

# A WAKING NIGHTMARE

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## **OVER BLACK**

*"Ultimate horror often paralyzes memory in a merciful way."*

-H.P. LOVECRAFT

FADE IN TO:

## **EXT. ALLEY - DUSK**

Backlit against the setting sun in a suburban neighborhood, a meticulous and clinical man, late-40's scraggly beard and large metal-rimmed glasses, approaches his RYDESHARE CAR.

This is FRANK. The glare off his glasses obscures his eyes as he examines a CLIPBOARD. A heavy sigh escapes his tight scowl. He steps towards his car, ready for a long night...

## **OPENING CREDITS SEQUENCE**

SynthWave music with chaotic accents cues a MONTAGE of SCRATCHED TEXT and a series of CLOSE-UPS (Think the credit sequence for Se7en).

- Frank tests his lights, turn signals, wipers...
- A BAND plays inside a DIVE BAR... A dancing crowd... A pair of BLACK, STUDED BOOTS dancing alone...
- Frank pulls on the seatbelts in his backseat...
- BEER BOTTLES toasted together in an APARTMENT...
- Frank engages the CHILD SAFETY LOCKS on his rear doors...
- A WOMAN's LIPS in a MIRROR applying RED LIPSTICK...
- The back of a WOMAN in a LEATHER JACKET watching the band in the dive bar. Looking back over her shoulder, she waits for someone to arrive...
- VIDEO GAME CONTROLLERS snatched from a coffee table...
- A TINY PURSE loaded with the LIP GLOSS, CELL PHONE, and HEAD PHONES, etc...
- Frank opening the glove box and stashing a BOTTLE OF CHLOROFORM with TWO RAGS inside.
- The RYDESHARE CAR lights pop on and drives away as the sun finally sets.

Title on screen:

A WAKING NIGHTMARE

**INT. BAR - NIGHT**

A typical dive bar where patrons have to yell over the music as a band finishes its set in the background.

A near-empty WHISKEY TUMBLER lands on the bar top. A woman leans in, flags down the bartender. This is MARA, 29, Latina, rocker-chic, wears her pent-up exasperation on her sleeve.

A SMALL, SILVER CROSS dangles from her neck and a slick LEATHER JACKET hangs off her finger over her shoulder.

MARA  
Hey, yo, Pat!

PAT, 35, the way-too-hot-to-work-here bartender down the bar, pulls away from the attention she's getting from TWO DUDES.

Mara waves her hand across her throat.

MARA  
Close me out?

Pat, giggling, raises her finger...

PAT  
(mid-laughter)  
Yeah, one sec...

... then continues flirting with those damn dudes.

MARA  
(Are you kidding me?)  
Alright...?

Mara rests her jacket on the back of the barstool, sits, and pulls out her CELL PHONE.

On the phone screen, we see Mara was texting with Kyle:

**Mara:** Yo, nerd! :P B)  
You're missing a kick-ass show!!  
See you at the bar, soon, yeah?

**Kyle:** Damn! How many songs are left?  
We got one more game, def **before 11!**

**Mara:** Dork... :D

The top of the phone screen displays **12:00am**.

Mara sighs, swirling the melted ice in her glass. Waiting...

A MAN, 25, burly, clean-shaven, obviously God's gift to women, cozies up next to Mara at the bar. He goes out of his way to check her out... He smiles with lascivious intent...

MAN

Hi!

Mara ignores him. So, he taps on her arm, then projects louder.

MAN

Hey, I'm Gabe.

Mara rolls her head, an uninterested glare.

MARA

(mocking)

Hi, Gabe. Do you come here often?

She returns to her phone; a cold demeanor.

GABE

Ha... I like your style. Were you here for the show?

Avoiding Gabe's advances, Mara looks around the crowd for Pat, who is now taking shots with those dudes... *Ugh...*

GABE

Let me buy you a drink...

MARA

No thank you.

Mara texts Kyle on her phone:

**Mara:** *I take it you're not coming...*

She waits, rests her cheek against her palm, dismisses Gabe.

Gabe smiles over at his "BROS," squeezed into a nearby booth. They toast their brews towards their ambitious friend.

Pat finally arrives big smile on her face, Mara's check in hand. Mara holds her credit card out for Pat...

PAT

Here--

(to Gabe)

Heeeyyy, whatcha havin?

Gabe extends a \$50 BILL to Pat...

GABE

Vodka tonic double shot...

(MORE)

GABE (CONT'D)  
She could use a drink. How about  
something classy for the lady.  
Cosmo? It's on me.

MARA  
(interjects)  
No, I'm fine--

PAT  
(ignores Mara)  
Kk...

With a wink of her eye, Pat snatches the fifty, NOT Mara's credit card, then rushes off to make the drinks.

MARA  
Wait...

Too late, Pat's already gone.

Mara drops her head in exasperation...

Gabe moves in closer, invading Mara's personal space.

GABE  
You know, there's plenty of booze  
back at my place...

Mara sneers at Gabe as he turns his sleaze up a notch.

GABE  
And, who knows, maybe I can cue up  
a Misfits playlist, turn the  
lights down, and we can just...  
see what happens...

A proud smile curls onto Gabe's face.

MARA  
Wow...

Mara can't help but chuckle at how lame this guy is.

PAT  
Here ya go, babe.

Pat shoves the drinks in front of Mara and Gabe, then rushes off as the cosmo spills onto Mara's hands... *Gross...*

Mara jerks her hands away as Gabe makes his move. He rubs the small of her back, too personal and way out of line...

Mara gasps... Grabs the cosmo... Tosses it in Gabe's face...

Gabe shouts, covering his eyes.

Pat looks down the bar as Mara stands, shaking the sticky liquid from her hands.

Mara slips into her jacket with ease, digs in for some cash.

Gabe's cronies laugh as he wipes the drink off his face.

GABE

You fucking bitch!

Gabe grabs Mara, trapping her within his domineering arms, pulling her close against him.

The bar stops. People gasp.

Gabe's sinister smile whispers into Mara's ear.

GABE

You like it rough? I can do  
rough...

Mara struggles for a moment, then, her reflexes kick in...

MARA

Oh baby... you just picked the  
wrong bitch to fuck with...

She lifts her RAD, STUDED BOOT and drives the THICK HEEL onto the toes of his PUNY SKETCHERS.

Gabe YELLS, releasing as Mara turns, PUNCHES him in the face, TWISTS his arm, and SMASHES his head down on the wet bar top.

Gabe collapses to the floor. The bar halts. Everyone watches in shock. Especially a tipsy Pat.

Mara SLAMS a TWENTY down and grabs a damp rag for her fist.

Trying to hold her composure, Mara surveys the rubbernecking patrons. Then, her eyes land on Pat...

PAT

I am so sorry, are you OK--

MARA

(Oh, fuck you...)  
Always a pleasure, Pat...

Mara tosses the rag at Pat then struts off. Her heavy boots echo across the wooden floor.

Spilled drinks drip onto Gabe's unconscious head. After a moment, his bros laugh at his humiliation.

**EXT. BAR - NIGHT**

It's cold and quiet as Mara exits passed the rotund bouncer.

BOUNCER

(jolly)

Damn, Mara, you're gonna put me  
out of a job...

She's focused on controlling her breathing. In a moment of vulnerability, she rubs her fist. That hurt.

On her phone, she orders a pick up from the RYDESHARE APP.

Completely oblivious, KYLE, 27, Mara's nerdy-but-cute boyfriend, walks up, snickering with his best friend, DANIEL, 27, bearded, lovable schlub.

MARA

Hey, what the fuck, dude?

KYLE

Hey, babe! Sorry, yeah, took  
forever, but, we totally kicked  
their asses!

They boys celebrate, giving each other fives, laughing, seems like they had a great fucking night...

Mara erupts in a sarcasm-riddled, enraged rant.

MARA

(animated)

OHHHHH... well, while you and your  
dumb friend here are playing a  
fucking video game, I'm left alone  
to fight off some sleazy, entitled  
asshole groping the lonely goth  
chick at the bar, getting his junk  
all up on me and shit--

DANIEL

(I'm not dumb...)

Um, ouch...

KYLE

Hey, whoa-whoa, somebody grabbed  
you?--

MARA

Yeah, and I fucking handled it!

Mara avoids making eye contact with Kyle.

KYLE  
Hey man, give me a sec...

DANIEL  
Alright... cool cool...

Daniel heads into the bar. Kyle chooses his words carefully.

KYLE  
Are you ok?

Mara glares at him, misty-eyed.

MARA  
You told me you'd be here.

Kyle rubs Mara's arms, an attempt to calm her down.

KYLE  
Look, I'm sorry. We got carried  
away, and I'm not saying it wasn't  
wrong, but--

MARA  
(pulls away)  
It WAS fucking wrong! You  
abandoned me, man! And for what?  
So you could get in one more  
round?!

KYLE  
(not this again)  
Mara, I didn't abandon you--

MARA  
Like fuck you did!  
(condescending)  
Oh, but, you're not to blame  
because you did nothing wrong,  
right? Of course not, I guess I'm  
the problem--

KYLE  
--Hey, not cool, come on. I fucked  
up. I'm owning it.

Mara releases a painful scream into the air.

Kyle takes a breath. He's not ready to head home, yet, but...

KYLE  
Alright, I'll take you home, let  
me just go tell Daniel--

MARA

(abrupt)

--You know, I think I'd rather be alone, so, it's fine... Ya'can't keep Daniel waiting, too...

He knows she's in pain... What's Kyle to do, though?

KYLE

You always push me away when you get like this, and I don't...

(sigh)

You wanna calm down alone, cool, do your thing, I can't stop you... but, I'm not your enemy, here, Mara. I wish you could see that.

Mara's pride halts her tears. Her foot won't stop tapping.

Her phone's chime breaks the tension. It reads:

*Your RYDESHARE is here.  
Lookout for FRANK!*

MARA

I gotta go.

Mara walks to the curb as the RYDESHARE CAR arrives.

**INT. RYDESHARE CAR - NIGHT**

Frank's eyes, hidden behind a glare off his glasses, survey the area as he lowers the passenger-side window.

FRANK

Name, please.

MARA

(leans in)

Mara Guerrero?

Frank looks around, nods, then unlocks the door.

**INT. RYDESHARE CAR/EXT. BAR - NIGHT**

Mara turns back to Kyle.

MARA

Look...

(beat)

Have fun with your friend...

She opens the car door when--

KYLE

Hey, Mara... let me know you got home safe, alright? I'm here if you need me.

Mara nods, forces a smirk, then gets in the car, closing the door behind her.

Frank studies their interaction as Mara climbs in, puts on her seat belt, and avoids looking out the window.

MARA

You have my address, right?

FRANK

Mm hmm...

Frank clicks his RydeShare app and puts the car in gear. The doors lock.

Out the window, Kyle stands alone on the curb.

He watches the car take Mara away...

KYLE

Fuck...

Kyle saunters to the bar...

**INT. RYDESHARE CAR - NIGHT**

Mara lowers her window and lays her head back. Her eyes close as the breeze blows through her hair.

MARA

(what a fucking night...)  
Ugh...

FRANK

(snaps at her)  
I'd prefer the windows closed, if you don't mind...

Mara jolts to attention. She closes the window.

MARA

Oh... sorry...?

Frank's phone light's up.

FRANK

We have another passenger.

Mara retreats to her headphones, avoiding any interaction.

MARA  
 (hold it together, Mara...)  
 OK...

Frank studies Mara in the rear-view mirror.

**INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX HALLWAY - NIGHT**

An apartment door swings open and out walks NATTY, 21, a petite and playful red-headed millennial in a sexy dress, ready for a night of dancing at the club.

She uses a small napkin to fix her lipstick, then digs through her tiny purse as the door slowly closes behind her...

NATTY  
 Ah, shit...

She walks back inside the apartment.

NATTY  
 Mom, have you seen my...

A woman sits in a chair, but, before she says anything--

NATTY  
 ugh... never mind!

The door opens and Natty returns with her keys in hand.

NATTY  
 Get some rest! Ok-love-you,  
 byeeee!!!

Natty doesn't wait for a response as she locks the door.

She tosses the keys in her purse and pulls out some earbuds, then bops down the hallway as POP MUSIC softly plays.

**INT. RYDESHARE CAR - NIGHT**

Frank eyes Mara in the rear-view window.

FRANK  
 Are you religious?

MARA  
 (removes headphone)  
 I'm sorry?

FRANK  
 I asked if you were religious. I  
 saw... your neck...

Mara looks down, confused, then realizes he means her silver cross necklace. She grabs it.

MARA

Oh... I dunno... just-a relic of a past life--I'm sorry, uh... I really don't want to talk right now... thanks...

She replaces the headphone in her ear.

FRANK

(too bad)

Hmm.

Frank keeps an eye on Mara as she hides the necklace under her shirt and zips up her jacket.

**EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT**

A glass door opens. POP MUSIC carries a dancing Natty to the curb as Frank's headlights arrive. The window rolls down.

FRANK

(muffled through music)

Name, please...

Natty pulls out one earbud, which LOWERS THE MUSIC.

**I./E. RYDESHARE CAR - NIGHT**

Natty leans into the window...

FRANK

(stern)

What is your name?

With a big smile, Natty extends her hand to shake Frank's.

