

VERVE

BLACKPILL

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**FADE IN**

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - DAY**

A DINGY yet IMMACULATELY CLEAN BEDROOM cheaply decorated with mismatched thrifted furniture and video game posters taped to the walls.

The only light in the room comes from a ceiling fan with one blade and daylight slipping through tattered venetian blinds.

JARED, a weary 20-something, enters and drops into a gaming chair exhausted. One look into his dark eyes reveals his exhaustion is soul deep; the look of a man who truly believes he's never caught a break.

He's compact but muscular with a look of extreme DISCOMFORT and UNEASE about him.

He removes his BACK BRACE, pauses for a moment seeming to stare at nothing and then POPS open an ENERGY DRINK, takes a swig and settles into the staid routine we come to know as the rest of his day.

An ALARM CLOCK reads 10:47AM.

OPENING TITLES play over a TIME LAPSE of Jared in his room.

- He plays Call of Duty
- He reads and writes posts on INCEL MESSAGE BOARDS
- He talks to OTHER INCELS via video chat
- He masturbates to porn
- He does push-ups
- He watches videos with the bracketed title: [BLACKPILL]
- He plays solitaire on the computer
- At 7:05 PM Jared exits the room turning the lights off

TIME LAPSE ENDS

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared returns wearing a towel, turns off his computer monitor, sets his alarm for 1:20AM and climbs into bed.

On his cell phone he selects a YouTube ASMR channel called SOUTHERN GOTHIC SOUNDS. He puts in EAR BUDS and begins a video called **"Whispered Affirmations for Sweet Dreams."**

The video thumbnail is of DEE, a gentle looking 23-year-old woman, her hands out-stretched as if to caress Jared's face.

As the video begins Dee whispers into two microphones set on either side of the video frame with a soft and shy smile imparted on her lips.

She has a CHARMING SOUTHERN ACCENT.

DEE

(whispered on screen)

Hi Tingle Monsters. I wanted to make a short and sweet video telling you things that you need to hear. So sit back, relax, listen and try to believe... because what I'm saying is true but you just need a little reminder.

Her delivery is so saccharine sweet you aren't sure if it's a put-on like a Disney Channel version of Tomi Lahren.

Dee, like Jared, is a product of countless hours on the internet, a contoured and highlighted type of comely who has come to know her best angles through hours of practice.

However, practiced authenticity is anything but and this video reads as calculated performance to the trained eye.

Dee begins to CARESS the camera like it's a person's face SIMULATING PHYSICAL CONTACT with the viewer.

DEE (cont'd)

(whispered on screen)

You are a good person. Being good doesn't mean you are perfect. We all make mistakes but that doesn't make us any less worthy of love. Everyone has flaws. Even the people you look up to. You just don't see them. Whatever is making you feel anxious, how you look, or not being the best at something, or something you said or did.

Dee leans over to the right side of the frame and whispers into that mic which emulates whispering into the viewers right ear.

DEE (cont'd)  
(whispered on screen)  
Just know that you don't have to be the best, or the smartest, or good looking to be someone of value. I struggle with this too. Give the compassion that you show others to yourself. You are beautiful. I don't care what anyone else has said and it's not about how you look. Believe me when I say you are good enough. We all make mistakes...

Jared rolls to his side and and closes his eyes but the whispered audio still continues.

DEE (V.O.)  
But mistakes are how we learn and grow. Mistakes don't define you. It's OK to move on and let go. Every day is a new day to try again...

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared's ALARM goes off. He gets out of bed and immediately drops to the ground to do push-ups.

**INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Jared SPLASHES water on his face and brushes his teeth.

**INT. JARED'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

Jared exits his room and LOCKS his bedroom door wearing a red work shirt and his back brace.

The rest of the house is a MESS in sharp contrast to the order of his room.

**EXT. JARED'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

Jared exits his house, a grounded DOUBLE-WIDE TRAILER that shares a lot with an abandoned house.

A LIGHT DRIZZLE falls.

RACCOONS frolic in the broken window of the abandoned DERELICT structure.

Jared stops to launch a rock at the raccoons who make CHIRPING noises as they scatter.

He gets into his 1997 Nissan Hardbody truck with deep tinted windows and starts the engine.

**INT. WALMART BACKROOM - NIGHT**

Jared PUNCHES his time card at 1:57AM and heads to his locker.

The OTHER MEN in the locker room are of Hispanic descent and are greeting each other in SPANISH. Jared's presence is completely ignored.

Jared puts on work gloves and a name tag that reads J. Smalls and shuts his locker.

**EXT. WALMART LOADING PLATFORM - NIGHT**

Jared carries heavy boxes off a semi truck and hands them his HISPANIC COLLEAGUES.

He moves with INTENSE and purposeful energy.

**INT. WALMART STOCK ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared drives a forklift with boxes. Two of his HISPANIC COLLEAGUES are walking slowly in front of him.

JARED  
Careful. Behind you.  
(in Spanish)

The HISPANIC COLLEAGUES slowly move out of the way and continue talking in Spanish but one, JESUS, a portly man, FLIPS JARED THE BIRD.

**IN. WALMART STOCK ROOM - MORNING**

Jared RIPS open boxes with a RAZOR BLADE and then breaks them down.

**INT. WALMART FROZEN FOOD AISLE - MORNING**

Jared stocks shelves in the frozen food aisle.

**INT. WALMART BACKROOM - MORNING**

Jared takes off his gloves puts them in his locker and PUNCHES OUT at 10:03AM.

**INT. WALMART - MORNING**

Jared goes onto the Walmart floor and picks up a bag of rat poison, two cans of an energy drink and two large bags of Doritos and walks to the checkout counters.

Jared pauses for a second as he notices a new checkout girl and he considers his options: does he try to talk to the new girl or go to another counter?

He decides to press forward and talk to the new girl, JAIME a cute 20-something.

JARED

Hey.

JAIME

Hey.

Jared extends his hand with an intense and nervous affect.

JARED

I'm Jared. Nice to meet you.

Jaime is confused by this awkward gesture but plays along and shakes his hand while snapping gum.

JAIME

I'm Jaime.

She says this and then points to her nice new name tag and scans his items.

JAIME (cont'd)

You want a bag?

JARED

Yes please.

JAIME

Alright that will be \$20.67.

JARED

Um I... I get an employee discount.  
Do you know how to do that?

JAIME

No... you're actually my first customer. I'll call a manager.

She presses a button that sounds an announcement "Manager requested at checkout six" over the PA system.

JAIME (cont'd)

It will just be a minute.

She says this with a conciliatory smile.

Jared looks around trying to think of something to say to fill the silence.

He notices Jaime's acrylic nails with french tips she absent-mindedly TAPS on the keyboard of her register.

JARED

I like your nails. I think all women should have nails like that. It makes your hands look so feminine.

Jaime regards her hands.

He pauses for a moment knowing he should stop but he can't help himself.

JARED (cont'd)

People must like it when you touch them with your nails. It must feel really good.

She looks down at her nails almost at a loss for words and then places her hands at her sides nervously.

JAIME

Ha. Yeah...

Jared and Jaime are locked in an uncomfortable silence looking at each other when MARC approaches.

MARC, a handsome Black 20-something, is the youngest person on the management team because he is a college graduate. He is attractive and comfortable speaking with women and comes off as non-threatening but confident.

MARC

Alright what have we got here Ms. Jaime. Only 5 minutes on the floor and you already need my help.

Marc smiles as he says this but suddenly realizes he is walking into an awkward situation.



MARC (cont'd)  
Everything OK here?

JAIME  
Yeah. Um I just need to know how to  
ring up an employee discount.

MARC  
Ah gotcha. It's super simple. In this  
box here just add Jared's employee ID  
number. What's your number bud?

JARED  
6-6-5-3-1-2-6

MARC  
So your total comes to \$14.46.

Marc takes the cash, rips the receipt and hands Jared his  
change.

Jaime hands Marc Jared's bag instead of handing it directly  
to Jared.

JARED  
Thanks.

MARC  
You got it.

Jared musters a thin smile and walks away. As he does he  
overhears Jaime talking to Marc under her breath.

JAIME  
(under her breath)  
Is there, like, something wrong with  
him?

MARC  
Naw, he's just shy and a little  
awkward but completely harmless.  
Don't worry about it. Let me know if  
you need anything else and I'll come  
a runnin'.

Marc walks away and Jaime preps her station for a new  
customer.

**EXT. WALMART PARKING LOT - MORNING**

RAIN FALLS as Jared exits the store with a pained expression  
on his face as he walks to his truck.

**INT. JARED'S TRUCK - MORNING**

Jared enters his truck drenched and SLAMS the door.

JARED  
(hitting himself each  
time)  
Stupid. Stupid stupid stupid.

Red welts appear on his face as rain pummels his windshield.

He EXHALES sharply and pulls out his phone and plays Dee's positive affirmation video that he watched the night before.

DEE  
You are good person. Being good  
doesn't mean you are perfect. We all  
make mistakes but that doesn't make  
us any less worthy of love. Everyone  
has flaws. Even the people you look  
up to. You just don't see them.  
Whatever is making you feel  
anxious...

**INT./EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - MORNING**

The rain has stopped as Jared drives home through his rough neighborhood, Montgomery, Alabama's west side, where every fourth house is abandoned with boarded up windows.

Jared exits his truck with his Walmart bag and spreads rat poison all over the interior and exterior of the derelict house mixing it in with crushed Doritos.

He walks to his house where the sound of television can be heard through the door.

**INT. JARED'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING**

BRANDY, Jared's middle-aged single mother who time has not been kind to, is passed out on the couch in front of a BLARING television set playing a game show. She's wearing a waitress uniform and a CIGARETTE still BURNS in an ashtray nearby.

Jared turns the television volume down and looks down at Brandy whose mouth is agape.

**INT. KITCHEN - MORNING**

On his way to his room Jared sees the kitchen is a wreck with bacon grease and eggs and a plate of half eaten food.

A cockroach scuttles across the counter and Jared kills it with a spatula.

He begins to clean the kitchen.

As he washes dishes, Brandy's slack body in a drugged torpor is in view sprawled out on the couch behind him and Jared wears a look of quiet but hostile resentment on his face.

He finds an Oxycontin pill bottle which he places on top of the refrigerator.

**JARED'S ROOM - AFTERNOON**

Jared eats Doritos while on an incel message board called **INCELDOM.ME**.

Writing under the screen name @SHYGUYREPLY, we can see from the stats beneath his screen name that he is a POWER USER having spent the equivalent of 106 DAYS 13 HOURS AND 54 MINUTES on the site.

JARED (V.O.)  
(typing onscreen)  
*[Venting] I will go to my grave without a female touching me. Tried talking to the new girl at work and she made me feel like I was speaking fucking Klingon. Blackpilling is the only way.*

The words we hear fill up his computer screen.

Jared's post begins to fill up with replies.

@NEVERBEENKISSED88 (V.O.)  
*I'm 23 and still a kissless virgin. I have touched a woman's hand tho bc I tend to pay in cash and sometimes the cashier touches my hand when she gives back the change.*

@INCELEBRATE (V.O.)  
*I used to think it was gonna get better. You'll learn. Just stop caring and take the blackpill. You're right, it's the only way.*

@LDARQUIETLY (V.O.)

*Pro tip: When you want to be touched by a non-prostitute, a paid massage always does the trick for me.*

@FOIDKILLER (V.O.)

*Foids only care about looks. What you do doesn't matter. There are only two options:*

- 1. surgery*
- 2. LDAR - lie down and rot*

@MINASSIANSTAN (V.O)

*Technically rope is the third option...*

JARED (V.O.)

*(typing on screen)*

*True. There's just 2 options: cope or rope.*

@MINASSIANSTAN (V.O)

*If you go for the rope route, you might as well take some Chads and Staceys with you.*

Jared gets a desktop notification that a YouTube video is live from a DR. JONATHAN ERICKSON, a Nordic-looking man with practiced elocution and salt and pepper hair, who is addressing a college lecture room.

DR. ERICKSON

*(on screen)*

*I'd like to start today's lecture with a statement. The masculine spirit is under attack. It's obvious. You likely feel it too if you are at this lecture or watching this video. Let's begin with myth.*

Jared POPS opens his energy drink and takes a swig.

DR. ERICKSON (cont'd)

*The myths we have told and retold as a civilization for thousands of years. The details in these stories change but their fabric always remains the same. Myths are always stories of men going out into chaos to make sense of it. From Marduk to Odysseus to the Marvel Cinematic Universe; these stories are the same.*

*(MORE)*

DR. ERICKSON (cont'd)

It must be stated that chaos is feminine. From the dawn of time it has been characterized as such. To negate chaos' feminine wiles is to raise a cat to be a dog and be surprised that it doesn't come when you call it.

