

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

A blue sedan makes its way through the loosely winding road.

INT./EXT. BLUE SEDAN - DAY

CLAIRE EASTERMAN CHEWS on some nuts as she listens to a SONG she knows by heart. She moves to the RHYTHM as she maneuvers the steering wheel along the winding path in front of her.

Claire is wearing a white-collared blue business-woman's dress that shows a little cleavage. She is cute, with blondish-brown hair and a can-do attitude.

She finishes her bite of nuts and SINGS.

The car slows, and now we can see that she is turning her car into the driveway of a mansion resting on a very small hill, surrounded by trees. There is another building to the right, and behind and between them is a greenhouse. There is a plain white van parked near the house.

She SINGS along to the tune right up to the point she turns off the car. Pulling the keys out and stuffing them in her purse, she pulls the purse strap over her shoulder and exits the vehicle.

As she walks up the steps that lead to the front door, Claire pulls out a pad and pen. She reaches the top of the stairs, walking onto the porch, stops, and turns to look at the scenery.

She sighs, a smile on her face.

Claire turns and steps up to the door, puts her fist up and prepares to knock on it. The door opens before she can.

In front of her stands a man in his mid-forties, greying hair, a short beard that comes to a point below his chin. His eyes are thin. His outfit is a bit over-the-top, mostly darks with a deep red tie.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Hi. I'm Claire. You must be...

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Doctor Enoch Plurablius
Strangeblood. You're a few hours
early.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD's voice is best stated as similar to Vincent Price from one of his movies. In fact, this man could probably play him, given the opportunity.

She pauses a second with a slow once-across shake of her head. She smiles.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

I wanted to familiarize myself with your place before I start. Besides, I hadn't had the chance to meet you, yet.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

So you believe in chance do you, Claire?

She pauses, taken by surprise.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Yeah...

The Doctor shakes his head a little in disgust, half-bows and stretches his left arm out away from himself as an invitation for her to enter.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Come in.

INT. DR. STRANGEBLOOD'S MANSION - DAY

She walks into the living room. There are no lights on, but the light shining in through the windows seems sufficient enough.

Claire looks around as the Doctor continues.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

I take it you had a safe journey?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Yes.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Good. Nothing worse than unsafe journey.

She turns to him with a quizzical look. By the time she's facing him, however, he is already turned away from her and walking toward a large flight of stairs on the left.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

This way.

Claire turns the opposite direction and sees a blonde-haired young man about her age sitting at a dining table eyeing her. He's smiling.

She smiles at him, and then turns to follow the Doctor up the stairs and into the hallway. She clears her throat.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
So, tell me, Doctor ... do you have
any other assistants?

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Not anymore.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Children?

The Doctor stops, and she quickly follows suit. Her mouth is open, as if a little worried she may have said something she shouldn't have.

The Doctor looks directly at her.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
I was married once, but we didn't
have children. Why do you ask?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Oh, no reason, sir. I was ... just
... trying to get to know you.

The Doctor harrumphs, folds his hands behind his back, and continues down the hallway.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
As you're aware, my experiments are
all based on scientific studies of
various ancient divinations. I use
animals and plants for my test
subjects, among other things.

He stops again and turns to her. She stops again, looking up at him.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
You did ... study the list of
divinations I sent you before you
came, didn't you?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Oh ... yes, sir. I, uh, went over
the list several times.

They begin walking again.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Claire, I need you to be more than
"familiar" with them.
(MORE)

DR. STRANGEBLOOD (cont'd)
I need my assistant to know and understand each kind. I don't have time to explain each one as we go. If I say 'oryctomancy,' I need you to know I mean 'divination by minerals.' Do you understand?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Yes, sir. I'll have them memorized before the end of the week.

Her face crinkles up for a brief moment in concern.

At the end of the hallway they turn right, and he stops at one of a number of doors and turns to her yet again.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
This will be your room. I've taken the initiative to put together a few things I think a young, beautiful college student on her internship would need. If you have need of anything else, please let me know immediately.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Yes, sir. Thank you very much.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Oh, don't thank me until you've seen it.