NATTY

Oh, I'm Natty! You?

Frank fumbles to close the window, pushing Natty back out...

NATTY

(wtf, dude?)

Oh... ok...

Frank is rattled as his eyes follow Natty to the rear door.

**INT. RYDESHARE CAR - NIGHT**

Mara scoots over as Natty climbs in. Frank controls his breathing, studying their interaction...

NATTY  
 (to Mara)  
 Ooh, cool! Hi, I'm Natty.

Mara grins, not in the mood for bubbly girl talk.

MARA  
 Hi--

NATTY  
 Wow, rad jacket!  
 (excited)  
 Oh-my-god, I saw one just like  
 that at Nasty Gal. So CUTE!... I  
 wanted to pick it up, but... damn,  
 I should have. Then we could be  
 twinzies!!

Natty's incessant cuteness bumps Mara's solitude.

MARA  
 Um... yeah...

Frank eyes the glove box... He scratches his shoulder... a nervous tick?

With a timid breath, he tightly grips the steering wheel...

FRANK  
 Seat belts, please.

Both Mara and Natty oblige.

Frank puts the car in gear... The back doors lock.

Frank's eyes scan the area as the car pulls away.

After a few moments...

NATTY  
 Oh, do you have one of those cable  
 thingies to play my music?--

FRANK  
 No.

He gauges Natty's reaction in the rear view mirror.

FRANK  
I mean, the radio... doesn't  
work...

NATTY  
(pouty)  
Oh... ok...

Frank tries to focus on the road.

Natty smiles at Mara, gesturing her thumb towards Frank.

NATTY  
(animated)  
What the fuuuck?

Mara shrugs.

Natty puts in her earbuds and dances in her seat while perusing something like Facebook on her phone.

MARA  
(under her breath)  
Wow...

Mara returns to her headphones. She gazes out of her own window as calming SYNTHWAVE MUSIC takes over.

### **I./E. RYDESHARE CAR - NIGHT**

The car drives along the busy streets, passing the neon lights from bars, clubs, stores...

Mara's head rests on the window, as Natty bops in her seat.

Mara feels the music, finally at peace, when...

A passing street sign catches her... She follows it...

### **INT. RYDESHARE CAR - NIGHT**

Mara yanks out her headphones.

MARA  
Excuse me, who are you dropping  
off first?

Frank ignores the question...

Mara undoes her seatbelt and leans closer.

MARA  
We passed my stop. Can you turn  
around?

Still, no reply.

Mara turns back and gets Natty's attention.

MARA  
Hey... Where are you getting  
dropped off?

NATTY  
Bootie. Why?

MARA  
(on guard)  
Yeah, we passed that a while  
ago...  
(to Frank)  
Would you mind pulling over? We're  
getting out here.

Beads of sweat billow on Frank's face...

His foot slowly pushes the gas pedal down...

MARA  
Hello?! I said pull over.

NATTY  
(confused-whiny)  
What's going on?

Frank pushes through his stunted breathing...

FRANK  
Please, sit back...

MARA  
Excuse me??!

NATTY  
(gets it)  
Oh-my-god, don't do this!!

The car speeds faster.

FRANK  
Sit back!

Mara pulls a small, FOLDING KNIFE from her jacket pocket.

MARA  
Stop the goddamn car!

She flips the knife open, like a pro, and holds it inches away from Frank's face.

Frank's eyes dart between Mara in the mirror and the road...

He moves the mirror to focus on Natty, who's fidgeting... frightened... ranting...

NATTY

(rapid, hysterical)

No-no-no-no-no, I can't see any blood- Please do what she says! I- I have black outs and I don't know what happens and I wake up and people are hurt and there's more blood and I just can't handle it--

MARA

Everybody calm down! Stop the car!

The knife creeps closer to Frank's widened eye.

Natty throws off her seatbelt. She yanks on the door handle.

It won't open!

NATTY

Let me out of here, please!!!

Frank breathes faster.... Knife gripped tighter...

MARA

Ohhh, don't tempt me, buddy!

NATTY

No!.. I... Can't... Breath!!

Frank notices Natty writhing in the mirror.

FRANK

OK! OK, just sit back!--

MARA

--Don't FUCK with me--

FRANK

--I'll stop! I'll stop!

Mara sits back. She comforts Natty.

MARA

Don't worry. I've got this.

After a deep exhale, Frank closes his eyes and SLAMS on the brakes!!

**EXT. RYDESHARE CAR - NIGHT**

The car SCREECHES to a halt.

**INT. RYDESHARE CAR - NIGHT**

Mara's and Natty's faces SMACK against the front seats...

The knife flies to the floor board...

Glove box pops open... Bottle and rags fall out, just out of reach...

FRANK

Shit...

Natty's head falls into her hands...

Mara winces in pain... grabs her forehead...

Frank reaches for the rags... grabs the bottle...

Natty breathes faster....

Mara jerks the door handle... It won't open!

MARA

(woozy)

What the fuck...

Frank catches his breath as he soaks the chemical into the rags.

Mara searches around for the knife... she sees it! Out of reach in the front!

She undoes her seat belt and lunges for it as--

Frank's sweaty face spins around to face her...

MARA

Mother fuc--

Frank's hand SLAMS Mara's head against the window...

The glass CRACKS...

Frank LUNGES at Natty, pins her head back with a WET RAG covering her mouth.

Natty GASPS for air... Her arms flail...

Frank holds her until Natty's energy fades away...

Blood trickles from Mara's forehead as she realizes Frank is suffocating Natty--

MARA  
You son of a--

Frank turns to Mara... struggles with her just enough to get the SECOND RAG in her face...

Mara thrashes... Her eyes strive to stay open...

FRANK  
Come on--shh--shhhh...

She can't help it... Mara's will fades away...

Frank's sweaty, panicked face is all Mara sees as we--

FADE TO BLACK

**INT. SCHOOL BATHROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

Dim lights FADE IN on the dark, blurry space...

Slowly coming into focus, we see...

Mara's eyes fill the screen. They flutter, trying to open, but, physically can't... She's woozy, reliving a painful memory...

In her POV: Bathroom stalls, grimy and grungy.

Fluorescent lights flicker on/off; an odd discoloration.

FOOTSTEPS ECHO as someone approaches. We can't see who it is. Or, maybe, Mara doesn't want us to...

Mara moans. She can't form words.

MALE TEACHER (O.S.)  
(echoes - calming)  
It's ok... Don't be afraid...

Mara's head wobbles back and forth. She doesn't want to be here.

MARA  
(no...no...)  
M-mmm...

A WELL-DRESSED MAN, an authority figure, enters her POV and looks directly into camera.

MALE TEACHER  
(echoes - calming)  
I'm gonna take care of you...

Mara's eyes roll beneath her lids. Why can't she move?!

MARA  
M-Mm!! MMMMM!!

The man's insidious smile fills the frame, in and out of focus. Colors and lights flicker around him.

MALE TEACHER  
Shhhh... It'll be over soon...

Mara struggles... Her face constricts... Her eyes finally open!

### **INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

Mara's eyes: wide, alert and misty. It takes a moment to recover from that brutal memory...

Her heavy breath is muffled... She can't move...

Camera pulls back: Mara's mouth is gagged with a RAG.

No longer wearing her leather jacket, she's bound to a WOODEN CHAIR, her hands and feet tied with NYLON ROPE.

She's alone, it's cold, sitting across from an EMPTY CHAIR.

SOUND-PROOF PANELS line the walls, there's a RICKETY BOOKSHELF filled with TOOLS and a PAINTED WINDOW with a GRIMY-GREEN GLOW.

A SINGLE LIGHT BULB, turned off, dangles over her head.

She notices a faint RED LIGHT blink in the corner of the ceiling... a SECURITY CAMERA.

She fights to make noise... She violently attempts to free herself...

The chair tips over.

SMACK! - Mara's face hits the cold, hard floor.

Her breath quickens as she realizes... she's been kidnapped.

The dangling light pops on; it's dull.

The garage door unlocks and opens.

Mara wiggles her chair deeper into the garage.

A large silhouette... cuts through the amber light...

It's Frank backing into the garage, dragging an unconscious Natty with a RAG gagging her mouth.

MARA  
(gagged)  
Hey! HEY!!!

Startled, Frank turns to see Mara laying on the concrete.

FRANK  
What'ya doing down there?

Mara yells, as much as she can, as Frank secures Natty in that empty chair. Then, he struggles to pick up Mara.

Mara's frantic. She jolts about, biting at him through her gag.

FRANK  
OK, OK... shhhh... I gotcha...

He makes sure Mara's chair is level, then...

FRANK  
Just hang on a second...

Frank grabs NYLON ROPE off a shelf and binds Natty's hands behind her chair.

Heightened, Mara tries to catch her breath and her consciousness...

MARA  
(muffled)  
Stop... stop it...

Frank then ties Natty's feet together...

FRANK  
(to Mara)  
You shouldn't be awake, yet...

He stands and cracks his back, glancing at Mara before rushing out of the garage.

Still groggy, Mara screams through the gag.

MARA  
(muffled)  
Let me out of here!!

Frank returns, closing the door behind him.

He carries Natty's PURSE, Mara's JACKET, and both CELL PHONES, and places them against the wall.

Frank eyes Mara and pulls her FOLDING KNIFE out of his back pocket, tapping it against his hand...

MARA  
(muffled)  
No! Stay away!!!

Frank strolls over to her, theatrically, reciting a passage by Edgar Allan Poe.

FRANK  
"Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded, with what caution, with what foresight..."

Frank leans down to Mara's bracing face as he opens the blade.

He holds an intense gaze, then... peeks back at a motionless Natty.

Returning his attention to Mara, Frank closes the knife.

FRANK  
(grave)  
You shouldn't play with knives until you're ready to use them. Once you are... don't hold back.

Frank taps the knife against Mara's forehead then moves back to the bookshelf, placing it on the top shelf.

He, then, grabs a small flashlight and kneels in front Natty.

MARA  
(muffled)  
Don't...

Frank shines the light into Natty's eyes, inspecting her when--

CRASH!! A LOUD TRASH CAN LID outside.

Frank stands at attention, looking at the grimy, green-tinted window behind Mara. He checks his watch.

FRANK  
No-no-no, he shouldn't be home...

As Frank rushes by...

FRANK  
 (to Mara)  
 Shh-shh... stay calm...

Frank opens and SLAMS the garage door down behind him.

Mara screams through her gag as the garage door locks. She shakes in her chair.

The dangling light cuts out. It's dark, once again.

MARA  
 (muffled)  
 Oh, come on....

**EXT. TRASH CANS - NIGHT**

Frank finds his neighbor, ROBERT, 56, serious demeanor, tired, loosened tie, like he just got home from a long day at the office... Nobody likes the night shift...

FRANK  
 (small talk)  
 Hey-hey, Robbie! Trash day tomorrow, huh?--

ROBERT  
 It's Robert...

FRANK  
 Yeah, I just figured, you know, since we're neighbors and all--

Robert holds a HARDBACK COVER BOOK that Frank recognizes... stops him in his tracks...

FRANK  
 What...  
 (clears throat)  
 What'chu got there?

ROBERT  
 Oh, this? Required reading for my daughter at the university... You know, I couldn't quite figure you out when you moved in last month, but, I became quite interested after seeing how you looked at her...

FRANK  
 Oh, I didn't mean anything by--

ROBERT

Save it... So, she shows me this book, and I start doing some digging of my own...

He hands the book to Frank. It's like he's smacked in the face with a past life, long forgotten...

The Book: well worn-in. A white cover with the title "Archeological Finds in Religious Myths, by Frank Parker" with a professional photo of a younger Frank.

A long cry from the scraggily kidnapper we've known all night.

ROBERT

Then, I wonder, what makes a respected professor leave his family and move cross country to drive his little car around all night, picking up kids as a RydeShare driver...

FRANK

(he's on to me...)

Well, life changes over time, right? Not a lot of work out there for us grave robbers... so, why not a change of scenery? Shake things up. Everyone needs a fresh start...

Frank hands the book back to Robert, keeping up a neighborly appearance...

ROBERT

A fresh start... Look, Frank, I don't trust you. You creep me out. You make way too much noise for a man of your stature living on his own... And, I don't appreciate the way you look at the young girls around here, you feel me?

Frank chuckles, wiping sweat off his forehead...

### **INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

Mara struggles to turn her chair towards that window... but is stopped by a metal CLANK!

A thick chain holds her chair a few feet away from the wall. She fights to scream... but...

**EXT. TRASH CANS - NIGHT**

MARA'S SCREAMS are muffled; barely audible.

Robert looks to the garage window behind Frank...

FRANK

I-uh, I mean no disrespect,  
Robbie, it's been tough, you know,  
since my family [passed on]--

ROBERT

--What's going on in there? You  
catch an animal or something?

FRANK

(oh shit...)  
Uhh... Yeah, I guess you could say  
that...  
(beat)  
Raccoon... Caught it going through  
the trash. Thought I'd torture it  
to give up his friends...

Frank chuckles...

ROBERT

(distracted)  
Raccoon, huh? I hear they're good  
for stew...

FRANK

Yeah, right... stew--

ROBERT

--Just keep it down. Noise curfew  
around here is 10pm. You wake me  
up again tonight, I'm calling the  
cops. No hesitation. No excuses.

