

VENGEANCE
LIFE HAS NO SEQUELS

Written by

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A young, pretty girl, MILLIE (18, blonde, the kind who could make a living as a model) is laying on her bed, home alone, as film credits scroll on her TV.

She is obviously a "girly girl" - pink duvet, pink t-shirt, stuffed animals on her bed. But she has this gloomy feel about her.

On her bed-side table is a framed photo of her and her EX-BOYFRIEND. She turns it face-down.

MILLIE
(Frustrated, betrayed.)
Ugh.

She gets up, phone on the table, grabs her ROBE and steps into...

ENSUITE

The bathroom is overly tidy - like the kind of tidy you'd expect in a rich-person's mansion. Not a spot on the mirror.

She turns on the shower, hangs up her robe and begins to undress - even her undergarments are pink. It's clear that she is unusually nervous.

PSYCHO-LIKE SHOT OF THE SHOWER

She puts her hand under the water, it's freezing.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
C'mon.

Her PHONE RINGS in the bedroom.

She puts on her robe and wanders back into her

BEDROOM

It's an unknown caller ID.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
(Phone to ear.)
Hello.

VOICE (V.O.)
(Menacing.)
Who is this?

MILLIE

The person who's phone you rang...
who's this?

VOICE (V.O.)

A nightmare come true.

MILLIE

Tommy? This is ridiculous okay,
it's over- we're over. Get over it.

VOICE (V.O.)

I'm not Tommy.

MILLIE

(Confused, a little
worried.)

You're not?

VOICE (V.O.)

No.

MILLIE

What do you want?

VOICE (V.O.)

I want to see what you look like on
the inside.

MILLIE hangs up and shivers, before walking back into the

BATHROOM

Which is now full of steam. She disrobes and steps into the
shower (phone still in her bedroom).

PHONE RINGS.

She ignores it.

CUT TO:

2

INT. FILM HOUSE. BATHROOM - A LITTLE LATER

2

MILLIE is stood in-front of the mirror, in her robe, drying
her hair.

PHONE RINGS.

She takes a deep breathe and walks into her

BEDROOM.

She picks up the phone.

MILLIE

Hello?

VOICE (V.O.)

Hello, Misty.

MILLIE

H-How do you know my name? Leave me alone or I'll call the police!

VOICE (V.O.)

They won't get here in time!

She takes a deep breathe.

MILLIE

Listen, I have a boyfriend and he's big and strong and he'll knock you out!!

VOICE (V.O.)

Is this the same boyfriend who's photo you turned over.

Beat.

VOICE (V.O.)

That's right Misty.

(Almost singing.)

I can see you!

(Menacing.)

You look gorgeous in that robe though I have to say, I prefer you without it.

MILLIE

Shut up. Stop.

VOICE (V.O.)

You know, a lot of damage can be done these days with smart phones. Especially ones with CAMERAS!

Her phone VIBRATES.

She takes it from her ear - a notification appears.

She presses on it... it's a photo of her NAKED from before.

She shrieks and drops the phone on her bed before picking it up again.

MILLIE
What do you want? How did- What?

VOICE (V.O.)
Listen here you do as I say-

MILLIE
SCREW YOU!!

She hangs up and runs gripping her phone tightly...

CUT TO:

3 INT. FILM HOUSE. DOWNSTAIRS - MOMENTS LATER 3

MILLIE locks the front door, then RUNS to the backdoor and locks it.

PHONE RINGS.

She screams, but answers.

MILLIE
(Crying.)
What do you want?

VOICE (V.O.)
I WANT YOU TO PAY!

She shrieks.

VOICE (V.O.)
But before I make *that* happen, I want to play a game. It's a game called... did you lock me in or out of your house??

She cries and hangs up the phone.

GLASS SMASHES.

She shrieks.

Slowly, she moves her way around the corner to see the living room window has been broken with a brick.

DEATHLY SCREAM as she is STABBED IN THE BACK.

Blood runs down her leg and stains her robe.

She falls to the floor as THE KILLER dressed in ALL BLACK with a WHITE THEATRE MASK towers over her.

On all fours she crawls towards the kitchen.

The killer strides towards her, grabs her hair and pushes the knife into her chest.

The killer throws her onto the floor. She rolls onto her back.

MILLIE
 (Gargling on her own
 blood.)
 Please-

She lets out a BLOOD CURDLING SCREAM as the knife comes down on her.

MIKE (O.S.)
 CUT!

MILLIE sits up.

MILLIE
 How was it?

The killer removes her mask - it's actually OLIVIA (teen), also beautiful but a brunette rather than blonde.

MIKE, the director of this film, also a teen and not somebody who could make a living as a model...

Millie stands up as CAIT (short, brunette, boom op.) hands her her clothes. Millie goes around the corner to change.

SERENA (goth, 1st AC) is also present with JASON (smart, horror movie buff, camera op.) and PETER (phone guy with a voice changer).

MIKE
 It's good but you need to work on your face a little. We can reshoot the shower scene tomorrow.

MILLIE
 My face?!

MIKE
 You just look very nervous.

Millie pokes her head around the corner.

MILLIE
 Maybe that has something to do with the fact you're filming my TITS!

MIKE
You agreed to it...

She comes back out fully dressed.

MILLIE
(Sassy.)
...Because of the cheque.

JASON
To be fair, you don't have much to
be nervous about.

Serena arms-butts him.

JASON (CONT'D)
What?! Actresses, especially those
in horror get famous by showing
their tits?

MIKE
He has a point - it'll be good for
your career.

MILLIE
(Angry.)
My career?! If anything it'd damage
my career!! There is no reason for
me to be naked! The only reason
this scene exists is so that you
can fulfill your fantasy of seeing
a girl's boobs because your
girlfriend doesn't trust or like
you enough to get 'em out for you.
You're creepy and weird! You
literally get a hard-on just from
me taking my shirt off. God-forbid
a girl wears a BRA.

MIKE
No-

MILLIE
-Shut it! Also.. this movie..
SUCKS!! It's a steaming pile of
garbage! It's not even original!

She moves over the camera and removes the SD card.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
It's like if Temu got into the
movie business. It's cheap and
tacky. You're ripping off 'Scream'!

MIKE

What are you doing? Give me- put it back!

MILLIE

I hope you took a good, long look at this body because you ain't filming it anymore!!

She storms off.

JASON

Did she really just do that?

CAIT

Girl boss, wow!

OLIVIA

(Laughing towards Mike.)
She's got more balls than you! And she's right about the whole nude thing 'cos I didn't write that in the script.

MIKE

She'll get over it.

She swings her middle finger in the air as she swings open the front door.

CUT TO:

4

INT. MILLIE' HOUSE. FRONT HALLWAY - LATER

4

The MILLIE is on the phone to her boyfriend as she walks through the front door.

MILLIE

(Into the phone.)
It's ridiculous. The guy couldn't direct someone down the street never-mind direct an entire movie!

She clearly does NOT lock the front door.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

I know.

Beat.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

You said, you were right.

Beat.

She walks into the

LIVING ROOM

and slumps on the sofa, turning on the TV.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

It was a lot of money for a film nobody was ever gonna see - it's fine. Besides, I took the SD card.

Beat.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

Yeah I'm gonna wipe it.

Beat.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

(Somewhat disappointed.)
Seriously?... Fine. You can watch it ONCE. Then it's gone!

Beat.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

I don't know, I was thinking a romance- DON'T forget the popcorn.

Beat.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

Okay, love you too. Drive safe.
Bye.

She hangs up and flips her shoes off.

Her PHONE RINGS. It's an unknown caller...

MILLIE (CONT'D)

Hi, who's this?

VOICE (V.O.)

(Softly.)
I don't know, who's this?

MILLIE

Mike? You rang me?

VOICE (V.O.)

Who's Mike? I must have dialed the wrong number.

MILLIE
Oh, no worries.

She hangs up.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
Idiot.

PHONE RINGS.

She picks up.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
(Uneasy.)
Hello?

VOICE (V.O.)
(Softly.)
You hung up on me.

MILLIE
(Agitated.)
You dialed the wrong number?

She gets up and heads to the

KITCHEN

VOICE (V.O.)
Maybe I wanna talk to you.

MILLIE
Why would you want to talk to me?

She begins to make her and her boyfriend (still not home) drinks and prepare some snacks.

VOICE (V.O.)
I don't know. I believe everything happens for a reason so if I called you by mistake... there must be a reason.

MILLIE
I'm not the religious type, I don't believe in destiny and "God has a plan" and "everything is meant to happen" and all that.

VOICE (V.O.)
I don't believe in God either - I'm just nosey. Do you have a job?

MILLIE
I'm an actress.

Millie opens a cabinet door.

VOICE (V.O.)
Is there anything I might have seen
you in? What's your name?

MILLIE
Millie and not really. I do a lot
of independent films, slasher
films, student projects that kind
of thing. The only film I've done
that really went anywhere was
'Knife 7 - Blood And Gore'.

Millie closes the cabinet door.

VOICE (V.O.)
I thought I recognized your voice,
you're famous! Working on anything
at the moment?

MILLIE
I was working on a slasher film but
I quit, the director was too pervy
for me.

VOICE (V.O.)
A slasher, huh. Ever seen 'Scream'?

MILLIE
Yes. Actually that slasher film was
basically a rip-off of Scream.

Millie opens the fridge door.

VOICE (V.O.)
You were the Drew Barrymore of the
production then. The "big name",
the star. The reason people want to
see it.

MILLIE
No, I think my chest was the reason
people would have seen it. Besides,
Drew Barrymore died like ten
minutes into that film.

VOICE (V.O.)
And so will you.

Millie closes the fridge door.

MILLIE
(Confused.)
Sorry?

VOICE (V.O.)
Unlike you.

Glass can be heard smashing in the distance.

MILLIE
...Right.

VOICE (V.O.)
You know, the crew of that film
you're working on are some bad, bad
people.

MILLIE
Tell me about it.

VOICE (V.O.)
Seriously, they killed a young girl
and some guy getting the money to
produce it.

MILLIE
How do you know?

VOICE (V.O.)
And they're paying you, which means
that girl died so you can get your
nails done.

MILLIE
(Worked up.)
I'm hanging up.

Floorboards can be heard creaking.

VOICE (V.O.)
(A guttural roar.)
HANG UP ON ME AND I'LL CHOP YOU
INTO A HUNDRED PIECES!!

Millie's heart hammers against her ribs. She doesn't just stand there; she bolts for the butcher block, sliding a heavy chef's knife from the wood.

MILLIE
(Voice trembling but
sharp.)
You're in my house. I have a
weapon! I'm calling the police!

VOICE (V.O.)
Turn around.

She spins, slowly, knife leveled, but the space is empty. The silence is deafening. She turns back to the counter to grab her phone—

THWACK.

The KILLER is there, slamming a gloved hand onto hers, pinning it to the granite. He plunges a blade toward her midsection. Millie twists, taking a shallow graze to her side instead of a lethal blow.

MILLIE
(A primal scream.)
GET OFF ME!

She drives her elbow into the Killer's mask. He reels back, but she doesn't wait — she flings a heavy glass bowl of fruit at his head. It shatters against his shoulder.

The Killer recovers instantly, lunging over the island. Millie ducks, grabbing the empty kettle and flinging it towards him.

She scrambles toward the living room, but he tackles her into the coffee table.

CRASH.

Wood splinters. They roll across the floor in a frantic scramble for the knife.

KILLER
(Pinning her down, voice vibrating with rage.)
My sister... she caught that director stealing. He killed her to steal money for his "art"!

He raises the blade. Millie grabs his wrist with both hands, the tip of the knife inches from her throat.

MILLIE
(Gasping, straining.)
I... didn't... know!

KILLER
I know. But the stars always have to go first. You're just the opening act!
(MORE)

KILLER (CONT'D)

You're here to be on the poster
with top billing, we can't afford
to have you around any longer!

With a burst of adrenaline, Millie kicks upward, her knee between the killer's legs. The killer's grip slackens. She rolls out from under him, reaching for a heavy floor lamp to swing—

But the Killer is faster. He sweeps her legs. She hits the floor hard, the air leaving her lungs in a wheeze. Before she can recover, he's on her.

He drives the knife down. STAB.

She gasps, her hands clutching at his sleeves, trying to push him off, but her strength is fading.

KILLER (CONT'D)

(Whispering now, leaning
into her ear.)

They say the first kill is the
hardest. You're my practice.

STAB.

Millie's movements become sluggish, a frantic drumming of sneakers against the carpet that slowly slows to a rhythmic thud... then silence.

The Killer stands, breathing heavily, looking down at his "practice".

The killer slashes Millie's neck; blood spews everywhere.

SMASH CUT TO:

TITLE CARD.

FADE TO:

TEXT: "SIX MONTHS EARLIER."

FADE TO:

5 EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

5

Summertime. A flickering fluorescent sign hums over a puddle of oil and rainwater, casting a sickly green light over the lot. Under the harsh buzz, a red car sits idling, its muffler rattling like a wet cough.

Inside, the dashboard is a graveyard of empty Red Bull cans, crumpled fast-food wrappers, and scratched, burnt-out CDs. Through the condensation, the silhouettes are locked in a heated, overlapping argument—fingers pointing, heads shaking.

The car doors swing open simultaneously, the heavy thud of metal echoing off the empty street.

MIKE slams the driver's side door, the force rocking the chassis. PETER frantically taps his iPhone, holding it up to the dark sky, searching for a bar of signal that isn't there.

From the back, OLIVIA steps out, her hands trembling as she adjusts a thick jersey headband. She's followed by SERENA and JASON.

They stand huddled in the flickering glow, the hum of the sign vibrating in their chests. All of them wearing cheap plastic animal masks — a pig, a wolf, a rabbit—over their faces

MIKE
(A sharp whisper.)
Let's go.

The group moves as a pack, their sneakers scuffing against the grit. Mike leads the charge, shoulder-charging the glass door so hard the bell above it nearly rattles off its hinges.

CUT TO:

6 INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

6

The bell's chime is cut short by the sound of boots on linoleum. PETER hovers by the door, his eyes darting wildly between the street and the counter. The others storm the aisles, their chaotic energy shattering the graveyard silence.

CASHIER
Hey! What is this?

The CASHIER, a man with skin as white as paper and eyes rimmed with exhaustion, freezes behind the plexiglass.

CASHIER (CONT'D)
Guys, stop! What do you want,
just—what do you want?!

