

IN THE HOUSE

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INT. ATTIC ROOM - DAY

A large gloomy room in an old house. Toys scattered everywhere: a tricycle, a toy castle, figurines, a ball, a toy airplane, stuffed animals. The place is neglected.

The autumn sunlight stabs in through a small round window, illuminating the dust in the air. On a bed next to the window, wrapped in a blanket, lies a CHILD (8-9).

Long hair, dressed in a nightgown, it's unclear if it's a boy or a girl. The child holds a TEDDY BEAR tightly, almost clinging to it, and looks out the window.

FOOTSTEPS approach. A silhouette, tall and slender (a TEEN, perhaps), comes to him. The child doesn't even turn around, keeping his eyes on the window.

CHILD

I miss going to the river, Drew. I want to see the sun again...

TEEN

I know.

CHILD

You will take me back there?

TEEN

Maybe.

The teen sits down on the bed and strokes the child's hair. The child, JONATHAN, finally turns around. He is skin and bones; his skin is sallow, covered with scrapes and bruises.

Seemingly ill, weak, out of breath, he casts a sad glance towards the teen, ANDREW. Andrew starts to sniffle, as if he was crying. Jonathan's expression becomes inquiring.

ANDREW

I'm so sorry. I love you.

Jonathan looks at Andrew with fear. Something's wrong, he can feel it. He holds his teddy bear tighter against him.

Jonathan backs up to the window and presses against it. Through the glass overlooking the garden, is a wooden patio and a withered, twisted ROSE TREE on a fence.

Gust of wind loosens yellow and orange leaves of the rose tree that fly away.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPER - PRESENT DAY...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

BEEPING of a HEART MONITOR mixed with the SOUND of an ARTIFICIAL RESPIRATOR, almost in harmony.

A man, JAMIE DAWSON (35-40), connected to medical devices, lies unconscious on a bed. On the verge of death, skinny and bald, he is nothing but the shadow of the man he once was.

His wife, SARAH BAILEY (35-40), sits next to him. A sensitive, reserved woman, both strong and fragile.

Devastated, broken, she tries to be solid, tries to hold herself together. She gently strokes Jamie's head and holds his hand, but he's not really there anymore.

INT. HALLWAY - A MOMENT LATER

Sarah exits the room, in shock. Slowly sits on a chair. She breathes heavily, about to collapse. Nearby, a CLOCK TICKS.

Her hands shaking, she tries to make a phone call. Unable to hold back any longer, she bursts into tears.

INT. FUNERAL HOUSE'S RECEPTION - DAY

Sarah enters, with her daughter, VIOLET DAWSON (11), strong, mixed race, a lovely blend of her parents.

Along are her mother-in-law, MARY DAWSON (65-70), resilient, a force of nature from Barbados, and her sister-in-law, CHELSEA DAWSON (30), calm, dignified. They're sad, resigned.

RECEPTIONIST

Do you have an appointment?

MARY

Yes, with Mr. Jackson.

RECEPTIONIST

It's down the hall.

INT. SHOWROOM - CONTINUOUS

Funeral alcoves with urns everywhere. Coffins all over the room, carpeted wall to wall. The room gives off a serene but cold atmosphere.

The women walk in slowly, their FOOTSTEPS dampened by the carpet. Sarah brushes a coffin with her hand. She stops in front of a funeral urn's display case.

Sarah closes her eyes: she wants to escape this nightmare. Mary stops behind her and gently grabs her arm.

MARY

Sarah, the director is waiting.

Sarah sighs, then follows Mary and the others.

INT. CHURCH - DAY - SEVERAL DAYS LATER

Sarah seats on a bench, with Violet, Mary, Chelsea and FRANCES BAILEY, her mother (65-70, sweet, discreet, maternal). Everyone is dressed in black, some cry silently.

PRIEST (O.S.)

... know that you will be mourned and missed, that no one can replace you, that you have loved and are beloved.

Sarah hands a tissue to Mary to wipe her tears. Then, Sarah holds Mary's hand to comfort her with a faint smile.

INT. SARAH'S LIVING ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

All around are PHOTOS of Sarah, Violet, and Jamie. School pictures, birthday pictures, baby pictures of Violet; of Sarah and Jamie climbing, trekking, playing music together.

The sheer joy in the photos clashes in the sad atmosphere.

Violet sits on a couch with Mary and Frances. Her dog KALI, a 3-year-old, female Australian shepherd, sits close to her. Violet strokes the dog's head. She seems on autopilot.

In the background, a GRAND PIANO, fallboard closed. On it, stands a violin, next to Jamie's picture with the violin. People and white bouquets everywhere.

People whispering all around. On the television, a recording of Jamie playing the violin.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Meals and plates cover the table. People take food and go into the living room. Like a shadow, Sarah walks around.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - A FEW HOURS LATER

Visitors leave. Finally. Frances stands close to the door with Sarah. She gently strokes her daughter's hair.

FRANCES

If you need anything, call me, okay?

Sarah nods without a word. Frances kisses Sarah and exits. Chelsea stands on the porch, staring blankly, miles away. Mary hugs Sarah. Sarah's on the verge of falling apart.

SARAH

How do you do it, Mary? Still stand like that? If I were in your place--

MARY

-- but you're not. And I'm not alone. I have a daughter and grandkids. Remember: family is everything. Jamie may be gone, but we are still here.

SARAH

Okay. I'll try to remember.

MARY

Be strong, honey. Violet needs you. Take care.

Mary leaves and Sarah closes the door.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sarah looks at the table. It's cluttered with dirty plates, crumbs and dirty utensils. Downcast, she walks to a corner of the room and sits on the floor.

She curls up and leans her head against the wall. Violet sits next to her. Sarah wraps her arm around her, kisses the top of her head. Kali joins them and lies down.

SUPER - SIX MONTHS LATER...

EXT. HOUSE - DAY (WINTER)

A car drives on a dirt road, in the middle of a land covered with a thin layer of snow, surrounded by woods. It goes towards a multi-story, old Victorian house.

It was probably once majestic, imposing. Now, it's abandoned and old, but still has a certain elegance.

Sarah parks the car. She and Violet get out, followed by Kali, then walk towards the house.

SARAH
So, what do you think?

VIOLET
(a bit skeptical)
Dad really bought that house?

SARAH
He fell in love with it the minute he saw it. He said it would make the perfect place for a music school.

VIOLET
Dad always had a lot of imagination.

SARAH
That's why he was always in charge. You don't like it?

VIOLET
Yeah, but it didn't look that old on the pictures.

They are interrupted by another car coming their way. It stops close to them. Then, JUDY ROSE (60-65) an elegant, but simple woman, gets out and walks towards them.

JUDY
Welcome to our town. I'm Mrs. Rose. We spoke on the phone.

SARAH
Right, you're the agent.

JUDY
By the way, I'm sorry for your loss. Your husband was a very nice man.

Sarah smiles. Judy hands her some keys.

JUDY (cont'd)
Ready to move in? Let's take a look before the movers arrive.

INT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Silhouettes are visible through the frost on the door's windows. RATTLING of a KEY in the lock, then the door opens. Mist comes out of their mouths in the air as they enter.

JUDY

It would be better to turn up the heat right now if you don't want to freeze for hours.

SARAH

I'll take care of it.

She disappears. Meanwhile, Violet walks into the--

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

A large room, with a grand crystal CHANDELIER hanging from a high ceiling. It leads to other rooms on the first floor, and a staircase. The second floor balcony stands over them.

Everything looks old, but not worn. While Judy stands behind her, Violet keeps walking. She looks at the--

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room still has old furniture, including a GRANDFATHER CLOCK, covered with white sheets. The entrance hall can be seen through the wide door.

Violet enters, uneasy. The floor creaks under her steps. A loud BOOM resounds, startling Violet.

JUDY

Ha... the heating is on.

Sarah reappears from the staircase leading to the basement.

JUDY (cont'd)

Oh... just a reminder: the greenhouse is badly damaged and dangerous. My advice would be to destroy it.

SARAH

Noted. We'll see.

JUDY

All right, time for the tour.

A FEW HOURS LATER

MOVERS come in and out, carrying furniture, boxes, plants. Slowly, new pieces of furniture, including the PIANO, are installed in the living room and the entrance hall.

After a while, the movers are gone. Sarah and Violet unpack while Kali trots around, exploring. The DOORBELL RINGS.

INT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Sarah and Violet open the door to GAYLE THOMPSON (mid 60s), friendly, warm, maternal yet a bit intrusive. The perfect cliché of the nice, but overbearing neighbor.

MRS. THOMPSON
Hello, I'm Gayle, your neighbor.

SARAH
Hi, nice to meet you. I'm Sarah and this is my daughter Violet.

MRS. THOMPSON
Welcome. So, if you need anything, My husband and I live in the house next to the road.

SARAH
Thank you. Speaking of which... I'll probably need help with a few renovations. If you know someone...

MRS. THOMPSON
Oh, you should talk to Christopher Jones. He's the best handyman in town. And he knows this house well.

SARAH
How so?

MRS. THOMPSON
His father worked on the house twenty years ago. Christopher used to come with him all the time. I'll find his number and give it to you.

SARAH
Okay, thank you.

MRS. THOMPSON
I'll let you settle in now. Goodbye.

Sarah closes the door as Mrs. Thompson leaves.

INT. BATHROOM - POV FROM THE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Violet takes a bath, distant somehow. Sarah puts away different items. The corridor is plunged in the darkness.

SARAH
Nervous about school tomorrow?

VIOLET
A little.

SARAH
I'm sure you'll fit in fast.

VIOLET
I guess.

Sarah senses something is wrong. After all, a mother knows. She sits on the toilet's lid, to get closer to her.

SARAH
I'm sorry, I know that all this...
changing city, changing school...
that's not easy. But you know why I'm
doing this, right?

Violet exhales deeply, a bit irritated but resigned.

VIOLET
Yeah, I know... you want to pursue
dad's dream. I just don't get why
it's that important to you.

SARAH
Because it was his last project. And
I want this to survive him. You
know... that there's something left
of him. I mean... besides you.

Violet smiles.

SARAH (cont'd)
I also think we needed some change...
a fresh start. You'll see, it's going
to be great. And you could design the
school's logo. What do you think?

VIOLET
Yeah, I suppose.

The bathroom LIGHTS FLICKER for a few seconds.

SARAH
Hmmm... I'll need to talk to Mr.
Jones about this. Okay, time for bed.
We have a big day tomorrow.

Sarah brings a towel to Violet who gets out of the bathtub.

EXT. ROAD LEADING TO THE HOUSE - DAY

Violet gets onto the school bus. Sarah waves goodbye.

INT. LIVING ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Paint cans, brushes, and rollers lay on the floor, covered by a tarp. As Sarah pours paint in a tray, she hears FOOTSTEPS of SOMEONE running upstairs, just above.

She stays still, her head up, listens. Another SOUND. SOMETHING HEAVY DRAGGED on the floor upstairs. It stops. Silence. Sarah puts down the paint can, goes to--

SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Sarah reaches the top of the staircase, looks on both sides of the corridor, but it's empty. She proceeds to--

VIOLET'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Boxes lie on the floor, surrounded by books, artist's paintbrushes, pencils, canvas, sketchbooks. Sarah walks in, looks around. Walks by the closet.

A motion-sensing light in the closet turns on, revealing a DARK CHILDLIKE SILHOUETTE with long hair, dressed in a nightgown, in the back of the closet behind the clothes.

The face of the child, in darkness, is indiscernible. Whether it is a boy or a girl is unclear. Sarah turns her back on the closet and doesn't see the silhouette.

She picks up a piece of clothing from the floor and turns to the closet to put it away. When she moves away, the child has already disappeared, and she didn't see it.

A BANG on the first floor. Startled, Sarah gets out to--

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sarah enters, notices a spilled paint can on the floor and dog's footprints on the tarp.

SARAH
Dammit, Kali!

She looks for the dog, prostrated under a table, weeping.

SARAH (cont'd)
Come on, let's clean you up.

She pulls Kali from under the table and leaves, without noticing a CHILD'S HANDPRINT in paint on the tarp.

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - SAME DAY (LUNCH TIME)

The cafeteria is full and BUSTLING. Students sitting everywhere, eating, talking. Violet, her lunchbox in her hand, looks around for a place to sit.

No one pays attention to her. Violet starts gasping, stressed out. She grabs her asthma pump and takes a puff. A girl (11), RILEY MCKENZIE, sturdy, confident, beckons her.

Relieved, Violet joins her and the other kids (all 11), MAYA SIMMONS, sweet and shy, AIDEN BANKS, funny, joker, and WESLEY GARCIA, reserved, all eating at a table.

VIOLET
Thanks for letting me eat with you.

RILEY
No problem. I was at your place once;
I know what it is.

Violet opens her lunchbox and eats.

VIOLET
How come?

RILEY
My parents moved here two years ago.
At first, it wasn't easy, but now,
we're like old buddies. Right, guys?

Chuckling, the others nod to agree.

AIDEN
Riley is not the kind of person who
lets people walk over her. The last
one who tried still regrets it.

RILEY
(to Violet)
Don't let anyone push you around
here. And if someone tries, just let
met know. I'll deal with that.

Reassured, Violet smiles: she's part of the group now.

INT. ENTRANCE - DAY - A FEW DAYS LATER

Sarah opens the door to CHRISTOPHER JONES (35-40), friendly, self-confident, maybe a bit cocky, but also really kind. He is standing on the front porch, with a warm smile.

CHRISTOPHER

Mrs. Bailey?

SARAH

Yes. You must be Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER

The one and only.

(beat)

So, I heard you need help?

SARAH

Yes... come in.

Carrying his toolbox, he gets inside, and they walk to the--

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The walls are lined with family PHOTOS everywhere. Like some kind of nostalgic veneration of the deceased. The people in the photos even seem to be staring at Christopher and Sarah.

Christopher frowns, uneasy: all this seems a bit unhealthy. Creepy even. The GRANDFATHER CLOCK stands against a wall nearby, but it's not working.

SARAH

We have problems with the plumbing and the electricity. We also need an evaluation of the greenhouse. But there's something else...

CHRISTOPHER

Oh?

SARAH

I heard strange noise two days ago. Coming from inside the floor upstairs. Like... something moving.

Christopher ponders the question while they are walking.

CHRISTOPHER

I might have a theory about that. How do you access the attic?

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Christopher points at the STAIRCASE at the end of the corridor, leading to THE ATTIC ROOM'S DOOR.

CHRISTOPHER

Is that it?

SARAH

I think that's another room. And I don't have the key. I'll see if Mrs. Rose still has it.

She takes him to a hatch leading to the upper floor.

SARAH (cont'd)

There it is.

CHRISTOPHER

All right, let's take a look at his.

He grabs the handle of the hatch and pulls it to release the stairs. He takes a flashlight and climbs the stairs to--

INT. ATTIC - CONTINUOUS

The room is almost pitch-dark, the only light coming from the hatch. Nearby, a DARK SILHOUETTE moves with SCRATCHING SOUNDS. Christopher puts his head through the hatch.

Christopher climbs a few steps. Several BRIGHT EYES appear in the dark. Christopher raises his flashlight, but accidentally drops it. It rolls on the floor beside him.

CHRISTOPHER

Shit!

He quickly grabs it and turns it on. The beam lights up several raccoons milling around. Christopher gets down the stairs rapidly and closes the hatch.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

He turns to Sarah.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, you have raccoons. They move in the walls and the floors as well, which would explain the noise.

SARAH

Raccoons?

CHRISTOPHER
I'll bring some traps. In the
meantime, don't go in the attic.

