddenly DOUSED with blood.

The Little Maiden has bitten Jackson's head off. His carotid arteries pump out blood at a healthy 60 beats per minute, and then his headless corpse slumps off Lyla.

Desi and Lyla rise as the Maiden NOISILY devours Jackson o.s.

Bo is apparently devastated by what's happened.

BO HARRIS  
 (muttering to himself)  
 It wasn't supposed to be like this,  
 it wasn't supposed to be like  
 this...

Finished with Jackson, the Maiden rises and turns slowly to Desi.

The young man immediately realizes what's happened:

DESI  
 The Maiden needs three -- my tooth  
 ... it's still in the box...

The Maiden takes one of her lurching steps toward Desi.

LYLA  
 Run!

Desi turns and rushes for the small door!

The Maiden wails and lunges after him...

INT. THE HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Desi crawls out on the other side, almost free -- but he trips, his leg caught on something.

We're CLOSE on Desi's horrified face as he's DRAGGED BACKWARD through the door by...

INT. THE HOUSE - SUB-BASEMENT - NIGHT

...The Maiden.

She looms over her prey. No escape now.

BO HARRIS  
 No!!

Bo CHARGES the Maiden in desperation --

She LASHES out, sending him crashing into Peter and the pole.

Lyla CHARGES --

LYLA  
 Die, fucker!

Another arm LASHES out. Lyla goes flying across the room.

Peter can only watch, eyes full of fear.

Her enemies defeated, the Maiden turns her attention back to Desi. She scoops him up like a ragdoll and brings him toward her gaping maw...

Lyla looks on in horror as...

**THE LITTLE MAIDEN'S POV:** Desi struggles in vain against the Maiden's vise grip as he is brought closer and closer...

**ANGLE:** Bo Harris, slouched by the box, SPITS in it.

The Little Maiden stops. Tosses Desi aside and turns to Bo.

Bo looks to Desi as the Maiden approaches.

BO HARRIS

I'm sorry, son. I don't want to ask  
for your forgiveness, but I hope  
one day you'll understand.

The Maiden looms over him.

BO HARRIS (CONT'D)

It's because I love you, son.

We're on Desi's face as we hear the horrible flesh-tearing sounds of Bo being devoured.

Lyla rises. Goes to Desi and gently shepherds away his gaze.

LYLA

Don't look.

We catch a GLIMPSE of the Maiden hunched over what's left of Bo and then there's a POWER SURGE -- the lights FLICKER and GO OUT for a beat, then come back on...

...and then Maiden is gone. The only evidence she existed is the blood streaks on the floors and walls and faces of our protagonists.

Lyla and Desi stand there, breathing hard. Shell shocked.

It's over. They've survived.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Lyla and Desi and Peter emerge, battered and weary and blood-soaked from their ordeal. Peter is supported by Lyla, hobbling on his one good leg.

They stand for a beat. Then Lyla notices something.

**ANGLE:** FIGURES in the neighbors' windows. All of them staring. Like people waiting for white smoke to come out of the Vatican chimney.

LYLA

Look.

(then)

Think they were in on it?

PETER

Let's not find out.

He takes out his phone.

PETER (CONT'D)

Tesla, turn on.

**ANGLE:** In the driveway, the Tesla's lights turn on and the doors pop open.

PETER (CONT'D)

Come on, kids. Let's get the fuck outta here.

Off which we go to...

E/I. OREGON ROAD / PETER'S TESLA - DRIVING - NIGHT

The Tesla purrs along a dark, tree-lined road.

**INSIDE:** Desi and Lyla both sit in the back. A slant of moonlight turns the seat between them pearly white.

Peter is on autopilot. Desi is stunned too, staring out the window. Lyla clocks this.

LYLA

Hey, Desi.

Desi turns to her.

LYLA (CONT'D)

We're gonna be okay, you know?

DESI

I know we are. It's just -- my dad.  
I can't believe he would do ... any  
of it.

LYLA

He was just ...

She trails off. How do you comfort someone in this situation?

PETER

...he was just doing what he  
thought he had to, to protect what  
he loved the most.

Peter turns to them from the front seat. Regards the kids for a beat, then turns his gaze back to the road.

The kids nod. In their way, they get it.

Lyla puts her hand in the gleaming patch of moonlight. After a beat, Desi takes it.

Lyla smiles, squeezing her friend's hand. Then she turns to the front seat.