At this, he opens the door, and she steps in.

The room is quite large, with a chandelier hanging in the center. In the center back is a canopy bed with beautiful red silk over the top, hanging around the sides a foot or so down. A large Victorian chest-of-drawers sits in the far right corner, and on the left a vanity. There is a more modern computer desk on her immediate left, and on the immediate right a large, plush easy chair that looks soft enough to fall asleep on. Two large doors on the left signify a walk-in closet.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Make yourself comfortable, Claire.
Dinner is at six in the dining room. Don't be late.

She turns with a broad smile on her face, but he is already gone, no footsteps to be heard.

Claire turns back around to take in her surroundings, but is suddenly startled by a voice behind her.

RENE

Hello.

She turns to see the blonde-haired young man she saw earlier. Now we are able to make out more details.

RENE's hair is spiked. His face is thin and chiseled. He is built like the high school quarterback. He has on a white shirt, blue jeans, and sneakers. Hung over his forearm in front of his chest is a dress jacket.

Claire is all smiles.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Hi.

RENE

I'm Rene.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Claire.

RENE

Yeah. I heard the Doctor.

There is a long pause between them.

Finally,

RENE

Well, um, you're the first female assistant I think he's ever had. I must say, you're quite cute.

He says this as he looks her up and down.

Claire smiles with a soft, quiet laugh that shows her white teeth. She walks toward him.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

You're not too bad yourself. I was hoping I wouldn't be all alone with that horrible man.

RENE

(still smiling at her)
You don't know the half of it.

(BEAT)

Look, I need to go for now. Maybe I'll see you again soon?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Dinner's at six.

He looks down, but his demeanor does not change.

RENE

So it is.

A sound off to her left gets her attention and she turns. When she turns back toward the door, Rene is gone.

She peaks her head out the door and looks both ways. Nothing.

She seems a little spooked, steps back, and closes the door.

She walks over to the area the sound came from but finds nothing to indicate what it may have been.

With a give-in she walks over to her bed, sets her purse down next to the pillows and lays down in the middle with her legs hanging off, arms outstretched.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

This is going to be a long month.

INT. DR. STRANGEBLOOD'S MANSION, DINING ROOM - EVENING

Claire walks down the staircase to the living room, across the living room into the dining area, and sits down at the table just as the clock on the wall rings out 6pm.

Dr. Strangeblood is setting a large pot of meat down in the center of the elaborate Victorian six-person table. Also on the table are bowls of fruit, vegetables, and a plate of hot buttered garlic toast.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Good. You're just in time. Help yourself.

The Doctor walks to the opposite side of the table and sits down. Meanwhile, Claire is already dumping food onto her plate.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

May I ask you some questions, Doctor?

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

By all means, my dear. What's on your mind?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Well, for starters, tell me about your previous assistants.

Dr. Strangeblood makes a face and nods his head.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

I don't like to talk about it. Why don't you tell me about yourself, Claire. Something ... that wasn't on your resume.

Claire looks straight into the man's eyes, then down at the table. She swallows her food and puts her fist on the table, hidden from him by the large pot of meat.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Well, I was a cheerleader in high school. I dated the captain of the football team until I went to college where he dumped me for a girl at his college. I decided I'd had enough of men for a while and dedicated myself to my studies.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Veterinarian, correct?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Yes.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

That's a good profession. I hope you make it.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

(under her breath)

I bet you do.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

What?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

I said, 'I do, too.'

Now they sit in silence.

EXT. DR. STRANGEBLOOD'S MANSION - EARLY MORNING

Claire is jogging with her MP3 player attached to her hip, Bluetooth(TM) headphones plugged into her ears. She mouths the words to whatever song is playing as she makes her way down the paved driveway, up the stairs, and into the house.

INT. DR. STRANGEBLOOD'S MANSION, KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING

Claire walks into the kitchen, opens the refrigerator, takes out a store-bought sealed health shake, shakes it up, opens it, and starts chugging it.