Jared continues to listen to the lecture as he peruses a PORN SITE for a video to watch.

DR. ERICKSON (O.S.)

In today's modern society with our legal system being focused on fair and equal treatment without taking into account the inherit and substantial differences between the sexes, which are myriad and beautifully derived through years of precarious evolution, everyone has so much freedom that they can indeed choose bondage... and they often do. If women only understood that feminism is bad for women. Cats will never be happy if you push them to be like dogs.

Jared hovers his mouse over various porn videos for a preview of their contents.

DR. ERICKSON (O.S.) (cont'd)

Women evolved for the purpose of childbirth. That is their primary raison d'etre. Only in the embracing of this fact will they find happiness. I'd like to read a passage from an interview with Nikola Tesla, who I believe to be the greatest mind of the 20th Century. When asked why he never married he had this to say in 1924.

Jared selects a PORN called "**Busty Superstar Pops Slave Incel's Cherry**" and plays the video while the voice over of the Erickson lecture is still playing.

The video begins with the porn star dominating the incel who is wearing a choke collar.

SOUNDS of the porn intermingle with the lecture.

DR. ERICKSON (O.S.) (cont'd)

I had always thought of woman as possessing those delicate qualities of mind and soul that made her in her respects far superior to man. I had put her on a lofty pedestal, figuratively speaking, and ranked her in certain important attributes considerably higher than man. I worshiped at the feet of the creature I had raised to this height, and, like every true worshiper, I felt myself unworthy of the object of my worship. But all this was in the past. Now the soft voiced gentle woman of my reverent worship has all but vanished. In her place has come the woman who thinks that her chief success in life lies on making herself as much as possible like man - in dress, voice, and actions, in sports and achievements of every kind.

Jared starts touching himself.

DR. ERICKSON (O.S.) (cont'd)

Practically all the great achievements of man until now have been inspired by his love and devotion to woman. Man has aspired to great things because some woman believed in him, because he wished to command her admiration and respect. For these reasons he has fought for her and risked his life and his all for her time and time again.

Jared starts masturbating in earnest.

DR. ERICKSON (O.S.) (cont'd)

Perhaps the male in society is useless. I am frank to admit that I don't know. In this matriarchal empire which will be established, the female rules. As the female predominates, the males are at her mercy. The male is considered important only as a factor in the general scheme of the continuity of life.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - SLIGHT TIME CUT**

Jared is in the middle of AGGRESSIVE MASTURBATION with a look of steely focus and detachment. His headphones are around his neck and his strokes are FURIOUS. It looks like it hurts.

He CLIMAXES and is immediately DISGUSTED with himself pressing the space bar on his keyboard to stop the porn throwing his headphones off.

Suddenly there's a KNOCK at the door.

BRANDY (O.S.)

Jared?

Startled Jared waits a second to answer as he frantically tidies his room concealing all evidence of his masturbation session.

BRANDY (O.S.) (cont'd)

Jared?

JARED

Yeah.

Jared UNLOCKS and opens his door revealing Brandy's face which has a pained, dazed expression.

BRANDY

Have you seen my pills?

Jared exits his room closing the door behind him and brushes past Brandy who limps after him.

**INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Jared pulls the PILLS off the refrigerator and hands them to Brandy.

She CRUSHES a pill with her car keys in front of him and SNORTS it exhaling sharply with relief.

Jared scoffs and starts back towards his room.

BRANDY

(contrite)

I'm sorry. I'm working a double and my back is killing me.

Jared lingers half way out of the room avoiding eye contact.

BRANDY (cont'd)  
 Oh when I came home this morning them  
 raccoons were havin' a little party  
 next door. We should get some more  
 rat poisoning.

Brandy pinches her nostrils and inhales to clear them of the  
 remainder of the pill.

JARED  
 (looking away from  
 her)  
 I took care of it this morning while  
 you were sleeping.

BRANDY  
 That's my boy.

Brandy touches Jared's face and her pupils are heavily  
 dilated; the Oxy has started to take effect.

Jared shakes his head free and leaves the room. Brandy  
 lingers for a second then brushes off the rejection.

BRANDY (cont'd)  
 OK I'm off. See you when I see ya.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared enters his room and unlocks a drawer in his desk and  
 pulls out an old 66 REVOLVER.

Jared places the gun in his lap and heads to an online  
 suicide forum called Life Taker.

Browsing the active threads he clicks on one called "Which  
 suicide method activates the least survival instinct  
 resistance?"

@DEAD\_ALREADY (V.O.)  
*A heroin overdose or full suspension  
 hanging. You lose consciousness so  
 fast there's no time to worry about  
 SI.*

@INTHEDARK (V.O.)  
*I think sodium nitrite is the best  
 way to go because it's so quick &  
 peaceful*

Jared types in "best place to shoot yourself" into the forum  
 filter. Jared clicks on an entry.



@EMPTYSMILE (V.O.)

*Eat the gun. Shots that destroy the brain stem are 100% non-survivable.*

@AFTERLIFER (V.O.)

*Have fun being a vegetable. The success rate for suicide by gun is actually shockingly low.*

@NOTDEADYET (V.O.)

*There really isn't a "best place" but there is a best weapon. A relative of mine shot himself with a shotgun. His head came right off. Takes the guess work out of it.*

Jared regards the revolver. And then places it back in the locked drawer along with the photo.

**INT. BRANDY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared enters Brandy's room which is filled to the brim with boxes and various piles of clothes and bric-a-brac. She's a hoarder and every surface is covered.

Jared opens the bifold closet doors and items FALL on him. He searches for something and doesn't find it.

Under the bed he pulls out a SHOTGUN CASE and assembles the gun.

In a mirror he holds the gun to the base of his neck while staring into his own eyes. He pulls the trigger.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared's head falls on his pillow as he watches the latest Southern Gothic Sounds video.

DEE

(whispered on screen)

Hi my little Tingle Monsters.

Dee CARESSES the camera and smiles as she whispers simulating physical contact.

DEE (cont'd)

I have a big announcement. Today we just surpassed 200,000 subscribers! I cannot believe it!

(MORE)

DEE (cont'd)

I am so so grateful to this community  
and I wanted to let you know that I  
love each and every one of you.  
Without you guys I am truly nothing.

Jared snorts at this.

DEE (cont'd)

In celebration of this milestone,  
tomorrow I have a very special live  
stream Q&A planned which will replace  
my normal study-with-me stream. If  
you're new to our channel, click on  
this link here for more scheduling  
details.

Dee points above and an ad rolls over the top of the video  
screen with the prompt "My summer shooting schedule"

DEE (cont'd)

So without further ado let's get into  
today's video which is personal  
attention and ear to ear whispering.

Dee starts cooing into the binural mics on either side of  
her frame mimicking caressing the head of the viewer.

Jared's face softens as he watches this and he begins to  
dose off.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared's ALARM goes off.

**INT. JARED'S BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Jared does push-ups.

**EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Jared walks to the derelict house. He peers through the  
broken window and sees a dying raccoon making WHEEZING  
NOISES in the interior of the house.

He stares with a BLANK BUT CURIOUS look as the animal takes  
its last labored breaths.

It stops breathing and Jared continues to stare.

**INT. WALMART BACKROOM - NIGHT**

Jared PUNCHES into work.

**INT. WALMART LOADING PLATFORM - NIGHT**

Jared unloads boxes.

**INT. WALMART STOCK ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared drives the forklift and breaks down boxes.

**INT. WALMART BACKROOM - MORNING**

Jared is taking a break drinking some water when he hears a SCREAM on the stockroom floor. He goes to investigate.

**INT. WALMART STOCKROOM - MORNING**

Jesús is bleeding from the hand. His friend is putting pressure on the wound.

Jared watches with curious intensity and discreet schadenfreude.

DALE, the stockroom manager, an awkward, gangly white man in his late 30s dressed in a short sleeve shirt and a tie, is on the phone with 911.

**INT. WALMART STOCK ROOM - MINUTES LATER**

The paramedics arrive and Dale chats with them and then approaches Jared who is working while watching the scene.

DALE

Hey Jared. I was wondering if you could stick around until noon today to fill in somewhat of a management capacity. I've got to answer some questions about Jesús and what just happened here and I need coverage. Can you do that?

JARED

Uh yeah, just let me know what you need me to do.

DALE

Cool. Great great. For the time being just hangout in the backroom to mark attendance. The new shift begins at 10AM. Mark anyone who is tardy after the 10 minutes.

(Looking around)

I think some people are punching in for their friends. And then I'll have you in frozen foods until 12.

JARED

Yeah, sure.

DALE

Thanks bud. I knew I could count on you.

Dale gives a dopey double thumbs up and flashes a wide smile revealing poor dental hygiene.

**INT. WALMART FROZEN FOOD AISLE - LATE MORNING**

Jared, zoned out, stocks frozen pizzas on the interior of the frozen food aisle. On the store side, a woman appears. Her back is to Jared as she scans the aisle.

Jared stares at her as he continues about his work ON AUTOPILOT.

Suddenly, she turns around and Jared realizes it is Dee from the ASMR channel.

His eyes LOCK on her as he moves behind the glass following her with alert focus.

She opens a fridge door and selects a frozen cake.

Jared is dangerously close to her but she doesn't see him.

His heavy breathing can be seen in the air because of the cold of the freezer.

Dee leaves the aisle and Jared runs to the retail floor to follow her.

**INT. WALMART - LATE MORNING**

Jared bolts down various aisles searching for Dee.

He finally locates her in the electronics department. She is talking to Marc.

From a distance he can hear their conversation.

MARC

Well what do you need them for?

DEE

I do ASMR. Do you know what that is?

MARC

Is it that whisper stuff? Yeah I've seen a few videos. Watched one the other night actually when I couldn't sleep. In that case, I think you want these guys. They're noise canceling.

DEE

How much are they?

MARC

These are \$29.99.

Dee scratches her head and deliberates for a second.

DEE

Alright I'll take them.

MARC

Great I can ring you up here. What's your channel called?

DEE

Southern Gothic Sounds.

MARC

Ah nice kinda spooky. I'm into it. I'll check it out.

Marc notices Jared staring from afar and WINKS at him. Jared snaps out of his intense focus realizing he's being a creep.

MARC (cont'd)

You're all set. If you have any issues with the headphones you can bring them back for a refund within 30 days. My name's Marc if you have any questions.

DEE

Thanks.

MARC

Sure thing. Have a nice day.

Marc flashes Dee a charming smile and she walks towards the exit.

Jared runs down an aisle away from Marc's view to catch up with her.

Marc pull out his phone and subscribes to Southern Gothic Sounds. Clearly she has made an impression on him too.

**EXT. WALMART PARKING LOT - LATE MORNING**

Jared follows Dee from a distance and watches as she gets in her car. He starts the engine of his truck without blinking.

The weary look he's had up until now is gone, replaced with the highly acute stare of a hunter on its prey.

As Dee pulls out he follows her.

**EXT. DEE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

After a short drive Dee pulls into a small apartment building with four units connected by outdoor hallways. It's in a nicer neighborhood than Jared's but not by much.

It's the last building on a DEAD-END ROAD bordering SWAMPLAND.

Dee parks her car in a carport. Jared parks a block away and watches her walk to a first floor unit.

After a few minutes he gets out and cases the building looking at the mailbox and in neighbors windows.

On the ground floor across from Dee's apartment lives ANITA GREEN, an elderly woman in her 80s, in a nightgown watching television with an oxygen tank. She sees movement out of the corner of her eye but by the time she looks, Jared is gone.

Jared walks to the back of the apartment building and sees Dee's filming backdrop through a window.

He sees Dee walk in with the headphones. She starts doing her makeup in a small mirror.

Jared slinks back to his truck and moves it behind the apartment to an alley so he can have a view of Dee's room from the cover of his vehicle.

**EXT. DEE'S HOUSE - MINUTES LATER**

Dee walks around her room trying on different tops for her live stream. She finally settles on one.

Jared watches her intently in rapture as he bites his nails.

Dee turns on a ring light and plugs in her binural mics and begins sound-checking and setting up her frame.

She leaves the room for a moment and Jared gets visibly antsy. She returns with the cake.

Jared gets a notification on his phone saying that Dee's channel is now live. He opens the video.

**INT. WALMART BREAKROOM - SAME TIME**

Marc gets a notification on his phone that Dee is live now.

He looks around to see if anyone is watching, puts earbuds in and starts to watch the live stream.