SARAH
You think they're dangerous?

CHRISTOPHER
No, but they could have rabies. So,
now, what about the electric box?

INT. FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Christopher follows Sarah towards the basement. Christopher stops and looks through a window, perplexed.

CHRISTOPHER
Is that your dog?

Sarah gets closer to take a look as well.

SARAH
Goddammit, not again!

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

In a frenzy, Kali scrapes the PATIO'S WOOD BOARDS, near the DEAD ROSE TREE. They are covered with deep scratches.

SARAH
Come on, girl, let's go.

She grabs kali by the collar and pulls her. Kali resists, but Sarah manages to bring her back.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sarah brings Kali in. Christopher smiles when he sees them.

CHRISTOPHER
Cute dog. What's her name?

SARAH
It's Kali.

They are interrupted by the DOORBELL RINGS.

INT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Sarah opens the door to Mrs. Thompson.

MRS. THOMPSON
Hi, may I speak to Christopher?

Sarah looks at him, standing a little further back. He waves at Mrs. Thompson, looking a little annoyed.

MRS. THOMPSON (cont'd)
(to Christopher)
When you are done here, do you think you could check on our water heater?

CHRISTOPHER
Yes, Mrs. Thompson.

Christopher seems is tense. She turns to Mrs. Thompson.

SARAH
There is a lot of work to be done here. Maybe tomorrow?

MRS. THOMPSON
Huh... All right. Tomorrow, then.

SARAH
Have a nice day.

She closes the door. Relieved, Christopher sighs.

CHRISTOPHER
Thanks.

Sarah gives him a questioning look.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
She's nice, but she can be a bit overbearing. So, that electric box?

SARAH
Yes, follow me...

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT - A FEW DAYS LATER

The house, an imposing dark shape in the snow, stands, surrounded by trees. In the sky, gray clouds move fast, pushed by a strong wind.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sarah enters, dressed in her pajamas.

SARAH
Good night, sweetie.

VIOLET (O.S.)

'Night, mom.

Sarah turns off the light, gets into bed and closes her eyes. After a while, she opens her eyes. She is in the--

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - DAY (DREAM)

DEAD LEAVES and DRY ROSE PETALS roll across the floor, as if blown by the wind. The GRANDFATHER CLOCK TICKS. Random NOTES from a VIOLIN play. Intrigued, Sarah walks into the--

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS (DREAM)

The FLOOR CREAKS when she walks. Hesitant, Sarah looks around. More dead leaves and dirt. On a chair, head bent forward, sits the DARK CHILDLIKE SILHOUETTE in a nightgown.

His face is still in darkness. Jamie is also here. Standing, his violin in his hands, turning his back on Sarah. He starts playing SAINT-SAËNS'S DANSE MACABRE.

But after a few seconds, the music changes into an unpleasant, regular, SCRAPING HIGH-PITCHED SOUND. Like two objects rubbing against each other.

Jamie stops playing and turns to Sarah. His eyes are solid white, lifeless, his skin is grayish. He has an eerie smile.

JAMIE

You shouldn't be here.

Sarah stands speechless. Jamie resume playing, reproducing the same UNPLEASANT SOUND. Superimposed on top of this is now another similar, regular, SCRAPING HIGH-PITCHED SOUND.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

Sarah wakes up to the displeasing BLARE OF THE ALARM CLOCK. She turns it off, gets up slowly and sits on the bed. She looks weary: the night has been rough.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Sarah walks towards the bathroom. She notices something and stops. In the STAIRCASE at the end of the corridor leading to THE ATTIC ROOM, sits an old TEDDY BEAR.

The ATTIC ROOM DOOR is now ajar.

SARAH
Sweetie? Did you open that door?

Violet joins her mother and looks at the door, puzzled.

VIOLET
No, I didn't.

SARAH
Okay. Go have breakfast, I'll be
there in a minute.

At that moment, a CLACKING SOUND is heard upstairs. Sarah and Violet look up to the ceiling.

VIOLET
Raccoon trap?

SARAH
Probably. Come on, go have breakfast.

Violet leaves. Sarah climbs the staircase slowly. She stops after a few steps and stares at the TEDDY BEAR.

It almost seems as if it was staring back at her. Uneasy, she grabs it, and keeps climbing to--

INT. ATTIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is dirty, filled with old furniture: a wooden dresser, a child's MATTRESS, old toys. A ray of light comes through a small round window, lights the dust in the air.

Sarah looks around, puts the bear on a dresser next to a BALL, leaves and closes the door.

EXT. WOOD - DAY

Violet, Riley, Maya, Aiden and Wesley walk on a small path through thick snow.

VIOLET
Where's that secret place of yours?

RILEY
Almost there.

They arrive at the edge of a ledge overhanging a half-frozen river in a chasm, carrying away ice lumps.

Next to it is a small clearing with old objects: a loveseat, wooden pallets, milk crates, candles, metal cabinets.

MAYA

Welcome to our little domain!

VIOLET

Wow, that's really cool!

RILEY

I like your scarf. Reminds me of Harry Potter.

Violet proudly smooths her red and yellow scarf.

VIOLET

Thanks.

Aiden hands Violet a cookie. While eating, Violet cautiously leans over the river's ledge. Wesley and Riley join her.

VIOLET (cont'd)

People don't mind you coming here?

WESLEY

They don't know about this place.

CHRISTOPHER (O.S.)

Hey! What are you doing there!?

The kids look for the voice. Across the river, on the bank below, stands Christopher watching them. Riley huffs.

RILEY

Except for him.

CHRISTOPHER

Shouldn't you be in school?

RILEY

No! It's still lunchtime!

CHRISTOPHER

All right, just be careful. It's dangerous around here.

WESLEY

Yeah, okay!

The kids are about to turn around when--

CHRISTOPHER

Hey, Violet!

VIOLET

Yeah?

CHRISTOPHER

Say hi to your mom for me, okay?

VIOLET

No problem.

They turn around and leave.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY - A FEW DAYS LATER

Sarah sits in front of the piano. She's on the phone. Close to the piano, two microphones are placed. Next to her is a small table with a laptop, speakers and headphones.

In a corner a Christmas tree brings a little joy in the atmosphere. On the fireplace mantle stands the JAMIE'S URN.

In another corner, canvases, colored pencils, charcoals and brushes are placed on easels.

SARAH

Hey, Mom.

FRANCES (V.O.)

Hey! So, almost a month in your new house... How is it?

SARAH

Great. Still a few issues to deal with, but we have help.

FRANCES (V.O.)

I wish I could help you, sweetie, but you live so far away now. And the music school?

SARAH

Coming up. I am reviewing the plans prepared by Jamie. Things should get moving soon. And I'm still working on recordings for a client.

FRANCES (V.O.)

Oh! Don't forget to give me gift suggestions for Violet. You're still coming for Christmas, right?

SARAH

Of course.

FRANCES (V.O.)

Okay, see you later. I miss you.

SARAH
Miss you too, Mom.

She hangs up, then moves the microphone next to her and types on the keyboard of her laptop. She plays a few NOTES, then plays the recording she just made.

She stops for a moment, uncertain, turns up the volume until she hears a SIZZLING BACKGROUND NOISE and plays the recording again. Then, she puts the headphones on.

She resumes RECORDING her musical piece, still hearing the SIZZLING NOISE, and plays a few notes. Suddenly, a VOICE WHISPERS HER NAME through the noise.

VOICE
Sarah!!!

Sarah jumps and turns around. There's no one. She's alone.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Violet walks, carrying her artist's material. The usual BOOM from the HEATING SYSTEM resounds, followed by the HISSING OF AIR coming from the heating vent in the walls.

Suddenly, Violet hears a FAINT SOUND, coming from the vent. Intrigued, she puts down her material, gets onto her hands and knees, then presses her ear against the vent.

Through the HISSING of air, the SOUND, perhaps a CHILD'S VOICE, continues. Like a WHISPER. Violet then hears the THUD of AN OBJECT FALLING on the floor, upstairs.

Violet looks up to the attic room. Its door moves slightly, as if it had just been pushed. She climbs the steps to--

ATTIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Violet looks around. She notices the TEDDY BEAR and a BALL on the floor. She grabs it, stares at it for a moment.

The bear's eyes seem to have an unusual reflection. Almost alive. Violet smiles and takes the bear with her.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - LATER

Sarah starts a dishwasher cycle. About to leave, she turns off the light. Behind her, a dark shape passes quickly before the dishwasher.

Sarah hears a brief SCRATCHING SOUND. Almost frantic. She tries to turn the light switch back on. Nothing.

SARAH
Goddammit.

Except for the lights coming from the dishwasher and the clock on the gas oven, the room is pitch black. The SCRATCHING starts again, gently this time.

Sarah picks up her cellphone from her pocket and turns its light on. The beam sweeps the room, revealing Kali behind the table, whimpering. Sarah exhales deeply, relieved.

As she moves the beam, suddenly, a pallid, meager BOY, with long hair and dead white eyes, mouth wide open on a silent cry, appears in the beam and rushes towards her.

Sarah screams and falls backwards on the floor, dropping her phone. Terrified, she backs away to the--

HALLWAY

then quickly backs up to the--

LIVING ROOM

where she stops, on the floor, terrorized, out of breath.

VIOLET (O.S.)
Mom! Is everything okay?

Trying to catch her breath, Sarah stares at the light beam from her phone illuminating the ceiling in the dark hallway.

Something rushes out of the kitchen, crossing the beam!!! It's Kali! Sarah quickly gets up and turns on the hallway light, which also illuminates the kitchen. It's empty.

VIOLET (O.S.) (cont'd)
Mom!?

SARAH
It's okay. I'm fine!

Still hesitant, Sarah quickly picks up her cellphone, turns off the hallway light and leaves.

INT. ENTRANCE - DAY

Sarah opens the door to Christopher, holding a gift basket.

CHRISTOPHER
Merry Christmas.

Sarah barely has a faint smile. Christopher notices and looks at her with a puzzled expression.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
Everything okay? You don't look so good.

SARAH
I'm sorry. Rough night. Thank you for the basket.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Christopher drops off the basket on a console table. He pauses and looks at the family PHOTOS. The same strange atmosphere of nostalgia emanates from it.

One photo is of Jamie's last Christmas. He was already sick and had lost his hair. Christopher turns to Sarah.

CHRISTOPHER
If you don't have anything planned, we always celebrate at my father's house and everyone's welcome.

SARAH
Thanks. We'll be at my mom and then, we'll visit Jamie's mom.

CHRISTOPHER
So... first Christmas without...

SARAH
Yeah...

There is an awkward silence. Sarah finally breaks it.

SARAH (cont'd)
When you used to work on the house with your father, did you ever notice anything... unusual?

CHRISTOPHER
Unusual? Well, the house had all kinds of problems.

SARAH
Like what?

CHRISTOPHER
 Creaking walls and floors, stuff
 breaking. But... it's an old house,
 so... I guess that's normal. Why?

SARAH
 Oh... issues with the lights, and...
 I thought I saw something, but I was
 probably just tired.

They are interrupted by a KNOCK on the front door.

INT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Sarah opens the door to Mrs. Thompson.

MRS. THOMPSON
 (to Sarah)
 Hi, sorry to bother you.
 (to Christopher)
 Would you mind helping Henry with the
 cords of wood? His back really hurts.

Christopher refrains a sigh and gives her a forced smile.

CHRISTOPHER
 I'll finish dealing with the problems
 here and I'll come in after.

MRS. THOMPSON
 Thank you so much. Goodbye!

Sarah waves goodbye and closes the door.

SARAH
 You just can't say no to her.

CHRISTOPHER
 I have my reasons. She's... very
 important for my family. Now, what
 about that electric box?...

INT. JUDY ROSE'S OFFICE - DAY

Judy is at her desk. Sarah knocks and gets in.

JUDY
 Mrs. Bailey, hi! Have a seat.
 Everything's okay?

Sarah sits down.

SARAH

Yes... a few minor issues with the house, but nothing we can't handle.

JUDY

Good. What brings you here?

SARAH

I would like to know a little more about the history of our house. Where could I find information about it?

JUDY

At City Hall, in the land register department, I guess. Or with the lawyer who certified the sale. May I ask why? Is there a problem?

SARAH

I was wondering if there was anything... strange about it.

JUDY

Like what?

Sarah falters; what she's about to say will sound weird.

SARAH

Well... do you know if anybody died in this house?

JUDY

My God, no! I mean... not that I know of. Why?

SARAH

Just curious. I heard rumors, but nothing to worry about.

JUDY

Well, like I said, if there's anything, it's at City hall. But I don't think you'll find anything.

SARAH

All right, then. Thank you.

She gets out, under the perplexed Judy's gaze.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Christmas tree is now gone. Sarah passes in front of the fireplace, brushes JAMIE's urn, sits in front of the piano, activates her METRONOME which produces its TICKING SOUND.

She plays a few NOTES on the PIANO. But soon, she notices something faulty. One of the KEYS is out of tune and the SOUND is distorted.

She starts over and finds the defective key. She stops the metronome, takes a tune lever, rubber mutes and an electronic TUNING DEVICE that she turns on. She bends over--

THE PIANO'S INTERIOR

At first glance, nothing's wrong. Sarah puts rubber mute on some steel strings, puts the tune lever on a tuning pin and adjust the TUNING DEVICE.

She hits the defective key repeatedly, turns the lever very slightly. The KEY'S STRING, taut, emits a CRACKING SOUND but Sarah is too focused on her problem to notice.

Sarah keeps hitting the KEY and turns the lever, but the SOUND is always strangely out of tune, distorted, creepy.

The STRING, tauter and tauter, CRACKS more and more. Sarah keeps hitting the KEY, turns the lever. The STRING keeps CRACKING dangerously.

The indicator on the TUNING DEVICE suddenly moves CHAOTICALLY, out of control!!! Then--

SNAP! The STRING breaks and hits Sarah in the face!!!

In shock, she staggers, bends over in pain, her hands over her face. Blood flows from her face between her fingers!

Disoriented and hurt, Sarah walks with difficulty towards the--

KITCHEN

She opens the faucet and tries to lean under the stream of water. Blood mixes with the water in the sink.

She manages to grab some kitchen towel and to put it on her eye where the blood seems to be coming from.

The entrance DOOR opens and SHUTS.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Christopher unties Kali's leash and pats her back. He immediately notices a trail of blood drops on the floor leading to the kitchen.

CHRISTOPHER

Sarah!?

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Christopher reaches Sarah, still holding the blood-soaked kitchen towel to her face. He rushes to her.

CHRISTOPHER

Holy shit, are you okay?

INT. BATHROOM - A MOMENT LATER

Sarah sits on the toilet's lid. Christopher is tending to her wound, just above her eye. Her injury seems nasty.

CHRISTOPHER

You're really lucky. A little lower
and your eye was hit.

He brushes her cheek, as if removing an imaginary dust. Sarah freezes up for a second at this contact. Christopher promptly withdraws his hand and gives her a cold pack.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

There, put this on your wound.

The entrance DOOR opens and SHUTS again.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Violet puts her backpack on the floor and sees the blood.

VIOLET

What the hell? Mom!?

SARAH (O.S.)

Over here!

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Violet enters, unnerved, sees Sarah and Christopher.

VIOLET
What happened?

CHRISTOPHER
(smiling)
The piano was angry at your mom.

VIOLET
What?

SARAH
A string broke and snapped me in the
face while I was tuning the piano.

VIOLET
Oh shit!

CHRISTOPHER
Can you take care of your mom? I have
to go.

VIOLET
Sure.