MIKE

You know...

Claire stops, a little startled, noticing now that someone is standing in the kitchen with her; a black male about her age with a very short afro, a bright red tattered shirt, tattered blue jeans, and a pair of shoes that look like they've been through the mud or something. In fact, his entire body looks like he's been playing in dirt.

MIKE continues,

MIKE

...it's really unhealthy to drink like that, even if what you're drinking is good for you.

(BEAT)

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to...

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Where did you come from?

Mike shrugs.

MIKE

I was in the other room and came into the kitchen when I saw you enter.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Who are you?

MIKE

Oh, I'm sorry. I'm Mike ... one of the Doctor's previous assistants...

He nods and smiles.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Why are you still here?

MIKE

I like to hang out here. It's an interesting place.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

You know Rene?

MIKE

Of course. We met right after he took over for me.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Are there any other guys here I should know about?

MIKE

Darren. I haven't seen him this morning, but I'm sure he's around somewhere.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

What do you guys do for him?

MIKE

Oh, we don't work for him. We just kind'a hang out here.

Her face crinkles.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

(blank stare)

Why?

MIKE

It's fun to see the cool stuff he's doing with all his experiments.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

If you say so. This is just a job for me. When it's over, I'm outta here.

Mike looks off toward the staircase.

MIKE

Hey, look, um, I'd better get back. If the doctor catches me in here...

He pauses.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

I get it. I'll see ya' around.

She smiles and nods. He catches it and smiles back as he walks away.

Claire takes another drink.

We HEAR footsteps coming down the stairs. Claire walks to the edge of the kitchen to see Dr. Strangeblood walking across the spacious entryway/living room.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
There you are, Claire. I was
wondering where you ran off to.

She smiles.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
I just went for a morning jog.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Yes. A jog. It's good for the
body, mind, and spirit.

She stares at him a second before responding,

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Yep.
(BEAT)
So, what time do we start?

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Just as soon as you're ready, my
dear. Oh, while I'm thinking about
it ...

She pauses, raises her eyebrows at him.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Yes...?

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
This weekend, I have a magic show
to perform at a local parlor.
Would you like to be my lovely
assistant?

She isn't sure what to think, but finally says,

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Sure. 'Sounds like fun.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Excellent. When you're dressed,
meet me out in the greenhouse.

She nods. He nods in return and walks out the back door.

INT. SECONDARY BUILDING - MORNING

The atrium of the building next to the house is nothing
incredible. It's drab decor and seemingly nauseating white
walls are nothing to write home about.

Never-the-less, this is where Darren; a white guy with dark hair; Mike, and Rene all sit on the sofa along one wall. They don't really look directly at each other when they talk.

RENE

Dude, the new assistant is soooo hot.

MIKE

Right on, man. She is a total and utter uberbabe. You totally gotta meet her, Darren.

DARREN

Sounds good. I'll catch you dweebs later.

He stands up, (head out of frame), and walks away.

After Darren has left, Rene smiles.

RENE

I wanna kiss her.

Mike looks about half upset, half playful.

MIKE

Man, I thought you had a girlfriend.

Rene smiles.

RENE

Yeah...I did.

They both laugh.

EXT. DR. STRANGEBLOOD'S MANSION, BACK YARD - MORNING

Claire steps out onto the planks of the back porch, which is mostly covered by a vast portion of the second story. The porch extends maybe an extra ten feet beyond that. A set of stairs with wood railing hits the green lawn of the back yard, which is mostly open with a few spotted trees here and there. Walling around the yard is the forest, thick and lush, like an Amazon rainforest.

She steps down onto the lawn and begins the trek across it to the greenhouse. As she walks, she sees something out of the corner of her eye and turns to see another young white male about her age walking toward her.

She stops as he catches up with her.

DARREN
You must be Claire.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Yes. You must be Darren...

He grins at her.

DARREN
I must be dreaming. You're very lovely.

For those paying attention, she doesn't exactly find him attractive, per se, but she smiles at the polite comment.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Thank you.