**EXT. DEE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Jared watches Dee through the window while the audio of the video plays from his phone on the dashboard.

DEE

(whispered)

Hi Tingle Monsters. I'm just going to give it a minute so more people can join. I wanted to start today's Q&A off with a surprise.

Dee flutters her fingers as she waits expectantly for viewers.

DEE (cont'd)

Yesterday, we hit the 200K subscribers.

Dee starts the manufactured emotion here waving her hand at watering eyes.

DEE (cont'd)

I never would have believed when I started this channel a little over a year ago that this was even possible. That 200,000 people from across the world would care about little old me from Alabama.

She maudlinly brushes a tear from her eye.

DEE (cont'd)

It's because of you that I am special. It's because of you I have found my calling--my calling to heal. So of course, I wanted to celebrate this moment with each and every one of you.

Dee reaches over the desk to present the cake which has a 200-shaped candle on top of it.

DEE (cont'd)

So here we go.

Dee LIGHTS the candle which turns into a sparkler.

She MOVES the cake from microphone to microphone so the audio can be captured from different angles.

After about 20 seconds of this she takes the candle off the cake and PLUNGES it into a glass of water extinguishing the flames with a HISS.

DEE (cont'd)

OK! Who wants a piece of cake?

Dee cuts a piece of cake and places it on a plate and pretends to hand it someone.

Jared's phone on his dashboard lights up with live stream comments all saying "me" "me" "me" but he isn't looking at the phone. He's fixated on the window where his live show for one plays out.

DEE (cont'd)

Here's one for you.

Jared watches Dee place the piece of cake behind the camera. He chuckles at the farce of it all.

DEE (cont'd)

OK. Here's one for you.

Dee looks at her laptop screen at the comments coming in.

DEE (cont'd)

Oh hey Jessie! Of course there's a piece for you.

Dee finally cuts a piece for herself.



DEE (cont'd)

OK so this one is mine. So let's get down to the Q&A.

Dee crinkles her nose and uses her mouse to scroll up to the top of the chat.

DEE (cont'd)

Gonna do my best to answer everyone's questions as long as they follow the rules of our channel. Let's see what you got for me today. Tabbycat asked what kind of cake this is. It's chocolate cake with vanilla ice cream in the center. My favorite.

Dee takes her first bite of cake.

DEE (cont'd)

Locknessa asked where in Alabama I live. I won't say the town but I'm in central Alabama. Juniperberry asked how old are you and what is your zodiac sign? I'm 23 and I'm a Cancer. I love reading my horoscope.

(she smiles broadly)

JellyBelly54 asks what do I do for a living. I'm a teacher on summer break, but I'm also a student getting my masters in childhood education. If you're a regular viewer you know that today is usually my study with me live stream but today's a special occasion.

Dee uses her mouse to scroll down.

DEE (cont'd)

MarcoPollo says how are those headphones treating you? I sold them to you. Aww hi, yeah so far so good.

Hearing this Jared picks up his phone and scrolls up to Marc's comment.

Not to be outdone, he types his own question as Dee continues to babble on with questions.

A bunch of chat participants ask MarcoPollo where he works and in what city.

**INT. WALMART - DAY**

Marc smiles as he types on his phone.

@MARCOPOLLO  
(on screen)  
*I'll never tell.*

A COWORKER walks up behind Marc and peers over his shoulder.

COWORKER  
Yo, bro what you watching?

Marc abruptly shuts the video.

MARC  
(flustered)  
Just some stupid Q&A.

Marc returns to work.

**INT. JARED'S TRUCK - DAY**

JARED  
(typing on screen)  
*Do you have a bf?*

There is one questions ahead of Jared's in the chat and he waits for Dee to answer his.

DEE  
Starbuxxxx asks who's my favorite ASMRtist. That's such a good question but I have so many favorites it's hard to pick just one. If I had to narrow it down I'd say Gently Whispered but that's not very original. If you haven't seen one of her videos, you must be living under a rock. I also love Lady ASMR but I feel like I can never finish one of her videos because two minutes in and I'm sound asleep! Who are some of your favorite ASMRtists?

The chat now lights up with people chiming in to name their favorite ASMRtists.

Dee SKIPS over Jared's question and starts commenting on the ASMRtists.

DEE (cont'd)  
I love Carina ASMR. Oh yeah,  
Goodnight Moonrise her stuff is so  
creative.

Jared is irate and types his question again.

JARED  
(on screen)  
Do you have a bf???

Again, Dee deliberately SKIPS over his inquiry.

DEE  
Insomnia ASMR is so technically  
advanced but I personally don't find  
it relaxing but different strokes for  
different folks. Oh yeah River Run  
ASMR is fantastic. But I'm just a  
sucker for a British accent.

Jared types with intensity.

JARED  
(on screen)  
WTF answer my question you dumb  
bitch.

DEE  
Oh yeah ASMR Elise is great! Her  
random aggressive style gives me lots  
of tingles.

Dee hasn't noticed Jared's latest comment but he is getting  
eaten alive in the comments by other live stream  
participants.

Dee finally comes to his latest comment and she looks  
flustered.

DEE (cont'd)  
Hey @shyguyreply. You must be new to  
my channel but sadly you just earned  
yourself a lifetime ban. Buh bye.

Dee waves bye-bye with her hand and moves her mouse. Jared  
is knocked off the video.

He continues watching through the window but he's seething,  
looking like he might pop a blood vessel.

**EXT. DEE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Jared is still outside Dee's house.

Dee closes her laptop and turns off her ring light. She picks up the cake and exits the room returning a few seconds later.

She removes her shirt and pulls on a sports bra and leggings.

Jared is made uncomfortable by Dee's nudity and he looks away and bites his nails.

Dee exits her room with a yoga mat and Jared starts his truck and pulls around to the front of the house.

Moments later Dee exits yoga mat and water bottle in hand and drives off.

Jared keeps his distance and follows her to a nearby UNIVERSITY CAMPUS.

**EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - LATE AFTERNOON**

Dee greets a FRIEND as she enters a building.

Jared looks on from the parking lot as the friend takes a photo of Dee who poses like she's Miss America, hips to the side, one toe pointed and one hand in the air as if to announce "I'm the protagonist, bitch".

Jared watches Dee disappear into a building and drives back to her apartment.

**EXT./INT. DEE'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON**

Jared parks a block away and cases Dee's apartment building looking for a way in.

He finds a window slightly open with a large HVAC unit just outside of it. The window is TINY and doesn't look like a full-grown man can pass through it.

Jared stands on the HVAC, pops the screen and contorts his frame to fit. He SLITHERS to the floor of a bathroom.

He replaces the screen and records video inventory of the bathroom's contents going through the drawers in her counter and the contents of her shower.

It's all girl stuff. Only one toothbrush.

**INT. DEE'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Jared continues to film the apartment and heads into Dee's bedroom which is well organized and girly.

Tucked into one corner are backdrops and filming gear. There is a small desk with makeup brushes and a laptop.

Her bed is made and her headboard is strewn with fairy lights.

Above the headboard is a menacingly large simple CRUCIFIX.

There are photos littered throughout the room of Dee posing and smiling with her Tri-Delt sorority sisters looking like a CHRISTIAN GIRL AUTUMN MEME.

Jared picks up a framed photo of Dee and her bowling league: 8 women with curled blonde hair and megawatt smiles pose for the camera while pointing at their league t-shirts emblazoned with the words "Holy Rollers" accompanied by bowling pins with halos on top of them.

Next to the bowling photo is a framed yearbook page which says "**Senior Superlatives: Most Likely to be Famous Deanna Taylor**". The photo is of Dee doing her signature pose: toe pointed, one hand in the air and smiling maniacally for the camera.

On the night stand is a book *Foundations of Early Childhood Education: Teaching Children in a Diverse Society* with sticky notes marking certain pages.

Inside the nightstand is an Evangelical Heritage Version Bible also marked with sticky notes.

Jared opens the bible to a marked passage. Romans 12:21 is highlighted. "**Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**"

He looks under the bed which is empty.

**INT. DEE'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Jared makes his way to the galley kitchen.

On the fridge there are more smiling photos of Dee drinking cocktails at various events and a schedule of university classes; all her classes are on Tuesdays and Thursdays which are the same days as her live stream study sessions.

Jared takes a picture of the schedule and resumes the video.

Inside the fridge is milk, and a few takeout containers.

The freezer is packed to the brim with frozen health food meals and the rest of the cake.

Jared swipes a piece of cake off a plate in the sink and eats it.

**INT./EXT. DEE'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

Jared walks through Dee's living room looking at the mail on the entry table all of which is addressed to Deanna Taylor.

He peers cautiously out the window before exiting through the front door which he locks behind him.

**INT. JARED'S TRUCK - EARLY EVENING**

Jared settles into his truck waiting for Dee to return.

He is inert but with an intense stare making mental notes of the surroundings: who enters, who walks a dog etc.

**INT. JARED'S TRUCK - NIGHT**

Jared scrolls through Dee's Instagram profile which is primarily selfies of Dee in good lighting accompanied by trite captions like "you are worthy" and "put down your phone and open a book".

Each post includes 20 hashtags including #saved #bornagain #christianinfluencer #foreverlove #thewait #daughteroftheking.

As Jared scrolls a Dr. Erickson lecture plays in the background.

DR. ERICKSON (V.O.)

The West has lost faith in the idea of masculinity. And in this act we've single-highhandedly smited God, the benevolent father. We are entering into an age of a crisis of faith for how men define themselves. What we should be doing is embracing masculinity. It is the force by which all things are driving forward against chaos and into order.

(MORE)

DR. ERICKSON (V.O.) (cont'd)  
The world only works because men  
break themselves a part every day  
fixing what is broken, forging ahead  
into as yet unknown horizons.

**INT. JARED'S TRUCK - NIGHT**

Around 7:00pm Dee returns to the apartment and Jared is fighting to keep from dozing off.

He sets his phone on the dashboard to capture a time-lapse video of Dee's front door and then reclines his seat and goes to sleep.

**INT. JARED'S TRUCK - NIGHT**

Jared's ALARM goes off at 1:20AM. He watches the time-lapse video from the night before noting that no one comes or goes and then drives to work.

**INT. WALMART BACKROOM BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Jared washes his face and armpits in the sink at work and then gargles water in his mouth.

**INT. WALMART BACK ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared clocks in at 1:55AM.

**INT. WALMART LOADING PLATFORM - NIGHT**

Jared unloads boxes.

**INT. WALMART STOCK ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared operates the forklift and breaks down boxes.

**INT. WALMART FROZEN FOOD AISLE - NIGHT**

Jared stocks shelves in the frozen food aisle.

**INT. WALMART BACKROOM - EARLY MORNING**

On a break Jared watches the playback of Dee's live stream Q&A from last night with headphones.

He's at the part where she is talking about different ASMRtists when Dale approaches him from behind startling him.

DALE  
(insanely close)  
Hey you got a sec.

JARED  
(startled)  
Oh I was about to get back to work.

DALE  
Don't sweat it, my man. Just wanted to have a quick chat about yesterday.

JARED  
OK.

**INT. DALE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

They enter Dale's office which is a grimy makeshift room off the stock room floor made of exposed drywall with a rotating fan and a disheveled desk full of papers.

DALE  
(gestures expansively)  
Take a seat. Anywhere.

Jared settles into the only chair not covered with paperwork.

DALE (cont'd)  
How did yesterday go? How'd you like being jefe for the day?

JARED  
(nervously)  
Yeah, everything went fine. Nothing really came up.

DALE  
That's what I like to hear. No news is good news. That's what I always say.

JARED  
Yeah.

There is a long pause.



DALE

Well, I wanted to see if you could pick up 3 shifts this week to cover for Jesús. That'll make it a 7 day work week for you but you'll qualify for lots of overtime.

JARED

Yeah I'll take the shifts.

DALE

Fan-tastic. You see it's hard to find people who stick with this graveyard shift... especially ones who speak English.

(let's out an insipid  
chuckle)

You've been with us for a minute now always on time and courteous and you're a real good worker. There's an assistant manager position opening up. It's five days a week and overtime wouldn't start until 55 hours but you'd be eligible for health and dental.

Dale pauses and Jared continues to stare.

DALE (cont'd)

Oh, almost forgot the most important part, I should have lead with this  
(hitting himself on  
the head)

it comes with a \$2 an hour raise so that'd put you at \$14 per hour. Not bad am I right?

Jared nods his head but with a blank stare.

DALE (cont'd)

So what do you think?

JARED

(after a pause)

Can I think about it?

DALE

Yeah, sure son. Absolutely. Absolutely. That's a good answer. Always good to sleep on these things.