CHRISTOPHER
(to Sarah)
Tomorrow, I'll take you to Dr. Lee,
make sure everything's fine.

Sarah nods to agree and Christopher he leaves.

INT. VIOLET'S ROOM - NIGHT

Violet, tucked in her bed, is asleep. On her dresser stands
the TEDDY BEAR. For a moment, its eyes reflect light in a
strange way, as it seems to be watching her.

INT. ATTIC ROOM - DREAM

Violet stands in the middle of the room, turning her back on
the WINDOW. Behind her stands a CHILD in a nightgown,
Jonathan, staring at the window.

DEAD LEAVES and DRY ROSE PETALS roll across the floor.
Violet hears sniffing. She turns around and sees Jonathan.

He is tapping his finger in the window, pointing at
something. Getting closer, Violet discovers he is pointing
at the ROSE TREE in the garden.

Jonathan keeps tapping in the window faster, harder. He
turns to her with a pleading, desperate look.

JONATHAN
It's here, Violet. It's here.

Unnerved, Violet walks back. He's scaring her.

JONATHAN (cont'd)
Please, Violet. Help me! Violet!

Violet turns around and sees her father.

JAMIE
Violet, get out!

Violet now hears another distant VOICE.

SARAH (O.S.)
Violet!!! Wake up!

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Violet jolts back. She is standing in front of her canvas placed on the easel, still in her pajamas. Her hands are blackened by the charcoal she is holding.

Sarah stands next to her, with a concerned expression.

SARAH
What are you doing?

VIOLET
I... I don't know. I think I was dreaming.

SARAH
Some dream... I couldn't wake you up.

Sarah and Violet look at the CANVAS. Scribbled on it with charcoal is the black image of the twisted, ominous DEAD ROSE TREE with the fence. Both can help but to look worried.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - DAY

Christopher gets down the staircase, carrying an empty cage. NOTES from a VIOLIN play. Sad, melancholic. Christopher turns to the--

LIVING ROOM

Sarah, on the couch, plays the violin. Eyes closed, focused. Her injury looks better; she only has a small bandage now.

Christopher stops in the doorway, puts down the cage. Listen to the music. Sarah stops playing.

CHRISTOPHER

I didn't know you played the violin.

Sarah turns to Christopher, then puts the instrument back in its case. Carefully, like a precious object.

SARAH

When we start music school, we have to try different instruments.

CHRISTOPHER

This one was Jamie's?

SARAH

Yes.

CHRISTOPHER

You play it often?

SARAH

Violins are fragile. You have to take care of it from time to time.

Christopher sees the papers scattered on the coffee table.

CHRISTOPHER

The school project is going well?

SARAH

Yes. I should start looking for clients soon.

Christopher ponders for a while, then makes the move.

CHRISTOPHER

Listen... I was wondering if you would like to... I don't know... go for a coffee some time. Or a movie... or whatever you want.

SARAH

Sure, I suppose. I'll think about it.

CHRISTOPHER

Great. Hem... I have to go, now.

Christopher is about to leave but stops and turns to Sarah.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

Is that the grandfather clock that used to be in the living room?

SARAH

Yes, I put it there, but I can't get it to work.

CHRISTOPHER

I could take a look at it.

SARAH

Okay. Thanks again for everything.

CHRISTOPHER

Always my pleasure.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

All lights are off. Snow falls over the house: a dark, sinister, massive shape. Even the winter NATURE'S SILENCE sounds oppressive.

INT. VIOLET'S ROOM - NIGHT

The room is plunged in darkness. Violet, in her bed, is dozing, on the verge of falling asleep. Nearby, the TEDDY BEAR, on the dresser, still seems to stare at her.

Violet is close to sleep. It is then that a distant, familiar VOICE whispering, calls out to her.

JONATHAN (O.S.)

Violet...

Violet opens her eyes, petrified. It's the voice of the BOY she saw in her dream. She is now completely awake.

Without moving, she looks around. Did she really hear that?

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

I know you can hear me.

Violet latches onto her blanket, hardly dares to breathe. But she keeps looking around.

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

I'm in the room...

Violet holds herself back not to panic. Sound of SOMETHING CRAWLING at FULL SPEED under the bed is heard! There's something UNDER THE BED! Violet raises her head slightly.

Suddenly, at the foot of the bed, a child's bony arm pops out from under the bed and grabs the blanket!

Then, a second arm also appears to do the same! Violet screams at the top of her lungs. In a matter of seconds, Sarah dashes in and turns on the light switch.

SARAH
What!?! What's wrong!?

Panicked, on the brink of tears, Violet points at the foot of her bed. She keeps screaming, hysterical.

VIOLET
He's here!!! He's here!!!

SARAH
What!?! What's here!?

VIOLET
There's someone!!! He's under the bed!!!

Sarah leans over, quickly pulls back the blanket and looks under the bed. Nothing. She looks back at Violet.

SARAH
There's nothing!

But Violet won't let go.

VIOLET
He's here!! I know he is!!

SARAH
There's no one! You just had a bad dream.

Violet bursts into tears. Sarah takes her in her arms and hugs her tight.

SARAH (cont'd)
Shhh... It's okay, sweetie, it was just a nightmare.

VIOLET
(sobbing)
I want Daddy...

Sarah, troubled, stroke Violet's hair to calm her down.

SARAH
I know... I miss him too.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Sarah and Violet lie in Sarah's bed. Violet, now asleep, is clinging tightly to her. Sarah strokes Violet's hair.

Staring at the ceiling, she seems to ponder. Deep down, she knows that something is really wrong with that house.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - DAY

Violet, Riley, Aiden, Maya and Wesley sit on a bench. Violet wears a haggard expression.

RILEY

(to Violet)

What the hell happened to you? You look like shit.

VIOLET

(sarcastic)

Thanks. I feel much better now.

RILEY

Hey, I didn't mean to upset you.

VIOLET

Just had a really bad night. Had a fucking bad nightmare.

WESLEY

That's not surprising.

VIOLET

What do you mean?

WESLEY

Well... in that house? Have you seen it? Gives me the creep. And I'm not the only one.

AIDEN

It's been deserted for years. And no one knows why, but apparently, the previous owners left really fast. Don't you think that's weird?

MAYA

I heard some people say that when it was inhabited, at night, they could hear screams coming from the house.

WESLEY

Maybe someone died in there.

VIOLET

What!?!

RILEY

Guys, stop it! You're scaring her.

(to Violet)

Don't listen to them, they're idiots.
No one died in there and no one heard
any screaming. They're just stupid
rumors, okay?

(to the others)

Right, guys?

A little embarrassed, Aiden, Maya and Wesley stoop the head.

WESLEY

Sorry, Violet.

VIOLET

It's okay.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Sarah passes in front of Violet's room's door. She's asleep. There is now a projector night light and LED lights illuminating the room.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sarah gets into her bed and under the covers. She turns to the nightstand. On it, a picture of Jamie and her, smiling from ear to ear.

Sarah stares at it, a pained expression on her face. She looks away and exhales deeply. She turns off the light, lies down and closes her eyes. Soon, her breath slows down...

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - DREAM

Sarah stands in the gloomy corridor. DEAD LEAVES and ROSE PETALS roll across the floor. She hears the same unpleasant, SCRAPING HIGH-PITCHED SOUND from her previous dream.

It's coming from the bathroom. Light escapes through the half-open door. Sarah heads to the bathroom.

The SOUND continues. As she gets closer, it gets louder. When she almost reaches the door, she sees a trickle of blood flows under the door panel.

The dark silhouette of a man appears behind her. She feels a presence and turns around. It's Jamie. He has the same appearance as in her previous dream. He looks upset.

JAMIE

Get out!!!

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

Sarah wakes up to the dreadful BLARE OF THE ALARM CLOCK. She rubs her forehead and her puffy eyes. She looks awful.

Still half asleep, Sarah drags herself out of bed.

INT. MR. KELLY LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

Sarah gets in the lobby. She turns to the RECEPTIONIST.

SARAH

Hi, I'm Sarah Bailey. I believe Mr. Kelly has some documents for me?

RECEPTIONIST

Let me check... yes... there it is.

She hands Sarah a file filled with a pile of papers.

RECEPTIONIST (cont'd)

All the documents you asked for. Bills of sales, location certificates, property titles...

SARAH

Does it go back to the building of the house?

RECEPTIONIST

No, just the last 25 years.

SARAH

Twenty-five years?

RECEPTIONIST

Mr. Kelly was not implicated before that, it was someone else, I'm not sure who. But he also added newspaper articles about the house.

SARAH

Okay. Thank you.

Sarah puts the file under her arm and gets out.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A CHILD (8-9), seated, plays a few NOTES on the PIANO. Sarah stands next to him. Her wound is now fully healed. The METRONOME produces its usual TICKING SOUND.

SARAH
Watch the tempo, Mason...

The DOORBELL RINGS.

SARAH (cont'd)
Lesson's over. Your father's here.

MASON gets up in a hurry.

MASON
Yeah!

In the meantime, Frances, crosses the entrance hall.

EXT./INT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Frances opens the door to Christopher and ISAAC, Mason's father. When she sees both men, Frances looks puzzled.

FRANCES
May I help you?

ISAAC
I'm here to pick up Mason.

Putting his coat on, Mason rushes to the car, parked nearby.

ISAAC (cont'd)
(to Mason)
Eh, what do we say to Mrs. Bailey?

MASON
Thank you!

Frances and Christopher laugh while Sarah arrives.

SARAH
Goodbye, Mason.

Isaac and Mason leave. Sarah turns to Christopher, a bit surprised.

SARAH (cont'd)
I wasn't expecting you for another 30 minutes.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, I finished my last job a bit early. I can come back later...

FRANCES

Nonsense! Don't stay there, you'll freeze to death.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Christopher gets in and Frances closes the door.

FRANCES

Sarah, go get dressed. I'm going to discuss with Mr...?

CHRISTOPHER

Christopher Jones.

SARAH

Mom, I don't need to "get dressed".

FRANCES

Look, I'm here to babysit my granddaughter, and you, you will take the opportunity to have fun!

SARAH

We're not going to the Paris Opera.

Frances ignores her daughter, waving her hand in the air. She grabs Christopher's arm and drags him away.

They pass by the GRANDFATHER CLOCK, now functioning and TICKING. A few seconds later, it CHIMES.

Frances shakes her head when she sees the pictures on the walls. This devotion to Jamie annoys and distresses her.

FRANCES (O.S.)

I'll bring this lovely man back to you in less than 30 minutes.

Sarah chuckles, shaking her head.

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S PICKUP TRUCK - DRIVING - A LITTLE LATER

Sarah and Christopher are seated. Christopher starts the engine.

SARAH

Sorry for my mom. If it were up to her, I would always be dressed in fancy dresses.

Christopher smiles, amused.

CHRISTOPHER

Like the ones in your photos?

SARAH

Right. With crinolines and sequins.

CHRISTOPHER

Anyway, you don't need to dress up where we're going.

He presses the gas pedal, and they leave.

INT. BAR-RESTAURANT - LATER

The place is crowded. People, sitting at tables, eating, drinking, talking. On a stage, musicians prepare their instrument for the show.

Sarah and Christopher sit at a table near the stage.

CHRISTOPHER

I know it's not Beethoven, but you'll see, they're great.

Sarah smiles in reply while a WAITRESS brings them menus. MUSICIANS start playing RANDOM NOTES.

INT. HOUSE'S BATHROOM - LATER

Violet finishes drying her hair with the hairdryer.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A Monopoly game board is placed on the coffee table. Frances distributes the game money. Kali walks around the table and tries to sniff the game pieces.

FRANCES

Violet, game's almost ready!

VIOLET (O.S.)

Just a minute!

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Violet takes her clothes from the floor, turns down the light and gets out.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Violet walks towards her room. As she is almost there, she hears a LOW WAIL. It comes from the bathroom. She stops and turns around. The WAILING continues.

Suddenly, a bony, dirty hand emerges from the bathroom door and grabs the door frame near the floor! Another one appears and clutches the floor.

Crawling slowly, the rest of the body appears in the door. There is NO HEAD!!! Horrified, Violet screams at the top of her lungs.

EXT. HOUSE - LATER

Christopher's truck arrives at full speed and stops abruptly in front of the porch. Sarah, worried sick, storms out the truck and runs towards the house, Christopher on her tail.

INT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Sarah barges in and runs to--

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Violet and Frances sit on the couch. Frances holds Violet tight in her arms and rocks her. Violet is in tears, hyperventilating and shaking. Sarah rushes towards her.

SARAH

What happened!?

VIOLET

I saw him!!! I saw him again!

Frances, confused, makes a helpless gesture to Sarah.

INT. VIOLET'S ROOM - LATER

Violet, now calmed down, lies in her bed with Frances and Kali. Sarah stare at them for a brief moment and leaves.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Sarah gets down the staircase where Christopher sits.

CHRISTOPHER

How is she?

SARAH

Better. I think I'll take her to my mother for a while. I don't know what's happening, but she needs some rest and... maybe to get out of here.

CHRISTOPHER

What the hell did she see? She looked terrified.

SARAH

I'm not sure. It's not the first time she has claimed to have seen someone.

CHRISTOPHER

Someone? In the house?

SARAH

Yeah. I'm so sorry about our evening.

CHRISTOPHER

Don't worry, it's okay.

EXT./INT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Sarah escorts Christopher out. Snow has now started to fall.

CHRISTOPHER

Keep me informed, okay?

SARAH

Sure, no problem.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Sarah walks towards the staircase. She stops and turns to the living room. Her gaze stops on the DRAWING of the ROSE TREE made by Violet. She stares at it for a while.

INT. VIOLET'S ROOM - A MOMENT LATER

Violet and Frances are still in the bed with Kali. Sarah brings a mattress, a pillow and a sleeping bag and settles on the ground to sleep as well.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The snow is now falling heavily and flies, lifted and hurled by the wind. There seems to be a snowstorm. Sarah, Violet and Kali head for the car. Violet is dragging a suitcase.

INT. SARAH'S CAR - DRIVING

Sarah sits in front and Violet is in the back with Kali.

SARAH
I think it will do some good to go
see Grandma.

Staring blankly at the window, Violet doesn't answer. She mechanically smooths her red and yellow SCARF.

Sarah starts the engine and starts driving. While driving, she adjusts her rear-view mirror.

Suddenly, in the reflection, she catches a glimpse of a figure through the falling snow. Like a human silhouette. She abruptly stops the car.

VIOLET
Wo... what's wrong?

Sarah looks in the rear-view mirror again. Nothing. She turns to look through the rear window, then rushes out.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Sarah nervously looks around, but sees nothing but falling snow. Violet opens her window.

VIOLET
Mom?

Sarah keeps looking, but whatever it was, it's gone.

SARAH
Nothing, sweetie. Sorry.

Sarah gets in the car, and they leave.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is bathed with the TV's blue light.

Dressed in her pajamas, wrapped in a BLANKET, Sarah sits on a couch, her feet on a poof. She goes through the papers she received from Mr. Kelly about the house.

Most is nothing but boring administrative documents. But a NEWSPAPER ARTICLE published in 2015 titles:

"TEENS SQUATTING ABANDONED HOUSE SUFFERED MINOR INJURIES"

Other words stand out: "WITNESSED SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS"
"DARK SILHOUETTE" "CREEPY MOANING" "SCRATCHING NOISES".

Sarah sighs, weary. She rubs her eyes. She leans her head forward and breathes deeply, her hand over her face.

After a brief moment, her BLANKET starts to MOVE and slowly goes down, as if SOMEONE was pulling on it.

