

ONCE IN THIS HOUSE

Written by

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Address
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INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A living room wall. An orange firelight glows upon it.

The SILHOUETTE of a pair of tiny hands appears upon it. They join together to form the shape of a bird in flight.

The hands drop down.

A second pair of SILHOUETTED tiny hands rise and make the shape of a rabbit, which bounces along the wall.

Sisters EMILY (6) AND JAMIE HARRISON (4) sit by the fireplace and giggle over the shadow show.

From their clothing, as well as the furnishings, the scene appears to be set in the mid-70s.

A pair of sliding doors open on the other side of the room, and their father EDWARD (36) enters.

EDWARD

Have you two been waiting up?

YOUNG EMILY

We want to know if Mommy is okay.

EDWARD

Your mother and I are going through a lot. But, you must remember that we love you both.

The girls nod. Edward kneels in front of them.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

Since you're both still awake, how about a story?

He motions with his head over to the couch. The girls excitedly run over to take their seats.

Edward rises and joins them on the space that has been left open for him. He sits between his daughters.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

Did I ever tell you that two little girls lived here as Princesses?

They shake their heads.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

It's true. There used to be a castle on this very spot.

(MORE)

EDWARD (CONT'D)

It had a good King and Queen, and Knights who were sworn to protect them all.

JAMIE

What happened to them?

EDWARD

Oh, it was a long time ago. But, guess what? I've heard that the spirits watch over this house, and make sure everyone within is safe. They'll watch over your mother and make sure she'll be okay.

JAMIE

I want to hear about the Princesses.

Edward smiles, then puts his head back as he thinks of the story he's about to tell.

It takes only a moment, then he is in full storyteller mode, where he speaks in a hushed and wondrous tone.

EDWARD

Once in this house, there lived two little girls--

CUT TO BLACK.

SUPERIMPOSE OVER BLACK - "50 YEARS LATER".

INT. REBECCA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

REBECCA SHEPARD (36) sleeps in bed. Moments later, her eyes POP OPEN.

Even half-awake, it is evident that she is a youthful-looking woman, despite the early stages of age setting in. Organized, successful, working mom.

She sits in bed and looks to the other side, where her husband sleeps. He is gone, the covers pulled away.

She rises and looks out the nearby window.

Out in the backyard is a TOOL SHED, the door open with light from within pouring out.

Rebecca stands silent for a moment, then puts slippers on her feet before she leaves.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY / KEVIN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

As she steps out of her room, she stops outside the room of her son to look in.

The door to his room hangs open, and within, Kevin (8) sleeps in the bed, with various toys dotting the floor.

He is small for his age, untidy black hair.

Satisfied that everything is as it should be, she steps away.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Rebecca steps off the stairway into the foyer. She rounds the corner to head for the kitchen, when she stops with a GASP.

In the kitchen doorway before her is the silhouette of a MAN. Rebecca recovers, assuming it's her husband.

REBECCA

There you are. You weren't in bed,
so I got worried. Why were you in
the tool shed?

The figure stands silent for a moment, then walks to the left into the kitchen, disappearing.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

James?--

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Rebecca enters as she turns to where the figure vanished to, only to be met by a wall.

She surveys the empty kitchen, only to see a door to the backyard, which hangs open on the other side of the room.

EXT. / INT. BACKYARD / TOOL SHED - CONTINUOUS

She steps onto a patio. It is a cool fall night, so she huddles her arms close to her to keep warm.

Rebecca walks off the patio, toward the tool shed. As she draws closer, she STOPS cold in her tracks.

Just within the door is a HAND on the floor of the shed. Someone lies on the ground just out of sight.

As she reaches the door, she finds JAMES (35) dead and BLOODIED from a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head.

Rebecca steps back, her hands over her mouth. Her feet give out from under her as she walks back, and she FALLS.

She does not get up. She simply cries in anguish, the sounds muffled by her hands.

INT. CHICAGO BLUES CLUB - NIGHT

A LOCAL BLUES BAND rocks away onstage to a lively crowd. The joint is alive with dancing and laughter.

At one table sits ETHAN MOORE (30). He doesn't look like the others attending this evening. He's solitary, overweight, rumpled and doesn't seem interested in the music.

He has a mug of beer on the table, which he drinks from, and a non-descript shopping bag on the seat next to him.

SUSAN WELLES (34) approaches him with a friendly smile. She is dressed in a BAR WAITRESS uniform.

She is blonde, with striking eyes.

SUSAN

Ethan. Didn't expect to see you here tonight.

ETHAN

(points at the bag)
Just picking up some necessities from the comic store, thought I'd stop by.

SUSAN

I'm surprised you still have room in that house for your collection.

ETHAN

How are things with you?

SUSAN

Barely scraping by, as usual.

ETHAN

Well, let me know if you need anything.

She does not hear this, as her attention is now on someone who enters the bar. She TIGHTENS at the sight of him.

A handsome ROCK MUSICIAN TYPE (LATE 20s) walks in. He's got a sexy redhead on his arm. A number of people recognize him as he walks in and welcome him enthusiastically.

Susan does not move, her face blank. Ethan's gaze now follows hers, and notices him at the entrance.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Is that the asshole?

She does not respond.

The Musician happens to notice Susan from afar. He tenses, then gives a weak smile. She does not return it.

Another bar waitress, LINDA (BLACK, EARLY 20s) happens to pass by. Susan grabs her arm.

SUSAN
Hey, Linda, can you cover for me? I
need to step out for a minute.

Linda glances toward the entrance and sees the Musician mingling with a crowd over by the door.

LINDA
Say no more.

SUSAN
Thanks.
(to Ethan)
Sorry. We'll catch up soon.

ETHAN
Sure thing.

Susan works her way through the crowd, desperate to leave.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Susan leans against the wall of the building near the employee door. The MUSIC can still be heard from outside.

She has a deflated air to her as she looks at a small photo in her hand.

It is an ULTRASOUND PHOTO of an unborn baby.

TEARS start to form in her eyes, which she quickly wipes away.

INT. APARTMENT CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Susan now steps off a GRAFFITI-FESTOONED ELEVATOR as the doors open. From it, she walks into a scuzzy and dimly-lit hall to her apartment.

As Susan approaches the door, she stops--

AN EVICTION NOTICE has been taped to her door.

Susan RIPS IT OFF and looks at it in disbelief. Her hand covers her forehead as she looks at it with visible stress.

Her cellphone RINGS from her pocket.

When she reaches for it, the name displayed on the screen reads "BECCA". She answers--

SUSAN

Hey, Sis, this is not a good time--

The words die on her lips, and a look of great concern crosses her face as she listens.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Slow down, I can't understand you.
What happened?

EXT. THE SHEPARD HOME - LATER

Police cars and emergency vehicles now surround the home, as various COPS mull about the scene.

A TAXI CAB pulls up outside the home. Susan steps out, still dressed in her uniform. She looks toward the scene as the cab pulls away--

--Rebecca sits crumpled and deflated on the front step of the house.

Kevin sits beside her, equally devastated and shellshocked as the two SOB desperately, their arms wrapped around each other.

All Susan can do is watch from afar.

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

The same living room from the opening scene, only the furnishings are now modern.

Rebecca now stands silent and despondent before a fireplace mantle which displays a variety of candid and staged family photos of her, James and Kevin.

In the photos, James is an attractive ASIAN MAN with a wide smile and broad shoulders.

Her eyes are RED and swollen, as her face shows no emotion. She has not even bothered to change out of her pajamas.

Susan enters from the foyer behind. Her sister does not look at her, but can sense her arrival, and speaks--

REBECCA

I know you have your own problems to deal with, and I don't want to throw mine on top of them. I just didn't know who else to call.

SUSAN

It's fine. Suddenly losing my apartment doesn't seem like such a big deal anymore.

REBECCA

I'm sorry they kicked you out.

SUSAN

Yeah, well, just another notch in my list of failures - Men, career--
(short, sad beat)
--Being a mom.

Rebecca is silent.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I don't know, maybe it's time for me to accept these kind of things were meant for you, not me.

REBECCA

You're welcome to stay.

SUSAN

I couldn't do that.

Rebecca turns to face Susan, her eyes pleading.

REBECCA

Please. I need you here, just for a little while. I know Kevin would love having you.

Susan is overcome with emotion. Rebecca looks back and starts to SOB.

This causes Susan to rush into her arms and embrace her.

SUSAN

Of course I can stay. Where else am
I going to go?

They LAUGH through their tears.

INT. DR. RICHARDSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Rebecca is now on the couch of a warmly-appointed therapist's office.

She is dressed for an upscale office job, having come from work - business outfit, her hair styled and expensive shoes.

Despite her fine clothes, her demeanor is not confident. He foot FIDGETS and her fingernails DIG into the couch.

Across from her is DR. RICHARDSON (50), a heavysset and soft-spoken man.

REBECCA

James didn't even leave a note.
Five months later, it still makes
no sense.

DR. RICHARDSON

And what's it like at home now?

REBECCA

I put on a brave face for Kevin
when I get him ready for school.

DR. RICHARDSON

How is Kevin handling it?

REBECCA

My sister's moved in, so she tries
to make things as normal as
possible.

DR. RICHARDSON

You said that you saw your husband
before you entered the kitchen?

REBECCA

He was right there, in front of me.

DR. RICHARDSON
But then, he disappeared.

Rebecca looks away.

DR. RICHARDSON (CONT'D)
Maybe you wanted him to still be in
the house, so you could've had a
chance to save him, when you know
that he was outside.

REBECCA
I would have heard the gun if he
had run outside when I saw him.

He smiles reassuringly.

DR. RICHARDSON
Well, we have a lot of time to
figure this out. I promise we'll
get through this.

From Rebecca's face, she does not share his confidence.

EXT. THE SHEPARD HOME - DAY

The Shepard Home is a two-story Colonial in a Chicago suburb
that looks like it was built in the past 50 years, but is
well maintained.

The fall weather from the earlier scene has been replaced
with late winter - Around February.

In the front yard, Susan is getting ready to throw a football
to Kevin.

SUSAN
Okay, let's see if you can catch
this one!

KEVIN
Bring it!

She throws a nice, straight pass to him, which lands
perfectly in his outstretched hands.

SUSAN
Ooh! Nice one!

A RED MINI SUV pulls into the driveway.

When Kevin sees this, he gently tosses the ball into Susan's
hands then sprints over to it.

Rebecca climbs out of the vehicle just as Kevin runs up to her and hugs her warmly.

REBECCA

(laughs)

I'm glad somebody missed me!

SUSAN

(walks up)

Hey, don't mind me. I just look after the kid while you're gone.

Rebecca looks toward the fence that surrounds the backyard. Susan and Kevin look in the same direction soon after.

Through the open fence door is the spot where the tool shed once stood. It has recently been TORN DOWN.

The three stare silently at this for a long beat, until--

SUSAN (CONT'D)

You okay?

REBECCA

Yeah! That's great. Thanks for setting up someone to knock that thing down finally.

They walk toward the front door of the house.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

(to Kevin)

You have a good day at school?

KEVIN

Pretty good. Tim and I saw a dead mouse on the playground.

REBECCA

(a disgusted face)

Well, that sounds like a great day! So, did you learn anything, or did you two just stare at a dead mouse all day?

SUSAN

I'll tell you what! This guy learned about fractions, and he can't wait to do his homework so he can practice some more!

They disappear inside the house.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

After dinner, Rebecca sits at the table with a diet soda, while Susan turns on the dishwasher.

She then joins her sister at the table.

SUSAN
So, how'd it go with Dr.
Richardson?

REBECCA
Fine.

SUSAN
No. "Fine" works with Kevin when I
ask about a test. He's eight, he
can get away with that. You don't
have that luxury.

Rebecca LAUGHS.

REBECCA
Too soon to tell. It still hurts to
talk about it. James became so
distant after we moved here.

SUSAN
Maybe he was hiding something?

REBECCA
He wasn't that type.

SUSAN
All men hide something, Becca.

REBECCA
Not James.

SUSAN
Sorry. Forgot you married the one
perfect man in this entire world.

REBECCA
Can you not start with me?

SUSAN
I'm not starting anything. I'm
simply saying the guy had secrets.

REBECCA
You think I don't know that?! He
left us without a word!

SUSAN

I know. I shouldn't have said anything.

REBECCA

No, I get too sensitive when I talk about him. Maybe you're right. Maybe he was hiding something.

Uncomfortable silence. Susan then stands.

SUSAN

I think I'll go and see if Kevin is actually doing his homework, or if he's playing Nintendo with the sound off again.

REBECCA

He does that?

SUSAN

Yeah, no wonder he's gotten better at those games than me. He's been practicing behind my back, the cheater.

She exits.

Alone, Rebecca takes out her phone and begins to play a video. Her VOICE rings out from the device.

REBECCA (O.S.)

Alright, everybody! Here's our new home--

INT. FOYER - DAY (VIDEO)

The video is shot from Rebecca's POV as she walks through the front door, into the foyer of the empty house.

REBECCA (O.S.)

We've just arrived, and everyone's pretty excited.

Kevin runs by RAPIDLY from behind and bumps her a little, as he carries a small box of his things.

KEVIN

Sorry, Mom!

He runs upstairs.

REBECCA (O.S.)
 There's Kevin, clearly excited
 about his new room, and almost
 knocking me over--

Rebecca's POV points at the rooms as she mentions them.

REBECCA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Living room, kitchen--Very excited
 about how much space there is.

The camera now points at the top of the stairs, where James
 stands with a distant and concerned look on his face.

REBECCA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 And here's my amazing husband, who
 made all of this possible!

JAMES
 Honey, were you up here just now? I
 thought I heard someone talking
 while I was in our room.