Dale gets up and Jared does too. They both walk towards the door.

DALE

You let me know what you think once  
you've had time to mull it over.

Dale puts his hand on Jared's shoulder and lowers his voice.

DALE (cont'd)

(smiling)

Guys like us gotta look out for each  
other, know what I'm sayin'.

Dale's terrible breath causes Jared to blink but he nods his  
head affirmatively.

Jared walks out of the office and Dale walks back in but  
pops his head out again.

DALE (cont'd)

Oh hey Jared, you never punched out  
yesterday. What time did you leave?

JARED

Oh I'm not sure.

DALE

I get it. Heavy is the head my man.  
Alright, I'll just mark it down as  
noon. Thanks bud.

**EXT. WALMART BACKROOM - MORNING**

Jared opens his phone and Dee's live stream video starts  
playing again where it left off.

Jared watches his comment go up on the screen calling Dee a  
stupid bitch and a barrage of comments condemn him one after  
another.

@TINGLETANGLE

*@shyguyreply wtf is wrong with you*

@LARA12345

*GTFO*

@TOMMYSALAMI

*Nah bro take your toxic shit  
elsewhere*

@PURPNURP

*@shyguyreply you're bout to catch  
these hands*

@PLANTMOM

*Dee is here to help*

@CALIKID

*Bro you gotta go chill vibes only*

@HAMHAND

*@shyguyreply who hurt you??*

DEE

*Oh yeah ASMR Alysa is great! Her random aggressive style always gives me lots of tingles.*

Dee pauses to read Jared's hostile comment and looks a bit shaken.

DEE (cont'd)

(on screen)

*Hey @shyguyreply. You must be new to my channel but sadly you just earned yourself a lifetime ban. Buh bye.*

@ITSALEX

*Yeah bounce that guy Dee*

@MIKEYLIKESIT

*...and you're outta here*

@BUMBLEBEETUNA

*Go Dee! Show him who's boss*

@MSMUFF

*We stan a strong queeeeen*

@SPEEDEMON

*And now back to our regularly scheduled programming.*

@KOZY

*Tingle Monsters unite!*

@FREUDVOID

*How much you wanna bet that guy's mom never hugged him?*

DEE

(on screen)

*Sorry about that everyone. But you know what they say about one bad apple, right? Now back to the tingles.*

Jared SLAMS his locker shut with aggression.

**INT. WALMART - MORNING**

Jared walks down the aisles of Walmart pushing a cart with a determined look on his face tossing in industrial cleaner, paper towels, an air mattress, a set of sheets, and a pillow.

He takes the full cart to a checkout counter but Jaime is the only cashier open.

Jaime avoids eye contact with him. Marc walking by sees this.

MARC

Hey Jared. I can take you down here.

Marc scans his items.

MARC (cont'd)

You expecting company?

He asks this while ringing up the air mattress and sheets.

JARED

(without emotion)

Yeah.

**INT. HARDWARE STORE - MORNING**

Jared purchases plywood boards, egg crate, acoustic tiles, cork roll, sealant, 20 feet of chain, a padlock, spray adhesive, zip ties, caulk, paint, work gloves, a deadbolt, work light and duck tape and pays in cash.

**EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - EARLY AFTERNOON**

Jared drives up to the derelict house and unloads his purchases inside of it.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Wearing work clothes, Jared removes dead raccoon carcasses from the interior of the house.

He sweeps rat poison, Doritos and other debris off floor.

He mops and lays cork on the floor and the walls.

**EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - DUSK**

Jared exits the house looking tired and sweaty as the sun sets and heads to his house.

**INT. JARED'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Inside Brandy is getting ready for her shift.

BRANDY  
Where you been at?

JARED  
Out.

BRANDY  
(with a utter distain)  
Phew, you stink. You're ripe for the  
pickin'.

Jared walks past her to the bathroom and turns on the shower.

BRANDY (O.S.)  
Bye!

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared gets an alert from a chatroom. He clicks on it.

It's a link to an incel message board thread titled "[News] 20 year old man kills his 18 year old gf. Tells court "I'm a murderer."

Jared clicks into the VIDEO CHATROOM. On screen there are 3 other participants sitting in dark, grimy rooms resembling his own.

JARED  
Sup.

@POLITICKER  
(on screen)  
Join the celebration comrade. Another  
Stacey dead.

Jared clicks through pictures of the young woman in the news article, a pretty 20-something makeup influencer.

@ZOOMERCEL  
Never met a Stacey who didn't deserve  
it.

@ED\_KEMPER  
She's not a stacey bro

JARED  
Yes she is.

@ED\_KEMPER  
Nah dawg you're simping.

JARED  
Whatever. Are we going to play?

Jared puts his headset on and and joins a Call of Duty session.

Sounds of gunshots and explosions abound and Jared gets that crazy hunter look in his eyes as lights flash on his face in the dark.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared's alarm goes off.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared does push ups.

**INT. WALMART BACKROOM - NIGHT**

Jared punches into work.

**INT. WALMART LOADING PLATFORM - NIGHT**

Jared unloads boxes.

**INT. WALMART STOCK ROOM - EARLY MORNING**

Jared operates the forklift and breaks down boxes.

**INT./EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Jared installs acoustic tiles on the walls.

He places a wood panel on the living room window and seals around it with sealant by the light of a work lamp taking video of his progress.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared watches Dee's "Study with me" live stream which consists of Dee in her bedroom reading and highlighting her text book in her bedroom.

On the right side of the video, there is a small vertical bar that says "Studying for Childhood Cognitive Development Test" and below it "Today's Schedule" which breaks down 45-minute intervals where she studies and 10 minutes breaks where she chats with fans. The timer counts down a 45 minute interval to the first break.

Jared studies the video and sketches the schematics of Dee's room in a notebook.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared's ALARM goes off.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared does push ups.

**INT. WALMART BACKROOM - NIGHT**

Jared punches into work. He looks more tired and hardened.

**INT. WALMART LOADING PLATFORM - EARLY MORNING**

Jared unloads boxes.

**INT. WALMART STOCK ROOM - EARLY MORNING**

Jared operates the forklift and breaks down boxes and stocks frozen food aisle.

**INT. WALMART BACKROOM - MORNING**

Jared on break watches a video on his phone about how to make ersatz handcuffs using zip ties.

**INT./EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON**

Jared changes the deadbolt on the front door.

Inside the house he screws metal brackets to into the concrete brick walls of the basement and threads chain through it.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared enters his room sets his alarm for 1:20AM and sits down at his computer.

He activates his VPN and types in "recipe for chloroform" into his browser.

Next to him he begins to write a checklist including bleach, acetone, rubber tubing and frozen dinners.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared's ALARM goes off.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared does push ups.

**INT. WALMART BACKROOM - EARLY MORNING**

Jared punches into work.

**INT. WALMART LOADING PLATFORM - MORNING**

Jared unloads boxes looking like a zombie.

Dale approaches Jared.

DALE

Hey, my man. So what's the word. Am I looking at my new assistant manager?

JARED

I'm gonna pass. I did the math and I make more with overtime.

DALE

I hear ya. But this is more than a paycheck, son. It's a strategic move for your future. You'd be joining management. Plus health and dental.

Dale smiles which is ironic because it looks like he's never been to a dentist in his life.



JARED  
I'm not sure I see a future...  
(a pause)  
With the company. Thanks for the  
offer though.

Dale looks disappointed and nods with his hands on his hips.

DALE  
Alrighty. Suit yourself.

**INT. WALMART - MORNING**

On the store room floor Jared heads to the frozen food section and selects some of the meals he saw in Dee's freezer. He also gets bleach and acetone.

On his way to checkout he passes a red, white and blue paintball mask shaped like a rodent. He puts that in his cart too.

**INT. JARED'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Jared puts the frozen dinners in the freezer.

**EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Jared mixes the bleach and acetone together inside a bucket outside and starts coughing because the mixture is so noxious.

He spray paints the paintball mask black.

He adds a final wood panel to the front window of the derelict house and with spray paint he writes the words "ALARM ON. NO COPPER" in big orange letters.

**INT. JARED'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Jared distills the chloroform from the bucket using a complicated web of pots, mason jars, foil, plastic wrap, and rubber tubing; a kind of homemade chem lab.

He records a video of the process.

He puts a lid on the mason jar with the distilled chloroform inside and holds it tightly in his hands.

**INT./EXT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - AFTERNOON**

Jared blows up the air mattress and puts sheets on it placing it against a wall in the basement.

He tests the strength of the chain link and records a video of the room.

He sets his cell phone outside of the basement windows and records a video. Inside the house he SCREAMS and RATTLES the chains to see if he can hear anything.

Upon playback of the video, Jared is satisfied with his soundproofing test.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - EVENING**

Jared crosses off items on his checklist including bed, handcuffs, chloroform, gas.

**INT. JARED'S BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Jared walks to the bathroom in his towel as a detached and high Brandy exits.

BRANDY

Hey. You've been busy next door. Why don't you do a little home improvement over here while you're at it.

JARED

I just boarded up the windows over there because it's a cheaper than always buying rat poisoning.

BRANDY

Oh, alright.'Spose that works too.

She shuffles away.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared irons and puts on black pants, black sneakers, black gloves, a black hoodie pulled up and the paintball mask and records himself in the mirror.

He is transformed. His every movement now sharper, more acute and precise. There is no hesitation or indecision.

He hangs the outfit on the back of his door along with the mask and regards it as if it is somehow separate from him: like a monster frozen in time, one who's potential energy will soon become kinetic.

He sets his alarm and crawls into bed and starts Dee's latest video.

DEE  
 (whispered on screen)  
 Hi Tingle Monsters. I hope you all  
 are doing well. I'm so excited  
 because today is our first sponsored  
 video!

Dee squeals with genuine excitement for the first time and then quiets herself back into character.

DEE (cont'd)  
 Having a sponsor means so much to me.  
 It's a sign that this...  
 (pointing at herself  
 and the camera)  
 may be my true calling... helping  
 people like you.

Dee maudlinly takes a deep breath and smiles serenely at the camera pausing for a moment before she picks up her cell phone to plug the sponsor.

DEE (cont'd)  
 So without further ado, the fine  
 folks at Jewel Fiends reached out  
 about their puzzle adventure game.

Dee holds her phone to the camera and starts playing the Candy Crush-like game.

DEE (cont'd)  
 It's really fun you have to match  
 certain like-colored objects to feed  
 the butterflies...

Jared looks at his phone with a sinister stare.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared's ALARM goes off.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Jared unlocks the door to the house and stands in the basement in quiet contemplation. Everything is ready for today, the big day.

**INT. WALMART STOCKROOM/FLOOR - MORNING**

Jared buys two energy drinks and waits in line at Jaime's register despite other registers being open.

He looks like a zombie.

Jaime attempts a toothless smile and Jared just stares at her with a blank expression.

JAIME

That's \$4.73. You wanna a bag.

Jared shakes his head no and hands her a \$10 bill.

She returns the change to Jared's hand who GRASPS at her fingers while making unflinching eye contact.

Jaime RECOILS and Jared walks away with a smirk on his face.

**EXT. JARED'S ROOM - MORNING**

Jared drops into his gaming chair, takes off his back brace and pops the top on an energy drink.

He's tired and emaciated but there's a lightness there; something akin to happiness.

He opens video editing software while listening to a Dr. Erickson lecture dropping new footage he has taken of the derelict house renovation and him with a gun in the black outfit into a timeline sequence.

DR. ERICKSON (V.O.)

If there is anything that history tells us, it's that there's nothing more dangerous than a weak man. But as times change and more women graduate from college and then invariably flood the workplace, we see a feminization of society as a whole. Suddenly, what feels like overnight, men are not allowed to be men.

He freeze frames on a closeup of his own face in the mirror and sits back listening to the lecture.

DR. ERICKSON (V.O.) (cont'd)  
When conflict arises, the rules that pertain to male on male interactions are simple. When pushed beyond a certain point, men know they will come to blows. It is expected. But the idea of physical combat in male and female conflict dynamics, society tells us, is completely abhorrent...

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - AFTERNOON**

Jared puts on the black pants and a t-shirt and places the mask and sweatshirt in a small backpack along with the revolver.

**EXT. JARED'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

He exits his house and drives away.

**EXT. DEE'S HOUSE - DAY**

Jared does a drive by of Dee's apartment and sees Dee's car in the carport and her bathroom window is again cracked open.

Jared parks and watches his rear view mirror waiting for Dee to leave.