Robert walks back to his house.

FRANK

Alright, Robbie! Have a good one,  
man!

ROBERT

It's Robert.

Robert slams his door.

Frank's smile turns to concern. He scampers to his house.

**INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

Mara attempts to get Natty's attention...

MARA  
(muffled)  
Hey... hey! Fuck...

It's useless. Natty is weirdly at peace without any signs of struggle.

The light pops back on as the garage door opens.

Frank enters, closes the door. He carries a FOLDING CHAIR and a GLASS OF WATER, complete with BENDY STRAW.

He sets the chair in front of Mara and holds up the glass.

FRANK  
Here, at least we can keep you hydrated.  
(takes a sip)  
See? It's just water.

Frank moves in to feed the straw around Mara's gag-- her instincts kick in, she flails about.

FRANK  
(pulls back)  
Ok, ok, I get that you're scared.  
Sh-sh-sh... You're really going to want to reserve your energy.

Mara peers through her focused, threatening eyes.

Frank walks to the bookshelf and grabs an old heart-rate pump. He approaches Natty.

Mara's breathing heightens.

FRANK  
No-no, I'm just checking. It's ok.

He wraps the band around Natty's arm and pumps.

Mara surveys her surroundings. *What the hell is going on?*

Frank times Natty's pulse with his watch. A low pressure.

Mara stares daggers through Frank...

MARA  
(through gag)  
Leave. Her. Alone...

Frank slowly turns his head to Mara.

Mara stares like a caged tiger protecting its cub as she yells through her gag.

MARA  
(muffled)  
Get away from her!

Frank chuckles with nervous frustration.

He saunters to the folding chair, sits, and leans into Mara.

FRANK  
(how do I explain...)  
Look, we are both part of  
something, uh, unexplainable, and  
you are... you're...

He's distracted by the rage in Mara's eyes.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
... Well, you're never going to  
believe me. You're just going to  
have to experience it for  
yourself.

Frank raises the glass of water and offers Mara the straw.

FRANK  
Do you want some water?

Looking Frank dead in the eyes, Mara controls her breathing. She nods her head.

FRANK  
Ok.

He unites the gag around Mara's mouth. Once it's removed...

Mara bites at Frank... Barely misses his fingers...

She YELLS with all the rage in her system!

MARA  
(guttural)  
UN-FUCKING-TIE ME!!!

Frank bolts from the chair...

His head hits the hanging light...

It swings back and forth...

Harsh shadows cross Mara's infuriated expression as she violently bounces in her chair.

MARA  
HELP!!! Somebody, get me out of  
here!!!

Frank looks over at Natty.

In-between the shadows, Natty barely moves; it's subtle.

Frank grabs his shoulder; he recognizes the shooting pain.

Mara rants and raves in her chair.

Frank rushes the gag back around Mara's mouth.

He's afraid as his eyes dart between the two girls.

FRANK  
OK, OK... I'll come back later.  
Just... be careful.

He retreats from the garage and slams the door down.

**EXT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

Frank backs away from the garage.

He winces at the pain in his shoulder, then scurries off.

**INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

Mara breathes heavily, watches Natty.

Natty barely twitches in the swinging light.

Mara peers *through* the Garage door - She plans their escape.

The light cuts out. MARA'S BREATHING continues OVER BLACK.

**INT. BAR - NIGHT**

A flame erupts over two shot glasses.

Daniel's hand reaches in and lifts one glass up to his bearded grin, revealing a worried Kyle sitting across the table.

Daniel blows out the flame and drinks the shot.

DANIEL  
 (grits his teeth)  
 Yes!!!

Daniel slams his fist on the table a couple of times. He follows with a beer chaser.

DANIEL  
 (smacks his lips)  
 Mm... I think I singed some whiskers that time...

Kyle checks his phone.

KYLE  
 She should have been home by now...

DANIEL  
 (having a good time)  
 Owww!! I could do another one of those! Ha!

Kyle texts Mara:

**Kyle:** *Haven't heard from you. Home yet?*

Daniel eyes the other shot glass, still on fire.

DANIEL  
 You gonna let that burn?

KYLE  
 Ugh... I really fucked up tonight, man...

DANIEL  
 (This again?...)  
 Alright look, you're playing right into her games. It's no different than fucking covert ops, you go left, she goes right. You duck, she attacks. You gotta juke, man.

KYLE  
 What are you doing?

DANIEL  
 (smiles)  
 Relationship advice.

Kyle smiles, he can't help it.

KYLE  
When was the last time a girl even  
looked at you?

DANIEL  
Just now.

Daniel points at the bar where some women laugh AT him, not  
with. He smiles, toasting his glass to them.

KYLE  
Do you really want to go through  
life being the dancing monkey?

DANIEL  
Oh, no, I don't think I'm drunk  
enough to start dancing, yet...  
Are you wasting that shot?

Kyle checks his phone again.

KYLE  
Something doesn't feel right. Mad  
or not, she always lets me know  
she's home.  
(beat)  
She almost cried tonight...  
(beat)  
You know, in the five years that  
we've been together, I've never  
seen her cry--

DANIEL  
Ugh... She told you to have fun,  
so have some fucking fun. Mara's  
pissed. What else is new? Why  
don't you take a page from Dumbass  
over there and savor what's left  
of the night?

Kyle turns to: Gabe with TWO PIECES OF NAPKIN hanging from his  
bloody nose as his bros toast their beer.

DANIEL  
(across the room)  
She fucked-yo-shit-up, bro!  
Whooo!!

Daniel chuckles with delight as Kyle turns back to him.

DANIEL  
Drink the fucking shot, man! And  
then, we're gonna order another  
round.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

After that, you'll go home and see Mara crashed on the couch watching 30 Rock or some shit, and you're gonna think back and say "I sure am glad Daniel is a smart mother fucker, cuz I had a pretty good time tonight."

KYLE

It's not about handling herself, it's about whether she should have to. I should've been here...

DANIEL

Maaannn, Mara is the baddest chick that I know. If anyone's handling shit, it ain't you. Com'mon, I've seen you fight.

Daniel's laughter is pretty amusing and belittling...

KYLE

You're not wrong, Daniel... You're just an asshole.

Daniel leans in.

DANIEL

Well, from this asshole to God's ears... I feel bad for any poor sap who messes with that chick!

Daniel grabs the still-burning shot glass. It burns him. He slams his hands on the table...

DANIEL

Ow! Shit!

### INT. FRANK'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Lit by the blueish glow of the moon through the blinds, MOVING BOXES cover the counter tops, as Frank barges in.

He opens a cabinet, filled with WHISKEY BOTTLES, and pulls down a TUMBLER GLASS.

At the freezer, full of CHEAP MICROWAVABLE DINNERS, he scoops a couple ice cubes into the glass.

Cap spins off bottle. Whisky pours into glass. Frank downs the drink. He SLAMS the glass, then pours another...

He wipes the sweat from his face and exhales with a chuckle. It's as if he just escaped death.

He swirls the glass in his hand, like a classy crooner, and walks over to the fridge, where we can clearly see:

A calendar with Xs over every Friday and Saturday of this month, except for the last Saturday: today.

Surrounding the calendar are random photographs of Frank with his wife and young daughter, all smiling.

Frank's eyes dart around the pictures. His mouth frowns.

His hand reaches up with a marker and draws the final X.

### INT. FRANK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Frank's silhouette appears in the doorway of a dark room. He takes a sip, then enters, disappearing in the darkness.

CLICK!

A DESK LAMP lights the sparse room. A desk cluttered with PAPERS. A CORK BOARD with pinned PHOTOGRAPHS hangs on the wall.

Frank clears the papers, showing a large, OLD BOOK; a name in an ancient text brandished on the cover.

A small SURVEILLANCE TV sits on the desk, which he turns on.

ON TV: a black and white feed of the garage with Mara still struggling in her chair as Natty sits peacefully.

Next to the TV, a LAPTOP, which he opens and uses the webcam to record himself during his research...

FRANK

It's about one thirty in the morning. Tonight didn't go as planned. I acquired two young women in my RydeShare. The previous experiments have only required one subject, and, I made the tough decision to not leave a witness behind. The end goal is far too important to risk discovery at this point...

Frank checks through his phone.

FRANK

This witness is named...  
(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)  
 Mara Guerrero. She frightens me,  
 but, not in a way that helps the  
 cause. Perhaps she could be  
 persuaded...

He adjusts his glasses and scrolls through his phone.

FRANK  
 And the second young woman is...  
 Natalie Myers...

Frank is lost in thought. In a moment, he realizes that he has  
 been scratching his shoulder, as if by instinct.

FRANK  
 It's gotta be her...

Frank digs through a box of old newspapers and finds a journal.  
 While flipping through it's pages...

FRANK  
 (still in thought)  
 I need to run a few more tests to  
 be sure, but...  
 (lands on a page)  
 OK, June sixth, 1860, a young  
 girl, lost in the fog, cries out  
 for help. The man, assumed to be  
 of decent character, offered  
 assistance when, it pounced!  
 Renders show it was a blood bath,  
 but somehow, the man survived. He  
 wasted away in an institution,  
 screaming about her red eyes and  
 his scar... how it... burns...

He pulls his shirt from his shoulder to reveal a GNARLY SCAR...

FRANK  
 It's been ten years since I've  
 thought about this scar... ten  
 years since my little girl--

BOOM! A loud, violent sound shakes his walls.

Frank snaps out of his daze, then eyes the small TV.

ON TV SCREEN: Mara bangs her head against the painted window,  
 causing another loud BOOM outside.

Out the bedroom window, a light from Robert's house pops on.

Frank grabs a small box from under the desk, opens it, pulls  
 out a LARGE SYRINGE. With panicked breath, he rushes off.

**INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

Mara's depleted as she screams, attempting to fling her head against that window.

The garage door opens... It stops a foot high.

A small canister rolls in and gas fills the air.

Frank's silhouette approaches, like a sinister troll, with a LONG SYRINGE. Mara coughs, losing consciousness...

MARA  
(muffled)  
NO! Stay away!

Mara's vision blurs as we--

CUT TO:

**INT. GARAGE - LATER**

Mara pops awake. She's groggy.

The garage is partly open with a fan blowing the gas out.

Frank's cautious as he inspects Natty with lights attached to his glasses, like a doctor would use.

He studies her face and takes notes on a clipboard.

Mara's mouth is not gagged, but, her face is numb. It's hard to control her muscles. She smacks her lips...

MARA  
Wha... Why?...

Frank perks up. He moves over to Mara and inspects her...

Mara's blinded by the light on his glasses.

MARA  
Let me go...

FRANK  
(clinical)  
OK, everything looks normal, here.  
Eyes dilate, seems to be  
conscious...

Frank grabs Mara's face, inspecting the side of her head. There's a bruise from hitting it against that window.

MARA

I don't know you. You can let me go...

Frank ignores her plea as he writes on his clipboard.

MARA

Say something you PIG!

Frank stops writing and gets right in her face.

FRANK

(reciting Lovecraft)

"The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is... fear of the unknown..."

Mara is confused - I mean, who is this guy?

FRANK

(cold)

It was just Novocaine, this time. You passed out on your own...

MARA

(in shock)

Why can't I feel my fingers?! Did you take something? What did you do to my face?!--

FRANK

You're fine! Just numb. You banged your head pretty hard... I need you to be rested, not dead.

Mara sniffles.

FRANK

Mara, do you ever read Lovecraft? Or Poe?

Mara shakes her head.

Frank goes back to inspecting Natty.

FRANK

Geniuses, really ahead of their time. People loved it when they were writing horror. Publishers got a kick out of seeing an empty book shelf. But in the end, they both died alone and penny-less, and you know why?

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)  
 Because nobody believed their  
 nightmares were real...

Frank moves back to Mara. He uses his pen to pull Mara's cross necklace from inside her shirt so it rests visibly.

FRANK  
 I suggest you find something to  
 believe in.

Behind Frank, Natty wakes up. She screams through her gag.

NATTY  
 (muffled)  
 What's happening---!!!

By instinct, Frank inspects Natty, cautious as he takes notes.

Natty tries to move but realizes that she's restrained. She cries as she pleads for her life.

NATTY  
 (muffled)  
 Let me go... I-I won't say  
 anything to anyone... please...

She trails off into sobbing cries; massively doped up.

Frank shines the light around her gag, into her mouth.

Mara watches Frank study Natty.

MARA  
 You sick son of a bitch...

She struggles in her ropes, then sees a bright light, wait, it's clearer... the garage door is open! She braces and--

MARA  
 HELP!!!

Frank stands alert. He hits that light dangling above, it swings back and forth...

FRANK  
 No-no-no-no... Shhh...

MARA  
 (top of her lungs)  
 Help us!!! ANYONE!!!

FRANK  
 Please stop! You don't  
 understand...

In and out of the harsh shadows from the swinging light, Frank grabs a bottle from the shelf, soaks a rag...

Mara screams through her hoarse voice as Frank covers her mouth with the rag... Mara's eyes widen...

FRANK  
OK... It's OK...

Mara passes out, quickly this time.

Frank, drenched in sweat, slowly backs away.

FRANK  
I don't want to hurt you... I  
don't want... this...

Natty sobs as the light sways above her head...