REBECCA (O.S.)
 Kevin just ran up there.

JAMES
 No, it wasn't him.

REBECCA (O.S.)
 (playful)
 Maybe you're going crazy and
 hearing voices?

He does not respond.

REBECCA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I think someone doesn't want to
 come down here, and help unload
 some of these boxes.

James forces a smile, then begins to walk down to her.

REBECCA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Come on, Mister! You'll need a
 better excuse than that.

As he walks off the bottom steps, Rebecca spins the camera
 around, so that it is pointed at both of them. She gets in
 close to him.

JAMES
 Love you.

REBECCA

Kind of crazy about you myself.

She kisses him on the cheek. The video image FREEZES.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Rebecca wipes her eyes as she puts her phone away. She rises and leaves.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Rebecca walks up the stairs, folded towels in her arms. She stops when she hears Susan and Kevin's voices from his room nearby.

She can see them both hunched over a desk and quietly discussing his homework, sharing a quiet LAUGH together.

As she watches, Rebecca seems happy, yet a little sad. He foot FIDGETS like it did at the therapist's. She seems somewhat uncomfortable.

She shakes her feeling and heads for the linen closet to put the towels away.

As she starts to sort through her work, a THIN AND RASPY WOMAN'S VOICE is heard directly behind her.

WOMAN'S VOICE

What are you doing here?

STARTLED, Rebecca drops the towels. When she turns, there is nothing. After a moment, she gathers the towels and continues her work, when--

WOMAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)

You don't belong in this house!

Again, Rebecca turns, and again there is nothing behind her.

She hurries to finish her work, then heads for Kevin's room.

INT. KEVIN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Susan and Kevin sit at his desk. There is a gentle knock on the open door as Susan enters.

REBECCA

Need any help?

SUSAN

Yeah, you can call Mrs. Dagenhart for me, and tell her she's psycho for assigning this stuff.

KEVIN

We call her "Mrs. Dragon Fart".

SUSAN

And I bet it suits her, too.

Rebecca hesitates briefly before she speaks.

REBECCA

I don't suppose either of you were out in the hall a moment ago?

SUSAN

Why?

REBECCA

Oh, it's nothing. Forget I said anything. I'll start plotting revenge on Mrs. Dagenhart--

Rebecca leaves. As she does, Susan yells--

SUSAN

"Dragon Fart"!

Kevin's laugh ECHOES as Rebecca shuts the door behind her.

INT. REBECCA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rebecca sits in bed dressed in a worn T-shirt and sleep leggings. She watches a late night talk show on her phone.

There is a GENTLE KNOCK on the door as Susan enters.

SUSAN

You still up?

REBECCA

I think I'll turn in when this is done.

(she pauses the video)

Hey, can I talk to you?

Susan sits at the foot of the bed.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

I want to apologize. I know you're trying to help.

SUSAN

Yeah, well, you know what a big mouth I've got.

REBECCA

I haven't noticed.

SUSAN

(small derisive laugh)
You'd be the first. Besides, you don't have to apologize. I sometimes forget my place. This isn't even my house.

REBECCA

I'm glad you're here. With my work schedule, it's hard to give Kevin the attention he needs.

SUSAN

I just hope I'm not stepping on your toes when I'm with him.

REBECCA

Why would you say that?

SUSAN

I noticed you were upset while you were watching us from the hall earlier.

Guilt covers Rebecca's face when she realizes she's been caught.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I just want to do whatever I can for Kevin. I'm not using him to fill the void after losing--

She cannot finish. Rebecca CLASPS Susan's hands supportively.

REBECCA

I'm sorry you saw that. Please don't think I was judging you. It just caught me off guard seeing you two, and it made me think it should be me in there.

SUSAN

You sure? Because it kind of looked like you were staring daggers.

REBECCA

God, I feel like a jerk! I've got so much on my mind, and sometimes I don't even know what I'm thinking.

SUSAN

Hey, it's okay. We're all out of sorts right now. Let's just be like everyone else in our position, and blame our parents for everything.

They both burst into LAUGHTER. As it dies down, Susan looks at her sister.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Say, what did you mean earlier when you asked if we had been out in the hall?

REBECCA

It's strange, but I thought I heard someone talking to me when I was out there.

SUSAN

What did it say?

REBECCA

It said I didn't belong in this house.

Susan is immediately interested, even excited.

SUSAN

Did it say anything else?

REBECCA

(taken aback)

Are you happy about this?

SUSAN

I'm just curious. Remember when I was 16, and I dated that guy who was into Spirit Photography?

REBECCA

(laughs)

Oh God! Mom and dad thought you had a death fixation.

SUSAN

We were trying to capture ghosts on film.

(MORE)

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 (small beat)
 We never did find any.

REBECCA
 I'm not surprised. Well, don't put
 too much stock in this. I probably
 imagined it.

SUSAN
 All I'm saying is I have an open
 mind. Let me know if you hear
 anything else.

Susan gets off the bed and exits.

REBECCA
 Thanks again.

INT. REBECCA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Rebecca is asleep. Her phone on the nightstand BUZZES, which
 signals an incoming call.

Stirred awake, she looks over at it.

Groggily, she grabs it. The name displayed on the screen is
 "JAMES".

After some hesitation, she accepts the call.

There is loud PHONE STATIC, which forces her to hold it away
 from her ear. After a bit, the static dies down.

She now hears the RASPY BREATHS of someone on the other end.

REBECCA
 Look, I don't know who this is--

JAMES (V.O.)
 (from phone)
 I'm sorry--

Rebecca is visibly STUNNED.

JAMES (V.O.)
 --I just couldn't handle the
 visions anymore--

The call abruptly ENDS.

Rebecca instantly redials the number. After some tense
 moments, the call connects.

A few RINGS, and there is a PRERECORDED MESSAGE--

PRERECORDED VOICE

The caller you are trying to reach
has their phone turned off. If you--

She hangs up, and TOSSES the phone down on the bed in frustration.

Rebecca switches on the lamp on her nightstand, then walks over to the closet across from her bed.

In the back is a large CARDBOARD BOX, which she drags out.

When she opens it, the box is revealed to be filled with James' personal things - Photos, books, etc.

Rebecca digs through the contents until she finds his PHONE.

She turns it on, only to see it has NO CHARGE.

That's when she hears VOICES from downstairs -- A MAN AND A LITTLE GIRL. They are muffled, and come up from a vent on the wall nearby.

Rebecca leans close, and while the voices become louder, she still can't make out what's being said.

She stands and exits to head downstairs.

INT. FOYER / LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rebecca HURRIES down the stairs toward the living room. The room is closed off by a pair of sliding doors.

As she stands before them, she can hear VOICES on the other end.

She places her hands on the handles and silently prepares herself before she opens them.

The living room is EMPTY, and the voices STOP as soon as the doors are opened. Nothing is out of sorts.

Rebecca steps away, unsettled. She turns to head back upstairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Rebecca STOPS COLD when she reaches the top.

Before her is a FEMALE FIGURE cloaked in shadow as it kneels on the floor and SOBS pitifully.

The figure turns to face Rebecca. Its eerie form remains unnaturally dark, as it slowly stands.

Rebecca is petrified as the SHADOW WOMAN rises and speaks with the same WOMAN'S VOICE she heard in the hall earlier.

SHADOW WOMAN

What are you doing here?

REBECCA

What?!

SHADOW WOMAN

You don't belong in this house!

The figure RUNS AGGRESSIVELY toward her.

Rebecca crumbles to the ground, shuts her eyes and SCREAMS as she cowers.

After a long and very tense moment, she opens her eyes.

The figure is GONE.

Rebecca stands and slowly shakes her head at the impossibility of what she's just witnessed.

Susan comes out of her room, awakened by the scream.

SUSAN

Becca! Is everything all right?

She reaches out to touch her on this shoulder, but this only FRIGHTENS Rebecca more.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

(jumps back a little)

Whoa! Calm down. It's just me.

REBECCA

This can't be happening.

SUSAN

What can't?

REBECCA

It was the same voice as before,
only I saw her this time.

SUSAN

Wait, you actually saw this thing,
and didn't think to wake me?

REBECCA

I didn't want Kevin or you to get
involved.

(beat)

Oh God, Kevin!

She RACES to his room, leaving a bewildered Susan behind.

INT. KEVIN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door FLIES open as Rebecca hurriedly enters and turns on
the overhead light.

She goes right for his dresser to grab some clothes.

REBECCA

Kevin? Come on, Aunt Susan and you
are coming with me. I've got your
clothes. We can come back for your
toys later.

There is no answer from Kevin, but there is a TINY FIGURE
that resembles a child under the covers.

From the bed comes a horrible GAGGING AND RETCHING SOUND. She
stops at the noise.

The figure under the covers seems to be WRITHING IN AGONY as
it makes THROATY, CROAKING SOUNDS.

Rebecca walks to the side of the bed and, after hesitating
briefly, throws the covers off.

It is not Kevin in the bed. Rather, it is Jamie, the small
girl from the past.

She is SICKLY and in great pain, with her skin pale. Her eyes
are PURE BLACK and unemotional, despite her distress.

Rebecca rapidly steps away from the bed, closes her eyes and
cups her hand over her mouth.

The choking and gagging from the bed grow LOUDER before
everything is instantly silent, and--

KEVIN (O.S.)

Mom?--

Rebecca's eyes SHOOT OPEN. Her son now sits in bed, his face groggy with sleep.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

She does not answer at first. When she finally speaks, she tries to sound authoritative.

REBECCA
Didn't you hear me? We're leaving.

KEVIN
Can I at least use the restroom?

REBECCA
No! Nobody is entering any rooms until I've figured this out. We'll stop at a restaurant and use the restrooms there.

KEVIN
But, I'm not hungry.

REBECCA
(louder)
I said, let's go!

She storms off, not waiting for an answer.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Susan waits by the door as Rebecca steps out.

SUSAN
Mind telling me what's going on?

Rebecca stops.

REBECCA
You didn't see what was in his bed?

SUSAN
All I saw was you freaking out, and doing a damn good job of it.

Rebecca marches to her room as Susan follows.

REBECCA
I promise I'll explain when we're far away from here.

INT. REBECCA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

She walks straight for the closet and immediately grabs at clothes, as Susan stands in the doorway.

SUSAN

And where are we going, exactly?

Rebecca stops. She has not thought this far ahead.

REBECCA

No idea.

SUSAN

Okay, hear me out, but maybe Ethan?

REBECCA

That guy who has more toys than Kevin? Not a chance.

SUSAN

He happens to be my friend. Look, I know he's a bit quirky, but I've known him for years. He won't turn us away.

Rebecca walks past her, out the door.

REBECCA

Fine. Call him on the way, because I'm not staying another minute.

INT. MINI SUV - NIGHT

Rebecca is at the wheel, while Susan sits in the passenger seat on her phone, with Kevin in the back.

SUSAN

(into phone)

Hi, Ethan.

(beat)

Yes, I know it's late. Look, we're stopping by. Something's really spooked my sister.

(beat)

Well, I think she's in real bad shape and just needs to wind down.

(beat)

Thanks. We'll be there after we grab some food.

She hangs up.

REBECCA

We're really doing this, huh?

SUSAN

I know he's not your favorite, but can you be nice?

REBECCA

He just strikes me as someone who lives in his own world with that stuff he collects.

SUSAN

Yeah, well, it's 2 AM, and I doubt anyone else is awake.

REBECCA

(sighs)

I know.

SUSAN

I just hope he has an open mind when he hears what happened.

INT. ETHAN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The living room of Ethan Moore is small, filled with multiple shelves that are lined with various TOYS taken from Sci-Fi, Fantasy and Anime.

Stacks of boxed VIDEO GAMES from the 80s, 90s and early 2000s also line the walls.

Rebecca and Ethan sit across from each other in separate chairs with an awkward silence, until--

ETHAN

So you're aware, it's cool for you all to be here. Just make sure the kids knows that the toys here are not for playing.

REBECCA

(mock seriousness)

You have my word.

Susan enters and takes an empty chair.

SUSAN

(to Rebecca)

Okay. Time to do some explaining as to just what happened tonight.

REBECCA

I guess it all started when my phone rang. When I checked the ID, it was my husband.

SUSAN

Why am I just now hearing this?

REBECCA

When I answered, it was his voice.

ETHAN

(to Susan)

Did you know about this?

SUSAN

She's been acting weird since I got up, but I had no idea!

REBECCA

Then I heard him say that he couldn't handle the visions.

SUSAN

Visions?

REBECCA

Now I'm seeing things, and for some reason, I seem to be the only one.

ETHAN

Can I ask what kind of phone plan your dead husband has, because I really want to know this.

SUSAN

Ethan!

ETHAN

I mean, does he get unlimited minutes in the afterlife? Are there roaming fees?

REBECCA

I knew it! This guy never takes me seriously.

ETHAN

Given the circumstances you're describing, these seem like sensible questions.

Rebecca stands.

REBECCA

This was a mistake.

SUSAN

Now sit down and hear me out. James died in that house, and now you're hearing his voice. You said before that you were seeing someone else in the hallway.

ETHAN

Wait, there's more dead people involved in this?

SUSAN

(ignores him)

What if these other people you're seeing also died there?

Rebecca mulls this over, while Ethan silently wonders what he's gotten into.

REBECCA

I guess it's possible. I'd have to look into the history of my home.

SUSAN

(to Ethan)

Can we use your computer for a moment?

ETHAN

Why not? I'm morbidly curious.

He stands and walks across the room to his computer. Susan and Rebecca follow.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

First, I'll need your address.

REBECCA

1231 Stafford Drive.

Ethan types it into a search engine. A list of links to articles displays on the screen.

ETHAN

Holy shit--

SUSAN

Are all of these about the house?