DARREN
May I accompany you to the greenhouse?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
What makes you think I'm going there?

Darren glances off to the house, then to the greenhouse, never really turning his head.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Never mind. Sure. Let's go.

She starts walking, and he quickly follows.

DARREN
Look, I'm really sorry if you felt I was coming on to you. I just ... find you attractive.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
It's OK. Really, Darren. You don't need to apologize.
(BEAT)
I appreciate the gesture. I really do.

There is a long pause.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
I didn't mean to upset you.

DARREN

It's alright. Really. I'm just glad you're still letting me walk with you this beautiful morning.

At this, they are arriving to the door of the greenhouse. They both stop and turn to each other.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

It was nice to have someone to walk with, Darren. Thanks.

DARREN

My pleasure.

He watches her go inside, smiling after her.

INT. GREENHOUSE - MORNING

One might think that in a greenhouse there would be hundreds of plants. Not here. While there are some potted plants on the far end, the entirety of the first two thirds of the building are taken up by electronic instruments, wires, devices, and other equipment she can only guess at.

Dr. Strangeblood is connecting wires and pushing buttons as she walks the thirty some-odd feet to where he is.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Phytognomy?

He stops, straightens up, and looks over at her.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

You've been studying...

(BEAT)

No. We won't be divining by the appearance of plants today.

He points to a pile of wood in a circle of rocks. Nearby is some newspaper and a box of matches.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Ah. Lampadomancy.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Close. Capnomancy.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

(like she can't remember what that is)

Ah, crap.

The Doctor stops for another moment and looks right at her.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Divination by smoke.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Cool. OK. So, how does all this work?

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Well, my theory is that people give off bioelectric charges toward the product of their divination. By fine-tuning these instruments to recreate what a diviner would be doing during divination, I use the feedback readings to determine what is being divined, and how.

She looks a little confused.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Hm. Make's sense.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
So, when the machines are on, I need you
(pauses for emphasis,
looking at her)
to say nothing, think nothing, and feel nothing. Do you understand...?

She nods at him with wide eyes.

He finishes connecting the last of the wires and turns on the power. Machines all around them whir to life. Gauges rev, power output signals charge and blink at various levels, and everything seems to be to the Doctor's satisfaction.

Dr. Strangeblood walks over to the wood, crumples some newspaper and places them under the wood, grabs a match, lights it, and uses it to light the paper.

With the fire started, he walks back to Claire. Grabbing two pairs of goggles, he hands one to her, and both put them on.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Once the wood is lit, I'll turn on the reading instruments so we can get the measurements we need from this divination procedure.

She smiles and nods.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Remember: say nothing, think
nothing, feel nothing...

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Got it.

Soon, the fire takes hold of the wood. The smoke rising from the burning wood travels up to the top of the room, and out through some opened sections of glass.

She looks back down as the Doctor says,

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
I'm turning the readings on now.

He flips a switch.

At first, nothing seems to happen. However, soon the smoke seems to take on a shape of its own. Images begin to appear in it. Not in color. More like embossing, or tin plate photography, and nothing that can really be made out.

Within moments, the fire rages, and the smoke becomes thick.

Claire watches, bemused. Her eyes catch something in the smoke, and they widen in surprise. She tilts her head a little, and without warning, the smoke comes at her, throwing her back a few feet to the ground. Her head hits the ground, but she remains conscious.

She coughs loud. SOUND is gone. When she finally opens her eyes, she is not in the greenhouse.

INT. SECONDARY BUILDING, ROOM

Claire is standing in a room, her arms still up at her face. She slowly pulls them down and looks around. The same equipment in the greenhouse is hooked up in here, and standing beside the Doctor is Rene.

They are standing not far from a group of poles lying on the floor. As the instruments come to life, the poles levitate off the ground and suddenly fly toward Rene, passing through his abdomen. He has the look of utter shock on his face as blood begins pouring from his wounds.