Serena and Jason begin sweeping shelves. Bags of chips explode underfoot; cans of soup roll across the floor like thunder.

MIKE

(Voice muffled by the
mask.)

Shut up and empty the till.
Everything. Even the coins.

CASHIER

But—I don't—

MIKE

No questions!

Mike reaches into his hoodie, pulling out a crumpled plastic bag. He tosses it onto the counter. Then, with a fluid, terrifying motion, he pulls a handgun from his rear waistband and levels it at the Cashier's forehead.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I suggest we do this the quick and
easy way. Or the messy way. Your
choice, old man.

Behind them, Olivia and Serena rip open the glass fridges, the hum of the compressors rising. They shove heavy bottles of liquor into black bin bags, the glass clinking with a rhythmic, sickening sound.

In Aisle 4, CHLOE (10) cowers behind a display of cereal boxes. Her eyes are wide, fixed on the man with the gun. She's frozen, a small bag of gummy bears gripped in her hand.

The Cashier's hands shake so violently he can barely slide the bills into the bag.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Hurry. My patience is thin.

Mike adjusts his stance to face the others, but as he shifts, the cheap elastic band on his mask—strained to its limit—snaps. The plastic pig face clatters to the floor.

Mike freezes. He catches Chloe's gaze through the gap in the shelving. He grabs the mask and holds it to his face.

He turns back to face the Cashier.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Sorry.

He shoots the Cashier, then turns back towards Chloe - still holding the mask to his face.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(Deathly quiet.)
Did you see me?

He begins to walk. Not a run, but a slow, predator march toward the end of the aisle.

CHLOE
(Whimpering.)
No... please...

MIKE
I said, did you see me?

He rounds the corner, pointing the gun down at her. The girl shrinks into the metal shelving, her small frame shaking the entire display.

CHLOE
(Sobbing.)
No! I didn't see anything!

MIKE
(A cold realization.)
You did. You're looking right at me.

PETER
(From the door.)
Woah? Woah, what are you doing?
Let's just go! You've already
killed a guy, let's just go.

Mike doesn't blink. He pulls the hammer back.

BANG.

The sound is deafening in the small space. The smell of ozone and burnt powder fills the air.

PETER (CONT'D)
Whoa! Whoa! No!

OLIVIA
(Screaming.)
Not the plan, dude! This wasn't the plan!

JASON
(Backing away.)
You said no one gets hurt!

Mike marches back toward the till, ignoring them. He doesn't bother holding his mask as it falls to the floor.

He reaches over the counter, grabs the bag of money - now stained with a splash of red - and looks at his crew with eyes that have gone completely hollow.

MIKE

Plan changed. I'll figure it out. I need everyone to do what I say. Got it? Move.

He strides out of the store into the rain. The others stand paralyzed for a heartbeat before the sound of a distant siren snaps them into motion. They scramble out, leaving the door swinging.

We see CAIT stood with her hand over her mouth in tears hiding in the doorway to the restrooms.

CUT TO:

7

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

7

The club is a neon-soaked fever dream. A heavy bass line thumps, less like a heartbeat and more like a migraine in the making.

MIKE stands at the bar. He's wearing a fitted shirt and a watch that probably cost more than his car. He's currently holding a martini glass with such intense focus you'd think he was performing surgery. He's trying to look like a high-stakes gambler, but he keeps checking his reflection in the polished brass of the bar.

PETER and JASON are in a nearby booth with SERENA and OLIVIA, watching Mike like he's a science experiment they're hoping won't explode.

Mike signals the BARTENDER with a slow, practiced nod he definitely practiced in his bathroom mirror. He doesn't notice CAIT slide onto the stool next to him. She's in a vibrant red dress.

CAIT

(Shouting over the bass.)
Are you okay? You're holding that glass like it's a live grenade.

Mike jumps slightly, his "cool" mask slipping instantly. He nearly sloshes gin onto his sleeve.

MIKE

(Recovering, with a crooked grin.)
It's a very heavy glass. I'm Mike.

He goes to shake her hand. She looks at him weirdly and he slowly retracts it.

Cait chuckles.

CAIT

I'm Cait. I just moved back to the city. Is the "staring intensely at the olives" a local tradition, or are you just hungry?

MIKE

(Laughing at himself.)
Is it that obvious? I was going for "Sophisticated Urbanite," but I think I landed closer to "Man Who Forgot His Reading Glasses."

CAIT

(Smirking)
It's a fine line. At first I thought you were a businessman wearing that oh so tight shirt to a place like this.

MIKE

(Nodding toward his friends.)
Tell that to my "board of directors" in the booth. They're currently betting five dollars on whether or not I'll accidentally swallow a toothpick.

Jason gives a frantic, uncool wave from the booth. Mike closes his eyes for a second, mortified.

CAIT

(Amused.)
Your crew looks like they're waiting for you to lead them on a very disorganized quest.

MIKE

We're a work in progress. We're actually looking for new... members. People with better social skills than us. We make films. We're "filmies".

CAIT

(Teasing.)
I studied film actually. I was the top boom op out of all the girls.

(MORE)

CAIT (CONT'D)

Is there an application fee, or do I just have to be able to talk to people without staring at my drink?

MIKE

(Genuine smile.)
The "talking to people" part puts you in the top one percent. You're hired.

CAIT

(Raising her glass)
Good. Because I'm a very high-level recruit.

MIKE

(Clinking his glass against hers.)
I can tell. You've got "Manager of Operations" written all over that red dress.

CAIT

(Quietly in his ear.)
How long before you take that title off me?

Mike has a massive grin.

8

EXT. CITY STREET - LATER

8

A cold wind cuts through the alleyways. The sidewalk is mostly empty.

Mike and Cait walk side-by-side. Mike has his hands shoved deep in his pockets. Cait is shivering, her thin jacket clearly failing against the night air.

MIKE

You're freezing.

CAIT

(Teeth chattering.)
I'm fine. I'm just... vibrating with excitement about being back in the city.

Mike doesn't buy it. He stops, unzips his grey hoodie, and draped it over her shoulders. It's twice her size, making her look like she's wearing a tent.

CAIT (CONT'D)

(Pulling the collar up.)
Thanks, Mike. You're actually a
decent guy, aren't you?

MIKE

Don't tell anyone. I have to
maintain a certain level of
toughness for the guys in the
booth.

CAIT

(Looking at his watch.)
Right. The tough guy with the
expensive watch who hangs out with
two... cinephiles?

MIKE

(Grinning.)
The watch was a gift from my
grandmother. She thought it would
make me look like I have a real
job.

CAIT

(Stepping closer,
adjusting the hoodie
strings.)
It makes you look like a guy who
listens to his grandmother. Which
is way more attractive than a guy
who thinks he's an alpha.

She stands on her tiptoes and kisses his cheek. Mike stands
there, stunned, a massive, slightly dorky smile spreading
across his face.

MIKE

Does that kiss make this count as a
first date? Because I'd really like
a second one.

CAIT

(Laughing.)
Let's see if you can handle me
first!

MONTAGE - THE HONEYMOON PHASE

9 INT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT 9

They're watching a tear-jerker. Mike is trying to act unmoved, but he's secretly handing Cait tissues while wiping his own eyes.

10 EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT 10

Mike spends twenty dollars trying to win a stuffed panda. He fails miserably. Cait steps up, hits the target on her first try, and hands the bear to him with a smirk.

11 EXT. DINER PARKING LOT - NIGHT 11

They're leaning against Mike's car, sharing a basket of fries. They're laughing so hard at a story Mike is telling that he nearly chokes on a fry.

12 INT. MIKE'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT 12

The room is cluttered with typical twenty-something mess, lit by the amber glow of the streetlamp outside.

The atmosphere is warm and comfortable. They are tangled in the sheets, the earlier nerves gone, replaced by a genuine connection.

Mike exhales, resting his head on the pillow next to hers. He looks genuinely happy.

MIKE

(Whispering.)

I think that was the best second date in history.

Cait smiles, her eyes bright and sincere in the low light. She reaches out and softly runs her fingers through his hair.

CAIT

(Whispering back.)

I'm keeping the hoodie, Mike.

MIKE

I figured. It looks better on you anyway.

They both laugh softly as they settle into the quiet of the room.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I think I can find a way to
convince you to hand it back...

He kisses her – slowly this time, without the loud music or the audience of his friends. Cait reaches up, her fingers tangling in the hair at the back of his neck, pulling him closer.

There's a brief, clumsy moment where their knees knock together, and they both huff a little laugh against each other's lips. It's not a movie-perfect moment; it's better because it's theirs.

Mike's hands move to the hem of the sweatshirt, his touch hesitant and respectful. He looks into her eyes, checking in without needing to say a word. Cait nods softly, her gaze steady and warm.

As the oversized grey fabric comes off, the room feels smaller, more intimate. Mike's heart is thumping against his ribs—loud enough that he's sure she can hear it.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(Breathless.)

Is it just me, or did it get really
hot in here?

CAIT

(Pulling him down by his
collar.)

Shut up, Mike.

The teasing stops as they drift into a rhythm that feels natural. It's a tangle of limbs and soft exhales. Mike is focused on her, his movements gentle and attentive, while Cait grips his shoulders, her eyes locked on his.

Everything else—the robbery, the city, the stress of being nineteen—fades away. There's just the sound of their breathing and the occasional creak of the bed frame.

Later, Mike collapses onto the pillow beside her, his chest heaving. He's grinning at the ceiling like he just discovered fire.

MIKE

(Quietly)

Wow.

Cait rolls onto her side, propping herself up on one elbow. She looks at him, truly seeing him, and reaches out to brush a stray hair off his forehead.

CAIT

Yeah. Wow.

She leans down and kisses the tip of his nose, then settles into the crook of his arm, finally closing her eyes.

13 INT. FILM HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

13

The group (Mike, Cait, Jason, Peter, Serena, Olivia) are dressing the set and setting up the camera.

MIKE

I think we're just about ready for Millie to arrive... has anyone got questions?

Everyone shakes their heads.

MIKE (CONT'D)

No? Good.

Mike walks over the Cait who is putting together the boom pole.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(Cute.)

How's my favorite boom operator?

CAIT

Loving life.

They exchange a quick kiss.

CAIT (CONT'D)

Even though she's about to watch her boyfriend get another woman naked.

MIKE

(Seriously.)

She's an actress, this is a film. It's apart of life. It's not weird, okay? Everything is fine. I'm with you, I love you-

CAIT

I'm messing with you!

SERENA

(To Olivia.)

They're so weird.

CUT TO:

14 INT. BAR - NIGHT

14

A dive bar. Sticky floors, dim amber lighting, and the smell of stale beer.

The group is crammed into a corner booth. They look out of place—too young, too tense.

Peter, Jason, Olivia, and Serena are hunched over a glossy "TRAVEL NEW YORK" magazine. It's torn and stained.

Jason is tapping his foot non-stop.

Mike's leaning back, acting like he's already on vacation.

MIKE

I actually can't believe she stole the SD card. All that work for nothing.

Cait walks up to the booth.

CAIT

Hi, sorry I'm late.

Mike puts his arm around her.

OLIVIA

(Flipping pages.)
Everywhere we can get to is like three hundred a night. We don't have that kind of money.

MIKE

(To himself, quietly.)
Love getting ignored.

CAIT

(To Mike.)
Hmm?

Mike shakes his head slightly like "doesn't matter".

PETER

(Twitchy.)
We need somewhere private. Not a hotel.

SERENA

Why are we even doing this? We could just stay home.

MIKE

Because we're going crazy, Serena!
Look at Jason. He hasn't stopped
tapping his foot in twenty minutes.
We need to disappear for a weekend.
Reset. Re-think the film. Find
inspiration.

Cait leans forward, her eyes scanning the magazine. She reaches out and stops Olivia from turning a page.

Her finger lands on a small, grainy ad in the back corner of the "Budget Rentals" section. No professional photos. Just a shot of a dense tree-line and a sliver of dark wood.

"LAKESIDE CABIN - OFF THE GRID. LAST MINUTE CANCELLATION. CHEAP."

CAIT

Wait. Look at this one.

JASON

(Squinting.)

It doesn't even have a picture of
the inside.

CAIT

That's why it's cheap. It's my
uncle's neighbor's place. He
mentioned he was looking for
someone to fill the slot. It's way
up north. No cell service. No
neighbors for miles.

Peter perks up at "No cell service."

SERENA

"Way up north" is basically Canada.

OLIVIA

So? It's apart of America now.

Silence.

PETER

No. Just no.

SERENA

Cait, how cheap is "cheap"?

CAIT

Practically nothing. He just wants someone to keep the pipes from freezing. Maybe a couple hundred for the weekend.

Mike leans in, looking at the tiny ad. He feels the eyes of his friends on him. This is his chance to be the provider, the leader.

MIKE

No neighbors?

CAIT

Just the trees and the lake.

Mike looks at the group. He slams his hand down on the table, rattling the empty glasses.

MIKE

That's the one. Lock it in, Cait.

PETER

You sure? We don't know the area.

MIKE

(Grinning.)

That's the point, Pete. Nobody knows the area. We'll be ghosts.

OLIVIA

(To Serena.)

You know what vacation means?

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

New wardrobe!

SERENA

New wardrobe!

PETER

(Having a drink.)

Dear God.

SERENA

Cait you have to come with us.

CAIT

(Giggling.)

Okay!

CUT TO:

15

INT. CLOTHING STORE

15

The shop is high-end, filled with the scent of expensive perfume and the upbeat thrum of a pop remix.

CAIT, OLIVIA, and SERENA have practically taken over the fitting room lounge. A mountain of discarded hangers sits on a velvet ottoman.

OLIVIA struts out of her stall. She's wearing a crimson silk slip dress that clings to every curve. She catches her reflection, tilting her hips to see the back.

CAIT

(Whistling low.)

Okay, wow. If you wear that, the guys are going to forget their own names.

OLIVIA

(Smirking at herself.)

It's a bit much isn't it?

CAIT

Is it not revealing enough for the Olivia brand?

SERENA

(Peeking out from her curtain.)

Ouch. Shots fired.

OLIVIA

(Winking.)

It's okay. If you've got the assets, you might as well provide the public service.

Beat.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

You know, I think this is giving your kind of energy.

Olivia tosses a tiny, sheer black top toward Cait. Cait catches it, blushing.

CAIT

I don't think my body confidence can handle this yet.

CAIT

Hey.

MIKE

What did you get?

Cait comes and lays next to him.

CAIT

Wouldn't you like to know...

