

**AVARICE**

written by

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FADE IN:

**INT. FAY'S BEDROOM, HOTEL - NIGHT**

A large room but the decor and furnishings are faded, unfashionable.

FAY, stylish, mid-40s, dashes round the room, pulling clothes from drawers and thrusting them into the suitcase on the bed. She's listening constantly, on edge, almost scared.

Her eyes keep darting towards the DOOR.

Which is SHUT. Security chain in place.

The door is in an oppressively wallpapered feature wall. BLOOD-RED ROSES repeat, barbed stems form a spiked forest.

Fay dashes into the en suite bathroom.

A moment later, she's back with an armful of toiletries.

She freezes.

The door is HALF-OPEN.

The security chain hangs limply like it was never in place.

The toiletries fall to the floor.

Fay catches her breath, eyes wide.

Nothing happens.

Fay stares at the half-open door. Tensed, ready to run.

Still nothing.

She forces herself to take a step towards the door.

Another step.

Then another.

Through the opening, she has a partial view of a corridor.

Step by step, she nears the door.

She reaches out a trembling hand and grasps the handle. She hesitates.

Cautiously, she eases the door open a little wider and risks a look outside.

She's looking at:

**INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS**

A hotel corridor like any other except very long. The numbered doors getting smaller and smaller, seemingly repeating forever.

Fay lets out her breath.

She glances the other way.

The corridor turns a corner, she can only see a few metres.

ABRUPT CUT TO:

A MAN rounds the corner. Obese. Bald. Naked from the waist up, holding a pair of BLOODY GARDEN SHEARS in front of him.

His arms slick with blood drooling from his missing jaw. His neck and chest splayed open, a ruin of snapped ribs and gore.

Fay SCREAMS, stumbling backwards.

The Man sees her.

His arms flex.

The shears open.

A TELEPHONE RINGS.

ABRUPT CUT TO:

**INT. FAY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Fay stands in the open doorway looking out at the empty corridor. There's no Man.

She glances behind her.

The bedside telephone is RINGING.

She looks back at the corridor. There's not even blood on the carpet.

She sags with relief and confusion.

Leaving the door open, she walks warily over to the phone.

She looks at the old cordless phone on the bedside table. It's display flashes UNKNOWN as it rings.

Fay stares at it, like it's going to bite. She snatches it up.

FAY (INTO PHONE)

Hello?

**INT. MIKE'S BEDROOM, HOTEL - THE SAME TIME**

A very similar room.

MIKE is paunchy, late-40s. He's terrified.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)

Fay?

(then)

Thank God! Listen to me. Don't go out of your room --

Mike's eyes widen in terror at Fay's reply.

He looks across at the door of his own room - it's BARRICADED with the room's dresser and wardrobe.

MIKE

(in horror)

It's still open?

**INT. FAY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Fay watches the open door at the opposite side of her room.

From this angle she can't see much outside. Anything could be out there ...

FAY

What ... what can I do? I can't go over there --

**INT. MIKE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Mike stares at his barricaded door.

The door handle MOVES subtly.

SOMETHING is trying to get in.

MIKE  
You're gonna have to! You have to  
shut your door.

**INT. FAY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Fay is rooted to the spot, staring at her open door, the  
phone clamped to her ear.

She starts to cry.

MIKE (O.S. OVER PHONE)  
Just close your eyes --

FAY  
WHAT?

MIKE (O.S. OVER PHONE)  
I don't think they're real. They  
can't be ... If you can't see them,  
they can't hurt you.

FAY  
I can't!

MIKE (O.S. OVER PHONE)  
Just walk over to the door.

FAY  
I can't move!

MIKE (O.S. OVER PHONE)  
MOVE!

Fay is sobbing but starts walking. Slowly.

She takes one step, then another.

Her eyes are open but cast down at the carpet.

FAY  
I'm walking ... I'm ...

MIKE (O.S. OVER PHONE)  
Good girl. Are your eyes shut?

Fay glances at the bottom of the door, she's on course. She  
scrunches her eyes tight shut.

FAY  
Yes ... yes.

MIKE (O.S. OVER PHONE)  
Good. Good. You're doing great. Are  
you nearly there? Can you feel the  
door?

Fay thrusts an arm out in front of her, fingers shaking. She  
misses the door by an inch.

She moves her hand. Her fingers brush the door.

FAY  
(whisper)  
Got it!

She gets a grip on the door.

Slowly, silently, she starts to inch it shut.

MIKE (O.S. OVER PHONE)  
(with massive  
relief)  
Thank God. Now shut it. Quietly. And  
whatever you do, don't --

Fay opens one eye to peek into the corridor.