ETHAN
 "Domestic violence", "Murder-
 suicide" -- Where the hell do you
 ladies live, exactly?

The top link reads, "*Murder at Home a Month After Mysterious
 Death*". Susan points at it.

SUSAN
 Can you bring up that one?

ETHAN
 This dates back to 1975--

He clicks on it.

At the top of the article is a photo of the two GIRLS, Emily
 and Jamie. Rebecca recognizes Jamie from Kevin's bed.

REBECCA
 That girl on the right. I've seen
 her!

SUSAN
 What, you mean you've seen this
 photo before?

REBECCA
 No, I saw her in Kevin's bed when I
 went to wake him!

Rebecca GRASPS her head desperately, while Susan tries to
 calm her.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
 What if James saw her too?

SUSAN
 Okay, let's not jump to
 conclusions.

Ethan shuts off the computer.

REBECCA
 (to Ethan)
 What are you doing?

ETHAN
 It's 3 AM. Believe it or not, I do
 actually sleep.

SUSAN
 He's right. We're not going to
 solve anything like this.

Rebecca PLOPS down into a chair, frustrated. Like at the therapist's, she digs her fingers into the chair.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Hey, we're not stopping until we figure this out. It's just not going to be tonight.

After a beat, Rebecca nods in agreement.

ETHAN
You ladies can use my room with the kid. I'll crash down here.

SUSAN
Thanks, Ethan.

He leaves. When he's gone, Susan turns to Rebecca.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Think you'll sleep?

REBECCA
God, I have no idea. Everything's happening so fast.

SUSAN
You know, when I was into this paranormal stuff, I'd have killed for an adventure like this. Now it's like I don't even know how to process it.

Rebecca is silent. Susan stands and pats her on the shoulder.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Let's turn in.

She leaves. After she's gone, Rebecca SIGHS.

INT. ETHAN'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Kevin sits at the table in his pajamas and eats a sugary kid's cereal.

Next to him, Ethan checks his phone, while Susan is at the virtually empty cupboard.

SUSAN
Ethan, there's barely any food in here!

ETHAN

I've got bread. I could make you
some toast.

She holds up the small remains of a loaf of bread, with only
a single slice remaining in the bag.

SUSAN

You mean this?! The point of
grocery shopping is to buy stuff
when you're running low, not wait
until you're virtually--

He's fixated on his phone.

Susan tosses the slice back in the cupboard and joins them at
the table.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Not that hungry anyway. I didn't
sleep much, either. I stayed up
reading about my sister's house.

ETHAN

Something tells me the history of
violence is a detail the realtor
conveniently left out.

SUSAN

I thought you didn't believe her.

Ethan puts away his phone.

ETHAN

Well, were you listening to her,
seeing dead kids in bed and all?

SUSAN

Trust me, my sister is the last
person to freak out.

(beat)

Well, until last night.

ETHAN

(to Kevin)

You didn't see anything?

KEVIN

No.

SUSAN

So far, she seems to be the only
one.

ETHAN

Could be stress at work for all we
know that's causing it.

Rebecca enters HURRIEDLY and fully dressed. She bends down to
kiss Kevin on his head as she hurries by, then grabs her keys
off the counter.

SUSAN

(to Rebecca)

And where are you going?

REBECCA

Back to the house. I need to get
some things we left.

Susan stands from her seat.

SUSAN

I don't think it's smart for you to
be there alone.

REBECCA

You couldn't see the things I did,
so I don't think you'd be much
help.

SUSAN

Becca--

REBECCA

Susan, please! I'll call if there's
any trouble.

Rebecca heads for the door, while Susan follows. Ethan and
Kevin can only watch them leave, not sure if they should get
involved.

EXT. ETHAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

As Rebecca walks to her vehicle, Susan grabs her by the arm
to stop her.

SUSAN

Will you hold up? What's so
important back there?

REBECCA

I want to go through James' things.
Maybe there's something important
that I missed.

SUSAN

Well, can it wait? Maybe Ethan and I can help.

REBECCA

I don't need you, and I certainly don't need him.

SUSAN

(taken aback)

Whoa. You don't need me? Where's this coming from?

REBECCA

Last night, you told me you would have killed for an adventure like this when you were younger. It made me realize that you're not taking this seriously.

SUSAN

Becca, wait--

REBECCA

My husband died because of this! I need answers, and I can get them without you playing "Ghostbuster", or whatever.

SUSAN

(visibly hurt)

It's not like that.

REBECCA

Look, this is just something I need to figure out on my own, so can you please just leave me alone this once?

Susan is silent this time. It's useless to argue.

Rebecca senses the conversation is over and gets in her vehicle. As she drives off, Susan watches her go.

EXT. THE SHEPARD HOME - MORNING

Parked outside of her home, Rebecca climbs out of her vehicle and stares at her house.

INT. REBECCA'S BEDROOM / KITCHEN - MORNING / DAY (VIDEO)

As Rebecca enters, her eyes fall immediately on the bed.

There on top is the CARDBOARD BOX with James' things, like someone left it there for her to find. Next to it is his VIDEO CAMERA.

Rebecca sits on the bed and holds the camera. She pulls out the small screen attachment on it.

There's a video loaded and paused on the camera. On the screen is the IMAGE of James at the kitchen table. Even paused, his face seems distraught.

After a beat, Rebecca presses "Play" on the video. He begins to talk to the camera as it plays out.

JAMES

The visions are getting worse. I
can feel someone with me, even when
I know I'm alone.

Rebecca tears up while she watches.

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

I want to tell my wife, but where
would I start? And do I even want
my family involved in this?

On the tape, James lowers his head. After a beat, he looks up at the camera with no hope on his face.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I need to find a way out--

Rebecca SLAMS the monitor shut on the camera. The tears become full-on SOBS.

THE BEDROOM DOOR CLOSSES BY ITSELF FORCEFULLY NEARBY.

This STARTLES Rebecca and she rises from the bed.

She can now hear BREATHING from the spot in front of the door, even though the space is empty.

Rebecca HURRIEDLY grabs for her phone to call Susan, when she suddenly STOPS. Her hand goes limp and she drops the phone.

As Rebecca raises her head, her eyes are now SOLID BLACK. Two dark pools that show no emotion.

She walks to a window near the bed in a stiff and robotic manner. She stands, and "glances" out onto the backyard with her soulless eyes.

EXT. BEDROOM WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

From outside, the window SHATTERS as her body DIVES forward through it with great force. There is no scream. Just the sound of the glass, followed by a sickening THUD.

EXT. THE SHEPARD HOME - LATER

SILENCE.

POLICE AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES are parked outside the home.

ETHAN'S CAR pulls in amongst all of this, with him at the wheel and Susan behind him.

The instant the car stops, Susan FLIES out the door to take in the scene.

In front of her, EMERGENCY WORKERS wheel a stretcher into the back of a waiting vehicle. It has a WHITE SHEET over it, which covers Rebecca's body on top of the stretcher.

Susan FRANTICALLY runs toward it, only to be stopped by Ethan, who grabs her from behind and desperately holds her.

Susan WAILS, though there is no sound. Still in his arms, she drops to her knees and SOBS.

VIDEO MONTAGE

Again, there is no sound, just MUSIC UNDERSCORE, as a videotape montage of the sisters' past plays out.

--First, a Christmas home movie from the early 2000s, as the girls hold up their respective favorite gifts to the camera while seated before the tree.

An 8-YEAR-OLD SUSAN triumphantly holds up a MARIO KART video game of the time period and a new BARBIE (both still in their boxes), while 10-YEAR-OLD REBECCA displays a hardcover collection BOOK of Jane Austen to the camera.

--Next, in their childhood bedroom, 10-YEAR-OLD SUSAN tries to teach her 12-YEAR-OLD SISTER some dance moves. Rebecca stumbles, and while Susan laughs, she lifts her up to try again.

Soon, they dance together -- Susan with speed and confidence, and Rebecca more reservedly and always watching what her sister is doing.

--Then, 17-YEAR-OLD REBECCA stands outside of their childhood home, dressed in a graduation cap and gown.

Susan (NOW 15) FLIES toward her from off screen, and wraps her arms around her tight.

She then grabs the cap right off of Rebecca's head, puts it on her own, and makes a "V" symbol with her fingers while she gives her widest, intentionally goofy smile.

Rebecca, a bit embarrassed by her sister's exuberance, laughs and shakes her head regardless.

--Finally, James briefly films himself as he walks down a hospital corridor, before he switches the camera to face the direction he's walking.

He enters a hospital room where Rebecca (27) is in bed with her NEWBORN SON. Susan (25) sits in a chair nearby.

Rebecca smiles and waves at the camera as he moves to the foot of the bed to film her.

At the same time, Susan leans in to get in the picture. She holds a handmade sign which reads, "PROUD TO BE A CRAZY AUNT TO AN AWESOME NEPHEW".

Both sisters LAUGH warmly as Rebecca begins to wave Kevin's tiny hand at the camera.

THE VIDEO SHUTS OFF.

EXT. THE SHEPARD HOME - DAY

Some time later, a funeral visitation is being held for Rebecca. People dressed in formal black walk toward the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

All the guests gather and whisper about the mysterious nature of her death.

Susan stands in one corner of the room. She looks emotionally spent. A FEMALE MOURNER walks up and clasps her hands tenderly.

MOURNER

Oh, Susan, I'm so sorry.

SUSAN

Thank you.

MOURNER

To have this happen so soon after
her husband. Please know that Frank
and I are here for you.

Susan gives a distant and weak smile in response.

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Kevin sits on the top step of the patio, his head low.

Behind him, Ethan opens the door from the kitchen and walks
outside.

ETHAN

You out here by yourself, man?

Kevin says nothing, his back to him. After a beat, Ethan
forces a smile.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

What do you say we go inside, raid
the buffet table, and maybe pick up
some chicks for later? Come on! Be
my wingman!

He puts his hand on Kevin's shoulder, which causes the child
to FLINCH severely at his touch.

Ethan immediately pulls back. He nods slowly, then walks
solemnly back inside.

After he's gone, Kevin SOBS.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ethan joins Susan in the corner.

ETHAN

Think I just crashed and burned
with the kid.

They scan the room of guests as they talk.

SUSAN

I can hear everyone whispering
about Rebecca, and how she died.

ETHAN

Well, it is strange, unless she
somehow tripped and fell out that
window.

SUSAN

You think she would actually take her own life?

ETHAN

You knew her better than me.

SUSAN

She was upset, but she'd never do something like this to Kevin.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

After the visitation, Ethan and Susan put dishes away as they talk.

SUSAN

It can't be a coincidence that both her husband and her were complaining about visions before they died.

ETHAN

Did you watch that video they found? The guy looked like he was scared for his own life.

SUSAN

Yeah, well, so was Rebecca when she was trying to get us out.

ETHAN

Sorry I suck at solving mysteries. Guess I'm only good for collecting retro crap that only OCD people like myself care about.

Susan smiles.

SUSAN

Well, your collection is pretty kick ass.

ETHAN

Damn straight.

Susan LAUGHS. It is her first one in a while.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Susan walks from the stairs to Kevin's bedroom. The door hangs open and empty when she looks within.

She is briefly concerned, but then notices down the other end of the hall, Rebecca's bedroom door HANGS OPEN and the lights are on within.

INT. REBECCA'S BEDROOM / CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

As she enters, her eyes immediately fall on the window her sister threw herself through, which has now been covered with a wood board.

That's when she sees the closet door open. Susan walks toward it and looks within.

Kevin lies on the floor inside, fast asleep. He is surrounded by various articles of his mother's clothes which he has pulled from the hangers above.

The comforting scent of his mom on the clothes calmed him, and he fell asleep on a bed of outfits.

When she sees this, Susan TEARS UP. Her back slides down the doorframe of the closet and she sits just outside as she looks warmly at her sleeping nephew.

She GENTLY brushes his hair, making sure not to wake him, then stares off into the bedroom, deep in troubled thought.

INT. REBECCA'S BEDROOM / CLOSET - LATER THAT NIGHT

Kevin's eyes POP OPEN as he wakes.

He lifts his head wearily to see Susan asleep in the same position outside of the door.

He stands and silently walks past her, out of the room.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As Kevin leaves and approaches the bathroom, he hears the distinct sound of WATER SPLASHING from within.

He stands outside the door and looks toward the tub, which is covered by a curtain.

He can still hear the SOUND.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Apprehensively, Kevin walks toward the sound. He stands silent before the curtain for a beat before he PULLS it back.

The bathtub is FILLED with water. Within, there is a lifeless BABY that lies at the bottom. Its eyes are shut tight and its skin is PALISH BLUE.

Kevin's eyes are wide with fright.

A WOMAN'S HAND reaches out and touches his arm from right beside him.

He turns, only to be met by a SOBBING WOMAN. Her eyes are completely BLACK and emotionless, despite the visible sorrow.

SOBBING WOMAN

What have I done? What did I do to
my child?

Kevin tries to back away out of fear, but the woman clutches onto him and continues to plead.

SOBBING WOMAN (CONT'D)

Please! I would never hurt him.

Kevin breaks free from her grip and FLEES.

SOBBING WOMAN (CONT'D)

Don't leave me!

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As soon as he is out the door, Kevin CRASHES into Susan.

SUSAN

Kevin? What's wrong?

He is in a complete state and struggles as Susan tries to calm him.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

What's gotten into you?!

Unable to speak out of fear, Kevin points toward the bathroom.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Is something in there?

He nods frantically. Susan cautiously lets him go and walks toward the bathroom.

Kevin grips her hand to hold her back.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I don't understand--

Kevin starts to SOB. Susan kneels in front of him.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Kevin, please talk to me.

After some deep breaths, he speaks--

KEVIN
A woman killed her baby in there.