The Doctor turns off the machines and watches Rene fall to the floor. The poles that passed through him fall to the floor behind him against the wall. He bends down with him, holding him, both knowing nothing can be done.

INT. GREENHOUSE - MORNING

Then, she is back in the greenhouse, lying on the ground. She is coughing uncontrollably, her eyes are still shut, and the Doctor is at her side.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Claire, my dear, are you alright?

She holds up a hand at him for a brief moment as she tries to get the smoke out of her lungs.

Finally, she is able to breathe a little, enough to talk.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

I think I'll be *COUGH* fine,
Doctor...

Another coughing fit seems to say otherwise.

Now she is in a chair, and the Doctor hands her a bottle of water.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Drink this.

She takes a chug of it, coughs again, and drinks some more.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

What happened to say nothing, think
nothing, feel nothing?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

I've never seen anything like that
before. I didn't even know it was
possible.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

There are many things we are not
meant to understand, Claire. That
doesn't keep us from trying.

She clears her throat.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

What did you see?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

What'a'ya mean?

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

In the smoke. What did you see?

She looks bewildered for a second.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Images. I couldn't make them out,
but...

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
What were you thinking about?

Claire blushes.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
A guy.

It's the Doctor's turn to look amused.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Ah, yes. A young woman's mind is
always on a young man.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
That's not always true, Doctor.

She says this just as she pours more water into her mouth.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Perhaps you should leave me to this
for the time being until you've
learned to control your thoughts.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
That won't be necessary, Doctor.
Now that I understand what you're
doing here, I think it'll be easier
to 'say nothing, think nothing,
feel nothing.'

At the quote, she tries to mimic his voice, without success.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Good.

He stands up, holding his hand to her to help her stand, and
they walk back over to the machine.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
I think we're done with this test
for the day. Let's try something a
little more ... simple, shall we?

He smiles at her.

She smiles, her heart not in it, and nods.

INT. DR. STRANGEBLOOD'S MANSION, LIVING ROOM

The Doctor has a large setup of boxes and other things. He is performing a magic trick - pulling a rabbit out of a hat.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Tada!

The rabbit looks annoyed, for lack of a better word.

Claire laughs.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

That's so cool. I love rabbits.

Dr. Strangeblood walks over and hands it to her.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Don't let it out of your sight, my dear. I need him for Saturday.

She cuddles and pets it. Looking right at it, she says in a slight baby-talk,

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

You are just too cute.

The rabbit seems unaffected by her comment, enjoying the strokes of its fur from its head to its back, wriggling its nose every second or so.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

For my next trick, I shall need a volunteer.

Claire raises the hand not holding the bunny, a broad smile.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Ooh! Me! Me! Pick me!

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

You, there. In the front row, with the blonde hair...

He walks over to her and hands her a sheet of paper. Holding a bag, he picks up a handful of folded sheets of paper.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Write down a number from one to one hundred, fold it, and put it in this bag with these other folded sheets.

He drops the folded sheets back into the bag as he turns to wait while she writes down '74'. She folds the sheet and puts it in the bag.

Dr. Strangeblood turns back around.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Give it a good stirring in there.
I don't want to be able to pull it
off the top.

She reaches in, trying to hang on to the bunny while ruffling the sheets around and around a few times.

When she's satisfied, she pulls her hand out of the bag.

He turns and walks back to his table, sets the bag down, reaches into the bag and pulls out a number.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Is it 51?

Claire shakes her head.

He tries again.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Is it ... 38?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
No.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Ah... I bet I know where to find
it.

He reaches into his sleeve, and begins to pull out a bright red handkerchief, tied to a blue handkerchief, and so on, and so on, seemingly endlessly pulling more various-colored handkerchiefs out until it seems like there wasn't enough room in his entire jacket for that many. At the very end, tied to the last handkerchief is a sheet of paper rolled up in a scroll-like fashion. He pulls it out of the tie, opens it up, and unfolds it.

There, in her handwriting, is the number '74.'

Her jaw drops.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
How ... in the world ...

The Doctor laughs heartily.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Do I even need to say it?