Feeling her BLANKET moving, Sarah opens her eyes, her head still leaning forward. She slowly takes her hand away from her face and straightens her head.

She gasps and curls up on the couch. A skinny, pallid BOY, dressed in a nightgown, with long hair, stands near her feet and stares at her. His face gives off an immense sadness.

His mouth opens and begins to stretch unnaturally, as if he was screaming of pain, but there's no sound. His head tilts back and his eyes roll back.

Sarah watches him, terrified, unable to move. A YELP draws her attention. Sarah turns to Kali, nearby, who growls at the boy. She turns back to him, but he's gone.

INT. JUDY ROSE'S OFFICE - DAY

Sarah enters. She looks exhausted, at the end of her rope. She drops into the chair more than she sits down.

SARAH

Tell me what's wrong with that house.
Please, tell me what happened.

JUDY

Nothing. Nothing happened. I...

Sarah snaps. Tears begin to well up in her eyes.

SARAH

Don't lie to me!

JUDY

I'm not lying to you. I swear...

SARAH

If something happened, you have to tell me. You have to. I can't...

Sarah tries to hold back her tears. In vain. Judy hands her a box of Kleenex. Sarah picks one and wipes her tears.

JUDY

Sarah, I swear if something bad happened, I really don't know. Why do you ask? What's wrong?

SARAH

My daughter and I have seen too much weird stuff. Horrible stuff. It's not normal. Something's wrong, I know it.

JUDY

Do you... want to sell the house?

Sarah shakes her head.

SARAH

It's the last thing I have left of my husband. It was supposed to be his legacy. I can't sell it. I just can't. If there's anything you know, anything...

Judy dithers for a moment, affected. She goes through her drawers and draws a business card.

JUDY

Listen, normally, I don't do this, but I may have something for you. It's quite unusual, but... who knows?

INT. ENTRANCE - DAY

Sarah opens the door to Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER

Hey. Just wanted to know how you were doing.

SARAH

Hi. You want to come in?

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Christopher and Sarah sit down.

CHRISTOPHER

How's Violet?

SARAH

Better. I think spending a week at her grandma did her some good. She'll be back tomorrow.

Christopher glances in surprise at something on the coffee table. He picks up the business card and reads it.

CHRISTOPHER

Adam Green, supernatural expert?

SARAH

Mrs. Rose gave me that.

CHRISTOPHER

Are you gonna call him?

SARAH

I know it sounds weird but... I think so. Violet has seen strange things and so have I. Things I can't explain, so... why not?

Christopher blinks and puts the card back down.

CHRISTOPHER

There have always been rumors and weird stuff with this house. I never took it seriously until now.

SARAH

But you said you never noticed anything strange.

CHRISTOPHER

I always assumed that the weird noises and all the things that broke were normal. But you say that Violet and you saw something else.

SARAH

I know it may sound completely nuts, but I'm seriously thinking that there may be... someone or something... Violet and I have had unusual dreams and visions since we moved here.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't think that's nuts. It's certainly... weird, but not crazy.

SARAH
Well, thank you for not thinking I'm
losing my mind.

Christopher chuckles.

CHRISTOPHER
So, would you like to go back to
where we were and go out again?

Sarah exhales deeply, dithers.

SARAH
Listen, I... I really, really like
you. But it's just...
(beat)
I'm not quite ready yet. And...
Violet's not ready for someone to
replace her father. I'm sorry...

CHRISTOPHER
It's okay. I understand.

SARAH
I know it sounds kind of cliché, but
can we remain friends for now?

CHRISTOPHER
Sure. No problem.

He gets up a bit abruptly. Maybe he's upset after all...

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
I'll go. The Thompsons need me.

Sarah is about to get up, but he stops her.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
It's okay. I know the way out.

He leaves. Sarah closes her eyes and sighs. She screwed up.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sarah puts a plate of fried fish on the table. Violet,
sitting at the table, leans in to smell it.

SARAH
Bajan Fishcake to welcome you back.
Your favorite.

VIOLET
Smells great, Mom.

Sarah sits down and starts to serve the meal.

SARAH
I know it's not like your dad made it
and it's usually not for dinner...

VIOLET
Mom, stop it. It's great.

Sarah stops talking. They both start to eat silently.

VIOLET (cont'd)
You know you don't have to replace
Dad, right?

SARAH
Yeah... it's just...
(beat)
I wish I could have saved you all
this pain and trouble.

VIOLET
What happened was nobody's fault.

They keep eating for a moment.

SARAH
Listen, I... I'm gonna call a... an
expert, some kind of medium.

Violet stops eating and looks at her mother, open-mouthed.

VIOLET
What?

Sarah puts her forks down. She ponders for a moment.

SARAH
I saw it.

VIOLET
The boy?

SARAH
Yes.

VIOLET
Where? When?

SARAH
In my dreams, at first. But then, I
saw him as clearly as I can see you.

VIOLET

Holy shit! You think it's a ghost?

SARAH

I don't know what to think anymore.
But so far, I don't see any other
explanation.

VIOLET

Wow. That's just so weird.

SARAH

I know. We're gonna get to the bottom
of this, sweetie. I swear.

Sarah throws a smile that is meant to be reassuring. They resume eating in silence.

INT. ATTIC ROOM - DAY

Sarah searches among the objects scattered around the room. She opens the dresser's drawers, but besides common objects and toys, nothing interesting.

She opens a compartment on top, but still nothing relevant. She turns to the child's MATTRESS. Keeling down, she examines it, turns it around. Still nothing.

Sarah looks at the sides. She finds a small TEAR where the SEAMS are undone. She inserts a finger, then another.

Plunging her hand inside, she pulls out a small, folded piece of GLOSSY PAPER. Unfolding it, she discovers an old PICTURE. Sarah gasps when she sees it.

The BOY she saw is on the PHOTO. He is skin and bones; his skin is sallow and covered with scrapes and bruises.

Seated on a chair in the garden near the ROSE TREE, he holds a TEDDY BEAR tightly. Close to him stands a TEENAGER.

Based on their clothing and the film grain, the PICTURE was taken in the 60s. The boy and the teenager do not smile. An austere atmosphere emerges from the photo.

The PHONE RINGS and interrupts her search.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Sarah picks up the phone from a small table.

SARAH

Sarah Bailey.

MS. GARCIA (V.O.)

Hi, Ms. Garcia, from school. Are you Violet Dawson's mother?

INT. CORRIDOR IN FRONT OF SCHOOL SECRETARIAT - LATER

Violet sits on a chair, her backpack on the floor. She breathes a little heavily, her breathing slightly wheezing.

Christopher enters through the main door, his toolbox in his hands. He notices Violet and sits next to her.

CHRISTOPHER

Hey, are you okay?

Violet nods.

VIOLET

Asthma attack. But I'm better, now.

CHRISTOPHER

Is your mom coming over?

Violet nods again, avoiding talking to save her breath.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

You want me to stay with for now?

Violet agrees. After a brief moment, she talks.

VIOLET

How come we see you so often? It's like you're everywhere.

CHRISTOPHER

(smiling)

It's a small town.

Violet and Christopher sit quietly for an instant.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

Look, I just wanted to tell you something. I want you to know you have nothing to fear from me, okay?

Confused, Violet stares at Christopher.

VIOLET

Huh?

CHRISTOPHER

I care a lot about your mother, but I won't interfere in your lives. So, I'm going to stay friends with your mother if that's what you want.

Violet blinks, still puzzled.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

Sarah told me you're not ready to have someone replace your dad and I totally get that. I went through the same thing when I was younger. So, don't worry. I'll respect your wish.

VIOLET

Okay... but I never said that.

CHRISTOPHER

You didn't?

Violet shakes her head. Then she has a sudden, violent coughing fit. She tries to grab her pump but drops it. Panicked, she gasps for air.

Christopher snatches the pump and gives it to her fast! She takes a puff and seems better immediately. It is then that Sarah enters and runs to her.

SARAH

(to Violet)

Are you okay?

Violet nods while Mrs. Garcia arrives. Sarah turns to her.

MS. GARCIA

Her attack didn't seem too severe, but we couldn't take any chance.

SARAH

Of course. Thank you.

Sarah turns to Christopher while Mrs. Garcia leaves.

SARAH (cont'd)

Have you been here long?

CHRISTOPHER

No, just got here. I kept Violet company.

SARAH

Thank you for everything.

CHRISTOPHER
Don't worry about that.

SARAH
(to Violet)
All right, sweetie. Let's go.

Violet waves to Christopher and they leave.

INT. ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah retrieves the PHOTO she left on the dresser.

She lingers a moment to examine it. She glances out the window where the moonlight enters, then heads for the door.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Standing in the door frame, she turns the light off.

A second later, something springs up from the opening, grabs her and pulls her back into the darkness of the attic!!!

INT. ATTIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sarah, lying on the floor, is being pulled by something. She tries to fight back, but the room is dark, and she can't see anything. Two hands grasp her neck and start to squeeze.

Sarah struggles, tries to defend herself, she suffocates! Through the moonlight, she sees a figure leaning over her.

She then glimpses the face of her attacker. It's the TEENAGER in the PHOTO!!! He cries as he strangles her.

TEEN
It's okay, Jo. It's gonna be over soon.

Sarah keeps struggling, but she quickly weakens. Her eyes roll back, and she passes out.

A MOMENT LATER

Sarah coughs as she regains consciousness. She looks around. She is lying on the floor, in the dark. Alone.

There is a long TRAIL in the dust on the ground, where Sarah was pulled. She crawls back up and leaves, in shock.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Shaking, Sarah opens the tap and turns on the water. Her clothes are full of dust. She cleans her hands and her face.

Looking in the mirror, she notices nasty red marks on her neck. Strangulation marks...

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Sarah opens the door to ADAM GREEN (50s), gentle, refined. He exudes a blend of wisdom, knowledge and empathy.

ADAM
Mrs. Bailey, I presume.

SARAH
Yes. And you must be Mr. Green.

ADAM
Indeed. May we come in?

Sarah steps back and lets in Adam along with JANET PHILLIPS (50s) insightful, sensitive. A perfect match with Adam.

Next are MEGAN TAYLOR, keen, alert, RYAN GRAY (both 30s), ingenious, expressive, both carry big, heavy suitcases.

ADAM (cont'd)
This is my wife, Janet, and my assistants. Megan, who has a background in anthropology and Ryan, our electronics engineer.

SARAH
(to all of them)
Nice to meet you.

ADAM
So, I propose that we discuss what happened to you while Megan and Ryan set up the equipment.

SARAH
Sure, no problem.

INT. ATTIC ROOM - DAY (LATER)

Sarah, Adam and Janet enter. Janet has a notepad and a pen.

ADAM
This is where you were... attacked?

Sarah nods. Adam walks around the room, examining the surroundings. Janet reads her notepad.

JANET

You and your daughter have also seen this ghost in the bathroom, bedroom and living room. Correct?

SARAH

And the kitchen.

Adam kneels down and inspects the TRAIL in the dust.

ADAM

This teenager, have you seen him anywhere else but here?

SARAH

No.

JANET

You're positive the boy and the teenager you saw are the people in the picture you showed us?

SARAH

Yes.

ADAM

Do you remember what you were doing before these apparitions?

Sarah muses for a moment.

SARAH

In the kitchen, nothing special. In the living room, I was looking at papers and a newspaper article about incidents happening in the house--

Adam and Janet give each other an interested look: they might have a lead here.

JANET

Anything else?

SARAH

Just before the attack, I took the picture. On the dresser right there.

Janet quickly dashes off in her notepad.

ADAM

Let's go back downstairs, shall we?

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Monitors, tripods, cameras, infrared cameras, oscilloscopes, digital multimeters are installed all over the place. Sarah and Adam sit on a couch.

Her laptop and speakers stand on the coffee table. Her RECORDING, with the SIZZLING NOISE and the piano plays.

Then, THE VOICE WHISPERS calling Sarah is heard. Sarah pauses the recording.

ADAM

Seems like solid proof, but it's better to have more.

SARAH

Are you sure we're not just... I don't know... losing our minds?

ADAM

No, because you and your daughter both saw the same thing. And you have that recording.

Sarah rubs her face. She's not sure what to think anymore.

SARAH

If that's the case, what's happening? What are we supposed to do?

ADAM

The deceased have a peculiar way of communicating with the living. To perceive their messages can be hard and to interpret them even more.

SARAH

It's trying to communicate with us?

ADAM

Ghosts have all sorts of means for that: dreams, visions, diseases, accidents...

SARAH

I don't get it: there were other people who lived here before. No one has ever mentioned a ghost.

ADAM

Not everyone is sensitive to messages from the beyond. Some seem to be more susceptible to it than others.

SARAH

And that would be our case?

ADAM

It's hard to tell why some are prone to it. The recent passing of your husband could have made you and your daughter more sensitive to that.

SARAH

We saw him in several dreams. You think he's here or it's just... our minds playing tricks on us?

ADAM

Hard to tell. There's a thin line between the messages of the dead and those of our subconscious.

Sarah looks at the equipment around them.

SARAH

And if we confirm the presence of something... then, what?

ADAM

The best would be to communicate directly with it. Know what it wants.

SARAH

How do you plan on doing that?

Adam reaches into a suitcase and pulls out a large board which he places on the coffee table. A OUIJA BOARD. Sarah gives Adam a surprised look.

SARAH (cont'd)

You can't be serious.

ADAM

On the contrary. This is the best way to communicate with the dead.

SARAH

Isn't dangerous?

ADAM

If you follow the rules, it shouldn't. But you should be careful.

Janet comes in.

JANET

Ryan and Megan are done putting the stuff in the other rooms.

ADAM

Thank you.

Janet nods and leaves.

ADAM (cont'd)

In a few days, we will make a seance. I will tell you how to prepare yourself. Do you have family or friends willing to help you?

INT. THOMPSON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Violet hugs Sarah tightly. Mr. and Mrs. Thompson stand close to them and observe them, somehow moved. Kali is also there.

VIOLET

It's not fair I can't be there.

SARAH

Mr. Green says it's better if you're not. And I agree with him.

MRS. THOMPSON

It wouldn't be a good place for a young girl like you, honey.

SARAH

I'll tell you all about it, okay?

Violet nods. She lets go of Sarah, who then leaves.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The coffee table has been replaced by the dining table with the chairs. The OUIJA BOARD is placed on it. A heart-shaped wooden piece, the PLANCHETTE, stands next to it.

A notepad and a pen are also placed on the table. Around the table stands Sarah, Adam, Janet, Ryan, Megan and Christopher. A few lamps and candles cast a subdued light.

ADAM

Before we begin, let's clarify a few things. I will ask the questions.

(to Sarah)

If all goes well, you will also be able to question our host.

Sarah nods.

ADAM (cont'd)

Never ask an entity to show up with a physical sign. Our goal is to know what happened, what he wants and if we can help him.

JANET

Spirits are unable to move on because something holds them back. But sometimes, we can help them.

ADAM

You should also know that even though ghosts want to communicate, they want to do it in their own terms.

CHRISTOPHER

Which means?

RYAN

The Ouija compels them to answer in a way that might not suit them. So, they might resist or be upset.

ADAM

One last thing. We still don't know who will answer and what their intentions are. If our host tries to make the planchette go from A to Z--

Adam points from A to Z, on each extremity of the BOARD.

ADAM (cont'd)

--from 1 to 0 several times--

He moves his finger from 1 to 0, back and forth.

ADAM (cont'd)

--or make a figure 8 repeatedly--

Adam points the BOARD making the 8 circle figure.

ADAM (cont'd)

--stop immediately and end the conversation by moving to "goodbye".