SUSAN
What?!

KEVIN
She wanted me to help, but I didn't
know what to do. I don't want to be
here anymore.

Susan holds him close.

SUSAN
If you don't feel comfortable,
we'll leave. I'm sure Ethan will
let us stay a little longer.

INT. ETHAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Ethan drives, while Susan sits in the passenger seat. Kevin is asleep in the back, so the two talk quietly.

ETHAN
So, what do we do now?

SUSAN
I honestly have no idea. We can't
keep running away like this.

ETHAN
He really said he saw a dead baby?

SUSAN
Why?

ETHAN
Just sounds like something I read.
A woman who lived in that house
some thirty years ago drowned her
kid, and claimed she had no memory
of even doing it.

SUSAN
What happened?

ETHAN

Took her own life before she could
go to trial.

SUSAN

First James, then Rebecca, now
Kevin is seeing these things.

ETHAN

For all we know, he found out about
the story somehow.

SUSAN

You still don't believe there's
something weird about this?

ETHAN

I'll admit, the pieces don't quite
fit together, but I'm not going to
jump to "ghosts" as the answer.

Susan turns away from him and looks out her window. Ethan
says nothing.

INT. ETHAN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Susan stands in the shower as she finishes a rinse of her
hair. She bends down to turn off the flow of water.

When she stands, just outside the sliding glass door of the
tub, a DISTINCT SILHOUETTED FIGURE stands.

Susan does not notice as she wipes the last remains of water
from her face.

She opens the sliding door, and no one is there as she steps
out of the tub and grabs a T-shirt off the counter.

Now wearing the shirt, Susan steps before the fogged up
bathroom mirror. She wipes away the condensation with her
hand so she can see herself.

The mirror reveals REBECCA standing behind her. Her skin is
GRAY AND PALE. She looks at her sister with great sadness.

Susan does not notice and starts to work on her hair. As she
goes through her post-shower routine, she hears--

REBECCA

(soft)

Protect my son--

STARTLED, Susan turns around, only to see no one behind her.

She remains visibly nervous, however.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - MORNING

Kevin climbs out of the Red SUV, which is parked at the drop off area outside of the school. Various CHILDREN are dropped off all around him.

As he steps out, Susan comes out of the driver's door and calls out--

SUSAN

Hey!!

Kevin turns to her.

She walks closer as she speaks.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

You don't have to go back to school right away. No one will blame you if you want to take more time off.

KEVIN

I want to. It helps take my mind off of things.

SUSAN

I guess that's true--Just be careful, okay? And if anyone bullies you about what happened, just let me know. I'll punch their lights out.

KEVIN

(a bit embarrassed)

Oh, come on. Not in front of the other guys, okay?

SUSAN

Okay, you're too good for me all of a sudden? I get it. Guess I'm not the "cool aunt" now that I'm your guardian.

Kevin is silently struck by those words. Susan notices.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

You think that sounds weird, try saying it. It's hard for me to even wrap my head around it.

Kevin senses her uncertainty and gently takes her hand. There is a quiet moment of respect between the two.

THE SCHOOL BELL RINGS.

Kevin starts to walk toward the building, but turns as he does.

KEVIN

Love you!

SUSAN

Love you more!

She watches him leave.

INT. A CLASSROOM - DAY

A room of students watch, or barely pay attention to, a film on TV.

At the front sits MRS. DAGENHART (70) at her desk with a newspaper. She is a white-haired, sour faced woman long past the time for retirement, but various bad life choices have kept her at work.

Kevin sits at his small desk, his elbows on top of it and rests his chin in his hands.

HIS DESK SHAKES ever so slightly. His arms fall at this sudden movement.

The desk SHAKES again, harder and louder now.

Some of the kids hear this and turn their heads. His desk now SHAKES VIOLENTLY AND CONSTANTLY. In a futile effort to make it stop, Kevin grabs it by its sides.

Everyone now looks at him, including Mrs. Dagenhart.

MRS. DAGENHART

Mr. Shepard?

Kevin looks toward her and gives a look that plainly states, *"I'm not doing this!"*.

Just then, the SHAKING STOPS. Kevin stares at his desk, puzzled, while the teacher returns to her paper.

Kevin hears the QUIET SNICKERS of two boys next to him.

He turns to see BRAD AND IAN (BOTH 9) the next two desks over. Ian shakes his head as he laughs.

BRAD
(whispers)
What a freak--

BOY'S VOICE (O.S.)
(whispers)
Knock it off!

The two boys turn to look at the desk in front of them. TIM BROOKS (8), Kevin's friend, gives them a "death stare" that only a kid confident in his place on the playground social order can give.

Brad and Ian ROLL THEIR EYES, and quiet down.

Tim then turns to Kevin, a look of concern.

TIM
You okay, man?

Kevin slowly nods, but says nothing.

Just then, the writing surface on Kevin's desk RISES by itself ever so slightly.

Kevin firmly presses both of his hands on the surface to hold it down.

He removes his hands after a moment. Again, the surface RISES, this time wider than before.

Kevin bends down to look within the desk itself.

He is met by a PITCH BLACK FEATURELESS FACE that looks back at him from within the desk itself.

KEVIN SCREAMS.

INT. SUSAN'S ROOM AT ETHAN'S - DAY

Susan stands before a mirror dressed in an awkwardly-fit business suit. It's the same one Rebecca wore when she came home from work.

Ethan walks by the door and stops when he sees her.

ETHAN
New look?

SUSAN

It's Becca's. I've got to apply for a real job, unless you consider being a dog walker or working for tips a real job.

She straightens out the suit with her hands, but it still looks wrong.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

(annoyed grunt)

I have no idea how she pulled this look off.

ETHAN

Afraid I can't help you there. I'm leaving on some errands. You need anything?

SUSAN

No, I'm good, thanks.

Ethan leaves.

Susan continues to examine her image in the mirror. She is clearly not happy about what she sees.

Her cellphone on the bed nearby RINGS.

When she grabs it, the caller ID displays, "SCHOOL".

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - DAY

Susan, dressed in her regular clothes, walks down the hall at a brisk pace.

INT. A CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

As she enters, Kevin is at a desk up at the front of the room. Mrs. Dagenhart still sits at her private desk.

SUSAN

Kevin! Is everything all right?

Mrs. Dagenhart stands and approaches.

MRS. DAGENHART

I assume you're Ms. Welles?

SUSAN

Yes, I am. You must be Mrs. Dragon
Fa--

Susan stops herself.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Mrs. Dagenhart.

Kevin can't help but SMIRK to himself.

MRS. DAGENHART
I called, because Kevin started
screaming and being disruptive
during class.

SUSAN
(to Kevin)
Why were you screaming?

KEVIN
(after a beat)
I saw someone inside my desk.

MRS. DAGENHART
I checked if some kid had put a
small animal in there as a prank,
but I couldn't find anything.

SUSAN
Well, I'm sure he didn't mean
anything by it.

MRS. DAGENHART
I understand that he has lost both
parents lately, and I sympathize.
But I will not tolerate him acting
out in my class.

SUSAN
"Acting out"?

MRS. DAGENHART
He will get no special attention
from me. You both may go.

Kevin stands from his desk and leaves, VISIBLY FRUSTRATED.

Susan watches him, then turns to the teacher.

SUSAN
I guess I now understand why the
kids call you what they do.

MRS. DAGENHART
What do they call me?

SUSAN
Ask them yourself sometime.

She leaves.

INT. ETHAN'S KITCHEN - DAY

Susan and Kevin sit across from each other from the table.

SUSAN
You have to trust me, I'm not mad
about what happened. I believe you.

KEVIN
It doesn't matter. I'm not safe
anywhere.

SUSAN
What?

KEVIN
If it can happen at the house, and
it can happen at school, it can
happen here.

SUSAN
I know there's a lot we don't know,
but I won't let anything happen.

KEVIN
It got Mom and Dad, it can get me.

SUSAN
Please don't talk like that.

KEVIN
What if it's too late to stop this?

Susan's eyes TEAR UP. She looks away and wipes her eyes.

When she turns back, Kevin is terrified, and his eyes are
locked on something behind her.

SUSAN
Do you see something?

Kevin POINTS behind her, his eyes not leaving what he sees.

Susan slowly turns around, and her mouth DROPS with shock.

A TALL PITCH BLACK HUMAN FIGURE stands in the entrance of the
kitchen and peers around the corner at them.

The figure has no defining features, such as a face. It is pure black, shiny and almost oily in its complexion.

Susan immediately rises at this sight. She then shields Kevin with her body.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Get behind me!

As Kevin ducks behind, all she can do is close her eyes, unable to look at the impossible sight before her.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
(screams)
Stay away from him, you bastard!

Her shout is met by the appearance of Ethan, who enters with a bag of groceries in his arms.

ETHAN
Um--Okay. Not the greeting I was expecting--

When Susan opens her eyes, her face displays annoyance rather than relief at his arrival.

SUSAN
Oh, damn it, Ethan!

ETHAN
Am I missing something?

SUSAN
You didn't see what was standing there just now?!

ETHAN
(sets the bag down)
Standing where? I didn't see anybody.

SUSAN
(to Kevin)
Are you sure you're okay?

He nods.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
God, I'm so sorry. If I knew what Rebecca was seeing, I'd never let her go back to that house.

ETHAN

Okay, just what the hell is going on here?

SUSAN

The visions are real! Kevin saw one at school, and just now, there was this--thing right where you're standing. It didn't even have a face, but I could tell it was looking at us somehow.

ETHAN

Are you even listening to yourself?

SUSAN

Damn it, I don't know! I don't understand any of this.

ETHAN

Well, I don't know what to tell you, but I honestly saw nothing.

She walks off. Ethan stares at her before he heads after.

INT. HALLWAY OF ETHAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Susan strides down the hall with Ethan struggling to keep up her pace.

SUSAN

I know what you're going to say, but I'm not crazy.

ETHAN

Really? Because this is sounding more nuts by the fucking minute!

Susan stops to turn to him.

SUSAN

Have I ever lied to you about anything in all the years we've known each other?

ETHAN

No, but--

SUSAN

I'm telling you, it was looking right at both of us.

ETHAN

There has got to be a logical answer here, Susan!

SUSAN

God damn it, don't start--

ETHAN

I get it. Your sister just died, you have her kid now, and everything's shot to shit. I'm trying to help you out here and understand, but you have to realize that things like this just don't happen in real life.

SUSAN

You've buried yourself in fantasy pop culture crap your whole life. Now when I need you to believe that something impossible is going on, you tell me I'm crazy!

ETHAN

(nervous laugh)

You almost sound like my parents there--

SUSAN

Why can't you just open your mind?

ETHAN

Because I'm sane! Because I'm rational! And because I'm not obsessed over protecting the kid after you lost the other--

Susan SMACKS him hard clear across the face before he can finish.

Ethan is visibly stunned. She fumes, NOSTRILS FLARED, for a moment before she speaks--

SUSAN

Fuck you, prick!

She STORMS AWAY out of anger.

After she's gone, Ethan is still visibly reeling from the blow. That's when he looks toward the opposite end of the hall and sees Kevin, who has seen everything.

The two stare silently at each other, until--

KEVIN

You two said a lot of bad words.

Ethan takes out a DOLLAR BILL and hands it to Kevin.

ETHAN

Here, go start a swear jar. We're going to need one, I think--

Kevin walks away with the money, as Ethan continues to massage his tender face.

INT. CHICAGO BLUES CLUB - NIGHT

Just like last time, the joint is alive with music, dance and laughter from a joyous mob of patrons.

In a far corner, Susan is dressed in her bar waitress uniform and fixated on her phone, miles away from the lively atmosphere.

The article about the murder-suicide from before is on the screen.

She carefully studies the photo of Emily and Jamie.

SUSAN

(reads)

"Emily Harrison (left) is being held at an undisclosed hospital".

(to herself)

Emily Harrison--

She backs out of the article to a search engine, then enters Emily's name.

The top link is an article titled, "*20 Years Later, Survivor Tells All*". She clicks on the link.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

(reads)

"Emily miraculously survived a family tragedy. She now resides in Seattle, but insists something evil was in her childhood home"--

Linda, the other bar waitress from before, walks up to Susan, and WAVES HER HAND in front of her face to get her attention.

LINDA

Um--Hello? You taking an extended break, or what?

SUSAN
(puts her phone away)
I'm sorry. My mind's on a million
things right now.

LINDA
Well, maybe you haven't noticed
that the place is packed tonight,
and we need you to be on?

Susan does not respond as she mulls over something in her
mind. The waitress looks at her confused.

LINDA (CONT'D)
Girl? You okay?

SUSAN
No, I'm really not. I shouldn't
even be here, I'm sorry.

To Linda's shock, Susan walks away into the massive crowd.
She tries to follow after Susan, but quickly loses her.

EXT. / INT. CHICAGO BLUES CLUB / ETHAN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As Susan exits the building, her phone RINGS from her pocket.
When she reaches for it, she sees Ethan's name.

There is some hesitation and a few more RINGS before she
answers.

SUSAN
Yeah?

ETHAN (V.O.)
Thanks for picking up. I wasn't
sure if you would.

SUSAN
How's your face?

Ethan sits at his computer desk in the living room, his back
to the monitor.

ETHAN
Got some feeling back at least.

SUSAN (V.O.)
Yeah, well, you had it coming.

ETHAN

You're right, I went too far with what I was about to say. I can usually hold myself back from going into total asshole mode, but I guess I just got frustrated.

Back with Susan as she walks away from the bar. She again pulls out her phone to look at the article.

ETHAN (V.O.)

What are you doing?

SUSAN

I'm looking up Emily Harrison. She survived that murder-suicide case we read about. I'm thinking she might be able to give me some answers if I tracked her down.