THE DOCTOR & CLAIRE
A good magician never reveals his
tricks.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
(rolling her eyes)
I know. I know.

She laughs as he hands her the sheet. She just stares at it
in awe.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
That is so awesome!

EXT. DR. STRANGEBLOOD'S MANSION, FRONT PORCH

(Three days later)

Claire sits on the front porch wearing a thin blouse and a
short mini-skirt, one naked leg crossed over the other, a
book in her lap. She intently reads, turning a page.

She is unaware that Rene is standing, the same dress jacket
over his arm, in front of her until the page is turned.

She glances up at him and says,

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
I didn't hear you walk up...

RENE
How was the show?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Um, it was good. Good...

She nods her head almost aggressively, putting her hand on
the page she's on to hold her place.

He clears his throat.

RENE
Good. I'm ... glad to hear it.

He grins at her. She grins back.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
By the way, can you tell me what
divinations you worked with the
Doctor on?

RENE
Why do you ask?

She puts a bookmark in place of her hand and folds the book closed.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Please...

He sighs.

RENE
I don't remember all of them, but I worked on quite a few. Probably a good fifty or more.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
What was your last one?

He pauses, looking embarrassed, almost unsure of what to say.

RENE
Rhabdomancy.

She stands up with her book, looking at him very strange.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Planning on doing that one again?

He gives her an awkward look.

RENE
Not ... really, no.

She looks at him hard.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
I would suggest you not try it again. These experiments are dangerous.

He nods his head, a quirky smile on his face.

RENE
I didn't realize you cared.
(BEAT)
What about you?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
You don't worry about me. I've got a plan.

She smiles at him and walks away into the house.

His smile follows her butt as she does so.

As the door closes, Rene looks over to his left to see Mike and Darren walk up.

MIKE

She hasn't figured it out, yet?

RENE

No.

DARREN

Damn, she's cute.

The guys smile, and walk away (OFF CAMERA).

INT. DR. STRANGEBLOOD'S MANSION, KITCHEN

Claire walks into the kitchen, goes to the fridge, and pulls out a couple of eggs. Then she gets out a skillet and puts it on the stove, turns on the heat, pulls out a spatula, and breaks the eggs open on the skillet, throwing the shells in the trash and washing her hands.

Dr. Strangeblood walks in, goes to the fridge, and pulls out orange juice, pours a glass, and takes a sip.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Those eggs were for an experiment.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Oomancy?

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Also known as...?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Ovomancy, and...

Her voice trails off.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Ooscopy.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Oh, yeah.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

That wasn't bad.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

I'll go get some more eggs.

She turns around to look at him.

He smiles.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Don't worry about it. I think we
can do the experiment with ten eggs
instead of twelve.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
I have a question.

The doctor raises his eyebrows.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
(continues)
When we first spoke on the phone,
you said you worked with animals.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Correct.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
I haven't seen any animals around
here. How can I earn my credits if
I don't study animals here?

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Very good point. I'll go get some
animals from the farm down the
street and we'll make it a point to
work with them this week.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
One more thing...

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Yes?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
I don't think you should work with
the guys on these experiments any
more.

Dr. Strangeblood gives her an awkward look, resting against
the counter behind him.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
...The guys...?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Yes, the guys. Mike, Rene,
Darren... Remember them? They...

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Of course I remember them ... rest
their souls. I quit working with
them right after they died.

Clair's face goes white.

The doctor pushes off the counter and walks toward her.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
You've seen them ... their ghosts
... haven't you...?

She swallows hard.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
They're dead...

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
My dear, Darren was the last to die
... more than a year ago.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
So what I saw was the past, not...

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
My dear Claire ... what did you see
in that smoke?

She crumples to the floor, passing out.

INT. DR. STRANGEBLOOD'S MANSION, CLAIRE'S BEDROOM

Claire wakes on her bed.