SARAH

What does it mean?

JANET

That a spirit is trying to open a door and get into the human realm.

CHRISTOPHER

That's reassuring.

ADAM

Not to worry. We know how to deal with this. Shall we begin?

Everyone sits down. Janet puts the PLANCHETTE on the BOARD.

ADAM (cont'd)

Oh... and under no circumstances should you break the circle or leave in the middle of a seance.

JANET

Be patient. Spirits sometimes take a while to respond. Put your fingers on the planchette.

Everyone put their index and major on it. Adam takes a deep breath. He is now ready.

ADAM

We are gathered here with good intentions in search of the truth. Is there someone with us?

Nothing happens. The only sound is the TICKING of the GRANDFATHER CLOCK in the hallway. It seems louder than usual. Sarah and Christopher look at each other, uncertain.

ADAM (cont'd)

Are we alone in this place?

A THUD is heard on the upper floor. The SLOW SOUND of a CREAKING DOOR follows, then stops. Everyone stays still. Sarah looks unnerved: she doesn't like this at all.

CHRISTOPHER

(mumbling)

What was that?

ADAM

Is there anyone else here?

The PLANCHETTE has a TWITCH. Everyone holds their breath. Slowly, the PLANCHETTE slides to the top left corner and stops on "YES".

With her free hand, Janet writes on her notepad. Sarah snaps her head towards the hallway. She senses something.

FOOTSTEPS! Someone running upstairs. It stops.

Everyone heard it. They stay still, listen. Fear fills Sarah's eyes: the sound is eerily familiar.

The FOOTSTEPS start again. This time it sounds like someone coming down the stairs leading to the hallway. Slowly. Each footstep makes the WOODEN STEPS CREAK. Then it stops again.

The only sounds remaining are people's breathing and the CLOCK TICKING. Tense, Sarah turns to Adam.

SARAH
(whispering)
I thought you said we were not supposed to ask for physical signs.

ADAM
We didn't. He just decided to do it anyway.

CHRISTOPHER
Is that bad?

JANET
No but obviously, he's eager to manifest himself.

Sarah breathes deeply, to calm herself down. Adam gives her a reassuring look before continuing.

ADAM
Are you nearby?

The PLANCHETTE slides away from "YES" then goes back on it. Janet writes down everything.

ADAM (cont'd)
Can you tell us your name?

The PLANCHETTE slides on the letter J then O and stops. Jo. Sarah gasps. The name the teenager said when he attacked her. She cast a glance to Adam who nods.

ADAM (cont'd)
Can you leave this house?

The PLANCHETTE slowly slides to "NO".

ADAM (cont'd)
Did you die in this house?

The PLANCHETTE now slides to "YES". Sarah gets more tense.

ADAM (cont'd)
Did someone kill you?

This time, the PLANCHETTE moves a bit faster. It slides on the letters B R O T H E R. Janet keeps writing.

ADAM (cont'd)
How long have you been dead?

The PLANCHETTE moves twice on the numbers 5.

JANET
55 years...

ADAM
What do you want?

Moving fast, the PLANCHETTE slides on the letters P E A C E.

ADAM (cont'd)
What do you need to find it?

The PLANCHETTE now moves faster. It slides on the letters F A M I L Y H O M E. Janet can barely write fast enough.

The PLANCHETTE starts moving on H O M E again. Again. And again. Faster and faster. It almost seems to fly on the BOARD. Everyone looks worried, even Adam and Janet.

MEGAN
I think something's wrong...

ADAM
Agreed. Time to say goodbye.

They slow down, and immobilize the PLANCHETTE. But then, it nearly leaps to the upper right corner of the BOARD, on "NO" and stops completely!!! Everyone is frozen.

CHRISTOPHER
Why is it not moving?

Adam tries to stay calm, but even he looks concerned.

ADAM
I think it's trying to keep the
seance open.
(beat)
Push a little harder.

Everyone obeys but the PLANCHETTE is resisting. It's barely moving. Their hands get more tense as they struggle to move the PLANCHETTE. Some even start to shake.

The PLANCHETTE moves slowly towards the middle of the BOARD. It starts shaking as well, as if it met with resistance.

ADAM (cont'd)
Almost there. A little further.

The PLANCHETTE keeps resisting. Everyone pushes hard! It resists so much it's now leaving DEEP SCRAPES on the BOARD with a horrible SCRATCHING NOISE!!!

After a last effort, it finally reaches "Goodbye". It stops shaking right away and is motionless. No one dares to move.

ADAM (cont'd)
You can remove your fingers now.

Everyone looks relieved and starts breathing again. Janet quickly removes the PLANCHETTE from the BOARD. Adam smiles.

ADAM (cont'd)
Well, it was a bit of a rough session, but I think that...

WHAM! The OUIJA BOARD is violently projected on a wall!!!

Everyone stands still, petrified, staring at the BOARD, now lying on the floor.

ADAM (cont'd)
Everyone get out. Now.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They all dress quickly. Sarah stops in her track. Something caught her attention. The GRANDFATHER CLOCK has stopped.

INT./EXT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Everyone walks towards the cars parked nearby, disturbed. Sarah grabs Adam's coat as they are walking.

SARAH
What happened?

ADAM
Clearly, he was not happy that we stopped the seance.

CHRISTOPHER
Now what? Is that thing dangerous?

JANET
Most spirits are not. If he wanted to hurt you, he would have done it already.

CHRISTOPHER
So, what was that reaction?

ADAM
As we said, Ouija can disturb ghosts
and make them upset.

MEGAN
Obviously, he desperately wants to
tell something. But we cut him off.

ADAM
Stay out the house for a few days.
Give him time to calm down. We will
monitor everything. See what happens.

SARAH
Okay.

CHRISTOPHER
(to Sarah)
I'll take you to the Thompsons.

INT. ENTRANCE - DAY (SEVERAL DAYS LATER)

Sarah enters, uneasy, followed by Christopher and Adam.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

In the middle of the room now stands the DINING TABLE.

The CHAIRS are placed on the TABLE, balanced on top of each
other, defying gravity, yet mysteriously holding together.

Speechless, Sarah stares at this strange installation. Adam
and Christopher go to the living room.

A CHIME RESOUNDS. Sarah turns to the GRANDFATHER CLOCK: it
started to work again. On its own.

CHRISTOPHER (O.S.)
Sarah...

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sarah comes in and gasps. All plants are completely burned.

SARAH
Oh my God...

Adam is walking around, watching his multimeters.

Sarah picks up the TEDDY BEAR on the floor. It seems to stare at her. Uncomfortable, she puts it down on the couch.

CHRISTOPHER

(to Adam)

Picking up something?

ADAM

Nothing. He must have settled down.

CHRISTOPHER

(slightly upset)

What are you planning to do? Now that you pissed him off...

SARAH

Well, the ghost said he wanted peace. Maybe we should help him...

CHRISTOPHER

What? That ghost seems really disturbed to me.

ADAM

Perhaps you would be disturbed too if your brother had killed you and you were left alone for years.

Christopher huffs, annoyed. Ryan barges in, excited.

RYAN

Guys, you need to see this!

INT. ADAM'S MINIVAN - CONTINUOUS

The minivan is equipped with monitors, screens and several other measuring devices. Megan and Janet are already seated when Ryan, Adam, Sarah and Christopher enter.

RYAN

Take a look.

He presses a button and a thermal image of the hallway appear on the screen.

A moment later, a COLD, DARK CHILDLIKE HUMAN SHAPE appears.

It has long hair and is wearing a gown. His head bent forward, he's moving slowly, wandering, FLOATING A FOOT above the ground. Everyone stares at the screen, unnerved.

CHRISTOPHER

Holy fuck, that's creepy.

The image gets distorted.

SARAH
What's happening?

JANET
When the level of activity is high,
it disturbs the equipment.

The image goes back to normal. The TABLE and CHAIRS are in the hallway, in the same position they are now.

The image of the living room appears next. It was shot during the Ouija session. Next to the people seated stands the same DARK SILHOUETTE.

A few seconds after, the image gets distorted, and the OUIJA BOARD is thrown on the wall. Ryan stops the recording.

MEGAN
We have more footage to go through,
it will probably take hours.

CHRISTOPHER
You think it's safe to return there?

ADAM
As I said, he doesn't seem malicious.

CHRISTOPHER
What about the attack on Sarah?

JANET
A projection. The spirit was trying
to show her what happened to him. He
said he wanted peace. Not revenge.

RYAN
What he was saying... "family home".
It probably means he wants to be
reunited with his relatives.

CHRISTOPHER
Like... be buried with his family?

ADAM
A very likely scenario.

MEGAN
We can do more research. Find out who
he was, find his family's graveyard.

SARAH
You think his body is hidden
somewhere close?

ADAM
Another very likely scenario.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY (A MOMENT LATER)

Sarah, Janet, Christopher and Adam exit the minivan.

ADAM
We should get back to you in a few
days. Keep us posted.

JANET
Put the Ouija board somewhere safe.
And never ever use it alone.

SARAH
Understood.

Adam goes back into the minivan and the team leaves. Sarah and Christopher walk towards the Thompson's house.

CHRISTOPHER
Be careful, okay?

SARAH
Don't worry. I will.

Christopher gets into his truck and leaves too.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Sarah finishes wrapping the OUIJA BOARD and the PLANCHETTE with old newspapers and tape. She places them on a high shelf and hides them under a blanket.

As she is about to leave, she stops, hesitates. Stares at the BOARD a moment, then shakes her head and leaves.

INT. SCHOOL'S RESTROOM - DAY

Violet rushes in and runs to a toilet where she throws up. When she's over, she sits on the floor, pale, breathless.

Riley and Maya join her. Maya gently strokes her back.

RILEY
Are you okay?

Violet nods, still trying to catch her breath. Maya glimpses the toilette, and cringes. She turns to Riley, worried, and points the toilet with her chin.

The toilet is filled with a strange tar-like substance.

INT. SCHOOL SECRETARIAT - DAY

Riley and Violet sit on chairs. Violet doesn't look much better. Riley holds Violet's backpack and lunch box. Sarah enters, a concerned expression on her face.

SARAH

Eh... How do you feel?

Violet shrugs. She clearly had better days.

SARAH (cont'd)

Okay, let's go home.

Violet walks to the door. The school's secretary arrives.

SCHOOL SECRETARY

Mrs. Bailey, can we talk to you?

SARAH

Sure.

(to Violet)

Go to the car, I'll join you.

Violet leaves, dragging her feet. When she is out, Riley opens the lunchbox, takes out a container and an apple.

The sandwich in the container and the apple are completely rotten. As if it has been for a long time. Sarah is stunned.

SCHOOL SECRETARY

They found that in her lunchbox.

SARAH

The food was fine this morning.

Stunned, then puts everything back in the lunchbox.

SARAH (cont'd)

Thank you for telling me this. I'll take a look into it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (LATER)

Violet watches TV, lying down on the couch, wrapped in a blanket.

She holds the TEDDY BEAR tightly. Almost clinging to it. Like Jonathan used to. Kali lies next to her.

The entrance DOOR opens and SHUTS. Christopher enters. He stares at Violet, smiling, but concerned.

CHRISTOPHER
Hey... heard you're sick again.

VIOLET
It's okay.

CHRISTOPHER
Where's your mom?

VIOLET
On the phone. With Mr. Green.

Christopher sits on another couch. Sighs deeply, hesitating.

CHRISTOPHER
How's everything? See anything weird?

Violet shakes her head. Christopher nods, relieved.

VIOLET
Can I ask you something?

CHRISTOPHER
Sure.

VIOLET
The last time we talked, at school,
you said something...

CHRISTOPHER
Hmmm?

VIOLET
When we talked about my dad... you
said you went through the same thing
when you were younger...

CHRISTOPHER
I lost my mom when I was 14.

VIOLET
What happened?

CHRISTOPHER
She was hit by a drunk driver. While
taking her afternoon walk.

VIOLET

Oh my god, that's awful.

(beat)

Did you see her before she died?

CHRISTOPHER

No, she... she was already dead when they got her to the hospital.

VIOLET

That's so sad.

CHRISTOPHER

I think the worst part is I don't even remember what's the last thing I told her. Probably something stupid.

Violet gives him a questioning look.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

I was kind of a jerk back then. I wasn't really nice to her.

VIOLET

I'm sure it wasn't that bad.

CHRISTOPHER

(chuckles)

You didn't know me back then.

SARAH (O.S.)

Christopher? Can I talk to you?

CHRISTOPHER

Coming!

(to Violet)

If you need to talk, I'm here. Okay?

Violet nods. Christopher gets out.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - DREAM

Sarah is standing, her eyes closed, turning her back on the bathroom door. Her attention is drawn by the same regular, unpleasant, SCRAPING HIGH-PITCHED SOUND coming from it.

Sarah heads for the half-open bathroom door, which lets out some light. The SOUND keeps on going, relentlessly.

This time, the trickle of blood flowing through the doorway is much larger. Unnerved, Sarah takes a deep breath and approaches her hand to the door.

JAMIE
Don't go in there, Sarah.

Jamie stands behind her, in the shadow. He looks worried. But she has to do it, she has to know. Shaking, Sarah picks up the courage to pull the door on--

BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Andrew leans over the bathtub, a hacksaw in his hands.

In the bathtub lies Jonathan's body, his neck partially severed and his head dangling in a strange position over the edge of the tub.

Blood spills out of Jonathan's neck as Andrew cuts it and keeps flowing on the floor towards the door. Suddenly, Jonathan's HEAD falls on the floor with a THUD.

It rolls on the floor and stops next the TEDDY BEAR lying on the floor.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Sarah sits at the table. Hollow-eyed, she sips her coffee and scrolls through her phone. Violet rushes in, breathless.

VIOLET
Mom, have you seen my paint tubes?

SARAH
In the basement.

Violet disappears at once.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Violet rummages through the shelves. She smiles when she finds the tubes. As she grabs them, the LIGHTS FLICKER a brief moment. Violet looks up, puzzled.

Then, an object, wrapped in a blanket, falls on the floor. Intrigued, Violet bends down to pick it up.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Sarah, still sitting at the table, is on the phone.

ADAM (V.O.)
So, he was decapitated post-mortem?

SARAH
I guess so. And for your part?

ADAM (V.O.)
We found the other lawyer responsible
for the sale. But some papers are
missing.

SARAH
How is that possible?

ADAM (V.O.)
Apparently, there was water damage
about 30 years ago in the office.
Several papers were lost or damaged.

SARAH
All right. Let's hope we'll find
something eventually.

ADAM (V.O.)
We will. I'll keep you informed.

SARAH
Okay, bye.

She hangs up. Then turns around, perplexed.

SARAH (cont'd)
(to Violet)
Sweetie!? Everything okay?

No answer. Sarah frowns: there's something's fishy.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Sarah walks down the stairs.

SARAH
Violet?

She hears the sound of OBJECTS RUBBING each other, but
doesn't see Violet. Sarah keeps walking.

Behind a few boxes, she catches a glimpse of Violet leaning
over a table. At her feet lie the blanket and old torn
newspapers. Unnerved, Sarah gasps. She gets closer. Then she
sees it!!!

Violet is using the OUIJA BOARD! She is MOVING THE
PLANCHETTE TO MAKE FIGURE 8 CIRCLES!!!

SARAH (cont'd)
NOOOO!!!

Panicked, Sarah rushes to her and snatches the PLANCHETTE away from the BOARD! She grabs Violet by the arms.

SARAH (cont'd)
What are you doing!?!?

Violet looks at her, dazed, like waking from a trance.