ETHAN (V.O.)

Or, it's possible she wants to be left alone.

SUSAN

If whoever wrote this article I'm reading can find her, so can I. I'll fly out, and you can look after Kevin.

Back with Ethan.

ETHAN

Hold on. This sounds very rash. You need to think about this--

SUSAN (V.O.)

I feel like there's not much time left. Kevin even said earlier that it might be too late to stop this.

ETHAN

You think it's smart to leave Kevin alone?

Back with Susan.

SUSAN

Not really, but I don't have much choice. According to this, she's a total recluse, so I don't think she'll respond to emails or calls. I have to see her in person.

Back with Ethan.

SUSAN (V.O.)

Rebecca was all I had. Now Kevin and I are both seeing this thing, so it clearly is after one of us. I need to know what this is, and who it's going after next.

ETHAN

I hope you know what you're doing.

SUSAN (V.O.)

Me too.

INT. KEVIN'S BEDROOM AT ETHAN'S - NIGHT

Kevin is asleep in his bed, when--

The same PITCH BLACK FIGURE from before seeming RISES UP out of the ground at the foot of his bed.

The figure stands silent as it watches Kevin sleep.

Soon, it begins to SPEAK in a soft, unearthly language. Even if its face has no features or mouth, the sound is AUDIBLE and fills the room.

As Kevin sleeps, his mouth MOVES in unison with the soft tone of the figure.

He whispers along with the being in his sleep, until--

HIS EYES OPEN. They are PITCH BLACK POOLS, just as Rebecca's were before she dived out the window.

EXT. SUSAN'S ROOM AT ETHAN'S - DAY

Susan zips up a suitcase for her journey.

As she prepares to leave, she glances at her dresser, where a framed photo of Rebecca and her sits.

Next to it is a more recent photo of Kevin and her, both smiling broadly as they pose outside.

Seeing them together is a solemn reminder both of what she has lost, and what she is protecting with this search.

INT. ETHAN'S CAR - SAME TIME

Ethan sits at the wheel, with Kevin in the backseat, as they wait for Susan to come out.

Ethan glances through the rearview mirror at Kevin, who looks out the nearby window.

ETHAN

Bud?

(off Kevin's look)

I know you'll miss your Aunt, but you'll see, I'm a fun guy to be around.

KEVIN

(a beat)

Can I ask you something?

ETHAN

Ask away.

KEVIN

Why do you have all that neat stuff for kids in your house, but you don't have any kids?

Ethan was not expecting this, and has to think--

ETHAN

I just never grew out of the stuff I used to love when I was your age, I guess. As for kids, just never found the right woman.

Kevin does not answer.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

You know, Susan and I dated when we first met. Not for very long.

KEVIN

What happened?

ETHAN

I think she realized she was out of my league pretty quick. Went on to supposedly better things, but we stayed close.

KEVIN

Do you wish you were still with her?

ETHAN

Used to. When she was going to be pregnant, I thought it should have been me.

KEVIN

(surprised)
Aunt Susan had a kid?!

Ethan instantly regrets this--

ETHAN

Uh--She doesn't like to talk about it, and I probably shouldn't have said anything.

KEVIN

Why?

At that moment, Susan opens the door to climb in the front passenger seat with her bag.

Susan immediately is suspicious with both of the guys staring at her--

SUSAN

What's going on?

KEVIN

When did you have a kid?

Susan immediately looks at Ethan.

He responds by sheepishly mouthing the words, "I'm sorry".

EXT. AIRPORT DROP OFF AREA - DAY

Ethan's car pulls up to the drop off area at the airport.

SUSAN (V.O.)

(to Kevin)

Okay, Kid, I'm off. Mind Ethan.

She steps out of the car. Moments later, Ethan steps out from his side, and they face each other.

ETHAN

Look, I'm sorry about Kevin. I was talking about us, and I kind of stupidly blurted it out.

SUSAN

(sighs)

He was gonna find out sooner or later, I guess. Just wish I got to pick the time.

ETHAN

Seems like lately, I keep on giving you a new reason to be pissed. I'm starting to wonder why you're still friends with me. I mean, it can't be for my looks--I'm certainly not much of a dresser.

SUSAN

No. But aside from Rebecca and Kevin, you're the only one who hasn't seen me as a loser who can't get her life together.

ETHAN

I don't think you could be a loser even if you tried.

SUSAN

You guys going to be okay?

ETHAN

It's three days. We've got food, and I'm taking him to the comic store when we leave here so I can teach him about literature.

SUSAN

I'm actually kind of sorry I'll miss that. Nothing too inappropriate, please.

ETHAN

Have some faith, would ya? Just go do your thing, stalk that crazy recluse lady, and let me know what happens.

Susan walks into the airport, shaking her head.

EXT. CHICAGOLAND COMICS AND COLLECTIBLES - DAY

A BRICK AND MORTAR COMIC STORE from the 90s that has managed to stay in business by adding sports collectible and various hobbies to their inventory.

A motorcycle SPEEDS BY.

INT. CHICAGOLAND COMICS AND COLLECTIBLES - SAME TIME

Kevin stands in the middle of an aisle. A book lays open in his hands as he reads it.

Ethan strolls down the aisle toward him like a man with a mission. As soon as he's near, he SNATCHES the book out of Kevin's hands.

KEVIN

Hey!

ETHAN

(glances at the cover)
 "Galactic Ranger"? No child under
 my watch is going to be reading
 this kind of filth.

He puts it back on the shelf, then scans the other books.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Let's find you something more
 stimulating for your growing
 intellect--Ah!--

He grabs a large graphic novel book, and hands it to Kevin.

KEVIN

What's this?

ETHAN

That, my good man, is "Black
 Death". It's about a serial killer
 who comes back from the dead, and
 has to atone for his past sins.

KEVIN

(flips through it)
 Awesome--

ETHAN

Bet your butt it is. I was raised
 on it.

Ethan thumbs through various back issues of the title, not looking at Kevin.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

That one in your hands covers the
 issues from 1991 to 93, which was
 the peak time for the character.

(MORE)

ETHAN (CONT'D)

You might hear some yahoos say that the 2005 run surpassed it, but they're just talking out their asses. This is pure, unadulterated Grade A awesomeness that's guaranteed to put hair on your chest, and make you a better person all around.

He finally turns to look at Kevin, only to see that the kid is not there. Instead, a male RANDOM COMIC FAN (LATE TEENS) is now in his place, and stares at Ethan blankly after listening to his pitch.

RANDOM FAN

Wow--
(beat)
You're an idiot.

He walks off. Alone, Ethan immediately starts to look about for where Kevin has gone.

ETHAN

Where'd he go?

INT. CASHIER COUNTER - CONTINUOUS

Ethan runs up to the counter, where the bored, lanky, tattooed female CLERK (24) with various piercings waits.

ETHAN

Excuse me. I'm looking for the kid I came in here with. Have you seen him?

CLERK

(not interested)
No--

ETHAN

Well, can you help me look for him?

CLERK

I guess--

Unenthused, she slowly sulks out from behind the counter.

CLERK (CONT'D)

What's he look like?

ETHAN

He's got dark hair, brown eyes.

CLERK

Can you be more specific, maybe?

ETHAN

He was wearing a red shirt and blue jeans. He's eight--I'm supposed to be looking after him--

CLERK

Must be doing a bang up job.

She walks off to search the store. Ethan leaves in another direction to check elsewhere.

INT. RANDOM AISLE - CONTINUOUS

Ethan hurriedly strides by multiple aisles, searching each one. As he passes one random aisle--

--THERE IS A TALL, BLACK IMPOSING FIGURE WHICH STANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF ONE OF THEM. It is a fleeting glimpse, but is clearly the same figure Susan and Kevin saw in the kitchen.

Ethan wanders right past it, then comes to a DEAD STOP when he realizes what he just saw.

He frantically backtracks to the aisle where he saw the figure just moments ago, only to see Kevin now stands where the entity was.

He still holds the comic Ethan gave him in his hands.

Ethan is visibly confused, but rushes toward Kevin out of relief.

ETHAN

Where have you been, man? You had me in a panic there--

He stops when he realizes that Kevin just stares vacantly, and does not react to his presence. He also notices something else--

A single word has been SCRATCHED into the cover of the comic book. It looks like it has been applied with a knife, and scraped onto the surface.

The word scrawled on the cover is "DAHMEK".

Ethan stares at this confused.

Just then, he notices that Kevin starts to TEAR UP. He seems frightened.

Ethan kneels down to his level.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Hey, it's okay. I've got you.

KEVIN
I don't remember how I got here--

Ethan is not sure how to respond, but soon tries his best to be comforting.

ETHAN
Don't worry. We'll figure this out.

At that moment, the clerk comes walking up to them in her usual unenthused and sarcastic manner--

CLERK
Hey, you found him. I can call off the rescue party--

She notices the damaged cover. For the first time, she shows genuine emotion - namely, anger.

CLERK (CONT'D)
I hope he was planning to buy that!

ETHAN
(reaches for his wallet)
He was--I was. Here.

He pulls out his credit card. She SNATCHES it out of his hand, and walks back to her counter to ring up the purchase.

Ethan then takes Kevin's hand gently and tenderly.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Come on, let's go.

He leads him off.

EXT. ETHAN'S BACKYARD - DAY

Kevin stands outside and stares blankly at something on the ground. At the moment, we do not see what it is.

INT. ETHAN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Ethan looks out the window and sees Kevin, his back to him.

He sighs, and heads for the fridge. As he walks over, the window is still in view, and KEVIN IS GONE.

Ethan opens the door to the fridge, and pulls out a dish of chicken breasts with a tinfoil wrap on top of it.

Ethan closes the door and turns, when he JUMPS slightly, startled.

Kevin now stands where the figure was just seconds ago.

ETHAN
(nervous laugh)
You surprised me, bud.

Just then, Ethan notices something--

KEVIN'S HANDS ARE BLOODY AND RAW.

Ethan instantly sets the dish to the side on the counter to get a better look at his hands.

Kevin TREMBLES, while Ethan locks eyes with him, showing a helpless expression.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Did you hurt yourself outside?

Kevin hesitates, then quietly squeaks out--

KEVIN
I need to show you something--

EXT. ETHAN'S BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Ethan and Kevin stand next to each other in the same spot Kevin was.

A MUTILATED BIRD, its head torn clean off, lies on the ground before them. FEATHERS, BLOOD AND CARTILAGE are strewn about.

ETHAN
I don't understand. Did you do this?

KEVIN
I told you, I don't remember!

ETHAN
Well, I think if I was responsible for something like this, I'd sure as hell remember!

Kevin SPRINTS OFF, not wanting to hear anymore.

Ethan follows as fast as he can, grabs Kevin and turns him around to face him.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Hey, I'm sorry. I'm not mad. I just want to understand what this means.

KEVIN
Maybe I don't want to know.

Ethan does not have a response. Then--

KEVIN (CONT'D)
When's Aunt Susan coming back?

EXT. SEATTLE SKYLINE - DAY

Late afternoon in Seattle, as various PEOPLE go about their business.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Susan plops herself on the foot of a hotel bed, exhausted after her flight. She spots the TV remote on top of the dresser in front of her, grabs it and turns it on.

On the screen, an image of HERSELF looks back.

The image displays her sitting on the same bed in the exact same room she is in.

SUSAN
(soft)
The fuck?--

Susan stands and looks about for any cameras. The image on the screen remains seated.

Susan presses the button on the remote to turn off the TV, but the image remains.

On the screen, Susan rises from the bed. The real Susan watches this intently.

The image of Susan, her face blank, moves to the side of the bed where there is an EMPTY GLASS on the nightstand.

On the screen, Susan grabs the glass, holds it for a moment, then SMASHES it on the floor.

Susan's hand flies over her mouth. She then turns and sees the same glass next to her bed, whole and unbroken.

On the screen, the black-eyed Susan reaches down for a LARGE JAGGED PIECE OF GLASS. She then stares directly at the screen, as if looking at whoever is watching.

The image of Susan then proceeds to STAB HERSELF FORCEFULLY in the neck with the glass shard.

Susan SCREAMS, backs away from the TV.

On the screen, the image of Susan now BLEEDS PROFUSELY, but shows no emotion. She digs the glass even deeper into her neck, and cuts across her jugular.

As this terrible scene plays out, Susan runs up to the TV to find a Power button. When she finds none, she grabs the plug of the TV and desperately yanks it out of the wall.

The image on the screen finally disappears.

Susan backs away from the TV, her eyes locked on it. After a long beat, she is out the door.

EXT. TAXI CAB - DAY

A cab makes its way down the city streets.

Through the window, Susan is inside in the back. She leans her head wearily up against the glass.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK - DAY

Susan walks down the sidewalk of a middle class neighborhood. She stops outside of a house.

It is a modest TWO-STORY VICTORIAN. While the house and yard do not look particularly shabby, they are not as well maintained as others nearby.

EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

At the front door, she RINGS the doorbell. No answer. She RINGS again and looks through the window on the door.

After a beat, she KNOCKS on the door.

SUSAN
(calls out)
Hello?

(MORE)

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I'm looking for Emily Harrison. I know you don't like visitors, but it's urgent.

EMILY (O.C.)

What do you want?

Susan spins around and sees EMILY HARRISON (NOW IN HER 50s) on the front lawn.

She's a heavysset woman in a sunhat and gardening apron.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Are you a reporter?

SUSAN

No, I'm Susan Welles.

EMILY

I don't care who you are, frankly. I prefer to be left alone.

SUSAN

I know you don't know who I am, but I've come a long way to find you.

EMILY

Well, I'm sorry you've wasted your time then. If you'll excuse me, I have more work to do out back.