MIKE (O.S. OVER PHONE)  
-- look.

With shocking speed, Fay is RIPPED off her feet and savagely  
torn out of the room through the open door like a rag doll.

The phone falls to the floor.

Fay's room is empty.

The door stands open wide.

MIKE (O.S. OVER PHONE)  
Fay?

Silence.

MIKE (O.S. OVER PHONE)  
Don't leave me.

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. CAMPSITE, FOREST - NIGHT**

TWO BOYS - TOM (10) and MARK (7) sit on a log drawn up near a crackling CAMPFIRE. They wear bright, new outdoor clothes. They look like brothers.

Tom leans forward, staring over the fire.

TOM  
What happened to her?

On the opposite side of the fire, a gaunt old man (60s) sits on another log. His thread-bare overcoat wrapped tight round him.

Let's call him the STORYTELLER.

His eyes bore into Tom.

STORYTELLER  
Think of the worst thing you can.

Tom swallows. He nods.

The Storyteller smiles grimly.

STORYTELLER  
(with finality)  
It was worse than that.

The Storyteller turns his attention to the fire.

He starts to warm his hands over the flames.

The campfire is in the middle of a small clearing hemmed in by ancient trees.

The flames cast flickering shadows over two old-fashioned TENTS, one pitched either side of the clearing.

TOM  
D'you know any others?

No response.

TOM  
Other scary stories?

STORYTELLER  
It's too late.

MARK  
Please.

Slowly, the Storyteller looks up.

STORYTELLER

I do know one.

(then)

It's a grown-up story. Do you think  
you're old enough to hear it?

He studies the boys.

He has their total attention. The boys nod - Tom eager, Mark wary.

STORYTELLER

Okay, then.

(then)

Once there was a man --

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. HIGH-RISE OFFICE, THE CITY, LONDON - DAY**

STORYTELLER (CONT'D)(V.O)

-- who worked high up in the clouds.

DAVID MARSH (38), in his Savile Row suit, looks every inch the corporate shark.

He stands at the floor to ceiling windows, inspecting the human insects crossing the windswept plaza far below.

DAVID

That's all we're gonna make?

He turns to face the ultra-modern office.

A logo etched on the glass wall opposite dominates the room - a CLOCK-FACE and the name CDS INTERNATIONAL.

Below it, SEB HARRIS (31), sleeves rolled up, sits at a computer in the otherwise empty office.

SEB

The factory sites go to developers.  
Seventeen and a half maybe eighteen  
million. The machinery, scrap value  
one point three. Then it's just  
warehouse and office stock. Another  
half mil.

David paces in front of the windows.

DAVID  
You're saying I'm gonna go to the  
board, tell them we fucked these guys  
and I only got nineteen mil?

He glares at Seb.

DAVID  
How's that make me look?

Seb massages his temples, staring at his screen. He's  
struggling with something.

Seb risks eye contact. He's ashamed of himself.

SEB  
They didn't ring fence their pension  
fund.

David stops pacing. He stares at Seb.

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - EVENING**

An executive home in an exclusive estate.

There's a wide front lawn, triple garage and his and hers  
BMW's on the drive.

SARA (O.S)  
And it's legal?

**INT. KITCHEN, DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

In the designer kitchen, SARA, a beautiful but hard-faced  
trophy wife (36), prepares dinner.

David sits at the kitchen island with a glass of wine.

DAVID  
Technically.

Sara selects a sleek, vicious CHEF'S KNIFE from its display  
block on the counter.

She starts slicing carrots as if they were butter.

SARA  
There's an extra sixty two million  
just sitting there, you're brave  
enough to take it?

David nods.

DAVID  
But it's people's pensions ... more  
than seven hundred people's pensions.

Sara stops slicing, she looks at him.

DAVID  
Canteen workers, cleaners ...

SARA  
David. If you don't have the balls to  
take it, you know someone else will.  
(beat)  
Then what would you look like?

David stares at his wine.

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

David rolls over, plumps his pillow and flops back onto it.  
He can't sleep.

He glances over at Sara on the other side of the super-king  
bed.

She's fast asleep. Angelic.

He stares up at the ceiling, sweating, troubled.

**INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT**

A WORKMAN (50s) in grubby overalls, shuffles through an  
ancient warehouse.

He shines his torch in front of him, the rest of the  
cavernous space in darkness.

He checks the scrap of paper in his hand.

Written on the paper is: 4.22

He starts off again, shambling down a narrow aisle defined  
by peeling paint lines on the floor, marking the warehouse  
into bays. A number painted in front of each bay.