VIOLET
I... I don't know...

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

CRACK! An axe splits in half the OUIJA BOARD, placed in the snow, on the ground.

CHRISTOPHER (O.S.)
Sarah? What are you doing?

SARAH
What I should have done from the very beginning.

Sarah turns to Christopher as he approaches her, carrying wooden planks. He notices the broken board in the snow.

SARAH (cont'd)
I caught Violet using it.

CHRISTOPHER
What?!? Why?

SARAH
I don't know. When I asked her, she didn't even remember doing it.

CHRISTOPHER
That's not good. Where is she now?

SARAH
At the Thompson.

CHRISTOPHER
Mr. Green needs to know about this.

SARAH
I know...

Sarah runs a hand over her face and exhales deeply. Christopher puts his hand on her shoulder.

CHRISTOPHER
It's gonna be okay, Sarah.

SARAH
Yeah...

CHRISTOPHER
I'll put the new boards for the patio
over there. We'll be able to fix it
in a few weeks.

SARAH
Great. Thanks.

EXT. THOMPSON'S BACKYARD - DAY

The place is buzzing with BIRDS flying around and CHIRPING non-stop. Melting snow drips all around the backyard.

Mrs. Thompson feeds birds while Violet, sitting on a bench, watches, smiling. Sarah arrives, followed by Mr. Thompson. She stares at the birds flying around.

SARAH
Well, it's cheerful here.

Mrs. Thompson turns to her, delighted.

MRS. THOMPSON
Smells like spring, right?

SARAH
Yes, it does.

Sarah turns to Violet and notices that she is holding the TEDDY BEAR tightly in her arms. She frowns, perplexed.

SARAH (cont'd)
Want to go home?

Violet nods, gets up then turns to Mr. and Mrs. Thompson.

VIOLET
Thanks for everything.

MR. THOMPSON
No problem, my dear.

MRS. THOMPSON
You know, we took Christopher in for
some time when he was young. We are
used to having kids around.

SARAH

Really?

MRS. THOMPSON

When his mom died. Such a tragedy.

SARAH

My God... I didn't know that.

Violet grabs Sarah's arm.

VIOLET

I'll tell you about it, Mom. Let's go home.

SARAH

Okay.

INT. KITCHEN - DAYS

Sarah cooks supper. Violet heads to the sink to wash her dirty glass. She stares out the window.

VIOLET

Mom, it's Kali again...

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

In a frenzy, Kali scrapes the BOARDS of the PATIO. Close to the rose tree, the wooden boards are covered with big, nasty lacerations and razor-sharp splinters.

Kali starts biting the wood. Like she wants to gnaw her way into it. Sarah grabs her and pulls her away. Kali growls.

SARAH

No! Bad dog!

Kali lowers her head and whimpers. Sarah is about to take her to the house, but freezes up. Something caught her attention. She lets go of Kali who runs to the house.

Sarah stands still, listen. Not a sound. Pure dead SILENCE. Heavy, oppressive. She looks around. No birds, no animals.

She turns to the dead ROSE TREE. It's dark ominous shape leaning over her. Like a hand about to grasp her.

Sarah lowers her head and gazes at the scraped wood of the patio. What if this is THE place?

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY (DAYS LATER)

Ryan starts cutting scratched patio's wood boards with a circular saw. Sarah, Megan, Adam, Janet and Christopher stand close to him and watch him while he cuts the boards.

MOMENTS LATER

The boards are cut. Ryan digs a hole with a small excavator. Then, he and Christopher dig with a shovel.

After a few feet, there is something. Ryan and Christopher pull a burlap bag, closed with a rope, out of the hole.

MEGAN

Careful, guys...

They put it on the ground. Everyone holds their breath. Megan puts on a pair of gloves, then meticulously unties the knot. The bag opens, revealing human bones inside.

Sarah sighs, relieved. But then, she looks worried.

SARAH

Where's the head?

Megan and Janet trawl through the bones.

MEGAN

Missing.

ADAM

Perhaps hidden somewhere else.

CHRISTOPHER

Why would someone do that?

JANET

Identification is often made with dental records. No teeth...

CHRISTOPHER

... no identification.

Sarah sits down on a bench and buries her face in her hands. Christopher leans over and rubs her back to comfort her.

ADAM

Don't worry. It might not be far away. And we are making progress. Now, we'll take this to the lab.

Megan and Janet insert the bones and the burlap bag in a plastic bag while Ryan covers the hole with planks.

ADAM (cont'd)
We will get to the bottom of this. We always do.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY (LATER)

Christopher sits at the table. Sarah brings two beers, gives him one and sits down as well. Christopher takes a sip of his beer, then ponders awhile.

CHRISTOPHER
Why do you want to help him so much?

SARAH
Because no one else did. And if we don't, who will?

Christopher gazes at her, perplex.

SARAH (cont'd)
That child was killed by his own brother. Why would someone do that?

CHRISTOPHER
I don't know.

SARAH
I mean... you don't kill your own. If your own family won't protect you--

CHRISTOPHER
--then others should?

SARAH
Like the Thompsons did with you when your mother died.

Christopher gives her a surprised look.

SARAH (cont'd)
Violet told me what happened.

CHRISTOPHER
Dad was a wreck when Mom died.

SARAH
So, that's why you never refuse anything to the Thompsons.

CHRISTOPHER

They were there for us...

SARAH

... and you are there for them.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah... even though Mrs. Thompson can be overwhelming at times.

SARAH

That I know...

INT. MR. GREEN'S LAB - DAY

A metal autopsy table sits in the middle of the room. Bones and the burlap bag lay on it. Adam, Janet, Megan, Ryan and Sarah stand around it.

MEGAN

Upon examination, we found traces on the neck bones indicating that he probably had been strangled.

She points a horseshoe-shaped bone on the table.

MEGAN (cont'd)

The hyoid bone was broken. That kind of fracture can happen when someone is strangled. Besides the neck, no other bones were damaged. But it's obvious that this child was ill.

SARAH

How so?

JANET

His bone density is pretty low. Possibly a severe calcium deficiency.

SARAH

What could have caused that?

RYAN

A wide range of diseases. Thyroid problems, pancreatitis, cancer.

ADAM

Based on that and the picture you showed us, we suspect a kidney problem. The boy's skin tone and bruises point in that direction.

Megan exhibits two vertebrae. Both have scores on them.

MEGAN

The marks on the cervical vertebrae indicate that the neck has been cut.

ADAM

A rather crude job, by the way.

SARAH

Is there a non-crude way to cut someone's head off?

ADAM

No, you're right.

JANET

In any case, what we found seems to corroborate the visions you had.

SARAH

So now we need to find his identity and his head to... what? Give him a proper burial with his family?

RYAN

Usually does the trick.

MEGAN

We'll keep investigating.

ADAM

In the meantime, how's everything at home? Nothing more peculiar?

SARAH

Nothing more than what I told you.

ADAM

Good. I should warn you all the same.

SARAH

Warn me?

ADAM

That ghost knows he's got our attention. He probably knows by now that we are trying to help him.

SARAH

And that's bad?

ADAM

No, but he could hurt you even unintentionally. Or if he doesn't get what he wants, he could turn against you. So, just be careful.

SARAH

Okay, I'll remember.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The METRONOME produces its usual TICKING SOUND. Sarah plays a lively song on the piano. A GIRL (12), plays violin. The DOORBELL RINGS, interrupting them.

SARAH

Lesson's over.

GIRL

Great! Thanks, Mrs. Bailey.

INT. ENTRANCE - LATER

Sarah waves at the girl, then closes the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Sarah walks to the piano. She stops in her track: something caught her attention.

Kali frantically scratches the fireplace STONE SLAB. Intrigued, Sarah walks to her and grabs Kali's collar.

SARAH

Kali, what the hell? Stop that.

Kali violently snaps at her. Shocked, Sarah jolts back.

SARAH (cont'd)

NO!!!

Kali keeps showing her teeth, but remains still.

SARAH (cont'd)

Bad dog, Kali!!!

Kali lowers her head and whimpers. Sarah stares at her, afraid for the first time of her own dog.

SARAH (cont'd)

Go to your cage!

With a sheepish look, Kali enters her cage and lies down. Sarah, still in shock, doesn't take her eyes off her. Her CELLPHONE RINGS. She picks it up.

SARAH (cont'd)

Yes?

ADAM (V.O.)

I just sent you an email. I think you'll find it interesting.

INT. SARAH'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Still on the phone, Sarah finds an email from "ADAM GREEN" containing an attachment. She opens it.

ON SARAH'S COMPUTER SCREEN

An image is downloaded: a page from an old school yearbook.

BACK TO SARAH

--who searches in the image.

ADAM (V.O.)

Third row, fourth photo.

ON SARAH'S COMPUTER SCREEN

At the location indicated is the TEENAGER from the PHOTO found in the mattress and that Sarah saw in her vision! Under the photo is a name: "Andrew Stevens"!

BACK TO SARAH

Sarah gasps : she can't believe it!

SARAH

You found him!

ADAM (V.O.)

Yes. His father is Raymond Stevens. He owned the house for several years, but sold it about 55 years ago.

SARAH

Is he still alive?

ADAM (V.O.)
 Yes. Megan found his address. He
 lives in a nursing home now.

SARAH
 Did you find anything about the boy?

ADAM (V.O.)
 Yes, but not much. Mr. Stevens had
 two sons. There's a Jonathan Stevens
 born in 1957 in a hospital nearby.
 But no mention of him in any school.

SARAH
 Perhaps he was too sick.

ADAM
 Very possible. Also, Mrs. Stevens
 died a year after Jonathan's birth.

SARAH
 What happened to Jonathan?

ADAM
 We don't know. After that, nothing.
 Like he never existed. But we'll keep
 searching.

SARAH
 Okay. Thank you so much.

She hangs up.

INT. ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Her hands full of grocery bags, Sarah struggles to open the
 door.

SARAH
 (to Violet)
 Honey, can you help me?

No answer. In the distance, KALI YAPS. Sarah manages to kick
 the door open, and drops the bags. She looks around.

SARAH (cont'd)
 Honey?

A THUD echoes from the living room. Sheets of paper fly out
 of the living room. Alarmed, Sarah rushes to the--

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A chair is tipped over on its side. Sheets of paper fly everywhere, blown by a gust of wind. Kali growls and barks.

Sarah sees... VIOLET FLOATING IN THE AIR!!! Her head tilted backwards, her mouth wide open, and her eyes rolled back.

Sarah watches in horror as Violet keeps rising from the ground as if something is lifting her.

Sarah then notices a canvas, paintbrushes and paint tubes, lying on the ground. Letters and numbers are painted on it with black paint: a new OUIJA BOARD!

Sarah rushes to grab Violet. She pulls her to bring her back to the ground. It's no use! She lets her go and runs to--

ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

--where she looks towards the attic room.

SARAH

Jo!!! I will help you, but I need more time! Let Violet go!!!

Sarah glances towards the living room, where Violet continues to levitate amidst the leaves flying everywhere.

Panting, Sarah looks around: she doesn't know what to do! Her eyes fall on the TEDDY BEAR, lying on the ground. She has a flash!!!

She snatches the TEDDY BEAR and dashes into the--

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She lights a lid from the gas stove and brings the TEDDY BEAR close to the flame.

SARAH

(threatening)

Jo!!! Let Violet go or I'll burn it!

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The sheets fall back to the floor as Violet falls back to the floor as well where she lies unconscious.

Breathless, Sarah throws herself on Violet and hugs her. Caressing Violet's hair, she bursts into tears.

SARAH
I'm so sorry...

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Sarah throws the TEDDY BEAR in a PLASTIC BAG and tosses it in the SHED. Then, she locks the door with a PADLOCK and puts the KEY in the pocket of her COAT.

Sarah stares at Violet, close to her, a suitcase next to her. She nervously smooths her red and yellow SCARF.

SARAH
Let's go, sweetie.

EXT. NURSING HOME'S PARKING - DAY

Sarah and Christopher exit the car. Sarah glances at a sign on the building: "RUBY NURSING HOME". She sighs loudly.

CHRISTOPHER
Don't worry: Violet is in good hands with the Thompsons.

SARAH
She asked me to come back home.

Christopher frowns, but says nothing.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Sarah and Christopher follow an ATTENDANT.

ATTENDANT
It's been a while since Mr. Stevens had visitors.

CHRISTOPHER
He still has a son, right?

ATTENDANT
Yes. But if you ask me, he seems rather careless of his father.

SARAH
How so?

ATTENDANT
Well... leaving his father alone in this condition...

CHRISTOPHER

What condition?

ATTENDANT

You don't know? He had a stroke 10 years ago. He's been hemiplegic and aphasic ever since.

INT. MR. STEVENS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

An OLD MAN, MR. STEVENS (89) sits on a wheelchair. Leaning to the side, he looks out the window. Eyes lost in the vague. The attendant knocks on the door.

ATTENDANT

Mr. Stevens? You have visitors.

She leaves as Sarah and Christopher enter. Sarah stays still, while Christopher stares at the small, cold room.

The only personal object is an ancient WOODEN CLOCK lying on the dresser, TICKING rather loudly. Mr. Stevens turns his head to look at them, but barely moves.

Sarah sits in a chair opposite to him while Christopher stays away. Mr. Stevens stares at her silently.

SARAH

Mr. Stevens, you don't know me, my name is Sarah Bailey. I bought your house a few months ago...

Mr. Stevens frowns, a touch of worry on the face.

SARAH (cont'd)

My daughter and I have seen... strange things...

Mr. Stevens's breathing quickens, he is nervous. Sarah takes something out of her purse and shows it to him: the PICTURE of Jonathan and Andrew.

Mr. Stevens's eyes widen, he pants loudly, looking terrified.

SARAH (cont'd)

Did Andrew kill Jonathan?

Panting, Mr. Stevens shakes his head, agitated, distressed. He tries to speak, but only moans. He then turns his head towards the door, groaning louder.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't think we'll get anything from him, Sarah. I mean, look at him.

Daunted, Sarah gets up. Suddenly, Mr. Steven manages to grab her sleeve with his good arm! He shouts louder. A NURSE rushes in, alerted by the screams.

NURSE

What the hell are you going to him!?

CHRISTOPHER

Come on, Sarah, let's go.

Christopher pulls Sarah and Mr. Stevens reluctantly releases her. He keeps moaning, watching them as they leave.

NURSE

(to Mr. Stevens)

How terrible to get you in a sweat like that. Here, let me help you...

EXT. THOMPSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

All lights are off. A strong WIND MOANS, shaking the trees.

INT. MRS. THOMPSON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mr. and Mrs. Thompson sleep in their bed. Violet sleeps on an inflatable mattress, on the floor. Except for the sound of the WIND outside, everything is quiet. Then--

JONATHAN (O.S.)

Violet...

Violet abruptly opens her eyes, she's in the--

ATTIC ROOM - DREAM

She sees Jonathan, staring at the window, his TEDDY BEAR in his arms. After a brief moment, he turns to her. Stares at her with a sad expression. Almost pleading.

JONATHAN

I miss going to the river... I want to see the sun again...

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sarah is asleep in her bed. A BAM! resounds, waking her up.

She sits up and blinks, half asleep. The BAM! resounds again. Sarah gets up and puts on her bathrobe.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Sarah goes down the staircase. She hears the BAM! again.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sarah enters, then freezes: the DOOR to the backyard is open. Pushed by the wind, it SLAMS loudly. Her COAT lay on the floor in the opening, preventing the door from closing.

INT./EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Now with her boots and her coat on, Sarah looks around. On the horizon, over the woods, the sun is about to rise.