She leaves, while Susan follows.

SUSAN

Wait! I need your help.

EMILY

The only people who need me are those who want to dig up my past.

SUSAN

It's about your house.

EMILY

What about it?

SUSAN

I mean your old house. Where your family died.

Emily STOPS COLD. She then turns and eyes her suspiciously.

EMILY

I could never understand people like you. You hear about someone's tragedy, and force them to relive it. Maybe you see this as research or part of a job, but I have had to live with this my whole life.

SUSAN

Look, my sister's family moved into your old house months ago, and now both her husband and her are dead!

This grabs Emily's attention.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Her husband started seeing visions before he died, then she saw them, and now I think I'm starting to experience things.

EMILY

I hope you don't mind me asking, but was your sister Rebecca Shepard?

SUSAN

(a bit taken aback)
How do you know that?

EMILY

I've kept tabs on that place. Seems everyone who's lived there has faced some kind of tragedy, and hers was the most recent.

SUSAN

Please help me.

INT. EMILY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Emily pours two cups of coffee. Susan sits at the table with a SCRAPBOOK of articles about the house over the years.

Emily brings the coffee over and sits at the table.

EMILY

I'm sorry for how I acted before. I did an interview some thirty years ago, and ever since, tabloids try to do follow ups.

SUSAN

I can't believe you've actually kept up with the house.

EMILY

Guess I'm curious about what goes on there after what happened to me.

SUSAN

What did happen?

There is a sad, reflective beat before she speaks.

EMILY

There was a dark presence in that house. Even though I've long since left there, I still see it sometimes.

SUSAN

You've actually seen it?

EMILY

Saw it once when I lived there, then a few times over the years.

SUSAN

I don't know that much about ghosts, but--

EMILY

The thing in that house is not a ghost. It's demonic. A ghost is attached to where a person died. A demon can follow you, and wishes to harm you.

SUSAN

But, why?

EMILY

Demonic hauntings are hard to explain. There's often very little reason behind them, or why they even happen.

SUSAN

But, what is it doing in my sister's house?

EMILY

There's spiritual energy in that place. The entity grows strong with it.

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

It wants to be left alone with the energy, and will do anything it can to harm those who it sees is in the way.

SUSAN

Please tell me what happened.

EMILY

Let's see--It was 1975 when we moved in. I was only six at the time.

EXT. THE HARRISON HOME - DAY (FLASHBACK)

THE HARRISON HOME looks much the same it does in the present.

A MOVING VAN is in the driveway. Edward and his wife JANET (35) carry boxes from the van to the house.

In the front yard, Young Emily runs with her arms out at her sides as she makes airplane sounds. Jamie sits on the front step of the house.

EMILY (V.O.)

We were the first people to live there. It was Edward my father, my mother Janet, my younger sister Jamie and me.

Edward comes out of the van, a box in his arms. He passes Janet, who walks toward it. They exchange a kiss on the lips as they pass each other.

EMILY (V.O.)

It's sad to think back, but that's the last time I remember us being happy.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Janet takes books out of boxes and places them on the shelf.

EMILY (V.O.)

It would be my mother who first encountered the entity that lived in our new home.

She straightens the books on the shelf, when she hears the sound of SMASHING GLASS from the kitchen nearby.

Janet stops at the sound. A moment later, SHE HEARS IT AGAIN. This time, she heads for the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS (FLASHBACK)

As she enters, there is a stack of dishes on the countertop. She looks at the floor and sees the SMASHED REMAINS of two other plates.

She bends down in front of the pieces to investigate.

From another part of the kitchen, Janet hears the sound of GLASS BREAKING. This time, it is closer and much LOUDER than before.

She stands and sees a third SHATTERED PLATE on the floor over on the other side of the room.

Janet is visibly shaken. From outside comes the SHRIEKING LAUGH of Young Emily, which startles her.

She turns to the window and sees Emily and Jamie run by, giggling, with Edward giving chase. This signals that she is truly alone inside.

Janet starts to leave when she is VIOLENTLY PUSHED BACK BY AN INVISIBLE FORCE just as she was about to step through the door that leads to the foyer.

Stunned, Janet slowly stands.

Then, AN INVISIBLE PRESENCE GRABS HER BY THE NECK. The mark of invisible fingers PRESSES into her neck.

Her eyes are WIDE with shock as she struggles to breathe.

Janet is slowly and impossibly LIFTED INTO THE AIR by the invisible force before her.

INT. EMILY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Back in the present with Emily and Susan.

SUSAN

So, no one saw this happen?

EMILY

When we came in, the kitchen was in shambles, with our mother in the middle of it, trying to explain what she saw.

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

Of course, how do you even begin to explain something like that?

SUSAN

What did your father do?

EMILY

He did his best to hide the truth. He'd tell us stories about how once there was a magic castle where our house stood, and the King and Queen with their Princesses who once lived there.

Susan smiles. Emily's face remains glum.

EMILY (CONT'D)

But, things only got worse--

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Janet sits on an examining table, while a DOCTOR places a stethoscope on her chest, then listens.

She looks PALE and haggard from lack of sleep.

EMILY (V.O.)

My father took her to various doctors, and though she was weak with fatigue, they could never find anything physically wrong.

Janet's weary and despondent face stares at the camera.

EMILY (V.O.)

They gave her medications to calm her, but the visions didn't stop. They'd happen at all hours of the day, and into the night. Eventually, she was confined to her room, because my father didn't want my sister or I to see her.

INT. EMILY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Back with Emily and Susan.

EMILY

Our grandmother Jess had moved in by then. She took care of us while our parents were under so much strain. And then--

She trails off.

SUSAN

What?

EMILY

There was the night my sister and I
saw our mother.

INT. EMILY AND JAMIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Emily and Jamie sleep in small separate beds. A tiny
NIGHTLIGHT gives some illumination.

In one corner of the room, Janet SOBS. Emily is the first to
be woken by the sound, followed by Jamie soon after.

Janet sits on the floor of the room. Her knees are up close to
her as she cowers up against the wall.

EMILY (V.O.)

She had somehow escaped from her
room, and found her way to ours--

The girls silently watch from their beds while Janet PLEADS
to no one in particular.

JANET

(whispers)

I don't want to see anymore.
Please. I just want my life back.

She buries her face in her hands.

The girls cautiously climb out of bed. Janet does not notice.

YOUNG EMILY

Mommy?

Janet immediately looks up at her. The look on her face is of
repulsion and fear as she GLARES at her daughter.

As she rises and speaks, her voice is the same that Rebecca
heard on two separate occasions in the upstairs hall.

JANET

What are you doing here?

Confused, neither girl answers.

JANET (CONT'D)

You don't belong in this house!

She rushes toward Emily in a violent manner. The force of her mother as she SLAMS into her sends the girl to the ground.

Jamie watches helplessly, as her sister SCREAMS from under her mother's weight.

Their grandmother, JESSICA "JESS" HARRISON (66) enters to investigate the noise.

When she sees the struggle on the floor, she races over to Jamie's side and shelters her with her arms.

Edward enters the room soon after.

EDWARD

What the hell is happening in here?

When he sees the chaotic scene, he rushes to his wife and picks her up off their daughter.

Janet struggles in his arms. Emily backs away and huddles near Jess and her sister.

All the while, their father tries to keep his wife in control.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

Honey! It's okay. It's Emily.

JESS

I thought you locked the door to her room! How'd she get out?

EDWARD

I don't know! I didn't want the girls to see her like this.

JESS

You need to get everyone out! Can't you see what this place is doing to them?

EDWARD

I can't handle this right now, Mom!

Jess gives him a judgmental look as Edwards leads a struggling Janet out of the room.

After they're gone, Jess' mood softens. She leads the two girls to one of their beds. The three of them sit upon it.

JESS

Now, I'm going to be honest with you, but you have to promise to be brave. Can you do that?

They nod.

JESS (CONT'D)

Do either of you know what a presence is?

JAMIE

A presence?

JESS

It's someone you can feel all around you when you're alone.

JAMIE

Like an imaginary friend?

JESS

(she laughs)

Well, a little. A presence is someone who died, but stayed behind instead of going up to Heaven. Usually they have unfinished business here. And some people, like me, are very much in tune with them and can sense them.

YOUNG EMILY

Are they here right now?

JESS

Well, here's where you have to be brave. The presence here is very dark i fear it has control of your mother, and is using her to hurt all of you. So, whatever happens, you must not blame her.

She reaches into her pocket and pulls out a small vial of HOLY WATER.

JESS (CONT'D)

This is holy water. I'm giving you this to protect yourself. If you ever feel someone is near, even though you're alone, I want you to splash this all around you.

YOUNG EMILY

That sounds kind of silly

JESS

(laughs again)

I'm sure it does. But, if you make a line on the ground with this, no bad presence will be able to cross over it or hurt you.

Emily reaches over to hug Jess, and Jamie does the same. Jess wraps her gentle arms around both.

Just then, Edward SCREAMS from down the hall

Jess stands at the sound.

JESS (CONT'D)

Stay here. Don't come out until I tell you.

Jess leaves and closes the door behind her.

After, Emily and Jamie run to it and open the door slightly, so they can look into the hall outside.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS (FLASHBACK)

At the end of the hall is Edward and Janet's bedroom.

Within the open door, Edwards is on his knees as he holds Jent's lifeless and BLOODIED body in his arms. There is a large SLASH WOUND across her neck.

Edward cries hysterically as Jess stands just outside the door, her hand over her mouth.

EDWARD

She suddenly threw herself out of my arms. She got away and slashed her own throat before I could do anything!

JESS

I'll call an ambulance!

She races downstairs.

From their bedroom door, the girls watch with terror.

EMILY (V.O.)

That's when I truly saw it--

As Edward cries, there is now a familiar TALL PITCH BLACK FIGURE that stands over him. Edward does not seem to notice.

Soon, the figure raises its head and stares directly at Emily.

Emily leans over to Jamie.

 YOUNG EMILY
Do you see that?

 JAMIE
See what?

Emily glances at her sister briefly, surprised by her reply. She then turns back to see the figure still looks back at her in silence.

 EMILY (V.O.)
That's when I knew I was alone--

INT. EMILY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Back in the present with Emily and Susan.

 EMILY
He was never the same after that. I felt like I had lost both of my parents the same night. For weeks, we never saw him. And then, one day, he was acting like nothing had happened.

INT. EDWARD'S KITCHEN - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Edward is at a stove. His expression is blank and calm as he stirs a small pot of tomato soup with a large spoon.

He reaches for a cabinet above the stove and pulls down a box of RAT POISON. He pours some of it into the soup and mixes it.

 EMILY (V.O.)
Jess was going to see some friends that night, so he offered to make us dinner. I remember it tasted funny, so I did not eat much.

INT. EMILY AND JAMIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Edward sits on a small wooden chair in the space between the girls' beds, where they both sleep silently. His face is expressionless once more.

EMILY (V.O.)

After dinner, my stomach was in tremendous pain as I slipped into what was supposed to be a forever sleep.

Edward slowly rises from his chair and walks away. After a long, tense moment, there is a GUNSHOT OFF CAMERA.

EXT. THE HARRISON HOME - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

POLICE CARS AND AMBULANCES wait outside the home.

PARAMEDICS carry Emily on a stretcher out of the house and into an ambulance, which drives away after they are inside.

EMILY (V.O.)

When Jess got home, Jamie had already slipped away, but by some miracle, I survived. When I left the hospital some time later, I moved in with my grandmother.

INT. EMILY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Emily is sad and reflective as she finishes her story.

EMILY

I don't know why my father did what he did. Maybe he wanted all of us to be with our mother.

SUSAN

Why else would he have done it?

EMILY

In my darker moments, I think that presence enjoyed our suffering and used our father's grief to create more pain.

SUSAN

And you said you still see it?

EMILY

Oh, yes. It's why I carry this--

From her pocket, she reveals a small VIAL of holy water, similar to the one Jess gave her.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Who knows how many times it's saved
my life.

SUSAN
I've seen it also.

EMILY
(genuinely afraid)
What did you say?

SUSAN
It appeared before my nephew and I.
It was just standing there, staring
at us the whole time.

All life drains from Emily's face. She rises from her chair.

EMILY
You need to leave.

SUSAN
What?! No, I can't. Not now!

EMILY
If you're actually seeing it, you
need to protect him and yourself!

SUSAN
Will you come back with me?

EMILY
There's not enough money in the
world to make me go back there.

SUSAN
There must be a way I can fight
this!

Emily hands the holy water to her.

EMILY
Keep in mind, this will only keep
you safe from it. Far as I know,
there's no real way to fight it.

SUSAN
So, what, I'm just supposed to live
in fear the rest of my life?!

EMILY
I've only survived by keeping a low
profile.

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

I never married or had children. I could never willing drag anyone into this.

SUSAN

What about the visions?

EMILY

The visions can't hurt you. That's only how it gets inside your head.
(points at the drawing)
This is what you have to worry about. Just get back to that child, and keep him safe!

INT. SEATTLE AIRPORT - DAY

Susan carries her bag as she approaches a FEMALE TICKET AGENT behind a desk.

SUSAN

Hi. I have a flight scheduled for tomorrow, but I really need to get there today. Is there an earlier flight you can put me on?

TICKET AGENT

Let's see what I can do.

The agent types on her computer, while Susan checks her phone for messages.

Oddly, the phone's screen is BLACK. She rapidly presses the button to activate it, but it does not respond to her touch.

Just then, ALL THE NOISE IN THE AIRPORT INSTANTLY STOPS. Dead silence is now all around her.

Fixated on her phone, she does not notice at first. She soon raises her head when she realizes her surroundings are quiet.

She glances about and finds the place EMPTY. There are no people, or even signs of luggage.