Frank backs out of the garage... he grabs the door, ready to pull it closed when:

He catches Natty's scared, tear-filled eyes, in and out of the darkness caused by the swinging light...

Frank feels remorse. *Did he make a mistake... again?*

He pulls the door down, but catches another glimpse of Natty's face... Her sweet innocent face... her tear streaked--

In a flash of the brief light, Natty's eyes glow red, her face covered in blood, her smile under the gag-- then, it's normal... her sweet, innocent face... Did that actually happen?

Frank stammers back, slamming the door to the ground!

The light cuts out. Natty whimpers like a lost child.

Natty's gag is loose enough to push it out of her mouth as she looks over at Mara.

NATTY  
Hello?

Mara is motionless.

In the glint of light, Natty can see: Blood on Mara's forehead and her silver cross necklace.

Natty grunts and squirms, but, can't free herself.

Then, she drops her head. Her eyes glaze over in a trance... A bone CRACKS... Natty's shoulder POPS twice.

Suddenly, Mara GASPS for air and coughs.

Natty, oddly, sits still. Her eyes return to normal. She cries, as if she had never stopped.

NATTY  
(under her breath)  
No... Not now...

Mara catches her breath, she locks eyes with a timid Natty.

MARA  
Are you OK?

Natty just stares, paralyzed with fear; tear-stained cheeks.

MARA  
(commanding)  
Hey! Can you hear me?

NATTY  
My arm! I... I can't feel my  
arm...

MARA  
OK... look at me.

Natty snuffles, but connects with Mara's demand.

MARA  
Breathe... We're getting out of  
this together. You with me?

Natty is apprehensive, but nods her head.

MARA  
Good.

Mara starts jumping her chair closer to Natty as she formulates her plan.

### **INT. FRANK'S KITCHEN - NIGHT**

The door flings open as Frank stumbles in needing deep breaths.

His hand shakes as he picks up the bottle of whisky...

He's covered in sweat. He fights to open the whisky bottle. He's frazzled and can't calm down.

In a fit of frustration he hurls the bottle across the room.

It shatters against the fridge. The photographs fall to the ground with the broken glass.

He runs over to the damage, reaching out before his cherished photos are ruined...

He's too late...

the photos of his family soak in the spilled, dark liquor.

Frank falls to his knees. He picks up the photo and stares at it. He closes his eyes...

FRANK  
(mantra)  
Just... breathe...

He scratches his shoulder... it *really* itches... He reaches under his shirt, shocked at what he feels!

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

The light clicks on.

Frank runs to the mirror, he winces as his hand scratches his shoulder under his shirt.

He pulls the fabric away from his skin...

It clings to his body with sticky puss...

His scar is now a THROBBING MESS!

FRANK  
Oh-my-god...

SKIN and GOO pull away with his hand!

**INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

Mara struggles closer to Natty. The chain keeps stopping her.

MARA  
Ugh... FUCK!

She looks at Natty, who just sobs.

MARA  
This could be easier if you did something...

NATTY  
Oh, and what do you expect me to do while I'm TIED. TO. THIS. FUCKING. CHAIR??!!

Natty whines like a needy child as she bounces in her chair.

NATTY

I wanna go home! Just let me go  
ho-ho-ho-hooooome...

MARA

Hey! I'm scared out of my mind,  
but we can't just sit and wait for  
shit to get worse...

NATTY

What can be worse than this...  
(gasps)  
Was he touching me?!

MARA

Trust me, he will die before he  
touches you.  
(beat)  
Now, let's try again.

### **INT. FRANK'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Frank pats the sweat on his brow while nursing his shoulder.

He inspects the small TV: Mara and Natty are bonding.

He studies Natty as her fear morphs into admiration of Mara...

The TV's picture wobbles in and out of signal... SPARKS emit  
from its casing... It CATCHES FIRE...

Frank jolts back!

He grabs a small fire extinguisher and sprays the flames.

As it sizzles out, he hears the faint echo of a child, A LITTLE  
GIRL'S LAUGHTER... his little girl's laughter...

Frank composes himself... he's motivated...

### **INTERCUT BETWEEN OFFICE AND GARAGE.**

#### **Office:**

Frank's face drips in sweat as he opens that OLD BOOK on his  
desk. It's written in Sanskrit with English translations on  
sticky notes lining the edges.

His eyes dart back and forth as he flips through the pages...

**Garage:**

Natty tries to bounce her chair closer to Mara.

MARA  
If you could get close enough to  
reach me--

NATTY  
Um, hello?! It's not easy!

MARA  
Oh-my-God, just do something!!

With one more bounce... CLANK! A chain stops Natty.

NATTY  
What the fuck is this horseshit?!

**Office:**

Frank finds an untranslated page. He compares the text with a TRANSLATION KEY and jots down notes...

As he places a sticky note, he notices the pages are somewhat raised... He rubs his fingers across the anomaly... Then, he realizes--

There's a hidden drawing here.

Frank throws papers out of the way in search of a RED SQUARE CRAYON SET...

**Garage:**

Mara coaches Natty in navigating her chair.

MARA  
That's OK. Now just turn around...

NATTY  
What?! How am I supposed to--

MARA  
(snaps)  
Natty, stop your fucking wining  
and focus! Turn your chair around  
so I can reach you!

Natty rolls her eyes and bounces her chair around.

**Office:**

Frank places a sheet of paper on the page of the book and furiously rubs the crayon over the raised area...

His sweat builds as he reveals an image!

A DEMON with a sinister smile, sharp teeth, glowing eyes, and tentacles. It extends one hand, offered to A MEEK WOMAN.

Frank's now obsessed... what else has he yet to discover?! He turns a few pages, searching for another drawing indentation...

**Garage:**

With their chains pulled taught, Mara strains to loosen Natty's knot, but can't quite reach.

MARA  
Come on... almost got it...

NATTY  
Is this doing anything?

**Office:**

Frank discovers another image...

A detailed, large, OLD KNIFE spanned across two pages, hidden beneath the Sanskrit writing.

Frank's eyes widen... He runs to the closet, digs through it.

**Garage:**

Mara's finger tips bleed from picking at Natty's ropes.

MARA  
FUCK! Can you reach me?

Natty plucks at Mara's ropes, but can't get a grasp.

NATTY  
It's not working!!

MARA  
Keep... trying...

Natty's hands drop from exhaustion. Her strength collapses.

NATTY  
I'm sorry... I can't do it.

Mara slows her breathing and regroups.

**Office:**

Frank slams a large, long object, wrapped in bubble wrap, next to the book.

His breathing intensifies as he cuts open the wrapping to reveal... that GNARLY, OLD KNIFE, exact from the drawing.

FRANK

This is it! This is connected to  
this thing!

He turns the page in the book, again, and starts rubbing the crayon on another piece of paper...

There's another drawing. He reveals it in sections:

A MAN stands... facing off against the MEEK WOMAN/DEMON with GLOWING EYES and FANGS... and off to the side... a STRONG WOMAN holds the OLD KNIFE... it's two against one.

It dawns on Frank...

FRANK

I need her, after all... we need  
to kill this thing together...

**EXT. BAR - NIGHT**

Kyle exits the bar with his phone to his ear.

MARA (O.S.)

(Voicemail)

Hi, you've reached Mara. Tell me  
what's good!

(BEEP)

KYLE

Hey, just checking in. I, uh,  
wanted to make sure you got home  
safe. Text me or something...

As he hangs up the phone, Daniel, quite drunk at this point, is pushed outside by the bouncer.

DANIEL

Hey, hey, what the fuck m-man??!

BOUNCER

Go sleep it off, buddy.

The bar door slams and locks. Daniel stumbles to his feet.

DANIEL

I'm gonna make a f-f-formal  
complaint... bfffhaha...

KYLE  
 Seriously?! I have way too much  
 shit going on to babysit your dumb  
 ass...

Daniel dances as he hums a song to himself.

KYLE  
 (sigh)  
 Alright, come on.

Kyle supports Daniel under his arm.

DANIEL  
 Hey, has Mara really never cried?

KYLE  
 Nope...

DANIEL  
 So hard core... Did you find her  
 yet?

KYLE  
 Not yet...

DANIEL  
 (a happy drunk)  
 Maybe she found a friend...

Kyle isn't amused. He helps Daniel walk away.

**INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

Mara and Natty sit facing away from each other, defeated.

With a grunt, Mara pulls and struggles with her ropes.

Natty observes Mara's attempted persistence. She's amazed to see a woman exert such determination.

NATTY  
 You're so strong...

MARA  
 Not by choice... People suck, life  
 is shit, nobody cares. Maybe I  
 just don't like being touched when  
 I'm simply trying to exist...  
 fucker messed up, there.

Mara bounces her chair around to face Natty...

MARA

If you're smart, you're safe, if  
you're dumb, you're dead...

... she notices something over Natty's head... something she  
hadn't thought about... something out of reach...

MARA

...I'm a genius... I survive.

Before she can profess her new idea--

NATTY

(opens up)  
I've never had to do anything.  
I've always been... useless...

MARA

(don't have time for this)  
What?... You're not useless you're  
just--

NATTY

Pitiful?! I didn't want this... I  
wanted to be strong. That's the  
only reason I agreed to let that--

MARA

Ugh, enough! We don't have time  
for this self-deprecating  
bullshit. You wanna be useful?  
Kick the shit out of that  
bookshelf.

Natty follows Mara's eyes over her head where she sees:

The FOLDING KNIFE dangles over the edge of the bookshelf.

NATTY

Oh, this could get interesting...

### **INT. FRANK'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Frank had placed the crude drawings aside as he continues to  
translate the text.

He uses the laptop's webcam to record his findings...

FRANK

OK... It's almost fascinating...  
this thing can be hurt when  
subdued in its vessel.

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)  
 It... appears... to be bound to  
 the strength of its body. It's a,  
 what's this word... weakness...

He places the sticky note then flips the page of the book.

**INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

Natty's feet kick the bookshelf, a grunt with each hit.

FRANK (V.O.)  
 ... If the host is frail, then  
 it's also frail. If she's afraid,  
 so is the beast...

The knife bounces closer to the edge of the top shelf.

MARA  
 Just like that... keep going...

FRANK (V.O.)  
 ... But, it seems to have control  
 of the... subconscious? It draws  
 its target into a false sense of  
 security, gauges what strength it  
 needs to feed, then attaches, like  
 a parasite...

Natty kicks again. Other tools fall and crash around her.

NATTY  
 Shit!

**INT. FRANK'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Frank consumes all of this new information like a sponge. His  
 obsession is in full effect.

FRANK  
 Then, it... wait...  
 (rechecks word)  
 changes! That's when its  
 vulneralbe. That's when it can be  
 killed...

He leans back, catches his breath and picks up that old  
 knife...

FRANK  
 With this...

Frank remembers a line from Edgar Allan Poe's The Black Cat.

FRANK

"The fury of a demon instantly possessed me. I knew myself no longer..." I knew myself no longer... if the girl still exists inside, then... it can be drawn out... where it's vulnerable...

Frank looks off camera at something we don't see. After a moment, he composes himself, remorse painting his face.

He looks directly into the small webcam.

FRANK

My name is Frank Parker. If you are watching this, then please understand, I never wanted to hurt anyone, and if the deed is done, then I assure you that I am already dead. I'm sorry for what I released on this world... But, you should be safe.

Frank stops the recording and picks up the knife. As he leaves the room, light shimmers from...

A NOOSE swaying back and forth in the darkness.

**INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

MARA

You almost got it...

With a loud yell, Natty KICKS one last time...

The knife topples over and falls... on the floor between Natty's bound feet.

NATTY

Fuck!

MARA

(just our luck)

Fuck! Can you reach it?--

NATTY

I can't, no!

Mara starts pulling at her ropes, her aggression rising...

The back of her chair splinters from the force...

Mara stops and catches her breath...

MARA

Ok... I need you to kick it over  
here... do whatever it takes...

Natty strains to reach the knife with her feet. She bounces her chair closer...

Mara bares down on her ropes. They dig into her wrists as she pulls with all her strength...

There's another splinter from the chair!

Natty finally reaches the knife.

NATTY

(pew...)

Ok... ok... here it comes.

Mara's body pulls and contorts as her limbs become agile...

Natty kicks the knife... it slides across the floor, passed Mara, against the wall.

NATTY

Shit!

MARA

(straining)

It's OK... I'll get it... when...  
come on!!!

The chair wails as pieces splinter.

In the painted window, Natty sees Frank's shadow rush by...

NATTY

Oh shit... He's coming!

MARA

Fuck!

Mara starts to bounce her chair up and down, fighting to break out of her bindings...

Natty starts to hyperventilate...

NATTY

Hurry!

The door unlocks and flings up... the light above pops on!

Natty screams!

Frank steps in, gripping that old knife...

Mara continues to struggle.

Franks dashes right to Natty, determined to kill her if necessary!

He looms over Natty.

FRANK  
I'm sorry for this...

He SLAPS Natty's face!

Natty screams!

MARA  
STAY AWAY FROM HER!

She keeps jumping her chair as Frank shakes Natty.

FRANK  
Come on! Face me!

NATTY  
Stop! Please!

MARA  
GET THE FUCK AWAY FROM HER!

Frank steps to Mara and forces her gag around her mouth.