She kisses him, gently.

Cait's phone RINGS.

CAIT (CONT'D)

Hang on...

She answers. It's an UNKNOWN CALLER.

CAIT (CONT'D)

Hello?

The call is nothing but HEAVY BREATHING.

CAIT (CONT'D)

(Confused.)

Hello?

She puts the call on speakerphone.

CAIT (CONT'D)

Is anyone there?

Still just HEAVY BREATHING.

Cait hangs up.

MIKE

Who was that?

CAIT

I don't know. A butt-dial maybe?

MIKE

That was creepy.

Mike's phone RINGS - UNKNOWN CALLER.

He picks up.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Hello?

VOICE (V.O.)
Hello, Mike.

MIKE
Did you just all my girlfriend?

VOICE (V.O.)
One down, six to go. First one was
easy, a practice if you will-

Mike hangs up.

MIKE
What a creep.

CAIT
What did he say?

MIKE
One down and six to go? "First one
was easy" Like a practice?

CAIT
Millie.

MIKE
Hmm?

CAIT
You didn't hear?

MIKE
Hear what?

CUT TO:

18 INT. MIKE'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER

18

Mike is on the phone to Peter, pacing around his room whilst
Cait lays on the bed disapproving.

MIKE
(Clearly angry.)
Unbelievable!! She quits my
project, steals the footage and
then dies!?

PETER (V.O.)
(Through the phone.)
I mean, she didn't "die" she was
killed.

Mike bangs his head against the wall.

PETER (V.O.)

Let's just enjoy this week away and then we can look at re-casting.

MIKE

Fine. Yeah. You're right. Let's chill for a while. Have some time off.

CUT TO:

19

EXT. CABIN GROUNDS - MIDDAY

19

The woods are cold and empty. Mike and his friends exit the taxi and grab their bags from the trunk.

TAXI DRIVER

(To Mike.)

Back here in five days?

MIKE

Please.

Mike pulls \$50 from his wallet.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Have a good rest of your day.

TAXI DRIVER

Same to you kid.

The Taxi moves away.

The cabin isn't too far from the road. The exterior is a patchwork of cedar planks, stained dark by decades of humidity and rot. Horizontal siding, popular in the 1970s, is now warped and peeling away from the frame like dead skin. A wrap-around porch moans under the weight of their footsteps, the floorboards soft and spongy with decay.

To the left, a rusted screen door hangs off a single hinge, tapping rhythmically against the house—thwack, thwack, thwack—a hollow heartbeat in the silence. The windows are small, framed in oxidized aluminum, their glass so clouded with grime and spiderwebs that they look like cataracts.

The air here is different—thick with the scent of pine needles, damp earth, and the metallic tang of the lake. The cabin doesn't just look old; it looks exhausted, its roofline sagging in the middle as if the house itself is finally ready to collapse into the dirt.

CUT TO:

20 INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS 20

The heavy oak door swings open with a wet, splintering groan. They don't just walk in; they linger on the threshold, hesitant. A thick, grey layer of dust hangs suspended in the air, caught in the beams of their iPhone flashlights.

They exchange looks of hollow-eyed regret. Nobody wants to be the first to close the door and lock them in.

21 INT. CABIN. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 21

SERENA stands in the center of the kitchen. Her flashlight beam sweeps over the linoleum, catching the glint of a rusted, antique mousetrap. She kicks it. It doesn't skitter; it sticks to the grime, leaving a dark streak. She drops her backpack on the counter. The glass bottles inside clink - a sharp, fragile sound that feels far too loud in the silence.

22 INT. CABIN. PETER AND OLIVIA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 22

PETER and OLIVIA enter a space that feels less like a bedroom and more like a cell. Peter tosses his bag onto a sagging twin mattress. A cloud of mildew and something metallic - like old blood - puffs into the air.

Olivia doesn't help him. She stands by the window. She uses two fingers to peel back a yellowed lace curtain, but there's no glass behind it - only a heavy, reinforced plastic sheet.

23 INT. CABIN. MIKE AND CAIT'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 23

The "master" bedroom. The wallpaper - a faded floral print - isn't just peeling; it's hanging in long, wet strips like flayed skin.

MIKE drops his bag and sits on the bed. The frame screams under his weight, a high-pitched metal-on-metal screech. CAIT doesn't move. She stays in the doorway, her arms wrapped tightly around her waist. She isn't looking at the room. She's staring at the dark hallway behind her, her eyes wide, listening to the house "settle."

24 INT. CABIN. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 24

JASON wipes a layer of black grime off the coffee table.

Underneath isn't just old magazines. It's a stack of "Reader's Digest" issues from the 70s, but the covers have been scratched with something sharp.

25 INT. CABIN. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 25

SERENA and OLIVIA pass each other in the narrow corridor. The floorboards don't creak; they thud, like a heartbeat. Olivia tries the bathroom door, but the lock is jammed from the outside. She punches the door, then it opens.

They don't speak. The silence is heavy, smelling of cedar, mothballs, and a faint, underlying scent of rotting meat. The city feels a thousand miles away.

26 INT. CABIN. PETER AND OLIVIA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 26

Peter sits on the edge of the bed. The blue light of his smartphone illuminates his face, making him look like a ghost.

NO SERVICE. He toggles the Cellular button. Nothing. He holds the phone up to the ceiling, desperate for a single bar, his breath coming in shaky, jagged hitches. He looks at the screen, then at the black window.

27 INT. CABIN. SERENA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 27

Serena grips the handle of the built-in wardrobe - the wood swollen and stubborn. With a sharp YANK, it gives way. Inside, standing stiffly amidst a few moth-eaten wool coats, is a life-sized wooden mannequin. Its face is a smooth, featureless oval of polished oak, save for two shallow pits where eyes should be. In the dim light, its articulated limbs are locked in a strange, half-reaching gesture. Serena recoils, a sharp, jagged SCREECH tearing from her throat. She stumbles back, hitting the edge of the bed frame.

SERENA

Cait!

CAIT (O.S.)
(From the hallway,
muffled.)

What?

SERENA

Come here!

Footsteps thud heavily on the hollow floorboards. Cait leans into the doorframe, wiping dust from her palms onto her jeans. She looks annoyed until she sees Serena's face.

CAIT
Everything okay?

SERENA

Look.

Cait moves to see into the wardrobe.

CAIT

(A low whisper.)
Jesus. That's creepy.

SERENA

I know. Why is it in there? Why is
it wearing that?

Serena points to a tattered, yellowing lace garment draped over the mannequin's torso, half-decayed and clinging to the wood like a second skin.

CAIT

Probably belonged to whoever lived
here before the world forgot this
place existed. Just... close the
door.

Serena reaches for the handle, but her hand stops inches away. The mannequin's head is tilted just a fraction more to the left than it was a second ago.

SERENA

I'm not touching it again. You do
it.

Cait grunts.

28

INT. CABIN. MIKE AND CAIT'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

28

The bed springs wail under Mike as he shifts his weight. He's still wearing his boots, the heels digging into a quilt that probably hasn't been washed for ten years. He keeps his hands pressed hard against his eyes, as if trying to rub the last hour out of his skull.

MIKE

This place is a dump.

His voice is flat, echoing off the walls. A moth flutters frantically against the ceiling light, a dull thump-thump-thump that sets his teeth on edge.

Cait steps into the doorway.

CAIT

(Softly.)
No, it's good. It's quiet.

MIKE

It's not. It's like a typical horror movie set. We're one chainsaw away from a cliché, Cait.

He drops his hands, staring up at a water stain on the ceiling that looks vaguely like a screaming face.

Cait doesn't move at first. She watches the tension in his jaw, the way his fingers twitch against the bedspread. Slowly, she crosses the room. The floorboards groan a warning, but she ignores it.

She crawls onto the bed, straddling his waist with her legs on either side of his denim-clad thighs. The shift in weight forces Mike to focus on her.

CAIT

Good job we're in a rom-com then.

She leans down, her hair falling like a curtain around their faces, sealing out the peeling wallpaper and the smell of rot. She puts her face close to his, but their lips don't touch.

Mike's hands move instinctively to her waist, gripping the fabric of her shirt. His knuckles turn white.

MIKE

You're beautiful.

CAIT

I know.

Cait lifts her shirt off and throws it onto the floor.

She brushes a stray hair from his forehead, her expression softening into something dangerously loyal.

CAIT (CONT'D)

(Playfully.)

Are you not going to touch me?

Mike bites his lip with a visible grin on his face.

CUT TO:

29

EXT. LAKESIDE PATH - LATE AFTERNOON

29

The trail down to the water is a steep, jagged scar through the pines. The ground is a treacherous mix of slippery needles and half-buried roots.

Mike leads the way, holding Cait's hand, still riding the high of his earlier encounter with Cait. Peter follows close behind, eyes glued to the screen of his phone, still with no service.

PETER

I'm telling you, the topography is the problem. If we just get closer to the waterline, there's a bounce-back effect. Physics, Mike.

MIKE

(Without looking back.)
The only thing bouncing back tonight is your ego when you realize you're disconnected from the internet, Pete. Look at the view. Smell that? Fresh air.

Beat.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What are you even gonna do when you get signal on that thing? Text your mom?

PETER

(Cowardly.)
I want to make sure my cat is okay.

Mike chuckles. Olivia and Serena walk arm-in-arm behind them, their sneakers crunching in sync. Olivia has her baby-blue sweater tied around her waist.

OLIVIA

(To Serena.)
If I die out here, I want you to tell my mom I was doing something noble. Like rescuing a baby deer. Not that I was eaten by a bear because Mike wanted to "explore nature".

SERENA

(Laughing.)
I'll tell her you went down fighting. But honestly? The way this cabin looks, the bear would probably get tetanus just stepping onto the porch.

CAIT

Guy's, we'll be fine okay.

JASON

I'm honestly expecting a sign for
"Camp Crystal Lake" anytime now.

Jason brings up the rear, carrying a heavy galvanized bucket filled with ice and a dozen green glass bottles. He's the only one not talking, his eyes scanning the dense thicket of trees with a quiet, growing unease.

The group breaks through the tree-line. The lake is vast, a sheet of hammered silver under the deepening sky. The water is unnaturally still, reflecting the jagged silhouette of the pines like a dark mirror.

A narrow, grey wooden dock juts out into the water, its pilings slick with black moss. Tethered to the end is a small, rusted rowing boat. It sits low in the water, half-filled with dark rain, swaying rhythmically with a hollow thump-thump against the wood.

MIKE

(Spreading his arms.)
See? What did I tell you? Private beach.

OLIVIA

It's beautiful. And terrifying. It looks like it doesn't have a bottom.

JASON

(Setting the bucket down with a heavy clink.)
It's deep. Glacial. Probably freezes solid in the winter.

MIKE

Good job its summer and roasting out.

Mike doesn't hesitate. He kicks off his boots and shoves his jeans down, stepping out of them with an arrogant flick. He looks at the rowing boat, tempted, but decides the water is a better stage.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Last one in does the laundry for the rest of the year!

PETER

Mike, wait! You're going to get hypothermia!

MIKE

(Sprinting down the dock,
the wood groaning.)

Nope. I'm gonna have the time of my
life! C'mon!

He hits the water with a massive, uncoordinated cannonball near the rowing boat. The splash echoes off the hills like a gunshot. A second later, he surfaces, gasping for air, his face a mask of shocked, freezing delight.

Olivia looks at Serena. A silent, competitive challenge passes between them.

OLIVIA

If I get a UTI from this, I'm suing
you Mike!

She pulls her sweater over her head. She looks ghostly and fragile against the dark, looming woods. She runs down the dock and leaps, her scream starting long before her feet hit the water. Cait follows immediately, her silhouette disappearing into the black reflection.

SERENA

(To Jason and Peter.)

Well? Are you guys going to join us
or just stand there like statues?

Serena sheds her clothes, standing in a black sports bra and shorts. She dives in with clean, athletic grace, barely making a ripple. Peter looks at Jason, who sighs and begins unlacing his heavy boots. Jason gives a small, rare smirk and follows them in.

The group splashes in the shallows, their laughter and shivering shouts filling the empty air, though the sound seems to get swallowed by the trees almost instantly.

OLIVIA

(Wading toward Cait.)

Do you think anyone actually lives
out here?

CAIT

Doubt it. It's isolated. That's the
point, right? No witnesses. No one
to tell us to turn the music down.

OLIVIA

(Quietly.)

It just... feels like the trees are
watching. Do you get that?

(MORE)

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Like the woods are leaning in to
hear what we're saying.

MIKE

(Surfacing right between
them, lunging.)

BOO!

Olivia screams, splashing him back. The tension breaks into a chaotic water fight, their splashing masking the rhythmic creak-creak of the rowing boat's rusted chain.

JASON

(Submerged to his
shoulders, watching the
shoreline.)

It's just the quiet, Liv. We aren't
used to it. The city doesn't have a
"mute" button.

Mike grabs the edge of the rowing boat, trying to pull himself up, but it tips dangerously, the dark water inside spilling back into the lake.

He looks back at the shoreline. The cabin sits there, a dark, rotting tooth against the trees.

CUT TO:

30

EXT. CABIN. WOODPILE - LATER

30

The rhythmic THWACK of the axe echoing from the side of the house has stopped. Mike and the others (all dripping from the lake) have headed back to the porch, their laughter muffled by the heavy timber walls. Jason remains by the stump, methodically stacking the split wood. He's sweating despite the chill, his movements precise and weary. Cait appears from around the corner of the cabin. She watches him for a moment, her silhouette framed by the long, bleeding shadows of the pines.

CAIT

You're the only one actually
working, Jason. You know Mike won't
thank you for it. He'll just take
the credit for the warmth.

Jason doesn't look up. He places a log on the pile, aligning the edges.

JASON

I'm not doing it for Mike. I'm doing it because if I sit still for too long in that house, I feel like I'll start to hear the walls talk.

Cait steps closer, her boots crunching on the dry needles. She picks up a small splinter of wood, rolling it between her thumb and forefinger.

CAIT

What do you think they'd say? The walls.

JASON

(Finally looking at her.)
They'd say this place was built to be forgotten.

He wipes sweat from his forehead with a grimy sleeve. He looks at Cait, really looks at her, with the suspicious intensity of someone who has spent six months looking over his shoulder.

JASON (CONT'D)

You're awfully calm, Cait. Most girls would be complaining about the lack of a hot tub or the awful smell of the cabin. But you... you look like you've lived here your whole life.