As her panic grows, A BLACK AND OUT OF FOCUS FIGURE rises from the ground behind her. It is human in shape, yet somehow unearthly.

That's when she hears a distant and faint RASPY BREATHING. She closes her eyes as she mentally prepares herself for what she is about to face, before she slowly turns.

She opens her eyes and sees the same FIGURE from before in Ethan's kitchen with Kevin.

Susan is at a loss for words at first, but soon finds her voice--

SUSAN

I know what you are. You're responsible for all of this.

The figure does not answer.

This angers her. She reveals the bottle of holy water and holds it toward the entity before her.

At the sight of this, the figure lets out a DEAFENING AND UNEARTHLY SHRIEK OF RAGE.

This forces Susan to cover her ears and crumble to the ground. She SCREAMS, but the cries of the figure overpower hers.

Susan remains crouched on the ground, her eyes shut tight, when--

TICKET AGENT (O.S.)

Ma'am?

Susan's eyes shoot open at the innocent and concerned voice.

She then stands, sees that the airport has returned to normal. Passengers fill the halls, and there is no sign of the dark entity.

The agent simply looks confused, unsure if she should be calling security.

TICKET AGENT (CONT'D)

Is everything all right?

SUSAN

I'm fine. About that flight?

TICKET AGENT

I can get you on one that leaves in an hour. Is that too soon?

SUSAN

Not soon enough.

He phone DINGS MULTIPLE TIMES, signaling many messages coming in at once.

Confused, she glances at her screen. The phone is now working, with multiple messages from Ethan displayed that come right after the next. Some are dated hours ago, some from the previous day.

The messages contain words like, "*Where are you???*" and "*Please call me*".

INT. ETHAN'S LIVING ROOM / AIRPORT - DAY (INTERCUT)

Ethan is at his computer when his phone RINGS. When he sees Susan's name on the screen, he hurriedly answers.

ETHAN

Where have you been? I've been trying to call you.

SUSAN (V.O.)

My phone's been acting strange. I just now got all your messages.

ETHAN

Well, what's going on?

Susan at the airport walks with determination down the hall to the gate.

SUSAN

I found Emily. She confirmed everything. The visions, the voices, that thing Kevin and I saw the other day--

ETHAN (V.O.)

Slow down.

SUSAN

I'm coming back. I shouldn't have left you two alone to begin with. This thing is bigger than we know, but I might have something that can help us.

ETHAN (V.O.)

Just get here, and we'll sort it out.

SUSAN

Ethan, I don't care anymore if you believe me or not--

Back with Ethan, his computer monitor displays an old CHARCOAL DRAWING of a demon that resembles the one that appeared earlier.

ETHAN
Susan--I believe you--

EXT. AIRPORT PICK UP AREA - DAY

Ethan's car sits along the curb as Susan walks toward it. He gets out to meet her.

SUSAN
Where's Kevin?

ETHAN
He's at school.

SUSAN
We need to get to him. He's not safe anywhere, and neither are we.

ETHAN
Susan, I've been trying to contact you since yesterday. Why was your phone off?

SUSAN
It wasn't--But, when I got to the airport, I couldn't get it to work all of a sudden. Maybe it was off this whole time, and I just didn't know--

ETHAN
Yeah, well, I think you need to see this--

He reaches for his coat pocket and pulls out the COMIC that Kevin had at the store.

She stares at it, confused at the word "Dahmek".

SUSAN
(slowly pronounces)
"Day-Mek"?

ETHAN
"Dah-Mek". I caught Kevin with this, and had no idea what it meant, so I did a search and found this.

He pulls his phone out of his other pocket and hands it to Susan.

An article is displayed which reads, "ANCIENT DEMONS", with the subheading "DAHMEK".

To the right is the old charcoal drawing of the entity that Ethan was looking at on his computer.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Look familiar?

Susan scrolls through the article as Ethan continues.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Dahmek is an ancient evil that can create visions to drive its victims insane, which we already know, but it can also control people through possession. I think I might have seen that first-hand.

SUSAN
Wait, what?

ETHAN
When I found him with this book, his eyes were blank, like he was spaced out.

SUSAN
Take me to him now.

ETHAN
Hold on, there's one more thing you should know. Quick question - Has Kevin ever talked in his sleep?

SUSAN
I don't know.

ETHAN
Well, he does now. I want you to listen to what I captured. Let's get in the car.

INT. ETHAN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Ethan sits in the driver's seat of the parked car, while Susan sits beside him.

He brings up an audio app on his phone.

ETHAN

I hid a small recording device in his room, hoping I could pick up something. It's kind of quiet, so I've got the volume set to max.

Ethan presses "Play" on the audio file.

The car fills with the sound of the gentle and steady BREATHING of Kevin in a deep sleep.

Then, the sound of SOMEONE ELSE breathing joins in. It is the same thin, raspy sound that Susan heard back at the airport.

Her jaw drops when she recognizes it.

SUSAN

Shit, this thing is in his room when he sleeps?!

ETHAN

Wait, you'll want to hear this.

From the speaker comes a FAINT AND UNEARTHLY voice that speaks in a strange dialect.

Kevin soon joins in and follows the voice in perfect unison in a DROWSY voice.

Susan STOPS the recording, not able to listen any longer.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Whatever this Dahmek is, I think it's got control of the kid. The only question is what does it want, and why the hell is this thing in your sister's house?

SUSAN

Emily mentioned something about it being drawn to a spiritual energy that is inside the house. Maybe it's been there all this time, and the house was built on top of it.

She trails off, lost in thought.

ETHAN

Yeah, I didn't get any of that. Sorry. But I do get that the kid's in trouble.

SUSAN

There's not much time. I need to get to him now.

ETHAN

(starts the car)
You've got it.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - DAY

Kevin and Tim walk down the hall of the school amid other kids.

They turn the corner and only walk a few steps when they BUMP right into Brad and Ian.

Kevin FALLS, much to Tim's concern.

BRAD

Hey, Freak. You gonna spaz out in "Dragon Fart's" class again?

As Kevin is on all fours on the ground, he notices something--

A THIN BLACK VEIN-LIKE LINE grows across his hand and begins to spread up his arm.

His eyes WIDEN at this. No one around him notices.

TIM (O.S.)

Why don't you just lay off?

Kevin RISES, his hands in front of his face as the line continues to SPREAD up both hands and arms now. He races off.

Moments later, Tim follows, while Brad and Ian just watch, confused.

INT. BOYS RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tim enters the restroom and sees that one of the stall doors is shut. He gently KNOCKS at the door.

TIM

You okay in there?

Kevin sits atop the toilet within the stall, his legs scrunched up close to him in a futile attempt to hide. He is close to tears and TREMBLES.

He buries his face up against his knees.

Just then, the trembling stops. He is now completely still.

Kevin then starts to raise his head to look up at the stall door. His eyes are now SOULLESS BLACK POOLS, and his face displays no emotion.

Outside the stall, Tim hears the latch UNLOCK. The door opens, and there is the blank emotionless Kevin.

TIM (CONT'D)
Dude, what's with your eye?

Kevin VIOLENTLY THRUSTS his hands out and grabs Tim by his neck.

As he struggles, Kevin's grip TIGHTENS. Impossibly, he lifts him up in the air with a single hand.

On a BATHROOM MIRROR on the other side of the room, the scene is being reflected, only it is DAHMEK who holds the helpless child, not Kevin. Until--

We once again see Kevin's blank face as he stares up. There is a SICKENING SNAPPING SOUND off camera, and BLOOD SPLATTERS across Kevin's face.

The room immediately goes SILENT, until--

A school bell RINGS, which signals the start of the next class period.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Kevin steps out of the restroom into a now-empty hall. His eyes are still soulless and black and his clothes are DOUSED in blood, as is his face and hands.

Despite this, he walks casually down the hall toward the school's exit.

In the distance, Mrs. Dagenhart rounds the corner and sees him leave.

MRS. DAGENHART
(calls out)
Excuse me! Why aren't you in class?

Kevin ignores her and starts to step outside.

MRS. DAGENHART (CONT'D)
Mr. Shepard, I am talking to you!

He is gone as the door BANGS behind him.

She then looks toward the restroom that he exited from. Curious, she steps inside.

There is a long, tense beat of silence--

--then her SHRILL SCREAM is heard from the restroom.

INT. ETHAN'S CAR - DAY

As Ethan and Susan pull up to the school, they see a MOB OF PARENTS outside the building.

ETHAN

Okay, what's going on here?--

Susan notices POLICE OFFICERS mixed among the parents.

SUSAN

Stop the car!

Ethan slows the car to a crawl, confused. As soon as it's stopped, Susan is out the door.

ETHAN

Wait!--

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Susan fights her way through the crowd to the front, where she is stopped by an OFFICER.

OFFICER

Hold on, Ma'am. I can't let you in.

SUSAN

My nephew goes to this school!

OFFICER

You'll have to wait with the others. I'm sorry.

SUSAN

Can you at least tell me if he's all right?

OFFICER

What's his name? I'll ask.

SUSAN

Kevin Shepard. I can give you his photo.

POLICE DETECTIVE ALAN NORRIS (45) stands nearby. He looks at Susan when she mentions Kevin's name.

Alan approaches, but Susan does not notice as she digs through her purse for her phone. She looks up when he addresses her.

ALAN
Excuse me. I'm Detective Alan
Norris. Did you say your kid's name
is Kevin Shepard?

SUSAN
Do you know if he's okay?

ALAN
(to Officer)
I'd like to talk to her alone.

The officer nods and leaves. This only increases her anxiety.
Ethan runs up.

ETHAN
What's going on? Do they know
anything?

SUSAN
(points at Alan)
I think he does.

ALAN
(to Ethan)
Are you her husband?

ETHAN
I'm a friend.

ALAN
I need to speak with her privately.
It will just be a few minutes.

He takes her by the arm and leads her away from the crowd.

The two walk to a different part of the yard, when Alan stops and turns to her.

SUSAN
What's this about?

ALAN
Is Kevin Shepard your son?

SUSAN
He's my nephew, and I'm his
guardian.

Alan hesitates before he responds.

ALAN
I don't have all the details yet,
but there's been a murder, and we
think Kevin is a witness.

Fearing the worst, Susan BREAKS DOWN emotionally right there,
almost collapsing to the ground.

SUSAN
Oh, Jesus!

Alan grabs her by the shoulders to keep her steady.

ALAN
Don't worry, we think he's okay.
But we don't know where he is.

SUSAN
What?!

ALAN
A teacher saw him leave the scene
before leaving the building.

SUSAN
He wouldn't just leave. He knows to
ask for help if he's in trouble.

ALAN
Can I get your name?

SUSAN
Susan Welles.

ALAN
Ms. Welles, is there anywhere you
can think of where Kevin might have
gone?

SUSAN
I tell him to go home if there's
any danger.

Susan's phone RINGS.

When she checks the screen, it reads "KEVIN".

She lowers the phone, so Alan can't see the screen.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, but I need to go over by
my friend and take this call.

ALAN
Make it quick.

Susan nods. She then walks back over to Ethan.

ETHAN
What's going on?

SUSAN
Kevin is calling.

Ethan stands close to her so he can listen in on the call as
Susan answers.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Kevin?!

Kevin's voice on the phone is very soft and frightened--

KEVIN (V.O.)
Aunt Susan--

SUSAN
I'm at the school. Where are you?

KEVIN (V.O.)
At the old house.

SUSAN
Can you tell me what happened?

KEVIN (V.O.)
I think I did something bad.

SUSAN
What do you mean, "something bad"?

KEVIN (V.O.)
I have blood on me--

Susan's mouth DROPS, while Ethan stares at her, unsure if he
heard him right.

KEVIN (V.O.)
I don't know what to do.

SUSAN
Just stay right there. Ethan and I
are coming.

KEVIN (V.O.)

Hurry--

She hangs up as Alan approaches.

ALAN

You want to tell me what that was?

SUSAN

A friend heard about the situation at the school. I told them I didn't know anything yet.

ALAN

Good. Keep this quiet. And if you find him, I want you to contact me. Let me give you my number.

She hands him her phone so that he can enter it into her contacts list.

ALAN (CONT'D)

(hands the phone back)

You hear anything, get in touch with me, understand?

SUSAN

We will. Thank you.

Alan leaves.

Susan heads for Ethan's vehicle at a brisk pace, while Ethan desperately tries to keep up.

ETHAN

I have a feeling that going back to your sister's is a bad idea.

Susan does not answer, and climbs into the driver seat. She SLAMS the door in Ethan's face.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

And, obviously you don't give a shit--

He climbs into the passenger side while she starts the engine.

EXT. THE SHEPARD HOME - DAY

Ethan's car races down the street and rapidly pulls into the driveway outside the Shepard Home.

The instant it stops, Susan is out and sprinting for the door. Ethan follows a good pace behind.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

When Susan and Ethan reach the top of the stairs, they do not notice A SHADOWY FIGURE which stands in the open doorway to Rebecca's bedroom and watches them.

SUSAN
(calls out)
Kevin!

ETHAN
The hell could he be?

She looks to Rebecca's open doorway to her bedroom. The figure is now GONE.

As she looks at it, a realization occurs--

SUSAN
Maybe he's in her bedroom like last
time--

INT. REBECCA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

As they enter, they come to a DEAD STOP. The room itself is BLACK, the shades drawn with only slivers of light from the windows.

The SHADOWY FIGURE from before now sits at the foot of Rebecca's bed, and looks directly at them.

Susan reaches for the light switch next to her. As soon as she touches it, the OVERHEAD LIGHT EXPLODES. Sparks rain down.

Susan and Ethan SCREAM. The figure does not react.

ETHAN
You okay? What was that?

SUSAN
I'm fine.