**EXT. DEE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Dee emerges and drives away.

Jared waits a few minutes and moves his truck to the alley behind Dee's apartment where he parked the day of the live stream.

He puts on work gloves and a hat and exits the truck with the backpack posting up next to the window pretending to inspect the HVAC.

Once he's satisfied no one is watching he gets on top of the HVAC, pops the screen and climbs through the window.

**INT. DEE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Inside he cases the apartment. Everything looks the same as last time.

**INT. DEE'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON**

Jared checks his watch which says **4:17PM**.

He looks around. The room is already set up for her study-with-me live stream.

Jared puts on the sweatshirt and mask and settles in under Dee's bed waiting for her return.

He takes out the chloroform bottle and washcloth and places them next to him and records a video of him waiting.

**INT. WALMART - LATE AFTERNOON**

Jaime sees Marc walking around the floor and she stops him.

JAIME

Hey Marc you got a sec.

MARC

Sure do what's up!

JAIME

It's about Jared.

(pause)

The guy skeevs me out.

MARC

Did he do anything specific?

JAIME

No... not really he just makes me really uncomfortable.

MARC

I hear ya. He's an awkward guy but I guarantee he's harmless. The kids afraid of his own shadow.

**INT. DEE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Jared is a dark shadow under Dee's bed.

He's jittery because he's had to pee for over an hour and now he's really got to go.

He looks at his watch. It's **7:28pm**. Dee could be home any minute.

JARED

Shit!

He decides he can't hold it anymore and makes a mad dash to the bathroom.

**DEE'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Jared runs into the bathroom and relieves himself preemptively flushing while he is still urinating letting out a sound of relief.

Suddenly, there's the SOUND OF KEYS IN THE DOOR.

Without a second to spare, Jared zips up and bolts back under Dee's bed leaving the toilet seat up.

Dee enters her apartment wearing headphones singing a Top 40 song. Had she not been she would have definitely seen and heard Jared.

**INT. DEE'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Dee heads to the kitchen and takes out a frozen dinner and places it in the microwave. She then heads to the bathroom to shower.

**INT. DEE'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Upon entering the bathroom Dee notices the toilet seat is up. She looks at it curiously before lowering it down.

**INT. DEE'S BATHROOM - SLIGHT TIME CUT**

Freshly showered Dee exits wearing a robe.

**INT. DEE'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Dee drops her robe on the floor and changes into pajamas which consist of a shirt that says Dream Queen and pants with clouds on them.

Jared sees the robe on the ground and starts breathing more heavily.

**INT. DEE'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Dee grabs her backpack and food from the microwave and takes them back to her room.

**INT. DEE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Dee eats and mic checks at her desk.

She applies mascara and concealer and takes a duckface selfie flashing the peace sign which she edits with Facetune and then uploads to her YouTube channel with the text "**Live Stream starting in: [countdown clock]**".

Dee picks up her robe from the floor and hangs it in her closet. While doing this her phone rings and she leaves the closet door open to answer it.

DEE  
(into phone)  
Hi daddy. I was just thinking about you. Did you stop by my place today?

She looks at the toilet seat.

DEE (cont'd)  
Oh, no reason.

Dee listens on her end but we can't hear her father's side of the conversation. Again, she has a practiced saccharine quality when speaking to her dad as if she's playing a role.

DEE (cont'd)  
Yes, I don't want to fight either, I've given this a lot thought. There is money in being an influencer, daddy, and I have a small window to see if this works...

Again she listens as she picks up her TV dinner tray and throws it in the kitchen garbage. She heads back to the bathroom.

**INT. DEE'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS**

DEE  
(into phone)  
I know you don't understand this world so you're gonna have to trust me. If it doesn't work out I can always go back to school.  
(MORE)



DEE (cont'd)  
I'm finishing this semester and I'll  
only have one left...

Again she listens to the other side of the conversation as she brushes her teeth.

DEE (cont'd)  
(into phone)  
Daddy I can't do this right now. We  
can talk about it after church on  
Sunday. Yes, I promise not to make  
decision until after we talk.  
(she rolls her eyes)  
OK love you too. Bye.

She hangs up and FLIPS OFF THE PHONE.

#### **INT. DEE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Dee grabs her backpack and pulls out her book, note cards, a pen, highlighter and notebook and puts them on the desk.

She takes a deep breath letting go of the stress she accumulated during the phone conversation.

She turns her ring light and camera on and places her phone on AIRPLANE MODE.

Checking her frame on her computer she shimmies her chair into position with her back facing the bed. Her open closet door is visible in the frame.

She gives a practiced smile and turns her face from side to side feigning laughter psyching herself up to play the role of on-camera Dee.

Satisfied with how the frame looks Dee presses "Start live stream" on her laptop and sits at her desk.

DEE  
(whispered)  
Hi Tingle Monsters. Thank you for  
joining me for this two-hour study  
session. Today we are prepping for  
the dreaded teaching & learning math  
in early childhood mid-term. Anything  
with math in the title, am I right?

Dee laughs. We begin to see people join the chat bar on the right-hand side of the video as it becomes populated with comments from viewers.

@SARATWINKLES

*Hey Dee!*

@VLADTHEINHALER

*got a midterm this week too.  
calculus. pray for me.*

@PRITTYKITTY

*that open closet door is a bit  
stressful*

@ISUPREME

*math bleck*

@MISHELLY

*yeah that closet door is making my  
anxiety act up.*

@BRIGHTSHADOW

*yeah I can't concentrate*

DEE

(on screen)

Hi Sara! Hey Vlad good luck on your  
midterm

Dee looks at her closet door.

DEE (cont'd)

Ah I see what you're talking about. I  
promise there are no monsters in my  
closet but I'll close it anyways.

Dee gets up and closes the closet door and realizes her  
fairy lights aren't on.

She reaches under the bed for the switch which is near  
Jared's foot and he braces for impact but Dee doesn't notice  
he is there.

DEE (cont'd)

So I'm going to set the clock for 45  
minutes and then we will have our  
first 10 minute chat break.

Jared checks his watch. Dee moves her mouse and starts a 45  
minute timer on her computer screen which plays on the right  
side of her screen and puts headphones on.

She turns her laptop screen away from her so she cannot see  
it and begins tapping on her books to produce a nice sound.

**INT. DEE'S BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER**

Jared slowly and silently begins to pour the chloroform onto the rag trying not cough because of the fumes.

**INT. DEE'S BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER**

Dee reads and writes flashcards. Minutes pass.

Jared slowly starts to make his way out from under the bed. He really takes his time so as not to make a sound contorting his body.

It's about two minutes of movement before he can be seen on the live stream.

Once he is visible on the live stream Dee's computer lights up with comments; the chat is moving a mile a minute.

Jared moving at a snail's pace makes his way around the bed.

The floor CREAKS and he braces for impact but Dee doesn't notice because of her noise-canceling headphones.

As Jared clears the edge of the bed Dee INSTINCTUALLY TURNS AROUND.

Before she is able to see him, he LUNGES towards her.

She tries to scream but he places the chloroform over her mouth.

She manages to BITE him hard on his right hand.

Jared WINCES but continues to hold the chloroform over her face.

Dee COLLAPSES and Jared closes the laptop and turns the camera off.

Dee is on the floor. Jared turns off the lights in the room and breaths like he is having a panic attack.

**INT./EXT. DEE'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Jared hurriedly carries Dee over his shoulder towards his truck and places her in the reclined passenger seat.

He hears a rustling and turns to search for its origin. He finds it: a raccoon's eyes glow at him from the dark of the swamp.

**EXT. JARED'S TRUCK - NIGHT**

Jared catches a glimpse of himself in his rear view mirror. He is still wearing the mask.

He removes it revealing a look of terrified anguish drenched in sweat. What has he just done?

He starts the truck and drives off.

As he drives his eyes dart to the rear view mirror every few seconds. Dee is passed out.

**EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Jared parks the truck in his usual spot.

He looks over at Dee in the passenger seat passed out with her mouth open. He stares at her. She has his blood on her face from biting his finger.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Jared enters the house with Dee over his shoulder and walks to the basement where he carefully sets her onto the air mattress, his face hovers over hers.

He's never been this close to a woman before. He can smell her.

He brushes blood off her lips.

After some hesitation, he brings her hand to his face and softly uses it to caress his hair. He closes his eyes and savors the sensation.

He touches her face gently and then slowly and hesitantly brings his hand down her neck and then hovers over her breast.

He stops himself suddenly and balls his hand into a fist.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE - SLIGHT TIME CUT**

Jared loops the length of chain which is bolted to the floor around Dee's neck and secures it with a pad lock like a human dog leash.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared enters his room and immediately goes to his computer and clicks on an alert that says "your screen record is ready".

His right hand bleeds as he clicks the mouse.

The screen recording of the live stream plays. He skips forward to where he makes his appearance.

He watches as the comments begin to roll in, at first slowly and then all at once.

JARED

Yes!

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared changes his clothes and bandages his right hand where Dee bit him.

**INT. JARED'S KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Jared grabs a bottle of ibuprofen, roll of toilet paper and gallon of water.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Jared places 3 ibuprofen pills and water next to the air mattress on a paper towel.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Jared is sleeping on a folding chair on the main floor as Dee begins to stir on the air mattress in the basement.

She begins to groan as she comes to. She looks groggy and then scared as her eyes adjust to the darkness.

She slowly realizes she is chained.

DEE

(panicked)

Help me! Somebody help me!

Jared hearing this exits the house to see if he can hear her cries.

He walks around the house and can hear faint clanking but barely.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Jared re-enters the house and we immediately hear Dee yelling. Dee hears the door close.

DEE

Who's there? Help me! Please help me.  
Please help me. Please. Please. I  
need help.

(crying so hard she's  
choking)

Help! Help me! Help! Please! Jesus  
help me!

Dee breaks down into incomprehensible sobs which continue for an uncomfortable amount of time.

Jared puts ear buds in and plays Dee's positive affirmations video.

Slowly the sound of the video begin to DISTORT and FUZZ intermingled with Dee's real-life cries for help as Jared, seated in the chair, closes his eyes and begins to doze off against a wall.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE - EARLY AM**

Jared awakens in the chair. He looks at his phone it's after 4:00am. The house is silent.

Jared sneaks to the top of the basement stairs. He records a video of Dee passed out on the air mattress.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - EARLY AM**

Jared drops the video he recorded of Dee sleeping onto his editing timeline.

He checks Dee's YouTube channel and her live stream video has been removed.

He climbs into bed.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - DAY**

Around 7:30am Jared wakes when he hears Brandy comes home.

He exits his room and walks towards the bathroom startling Brandy who nearly jumps out of her skin.

BRANDY  
(out of breath)  
Jesus Christ! You scared me!

Jared barely acknowledges her presences and heads to the bathroom leaving Brandy to catch her breath in the hallway.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - DAY**

Jared sits down at his computer, activates his VPN and checks the local news.

Dee's kidnapping is the front page story. He clicks on the video.

A male newscaster, TODD LANCASTER, appears on screen behind a desk.

**INT. NEWS STUDIO - NIGHT**

TODD LANCASTER  
(on screen)  
We're getting some breaking news out of Cloverdale. That's where police say a home invasion kidnapping took place last night. But this one has a bizarre twist. It was live streamed directly to social media and the assailant is still on the loose. Melissa Vasquez is on the scene with more. Melissa.

MELISSA VASQUEZ, a Latinx woman in her early 30s, reports from Dee's apartment stationed in front of police cars, yellow police tape.

The background is bustling with police activity and spectators.

**EXT. DEE'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

MELISSA VASQUEZ  
Thanks Todd. I'm outside the apartment of 23-year-old Cloverdale resident Deeanna Taylor.  
(MORE)

MELISSA VASQUEZ (cont'd)  
Taylor, a popular social media influencer, appears to be the victim of what local police are calling the most heinous home invasion kidnapping they've ever seen. And what makes this crime truly chilling is it was designed to be broadcast live to social media.

The segment cuts to a pre-taped package of the scene with shots of the house from different angles and police activity with voice over from Melissa.

MELISSA VASQUEZ (V.O.)  
Ms. Taylor, simply known to residents here at the Sunnyside apartment complex and to her online fans as Dee, was a fixture of this community.

ANITA GREEN, the old woman across hall, is being interviewed on screen. She wears a nightgown and holds an oxygen mask to her face. A chyron on the screen identifies her by name and as Victim's Neighbor.

ANITA GREEN  
I just can't believe it. Who would want to hurt her. That child is sweet as pie. Helps me with my groceries and at the social security office.  
(Shakes her head)  
No sir. Whoever did this ain't right in the head.

The packaged footage ends and we are back to live footage of Melissa on the scene.