The doctor is sitting next to her on the bed. He smiles at
her gently.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
How do you feel?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Like a ten ton truck ran me over.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
I finished up your eggs for you.
They're still warm. They're
sitting over here on your dresser.
Take your time.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Thank you.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

When you're feeling up to it, I
want you to join me in the room
next door. I'm doing the egg
experiment at noon.

He gets up and walks away out of her room, closing the door
behind him.

She looks over at the plate of eggs and pushes herself up
against the headboard to sit up, then reaches over to grab
the plate. We SEE the clock reading 9:30am.

As she sets it on her lap and grabs the fork, she looks up to
see Mike, Darren, and Rene standing at the foot of her bed.

Her mouth opens and she starts to breathe hard.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

You ... you can't be here! You're
all...

DARREN, MIKE, & RENE

Dead.

DARREN

Yes, we know.

Still a little scared, she finally manages,

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

What do you guys want with me?

MIKE

I thought it'd be obvious by now.
We want to stop Dr. Strangeblood
before he kills you, too.

She looks at Darren, who still holds the coat draped over his
arm in front of his abdomen.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

I saw you...

She tries to say more, but finally, he pulls his arm away.
He has holes through his lower chest.

RENE

Creepy, huh...?

DARREN

(harumphs)
That's nothin'. Check this out.

He turns his head. The back of it is chopped off completely from about half-way back down to the nape of his neck.

He looks at her and smiles.

She's grossed out at it and puts her plate on the dresser.

Then she looks at Mike.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

You?

MIKE

Electrocuted...

We get a real good look at his clothes and a close-up of him and notice the 'dirty' look is actually charred skin; the fraying of the clothes the imply.

She makes to stand up.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

OK! That's it. I don't want to see any more ghosts. Get out of my room, right now. All of you. I'm NOT talking to dead people!

As she starts to stand up, her face goes flush again and she falls back toward the bed, catching herself by her arms to try to remain standing. Her hair hangs over her face and she breathes hard.

When she looks back up at the foot of her bed, they're gone.

She looks back at her plate of food.

INT. DR. STRANGEBLOOD'S MANSION, ROOM NEXT TO CLAIRE'S

The clock on the wall reads 11:58am.

Claire walks in to see Dr. Strangeblood hooking up his equipment and doing final checks.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Close the door, please.

She does so, and then proceeds to his side.

In the center of the room is a plate with two eggs on it.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Raw or hard-boiled?

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
One of each, just in case...

There's a long pause as he walks over to the other side of the room and double-checks some wiring.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Some of these experiments are pretty dangerous.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
The only thing dangerous about this one is getting egg on your face.

He turns with a big grin on his face, and turns right back around.

Claire looks almost as if she's smiling, but perhaps more like she's not sure if she should laugh at the joke. She looks over at the main terminal readouts as they show electronic readings.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
What exactly are these readouts?
What does it all mean?

The Doctor turns around, having completed his wire checks, and walks back over to her.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
It's hard to explain.

She puts her hand down on top of the terminal and looks up at him. He stops and turns to her.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Why do you do this?

He looks hard at her for a few moments.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Why don't you think about that when I start the experiment...?

They look at each other for a few moments, and she removes her hand from the terminal.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Maybe I will...

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Very good.

He turns his full attention to the machine in front of him and starts it up. Machines all around them whir to life. Gauges rev, power output signals charge and blink at various levels. Grabbing two pairs of goggles, he hands one to her, and both put them on.

As the energy crackles above on the piece that hangs over the eggs, smoke; very similar to the previous experiment; rises between the plate and the piece. Vague images appear in the black, but nothing can be made out.

Suddenly, the smoke rushes toward Claire and pushes her up against the wall, holding her there.

EXT. PSYCHIC'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dr. Strangeblood is seated at a psychic's table where the woman grabs his hand. Claire stands over him as the woman proceeds to read his palm.

PALMIST

You are a middle-aged man. You've been married before. You have...

She suddenly looks up, then her eyes roll back in her head and she closes them.

PALMIST

I see ... I see that you will die tragically. Painfully... In a few years, you will die in a horrible event...!