FRANK  
You have to let me do this!

Mara fights against him, ready for Frank's blood...

He shows off that gnarly, old knife.

FRANK  
There's no other way. It has to be  
now!

He paces back to Natty, raises the knife, and CUTS INTO HER  
CHEEK!

Natty SCREAMS IN PAIN and blood flows from the wound.

Mara jumps her chair into the air... then falls to the ground  
right on the chair's edge... It breaks!

Frank stands over Natty, screaming at her.

FRANK  
You need a new body, yeah? It's  
yours! Come take it!

Mara wiggles free from the ropes...

Frank cuts into another part of Natty's face.

NATTY  
STOP IT!!!

Blood flows down with Natty tears...

Mara's bloody hand grabs her folding knife from the ground...

FRANK  
(grunting)  
You'll die for what you've done to  
me and my family!

He's about to slash into another part of Natty when--

Mara stands behind Frank and DRIVES HER FOLDING KNIFE INTO HIS JUGULAR!

FRANK  
Wait, no!--

He GASPS for air, in complete shock.

He DROPS THE OLD KNIFE.

Mara grits her teeth! She forces Frank to the ground.

Frank tries to pull Mara's knife from his throat, but she overpowers him.

Mara's eyes are powered by every bit of pain she has ever encountered in her life.

Frank grabs Mara's arms as he fights to inform her...

FRANK  
(spitting up blood)  
You... d-don't know... what  
you've... d-done...

Mara pins Frank to the ground and retracts her knife. Blood splatters onto her face. She's a warrior.

Frank holds eye contact while blood gushes from his wound. He gasps for air as he reaches up with his blood-soaked hands.

He points his finger and directs his gaze behind Mara.

She follows to see:

Natty, who's face is obscured by her now-scraggly hair, convulses violently in her chair. It's unnatural.

Barely able to stand, Mara calls out...

MARA

Natty? It's OK. We're leaving.

Frank spits up blood, gets Mara's attention.

He grabs for the old knife, but can't reach it.

FRANK

(spits up blood)

Y-you... R-run...

His eyes move back to Natty, they tremble full of fear.

Mara also looks back.

Natty BREAKS out of the chair! It bursts into dust with surprising force! She now stands with SHARP CLAWS! She POPS her shoulder back into its socket.

Mara's eyes widen, like a classic pulp horror comic panel.

MARA

What the f--?!

Mara is sent flying and SLAMS against the wall.

Natty pounces on Frank and *feeds* on his flesh; a wild animal.

Frank SCREAMS in pain as blood erupts from his body.

Mara breathes heavily, she releases a well deserved--

MARA

FUCK!!

Mara catches Frank's eyes. He motions down to the knife, still grabbing for it.

Mara grabs for the knife...

Natty blocks her with an UNNATURAL SCREAM; a mixture of multiple pitches.

Natty is now DEMON NATTY, with GLOWING RED EYES and BLOOD-SOAKED FANGS. She inhales the blood drooling from her mouth.

Mara stumbles backward, bracing herself away from the carnage.

Demon Natty feeds on Frank. Blood spews about.

Mara's hand, again, reaches for the old knife when--

SLASH!!

One of Demon Natty's claws scrapes across Mara's forearm!

Mara SCREAMS and JERKS her bloody arm back in pain.

Demon Natty smiles. Her eyes *choose* Mara.

This Demon is like a junk yard dog feeding on a hunk of meat. She doesn't budge from Frank's fresh corpse. She snarls and hisses, enjoying her meal.

Mara hugs against the garage wall... Towards the exit.. Once finally clear, Mara runs!

Demon Natty's INDELIBLE LAUGHTER ECHOES through the air.

The old knife is engulfed in a pool of blood.

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

Mara runs past the trash cans, where Frank and Robert talked earlier. Her arm bleeds, her makeup is smeared, and her hair is a frazzled mess.

Mara stumbles about. She can't catch her breath.

MARA  
Help!!!  
(under her breath)  
Oh my god...

She braces herself against Robert's house, cries, and vomits all over the perfectly pruned bushes. She's delirious.

MARA  
Somebody!!!

She BANGS on Robert's windows.

She strains her tired and hoarse voice as she cries out...

MARA  
Please!! Help!!

A light clicks on inside. Robert peaks through the window blinds. He's annoyed, yet concerned.

Mara sees him and rapidly taps on the glass.

MARA  
Hey!!! Hey you!!! Help me!!

Robert hesitates. He sees Mara covered in blood.

ROBERT  
(through the window)  
Meet me up front...

He closes the blinds.

MARA  
OK... OK...

Nursing her bloody arm, Mara limps to the front of the house.  
The porch light turns on and Robert steps out wearing a robe  
with CORDLESS PHONE in hand.

He stands in silhouette against the porch light's glow.

MARA  
Please, call the police...

ROBERT  
OK, just hang on... you alright?

He dials 9-1-1 on his cordless phone as Mara stutters.

MARA  
I... I can't...

She inches closer as Robert raises the phone to his ear.

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
Nine-One-One, what's your  
emergency?

ROBERT  
Hi, yeah, I'd like to report--

Demon Natty's head pops up behind Robert!

Her deep red eyes glow through the silhouette.

Her teeth chomp into his bare neck with pure ferocity!

Mara's eyes widen. She SCREAMS and stumbles backwards.

MARA  
Noooo!!!

Blood spews from Robert's neck like a fountain. He screams in  
pain as Demon Natty latches on like a pit bull. She looks Mara  
in the eyes and smiles, controlling Robert's fading strength.

Mara stumlbles away, back down the path.

Behind her we see Natty force Robert to the ground through a  
mist of blood spraying into the air.

Mara grabs the first door knob she sees, which leads her into--

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

Mara SLAMS the door! She locks *all* the locks! Then, she collapses to the floor, hyperventilating.

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

Natty raises her head from Robert's mangled corpse. She licks the blood pooling from her mouth and wipes her chin like a cat.

From Robert's cordless phone, Natty hears...

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
Sir! Sir, are you still there?

Natty puts the phone to her ear. She speaks using her non-demonic voice, acting fragile and scared.

DEMON NATTY  
(into phone)  
Please... send help. More...  
people...

She smiles.

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
Ma'am? Can you describe what's--

Demon Natty CRUSHES the phone with her claw.

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

Kyle opens the front door to his apartment and turns on a nearby lamp.

He tosses his keys on the small table by the door, right next to a FRAMED PHOTO of him and Mara on a hike.

KYLE  
Mara? Hey, babe, you here?

He rushes through the apartment, on and off screen.

Daniel, drunk, stumbles in through the front door.

DANIEL  
Ugh... too. much. spinning...

Daniel collapses on the couch.

Kyle rushes back into the room, visibly stressed.

KYLE  
She's not here... Fuck!

He pulls out his phone and calls Mara.

**INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

We push in on Mara's phone and jacket, covered in blood splatter. Her phone vibrates and lights up with Kyle's photo.

MARA (O.S.)  
(Voicemail)  
Hi, you've reached Mara. Tell me  
what's good!  
(BEEP)

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

Kyle hangs up.

KYLE  
Shit. Shit. Shit!

Daniel stretches out on the couch.

DANIEL  
Dude... chill, man... she's  
probably--

KYLE  
Shut the fuck up! This is not  
normal. She doesn't have anywhere  
else that she *could* go. No  
friends, no family, just me!

Daniel chuckles and covers his eyes with a blanket.

KYLE  
This is bad, man. Something's  
wrong...

Kyle dials 911 on his phone. Daniel sings to himself.

DANIEL  
(singing)  
"Desperado..."

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
 Nine-One-One, what's your  
 emergency?

DANIEL  
 (singing)  
 "Why won't you come to your  
 senses..."

KYLE  
 (into phone)  
 Hi, yeah, my girlfriend  
 didn't come home. I last saw  
 her get into a RydeShare,  
 but she never made it home--

DANIEL  
 (singing)  
 "You've been out riding  
 fences..."

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
 Sir, I'm going to need you  
 to calm down. Where did you  
 see the vehicle?

DANIEL  
 (singing)  
 "For so long, now..."

KYLE  
 We were at a bar, she got in a  
 fight, and she left before me and-

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
 You got in a fight with your  
 girlfriend at a bar?

DANIEL  
 (singing)  
 "Oh, you're a hard one..."

KYLE  
 No, no it wasn't me. Some  
 guy was hitting on her or  
 something--

DANIEL  
 (singing)  
 "But I know you got your  
 reasons..."

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
 Ok, sir, would you like to file--

The call drops.

KYLE  
 Hello?! FUCK!

Kyle throws his phone. It hits Daniel's head.

DANIEL  
 Ahh, dude, what the hell... man...

KYLE  
 Alright, Mara's missing. If you're  
 not gonna help, then go home!

Daniel moans as he sits up.

DANIEL  
 Hang on... ugh... Does her phone  
 ring?

KYLE

I'm not fucking around, man!  
She's. Not. Answering!

DANIEL

Ok, I'm a little drunk... but, I think I'm helping... When you call her, does it ring or go straight to the mail... thing?

KYLE

It rings, yeah...

DANIEL

OK, good... use the phone tracker... thingy... The... fuckin'... Friends or something...

KYLE

Find my Friends. She never set it up... won't work... not into "big brother."

Daniel tries to stand.

DANIEL

(murmurs to himself)  
Ugh, it's technology, it ain't going backwards...  
(to Kyle)  
Alright, do you know her password?

KYLE

Yeah...?

DANIEL

(deep exhale)  
Give me a laptop and *all* the coffee...

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

Close up on a clean coffee maker glowing by the moon light shining in from the big window over the sink.

Mara passes by, rummaging through drawers. She grabs a large BUTCHER'S KNIFE and holds it close for protection.

She peeks out the window and sees:

Demon Natty gnaws on Robert's bones. She licks her long nails dry, enjoying the blood. Her bones pop, her spine straightens, she shakes off the chills; the feast heals her.

Mara ducks down and hugs the knife.

Then--

Demon Natty appears at the window-- Pressed against the glass.

SNIFFING! SEARCHING!

Mara's eyes shoot open! She holds her mouth closed!

Demon Natty smells around the window. Then, she DARTS off as if distracted by something off-screen.

Mara breathes. Her arm stings. She cringes and nurses it.

She looks around the kitchen and sees: The fridge.

Shattered glass, dark liquid, and curled up, drenched photos. A towel hangs on the fridge handle.

Mara hurries over and yanks the towel. She tightly wraps it around her bloodied arm, sits on the ground, and...

MARA  
(winces)  
Eeeeeee... ssssss!!!

As she exhales, her eyes catch one of the photos: Frank with his wife and daughter. His happy family.

Mara kicks it away, yells and SLAMS her fist against the fridge!

She holds back tears, breathes in the pain, then opens her eyes, determined to find a way out. She moves into--

**INT. FRANK'S HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Mara sees the front door from the hallway. A heavy wooden door with a fogged glass window.

She rushes to the...

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

... front door.

She pulls on the handle! It won't open!

She discovers: A dead bolt that requires a key on the inside, yet, NO KEY.

MARA

Shit!

There's a chair by a desk.

Mara drives the knife into the desk top and grabs the chair. In one swift motion, she winds the chair back and goes to strike the door's glass when....

A TRANSLUCENT TENTACLE SLAMS onto the glass from the outside!

Then, another...

Mara drops the chair... stumbles backward... mouth agape...

Through the window, tentacles wiggle in the air, as if they were waving under water. It's weird.

Then, Demon Natty's silhouette appears!

Mara holds her gasp in with her hands over her mouth. Her eyes stay alert as she slowly walks backwards.

One of Demon Natty's claws creeps up onto the window.

Mara retreats back into the hallway!

**INTERCUT BETWEEN HALLWAY AND LIVING ROOM**

Mara hides in the hallway, around the corner.

Demon Natty sniffs from edge to edge of the window, searching.

MARA

(quiet)

What the fuck??!...

(GASP!)

Where's the knife?!

Mara looks back into the living room.

The knife is still stuck in the desk... right next to the front door where Demon Natty presses her face against the glass and smiles, showing off her blood soaked teeth.

MARA

Shit...

Demon Natty's crooked nails caress the window. One gently taps on the glass, more like a tap and scratch.

Mara looks up and sees:

Demon Natty's other claw raises in a fist. It opens and dangles a small set of KEYS, which happen to be missing from the lock.

Demon Natty laughs as viscous fluids fall from her mouth.

The camera quickly PUSHES IN on Mara's reaction (Evil Dead style) as she realizes... this thing is TOYING WITH HER!

Mara falls back into the hallway. All around her, she hears DEMON NATTY'S LAUGHTER.

Mara covers her ears with her fists. She jerks her head back and forth. She SCREAMS as the evil laughter drives her crazy!

Demon Natty dashes off. The laughter fades away.

Mara sits, eyes wide open, hugging her legs close. Breathing. She knows she's fucked.

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

Daniel types on a laptop as Kyle stands behind him.

DANIEL

It was a huge deal back in the day when Steve announced being able to find your stolen iPhone. I mean, people were bitching about hackers and shit, but, com'mon, how fuckin' convenient, right?!

Kyle just watches, intently.

KYLE

It is an invasion of privacy...

DANIEL

Only in the wrong hands! Give me the password.