MELISSA VASQUEZ  
Police are telling us at 8:26PM on Thursday night Taylor's live stream was interrupted when a masked intruder who had been hiding in her home attacked her. The police have released a few stills from the live stream video which has been removed from YouTube. Please be advised what we are about to show you may be distressing to some viewers.

Images of Jared behind Dee and reaching for the camera are shown.



MELISSA VASQUEZ (cont'd)  
Police are asking that anyone with the information about this crime to please call the police tips hotline. The assailant is still at large and is projected to be around 5'8" and of medium build. Live from Cloverdale, I'm Melissa Vasquez for WFQA News. Back to you Todd.

Jared screen records the video and checks other outlets for more mentions.

The story has made national news.

He clicks on a link to Good Morning America. A video plays with AMY ROBACH, the breaking news host for GMA.

AMY ROBACH  
We are getting some disturbing news out of the Montgomery, Alabama area. A popular YouTuber was abducted during a live stream and the footage is disturbing.

Jared grins broadly. This is the best day of his life.

#### **INT. JARED'S KITCHEN - DAY**

Jared exits his bedroom dressed in jeans and a t-shirt with a pep in his step.

Once in the kitchen he peaks his head into the living room to see Brandy already passed out in front of the television, mouth agape.

He takes the keys from her purse.

#### **EXT. JARED'S HOUSE - DAY**

Jared walks to Brandy's 1992 Honda Accord and drives off.

#### **EXT. DEE'S HOUSE - DAY**

Jared drives Brandy's car slowly towards Dee's house and blocks away he can already see the police and crowd activity.

There are so many flowers and posters memorializing Dee it looks like a One Direction concert.

As he slowly drives by he sees sorority girls hug each other, neighbors shake their heads in disbelief and a church group praying.

Having appreciated his handy work, he drives off.

**INT. JARED'S HOUSE - DAY**

Jared puts the keys back in Brandy's bag. She hasn't moved.

**INT. KITCHEN - DAY**

Jared takes out a frozen meal and puts it in the microwave. After he takes it out he stirs it and takes a bite and then grimaces.

**EXT./INT. DERELICT HOUSE - DAY**

Jared walks with the frozen meal and a spoon across the lawn and enters the derelict house.

Dee is on her knees praying, rhythmically swaying back and forth. She's fully absorbed in the incantation.

DEE

(barely audible and shaking)

Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved. Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved. Jesus if you get me out of this I will devote my life to your message. Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...

Jared listens for a second then PUTS ON THE MASK and opens the door to the basement.

Despite being day outside the basement is dark save for one work lamp in the far corner of the room.

Jared stands at the top of the stairs but Dee is so absorbed in her prayers she doesn't see him.

JARED

Praying's not gonna help.

Upon seeing the masked Jared, Dee scrambles to the corner of the mattress crumpling herself into a ball hugging her knees.

DEE

Please. Please don't hurt me.  
Whatever you want. Money. I have \$600  
in my savings account. Take me to an  
ATM and I'll get it right now. No  
questions asked. We can forget this  
ever happened.

Jared sets a folding chair about 6 feet from the inflatable mattress.

As soon as he sits he sees that Dee has wet herself and urine flows off the side of the mattress.

Dee looks down at herself confused about what's happening.

JARED

That's what the buckets for.  
(deep breath)  
Stand up.

Jared stands up and Dee recoils in fear.

JARED (cont'd)

Stand up. I'm not going to hurt you.

Dee stands while making wide eye contact with Jared's mask. She presses herself against the cement wall of the basement.

Jared slides the air mattress away from her and strips the sheets walking upstairs with them.

Dee stands frozen for what feels like an eternity.

Jared returns with cleaning solution, paper towels and a pair of boxers in hand. He sprays the air mattress.

Dee is still frozen against the wall bewildered at what is happening.

JARED (cont'd)

Take off your pants.

Horrified, Dee panics.

DEE

What no!

Dee crumbles to the floor again.

JARED

You can wear these.

He tosses her the boxers.

JARED (cont'd)  
Do you wanna smell like piss?

Jared turns his back to Dee and heads to the far corner of the room to give her privacy to strip.

JARED (cont'd)  
Take them off. I'm not looking.

Dee is on the floor breathing heavily. She pauses for several seconds.

She slowly stands up with her back against the wall and removes her pajama pants watching Jared. He does not turn around.

JARED (cont'd)  
All set?

DEE  
(meekly)  
Yeah.

Jared turns around.

JARED  
Toss them here.

She tosses them.

#### **INT. WALMART ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - AFTERNOON**

Marc is walking by a wall of television sets and sees Jaime and another EMPLOYEE grippedly watching a row of TVs with local news coverage shaking their heads. He stops to inquire.

MARC  
What's going on here?

Jaime points to the TV.

NEWSCASTER  
(on screen)  
...Deanna Taylor, the 23-year-old Cloverdale resident who was kidnapped Thursday night by a masked intruder. The attack was designed to be broadcast via live stream and her attacker is still at large.

MARC  
Oh shit she came in last week.

JAIME

So I guess you haven't you seen the video?

MARC

(in a daze)

What?

Jaime takes out her phone and shows Marc a short grainy dark web clip of the masked intruder attacking Dee.

Marc looks horrified.

**INT. JARED'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Jared unloads sheets from a washing machine into a dryer.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Jared heads to his computer to check on the media coverage again.

He gets an alert from a chatroom.

@POLITICKER

(written on screen)

JRod isn't this near where you live?  
[link]

Jared clicks on the link. It's a CNN post about Dee's kidnapping.

In the article there are video embeds of Dee's fan's pleas to find her.

Jared plays a video of a young woman crying.

DEE FAN 1

Dee needs our help! Tingle Monsters  
unite and find Dee.

The post is marked with the hashtag #tinglemonsters.

Jared searches the hashtag on social media and there are more than 1,000 recent entries.

He scrolls through them playing a selection which are reminiscent of the #freebritney movement.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - LATE AFTERNOON**

Jared enters with the clean sheets and pajamas wearing the mask.

Dee is seated on the edge of the air mattress staring at the basement door.

Above her she has made a crucifix on the wall with dirt from the floor.

The food Jared brought is still uneaten.

Jared walks near the mattress.

DEE  
(low whisper)  
Why are you doing this to me?

JARED  
Stand up.

Dee obediently stands.

Jared moves the mattress away from her and puts the sheets on. He slides the mattress back and throws the pj pants on top.

Jared sits in the folding chair. Dee shakes her head in confusion and puts on the pants on.

A long pause ensues.

JARED (cont'd)  
You know, I used to like your videos.  
(long pause)  
For a long time they made me feel  
less alone.

Wiping tears from her face Dee tries to muster a smile.

She knows she has to use her practiced persona and charisma to get through this.

DEE  
That's why I make them.  
(she pauses wiping  
tears)  
If you like my videos, why do you  
want to hurt me?

JARED  
I told you before, I'm not looking to  
hurt you.

(MORE)

JARED (cont'd)  
 And I said I used to like your  
 videos. Now... I just feel like  
 they're all lies.  
 (pause and exhale)  
 Why do all women lie?

Dee knows she needs to tread lightly here.

DEE  
 (subdued)  
 Not all of us do.

JARED  
 Yeah you do. You all do.  
 (pause)  
 You say you like nice guys. That's a  
 lie. You say looks don't matter. Lie.  
 Size. Income. Lie. Lie.

Dee swallows hard as involuntarily tears continue to fall  
 from her open eyes.

JARED (cont'd)  
 (after a long pause,  
 Jared gets agitated)  
 Here I am spending my life wondering  
 why, no matter what I do, even girls  
 who look like me won't give me the  
 time of day.  
 (scoffs)  
 All I can come up with is women lie.  
 That's what they do and that's why  
 nothing matters.

Jared is silent and glaring at Dee behind the mask. He is  
 deadly still.

A long pause ensues. Dee swallows hard.

DEE  
 Have you talked to someone about  
 this?

JARED  
 You seemed like you'd be a good  
 listener. I guess that was a lie too.

DEE  
 I'm listening.

JARED  
 Yeah but listening and understanding  
 are different.

DEE  
OK. Tell me more.

Jared snorts.

JARED  
I wish you understood...

He looks away.

JARED (cont'd)  
...I wish you understood what it was like... everyday being the same. It's like being invisible. But I'm not. People can see me. They can see I'm in pain. *But MY pain doesn't matter.*  
(fighting back tears)  
I don't know why everyone else's pain matters but not mine.

Jared leans forward and puts his head in his hands and we can hear him start to cry. Dee is paralyzed with fear.

JARED (cont'd)  
(angrily shouting)  
You don't get it... you'll never get it. I'm sick of being the butt of the joke.

DEE  
Things can get better.

JARED  
(yelling)  
Things won't get better that's why we're fucking here!

Jared throws the mask off.

His face is red and wet with tears and his nose is running. He wipes his face on his sleeve and looks away from Dee.

Dee is visibly frightened because Jared has shown himself.

After a minute, she takes a deep breath fortifying herself to interact.

DEE  
I make videos so I can feel less alone. I'm always lonely too.

Jared turns to look at Dee when she says this.



JARED  
Bullshit. You got friends. I seen  
pictures of them. Shit forget  
friends, you got fans.

Dee looks down at her lap as to not challenge Jared.

DEE  
(whispered)  
Yeah but it's possible to be  
surrounded by people and still feel  
alone...

Jared looks away again. After a long pause.

DEE (cont'd)  
What should I call you?

Jared wiping tears and snot from his face pausing for a  
moment.

JARED  
(scoffing)  
It doesn't matter. It will all be  
over soon.

Dee looks down.

Jared stares at her for a long time. She's made an impact  
with what he perceives as honesty.

JARED (cont'd)  
Jared.

Dee realizes he has told her the truth about his name.

DEE  
(putting on a brave  
face)  
Hi Jared.

Jared looks at the food he brought earlier on the ground. A  
roach is crawling in it.

JARED  
You like hamburgers?

**EXT. FAST FOOD DRIVE THRU - EARLY EVENING**

Jared drives up to a drive-thru window. A cop car pulls up  
behind him.

Jared is so engrossed watching the COPS in the rear view mirror that he doesn't realize the FAST FOOD EMPLOYEE is handing him his order.

Jared collects 2 bags and two milkshakes and drives away and almost gets into an accident because he is so distracted by the cops.

**EXT./INT. DERELICT HOUSE - EVENING**

Dee is on the floor of the basement using her legs to try to pull her chain off the wall. She writhes trying to break free.

Jared enters the house with the bags of food and Dee hears him walking on the floor boards above.

She stops struggling, fixes her hair and wipes sweat off her brow so she doesn't look like she's been up to something.

Jared enters and sets the food near the mattress and flashes a weak, toothless smile. Dee attempts a smile back.

DEE

Thanks.

Jared opens his bag and starts hungrily eating a hamburger.

Dee opens the bag and takes a bite of a fry but she has difficulty swallowing it. They eat in silence.

JARED

This milkshakes good. Never had strawberry before.

Jared notices Dee isn't really eating.

JARED (cont'd)

You ain't hungry?

DEE

(sobbing)

Please let me go. I'm not going to tell anybody. You've been really nice to me. No one has to know.

JARED

I can't do that yet.

Hearing the word yet gives Dee some hope. She perks up a bit.

DEE  
 Yet.. so when?

Jared ignores the question and continues to eat.

DEE (cont'd)  
 Jared I'm sure you're not as alone as you think you are. You've got to have friends... parents that care about.

Jared slows eating and looks at Dee.

JARED  
 Not everybody does.  
 (after a pause)  
 The only person that cares if I live or die right now is you. And that's because I got you chained to a wall.

DEE  
 I'd care without the chain.

JARED  
 (shaking his head and squinting)  
 I don't think you would.

DEE  
 (gently)  
 There are professionals that can help you... if you talk to someone I'm sure..

JARED  
 (exasperated)  
 I'm talking to you! Talking won't help. I'm alone not crazy!

Jared throws down his sandwich and gets up from the chair. Dee flinches.

JARED (cont'd)  
 Completely alone!

Jared now paces angrily.

JARED (cont'd)  
 All that shit you say on your channel about being worthy of love no matter what. No matter what you do or say or how you look. You almost tricked me into believing that bullshit. But the reality is girls like you never give the time of day to people like me.

Jared stops pacing and faces Dee and points at her.

JARED (cont'd)

I don't think you make videos because you're lonely. I think you do it because you want to be famous. You want other people telling you that you matter. Shit you got 200,000 people who care what you say because you've tricked them into thinking you care about them. Another lie. You can't fucking help it.