In the semidarkness, she notices small, fresh child's FOOTPRINTS in the snow. Something's wrong, she can feel it.

She follows the TRAIL. It leads to the woods. She gasps when she sees VIOLET'S RED AND YELLOW SCARF in the snow!

Her eyes widen in horror when she sees the SHED. The door WIDE OPEN. The PADLOCK and the KEY lying in the snow!!! The PLASTIC BAG... EMPTY, flying in the wind!!!

EXT. WOOD - CONTINUOUS

Violet, dressed in her nightgown, coat and boots, walks with a purposeful stride in the snow, holding tight to the TEDDY BEAR. She looks absent, in some kind of trance.

BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Sarah storms out of the house with a flashlight, with Kali. She follows Violet's footprints, running as fast as she can.

SARAH

Violet!!!

WOOD - CONTINUOUS

Violet keeps on walking. She gets caught in some branches and drops the TEDDY BEAR but continues on her way. The SOUND of a RIVER FLOWING is heard nearby.

WOOD - CONTINUOUS

Sarah runs as fast as she can. She sinks into the snow and has trouble moving forward. Kali is already further away.

RIVER - CONTINUOUS

Violet is on the edge of the river. Nearby RAPIDS swirl, RAGING. She climbs a large tree leaning over the river.

WOOD - CONTINUOUS

Sarah, breathless, sees the TEDDY BEAR in the snow. Grabs it, then tosses it away. She looks around, desperate.

SARAH

Violet!!!

RIVER - CONTINUOUS

Violet crawls on a big branch leaning dangerously over the river. Below, the strong current is still raging.

Violet tries to stand up on all fours. The BRANCH produces worrying CRACKING SOUNDS.

Her feet slip, but she continues. She manages to straighten up completely, although she is off balance.

She turns to the horizon. The sun is finally rising! Her eyes widen in wonder. She smiles beatifically.

SARAH (O.S.)

Violet!!!

At the sound of her name, Violet jolts! She comes out of her trance and sees Sarah. The branch BREAKS!!! Violet falls into the water!!! Sarah screams!!!

UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

Violet falls into the water. She struggles to swim but the current is too strong! She is carried away!

RIVER BANK - CONTINUOUS

Sarah tries to descend the slope to reach the river.

RIVER - CONTINUOUS

Violet emerges from the water. She tries to breathe!

UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

She is pulled to the bottom by the current! Her head hits a rock! Blood spurts out and mixes with the water.

RIVER BANK - CONTINUOUS

Sarah is almost at the shore. She sees Violet floating away. She's moving away too fast! She'll never get to her!

UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

Bleeding, tossed by the whirlpool, Violet floats between two waters. She has stopped struggling. She seems unconscious.

Suddenly, two arms dive into the water and grab her!

RIVER - CONTINUOUS

A male figure pulls Violet out of the water: it's Christopher! He takes her to the shore where he lays her down in the snow. Violet coughs and spits water.

CHRISTOPHER

It's okay, take deep breaths.

Christopher sees Sarah, on the other side of the shore. With a relieved expression, she lets herself fall on the ground.

INT./EXT. ENTRANCE - DAY

On the porch, Violet hugs Sarah with all her strength. She has a bandage on her forehead. A little further stands Mary. When she lets go of her mother, Violet sighs loudly.

SARAH

It's better, honey. For your safety.

Without a word, Violet picks up her luggage.

MARY

We'll have a great time together.

VIOLET

I know...

Violet follows Mary to the car. A few moments later, Mary starts the engine, and they leave.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Sarah is back inside. She stares at the pictures on the walls. Now, the pictures almost seem to taunt her.

Sarah suddenly jolts: the TEDDY BEAR stands on the console table. Then, the ATTIC ROOM'S DOOR SLAMS shut! FOOTSTEPS run upstairs, then stops.

The PIANO starts playing NOTES on its own. A sad, melancholic piece. Sarah, frightened, on the verge of tears, staring at the piano, backs up to the wall behind her.

The MUSIC plays faster. The keys are struck almost violently. Without taking her eyes off the piano, Sarah curls up on the floor. She covers her ears with her hands.

SARAH

Stop... please, stop...

The MUSIC keeps playing faster. The keys are struck more violently. Sarah closes her eyes; she can't take it anymore.

SARAH (cont'd)

Stop... stop!!!

The MUSIC suddenly stops, and the fallboard closes abruptly!

Sarah opens her eyes and looks around her. Nothing. Everything is still, silent. It's over. For now.

INT. ANDREW STEVENS'S OFFICE, WAITING ROOM - DAY

Sarah sits on a chair, waiting. On the wall behind her, a sign reads "ANDREW STEVENS, ACCOUNTANT". A MAN, Andrew Stevens (early 70s), comes to her.

ANDREW

Mrs. Bailey?

INT. ANDREW STEVENS'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Both Sarah and Andrew Stevens are seated.

ANDREW

How can I help you?

Sarah shows him the old PICTURE of him with Jonathan. Andrew freezes when he sees it. He seems unnerved.

SARAH
I bought the house owned by your
father... what happened?

ANDREW
What do you mean?

SARAH
I think you know.

Andrew stares at her, silent, frozen.

SARAH (cont'd)
Did you kill your brother?

Andrew stands up abruptly.

ANDREW
Get out.

He walks to the door, but Sarah grabs his arm to stop him. She comes closer to whisper in his ear.

SARAH
It's okay, Jo. It's gonna be over
soon.

Andrew looks downright mortified. Like he's seen a ghost. He frees himself from Sarah's grip and opens the door.

ANDREW
Get out. Or I'll call security.

Andrew is obviously quite shaken. Sarah leaves reluctantly.

INT. HOUSE GREENHOUSE - DAY

The place is in a state of decrepitude. Shards of glass, dead plants, destroyed or twisted pipes, broken pots everywhere. Christopher and Sarah walk in.

CHRISTOPHER
What a mess...

SARAH
Maybe Mrs. Rose was right, we should
just destroy it.

CHRISTOPHER
Maybe.

(MORE)

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

(beat)

Sarah, I think you should move out.
It's not safe here. You know, my door
is always open... as a friend.

SARAH

We'll see. Come back to me with your
assessment on the greenhouse.

CHRISTOPHER

Yes, ma'am.

Christopher inspects the structure while Sarah leaves. Above him, CRACKS slowly appear in the CEILING GLASS. Unaware of what is happening, Christopher keeps working.

The CRACKS widen, it's now crossing the GLASS PANEL from side to side. Christopher is still absorbed in his work. The GLASS starts making CRACKING NOISE.

Christopher stops, alerted. He raises his head... the GLASS PANEL breaks!!! Huge shards fall right on him!!

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sarah hears Christopher's scream! She runs to--

GREENHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Christopher is lying on the floor. A big SHARD of glass pierced his shoulder at the base of his neck. Blood gushes from his wound as he writhed in pain.

Other SHARDS from the ceiling are about to fall off!!! Sarah rushes to Christopher as the pieces give way! She steps in just in time to protect him!!!

She suddenly catches a glimpse of a childlike silhouette through the dirty windows. A second later, it's gone.

EXT. ENTRANCE - DAY

TWO PARAMEDICS bring Christopher is on a stretcher and get him into an ambulance. In shock, Sarah is on the verge of tears. A paramedic turns to her.

PARAMEDIC

Don't worry, he'll be up and running soon. But count yourself lucky: he had a close call.

He closes the door and the ambulance leaves.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Seated on the couch, in shock, Sarah stares blankly, tears streaming from her eyes. She feels lonely, isolated, guilty.

In the background, Kali is agitated. This attracts Sarah's attention. Kali frantically scratches the fireplace STONE SLAB AGAIN. Sarah is about to stop her, but suddenly--

EXT. BACKYARD - FLASHBACK

In a frenzy, Kali scrapes the boards of the patio.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (BACK TO PRESENT DAY)

Sarah jolts! She picks up her phone and calls Mr. Green.

SARAH

I think I know where the head is.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Sarah kneels before the fireplace. The slab's sealant has been removed. Close to her lie a few tools: a folded tarp, a crowbar, a garden trowel, a tape measure, gloves.

On the phone next to her, Adam and Janet watch her on video conference.

ADAM

Go ahead, Sarah.

Sarah inserts the crowbar under the stone. Slowly, she lifts it and moves it. Underneath, she finds soil and ashes.

SARAH

Looks like a mix of soil and dirt.

JANET

Can you dig a little?

Sarah scoops out the soil. Soon, she knocks a hard object.

SARAH

I have something.

Under Adam and Janet's watchful eye, she puts some gloves on and plunges her hands in the soil.

Soon, she pulls out a smooth, brownish, slightly round shape.

Carefully, she keeps pulling and reveals... a HUMAN SKULL! Her hands shaking, she puts it down on the folded tarp.

JANET

Could you measure the cranium's perimeter? Just above the orbits.

Using the tape measure, Sarah proceeds.

SARAH

Twenty inches.

JANET

Definitely a child's skull. Probably between 6 and 9.

ADAM

Well done. Store it in a safe place and we will have it picked up for analysis.

Sarah nods, then she wraps the skull in the tarp.

EXT. ANDREW STEVENS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Sarah waits near the door. Andrew comes out.

SARAH

Mr. Stevens...

Andrew startles. Recognizing her, he ignores her and keeps walking to his car. Nevertheless, he seems deeply troubled.

ANDREW

I have nothing to say to you.

SARAH

I know what happened. Jo can't leave because of you.

Andrew speeds up, but Sarah is on his tail. Furious, she grabs his arm and shows him a picture of Jonathan's bones.

SARAH (cont'd)

Look at him! You did this!

Andrew gasps when he sees the picture, then falls apart and bursts into tears. Sarah is astounded by his reaction.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Sarah and Andrew sit on a park bench. Andrew is calmer, but still troubled. Strangely, somehow, he's ready to talk.

ANDREW

I didn't wanted to...

(beat)

But Father forced me to. We were crippled with debt, he wanted Jo's life insurance money.

(beat)

Jo was sick and most people were unaware of his existence. So, I did it and we hid the body.

SARAH

How could you? You should have protected him.

ANDREW

I know... I suppose he's still haunting the house.

SARAH

How do you know?

ANDREW

Soon after, strange stuff started happening. So, we moved out.

(he sighs)

That house should have been destroyed. Now, it's cursed.

(beat)

The worst part is... Father didn't know that without the body, the insurance wouldn't pay for years. When we received the money, it was too late. We were already broke. I killed my brother for nothing.

Unable to hold it in, he bursts into tears. Sarah gives him a look filled with empathy, but also a bit of resentment.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The SKULL is placed on the table, facing Sarah. She gazes at it, and it seems to gaze back at her from its empty orbits.

INT. DINING ROOM - A MOMENT LATER

Sarah lays a cardboard BOX on the table.

She wraps the skull in bubble wraps and puts it in the BOX filled with Styrofoam packing peanuts. Then, she tapes the BOX thoroughly.

INT. ENTRANCE - LATER

Sarah places the BOX on the floor next to the door.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Sarah calls Adam on her phone. She paces around, anxious, sometimes taking a look at the dining room.

ADAM (V.O.)
Good evening, Sarah.

SARAH
Hi. It's in the box.

ADAM (V.O.)
Good. We will send a messenger tomorrow to pick it up.

Kali, panting, approaches Sarah who pats her head. Then she keeps pacing in the room. Kali weeps, agitated.

SARAH
You think it will be over afterwards?

ADAM (V.O.)
We have to confirm the bones authenticity, but after that we can give this poor boy a decent funeral.

As Sarah keeps walking, the dining room is visible behind her. And now... the SKULL is BACK on the TABLE!!! Exactly in the same position as a moment ago.

SARAH
Let's hope we can just put this...

Sarah stops in her track. She just noticed the SKULL on the table! It still seems to gaze at her. Intensely.

She begins hyperventilating, on the verge of tears. She holds herself back not to panic.

ADAM (V.O.)
Sarah?

SARAH
Oh my God... it's back...

ADAM (V.O.)
What's back?

SARAH
The skull... it's on the table...

Sarah turns to the entrance. The BOX is open and upside down, as if it had been ripped open. Its contents scattered on the floor. Sarah is in shock.

SARAH (cont'd)
The box... it's open...

ADAM (V.O.)
Sarah, I think you should take Kali for a walk right now.

SARAH
What?

ADAM (V.O.)
Take Kali for a walk now. I insist.

SARAH
Huh... okay?...

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT (A MOMENT LATER)

Still holding her phone, Sarah goes out with Kali on a leash. She walks away from the house at a fast pace.

ADAM (V.O.)
Are you far from the house?

SARAH
A dozen feet.

ADAM (V.O.)
Good. Keep walking away. I needed to get you out so our friend couldn't hear me. So, listen to me: do not go back there alone. Not for now.

SARAH
Okay...

ADAM (V.O.)
I think our friend's impatience is starting to be dangerous for you.

Sarah keeps walking. She suddenly hesitates.

SARAH

What if we're wrong?

ADAM (V.O.)

What do you mean?

SARAH

I mean... why is he doing that? It makes no sense... unless he doesn't want to leave...

ADAM (V.O.)

Ghosts can be erratic, sometimes. Do you have a place to stay for now?

SARAH

Yes. I'll be at the Thompsons.

ADAM

Good. Don't worry, we'll take care of everything. Soon, this will be over.

SARAH

Okay, thank you.

Sarah stares at the house, then runs to the Thompsons.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Sarah, Christopher, Violet, the Thompsons, Adam, Janet, Megan and Ryan a PRIEST and FUNERAL WORKERS stand around a freshly dug hole. A small coffin is held over the hole.

PRIEST

Although for now we are apart, your precious memories live in our heart, until God calls us each to Heaven's door, where we will be reunited, forever more...

The funeral workers are preparing to lower the coffin into the hole. Violet places the TEDDY BEAR on top it. As they lower the coffin, Violet waves at it to say goodbye.

EXT. CEMETERY ENTRANCE - LATER

Everyone is about to leave. Sarah smiles: it's over.

CHRISTOPHER

You think Andrew feels guilty?

SARAH

He seemed really affected. And he paid for the funeral. So, will you be back soon? It's safe now.

CHRISTOPHER

My wound is almost healed, so... soon. I promise.

ADAM

Things should be fine by now. If there is anything, don't hesitate.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Violet paints a tree in bloom with birds. Kali trots happily around. Sarah passes by, carrying a pile of folded clothes and takes a look at the painting. The atmosphere is light.

SARAH

It's beautiful, honey.

VIOLET

Thanks, mom.

SARAH

Can't wait to see your school's logo.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Sarah passes by the GRANDFATHER CLOCK. It's still stopped.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Sarah walks to the room, carrying her pile. She hears a faint THUD. It's coming from upstairs.

Sarah freezes when she sees the TEDDY BEAR sitting in the STAIRCASE leading to THE ATTIC ROOM!!!

She sees the ATTIC ROOM DOOR open. A childlike silhouette stands in the opening. Sarah is in a state of shock!

SARAH

Jo!? What are you doing here?

He disappears into the attic room. Sarah drops her clothes and runs in his direction.

SARAH (cont'd)

Jo!!!

INT. ATTIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sarah rushes in and turns on the light. She sees Jonathan staring at the window. She walks slowly to him.

SARAH
Why are you still here?

He turns to her. He's different. Determined. Ready.

JONATHAN
It's time.

He immediately rushes towards her!!!

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - A MOMENT LATER

Sarah gets down the stairs. Slowly. Like an automaton.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She stops in the entrance. Observes the room. As if it was the first time she saw it. Then sits down on the couch and remains still, staring blankly. Violet turns to her.