Kyle hesitates...

DANIEL

Ugh, dude just type it in...

He pushes the laptop over to Kyle.

Kyle types in the password then hits enter.

DANIEL

Why do you know her password?

KYLE  
(matter of fact)  
I have my reasons...

Daniel takes a sip of coffee.

DANIEL  
Yeah... whatever, man...

Daniel clicks on the "Find My iPhone" button.

Kyle looks on, impatient, as Daniel drinks his coffee.

A map appears on screen with a flashing red dot in the middle.  
The screen narrows. It displays an address.

DANIEL  
Ew, why's Mara in the valley?

Kyle types the address on his phone then grabs his jacket.

KYLE  
Let's go!

DANIEL  
I dunno, man, I'm still kinda  
woozy. Maybe I should just--

KYLE  
No, get in the fucking car! You  
ain't weasling your drunk ass out  
of this one. Not now!

Kyle grabs his keys and shuts off the light.

DANIEL  
You both fuckin' owe me...

Daniel closes the laptop.

**INT. FRANK'S HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Mara sits against the hallway wall, motionless.

A faded, blueish glow from down the hallway catches Mara's  
attention.

She's cautious as she moves towards--

**INT. FRANK'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Mara looks around the room. She sees the cork board on the wall (our first good look):

Pictures of random women strategically placed around a map of the city with string connected to each photo. The pictures are X'd out from a red marker.

MARA

The sick fuck...

Mara turns, startled by the noose hanging over a stool.

Her focus lands at the source of the blueish glow: Frank's laptop screen. The old book sits on the desk.

She rushes to the laptop, clicks the keyboard, which forces it to boot up.

The light of the screen brightens, revealing the crude drawings to Mara. She's drawn into the wicked imagery.

A STRONG WOMAN holds that OLD KNIFE with a MAN facing off against the MEEK WOMAN/DEMON with GLOWING EYES and FANGS...

Mara studies the image. It calls to her somehow...

The computer screen boots up. Mara sees a paused video of Frank's recording fill the screen.

She hits the spacebar--

FRANK (RECORDING)

(from earlier.)

Then, it... wait...

(rechecks word)

changes! That's when its vulneralbe. That's when it can be killed... with this...

Mara stops the video.

MARA

You've gotta be kidding...

She closes the window, which reveals a folder full of several video files, all with corresponding dates.

Mara clicks a video from an earlier date.

Frank pops up on the screen.

Mara looks down at the book. There's an unfinished drawing left by Frank...

She moves the laptop closer for better light when the video starts playing...

As it plays: Mara grabs the crayon and finishes rubbing the drawing.

FRANK (RECORDING)

I've discovered something that makes my... job... stressful.

(Beat)

It appears that this, demon, um, "jumps" between vessels. It takes over their lives. Their home becomes its cave... It will hide within its host and allow her to believe that she is actually in control...

This new drawing: The STRONG WOMAN is pinned to the ground by A DEMON, with the MEEK WOMAN'S body next to the MAN, both unconscious. The OLD KNIFE is out of reach.

Mara is rightfully creeped out.

She closes this video and searches the desktop, unfamiliar with computers.

MARA

Where's the fucking web browser?

A file labeled "The End Goal" catches her eye. It's another video. She clicks on it...

This is not a self recording. Frank, a decade younger, sits in a briefing room, hand-cuffed to the table. He's distraught.

FRANK (RECORDING)

(crying)

The eyes... It was the eyes! Something took over my perfect little girl... my sweet Emma... She was possessed or something, I-I-I don't know... she wouldn't stop. She--- ATE her mother. I walked in and she was feeding on her! I tried to stop it, to pull her away, but she was strong--stronger than me... She threw me across the fucking room!... Then she dove out of the window... I, I just... WHY DON'T YOU BELIEVE ME?! You think I'm some kind of monster, but, I d-d-didn't do anything... My family is FUCKING GONE!--

Mara pauses the video on Frank screaming and sobbing.  
 Her finger trembles as she moves the mouse, closing the video.  
 Her breath hesitates as she opens an internet browser.

"*www.911.com*" is typed into the webpage. It takes a moment.

As she waits, Mara notices the drawing of the OLD KNIFE, the same knife Frank reached for before he died.

The website loads and a box pops on screen. Text writes out:

*9-1-1, what's your emergency?*

Mara is frantic as she types, but then she hears--

A soft, child's voice whimpers in the room with her...

CHILD'S VOICE (O.S.)  
 Daddy, please don't cry. I'm  
 scared, too...

Mara freezes in fear.

She slowly turns to see:

A bloodied Demon Natty, hangs in the noose. Her scraggly hair covers her face.

Mara GASPS!

Demon Natty lifts her head and looks at Mara with her red eyes. THICK BLOOD drools through her fangs.

Her face is healed, no longer with those gashes Frank cut into her cheeks.

Without breaking eye contact, Demon Natty speaks in that EERIE CHILD'S VOICE...

DEMON NATTY  
 But, now that you're dead, we can  
 be together forever...

Demon Natty smiles... it's evil.

Mara sprints for the door!

In an instant, Demon Natty pins her to the wall by her throat!

Demon Natty caresses Mara's face with her demonic fingers.

DEMON NATTY  
 (normal voice)  
 Sh-sh-sh... It's OK. You're OK.  
 You're so... strong...

Mara fights to look away from Demon Natty, her voice teeters between normal and slithery, as a serpent would speak.

DEMON NATTY  
 Impressive. Your strength, your core, your soul... Your beautiful soul...

Mara winces as Demon Natty slowly licks the side of her face.

DEMON NATTY  
 Mmmmm... You're far stronger than this vessel. You're... fierce...

MARA  
 No... stop...

Mara's hands search for something to free her. It's useless.

DEMON NATTY  
 No-no, don't be afraid. This is... a gift. You'll be... a *god* as you feed on the souls of wicked men...

Demon Natty's claw caresses the towel on Mara's bloodied arm.

DEMON NATTY  
 Imagine having that power when you were a helpless, little girl... when nobody believed your pain...

Mara's freed hand fights Demon Natty's grip on her throat.

MARA  
 Stay the FUCK out of my head...  
 I'm not a monster...

Demon Natty takes offense. She squeezes Mara's arm!

Mara screams IN PAIN!

DEMON NATTY  
 (full demonic growl)  
 NO! A Goddess! A Queen...

Demon Natty chuckles.

DEMON NATTY

(Softer)

You were kind to me, so, I'll give  
you the choice...

Mara's freed hand lands on her chest. Her heart beats faster.

DEMON NATTY

If you give me your soul  
willingly, then I won't kill your  
only love...

Demon Natty leans in to Mara's ear, gleeful smile on her lips.

DEMON NATTY (CONT'D)

... Kyle.

Mara's eyes widen.

Her hand feels her necklace, THE CROSS! She grips it!

MARA

You have a solid sales pitch,  
lady...

Demon Natty softly chuckles in delight.

MARA

And, if you can see in my soul,  
then you should know one thing...

DEMON NATTY

What's that?

Mara yanks the necklace from its clasp.

MARA

I believe in something after  
all...

Mara SHOVES THE CROSS DOWN DEMON NATTY'S THROAT!

The claw releases Mara!

Demon Natty grabs her own neck! Choking!

Steam spews from her mouth... She SQUEALS in pain... Demon  
Natty falls to her knees....

For a brief moment, Mara is surprised that worked. But, no time  
for that, she gets the fuck out of there!

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

Mara swings open the kitchen door and heads towards the...

**INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

Mara runs into the dank space. A bloody stain from Frank's body paints the floor. She reacts to the mess; it reaks.

MARA

Holy...!

Mara finds her phone and uses the flashlight to look for that old knife.

It lays in a pool of blood.

MARA GRABS THE KNIFE!

**INT. FRANK'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Demon Natty COUGHS... GAGS... Her eyes water... Her skin boils... She painfully PULLS the chain out of her throat.

Tears fall from her dark eyes as the, now melted, cross emerges from her mouth.

Demon Natty gasps for air. *That really fucking hurt!*

**INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

Mara flings excess blood from the knife, when, her phone BUZZES with the missed messages from Kyle.

**EXT. DARK ROAD - NIGHT**

Kyle's 1980's Camaro speeds down the dimly lit road.

**INT. KYLE'S CAR - NIGHT**

Kyle's phone is on the maps app. Then, it rings with Mara's sassy picture appearing on screen.

Kyle answers the call as Daniel nauseously rides in the passenger seat.

KYLE

Mara?! Are you OK?! Where are--

**INTERCUT BETWEEN GARAGE AND CAR**

Mara cuts Kyle off. She's quiet, she's careful.

MARA  
Kyle... listen to me...

KYLE  
What the hell is going on?!

DANIEL  
(moans)  
Uggggghhhh.....

Mara hides in the garage, keeping an eye out for Natty.

MARA  
Sh-sh-shhhh! Listen to me  
carefully. I was kidnapped--

KYLE  
What?! HOW?!!--

MARA  
Just stop!... It's something... I  
can't... Where are you?

KYLE  
I'm on my way to you, tracking  
your phone...

MARA  
I don't have time to explain. I  
need you... we have to get out of  
here...

KYLE  
OK, GPS says I'm 10 minutes out.

MARA  
I... I...

Mara starts to hyperventilate. She holds her chest as she looks out of the garage.

KYLE  
Babe, I need you to breathe.  
What's going on right now? Are you  
safe?

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

Demon Natty limps down the alley, a GRUNT with each step.

GHOSTLY VOICES are heard, some saying "Help me!" while others scream "It burns!" Various similar tortured phrases.

**INTERCUT BETWEEN GARAGE AND CAR**

Mara is shaken. Her eyes race back and forth. Her feet won't stay still. She's legitimately terrified.

MARA

Fuck! I don't know what to do...

KYLE

Ok, I'm getting close. Can you move?

MARA

Yes...

**INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

A shadow slowly approaches just outside the garage. It limps around the corner, surrounded by those translucent tentacles.

Mara's eyes widen!

MARA

Oh shit! Shit-shit-shit!!

Mara lowers the phone from her ear.

KYLE (O.S.)

Mara?... Mara! Get out of there!

She grips the old knife, holding it close to her chest.

WHISPERS and VOICES trickle in around her as the shadow grows larger, getting closer.

The tentacles flow only in the shadows, like a blind octopus moving underwater.

KYLE (O.S.)

Are you still there?! Mara?!

Demon Natty appears, looking fucked up! She nurses one of her arms and gasps for air.

Demon Natty smiles once she discovers Mara!

MARA

No....!

Mara bolts out of the garage! Demon Natty limps after her.

**INT. KYLE'S CAR - NIGHT**

The call disconnects.

KYLE

Shit!

DANIEL

Dude, I'm feeling pretty sick, can you just let me out--

KYLE

Hold on (to something)!

He shoves the gas pedal to the floor!

**EXT. DARK ROAD - NIGHT**

The Camaro's tires SCREECH as it speeds away.

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

Mara runs around the corner, phone and old knife in each hand.

Demon Natty follows behind... Her limps become steps... Then strides...

Mara looks back as Demon Natty gains on her, smiling with arms stretched out, chasing after Mara.

**EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

Mara runs down the street as Demon Natty catches up to her.

Mara screams, but is more focused on running.

Demon Natty laughs. She enjoys the hunt.

As Mara crosses, a streetlight reveals Demon Natty's shadowy tentacles stretched out to reach Mara.

The tentacles trips Mara's foot!

Mara falls over, bouncing off the road.

The old knife lands on the street, a few feet away.

Almost out of breath, Demon Natty approaches where the knife rests.

Mara tries to pick herself up as Demon Natty looms over her. Her eyes are determined as she pants for air.

DEMON NATTY  
 If you won't join us willingly,  
 then you'll fulfill our thirst!

Mara is frightened. *How can she escape this?!*

DEMON NATTY  
 We always get what I want...

Approaching lights reflect on Mara's face.

Demon Natty salivates over her victory as car lights illuminate quickly behind her. She glances over--

BAM!!

Demon Natty is hit by Kyle's car AS IT SCREECHES TO A STOP!

She flies off screen!

The car shuts off. The headlights cut out.

It's an eerie silence. Barely any crickets chirp.

Kyle and Daniel stand from the car, both stunned...

KYLE  
 Oh my god...

Daniel vomits onto the concrete.

Kyle walks around his opened car door to see:

Natty is unconscious on the ground, one leg twisted the wrong direction, her arms mangled, covered in blood.

KYLE  
 Oh, shit...

Daniel sobers up really fucking fast...

DANIEL  
 She came outta no where...

Softly in the darkness, they hear...

MARA  
 (whispers)  
 Kyle?...  
 (yells)  
 Kyle!

Kyle turns to find Mara fight to stand up.

KYLE

Mara!!

Kyle dives over the car and rushes to Mara's aid.

KYLE

Are you ok?! Holy fuck...

By instinct, he inspects Mara. He sees her bloody arm wrapped in a, now red, towel. He gives Mara his jacket.

MARA

I'm fine--

KYLE

I thought I fucking lost you...

He hugs Mara tight. But, there's no time for this emotional shit...

MARA

(out of breath)

We-- we have to g--go, we have to--

KYLE

Sh-sh-sh... Calm down, I got you.