Jared kicks over the chair and storms out.

Dee sits motionless on the bed holding back sobs.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - EARLY EVENING**

Jared enters his room and slams the door. He searches for a porn to watch.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Dee is pulling on her chains. She gets down on all fours to feel around for something that will help her pick the lock.

After a little while of searching she is elated to find a nail.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared masturbates and again feels disgusted with himself.

He cleans up and climbs into bed in the fetal position on top of his sheets.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared's alarm clock goes off and he wakes up on his bed in the same position he fell asleep.

**EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

He exits the house with his red work shirt and back brace in hand and stows them in his truck.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Dee is feverishly using the nail to file around the screws that mount her chains to the floor and she has made a little progress around one of the 4 screws.

She has bruises around her neck and her hands are bleeding from picking at the lock.

She hears Jared enter the house and she scrambles to get in the bed.

Jared first peaks his head in and then descends the stairs, stopping a few feet from the mattress.

He picks up the his hamburger he threw earlier and shakes a roach off his hand.

Dee has a stressed look on her face and is pretending to be asleep.

Jared exits and heads to his truck and drives off.

**INT. WALMART BACKROOM - NIGHT**

Jared arrives at work looking disheveled and out of it.

He looks so bad that for the first time he enters the stock room the Hispanic employees stop talking and regard him.

**INT. WALMART LOADING PLATFORM - NIGHT**

Jared parks the forklift and Dale approaches him.

DALE

Hey bud. You're looking a little long in the tooth. Everything OK?

JARED

Yeah.

DALE

Listen I know you have another day off this week but I was wondering if you could pick up one more of Jesús' shifts. He gets his stitches out tomorrow...

JARED

(cutting him off)  
I can't.

DALE

Oh I thought you'd want the overtime but it's probably better that you take that day off. You look like you need it.

Dale playfully hits Jared on the back and Jared give him a menacing glare and walks off.

The smile fades off of Dale's stupid, insipid face.

**INT. WALMART - MORNING**

Jared is picking up his usual energy drinks and a can of roach spray.

He passes by the electronics aisle on the way to the cash registers and stops at the rows of televisions playing news about Dee's abduction.

He is transfixed by the coverage staring like a deer in headlights. Marc approaches him.

MARC

Hey what's up my man. Shits crazy right.

Marc looks at Jared and sees he looks a bit off.

MARC (cont'd)

Yo you feeling alright.

JARED

Yeah. Think I'm... coming down with something.

Jared absently-mindedly swabs his sweaty forehead and Marc sees his injured hand.

MARC

Oh shit what happened to your hand?

JARED

Work. Razor blade.

MARC

First Jesús, now you. You guys gotta be more careful back there.

JARED

Nah mine's not that bad. Got a day off tomorrow so I'll rest it.

Jared offers a weak smile.

JARED (cont'd)

Later.

MARC

Later, man.

Marc watches Jared walk to the cash registers and sees Jaime notice Jared walking her way.

She quickly puts her break sign on and walks to the restroom.

Marc watches the interaction with a newly piqued interest.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - LATE MORNING**

Dee is working filing around the bracket of her chains.

The nail she is working with is now a nub and suddenly it breaks into pieces so small it's useless.

She pulls at the chains and they still won't budge.

She gets back on her hands and knees trying to search for another tool.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - LATE MORNING**

Jared enters his room pops the top on a energy drink takes a deep swig and then heads to the bathroom to shower.

**EXT. JARED'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Jared walks to the derelict house in what looks like his Sunday best, a button down shirt and slacks, carrying food and the Walmart bag with the roach spray.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

Jared enters the basement and we immediately see Dee on the ground against the wall looking at Jared. She looks matted, dirty and exhausted.

JARED

Morning.

DEE

Is it morning?

JARED  
Late morning. Almost afternoon.

Jared is in good spirits.

JARED (cont'd)  
Were the roaches bad last night?

DEE  
Yeah they're everywhere.

Dee shivers as she says this. Jared pulls the roach spray out of the bag and begins to spray the mattress base.

He picks up the bucket he left for Dee as a toilet which now has waste in. Dee looks away embarrassed. Jared carries it upstairs and disposes of it. He returns.

DEE (cont'd)  
When are you gonna let me go?

JARED  
Very soon.

Dee just stares at Jared with no emotion. A long pause ensues. Jared sits in the chair.

JARED (cont'd)  
Can I ask you something?

Dee shrugs.

JARED (cont'd)  
You believe in God. So that means you believe in heaven, right.

Jared regards the dirt crucifix behind Dee as he asks this.

DEE  
Yeah... why? Do you?

JARED  
I dunno know what I believe.  
(pause)  
But even if I thought I could get into to heaven... I'd just want everything to be over when I die... like just to be still in the darkness.

Jared's voice trails off.



DEE

Jared. It's not too late. You haven't done anything you can't come back from. We can walk out of here together.

Jared shakes his head.

JARED

I don't think so. There's no happy ending to this story... this is the only way.

DEE

What's the only way?

JARED

The only way that people will remember. I don't want anyone else to feel this way.

Dee looking scared.

DEE

Jared are you gonna kill me?

Jared looks at her for what feels like an eternity.

JARED

No.

(Jared shakes his head and pauses)

But you have something I need.

DEE

(hopeful)

What? Anything! Name it!

JARED

An audience.

**INT. WALMART STOCK ROOM - AFTERNOON**

Marc knocks on Dale's open office door.

MARC

Hey.

DALE

(mockingly)

Well hello. And to what do I owe this surprise Mr. bigshot I went to college quarterback man?

Dale's racism is on full display now and his southern accent is inflamed.

MARC

I need Jared Small's address. Want to check on him after my shift. He looked sick.

Dale raises his eyebrows and tilts his head cynically.

DALE

I... uh... didn't realize you guys were friends.

Dale sits down at his computer and types in Jared's name and then writes the address on a post-it note.

MARC

Yeah... he went to high school with my little brother. Got bullied a lot. Try to keep an eye out for him.

DALE

Well aren't you Mr. Wonderful.

Dale hands Marc the post-it and smiles condescendingly with his rotten teeth.

MARC

Thanks.

#### **INT. JARED'S ROOM - AFTERNOON**

Jared seated at his computer is putting the finishing touches on his video send off for the incel forum.

On the editing timeline he presses the space bar and watches a playback.

The video starts with Jared in his truck wearing the formal clothes he currently has on.

JARED

(on screen)

Hi @shyguyreply here. If you're watching this... I'm likely dead... hopefully

(slight chuckle)

But I wanted to give you a little context before I leave so here goes nothing. I'm 21 years old and I'm a virgin. I've never kissed a girl... shit I ain't even held one's hand.

(MORE)

JARED (cont'd)

Girls have never given me the time of day no matter what I did. I always tried to be nice and courteous. But to tell you the truth I never felt comfortable around them. I think they can smell weakness or something.

(a forced chuckle  
turns into tears)

I feel like I've been rotting in loneliness my entire life. Looking for some way to connect. But uh... that's all over now.

Tears falls silently down Jared's face and he brushes them away mustering composure.

JARED (cont'd)

I know a lot of people on here feel like this. Like if you slit your wrists right now, no one would shed a tear. I'm doing this so no one will ever feel as alone as I did in my life. Nobody's pain should be ignored. I did this for you my brothers.

Footage from the derelict house renovation plays and chloroform making with the chyron "Step 1: Planning." Then footage of the inside of Dee's apartment, Jared waving in the bathroom mirror. Footage of Dee's bedroom. Footage from under Dee's bed.

The video is edited with flashy cuts and zoom-ins like popular YouTube videos.

The YouTube live-stream footage of the abduction plays with the chyron "**The Deed**".

When Dee bites Jared the video pauses with a sound effects and the phrase "**no pain, no gain**" blinks in flashing letters.

Then there's a supercut of news anchors talking about the kidnapping. Similar soundbites are grouped together.

Finally, there is footage of Dee chained in the basement.

We return to Jared's direct address to the camera.

JARED

(on screen)

Now don't worry. Dee's fine. I just needed to borrow her YouTube channel for showtime.

(MORE)

JARED (cont'd)  
 (scoffing)  
 My parting gift to the world is mercy  
 even though it never showed me any.  
 @shyguyreply signing off.

Jared satisfied with the video, exports the file.

He stands and stretches and then sits back down and puts on a headset.

He puts his gaming headset on, logs into Call of Duty and joins a session.

JARED  
 Yo.  
 CALL OF DUTY PLAYER 1 (O.S.)  
 Yo JRod.  
 CALL OF DUTY PLAYER 2 (O.S.)  
 Sup Jdawg.  
 JARED  
 Sup.  
 CALL OF DUTY PLAYER 1 (O.S.)  
 Where ya been?  
 JARED  
 I've been busy. Finally got some time to kill.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - LATE AFTERNOON**

Dee is thrashing against her chains.

She manages to pull the one screw that she loosened free from the wall. She scrambles to retrieve it holding it dearly.

**EXT. WALMART PARKING LOT - DUSK**

Marc walks to his car with the piece of paper with Jared's address on it and drives away.

**INT. JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Jared still plays Call of Duty. It's after 7:30pm.

He hears Brandy leave for work. Jared gets up and peers through the living room window to see Brandy driving away.

Jared heads back to his room and pulls out the two guns from under his bed. He loads the shot gun and places it back into its carrying case and tosses the revolver and a knife in as well.

He changes into the kidnapping attire and places the black mask into a bag with a bunch of zip ties.

He then uploads the video he edited earlier to an incel forum with the header **"No more coping. Time to Rope. Showtime 8PM Est"** and then a link to Dee's Southern Gothic Sounds channel.

The video has an upload time of 14 minutes.

He pauses to look at himself in the mirror.

**INT./EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Jared exits the house and enters the derelict structure.

No sooner than Jared goes inside, Marc pulls up in his car.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Jared drops the case with the guns on the first floor.

Dee hears him enter, stops filing and hides the screw in her right hand and starts saying the Lord is my Shepherd prayer.

Jared hits himself a few times in the face to psych himself up and then descends the stairs to the basement.

**EXT. JARED'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Marc takes a deep breath and then exits his vehicle.

There are no lights on at Jared's house.

Marc looks around warily as he approaches. Few things are scarier than being a Black man in a poor white neighborhood.

He knocks on the door of the double-wide trailer and waits. Nothing.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Jared enters the basement and throws zip ties at Dee.

JARED  
(quietly intense)  
Put these on your feet.

Jared pulls duck tape out of his bag and starts duck taping an area in the corner which will become his phone mount.

Dee hasn't moved.

JARED (cont'd)  
(sternly)  
Feet! Now!

**EXT. JARED'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Marc knocks again. Nothing. He decides to case the building.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Dee has bound her feet and now Jared throws Dee another set of zip ties.

JARED  
Put these on your hands.

DEE  
(pleading)  
Why?

JARED  
Just do it!

Jared checks the time.

**EXT. JARED'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Marc looks in the windows and sees Brandy's cluttered room.

He walks around the trailer and can see Jared's computer with the upload screen.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Dee puts the zip ties on her hands while concealing the screw in her hand.

Jared approaches her and kneels down to tighten the zip ties on her feet.

Dee looks at him. As he tightens the ties on her feet she tightly grasps the nail in her hand.

Dee makes a split-second decision and instead of stabbing Jared, she gently holds his face in her hands and looks into his eyes, dropping the screw.

DEE  
(crying)  
Jared we can fix this. Please, let me help you. Pray with me.

Jared looks into her eyes and seems to contemplate it for a second.

He then locks the zip ties to the chain behind Dee's back and places a piece of duck tape over her mouth and she lets out muffled screams.

**EXT. JARED'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Satisfied no one is home Marc heads back to his car.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Jared runs upstairs and brings the gun case to the basement. Dee cries through the duck tape.

**INT. MARC'S VEHICLE - NIGHT**

Once inside his car Marc scratches his head.

His phone buzzes with a notification that Southern Gothic Sounds is live.

He looks confused but clicks on the notification.

The video is titled "**Watch Until the End for Dee's Location**"

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Jared wearing the mask films Dee.

JARED (O.S.)  
 (whispering imitating  
 Dee)  
 Hi Tingle Monsters. We have a very  
 special video for you today.

Jared turns the camera from Dee to himself. We can see  
 comments coming in.

JARED  
 Hi I'm Jared. And that's Dee but  
 y'all know that. Dee and I have been  
 hanging out, getting to know each  
 other. Say hi Dee.

Jared points the camera at Dee who is screaming beneath the  
 duck tape. He sits in the foldable chair.