They both look to the bed, only to see the figure is no longer there.

It now stands in the far corner on the other side of the room. It still silently stares at them and makes no movement. It does not even seem to breathe.

As the figure silently steps into the light, it is revealed to be JAMES. His face shows no warmth or emotion as he stares coldly at them.

Susan and Ethan don't even know how to react to this sight. Soon, Ethan quietly squeaks out--

ETHAN
Isn't that?--

James does not respond.

Susan closes her eyes, silently steeling her emotions before she confronts this impossible image before her.

When she opens her eyes, she nervously speaks.

SUSAN
(to "James")
Where's Kevin?

When he answers, it is with an unearthly monotone, devoid of any emotion, or seemingly thought. Not robotic, but calculated and unnaturally sure.

"JAMES"
I know not who he is.

A beat. Susan was not expecting this.

"JAMES" (CONT'D)
I have claimed many souls. This current form is one of my recent victims.

Susan's hands fly over her mouth, while Ethan just stares dumbfounded and silent.

As James speaks his next words, Susan's eyes glance toward the mirror next to him.

SHE SEES THE BLACK FIGURE OF DAHMEK, NOT JAMES, in the reflection.

"JAMES" (CONT'D)
If you mean the child, I am only borrowing his body. I will do with him as I wish.

He disappears back into the shadows.

SUSAN
(holds her hand out)
Wait!

"REBECCA" (O.S.)

Why?

At that instant, "Rebecca" now steps out from the shadows in an entirely different part of the room. Like "James" before, her face is emotionless, her voice unnaturally calm.

"REBECCA" (CONT'D)

You are all merely tools for my amusement. Knowing more than that would be worthless. All you need to know is that soon the boy will join me, just as countless souls have.

Susan finds that she cannot even speak in the presence of this thing that now resembles her sister.

Again, "Rebecca" disappears into the shadows.

There is a long, tense moment of silence as both Susan and Ethan try to comprehend what is even happening. Then--

--KEVIN COMES CHARGING OUT OF THE SHADOWS from another part of the room, directly past the two and out the door.

As he runs by, his head is down, so his face can't be seen.

ETHAN

The hell is even going on?

Susan reaches for her phone.

SUSAN

This isn't right. I need to call that detective.

She brings up her contacts list and dials Alan's number. After some tense moments--

ALAN (V.O.)

This is Detective Norris.

SUSAN

It's Susan Welles. We met at the school.

ALAN (V.O.)

I remember. What's wrong?

SUSAN

I found Kevin, but he might be in danger. We all might be--

ALAN (V.O.)
Just tell me where you are.

SUSAN
We're at 1231 Stafford--

INCREASINGLY LOUD PHONE STATIC MIXED WITH AN UNEARTHLY SHRIEK is heard from the phone.

Susan pulls the phone away from her ear. Even Ethan cringes at the sound.

When the noise abruptly stops, the screen goes black.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
My phone's acting up again. Shit!

From downstairs, there is a distant yet loud SLAM; the sound of a hammer as it strikes something. Both stop and listen. After a beat, another SLAM from downstairs.

They head for the stairway.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Susan and Ethan enter from the foyer. They both stop when they see Kevin seated at the table.

Kevin turns to look at them, his eyes JET BLACK and soulless.

In his right hand, he holds the hammer, which has BLOOD upon it. There is more BLOOD SPLATTERED on the table before him.

Kevin's left hand lies flat on top of the table. It has TWO SMASHED AND BROKEN FINGERS.

The two watch helplessly from the door as Kevin raises the hammer over his third finger.

ETHAN
Jesus fucking Christ! What is that kid doing?!

Without a word, Kevin brings the hammer down on the finger with a FORCEFUL SMASH.

Susan hides her face against Ethan's body as he does, unable to look.

Kevin calmly sets the hammer down. Moments later, his body SHAKES AND CONVULSES WILDLY.

When he stops, his eyes are now normal again.

He seems confused. He soon notices his hand with the broken fingers on the table before him.

His face registers fear, pain and TOTAL BEWILDERMENT at this sight.

Then comes the loud, piercing WAIL.

Susan rushes to his side.

SUSAN
Kevin? It's me!

Kevin simply looks at her, stunned and unable to talk.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
This isn't your fault!

KEVIN
You guys did this?!

SUSAN
No, of course not! We need to get you out of here before this thing does anything else to you.

She picks him up in her arms, but when she turns to Ethan, he PACES back and forth over by the door.

ETHAN
What's the use? This Dahmek isn't going to leave us alone.

SUSAN
Don't say that, Ethan.

ETHAN
Were you watching just now?! The kid smashed three of his damn fingers! God only knows what happened at the school!

Kevin SOBS even more in Susan's arm.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
This thing is just going to keep fucking with us, until it decides it wants to kill us.

SUSAN
I can talk to Emily again. I'll get her to help us.

ETHAN

(yells out into the
kitchen)

What, are you afraid to show
yourself? You can take over a
helpless kid, but you can't show
your damn face?!

SUSAN

Please stop--

ETHAN

Come on, you son of a bitch! Show
yourself to me, why don't you?!

A PAIR OF INKY BLACK HANDS grab Ethan from behind. He freezes
at their touch.

The featureless figure of Dahmek rises up from behind him.

Susan and Kevin huddle close together in fear.

Ethan's body begins to SHAKE UNCONTROLLABLY as a thick, black
VEIN-LIKE LINE spreads across his body to his eyes as
Dahmek's form is absorbed into him.

After that, his eyes turn BLACK as his face loses all
emotion.

SUSAN

Oh God, Ethan--

Ethan walks ROBOTICALLY over to one of the kitchen drawers,
where he pulls a LARGE CARVING KNIFE.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

(screams)

NO!!

Ethan holds the knife in front of its face, its bladed tip
pointed at one of his eyes. He then THRUSTS it toward
himself.

Susan shuts her eyes, while she shields Kevin's eyes with her
hand. Off camera, the sound of the knife as it STRIKES the
eye with such force that it penetrates the brain behind it.

There is silence for a long, tense beat, followed by a THUD.

Susan opens her eyes while still shielding Kevin's, and sees
Ethan lifeless on the floor, the knife stuck in one of his
sockets. BLOOD pours from the wound, as well as his mouth.

His face is FROZEN in an eternal state of shock.

Within the SPILLED BLOOD on the floor is an INKY BLACK SUBSTANCE, which rises to create the physical form of Dahmek once again.

Susan struggles to maintain any sort of composure as she leans close to Kevin.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Keep your eyes shut. Don't look at anything until I tell you.

Kevin nods, as she sets him down in the chair.

She then turns to face the entity before her. She pulls the VIAL OF HOLY WATER from her pocket.

She takes the top off the vial and pours it in a line on the floor directly before her.

Susan then stares at Dahmek, silently challenging him to make his move.

The entity slowly approaches. Susan's anxiety visibly rises.

Then, it STOPS. It cannot pass over the line on the floor.

Dahmek lets out an unearthly SHRIEK OF RAGE.

Susan can't help but LAUGH at this, mostly out of disbelief that it actually worked. She then looks directly at the demon.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
I don't know if you understand me,
but you've lost this time, you
bastard! I'm taking him away from
here.

She picks Kevin up into her arms and whispers--

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Keep them shut. We're almost safe.

She turns to the door behind her that leads to the backyard. When she approaches, she grabs the knob firmly.

Only, the door does not respond and open. The hope dies on her face as she relentlessly turns it over and over, still with no effect.

Despite his eyes being shut, Kevin senses something is wrong.

KEVIN
We're not safe, are we?

SUSAN
(a beat)
No--

From the foyer nearby, there is a KNOCK at the front door.
Susan turns toward the sound.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Through the front door, Alan's voice comes from the other side.

ALAN (O.S.)
Ms. Welles? It's Detective Norris.
Our conversation got cut off.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Susan panics. She turns to where Dahmek once stood, only to see that it is gone.

This does not ease her. She is afraid to step over the line of water.

SUSAN
(yells to the door)
DON'T COME IN HERE!!

EXT. THE SHEPARD HOME - CONTINUOUS

Alan is at the front door with two other OFFICERS (CREDITED AS OFFICERS 2 AND 3). He tries the knob. It opens easily at his touch.

ALAN
I'm coming inside. I've brought
help. Just tell me where you are.

He motions for the two others to follow him in.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Susan cowers with Kevin in her small part of the kitchen behind the line of holy water.

SUSAN

Please! You have to get out before
it comes back!

As Alan and the officers enter and lay eyes on the scene,
they are horrified, even sickened.

ALAN

What in God's name happened here?!

He rushes toward Susan and Kevin.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Who did this? Are they still
inside?

SUSAN

I don't know. Maybe.

He turns to the officers.

ALAN

Get some paramedics out here!

OFFICER 2

Yes, sir!

He exits.

ALAN

(to Susan)

Okay, we're getting you both out of
here. Give me the kid.

SUSAN

No, he's hurt. I want to stay with
him.

Susan slowly stands as she holds Kevin close the entire time.

Alan notices the LINE OF WATER on the floor.

ALAN

What's that?

Susan is unsure how to answer. Then--

SUSAN

The one thing that kept us alive.

She carefully walks across the kitchen toward Officer 3, who
waits by the door to the foyer.

INT. KITCHEN / FOYER - CONTINUOUS

When she reaches him, she looks into the foyer and sees the open front door before her.

Outside, Officer 2 can be seen on his radio as he requests help.

Relieved to see the outside, Susan clutches Kevin close and makes a MAD DASH for the door.

ALAN
Ms. Welles? Stop!

She ignores him and BURSTS through the open front door.

EXT. THE SHEPARD HOME - CONTINUOUS

She does not stop until she is on the front lawn, far from the house. A look of relief comes over her when she is far enough.

Officer 3 sprints out of the house toward her.

OFFICER 3
Hold on, Ma'am. Help is on the way.

Susan KISSES Kevin on his head, then gently sets him down.

SUSAN
We made it.

KEVIN
But what if it follows us?

SUSAN
We'll figure it out. But for now,
we have people who can protect us.

Officer 3 looks toward the house.

OFFICER 3
Detective Norris?--

Susan turns to look in the same direction he is.

There in the front door is Alan, his face emotionless and his eyes INKY BLACK.

The possessed Alan draws his gun from his belt and FIRES on Officer 2 directly next to him.

The bullet STRIKES him in the chest.

Officer 3 DRAWS his own gun, points it at Alan.

OFFICER 3 (CONT'D)
Shit! Detective, drop your gun!
That's an order!

The possessed Alan POINTS HIS GUN directly at Kevin.

Susan realizes who he is aiming at, and shields him with her body, her arms wrapped tight around him and her back to Alan.

Alan FIRES. At that same moment, Officer 3 SHOOTS.

The shot from the officer STRIKES Alan in the head. He drops instantly.

Simultaneously, Alan's shot hits Susan in the back. Her face FREEZES in shock.

Kevin can only watch helplessly as Susan's face soon registers nothing. She slowly crumbles to the ground at his feet.

Officer 3 grabs Kevin by the shoulders as he hurriedly leads him away.

OFFICER 3 (CONT'D)
Come on, kid! Get away from there!

He makes a call on his radio as he leads Kevin.

OFFICER 3 (CONT'D)
Where the hell is that backup?!
I've got men down!

He takes Kevin to a police car that waits by the side of the street. He opens the back door and leads Kevin inside, before he SLAMS the door.

Through the car window, Kevin looks outside. Tears begin to STREAM when he sees Susan lying in the lawn.

In the distance, SIRENS approach.

INT. EMILY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Emily sits at her table with her scrapbook of articles about her childhood home.

Two new articles have recently been printed out--

The first reads, "*Four Dead in Suburban Home. Victims Identified*".

Underneath are photos of Susan, Ethan, Alan Norris and Officer 2.

The other article is headlined, "*Child Only Survivor of Domestic Nightmare*".

A smaller headline underneath reads, "*May Be Connected to School's Murder*".

Emily focuses on Susan's picture in the first article.

Her attention then goes to the name of the article's writer, Bryan Atwood.

She takes one last glance at Susan's picture before she closes the book.

INT. EMILY'S OFFICE - DAY

Emily sits at her computer and enters, "*Bryan Atwood, Chicago Chronicle*" into a search engine.

The top link displays his contact information.

She grabs her phone and dials the number. After a few moments, the call connects.

EMILY

Hello? Yes, I'm calling about the murders at the Stafford house.

(beat)

Well, I think I might have some information that could help you.

INT. POLICE STATION / INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

POLICE DETECTIVE PETERS (39) stands at the window outside of an interrogation room.

Inside is a small table where Kevin sits on one end. Another detective, JAMESON (42), sits across from him.

Kevin wears a CAST over his left hand.

Through the window, Jameson talks to Kevin in a calm manner. There is no sound beyond the glass.

Kevin is despondent and does not reply.

Jameson stands and exits out the door where Peters waits.

JAMESON
He's still not talking.

PETERS
Can't blame him. Kid's not even
ten, and he's probably seen more
than most their entire lives.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kevin sits alone.

From behind, A PAIR OF GENTLE FEMALE ARMS reach for him from
behind, and place their hands on his shoulders.

SUSAN (O.S.)
(soft whisper)
I'm here--

SUSAN'S SPIRIT stands directly behind him.

With her are the spirits of Rebecca, Ethan and James in
different parts of the room.

Rebecca and James are close to him near Susan, while Ethan
stands on the other end of the room.

Their skin is GRAY AND LIFELESS, and their faces blank.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Tell them what happened.

KEVIN
What did happen?

Susan leans close.

SUSAN
Once in that house, there lived two
little girls--

CUT TO BLACK.

SUPERIMPOSE OVER BLACK - "ONLY THE BEGINNING".