Claire, peering over the doctor's shoulder, looks at the woman with skepticism.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

You've gotta be kidding me...

The doctor looks over his shoulder at Claire with a harsh face.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

(confused)

You can't be here.

Claire looks at the doctor in surprise.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Huh?

Suddenly, there is a blinding flash.

INT. DR. STRANGEBLOOD'S MANSION, ROOM NEXT TO CLAIRE'S

A rattling sound of ceramic can be heard as we see Claire still being held up by the smoke. As the picture widens away we can see the smoke holding the Doctor up as well. Both of them their eyes wide open in shock and horror.

Then a glimpse at the plate of eggs as the whole of them are shaking. The eggs roll around like they'll fall off the plate and/or explode at any second.

INT. SECONDARY BUILDING, ANOTHER ROOM

Claire is now standing with the doctor and Mike as the former starts up the machine, which is surrounding a laptop computer. The machines whir to life and the smoke appears between the laptop and the metal piece above it. Suddenly, electricity arcs across the room at Mike who cannot get away. His body is fried in seconds.

Another flash.

INT. SECONDARY BUILDING, SAME ROOM

Claire is with Darren where the setup is the same. In the center of the room this time is a saw blade. As the machine comes alive, the blade lifts off the small table it sits on, spinning faster and faster.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

Get down!

Just as he says it, Darren ducks, but he's too late as the spinning saw blade comes at him and cuts off the back of his head splattering blood everywhere ... even on Claire and the doctor.

The doctor looks at Claire.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD

I'm sorry...

Claire stands there in shock, looking down at the blood all over her, and then at Darren who lies on the floor bleeding profusely.

INT. DR. STRANGEBLOOD'S MANSION, ROOM NEXT TO CLAIRE'S

The smoke releases its hostages as the raw egg breaks open and the hard-boiled one bounces off onto the floor. The machines die down.

Claire and Dr. Strangeblood flop to the floor against the wall.

The doctor looks over at Claire.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
I didn't mean for any of this to
happen.

She looks over at him, getting her breath back.

Claire stands up, opens the door, and runs out of the room, down the hallway, out the front door, and out onto the lawn, tripping over her own feet and falling. As she falls, she sees a stake sticking up out of the ground, aimed right at her head.

She screams.

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I didn't mean for any of this to
happen.

She looks over at him, getting her breath back.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
You said that already...

Claire stands up, opens the door, and runs out of the room, down the hallway, and out the front door onto the porch and stops.

She looks out across the lawn and sees the stake sticking up out of the ground.

The doctor catches up with her.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
Claire, my dear. Are you alright?

She turns to him.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
These experiments end today!

Dr. Strangeblood looks at her for a moment.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
I'm sorry. They don't end.

She looks at him, appalled.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
Everyone dies, Doctor.

He half-laughs as he looks away from her.

DR. STRANGEBLOOD
You misunderstood, Claire. I'm not
just trying to stop my death. I'm
trying to stop all death...

A pause between them is quiet as Darren, Rene, and Mike walk
up the stairs (their footsteps not heard).

Dr. Strangeblood looks at them with surprise.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
You're insane.

The three ghosts fold their arms and look angrily at him.

Claire turns, walks between the three of them, down the steps
and toward her car.

As we watch her walk away, we hear the screams of the doctor,
evidence of his horrifying death at the hands of those he
murdered.

Only once does Claire stop to turn around, but we are unable
to see anything as it is all happening just inside the living
room doorway.

She reaches her car and opens the door, looking down at her
clothes - as clean as before the vision.

When she looks back up, Rene is standing near her.

RENE
Don't forget your stuff. It's
still in your bedroom.

CLAIRE EASTERMAN
No. I packed everything up and put
it in my trunk before I went into
that room.

Rene looks at her, then smiles.

RENE

Will we ever see you again?

CLAIRE EASTERMAN

Don't take this wrong way, but I
certainly hope not.

Rene nods his head as she gets in her car, pulls the keys from her purse in the passenger's seat floorboard, starts the car, and drives away.