Cait offers a small, thin smile. It doesn't reach her eyes.

CAIT

I like the quiet. It's honest. You can't hide who you are when there's no noise to drown it out.

She reaches out, her hand hovering near the handle of the axe buried in the stump. Jason watches her fingers – pale, delicate, and steady.

CAIT (CONT'D)

You're a good man, Jason.

JASON

Thank you?

CAIT

Did you think I looked pretty before?

She steps into his personal space, the scent of the woods and something sharp – like ozone—clinging to her. She leans in, her voice dropping to a whisper that is almost drowned out by a sudden gust of wind through the canopy.

JASON

What?! You're with Mike!

CAIT

You know, if Mike's plan doesn't go the way he thinks... just know that I noticed. I noticed you were the only one who tried to fix things.

JASON

What's that supposed to mean? What plan?

CAIT

(Backing away, her expression smoothing over.)

The fire, Jason. I'm talking about the fire. Don't let it go out tonight. It'll get cold.

She turns and walks back toward the porch, leaving Jason standing alone.

CAIT (CONT'D)

(Child-like.)

Oh. And I saw you peeking at me in the water.

(Pointing to him, cheekily.)

I caught you!

Cait giggles as she wanders off.

CUT TO:

31

EXT. CABIN. PORCH - SUNSET

31

The sun is a dying ember on the horizon, bleeding deep purples and bruised oranges across the jagged silhouette of the tree-line. The forest is settling into a heavy, expectant silence, broken only by the rhythmic creak-creak of the porch boards.

Jason sits on the top step, his large frame hunched over. He holds a metal bottle opener, the silver flash of it catching the last of the light.

SNAP. FIZZ.

He hands the first bottle to Serena, who leans against a peeling support beam. She takes a long, desperate pull, her throat moving as she swallows. She looks out at the lake, her heavy eyeliner smudged from the heat of the day.

SERENA

(Wiping her mouth.)

Tastes like copper and cheap hops.
God, I needed this.

Mike and Cait emerge from the cabin. Mike looks more relaxed, his jaw finally unclenched. He grabs two beers from the rusted cooler at Jason's feet, handing one to Cait.

Peter is the last to join, hovering near the door. He's still clutching his phone, the screen glowing a ghostly blue against his pale face.

MIKE

Put the phone away, Pete. The satellites aren't coming for you tonight.

PETER

I just... I thought I saw a bar.
Just one.

MIKE

(Coldly.)

Get your beer down you.

Mike raises his bottle in a mock toast toward the darkening woods.

Beat.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Actually...

Mike gets up and walks into the kitchen.

Olivia takes a beer from Jason, her fingers brushing his. She doesn't look at the others; she just stares at the water, which has turned the color of cold ink.

Mikes walks back outside holding a small bin-liner.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Let's all put our phones in the bag
and not touch them until we head
home.

CAIT
Mike, seriously?

MIKE
We have no signal anyway and some
of us are still glued to the
screen.

He looks to Peter.

PETER
Fine.

Everyone, including Mike, surrenders their phones.

MIKE
Let's cheers to a peaceful, phone-
free week away.

The sound of six bottles clinking together is small and
fragile against the vast, encroaching dark. For a moment, the
tension of the drive and the grime of the cabin fade behind a
haze of alcohol and the settling dusk.

CUT TO:

32 INT. CABIN. LIVING ROOM - LATER

32

The group files back inside, teeth chattering. The living
room is a cavern of shifting shadows, lit only by a few
guttering candles and a single floor lamp that buzzes with a
dying, high-pitched whine. The wood-paneled walls seem to
contract in the dimness.

CAIT enters last. She's carrying the bag of phones. She sets
the bag on the mantelpiece, well out of reach.

CAIT
It went cold so fast.

She rubs her arms.

MIKE
(Kicking a stack of grime-
streaked magazines
aside.)
At least the beer didn't need a
cooler. Everyone, sit.

They settle into a jagged circle. Mike and Cait claim the
sagging sofa; Olivia and Peter sit on the floor, their backs
against the damp, cold masonry of the fireplace.

Serena and Jason pull up mismatched wooden chairs that groan under their weight. A forest of green glass bottles quickly grows on the scarred coffee table.

SERENA

If I have to listen to that wind for another minute, I'm going to lose it. We need a distraction. Drinking game. Now.

OLIVIA

(Tracing the rim of her bottle.)
Something brainless. I don't want to think.

SERENA

"Never Have I Ever." Standard rules. Ten fingers up. If you've done it, you drink and drop a digit. Last one with fingers up wins.

MIKE

(A competitive glint in his eyes.)
Wins what?

SERENA

Bragging rights. And you don't have to be the first person to check the basement in the morning.

PETER

(Anxious.)
Let's keep it light, okay? No deep dives.

CAIT

(Breaking the tension.)
I'll start. Never have I ever... had a crush on someone in this room.

The mood shifts. Olivia drinks immediately, her face flushing. Jason takes a slow, heavy swig, his eyes fixed on the floorboards. Even Serena drinks with a sharp smirk. Mike looks at Cait, winks, and drains half his bottle. Cait takes a swig too.

MIKE

That's half the room. This is going to get messy.

JASON

(Clearing his throat, his voice raspy.)

My turn. Never have I ever... performed a striptease while wasted.

The room goes dead silent for a heartbeat before OLIVIA lets out a sharp, jagged laugh. She takes a massive pull of her beer – liquid spilling down her chin—and stumbles to her feet.

OLIVIA

You caught me!

She grabs her chest through her sweater and gives her hips a hard, exaggerated shake, mocking a burlesque dance. She's grinning, but her eyes are glassy, fueled by high-percentage IPAs on an empty stomach.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Senior year! Jenny's basement! Tell me you don't remember, Jason. You were staring so hard I thought your head was going to explode.

The others laugh—a desperate release of the evening's tension—but Jason doesn't join in. His face turns a dark, mottled red. He grips his bottle so tight his knuckles turn white.

JASON

(Voice low and jagged.)

I wasn't staring. I was trying to get you to sit down before you cracked your skull open. You were a disaster, Liv.

OLIVIA

(Waving him off.)

Oh, please. You loved it. It was probably the first time you'd seen a girl undress. You were practically drooling on your hoodie.

MIKE

(Chuckling.)

I mean, I saw you taking a peek at my girl at the lake today too, J.

CAIT

True!

The wooden chair screeches back against the floorboards. The sound kills the laughter instantly. Jason looms over the coffee table, his shadow stretching long and distorted across the peeling wallpaper.

JASON

Everyone always does this. You think because I'm the "quiet one," I'm just some... some voyeur? Some creep on the sidelines?

(To Olivia.)

I was the only one looking out for you that night. Just like I'm the only one who actually cleaned up Mike's mess at the store!

CAIT

(To Mike, whispering.)

What mess? What store?

MIKE

(Coldly.)

Sit down, Jason. You're drunk.

JASON

I'm drunk? You're the one who ruined our lives!

He turns his glare back to Olivia, his chest heaving with a sudden, violent energy.

JASON (CONT'D)

And you. You act like it's all a big joke. The dancing, the flirting. There's more to you than that. We're in a rotting shack in the middle of nowhere. This isn't a vacation!

He kicks his chair back, the wood splintering against the floor, and storms toward the kitchen.

33

INT. CABIN. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

33

Jason slams the bathroom door, the flimsy wood rattling in its frame. He fumbles for the lock, but it doesn't work.

He leans his forehead against the cool, damp wallpaper, breathing hard. The air in here is even colder than the living room, smelling of stagnant water and old porcelain. He reaches into the cramped shower stall and grips the single, cross-shaped brass handle.

With a violent twist and a scream of protesting metal, the pipes hum. A deep, subterranean thrumming vibrates through the floorboards as the water begins to chug out.

At first, it's a brown, rusty trickle. Then, with a sudden hiss, it turns clear and scaldingly hot.

Thick, heavy plumes of steam begin to billow out from behind the yellowed plastic curtain. The small room fills rapidly with white vapor, blurring the edges of the cracked mirror and the stained sink.

Jason removes his clothes and steps into the shower.

34 INT. CABIN. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

34

The groups cheers'.

Mike leads the charge, pumping his beer bottle into the air like a scepter. The amber liquid sloshes over the rim, raining down on the dusty floorboards, but he doesn't care. He looks at his friends—his accomplices—and for the first time in a year, he feels like he's in control.

Cait joins in, her voice high and melodic, a sharp contrast to the low, guttural roar from Peter, who seems to be trying to shout away his own shadow. Serena whistles through her teeth, her fingers drummed against the back of her chair in a frantic, manic rhythm. Olivia throws her head back and lets out a piercing, triumphant yell that echoes off the low ceiling.

CUT TO:

35 INT. CABIN. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - A LITTLE LATER

35

JASON stands in the shower, behind a translucent, mold-stained plastic curtain. He is scrubbing his chest with frantic, violent motions, like he's trying to wash away the anger from the living room.

Steam rises in thick, milky clouds, turning the mirrors into blind, silver eyes. Jason closes his eyes, tilting his head back into the spray. He is alone with the sound of the water.

Then, the bathroom door creaks. It's a soft, wet sound—wood dragging against a damp floor.

Jason doesn't hear it over the rattle of the pipes.

Through the steam, a silhouette appears. It is a void of absolute black against the yellow light. The KILLER moves with a terrifying, clinical silence.

The Killer's hand - gloved in slick, black leather - reaches out.

SCREEEEEE.

The plastic curtain rings shriek as the curtain is ripped aside.

Jason's eyes snap open, but they are full of soap. He's blind. He stumbles back, his heels skidding on the soapy floor of the tub.

JASON
(A panicked, choked gasp.)
Wait-!

The Killer doesn't wait.

The first strike is a silver flash. The blade, long, serrated, and heavy dives into Jason's shoulder. The sound is sickeningly wet, like a boot stepping into deep mud.

Jason screams, a high, jagged sound that is cut short as the Killer drives the knife into his midsection. Then again. And again.

It is a rhythmic, mechanical slaughter. The Killer isn't just stabbing; they are harvesting.

Jason's hands claw at the slick walls of the shower, leaving long, red streaks that the water immediately tries to dilute. His legs give out. He collapses into the tub, the lukewarm water now running a deep, dark crimson, swirling toward the drain.

The Killer leans over the edge of the tub. With a final, brutal efficiency, the blade moves in a long, gutting arc.

Jason's breathing becomes a wet, bubbling rattle. His head thumps against the fiberglass. His eyes, now clear of soap, stare up at the featureless white mask, reflecting nothing but his own dying terror.

The Killer stands straight. They don't breathe heavily. They don't linger.

They switch off the water and pull the shower curtain closed, the rings clicking softly back into place.

Behind the plastic, the silhouette of Jason's body slumped against the wall is just a dark, blurred shape.

CUT TO:

36

INT. CABIN. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

36

The morning light is a cruel, grey blade cutting through the grime-streaked windows. The cabin is silent, save for the rhythmic, wet ticking of a leak in the kitchen sink. The air is cold again—the kind of damp chill that seeps into the marrow. Mike is the first one up, slumped on the sofa amidst a sea of empty green bottles and overflowing ashtrays. He groans, clutching his head as he sits up. One by one, the others stir, surfacing from a heavy, alcohol-induced stupor. Serena sits at the kitchen table, her head resting on the cool formica. CAIT and OLIVIA are huddled together under a single moth-eaten blanket on the floor.

CAIT

(Voice a dry rasp.)
Someone tell me the sun is lying
and it's actually still 4:00 AM.

MIKE

(Rubbing the top of his
head.)
My brain is vibrating.

Beat.

Mike looks around... someone is missing...

MIKE (CONT'D)

Where's Jason? Tell him to start
the coffee.

Peter stumbles out of the hallway, his face even paler than usual. He points back toward the small bedroom Jason was supposed to be in.

PETER

Hey... did Jason sleep on the
porch?

MIKE

Why would he sleep on the porch?
It's freezing out there.

PETER

Because his bed... it's exactly how
it was when we got here.

The group falls silent. The hangover fog lifts just enough to let a sharp, cold spike of dread through. They move as a unit toward the small room. The door is open. The twin mattress is bare, covered in the same thick layer of grey dust they found it in. Jason's duffel bag sits in the corner, zipped shut

OLIVIA

Maybe he's just out for a walk? He was pretty wound off last night.

SERENA

In the middle of the woods? At six in the morning? Without saying anything?

Mike looks at the bed, then at the stairs leading to the bathroom.

CAIT

I'll check the bathroom.

Cait runs up the stairs.

MIKE

He did get really upset... I've not seen him like that for a while.

CAIT (O.S.)

(Shouting from upstairs.)
Bathroom is empty!

PETER

Let's check the woods.

Mike, Peter, Olivia and Serena grab their coats.

CAIT

Wait, we should take phones. Just in-case.

OLIVIA

Good idea.

Olivia turns to face the living room. The bag is GONE.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Um. Slight problem... the bag is gone.

MIKE

What do you mean "the bag is gone"?

OLIVIA
I mean. The bag. With our phones
in. IS GONE.

The group looks at each other suspiciously.

MIKE
So either one of us for some reason
stole all the phones for a laugh...
or Jason did.

CAIT
Or someone broke in.

PETER
People break into jewelry stores
not abandoned cabins.

SERENA
Regardless, we need to look for
Jason!!

CAIT
I'll stay at the cabin in-case he
comes back.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. WOODS - MORNING

37

The group pushes into the dense brush, their boots sinking
into the rot of humid earth and decaying pine needles.

MIKE
(Shouting.)
Jason!

OLIVIA
Jason, come on! This isn't funny.

They stop and listen. Just the rhythmic, high-pitched buzz of
insects.

PETER
Maybe he went back home or just for
a walk?

SERENA
There are no trails, Peter. It's
just miles of trees. Nearest main
road is a good walk away.

PETER

It's possible.

Mike shoves a low-hanging branch aside, his eyes scanning the flickering shadows between the pines. He's looking for a flash of color, a footprint, anything that isn't green or brown.

MIKE

He couldn't have gone far. Not in this heat.

(Shouting)

JASON!

The forest remains stubbornly still. No one answers.

CAIT jogs out from the cabin. Her sneakers skid on the parched, yellowing grass as she joins them. She looks back at the cabin.

CAIT

He's not in the house. I checked every room. I even shouted into that crawlspace under the porch.

Cait stops suddenly. She spots a crumpled packet of cigarettes nestled in a patch of dry ferns. She bends down and picks them up.