JARED (cont'd)  
 She's a really nice person and I feel  
 bad using her to get to you like  
 this. But it couldn't be helped.

Jared turns the camera on the shotgun.

JARED (cont'd)  
 I needed you to see what happens when  
 you push an "inferior man" too far.  
 What happens when someone is utterly  
 alone.

Jared gets up and sticks the camera to the duck tape mount.  
 In the frame is the empty folding chair and Dee.

JARED (cont'd)  
 This is what you get.

**INT. WALMART - NIGHT**

Jaime gets a text on her phone.

DEVON  
 (on screen)  
 Are you watching this?? [youtube  
 link]

Jaime clicks on the link and her eyes widen.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Jared sits down in the chair.



JARED

So before we get down to business I told y'all I'd tell you where Dee's at and I'm a man of my word. She's 3672 Seagull Court in Montgomery, Alabama.

**INT. MARC'S VEHICLE - NIGHT**

Marc closes the video and calls 911.

MARC

(repeating)

3672 Seagull Court. 3672 Seagull Court.

As he repeats the address he realizes that its the same address written on the post-it note. It's Jared address.

Marc exits his car and cautiously approaches the double-wide trailer again.

911 OPERATOR

911. What's your emergency?

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Jared picks up the shotgun. He looks at Dee and smiles.

JARED

Showtime.

Jared removes the mask and places the gun barrel in his mouth.

He stretches his arm to reach the trigger and closes his eyes.

**INT. WALMART ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - SAME TIME**

Jaime and a crowd of Walmart employees stand watching the live stream on TV in the electronics department.

There is a collective gasp when Jared removes his mask.

JAIME

Ha, harmless my ass.

**EXT. JARED'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Marc on the phone with 911 looks in Jared's windows again.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Jared has the gun barrel in his mouth but he hesitates. A minute goes by.

He starts to cry and drool. He twitches and struggles.

He can't do it.

**EXT. JARED'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Brandy comes back to the house having forgotten something and sees Marc loitering around her property.

BRANDY

Who are you and what the hell are you  
doing on my property?

MARC

Does Jared Smalls live here?

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Jared is blubbering like a child and finally takes the gun barrel out of his mouth only to stick it back in.

Another minute of twitching and struggle goes by.

He collapses crying. Realizing he can't do it he drops the shotgun.

Defeated, he picks up the revolver and knife.

He manically approaches Dee with the knife on his knees and she is terrified.

Suddenly, he cuts the zip ties from the chain freeing her hands.

He places the handgun in her hand and then lays his head in her lap.

JARED

(sobbing)

Please. You have to do it. You have  
to do it. Please. Please.

Dee is frozen. She just stares not blinking. The gun is a foreign object to her.

Jared grabs her hand and guides the gun to his temple.

JARED (cont'd)  
(Sobbing)  
Please. Please. Please. Do it.

**EXT. JARED'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Marc retreats to his car as Brandy shouts at him getting increasingly aggravated by the minute.

BRANDY  
You've got 'til the count of 10 to get off my property or I'm getting my shotgun.

MARC  
The police will be here any minute.

BRANDY  
One...two...

Two shots ring out from the derelict house cutting the conversation short.

Marc runs instinctually towards the abandoned house and Brandy stands there looking stunned.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Dee has shot her chains.

She throws Jared off of her and hops towards the stairs but he tackles her to the ground.

Jared climbs on top of her and brings her hand with the gun to his head.

JARED  
(with utter desperation)  
Please Dee. You gotta finish this. I can't do it. Please! Pull the trigger.

Snot pours from his face down onto Dee's.

Suddenly, Marc pulls Jared off Dee and starts beating him.

Punch after punch after punch Jared is stunned and motionless.

Dee clutches the gun and scurries to the corner of the room.

**EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Cop cars arrive and start to surround the house.

Brandy is speechless and doesn't know what to do.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Marc in a frenzy keeps punching Jared.

DEE  
Stop! You're killing him.

Jared's face is a bloody mess and he borders on unconsciousness.

Dee fires a warning shot at the roof.

DEE (cont'd)  
(screaming)  
I said stop.

**EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Upon hearing the shot the police spring into action.

Brandy looks on bereft and worried.

**INT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Police bust into the basement and shout at Marc who puts his hands on his head but is still forcibly thrown to the ground by multiple officers at gun point.

A FEMALE OFFICER approaches Dee.

FEMALE OFFICER  
It's OK. Put the gun down.

Dee complies sobbing and shaking and the female officer throws a blanket around Dee and works to unbind her feet.

FEMALE POLICE OFFICER  
Can you walk?

Dee shakes her head yes and hobbles up the stairs with the help of the police officer.

The background is a blur of police activity.

A POLICE OFFICER yanks Jared's phone off the wall ending the live stream.

**INT WALMART ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - SAME TIME**

The flabbergasted crowd watches as the live stream ends. Dale is among them now.

WALMART EMPLOYEE

(to Dale)

Y'all wouldn't let my cousin work here cuz he failed his piss test but you got straight up psychos back there in the stock room.

**INT./EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Jared's unconscious body is loaded onto a stretcher. His face is unrecognizable; a swollen bloody mound of flesh.

He is wheeled outside to a blur of activity: multiple police cars have lights flashing and news vans with camera people are setting up across the street.

Brandy breaks free from the sidelines and runs to the stretcher.

BRANDY

(screaming)

That's my son! What have you done to my son?

Brandy cries next to the stretcher and then climbs into the ambulance.

Marc is cuffed and seated in a police car with the door open being questioned by a POLICE OFFICER.

**EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

Dee is wheeled out of the house on a stretcher to a press frenzy.

**EXT. DERELICT HOUSE - NIGHT**

Different news reporters cover Dee's emergence in real-time from different angles.

NEWS REPORTER 1

(on screen)

EyeWitness News reporting live from Montgomery, Alabama where kidnapping victim Deanna Taylor has just emerged from an abandoned house after being held for nearly 46 hours.

NEWS REPORTER 2

(on screen)

Behind me Deanna Taylor has just come out of this abandoned house and is being treated by paramedics.

NEWS REPORTER 3

Deanna Taylor has emerged from what is quickly becoming known as the Montgomery House of Horrors...

We pull back and see half a dozen other reporters saying a different version of the same thing.

As Dee is wheeled past a few reporters call out to her by name.

NEWS REPORTER 4

Dee how are you feeling?

NEWS REPORTER 5

Dee are you alright?

Dee is dazed and bewildered by the lights and noise of the media circus she now finds herself the center of.

She is wheeled into an ambulance amid a cacophony of reporters' shouts and cameras shutters, as we FADE TO:

**INT. NONDESCRIPT LOCATION - DAY**

We see a station change on a television set and the cold open of a true crime interview begins.

The voice of DEBORAH FORESTER, a Diane Sawyer-type journalist narrates as pictures of Dee, Jared and footage of the rescue play on the screen.

DEBORAH FORESTER (V.O.)

(on screen)

Tonight, the ultimate showdown between a social media influencer and the incel who stalked her. A crime designed to be broadcast in real-time to the internet. Deanna Taylor was kidnapped from her home during a live stream by an angry young man obsessed with her. Jared Smalls drugged, handcuffed and imprisoned Deanna Taylor in abandoned house and tonight you'll see footage for the first time obtained by the prosecution of the squalid conditions she was kept in. We sit down with Deanna to talk about her extraordinary ordeal, how her courage and compassion know no bounds, and the power of indestructible optimism and faith.

A slow pull back from the television set begins, so slowly it's almost imperceptible.

The cold open ends and we now see Deborah standing in a studio in front of a green screen that reads "Deanna Taylor: Her First Interview."

DEBORAH FORESTER

(on screen)

Good evening. So glad you're with us for this remarkable story. In her book *Second Chances are for Everyone: The Power of Forgiveness*, Deanna Taylor opens with a quote from the Dali Lama about compassion being the radicalism of our time. Indeed, Taylor has taken compassion to its radical limits within her own life. Hers is a story that will both shock and bring you hope. Tonight we sit down with Deanna Taylor for her first interview since the trial that sent shock waves through social media.

The intro ends and Deborah and Dee are seated together in a beige studio.

Dee is styled and coiffed and it looks like she has spent some of her book money on her appearance; a little filler here and botox there. She looks like a bonafide celebrity.

The slow pull back from the television reveals a white concrete wall behind the television set.

DEBORAH FORESTER (cont'd)  
 Deanna Taylor. New York Times best  
 selling-author. Social media star.  
 Kidnapping survivor. How would you  
 describe the Deanna Taylor seated  
 across from me now?

Dee takes a deep breath smiles and pauses. Her practiced  
 charisma has grown since the last time she was on camera.

DEE  
 You know, it's taken a long time for  
 me to figure that out. If you had  
 asked me that before all this  
 happened, I would have said a  
 nurturer; someone who likes to take  
 care of others. But now I can add  
 warrior to that list.

Dee smiles wide and genuinely.

DEBORAH FORESTER  
 You say in your book you are deeply  
 grateful for being kidnapped. That it  
 was the best thing that has ever  
 happened in your life.

DEE  
 Yes, I truly believe that.

DEBORAH FORESTER  
 You can understand how I, and  
 probably some viewers at home, are  
 perplexed by that statement, right?

DEE  
 Well, what I always say is my  
 kidnapping created a platform for me  
 to reach more people with my message  
 of light and hope.

DEBORAH FORESTER  
 You have over 10 million social media  
 followers. That's more than a lot  
 movie stars.

DEE  
 Yes and that's all possible because  
 of the worst two days of my life. The  
 Lord works in mysterious ways.

Dee beams and Deborah nods her head maudlinly.

The segment cuts to footage with Deborah's voice over.



DEBORAH FORESTER (V.O.)

And what a harrowing two days they were. It is June 16th, 2020. Deanna Taylor, then a popular ASMR YouTuber, is kidnapped on a live stream, drugged and chained to a wall in a basement. Her attacker, Jared Smalls, a 23-year-old Walmart employee who stalked her through social media and planned her attack to be broadcast on YouTube in real-time, pleaded guilty to the crime. The footage we are about to show you is graphic. Viewer discretion is advised.

A clip of the live stream kidnapping plays. Then a clip of the basement conditions plays.

The camera has pulled back far enough away from the television to see that it's mounted and playing in some sort of sterile room.

DEBORAH FORESTER (V.O.) (cont'd)

For 46 hours, Deanna Taylor was forced to strip, defecate in a bucket and was subjected to the hostile suicidal rantings of an unstable young man who felt he had been scorned by women and the world.

The camera has pulled back behind a person sitting in a PRISON REC ROOM. We see the back of his head.

It is Jared watching the interview from prison.

As he watches he scrolls through Dee's Instagram account on a computer. He passes various scriptural posts, Dee with pop stars, Dee with the Dali Lama, Dee promoting a spoken word album, a shampoo, and her book.

Jared's nose is now crooked and his left eye sunken in. He looks harder, more self-assured now.

He has several visible jailhouse tattoos on his forearms, one of which is a raccoon.

There is one other PRISONER in the room playing solitaire who now looks up from his card game.

PRISONER

Ha that's you ain't it.

Jared shoots him a glance and then looks back at the TV.

PRISONER (cont'd)

I get it. I get it. You're big shot now.

DEBORAH FORESTER

(on screen)

In your book you talk about meeting your attacker Jared Smalls for the first time in captivity and instead of fear you said you were overwhelmed with a sense of compassion for him. This is a man who forcibly ripped you from your home in front of an audience and chained you to a wall for two days.

DEE

Yes. Yes he did that. But I truly believe something bigger brought us together.

DEBORAH FORESTER

For what purpose.

DEE

To make both of our lives better.

The prisoner scoffs at that.

PRISONER

You think you're better off now? Shoulda killed her when you had the chance.

Jared continues to ignore the prisoner as the interview segment cuts to Deborah in front of the green screen where she sends off to a commercial break.

DEBORAH FORESTER

(on screen)

Truly an incredible young woman. When we come back, we talk to Deanna Taylor about those 46 hours with her capture, her dramatic rescue and how the new love in her life played a central role in freeing her from captivity.

Images of Marc and Dee embracing flash on the screen behind Deborah. A PRISON GUARD enters the rec room with a cart full of mail.

PRISON GUARD

Smalls you've got mail... again.

The guard hands Jared a thick stack of envelopes with delicate penmanship. They've all been opened and resealed with tape.

Jared holds a few up to the light and then selects one to open. He carefully tears the tape off.

The prisoner watches as Jared removes a handwritten letter and photobooth strip of a woman making kissing faces while holding his mugshot up next to her face.

A wide smile breaks across Jared's face.

END