He helps Mara to her feet as she catches her breath.

MARA

No, you don't get it... We have to get out of here...

KYLE

Daniel, call the cops...

DANIEL

Yeah... OK....

MARA

There's no time...

Daniel stumbles over to where Natty lays as he pulls out his phone, still shaking off that sick feeling.

Kyle nurses Mara.

MARA

Wait... Please....

KYLE

Hey, look at me. I have you. You're safe--

MARA  
 (Fed up)  
 No! Listen!!--

Kyle stops, engages with Mara's eyes as she breathes heavily.

MARA  
 (dead serious)  
 We have... to leave.

Kyle sees Mara's eyes:

They twitch. They are glazed over, watery but not crying. She's afraid... He's never seen this before...

KYLE  
 OK.

Daniel inspects Natty. He clicks on his phone's light to see Natty's face... her beautiful, innocent face covered in blood.

DANIEL  
 Oh my god...

He bends down for a closer look. Natty's skin glows in the light.

Kyle helps Mara to the car.

KYLE  
 (to Daniel)  
 Hey man, I gotta get her out of here...

Daniel is transfixed on Natty.

DANIEL  
 This one's beat up something fierce...

He moves some hair from Natty's bloodied face as she whimpers.

NATTY  
 Please... help me...

MARA  
 (stern)  
 Daniel... get away from her...

DANIEL  
 She's still alive! Barely...

KYLE  
 Did you get the cops?

MARA  
 (interjects)  
 Fuck that! Daniel, back up!

Annoyed, Daniel pops up and rants, his arms flailing about.

DANIEL  
 We can't just leave her! Fuck,  
 man, all night I've been helping  
 to get you safe, and we found you,  
 but this shit is really messed up!  
 What is she, like 20? Dude, we  
 gotta stick around...

KYLE  
 You're right, man. We gotta wait  
 for help.

DANIEL  
 It's the least we can do...

Mara breaks away from Kyle's grip.

MARA  
 (to Daniel)  
 Listen, you brain-dead asshole,  
 That is no girl, it's... fuckin'  
 demonic! And since it's hurt, we  
 HAVE to leave right fucking now!

Natty's fingers twitch...

DANIEL  
 Hey, low blow, yo... I'm here to  
 help...

KYLE  
 Mara, calm dow--

MARA  
 Fuck no!

Natty's feet twitch...

MARA (CONT'D)  
 All three of us are leaving right-  
 the-fuck now if I have to drag you  
 and this man-baby kicking and  
 screaming!

Natty's BLOOD RED EYES pop open!

DANIEL  
Well, now you're just being  
mean...

KYLE  
Babe, come on, let's get you in  
the car...

Mara SCREAMS out of frustration!

Demon Natty pops up behind Daniel! She smiles.

MARA  
NOO!!

Demon Natty grabs Daniel, slamming him to the ground,  
immediately followed by a GEYSER OF BLOOD SPEWING INTO THE AIR!

Kyle freaks!

KYLE  
What the fuck?!

Daniel SCREAMS in pain!

MARA  
Kyle! Move!!

Mara forces Kyle to the car.

Daniel cries out as blood erupts!

KYLE  
(let me help him!)  
Daniel!

Mara pushes Kyle.

MARA  
KYLE! Get in the car! NOW!

He listens...

**INT. KYLE'S CAR - NIGHT**

Kyle climbs into the car through the passenger side. Mara  
pushes him into the driver seat as she slams the door.

KYLE  
What the fuck is that?!

MARA  
Start the car!!

Kyle fumbles with the keys.

DANIEL'S SCREAMS are heard all around, his painful cries...

DANIEL (O.S.)  
Help! Please God!!

KYLE  
What is going on?!

Mara realizes... she needs that knife!

MARA  
Shit!  
(to Kyle)  
Get ready to haul ass!

She exits the car.

KYLE  
Wait! Get back here!!

**EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

Mara stays low to the ground. She crawls to the front of the car and braces against the fender. With a deep breath, she dashes around to find:

Demon Natty feasts on Daniel. She gnaws on his flesh.

The old knife rests between Mara and this horrific scene.

Covered in blood, Daniel reaches out for help...

DANIEL  
Mara... please...

Demon Natty bites into his EXPOSED INTESTINES.

Mara grabs the knife, catching Demon Natty's insidious grin.

Looking down at Daniel, Mara's face softens with remorse.

MARA  
I'm sorry...

She leaves.

DANIEL  
Mara! MARA!!!

**INT. KYLE'S CAR - NIGHT**

Mara jumps back into the car, old knife in hand.

MARA  
(tight)  
Let's go.

Still shaking, Kyle turns the ignition key and flips on the headlights, which reveals:

A wall of blood shooting into the air as Demon Natty devours Daniel's final screams. TENTACLES flail in the shadows.

KYLE  
Jesus!!

MARA  
DRIVE!

Kyle slams his foot on the gas pedal!

**EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

The Camaro's tires burn out as it backs up and drives away, leaving Demon Natty to finish her meal; Daniel's corpse.

The car lights fade away from Demon Natty's face. She smiles and chomps into another body part.

**INT. KYLE'S CAR - NIGHT**

Kyle is a bit beside himself, to say the least.

KYLE  
What the hell was that?! What just  
ate my best friend?!

Mara contemplates what just happened. She realizes...

MARA  
It wants me...

KYLE  
This isn't real...

MARA  
(feels gross, invaded)  
It said it wants to be me... to  
take over my body. It wants to  
turn me into that-that--

Kyle tries to focus on the road, but his instinct is to attempt to keep Mara calm, which is currently tough.

KYLE

OK... it's OK... we're free now, right? It can't catch up--

MARA

--The fucking hell it can't! I've seen that thing eat two people then start teleporting like some David Blane bullshit! Masking her voice as a little girl and... and...

Mara stops mid-speech and cocks her head, as if she's accessing a memory. She lifts up the knife and stares at it.

KYLE

Um... Mara, babe, seriously, what is going on?

MARA

I hurt it...

KYLE

(in his own rant)

I shouldn't have let you leave! Fuck, I'm an idiot! I should have just gone home with you and we could have been playing Mario and making tacos--

MARA

Kyle... Shut up.

Mara grabs where her necklace used to be. She puts the pieces together in her head.

MARA

I can kill it...

Kyle looks over, trying not to swerve the car as Mara raises that gnarly old knife.

MARA

... With this.

### **INT. GARAGE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

Frank is being eaten by Demon Natty. His eyes, full of fear and pain, look at Mara.

*He reaches for the old knife.*

**INT. KYLE'S CAR - NIGHT**

Mara is almost in a trance. Kyle glances over and sees her holding that old knife.

KYLE  
Um... Baby... what are you gonna do with that?

MARA  
I have to kill it...

KYLE  
WHAT?! You wanna go back there?!

MARA  
(defiant)  
No... it's gonna come to us.

Kyle grips the wheel tighter and takes a deep breath in.

KYLE  
Not gonna lie, you sound pretty fucking crazy right now.

MARA  
(annoyed)  
What?

KYLE  
(Confused)  
What?

MARA  
You didn't believe me.

KYLE  
Huh??

MARA  
You thought I crazy back there. You were seriously going to write me off as some kind of traumatic nut case and coddle me into a straight jacket...

KYLE  
Ummm....

MARA

All I've ever needed was for you to believe me. But, just like usual, it's more important to listen to your friends, you know, since they aren't the fucking damaged nutcase...

KYLE

Yeah? And look where that got me. Daniel was eaten by some kind of god-damned succubus!

MARA

Ha... of course you'd call it a succubus...

KYLE

(backs out of a corner)  
Whoa, hey, babe, fuck, I mean, that was insane back there. What would you have done in my--

MARA

I would have believed you!...  
Fuckin' scary, right? Welcome to my world, baby.

Mara turns to the window.

Kyle just drives. He sees that Mara's vulnerable and hurt, but won't show it through her hard demeanor.

He reaches over to put his hand on her leg. She rejects.

MARA

No!...

Kyle pursues.

KYLE

(calm)  
Hey... hey... Mara, look...  
(beat)  
I'm sorry... You're right, I should have believed you. All I knew was you needed me, I saw it in your eyes...

Mara's shoulders soften as she looks at Kyle.

MARA

What did you see in my eyes?

KYLE

Pain... Fear... I thought you were going to cry. I've never seen you cry...

Mara exhales. She looks back out the window.

MARA

You will... Just, not tonight.

Kyle sees her wipe a tear forming in the corner of her eye.

KYLE

OK. How do we kill it?

Mara formulates a plan.

**EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

Demon Natty lifts her head. She licks the blood from her nails and shakes off the excess gore.

She stands up and closes her eyes, cracking her neck as she soaks in the strength from her meal.

Her red eyes open and a cute grin appears on her lips.

She struts down the middle of the street, like she owns it.

**EXT. NATTY'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT**

Kyle's car slowly pulls to the curb on the street.

MARA (O.S.)

Just up here. Forty-Four Twenty...  
Forty-Four Twenty-Two... Right there, stop the car.

**INT. KYLE'S CAR - NIGHT**

Mara puts her phone back in her purse.

MARA

(fucking big brother...)  
Gotta love RydeShare.

KYLE

That thing lives here?

Mara fixes her eye-liner in the vizer mirror.

MARA

Uh huh.

KYLE

And, you want to go in there, wait for it to show up, and kill it?

She reapplies her lipstick.

MARA

Yup.

Kyle's impressed. Daniel was right...

KYLE

You're such a fucking badass...

Mara grabs Kyle's chin and pulls him close, planting a sweet, passionate kiss on his lips.

All he can do is close his eyes.

MARA

(soft)

You're going to have to get the fuck out of here.

Mara grabs Kyle's jacket.

KYLE

Wait, what?

MARA

Baby, I love you. I've never imagined I could love a man as much as I do, even though you really piss me off, but, I can't let that thing get you. It would eat you alive...

KYLE

Are you kidding me?

MARA

No, I'm being quite literal. That thing will devour you and enjoy it, because it looked into my soul... and it saw you.

KYLE

No. Bull shit, we already played that game.

(MORE)

KYLE (CONT'D)

I mean, look, you're strong and ready to die for what you believe in, but there's no way in hell I'm letting you go in there alone. I'm with you till the fucking end.

Mara's soft smile barely curls on her lips. She doesn't want to look too pleased as her eyes narrow.

She caresses Kyle's cheek.

MARA

You know, my instinct is to knock you out and hide your body...

**INT. NATTY'S APARTMENT COMPLEX HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Mara is powerful and confident as her wicked, bad-ass spiked boots own the hallway.

Each step lands perfectly in sync with an Industrial-SynthWave cover of "Stupid Girl" by Garbage blasting into our ears.

Mara commands every moment with that gnarly old knife in hand. She rocks Kyle's Jacket with the sleeves rolled up.

Her make up is flawless. She's a warrior.

Kyle, nervous, follows behind. He's just the sidekick... along for the ride... scared out of his mind, but, with the baddest chick in any room.

Mara checks her phone as they approach Natty's front door.

KYLE

One would think it's an invasion of privacy, having this kind of info on a random human being...

Mara playfully, lovingly smacks Kyle's cheek. Then, after exhaling a deep breath...

MARA

Let's fuck this shit up...

She lifts her leg, and, with power, kicks the door to--

**INT. NATTY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT**

The door swings open to reveal Mara and Kyle standing in silhouette. It's the only light shining in.



KYLE

OK... I guess I'll follow your lead...

Mara looks back at Kyle.

MARA

Listen, it could get a little... weird.

KYLE

(as if it hasn't already?)  
Go on...

MARA

I need you to promise something big... bigger than anything...

KYLE

No... don't even ask... I don't want to hear it--

MARA

Kyle, shut up, this shit is serious...

KYLE

Yeah? Well, me too! Don't even think about that thing getting past the two of us--

MARA

Ok, stop. That thing will tear through you like a wet napkin, and if it does... you need to kill me--

KYLE

Are you fucking serious?!

MARA

Yes! That thing wants me, and if it succeeds... nobody's fucking safe. So just, fucking buck up and drive this knife through my heart! I don't want to hurt anyone.

KYLE

Fuck, man! I can't do that!

Kyle looks into Mara's eye. She's dead serious.

KYLE

(softer)  
Fuck...

The room gets darker as the door creaks open. UNINTELLIGIBLE WHISPERS fade in around them.

Mara pushes Kyle to duck behind the kitchen counter. She peeks around the corner to see:

Demon Natty stands in silhouette within the open doorway, arms stretched to each side of the door frame. Tentacles wave around her through the dark shadows.

Demon Natty inhales the wonderful smell of her upcoming meal...

She takes a few steps into the apartment, letting the door slowly closes behind her. The light fades out as the door slams shut with an echo.

Sounds of LAUGHTER and PLAYFUL HUMMING surround Mara, ringing hard in her ears, followed by Demon Natty's sinister voice.

DEMON NATTY

I see you met mother. She was...  
delicious.

Kyle is scared.

KYLE

Shit....

Mara shushes him.

Demon Natty struts through the space, shrouded in darkness.

DEMON NATTY

Had I known it'd be this easy to  
bring you home, I wouldn't have  
wasted so much time.

Mara hugs the corner of the counter, knife in hand.

She waits for Demon Natty to get closer.