OLIVIA

I thought you were "staying at the cabin in-case he comes back"? And those are Jason's. He never goes anywhere without those.

MIKE

(Taking the packet.)

Then he's definitely out here.

CAIT

Figured I'd be more helpful out here.

MIKE

He's probably just hungover and wandering around. Maybe trying to find the lake for a swim.

CAIT

(Voice trembling
slightly.)

Then why aren't there any broken
branches leading back to the house,
Mike? Why does it look like he
just... lifted off the ground?

The wind picks up, but it offers no relief – just a hot, dry
gust that rattles the summer leaves. Peter is practically
vibrating with nerves, his eyes darting toward every shadow.

PETER

Forget this. We need help. We need
to get back to the cabin and find a
signal.

MIKE

(Irritated.)

We have no phones remember. They're
gone.

SERENA

Let's just go back. This sun is
making me dizzy.

PETER

Where did the phones go?

CAIT

I don't know. Let's head back.

CUT TO:

The group is halfway to the porch when Cait suddenly freezes,
her head snapping toward a dense thicket of blackberry
bushes. Her eyes go wide, tracking a flash of movement
through the shifting heat waves.

CAIT (CONT'D)

Jason?

(Shouting.)

JASON!

MIKE

Cait, wait... stay with the group!

But she's already gone. Spurred by a frantic burst of
adrenaline, Cait lunges away. She ignores the jagged roots
and the thorns that tear at her skin, her sneakers kicking up
dust as she sprints toward the deep shadows of the old-growth
oaks.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Cait! Get back here!

CAIT
(Screaming.)
I saw him! Jason!

She disappears behind a wall of low-hanging branches. The others scramble to follow, their heavy boots no match for her desperate, panicked speed.

Cait leaps over a fallen, sun-bleached log. Suddenly, a figure in matte black lunges from behind a tree. He's wearing a featureless white mask. In one fluid motion, he grabs Cait, spins her around, and drives a long, silver blade into her stomach.

CAIT (CONT'D)
(A horrific, strangled
shriek.)
NO! Help me, please.

She collapses. The killer "twists" the knife, and a fountain of dark, viscous red sprays across her shirt. She hits the ground with a sickening thud, her body twitching once before going perfectly still. Her eyes are open, staring blankly at the canopy.

The figure in the mask stands over her for a second, then turns, wipes the "blood" from the knife and sprints into the brush, disappearing into the heat haze.

MIKE
(Screaming.)
CAIT!

Mike and Peter rush to her. Mike hits the dirt beside her, his face a mask of pure, unadulterated terror. He reaches for her, his hands trembling so hard he can barely touch her.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Cait! Cait, look at me! Oh God, oh
God...

OLIVIA
(Choking back a sob.)
He killed her... he just killed her
right in front of us!

SERENA
(Backing away,
hyperventilating.)
Where did he go? Mike, he's still
out there!

Mike pulls her into his lap. When he pulls his hands away, they are painted a slick, vivid crimson. He bundles his jacket and shoves it against her stomach, sobbing.

MIKE

Press down! Someone help me!
She's... she's not breathing!

Peter is backing away, his eyes darting toward the tree-line where the figure vanished.

PETER

We have to go! Mike, we have to go
now or we're next!

Mike looks at Cait's pale face, her "lifeless" eyes. He lets out a primal, broken sob and lets her body slump back onto the pine needles. He stands up, his hands dripping with the red syrup he thinks is her blood.

MIKE

(Voice low and lethal.
Cracking.)
I'm so sorry. I love you.

The group scrambles to their feet, abandoning the body in the center of the clearing. They sprint toward the cabin, hearts hammering, fueled by the absolute certainty that they are being hunted.

CUT TO:

38 INT. CABIN. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

38

The group slams the front door, Mike throwing the deadbolt and shoving a heavy wooden chair under the handle. They are all hyperventilating, covered in sweat and "blood."

OLIVIA

(Slumping against the
wall, sobbing)
We left her. We just left her
there!

PETER

She was dead, Liv! There was
nothing we could do! We have to
find a weapon, we have to find
something...

Serena collapses against the wall, sliding down until she's huddling on the floor, her hands—still stained with Cait's blood—pressed against her ears.

Olivia is hyperventilating in the center of the room, her eyes fixed on the door as if expecting the wood to splinter at any second.

OLIVIA

(Quiet.)

He's coming for us, isn't he? He's walking across the yard right now.

The cabin, which felt like a refuge only seconds ago, now feels like a tomb. The silence from outside is worse than the screaming. There is no sound of footsteps, no wood snapping – just the wind rattling the thin, single-pane glass of the windows.

MIKE

(Looking at his blood-red hands.)

And we don't even have a car.

OLIVIA

There has to be a landline.

She bolts toward the kitchen.

MIKE

Liv, give it up! Even if there is a landline I doubt it'll work.

OLIVIA (O.S.)

(Screaming.)

Shut up Mike! They wouldn't just have nothing!

Olivia comes back into the living room, phone in hand.

MIKE

Oh–

OLIVIA

Found it in the corner of the kitchen.

The PHONE RINGS.

SERENA

What?

PETER

Don't answer that.

OLIVIA

They could help us.

She answers.

VOICE (V.O.)
Hello-

OLIVIA
(Into the phone.)
HELP US PLEASE HE'S TRYING TO KILL
US WE'RE IN A CABIN AND-

VOICE (V.O.)
STOP! STOP! I know you're in a
cabin. I just gutted that sweet
girl, what was her name... CAIT.

Olivia cries hysterically.

VOICE (V.O.)
She seemed nice, like someone with
a big heart but I can tell you...
her heart really wasn't all that
big.

Olivia screeches. She looks to Mike.

OLIVIA
(Breaking through tears.)
It's for you.

She passes the phone to Mike.

MIKE
Hello?

VOICE (V.O.)
(Menacing.)
Who.. is.. this!?

MIKE
Mike, who's this?

VOICE (V.O.)
I'M THE PERSON WHO TREATED YOUR
GIRLFRIEND LIKE A BIOLOGY PROJECT.

Mike launches the phone at the wall and it smashes apart.

SERENA
(A sharp, jagged intake of
breath.)
No... no, no, no... Why did you do
that. We needed the Police!

MIKE

I'm sorry.

PETER

How dumb can you be?!

MIKE

I'm sorry.

She begins to gasp, her chest heaving in short, shallow bursts that don't seem to hold any oxygen. Her eyes are fixed on the floor, but she isn't seeing the wood—she's seeing the red trail they left behind. She starts to claw at her own sweater, her fingers trembling so violently she can't get a grip on the fabric.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Serena, hey! Look at me! Breathe!

SERENA

(Gasping.)

We left her... we just left her there... like she was nothing... he's going to... he's going to do the same to us...

Her hyperventilation accelerates into a terrifying, rhythmic wheezing. Her face drains of color, her lips tinging blue as her body enters a full-blown panic response. She pulls her knees to her chest and begins to rock, a low, keening sound vibrating in her throat.

OLIVIA

Serena, stop!

Olivia moves to grab her, but Serena flinches away, her eyes wide and unfocused, darting toward the dark corners of the ceiling.

SERENA

(Between gasps.)

He was... he was right there... the knife... he's in the house, Mike... what if he's in the house...

She starts to choke on her own breath, her hands flying to her throat as if she's being strangled by the very air in the room. The hysterical sobbing breaks through in jagged waves, filling the cabin with a sound of pure, unadulterated terror that makes the others move instinctively closer to the center of the room away from the windows, away from the doors, and away from the dark.

Mike tries to take charge, but his hands are shaking visibly.

Mike stands in the center of the room, his boots tracking dried mud and Cait's blood across the floorboards. He's trying to puff out his chest, trying to be the leader they've always let him be, but the mask is slipping.

MIKE

(Voice loud, forced.)

Alright! Everyone just... shut up for a second! We're going to be fine. We're going to barricade the back door, grab anything that looks like a weapon, keep it near you.

PETER

(Watching him, voice trembling.)

Mike... your hands.

MIKE

I'll wash them.

Mike looks at his red-stained hands.

MIKE (CONT'D)

We just... we need a plan. We have no phones. No car.

OLIVIA

I can't be bothered with this.

Mike looks at her, his eyes wide and bloodshot. He stares at his palms—the blood of his friend literally shaking off his skin in tiny, horrific droplets. He lets out a breath that sounds like a sob he's trying to choke back down.

MIKE

(A whisper now.)

I'm fine. I'm fine. I just... I need everyone to do what I say.

PETER

That almost sounds familiar.

Olivia moves with a strange, eerie grace toward the kitchen counter. She doesn't look at the door.

OLIVIA

Don't argue again. I'm not- I'm not listening to it.

39

INT. CABIN. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

39

Her eyes are glassy and wide as if she's switched off the part of her brain that processes fear. She reaches for a full bottle of beer left over from their toast to "the future." Her fingers are steady and cold.

MIKE (O.S.)

Liv? What are you doing?

Beat.

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Help me move this dresser!

Olivia doesn't answer. She doesn't even blink. She moves her attention over to a half-full bottle of whiskey. She twists the cap off, the plastic seal cracking with a sharp, lonely sound in the middle of their chaos. She brings the bottle to her lips and tilts her head back.

She doesn't sip. She swallows long, heavy gulps of liquid that burn her throat and bring a flush to her pale cheeks. She wipes her mouth with the back of her hand, leaving a smear of Cait's dried blood across her chin.

She heads back to the

LIVING ROOM

Taking the bottle with her.

PETER

(Disgusted.)

Great. That's just great. Get wasted while we wait to get slaughtered.

Beat.

PETER (CONT'D)

Do you think.. maybe Jason killed Cait? Secret crush or something?

Olivia finally looks at him, her expression completely vacant. It's the look of someone who has already accepted their ending and is just waiting for the credits to roll.

OLIVIA

(Voice flat, devoid of emotion.)

Don't be ridiculous.

She takes another long pull from the bottle, her throat working rhythmically. She leans back against the counter, sliding down until she's sitting on the floorboards, staring at nothing. The bottle rests in her lap, her grip tight and possessive.

PETER

Honey-

MIKE

Peter, just leave her. Let's barricade the doors.

They begin barricading the door with furniture.

The sudden, hollow boom of the wind against the siding snaps them out of their trance. Mike lunges for the heavy oak dresser near the entryway, his boots skidding on the floorboards.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Pete. Don't just stand there! Help me move this!

Peter hesitates for a heartbeat, then rushes over, grabbing the opposite corner. They heave together, the legs of the dresser screeching across the wood with a sound like a dying animal. They jam it directly in front of the front door, wedging the heavy wood against the frame.

MIKE (CONT'D)

The table! Get the dining table!

Serena, shaking, helps to drag the heavy kitchen table. They stack chairs on top of it, weaving the legs together to create a jagged, makeshift wall of timber.

PETER

(Breathless, frantic.)

The back door! What about the back door in the kitchen?

MIKE

The fridge!

They scramble into the

KITCHEN

Mike and Peter put their shoulders against the humming, yellowed refrigerator. It groans, the metal shell denting under their frantic pressure as they slide it inches at a time until it blocks the narrow rear exit.

They stand back, chests heaving, surveying their work. The living room is now a labyrinth of overturned wood and metal. The windows are still exposed thin panes of glass that offer no real protection but the doors are buried.

They walk back into the

LIVING ROOM

MIKE (CONT'D)

(Wiping sweat and blood
from his forehead.)

Nobody is getting in. Nobody.

He says it with a desperate kind of certainty, but as they stand in the center of their barricaded tomb, the silence from outside feels even heavier. They haven't built a fortress; they've just ensured that when the time comes, there is no way out.

OLIVIA is lounging against a dusty ottoman, looking at PETER like he's a snack.

OLIVIA

(Slurred, incredibly
airy.)

You look so handsome when you're terrified, Pete. Did you know that? Your eyes get all wide... like a deer in high beams. It's exotic.

PETER

(Staring at her,
horrified.)

Liv, what is wrong with you? Cait is literally lying in the mud right now! The killer is probably using her intestines as skipping ropes!

MIKE

Come on, man.

OLIVIA

(Dismissive wave, nearly
hitting herself in the
face.)

Cait was always going to be the first one to go, Peter. She had "First Act Victim" energy. She was pretty. New girl. Sweet. Looked good naked.

(To Mike.)

Am I right?

(MORE)

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

(She winks.)

Honestly? She was holding us back.

She crawls toward him on the floor, her movements less "predatory" and more "toddler in a sandbox." She reaches out and lets her fingers trail up Peter's denim jeans.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

We don't have to worry about her anymore. Or the robbery. Or the fact that I'm pretty sure I'm a lightweight. It's just us now. The ones who are actually going to make it to the sequel.

MIKE

(Rubbing his temples.)

Olivia, get away from him. You're trashed. You're literally flirting with a guy minutes after my girlfriend got killed.

Beat.

SERENA

I don't want a sequel to this. I want out if anything.

OLIVIA

(Ignoring them both, eyes locked on Peter.)

You were always the smart one, Peter. The one with the conscience. I want to see what happens when you finally snap.

She lets out a soft, tittering laugh that sounds like a broken flute. She leans her head against Peter's knee, looking up at him with a glazed, flirtatious heat.

PETER

(Shoving her hand away.)

You're losing your mind! This is not the time for this Olivia!

OLIVIA

(Giggling, taking a massive swig of lukewarm beer.)

Oh, come on, Pete. You know you want a piece of this. You loved it last time.

SERENA
(Head in her hands.)
I genuinely hate all of you.

Olivia winks at Peter. She sits back and starts unbuttoning her jeans with the coordination of someone wearing oven mitts.

MIKE
(To the room.)
Ladies and gentlemen... fifty shades of Olivia.

Olivia stands up, nearly trips over her own discarded denim, and slides her arms around Peter's neck. She smells like harsh bourbon and the syrup Mike still has on his hands.

OLIVIA
(Whispering loudly enough for everyone to hear.)
Put your hands on my butt. It's a great stress-reliever.

PETER
(Staring into the middle distance, broken.)
I really love alcohol. I love it so much.

OLIVIA
Wanna go upstairs? I think there's a bed that only has *some* mold on it.

Mike lets out a loud, theatrical cough for attention.

MIKE
Hi guys? Quick update: A masked murderer is currently sharpening things in our front yard and we are trapped in a shed. Any ideas on how to... not die?

Beat.

SERENA
Any ideas at all?