VIOLET
You okay, Mom?

SARAH
(smiling)
Sure.
(beat)
Isn't it time for you to go to bed?

VIOLET
Huh... a couple more minutes?

SARAH
All right.

Violet hastily put away her equipment and prepares to leave. She cast a quick glance to Sarah who still doesn't move.

VIOLET
'Night, mom.

SARAH
Goodnight.

Violet leaves. Sarah stays still on the couch.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - DAY

It's morning. Violet, dressed in her pajamas, gets out of her room. She notices Sarah is not in hers. She goes to--

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sarah is still sitting on the couch, in the EXACT SAME POSITION she was last night! Still staring blankly. As if she hadn't moved all night.

VIOLET
Mom? Are you okay?

SARAH
Oh... yes... rough night.
(beat)
Getting ready for school?

VIOLET
Huh... I'll have breakfast first. And
I'll need my lunch.

Sarah gets up. Her movements seem kind of stiff.

SARAH
Sure. What do you have for lunch?

Violet gives her a puzzled look. Sarah never asked that question. She always knows.

VIOLET
Same as usual... ham sandwich.

SARAH
Okay.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Violet leaves. She gives a last troubled look to her mother who just stands in the door. Without waving at her. She keeps walking to the bus stop near the road.

INT. SARAH'S OFFICE - DAY

Sarah turns on her computer.

ON SARAH'S COMPUTER SCREEN

A web browser is open on the webpage of "RUBY NURSING HOME".

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Sarah goes straight to her car and leaves.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

She drives fast. She even drives straight past a stop sign, almost hitting another car that honks at her.

INT. SARAH'S CAR - DRIVING

Sarah has no reaction to the honking of the horn. She looks straight ahead, as if completely focused on her goal.

EXT. NURSING HOME'S PARKING - DAY

Sarah exits the car. Suddenly, she falls to her knees and moans, bent double by a mysterious pain. She then starts to spit blackish tar-like blood in the snow.

She tenses up, panting. Her breathing eventually calms down and she seems to regain control. She wipes the blood from her mouth and stands up, determined.

INT. MR. STEVENS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Stevens sits on his wheelchair, looking out the window.

Suddenly, a hand grabs his shoulder. Mr. Stevens jolts and turns around. It's Sarah. She leans in close to his ear.

SARAH
Hello, Father...

INT. SARAH'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Sarah/Jonathan sits in the driver's seat. In the rear-view mirror, she looks at Mr. Stevens seated in the backseat.

SARAH/JONATHAN
Let's go home, Father...

EXT. NURSING HOME'S PARKING - CONTINUOUS

The car leaves with a squeal of tires.

INT. ANDREW STEVENS'S OFFICE - DAY

Andrew sits at his desk. His PHONE RINGS.

ANDREW
Andrew Stevens.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. THIRD FLOOR ROOM - DAY

Sarah/Jonathan is on the phone. Next to her is Mr. Stevens.

SARAH/JONATHAN
Hey, Drew. I have Dad. Come home.
Right now.

Sarah/Jonathan hangs up.

INT. ANDREW STEVENS'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - DAY

Andrew snatches his coat. His SECRETARY gapes at him.

ANDREW
Family emergency! I'll be back later.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Andrew arrives at full throttle and parks his car hastily.

INT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Andrew cautiously opens the door, unlocked. Peaks inside.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

At the top of the stairs, Sarah/Jonathan smirks at Andrew.

SARAH/JONATHAN
About time.

ANDREW
Where's Father?

SARAH/JONATHAN
Upstairs. In his favorite room.

Andrew runs in the stairs, passes Sarah/Jonathan, to--

THIRD FLOOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

--where he rushes to his father, seated on a chair. Sarah/Jonathan is about to enter. Suddenly, the entrance DOOR opens and SHUTS.

VIOLET (O.S.)
Mom?

SARAH/JONATHAN
Dammit!

Sarah/Jonathan shuts the room's door with a simple gesture. Andrew tries to open it. Pointlessly. It's locked!

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Sarah/Jonathan gets down the staircase and sees Violet.

SARAH/JONATHAN
You should be in school.

VIOLET
I came back, I was worried.

SARAH/JONATHAN
Why? Everything's fine.

VIOLET
I don't think so. Mom, what's wrong?

SARAH/JONATHAN
Nothing. Go back to school.

As she reaches the bottom of the stairs, Sarah suddenly doubles up with pain, falls to her knees and groans. Sarah gasps, coughs blackish blood. Violet throws herself at her.

VIOLET
Mom!!!

Tensed up, breathless, Sarah tries to stand up. Each of her movements seems terribly painful.

SARAH
Get... out...

But Violet doesn't move, she wants to help her!

SARAH (cont'd)
Get out...

VIOLET

Mom...

Gasping, Sarah draws all her energy to stand up. She must keep her daughter away! This time, she bellows.

SARAH

GET OUT!!!

Violet backs away, frightened. She doesn't understand anymore.

SARAH (cont'd)

GET OUT OF THE HOUSE!!! GET OUT!!!

Sarah is suddenly lifted several feet into the air, like a rag doll! She struggles against an invisible force, suffocates! She is then violently thrown on the ground!!!

Terrified, Violet screams and rushes out!

INT. THOMPSON'S ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Violet dashes in, panic-stricken.

VIOLET

He's back!!! I need help!!!

Mr. and Mrs. Thompsons run to her.

MRS. THOMPSON

What are you talking about?

VIOLET

I need to call Christopher!!!

INT. THOMPSON'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Violet snatches the phone.

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S PICKUP TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Christopher gets behind the wheel. His CELLPHONE RINGS. "THE THOMPSONS" appears on the screen. But this time, he's fed up with their requests.

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, for crying out loud!

He throws the phone on the passenger seat. As he starts the engine, the RING stops.

INT. THOMPSON'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Violet is pacing in the room.

CHRISTOPHER (V.O.)

You know the drill. Leave a message.

VIOLET

Christopher, he's back! He's got mom!
He's hurting her! I don't know what
to do! Please, you have to come!

In tears, Violet falls on the couch. Mrs. Thompson hugs her.

MRS. THOMPSON

We'll try to reach Mr. Green. He'll
know what to do!

MR. THOMPSON

We should also call the police!

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S PICKUP - DRIVING

A VOICE MAIL NOTIFICATION appears on Christopher's phone, on the seat. But he barely looks at it and keeps driving.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Sarah is lifted into the air again, then lands on her feet. Jonathan has regained control. With a gesture, Sarah/Jonathan places a crowbar across the door handles to block it.

INT. THIRD FLOOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sarah/Jonathan opens the door and gets in.

ANDREW

What do you want?

SARAH/JONATHAN

For you and dad to pay.

Sarah/Jonathan raises her arm and points it at Andrew. Suddenly, a light escapes from her hand and hits Andrew head on! Sarah and Andrew are both thrown to the ground.

After a brief moment, both of them effortfully try getting up as Mr. Stevens watches them in agonizing silence. Sarah casts a desperate glance at Andrew. She knows his plan.

SARAH
Jo, don't do this. You don't have to.

Andrew/Jonathan smiles at her.

ANDREW/JONATHAN
Thank you for what you did for me,
Sarah. I really appreciate it. But I
don't need you anymore.

With a hand gesture, he throws her out of the room and down the staircase!

SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

As she falls, Sarah hits her head on a post and falls unconscious at the bottom of the staircase.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

A deadly SILENCE settles in the house. Everything is still. Then, the GRANDFATHER CLOCK starts TICKING again. On its own.

INT. THIRD FLOOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Andrew tilts his head backwards, his eyes widened.

He gasps and groans, in pain. His mouth stretches in an abnormal way, his eyes roll back. He is lifted into the air and starts levitating.

He starts bending backwards, his hands twisting, shaken by spasms. Mr. Stevens gapes at him, terror filling his eyes.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

CRACKING SOUNDS are heard as CRACKS appear on the WALLS.

ATTIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

With an eerie SOUND, CRACKS appear on the CEILING.

THIRD FLOOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The CRACKS in the CEILING have appeared here as well. Andrew, still levitating, keeps bending backwards, now arching unnaturally. He screams in agony.

Mr. Stevens now sees Jonathan next to him, looking at Andrew, with a sadistic grin of satisfaction.

SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Sarah is still unconscious, her head bleeding. Meanwhile, the disturbing CRACKING SOUNDS continue.

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The WALLS keep CRACKING, the ceiling starts bending. Part of the kitchen CABINETS falls off the wall!

It hits the GAS STOVE and breaks it! The GAS PIPE ruptures. GAS starts filling the kitchen.

Kali approaches, sniffs the air, whimpers. She flees, disgusted by the smell.

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S PICKUP - DRIVING

Christopher is waiting at a red light. He looks at his phone. Taps on the wheel, dithering. The VOICE MAIL NOTIFICATION is still on the screen.

He huffs, and finally picks up the phone.

VOICE MAIL

You have a new message from...

CHRISTOPHER

(over it, irritated)

Yeah, yeah, I know...

VIOLET (V.O.)

Christopher, he's back! He's got mom!
He's hurting her! I don't know what
to do! Please, you have to come!

CHRISTOPHER

Hold on, Violet, I'm coming!

He leaves immediately, making its tires squeal.

INT. ATTIC - CONTINUOUS

The roof is falling apart. A beam falls, damaging the floor.

SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The ceiling now sinks dangerously, but Sarah won't wake up.

HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

GAS has reached the hallway. A larger CRACK appears along the wall, stripping electrical WIRES and causing SPARKS.

The CRACKS get bigger. SPARKS get closer to the AIRBORNE GAS. Closer, faster... it reaches the GAS!!!

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The GAS EXPLODES!!! The explosion throws flames, furniture, utensils, dishes and debris EVERYWHERE!!!

HALLWAY

FLAMES erupt, fill the hallway, reach the--

LIVING ROOM

--where they set fire to furniture, curtains, canvas!

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The EXPLOSION RESOUNDS violently, FLAMES erupt from the kitchen windows!

INT. THOMPSON'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Everyone hears the EXPLOSION. Violet jumps on her feet!

VIOLET

MOM!!!

EXT. THOMPSON'S ENTRANCE

She storms out and runs towards the house, Mr. and Mrs. Thompson on her tail.

MRS. THOMPSON

Violet! Wait!

They try to follow her, but they can't keep up with her!

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S PICKUP - DRIVING

Christopher, not far away, hears the EXPLOSION and sees a PLUME OF SMOKE rising over the trees. He immediately understands where it's coming from!!!

Onlookers on the streets also notice the EXPLOSION. Christopher presses the gas pedal and speeds up.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Violet runs breathlessly towards the house, followed by the Thompsons far behind. Christopher turns onto the dirt road.

He's going so fast that the truck skids on the snow! He keeps going and passes Violet.

INT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Kali scratches the door desperately and yaps to get out.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Some furniture, including the PIANO, are on fire. Smoke is filling the room.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Christopher arrives! Storms out of the truck and smashes the entrance door glass! He tries to open it, but the crowbar is blocking it! Kali, panicked, yaps in the opening.

He runs to his truck. Violet and the Thompsons arrive. Violet tries to open the door!

VIOLET

MOM!!!

Christopher grabs her and pulls her away.

CHRISTOPHER

No! Stay here!

VIOLET

But--

CHRISTOPHER

I'll bring her back! Stay there!

Violet obeys, but stamps nervously. Christopher grabs an axe from his truck and smashes a window from the living room.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

As the roof begins to collapse and beams fall near her, Sarah regains consciousness. Choked by the smoke, she coughs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Christopher enters as Kali rushes towards him. He grabs her and throws her out the window. He looks around: almost everything is on fire!!!

ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Christopher looks around, but there's smoke everywhere!

CHRISTOPHER

Sarah!!!

Suffocating, he coughs.

SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Alerted by his voice, Sarah tries to respond, but she can't because of the smoke!

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Christopher approaches the kitchen, but the fire is too strong. There's screaming upstairs. It's Andrew!

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Christopher arrives as the ceiling starts to collapse. He sees Sarah crawling, trying to get up! He passes over fallen beams and grabs her!

CHRISTOPHER

Sarah! I'm here!

Sarah can barely walk. Christopher helps her to the stairs as the floor starts collapsing, knocking them off balance!

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

As they get down the stairs, the second-floor balcony and the stairs collapse and fall, taking them down with them!!!

Pieces of the floor and the stairs fall over them!

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A horrible CRASHING NOISE bursts from inside the house! Violet screams in horror and runs towards the house, but the Thompsons pull her away!

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Sarah has a sharp piece of wood stuck in her leg and moans in pain. Covered with pieces of wood and dust, wounded on the head, bleeding, Christopher moans, dazed.

Choked by the smoke, both keep coughing. Sarah tries to get up, but the pain stops her! She crawls to Christopher.

SARAH
Christopher!!! Wake up!!!

Christopher regains consciousness, still dazed. He pushes away pieces of wood and crawls towards her.

Sarah hears CLINKING above, and looks up. The crystal CHANDELIER shakes dangerously, it's about to fall!!!

She grabs Christopher and pulls him just in time to keep him from being crushed! The CHANDELIER falls on the floor and shatters into a million pieces!

Christopher and Sarah are covered with glass shards. They see that the ceiling is about to give way! Behind them, the wooden floorboards begin to splinter under the pressure!

This gives Christopher one last burst of energy! He grabs Sarah, lifts her up, and runs to--

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As Christopher runs, Sarah can see the floor of the entrance hall collapsing, swallowing the CHANDELIER in a huge crash!

Then she sees Jonathan. Grinning from ear to ear, he waves at her. Saying goodbye. He's at peace. Satisfied.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Christopher throws Sarah out by the broken window. Violet and the Thompsons rush to her.

VIOLET

Mom!!!

Sarah and Violet hug as if there were no tomorrow. Sarah starts looking around, worried: Christopher's missing!

SARAH

Where's Christopher?!?

Christopher storms out by the window, carrying Jamie's URN. In the nick of time!!! With a horrible CRASH and a cloud of black smoke, the HOUSE implodes and collapses on itself!

In a final fit of vengeful rage, it sinks into the ground with a RUMBLING, as if it were SUCKED IN by the earth!

When the house is almost completely sunk into the ground, it stops moving. Not far away, the FIREMEN'S SIRENS sound as the trucks approach. Too late.

It's over.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY (LATER)

Some time has gone by. The snow has completely melted. All around, grass is emerging from the muddy ground.

The house's rubble is still in the same position. Untouched. Yellow tapes and several excavators surround the area. WORKERS bustle around, busy.

Christopher's truck drives on the road, then stops nearby. Sarah, Christopher and Violet get out and approach the area. Christopher helps Sarah who is using a cane to walk.

The three of them stand close to the rubble and stare at it. One last time. Around them, workers barely pay attention to them.

VIOLET

You think Jonathan has found peace, now?

SARAH

I suppose so. Now, he really is home with his family...

Next to them, workers spring into action. Excavators start moving towards the wreckage. About to bury it all for good.

Sarah cannot hold back a few tears. She has lost almost everything she had.

Christopher holds Sarah's hand to support her. In return, she leans her head on his chest. Something has definitely changed between them. Violet hugs Sarah in turn.

Suddenly, Sarah frowns. In the rubble, next to the small round broken WINDOW from the ATTIC ROOM, lies the TEDDY BEAR. Still intact. Staring at them.

SARAH (cont'd)
Let's go, it's time to go home.

They turn around and leave without looking back.

A moment later, the TEDDY BEAR disappears under the tons of earth thrown by the workers.

THE END