DEMON NATTY

But, I must say, that boy of yours  
looks quite... tasty, hmmm...

Mara watches Demon Natty's shadow get closer.

She pops out to stab Demon Natty in the heart!

But, she ends up just wafting the air. Demon Natty's not there...

Demonic laughter solidifies behind Mara, followed by Kyle's grunts and gargles.

Mara looks back to find: Demon Natty holds Kyle in the air by his throat with one hand, inspecting him.

MARA  
Put. Him. Down.

Kyle struggles to breathe.

DEMON NATTY  
Hmm... That passion. It's power.  
But this...

She turns Kyle from side to side, smelling him.

DEMON NATTY (CONT'D)  
(disgusted)  
... This is weakness.

Mara holds eye contact. She grips the old knife tighter.

Demon Natty smiles, then licks Kyle's face, enjoying his fear as Kyle squirms and struggles!

MARA  
Let him go!--

Mara ATTACKS with knife extended!

SLAP!!!

The back of Demon Natty's outstretched hand connects with Mara's face. A solid impact.

Time slows as Mara falls down to the ground.

The old knife flies out of her hand.

Mara's face lands SMACK on the cold floor.

There's a moment of silence. We move in on Mara's closed eyes as the light fades away around her.

There's an eerie stillness as her eyes begin to move under her lids; her lashes flutter.

Mara exhales a single breath. Her eyes shoot open to see...

#### **INT. BLACK SPACE - NIGHT**

Darkness surrounds Mara. It's silent, except for her breath.

Time crawls as she stands to her feet.

MARA

Kyle?

Her voice echoes throughout.

She spins around, confused. There's nothing for miles.

MARA

KYLE!!

Footsteps approach behind her. A familiar voice creeps in...

FRANK (O.S.)

(Relaxed)

You know, it really is better down here. Time stands still, and that's... just fine...

Mara spins around to see Frank slowly appears out of a black fog, in and out of shafts of light.

He moves as if his bones are breaking with every step, yet he has that doughy, wide-eyed smile.

FRANK

I didn't believe it at first, but, it has surpassed my understanding.

His feet stick to the ground with each step. He fights to move forward as if stuck in thick mud.

Mara takes timid steps backward, her hands blocking the eerie image. Her head shakes in disbelief.

MARA

Stay away from me...

Frank moves like he's dead; staccato twitches with his limbs, wide-eyed stare...

Frank smiles... drool falls from his lips... His bones crackle...

His hands reach for Mara, clawing through the air...

FRANK

(quoting Lovecraft)

"The world is indeed comic, but the joke is on mankind..."

Frank's face is beaded with a heavy, green sweat. His skin is pale. As he walks, shafts of light reveal:

Frank's skin melts and falls off in chunks. (Think that freaky face melting effect at the end of Raiders of the Lost Ark.)

FRANK  
You're going to love it here...

Mara's eyes widen.

Frank approaches her. His hands now bloody bones. His face now a bloody skull.

Mara screams. She backs up. But like a dream, she can't escape.

Frank's hands reach to grab her.

FRANK  
(broken, hollow)  
We... are... family...

Mara falls backwards and lands on her ass.

A bright red light erupts behind Frank's bloody skeleton, an unearthly glow. A DEMONIC SHADOW looms behind him. It's Chthonian in nature, with tentacles sprawling around it, with DEADLY FANGS and GLOWING RED EYES!

Laughter and supernatural sounds fill the air around Mara.

The eye holes of Frank's dead, gnarly skull also glow red as his bones fall onto Mara, grabbing and pulling at her!

FRANK  
(among other voices)  
Fam-i-ly...

MARA  
NO! LEAVE ME ALONE!!

She fights herself away from BONE FRANK'S DEATH GRIP!

She scoots back and stands straight up, jumping about as if swiping at millions of spiders crawling on her skin.

The laughter fades away. Frank's bones strike the ground and melt into a red and green ooze (think the vampire's familiar dying at the end of Fright Night).

Mara screams as the voices drive her crazy.

Starting as a faint echo, Mara hears one voice cut through...

KYLE (O.S.)  
Mara!...

The comforting yet frightened voice calls to her, piercing though the hell before her...

KYLE (O.S.)  
Mara!!! Wake up!

The world spins around Mara. She closes her eyes and screams with every ounce of her being!

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

Mara wakes up screaming from the pit of her soul!

Kyle kneels in front of her.

KYLE  
Babe, snap out of it!

Mara's eyes jolt open, they are glazed over.

She sees Kyle talking, but his voice is distant and delayed from his lips.

His hands caress Mara's face as she exits her trance-like comatose state.

She looks around the room. It's dark, like before.

Mara regains consciousness. Kyle's voice matches his lips.

KYLE  
Hey, can you hear me? We gotta get outta here!

Mara looks over and sees: Natty, non-demonic and innocently unconscious, lays on her back beside Mara.

Mara snaps out of it.

MARA  
What happened?

KYLE  
I don't know. Right after you went down, that thing fell over, dead. I mean, it's dead, right?

Mara's eyes drift back over to Natty's seemingly corpse.

MARA  
It's not dead...

They both hear a SLITHERING LAUGHTER surround them.

Mara looks over Kyle's shoulder: A shadow passes through a shaft of light - a serpent-like shadow with tentacles.

Light flashes reveal the figure stands behind Kyle, the same figure from Mara's dream.

Its eyes glow red as it smiles.

This is no shadow. It's a transparent beast with actual claws, horned-shaped head, and flowing tentacles! (Think a slim, female version of Pumpkin Head.)

MARA

Oh my God....!

Kyle dives at the creature, but is smacked, sent flying across the room!

MARA

KYLE!!

He lands on the kitchen floor... Right next to the old knife.

THE DEMON stands over Mara. She pins Mara's arms to the ground with her talon-clawed feet.

Mara SCREAMS in pain. Her eyes shoot open as she looks over to Kyle to see if he's alive.

MARA

Kyle! Wake up!!

Kyle is slow to regain consciousness.

The Demon bends down to get in Mara's face.

***(Bold Italics denote subtitles for Old Hebrew dialect.)***

DEMON

***Your fight is appetizing. Tonight,  
I'll feast on your strength.***

Kyle wakes up. He grunts in pain, then sees this figure standing atop Mara's pinned body.

The Demon salivates!

His eyes meet Mara's.

Her eyes point down to the old knife.

Kyle grabs it, then CHARGES THE DEMON WITH A FULL-ON WAR CRY!

The Demon acknowledges Kyle and smiles.

Kyle dives at the Demon, except, he phases straight through the creature as if it wasn't even there!

He lands on the floor, hard, next to Natty's lifeless body.

Mara watches Kyle. She fights to avoid the viscous drool falling from it's mouth...

The Demon leans down to Mara's face, smiling in elation.

DEMON

***We were meant to be, you and I...***

Mara sees's Natty's unconscious body, then whips her head back to Kyle.

MARA

(yells)

Stab the corpse!

Kyle looks down at Natty. He raises the knife over his head.

The Demon yells!

DEMON

***NO!!***

The knife slams into Natty's chest!

Natty's eyes open. Her SCREAMS erupt among the unearthly sounds around them!

The Demon also screams in pain, like a banshee, as her tentacles flail about!

It releases Mara and staggers backwards, fading away in a flash of light and smoke.

Natty's eyes burn red. Her body tenses up as if being surged with electricity.

Mara rushes over and grabs the knife from Kyle's hands. With all of her strength, she SLAMS THE KNIFE THROUGH NATTY'S HEART!

Natty's body constricts. Her back lifts her off the ground.

Wind erupts, blowing back Mara's hair like a hurricane.

Mara puts all of her weight on the knife. It pierces through Natty's back, stabbing the floor beneath.

Natty's face turns back into that demonic version, her hands become claws, her teeth become fangs!

The floor beneath her opens up in an organic flame, revealing a fiery pit stretching for miles deep.

Demon Natty braces herself, preventing her body from falling into the pit.

Mara releases a war cry into the air as she drives the knife further through Demon Natty's body.

Demon Natty's claw grabs onto Mara's bloodied arm.

Mara looks back at Demon Natty, but, her face is now that frightened, innocent girl. Just Natty.

Mara's eyes well up, she's sending this poor girl to hell.

MARA  
I'm sorry...

Natty's NOW PETITE HAND releases Mara's arm.

Mara watches as Natty's body goes limp. Tears smear her face. She reaches for Mara as she plummets to the volcanic pit.

The opening closes, solidifying back into the floor.

Mara steps back. Kyle wraps his arms around her as the wind and light disappear. It's now silent, not eerie, just calm.

They embrace in the dead apartment as we...

FADE TO BLACK.

### **OVER BLACK**

ONE WEEK LATER...

### **INT. KYLE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

The TV plays the ending of a light-hearted CHICK FLICK. Two teenagers embrace in a Hollywood kiss.

The camera pulls back from the TV and spins around the room: Mara cuddles within Kyle's arms on their couch, both asleep.

We move in on Mara. She twitches. She's having a nightmare, maybe a memory.

She wiggles and jerks herself awake. Her eyes pop open and she sits straight up, catching her breath.

Kyle wakes up.

KYLE  
Hey, you ok?

Mara braces herself on Kyle's arm as she relaxes.

KYLE  
Another nightmare?

MARA  
The more things change....

Kyle rubs her back to calm her down.

KYLE  
You don't have to live it alone.

Mara smiles. She caresses Kyle's face.

His eyes move just past Mara. He has a moment of sadness.

Mara turns and sees: Two video game controllers rest on the coffee table.

Mara leans in and gives Kyle a passionate kiss.

KYLE  
What was that for?

MARA  
For being exactly what I've always wanted.

Kyle smiles as Mara stands and stretches.

MARA  
I'm gonna get ready for bed. You  
wanna wait up for me?

KYLE  
Always.

She walks away as Kyle sips from a glass of water.

Mara smiles as she walks towards the hallway--

CUT TO:

**INT. BATHROOM - LATER**

We see an empty mirror as water runs in the sink facet.

Mara stands up in the reflection wearing a white bathrobe. Her hands splash her face with water.

She lets out a heavy sigh and watches the water fall from her clean skin. She's at peace, so she softly grins.

Mara grabs a towel and dries her face as she opens the door and turns off the bathroom light. She steps into--

**INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT**

It's dark and eerie. Mara stops once she notices the difference in atmosphere.

A light flickers in the living room. Electric sparks are heard.

MARA  
Babe?... Kyle?...

She takes tentative steps into the--

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

Mara's eyes tense up. Her jaw drops open.

In slow motion, Mara falls to her knees. She gasps for air.

A faint laughter creeps into the air around her...

MARA  
No...

FRESH BLOOD on the carpet... Mara's trembling hand... Blood on a SMASHED WATER GLASS... Mara grabs the scars on her forearm.

**A MONTAGE OF FLASHBACKS**

**Frank's Garage:** Demon Natty's claw scratches Mara's forearm. Mara pulls back in pain.

Demon Natty smiles at her with blood soaked teeth.

**Frank's Office:** Demon Natty's claw pins Mara's to the wall.

DEMON NATTY  
(echoes throughout)  
... But, you'll have to feed...

**Natty's Apartment:** Natty's PETITE HAND releases Mara's arm.

She falls into the volcanic pit.

**INT. KYLE'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Mara's eyes, watery and tense. Her lips tremble.

MARA

No....

Mara convulses. She wants to vomit.

MARA

NOOO!!!

Her body falls to the floor, curled into a fetal position.

The camera floats around to reveal:

Kyle's ripped clothes stick to the couch, within a large puddle of fresh blood, splattered all across the room.

The broken floor lamp flashes sporadic bits of light.

CUT TO:

**INT. KYLE'S LIVING ROOM - EARLIER**

Two video game controllers rest on the coffee table.

Mara turns back to Kyle. She leans in and gives him a passionate kiss.

KYLE

What was that for?

MARA

For being exactly what I've always wanted.

Kyle smiles as Mara stands and stretches.

MARA

I'm gonna get ready for bed. You wanna wait up for me?

KYLE

Always.

She walks away as Kyle sips from a glass of water.

Mara smiles as she walks towards the hallway...

Back on Kyle: He rubs his eyes and yawns. He opens them to see Mara frozen in mid-step.

KYLE

Everything alright, babe?

Mara's body twitches.

KYLE

Mara?...

Mara's head unnaturally cocks to the side... her bones crack!

Kyle slowly stands.

KYLE

MARA!

Mara spins around, revealing herself to now being DEMON MARA!

She POUNCES ON KYLE AND CHOMPS INTO HIS FLESH!

Kyle SCREAMS! Blood erupts, splashing and splattering across the room.

Kyle's glass of water CRUSHES IN HIS HAND.

The floor lamp falls over, flickering light onto the wall behind them.

In silhouette, through the flashes, we see:

Kyle flails and blood spurts as THE DEMON, TENTACLES AND ALL, FEASTS ON HIM!

The camera pulls back, moving through the watery lens of...

**INT. KYLE'S LIVING ROOM - LATER**

... Mara's tear-filled eye as she lays on the floor.

The Demon's shadow devours Kyle within in her eyes.

Mara finally cries actual tears.

Her pale face fills the frame. Her eye blinks.

Cut to black.

The Demon's laughter echoes.

The End.