OLIVIA
(A slow, dim-witted grin spreads across her face.)
I have an idea.

CUT TO:

40 INT. CABIN. PETER AND OLIVIA'S ROOM 40

OLIVIA is on top of PETER, moving with a frantic, rhythmic urgency that looks less like passion and more like she's trying to start a lawnmower.

Peter's eyes are clenched shut so tight he's seeing stars. He's clutching her with a possessive, terrified grip, as if she's a life jacket and he's sinking in the ocean.

PETER
(Moaning, incredibly loud
and guttural)
OH GOD! CAIT! OH GOD, THE STABBING!
THE BLOOD!

CUT TO:

41 INT. CABIN. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 41

Mike and Serena are sat on the ground in shock and despair.

OLIVIA (O.S.)
(Slurred, bouncing
rhythmically.)
That's it, baby... use the trauma.
Work through the grief.

The old mattress doesn't just creak; it shrieks in a high-pitched, rhythmic metal-on-metal wail that perfectly matches the tempo of Peter's panicked breathing.

SERENA
What the heck.

CUT TO:

42 INT. CABIN. PETER AND OLIVIA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 42

Every time the springs squeak, a small puff of ancient, grey dust explodes out of the mattress, making Peter sneeze mid-moan.

PETER
You're so good baby.

He pulls her down closer, his breath hot and ragged against her skin. He's trying to drown out the memory of the "murder".

OLIVIA

(A drunken, jagged
whisper.)

More, Peter... don't stop. If we
stop, the killer wins. Do it for
Cait. Our tribute to her. Do it for
America. Do it for the plot.
Imagine people watching this at
home!!

She moves faster, her skin slick with a cold, clammy sweat.
The draft from the broken window hits them, causing Olivia to
shiver so violently that her teeth actually chatter against
Peter's forehead.

PETER

(Gasping.)

Is that him? Is he watching?

OLIVIA

(Eyes rolling back,
totally gone.)

I hope so... I hope he's taking
notes. I'm doing all the work here.

The bed frame suddenly gives way with a structural CRACK,
sending the left side of the mattress sloping toward the
floor at a forty-five-degree angle.

CUT TO:

43 INT. CABIN. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 43

Mike and Serena shake their heads.

MIKE

What do we do?

CUT TO:

44 INT. CABIN. PETER AND OLIVIA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 44

They both slide toward the wall, but Olivia doesn't even
pause, using the new incline to gain more momentum.

PETER

(Muffled against the
headboard.)

The structural integrity of this
cabin is... almost as bad... as our
friend group!

OLIVIA
 (Breathless.)
 Don't talk... just... enjoy!

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN. PETER AND OLIVIA'S ROOM. ENSUITE - A BIT LATER

The air in the tiny ensuite is freezing. Peter stumbles into the cramped space, he's sweaty.

He fumbles for the shower handle, his fingers slipping on the cold metal before he cranks it all the way to the side. The pipes let out a violent, metallic shriek a groaning thump-thump-thump that echoes through the thin walls before a stream of lukewarm water sputters from the rusted shower head.

He steps in, shivering.

CUT TO:

45

INT. CABIN. PETER AND OLIVIA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

45

OLIVIA sits on the edge of the bed, naked and swaying. She's kneading her own skin with a drunken, hypnotic intensity, her head lolling back as she grunts with a dark, blurred satisfaction.

CRACK.

A floorboard in the doorway screams. Olivia's eyes snap open, struggling to focus on the void standing in the frame. The KILLER is a silhouette of matte black, the long, heavy blade of the hunting knife shimmering like a silver tooth in the candlelight.

OLIVIA
 (Slurring, a jagged,
 pathetic smile.)
 Hey... you're late to the party.
 You like what you see?

She doesn't cover herself. She just stares, her brain too pickled in bourbon to trigger the "run" reflex. The figure glides forward. The silence of the boots is more terrifying than a heavy footstep.

STAB.

Olivia's smile vanishes, replaced by a raw, primal twitch of the lip. She tries to scramble back, her bare heels digging into the mattress.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

(A trembling, wet
whisper.)

Stay... stay away. Jason? Is that
you?

The Killer doesn't hesitate. In one explosive, predatory lunge, the figure is on her. A heavy, leather-gloved hand slams over Olivia's mouth, the force of the impact snapping her head back against the wooden headboard with a sickening thud.

Her muffled scream is a hollow vibration against the Killer's palm.

The blade doesn't just sweep; it drives. The Killer plunges the knife into her collarbone first, the sound of steel shearing through gristle and bone echoing in the small room. Olivia's eyes bulge, the veins in her neck rosey and blue.

Then, the "mercy" stroke. The blade carves across her throat in a deep, sawing motion.

It isn't a clean cut. There is a wet, spraying hiss; the sound of pressurized blood hitting the floral wallpaper. Olivia's hands claw at the Killer's wrist, her fingernails tearing at the black fabric as a geyser of crimson drenches her bare chest and the white sheets.

Her body gives one final, violent convulsion, her heels drumming a frantic rhythm against the mattress before she goes limp. The Killer holds her pinned until the last bubble of air escapes the gash in her neck.

The shower stops.

The Killer melts back into the corner shadows, a dark stain against the dark wood.

PETER pushes open the ensuite door. He is dripping wet, a thin white towel wrapped haphazardly around his waist, steam clinging to his skin like a shroud.

PETER

(Wiping his eyes.)

Liv? That shower is steaming—

He stops. His bare foot lands in something red and thick. He looks down. A wide, dark lake of blood is spreading across the floorboards.

His gaze follows the trail to the bed.

Olivia is a broken, red-painted doll. Her throat is a jagged, cavernous ruin.

The air leaves Peter's lungs in a ragged, pathetic wheeze. He stumbles back, his wet heel slipping in the gore, his back slamming against the doorframe.

PETER (CONT'D)
 (A high, gut-wrenching yell.)
 NO! OH GOD!

CUT TO:

46 INT. CABIN. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 46

Mike and Serena stand still, looking up to the ceiling.

CUT TO:

47 INT. CABIN. PETER AND OLIVIA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 47

He doesn't see the shadow move.

Before he can turn, the Killer is behind him. The blade erupts through the front of Peter's throat, the silver tip glistening with fresh red. Peter's yell turns into a wet, metallic gurgle. He is lifted off his feet, pinned to the doorframe by the sheer force of the blade.

The towel falls away. He hangs there for a second, a human ornament, before the Killer yanks the blade free and lets him collapse into the pool of his girlfriend's blood.

CUT TO:

48 INT. CABIN. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 48

SERENA
 (A terrified whimper.)
 Peter... Serena...

A heavy thud vibrates through the ceiling. Then, silence. A silence so absolute it feels heavy.

MIKE
 (Finding his voice, a low snarl.)
 Stay behind me.

Mike grabs a skillet as they sprint. There is no more caution, only the frantic, lizard-brain impulse to reach their friends. Their footsteps thunder against the wood, echoing in the hollow shell of the house.

UPSTAIRS

As they round the corner into the hallway, they see it.

The door to their bedroom is sitting ajar.

It's not wide open, just a three-inch sliver of darkness peering out into the hall. No light comes from inside. No sounds of struggle. No breathing.

Mike reaches the door first, his knuckles white around the handle of the skillet. He pushes the door open with the toe of his boot. It swings wide on rusted hinges, creaking like a funeral bell.

The first thing that hits them isn't the sight, but the smell.

It's the overwhelming, cloying scent of copper. It's thick and metallic, coating the back of their throats instantly. The room is a grotto of shadows, but the moonlight is just bright enough to illuminate the carnage.

They step into

PETER AND OLIVIA'S ROOM

Serena's knees buckle. She hits the doorframe, her eyes fixed on the bed where Olivia's pale, lifeless legs hang over the edge. Below them, slumped against the bed, is Peter. The pool of blood on the floor is so vast it looks like the room has been flooded with ink.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(A choked, broken
whisper.)
Oh, God... Liv, Peter...

The room is silent. The window is closed but as Mike steps into the room, his boot splashing into the warm gore, he realizes the closet door is standing slightly open.

MIKE (CONT'D)
We have to- we have to get out...

THUMP.

It's not coming from the room they're standing in. It's coming from across the hall.

A heavy, deliberate sound. Then, the unmistakable shriek of a drawer being pulled open... too far... until it hits the floor. It's coming from the Master Bedroom. Mike's bedroom.

Mike's head snaps toward the doorway.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(A frantic whisper.)
He's in my room.

He grips the skillet so hard his fingernails draw blood from his own palms. They move into the

HALLWAY

The door to the master bedroom is standing wide open.

Inside, a shadow moves.

The figure isn't hiding anymore. It's standing by the window of Mike's room, its back turned to them. The long, curved knife hangs in its hand, dripping a steady pitter-patter of Peter and Olivia's blood onto the floorboards.

The killer slowly tilts its head to the side, listening. It knows they are standing right there.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(To Serena, barely
audible.)
Run for the front door. Break the
barricade.

They hit the

STAIRS

at a dead sprint, nearly tumbling headlong into the darkness below. They reach the

LIVING ROOM

where the air is still heavy with the scent of the whiskey Olivia had been drinking just an hour ago. The furniture they had so carefully stacked now looks like a pile of kindling - a pathetic wall of wood that feels more like a cage than a fortress.

Serena lunges for the heavy oak dresser wedged against the front door, her fingernails clawing at the polished wood.

SERENA

(Sobbing, breathless.)

It's too heavy! Mike, help me! It's too heavy!

Mike drops the skillet, the metal clanging uselessly against the floor, and throws his shoulder into the dresser. He groans, his face turning a deep, bruised purple as he tries to overcome the friction of the floorboards.

MIKE

PUSH!

Behind them, at the top of the stairs, a heavy, rhythmic thud... thud... thud... begins. The killer is descending, unhurried, his boots hitting the wood with the weight of an executioner.

They scream in unison, a frantic, animalistic sound of pure survival. The dresser finally gives, screeching across the floor and exposing the door. Mike fumbles for the deadbolt, his hands shaking so violently he can barely grip the metal. He turns it. He yanks the handle.

The door doesn't budge.

MIKE (CONT'D)

The chain! There's chain on the outside!

Through the narrow crack in the door, they see it: a thick, heavy industrial chain has been looped through the outer handles and padlocked shut. They aren't just barricaded in - they've been locked away from the world.

From the base of the stairs, just a few meters away, the figure in black steps into the living room light. The silver knife is held high now, ready for the final harvest.

The killer jolts towards them.

MIKE (CONT'D)

KITCHEN!!

They run towards the kitchen, but the killer grabs Serena's jumper, pulls her towards him and pushes her to the ground.

SERENA

(Screeching.)

Mike!!

MIKE

Serena!

Mike comes back for her, but the killer slices his arm and punches him across the cheek.

The killer grabs Serena's hair and pulls her along the floor. She kicks the killer's groin and he falls to the ground.

The killer swings the knife around in the air.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(Crying.)

Please just stop it, please!

The killer stands straight and turns to face Mike, before marching slowly towards him, grabbing a small candle pot along the way.

SERENA

The window!

Mike smashes the kitchen window with the knife block as Serena smashes a vase over the killer's head. Mike and Serena climb out of the window.

49

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

49

Mike and Serena around the cabin towards where Cait "died".

They reach the spot. The grass is matted down. The dark, sticky pool of syrup glints under the harsh sun like a taunting joke.

But the body is GONE.

They stop dead. The silence of the woods is no longer peaceful; it's predatory.

SERENA

(Spinning in a circle,
hysterical.)

Where is she? Mike, where is she?!
Animals couldn't have... they
couldn't have moved her that fast
or eaten her... like... all of her!

Mike doesn't answer. He's staring back toward the cabin. His face isn't pale anymore, it's frozen, a mask of cold realization.

MIKE

(A low, hollow whisper.)

It's Cait.

SERENA

What? Mike, what are you talking about? She's dead! We watched her bleed out!

MIKE

(Louder, his voice
trembling with rage.)
The killer. It's Cait.

He points. Standing on the porch of the rotting cabin, framed by the dark doorway, is the KILLER. The silhouette is a void of matte black, the silver hunting knife held casually at its side. It doesn't move. It just watches them, a silent judge in a white mask.

SERENA

(Backing away, bumping
into Mike.)
But... we saw it. We saw the killer stab her. We saw the knife go in. We saw her bleed. How is she the killer if she was the victim?

MIKE

(His eyes fixed on the porch.)
Because there are two of them. They faked her death.

As the words leave his lips, a second figure emerges from the shadows of the tree-line, stepping out to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the first. The first killer reaches up, the leather of the glove creaking in the silence.

The mask comes off.

CAIT'S face is smudged with dirt and the remnants of the fake blood, but her expression is unrecognizable. Gone is the "judge of character" and the "softie" from the bar. Her eyes are bright with a jagged, manic electricity. She gives them a slow, terrifyingly sane tilt of the head.

SERENA

(A choked, broken sob.)
Cait... why?

Cait wipes a streak of syrup from her jaw and licks her finger, her gaze never leaving Mike's. She looks at the knife in the other killer's hand, then back at her friends.

SERENA (CONT'D)

(Voice cracking.)
Now what? What do we do?

Mike reaches out, grabbing Serena's arm so hard his knuckles go white. He doesn't look at her. He's already calculating the distance to the tree-line.

MIKE
(Voice like ice.)
Run.

They don't wait for a signal. They bolt.

They tear into the thickest part of the brush, heading for the only road they know.

CUT TO:

50

EXT. TWO-LANE ROAD - NIGHT

50

The humidity has broken into a thick, suffocating mist that clings to the asphalt. MIKE and SERENA stumble out from the tree-line.

The road is a vein of cracked blacktop stretching into the void of the forest. Mike is limping, his hand clamped onto Serena's elbow as much for her support as his own. They are beyond exhaustion; they are running on the raw, metallic fuel of terror.

SERENA
(Gasping, her voice a dry rattle,)
Mike... I can't. My lungs...
they're burning.

MIKE
(Eyes fixed on the horizon,)
Don't stop. If you stop, you're a
target. Look.

In the distance, two twin pinpricks of light cut through the haze. A car.

Mike lunges into the center of the road. He doesn't just wave; he flails, his blood-stained hands ghostly in the approaching high beams. The vehicle slows with a screech of protest, its tires biting into the gravel shoulder.

The passenger window whirs down. An OLD MAN with a face like crumpled parchment peers out, squinting through thick spectacles.

OLD MAN

Good lord, son. You look like you went ten rounds with a wood chipper.