LYLA

Hey, Dad. Where are we going?

Peter doesn't respond for a long beat. Maybe he can't process that right now. But then:

PETER

Somewhere with a Whole Foods.

CUT TO:

EXT. PINYON STREET - NIGHT

The dead of night. The lights are out in the windows, not a creature is stirring. Pinyon suddenly feels devoid of life.

A SHERIFF'S CAR turns a corner and approaches slowly. It pulls to a stop in front of the colonial formerly known as the Danvers-Cho residence.

Out steps Deputy Roberts, the cop we met earlier. He sees the front door is ajar. He advances...

INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

...into the pitch black abode. It's even creepier now than when the Danvers-Cho clan first moved in.

SHERIFF ROBERTS

Hello?

No response.

He flips on his flashlight. Moves down the hallway, shining the beam through a door to the dining room. Sees nothing. Then shines it through the kitchen door...

...where he sees Ryan Stump lying in a pool of blood. A knife sticking out of his back like an exclamation point.

Roberts unholsters his service weapon. He's about to step into the kitchen when he hears a NOISE coming from the direction of the basement door.

He takes a breath, knowing he's about to dive into something bad...

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Roberts pads through the basement. Up ahead, we can hear the indistinct MURMUR of two people talking. Light shining through the door to the sub-basement.

He moves forward...

INT. THE HOUSE - SUB-BASEMENT - NIGHT

The room is still a gory mess, the blood turned from vivid red to rust.

Two PINYON STREETERS, a man and a woman we might recognize from the barbecue, are scrubbing away at the walls and floor. Blood and soap suds drip down and mingle at their feet.

MALE PINYON STREETER

I can't believe Bo let this get so out of hand.

FEMALE PINYON STREETER

(shaking her head)

We never shoulda let him be priest after his wife died. She was always the one with the smarts.

Roberts emerges from the cubby door, gun in hand. His jaw nearly drops at the sight of this ghoulish vision.

SHERIFF ROBERTS

Aw, what the fuck?

The two cultists turn in surprise. They trade glances -- *what do we do?*

After a long beat:

SHERIFF ROBERTS (CONT'D)

I didn't believe when they told me ... we should never've let him just take over Charmaine's duties.

FEMALE PINYON STREETER  
I was *just* saying that!

And then we realize: Sheriff Roberts is one of them.

SHERIFF ROBERTS  
(oh well)  
The Maiden got her three. We got  
thirteen years to learn from our  
mistakes. That's all that matters.

He points to the Maiden's box at the base of the column.

SHERIFF ROBERTS (CONT'D)  
May I?

MALE PINYON STREETER  
With pleasure.

Roberts walks up to the pit and grabs the Maiden's box.

SHERIFF ROBERTS  
Hey, we still watching the Ducks  
this Saturday?

MALE PINYON STREETER  
You know I wouldn't miss it.

SHERIFF ROBERTS  
You two keep scrubbing. I want it  
clean when I call this in tomorrow,  
ya hear?

The man and woman nod. Satisfied, Roberts head out...

INT. THE HOUSE - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

...and we TRACK with him through the basement as he begins to hum the theme song from "Friends". He keeps going...

INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

...down the hallway, box in hand, outside...

EXT. THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

...down the front steps and out onto Pinyon Street. We TRACK with him, humming the whole time, as he gets into his car and drives off.

And then we turn back to the house. We're at some remove. Looking up at this creepy colonial TOWERING over us.

And as we linger on the house we...

**BEGIN TIMELAPSE**

Days, months, years roll forward in the blink of an eye.  
Season after season, the weather changing, people and dogs  
passing.

And the house at the center of everything.

Marissa's yard becomes overgrown. The gentrification fence is  
stripped. The new paint job fades.

On and on time marches until a FOR SALE SIGN is planted in  
the yard and we...

**END TIMELAPSE**

Into the frame comes a REALTOR (40s) we recognize from the  
barbecue talking to a YUPPIE COUPLE (30s).

REALTOR

Now this house might look a bit  
funky, but it's got great bones,  
and the neighborhood is only going  
to appreciate.

The male yuppie looks around.

MALE YUPPIE

I love it. So charming!

The Realtor gives a big toothy smile.

REALTOR

Trust me, once people move to  
Pinyon Street, they never leave.  
(then)  
Let me show you inside.

And off this image of the cycle repeating itself...

**END FILM**