MIKE

(Leaning on the door, desperate.)

Please. There's... there's someone in the woods. They've got a knife. Our friends... they're gone. We need a phone. We need to get to the city.

The old man looks from Mike's bloodied shirt to Serena's hollow, tear-streaked face. He clicks the door locks open.

OLD MAN

Get in. I don't have a cell, reception is garbage out here anyway, but I can get you to the nearest town. There's a police station about twenty miles up.

They scramble into the back seat, the scent of stale tobacco and peppermint overwhelming after the damp rot of the woods. Mike collapses against the vinyl, his eyes fluttering shut for a second.

MIKE

Thank you!

SERENA

Thank you!

SERENA (CONT'D)

(Whispering.)

We made it. Mike, we actually made it.

The car pulls away, the rhythmic thrum-thrum of the tires on the pavement acting like a sedative. The old man drives in silence, his eyes fixed on the road, the green glow of the dashboard making him look like a wax figure.

51

I/E. OLD MAN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

51

MIKE

(Opening his eyes, looking out the window.)

Wait. This isn't the way to the station. You should have turned left back there at the fork.

OLD MAN

(Voice calm, almost soothing.)

Bridge is out on the main road, son. Heavy rains last week. I'm taking the back way. It's a bit of a detour, but it'll get you where you need to go.

Mike looks at Serena. A cold, familiar knot begins to tighten in his stomach. He looks out the window again. The trees are thinning, replaced by the silhouettes of suburban fences and manicured lawns. They are entering a neighborhood.

The car slows, turning into a quiet, tree-lined cul-de-sac. It pulls into a driveway in front of a neat, two-story colonial house with a "Home Sweet Home" sign hanging by the door.

MIKE

(Voice trembling.)

Why are we stopping? This isn't a police station. This is-

OLD MAN

(Putting the car in park, turning to look at them with a thin, sad smile.)

No. But it is the address on the ID I found in the woods earlier.

52

EXT. CAIT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

52

The front door of the house swings open. The warm, amber light from the foyer spills across the lawn.

Standing in the doorway, still wearing the red-stained shirt but now holding a clean, steaming mug of cocoa, is CAIT. She isn't wearing the mask. It looks like she doesn't have the knife. She just looks like a girl waiting for her friends to come home.

CAIT

(Waving cheerfully from the porch.)

You guys made it! I told Dad you'd find your way eventually.

OLD MAN

Here you go dear-

STAB.

The sound is a sickening, wet crunch. Cait doesn't hesitate. She lunges forward, the mug of cocoa shattering on the driveway, and drives a jagged blade directly into the Old Man's stomach. The steam from the chocolate mingles with the sudden, hot spray of crimson.

The Old Man's eyes bulge behind his thick spectacles. He lets out a soft, confused wheeze before his knees buckle, and he drops to the pavement like a sack of wet flour.

SERENA
(Screaming.)
CAIT! NO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

Cait doesn't look at Serena. She looks at Mike, the blade in her hand dripping onto her sneakers. She looks thrilled—completely, terrifyingly alive.

CAIT
(Wiping a spray of blood
from her lip.)
He was getting talkative, Mike. You
know how the older generation is.
No discretion.

MIKE
Why are you doing this!?

She starts walking toward the car, her pace casual, as if she's just strolling to a mailbox.

53 I/E. OLD MAN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

53

Mike doesn't wait for her to reach the handle. He scrambles over the center console and into the driver's seat.

Serena is hysterical in the back, clawing at the child-safety locks, but Mike isn't looking at her. He's looking at the keys still dangling in the ignition.

MIKE
(Growling.)
Sit down, Serena!

SERENA
We have to call the cops! We have
to help him!

MIKE
(Slamming the car into
reverse.)
Screw the police. He's dead.

He floors it. The tires scream against the suburban asphalt, smoke billowing from the wheel wells as he turns out of the cul-de-sac. In the rearview mirror, he sees Cait standing under the warm glow of the streetlamp.

She isn't chasing them. She's just watching. And then, the second figure the one in the matte black suit steps out from the shadows of her garage, placing a hand on her shoulder.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(To himself, white-knuckled.)

We aren't going to the station...
we're getting weapons.

SERENA

My house is closer. Go there we can
get knives.

MIKE

Do you have a gun?

SERENA

Mike, do I look like someone who
has a gun!?

MIKE

Or your parents?

SERENA

No, no gun.

54 EXT. SERENA'S HOUSE

54

With a heavy thunk, Mike disarms the child-lock and heaves the door open. SERENA spills out, her face a gaunt mask of grey exhaustion. She looks at her house—a narrow, terraced building that usually feels like a sanctuary. Tonight, it looks like a tomb.

MIKE

(Voice a low, gravelly
rasp.)
Inside. Fast.

55 INT. SERENA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

55

They don't turn on the lights. They move through the house in the rhythmic strobe of a passing police siren, its blue light washing over the walls like a cold Atlantic wave.

The silence of the house is deafening. Mike heads straight for the kitchen. He isn't looking for food or a phone. He flings open a drawer, the sound of clattering steel sharp and violent in the quiet.

He pulls out a heavy butcher's knife. He tests the edge with his thumb, his face illuminated by the flickering light of a faulty hum from the refrigerator. Behind him, Serena is shaking, her hands fumbling with a serrated bread knife.

SERENA

(A ragged, breathless
whisper.)

We should call it in, Mike. We tell them about the cabin. We tell them about the old man. We tell them everything.

Mike turns. The blue light catches his eyes - they're hollow, twin pits of focused, singular rage. He looks less like a victim and more like the thing that comes for the monsters.

MIKE

The cabin and everything like that was planned. This was planned. You call the cops, we're the ones in jail by morning. I just know it.

He slides the butcher's knife into his waistband, the metal cold against his skin.

SERENA

(Her voice cracking.)

Then what? We just sit here? We wait for her to knock?

MIKE

(Stepping into her personal space, his shadow looming over her.)

No. We don't wait. Waiting is for victims.

SERENA

so what do we do?

Mike reaches out, his hand gripping her shoulder with a terrifying, grounding pressure. He looks toward the door, back toward the road that leads into the dark heart of the suburbs.

MIKE

Now we go back to Cait's. We don't run. We don't hide.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

We find her, and we find that
friend of hers in the black suit,
and we end it.

SERENA

End it?

MIKE

END IT.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. CAIT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

56

The car skids to a halt, the engine cutting out with a wet, metallic rattle that sounds like a final breath.

The OLD MAN is still there, a motionless heap tucked behind the manicured boxwood hedges. In the shadows, he looks like nothing more than a discarded rug, but the way the moonlight catches the congealed pool around him tells a different story.

MIKE steps out of the car. He doesn't close the door - he leaves it gaping like a wound. His movements are heavy, possessed by a cold, industrial fury. He doesn't look like a victim anymore; he looks like the personification of revenge.

SERENA follows, her face a pale blur in the smog. She's clutching the serrated knife so tight her hand is locked in a spasm.

They reach the porch. The "Home Sweet Home" sign swings in a sudden, sharp gust of wind, its creak rhythmic and mocking. Mike doesn't reach for the handle. He doesn't knock.

He draws back a heavy, mud-caked boot and smashes it into the doorframe.

CRACK.

The wood splinters. He hits it again, his shoulder following the blow, and the door groans before surrendering, swinging inward to hit the foyer wall with a deafening thud.

57 INT. CAIT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

57

Mike leads the way, the butcher's knife held low against his thigh, his movements twitchy and jagged. Every shadow on the floral wallpaper looks like a threat.

The house is deathly silent, save for the muffled, rhythmic thud of a bass-line from a television somewhere upstairs. They move through the foyer, past a framed family portrait where Cait's smile looks like a warning.

MIKE
(A harsh whisper.)
Empty. She's gone.

SERENA
(Pointing toward the stairs.)
The TV. Someone's up there.

MIKE
And they didn't hear me smash through the door?

They ascend the stairs, the wood groaning under their weight. Mike pushes open the master bedroom door.

58

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

58

CAIT'S MOTHER is propped up against a mountain of lace pillows, the blue light of a shopping channel reflecting off her spectacles. She's humming to herself, a tray of coffee and biscuits untouched on her bed-side table. She doesn't even look up as they enter.

Mike stalks toward the bed, his face a mask of sweating, singular intent. He doesn't look at her face. His eyes land on a heavy-duty staple gun sitting atop a roll of fresh wallpaper. He grabs it.

MIKE
Where is she?

The woman gasps. She looks at Mike's blood-stained shirt, then at Serena's wild eyes.

CAIT'S MOTHER
Who are you?

MIKE
(Leaning over her, voice a low growl.)
I'm your darling daughter's ex-boyfriend. "Ex" because she's slaughtered my friends. Now, tell me where Cait went, or this gets very dirty, very fast.

CAIT'S MOTHER

(Trembling.)

I... I don't know! She said she was going out with friends!

THWACK.

The sound is a sharp, mechanical crack. The woman shrieks as Mike presses the staple gun against her hairline and fires. A heavy steel staple bites into her skin.

MIKE

(Eyes wide, manic.)

Don't lie to me. Where. Is. She?

SERENA

MIKE!

CAIT'S MOTHER

(Sobbing, clutching her head.)

Please! I don't-

THWACK.

A second staple. The woman collapses against the headboard, her breath coming in ragged, terrified hitches. Mike doesn't flinch. He holds the cold metal of the stapler against her temple, his finger tightening on the trigger for a third.

MIKE

Your phone. Give me your phone.

With shaking fingers, she reaches into her nightstand and pulls out her iPhone. She fumbles with the passcode. Mike opens Find My Friends.

His eyes scan the map. A small, pulsing icon labeled "Cait" is moving. Fast.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(His voice dropping to a whisper.)

She's not running.

He turns the phone so Serena can see. The icon is hovering over a familiar residential street. Their street.

MIKE (CONT'D)

She's going to my house. She's three minutes away.

Beat.

MIKE (CONT'D)

My MOM!!

He drops the staple gun onto the bed and turns for the door, the butcher's knife catching the blue light of the TV.

CUT TO:

59 I/E. OLD MAN'S CAR

59

The car roars, the engine screaming as Mike pushes the car to its breaking point. The steering wheel vibrates under his white-knuckled grip. Serena is a ghost in the passenger seat, staring at the phone's glowing map as the "Cait" icon moves closer and closer to Mike's home.

Mike fumbles with his own phone, hitting speed-dial to call his mom.

60 INT. MIKE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN

60

The house is quiet. MIKE'S MOM is at the counter, humming as she puts away the last of mugs and glasses. The phone rings, vibrating against the granite. She smiles when she sees the caller ID - "Michael".

MIKE'S MOM

(Answering, voice warm.)

Michael? I thought you kids were staying at the lake until-

MIKE (V.O.)

(Over the phone; his voice is a jagged, hysterical wreck.)

Mom! Listen to me! Get out of the house! Right now!

MIKE'S MOM

(Chuckling, confused.)

What? Michael, slow down. I can barely understand you.

MIKE (V.O.)

Mom, I'm not joking! Get a knife from the kitchen. Drive as far away as you can. Cait is coming. She's coming to kill you!

Mike's Mom stops. She looks at the empty, brightly lit kitchen. She sighs, the sound of a mother who has dealt with too many "high-energy" pranks over the years.

MIKE'S MOM

Michael, that is a sick thing to say. Truly. Did you and the boys have too much to drink? You shouldn't lie about things like that. Cait is a lovely girl. She's been nothing but good to you.

MIKE (V.O.)

(Screaming, the sound of wind rushing past the car window.)

MOM, PLEASE! SHE KILLED JASON! SHE KILLED PETER! SHE KILLED OLIVIA AND HER OWN FATHER! SHE IS NOT WHO YOU THINK SHE IS! GET OUT!

MIKE'S MOM

(Voice firm.)

That's enough, Michael. I'm hanging up. You come home and apologize-

CRASH.

The sound of the back sliding door shattering echoes through the house. Mike's Mom jumps, her heart leaping into her throat.

MIKE'S MOM (CONT'D)

Michael? What was that?

MIKE (V.O.)

MOM? MOM, WHAT WAS THAT NOISE? RUN!

She turns toward the hallway. In the dim light of the dining room, a silhouette stands. It's small, slight, holding something long and silver... a KNIFE.

CAIT steps into the kitchen light. She looks perfectly normal, except for the spray of crimson across her white sneakers.

CAIT

(Voice sweet, melodic).

Hi, Mrs. Miller. Is Mike on the phone?

MIKE'S MOM

(Breathless, clutching the phone.)

Cait? Honey, you scared me... what happened to the door? Why are you-

Cait doesn't answer. In one fluid, blurred motion, she lunges.

MIKE (V.O.)
 (A raw, guttural howl.)
 MOM! MOOOOOM!

The phone falls to the floor as Cait STBAS the woman. There's a wet, heavy thud as she hit the floor. The sound that follows is visceral - the rhythmic, metallic thunk-thunk-thunk of a blade meeting bone.

Mike's Mom lets out a sharp, gurgling cry that is abruptly cut short by a wet, bubbling wheeze.

On the floor, the phone lies face up. Mike's voice is still coming through, a tiny, tinny sound in the now-quiet kitchen.

MIKE (V.O.)
 Mom? Please, Mom, talk to me... I'm almost there... please...

Cait leans down, picking up the phone with a gloved hand. She holds it to her ear, her breathing steady, almost peaceful.

CAIT
 (Into the phone.)
 Too late, Mike.

She ends the call.

CUT TO:

61 EXT. MIKE'S HOUSE - A LITTLE LATER 61

Mike brakes the car very harshly on the drive. He jumps out, his boots hitting the pavement with a heavy, rhythmic desperation. Serena followed, her movements jerky, her eyes fixed on the front door that hung open like a shattered jaw.

62 INT. MIKE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 62

The house didn't smell like home anymore. It smelled of iron.

Mike hit the kitchen threshold and skidded. The butcher's knife clattered to the floor, forgotten. He didn't scream. He didn't howl. The air simply left him in a long, jagged wheeze that sounded like a radiator dying in a cold flat.

MIKE'S MOM was sprawled against the cabinet. The lemon-yellow walls were mappd with a violent, spray-painted geography of crimson. She looked smaller, somehow. Deflated.

Her eyes were still open, reflecting the sterile overhead light, staring at the phone that lay inches from her hand.

MIKE

(A broken, guttural
whisper.)

No. No, no, no...

He collapsed beside her, his hands hovering over her, afraid to touch the wreckage. He finally pressed his palms to her cheeks, his thumbs smearing the cooling blood. He leaned his forehead against hers, a low, animalistic whimper vibrating in his chest.

SERENA

(Standing in the doorway,
hand over her mouth.)

Mike... oh God, Mike.

The silence was absolute, punctuated only by the hum of the refrigerator... the same hum he'd heard every morning of his life. It felt like a mockery.

Serena walked over, her legs trembling so violently she had to lean on the kitchen island. She picked up the phone that was still slick with gore. Her fingers fumbled, the screen glowing bright and clinical against the horror of the room.

SERENA (CONT'D)

(Voice a thin, terrified
thread.)

The app. Mike...

Mike didn't look up. He was rocking slightly, clutching his mother's cold hand to his chest.

SERENA (CONT'D)

She's I don't know where this is.

Mike's head snapped up. The grief in his eyes hadn't vanished; it had just been compressed, hardened into a black, obsidian-sharp edge of pure, industrial malice. He stood up, his clothes drenched in his mother's blood, his face a mask of pale fury.

MIKE

(Voice a low, lethal rasp)
Where.

SERENA

(Looking at the pulsing
icon.)

It's an apartment complex.

MIKE

That's her friend Sophie's
apartment building.

Mike stared at the icon. It sat there, stationary, mocking
him from three miles away. Cait isn't running. She's waiting.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(Wiping a streak of red
across his brow.)

Get in the car.

He reached down and retrieved the butcher's knife. He didn't
look at his mother again. If he looked, he'd break, and he
couldn't afford to break—not yet.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Get in the car.

SERENA

Mike, we need to call-

MIKE

(Slamming his hand against
the counter, the sound
like a gunshot.)

There is no one to call! There's
just us. And there's her. And I'm
going to kill her.

He walked out of the kitchen, his shadow long and distorted
against the blood-splattered linoleum. He looked like a man
who had already died and was just waiting for his body to
realize it.

CUT TO:

63

INT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT

63

The apartment is a chic, minimalist box high above the city,
all polished concrete and designer lighting. The air smells
of expensive candles and copper.

SOPHIE stands by a floor-to-ceiling window, looking down at
the street. She's wearing a silk robe, sipping a glass of
vintage red wine that is almost exactly the same shade as the
stains on CAIT'S sneakers.

Cait is sprawled on the sofa, her feet up on the coffee
table. She's idly scrolling through her phone, a small, bored
smile playing on her lips.

SOPHIE

(Laughing softly.)

I'm sorry, but Peter's face? When you did the whole "bleeding out" routine? I thought he was actually going to have a stroke right there in the pine needles.

CAIT

(Giggling.)

Right? He was literally whistling he was hyperventilating so hard. And Mike - oh God, Mike was so dramatic. "Someone help me press down!" It was like watching a community theater production of Hamlet.

SOPHIE

(Taking a slow sip.)

His mother was a bit much, though, wasn't she? She wasn't apart of the robbery.

CAIT

(Dismissive wave)

She wouldn't stop talking about her "famous pie". It was getting tedious. Honestly, I did the neighborhood a favor. That woman was a public nuisance.

Sophie turns away from the window, her eyes bright with a cold, jagged excitement.

SOPHIE

So. The guest of honor. How far out is he?

CAIT

I'd say... five minutes. Maybe two if Mike drives like fast and doesn't spend ages balling his eyes out over his Mommy.

Cait stands up, stretching her arms above her head. She looks refreshed, as if she's just finished a yoga class rather than a spree. She picks up a long, serrated blade from the side table and tests the weight.

CAIT (CONT'D)

He's going to come through that door thinking he's the hero.

(MORE)

CAIT (CONT'D)

He's got the butcher's knife and the vengeance. He's going to be so focused on killing me.

SOPHIE

(Grinning.)
And Serena?

CAIT

Serena's the dessert. I want them both to realize that the only reason they're still breathing is because we allowed it.

SOPHIE

(Setting her wine glass down with a clinical click.)
The final act. I've been looking forward to the climax all summer.

CAIT

So have I.

Suddenly, the apartment door shatters under the weight of Mike's fury. The wood groaned and splintered as he surged into the room.

MIKE stands in the center of the polished concrete floor, the butcher's knife trembling in his grip. His face is a ruin of sweat and his mother's drying blood. Beside him, SERENA is hyperventilating, her eyes darting between the two silhouettes standing by the window.

SOPHIE stands in the shadows. CAIT sits on the edge of the marble table, swinging her legs like a child at a playground.

MIKE

(A low, guttural snarl.)
I'm going to carve the life out of both of you. You think this is a game? You think my mother was a punchline?

CAIT

(Voice calm, terrifyingly sane.)
No, Mike. Your mother was a footnote. Just like Jason. Just like Peter. And Olivia. And Millie.

MIKE

Why? What did we ever do to you?

Cait stands up. The playfulness vanishes, replaced by a cold, jagged grief that matches Mike's own. She walks into the light, her eyes fixed on him with a lethal intensity.

CAIT

You don't even remember, do you?
The robbery. Six months ago. My
little sister saw your face, your
mistake by the way, not her fault.
And you shot her.

FLASHBACK TO CHLOE'S DEATH.

MIKE

(Frozen.)
That... that was an accident.

CAIT

No it wasn't. Don't lie to me. I
saw the whole thing. Her name was
Chloe by the way. She was ten,
Mike. Eleven next month actually.
Or she should have been. She was my
sister and you killed her so you
could steal money to make some
terrible slasher film. When you
told me you'd "kill to be a real
film director"... you meant it. You
left her on that floor just like
you left me in the woods today.

She gestures to Sophie, who steps forward, the silver blade glinting.

CAIT (CONT'D)

This isn't a murder spree, Mike. Or
at least it isn't *my* murder spree.
Sophie is just here for the love of
the game... and to give me the
opportunity to kill you guys. You
know, faking my death and all that

SOPHIE

(Almost laughing.)
Isn't it scary when there's no real
motive!

Cait steps closer, her voice dropping to a whisper. She reaches out and grabs Serena's shoulder, yanking her forward. She grabs the serrated knife and throws it on the floor.

Cait turns to Mike, still wielding his knife.

CAIT

I want you to stab her. Right now. You took my sister; I take your friends. Balance the books, Mike, and maybe I let you walk out of here.

MIKE

(Shaking his head, tears blurring his vision.)
No. No, I'm not... I'm not doing that.

SERENA

(Sobbing, looking at the blade.)
Mike... it's okay. Just... do the shoulder. I can take it. Give her what she wants so we can go!

CAIT

(A sharp, dry laugh.)
The shoulder? This isn't a TV-movie, Serena. No. The stomach. I want to see you hold her together while she leaks out, just like I had to watch Chloe bleed out.

MIKE

I won't do it! Kill me! Just leave her alone!

CAIT

(Sighing, disappointed.)
You're so boring when you try to be a hero.

In one fluid motion, Cait reaches behind her back and pulls a matte-black handgun from her waistband. The click of the safety off is the loudest sound in the room.

CAIT (CONT'D)

Sorry Serena.

She levels the barrel at Serena's chest. Her finger tightens on the trigger.

BANG.

The muzzle flash blinds the room for a split second. Serena screams, bracing for the impact, but it never comes. Instead, she feels a heavy, warm weight slam into her, knocking her to the hard concrete floor.

SERENA
 (Gasping)
 Mike?

Mike is slumped over her, his breathing a wet, ragged whistle. A dark, blossoming stain is already spreading across the back of his shirt. He took the round squarely in the chest, shielding her body with his own.

CAIT
 (Looking down at the
 smoking gun, bored.)
 Well. What a shocking turn of
 events.
 (To Sophie.)
 This could still work.

SOPHIE
 Yeah.

Serena's hands shake so violently she can barely find the wound. She rips at her sleeve, trying to bunch the fabric against the hole in Mike's chest.

SERENA
 (Sobbing, breathless.)
 Stay with me, Mike! Stay with me!
 Don't you dare close your eyes!

MIKE
 (A wet, rattling wheeze.)
 Serena... stop. Just... stop.

Across the room, Cait and Sophie didn't linger. They moved with a chilling, synchronized grace. Cait tossed the handgun onto the marble counter... like a casual, discarded toy. The pair vanish into the dark the hallway. Their footsteps echo, retreating toward the stairwell.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 (Grabbing Serena's wrist,
 his grip surprisingly
 strong.)
 The gun. Serena... get the gun.

SERENA
 No! I have to stop the bleeding!
 I'm not leaving you!

MIKE
 (Coughing, blood flecking
 his lips.)
 They aren't running...
 (MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

they're setting a trap so it looks like you killed me. You go.... Look at me! Go! Kill them both. END. THIS.

Serena looked into his eyes; hollow, fierce, and utterly certain. She let go of the makeshift bandage, scrambled across the slick floor, and snatched the cold metal of the handgun from the counter. It felt impossibly heavy.

64

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING. SPIRAL STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS 64

Behind the service door, Cait and Sophie descended the iron spiral staircase toward the basement, their footsteps ringing out in the hollow shaft. Sophie held her phone to her ear, her voice transforming instantly from a killer's coldness to a victim's frantic, high-pitched terror.

SOPHIE

(Into the phone, sobbing hysterically.)

Please! Help us! I'm at the Tower Apartments! There's a girl... she's gone crazy, she has a gun!

She paused, catching her breath as they reached the bottom landing, the air smelling of laundry chemicals and damp concrete.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

She followed us into the basement! She's trying to kill us! Please, send help! She's wearing a hoodie and she's armed!

Cait watched her, a small, admiring smile on her face. Sophie clicked the phone shut, the mask of terror vanishing instantly into a look of bored calculation.

They stepped into the shadows of the boiler room.

Serena storms into the stairwell.

The iron stairs rang like a funeral bell under Serena's feet. She descends into the bowels of the building, the handgun clutched in both hands, her knuckles white enough to pop through the skin.

FLASHBACKS TO VARIOUS SCENES: CHLOE'S DEATH, MILLIE'S DEATH, THE FRIEND GROUP AT THE BAR, TRYING ON CLOTHES, LAKE, OLIVIA AND PETER'S DEATH.

65

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING. BASEMENT

65

Serena bursts through the heavy door, her breath coming in jagged, panicked hitches. The basement is a labyrinth of concrete pillars, humming boilers, and flickering fluorescent tubes that hums with a sickly yellow light.

SERENA
(Screaming, her voice
cracking.)
CAIT! COME OUT!

The only answer is the rhythmic thump-thump of a water pump. Far above, the first wails of sirens begin to bleed through the foundation, distorted, high-pitched shrieks that were getting closer by the second.

SERENA (CONT'D)
I know you're here! I'm going to
kill you! I'm going to kill both of
you!

She moves around a huge rusted boiler, her shadow dancing wildly against the wall. Behind a row of industrial washing machines, she hears a sharp, sudden scuffle... the sound of sneakers dragging on grit.

Suddenly, a figure stumbled out into the open.

It's SOPHIE. She looked terrified, her silk robe fluttering as she was propelled forward by a violent shove from the darkness behind a pillar. She tripped, flailing her arms, her eyes wide as they locked onto Serena's gun.

SOPHIE
(Gasping)
Wait—!

Serena didn't wait. She didn't think. All she saw was the girl who helped kill all her friends. The adrenaline and grief fused into a single, electric impulse.

BANG. BANG.

The shots were deafening in the confined concrete space. Sophie's stomach erupted in two blossoms of red. She was slammed backward against a concrete pillar. She slid down the wall, a look of shocked vacancy on her face.

BOOM.

The basement's main loading doors exploded inward.

POLICE
POLICE! DROP THE WEAPON! DROP IT
NOW!

The room flooded with the blinding, white-hot glare of tactical flashlights. Serena spun around, blinded, the gun still in her shaking grip pointed towards the light. In the strobing light, she looked like a monster—drenched in Mike's blood, teeth bared, holding a smoking weapon over a dying woman.

From the shadows behind the pillar, CAIT watched, her face a mask of perfect, silent calm. She didn't move. She didn't breathe.

POLICE (CONT'D)
OPEN FIRE!

SERENA
NO!

A thunderous volley of gunfire rips through the basement. Serena's body jerks like a marionette with its strings being snapped. The handgun flew from her fingers, clattering across the concrete. She hit the floor hard, her eyes fixed on the ceiling, the light fading as the sirens outside reached a deafening, final crescendo.

The officers swarmed the room, boots heavy on the concrete.

As SERENA lays still on the cold concrete, her eyes glazed under the flickering fluorescent lights, the tactical team fan out, their weapon lights cutting through the steam and shadows.

POLICE
(Muffled through gas
masks)
Clear! Clear Right!

A young officer, his gun raised, kicked aside a fallen piece of industrial ducting near the back of the boiler room. He froze as his light hit a small, trembling figure huddled in the corner, tucked behind a stack of crate liners.

It's CAIT.

She looks small. Fragile. Her face is a masterpiece of manufactured trauma... tear streaks, smeared with soot, her lip trembling with a rhythmic, convincing terror. She looks exactly like a girl who had just watched her friend get slaughtered...

OFFICER

(Into his radio.)

I've got a survivor. White female,
early twenties. I'm bringing her
out now. Clear the path for EMTs.

The officer drapes a heavy, yellow shock blanket over her shoulders, its weight feeling like a ceremonial robe. He guides her through the basement, past the carnage, past Serena's motionless body, and toward the loading dock where the blue and red lights danced against the concrete.

As they step out into the cool night air, the wall of sound from the media and the sirens hits them. A paramedic rushes forward with a gurney, but Cait doesn't look at the cameras or the crowd.

She looks back at the building... the tall, chic box where she'd finally settled the debt for her sister.

PARAMEDIC

Can you tell me your name,
sweetheart?

Cait looks at the paramedic, her eyes wide and watery, the picture of innocence.

CUT TO BLACK.

SEQUEL MINI-TREATMENT

One year has passed. CAIT has successfully rebranded herself as the "Tragedy Survivor" at a prestigious university. She's the center of a new, elite social circle—a group of wealthy, oblivious students who treat her past like a fascinating true-crime podcast.

The anniversary of the massacre arrives. During a high-end weekend getaway at a glass-walled modern estate in the mountains, the body count starts again. One by one, Cait's new friends are picked off by a killer wearing the same matte-black suit and mask.

MIKE and SOPHIE are ALIVE and out for revenge!!

TOBY JONES