The Workman scuffs past 4.16 ... 4.17 ... 4.18 ...

In each bay stands an object shrouded by a dust-sheet.



A dust-sheet drapes a RECTANGULAR FORM, six feet tall and a foot and a half wide - standing silently like the squarest ghost in the world.

WORKMAN

Time ...

**INT. PRIVATE ROOM, RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

A champagne cork POPS. It hits the ceiling to a round of laughter.

Champagne sloshes into waiting glasses.

Soft lighting gives a warm glow to a table of TWELVE drunk, fat BANKERS.

HENRY (late 50s), the oldest, most senior of the group, taps his glass with his knife.

Slowly he gains everyone's attention. He stands.

HENRY

A toast. To David. One of our  
brightest and best.

Seated at the table, David smiles, lapping it up.

HENRY

Who's about to make us a fuck of a  
lot of money!

The group collapses into cheers, clapping and laughter.

In the midst of the noise, Henry leans in close to David.

HENRY

Shouldn't ruin it, but I think you  
can expect a nice little extra  
something soon.

Henry winks. David grins.

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S STREET - DAY**

A dirty, old white TRANSIT noses slowly down the peaceful street, crawling past the expensive homes.

It rolls to a stop in front of David and Sara's house.

**INT. LIVING ROOM, DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - TWO MINUTES LATER**

Sara fusses with a flower arrangement on the mantelpiece, checking the reflection in the mirror on the chimney breast. The DOORBELL chimes.

Sara wipes her hands and heads for the:

**INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS**

Sara crosses the impressive, statement hall to the front door.

She opens it.

A weasily, shabby DELIVERY GUY (60s) stands outside.

He has a tall and obviously heavy CARDBOARD BOX - SIX FEET OR SO - balanced on a two-wheeled trolley.

DELIVERY GUY  
The Marsh household?

SARA  
I didn't order anything.

DELIVERY GUY  
It's probably a gift ...

Sara glances past him at the van at the kerb, bringing down the tone of the neighbourhood.

DELIVERY GUY  
I can always take it back to the depot --

SARA  
A gift?

DELIVERY GUY  
Maybe for Mister Marsh?

Sara is undecided.

DELIVERY GUY  
You'd have to sign.

SARA  
Put it in the hall.

The Delivery Guy smiles.

DELIVERY GUY  
My pleasure.

**EXT. PICK-UP POINT, PRIVATE SCHOOL - DAY**

Sara leans against her BMW, checking her phone. Other rich MUMS wait inside their expensive cars.

Sara looks up at the clock tower of the school.

The clock reads one minute to four.

**INT. HALL, SARA AND DAVID'S HOUSE - THE SAME TIME**

The tall, man-sized box waits in the silent, empty hall.

**EXT. PICK-UP POINT, PRIVATE SCHOOL - A MINUTE LATER**

A flood of uniformed CHILDREN rushes out of the now open school doors, heading for their rides home.

Sara scans the throng.

SARA  
Over here!

Her sons, TOM and MARK head over, carrying their school bags. They are the SAME BOYS who the Storyteller by the campfire is telling this story to.

**INT. SARA'S CAR, TRAVELLING - DAY**

Sara drives. The kids are in the back.

SARA  
So, how was it?

Mark proudly holds up a plastic GOLD MEDAL on a ribbon.

MARK  
I won! Speller of the week!

Sara's face lights up. Tom flashes his younger brother a jealous look.

SARA  
That's amazing Mark! How about you,  
Tom --

CAMPFIRE TOM (V.O.)  
 You said Tom and Mark.

**EXT. CAMPSITE, FOREST - NIGHT**

Tom stares accusingly across the fire.

TOM  
 Why've they got the same names as us?

The Storyteller shrugs. He leans back.

STORYTELLER  
 Well, you're here.

He watches the boys.

Mark looks confused, uncomfortable. He can't quite put his finger on ...

STORYTELLER  
 Shall I continue?

Tom nods.

STORYTELLER  
 Okay.  
 (then)  
 Well, later that evening when their  
 Daddy got home ...

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. HALL, SARA AND DAVID'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Sara and the boys watch as David works on the packaging with a Stanley knife.

He cuts the cardboard open to reveal:

SARA  
 (underwhelmed)  
 It's a clock.

David pulls off more packaging.

It's a GRANDFATHER CLOCK.

DAVID  
 (puzzled)  
 Henry said ... but I ...  
 (MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

(then)

Why'd work send me a clock?

SARA

Maybe it's valuable? An antique.

The clock does look old but a little scuffed and worn.

It has a brass face and a mahogany body with a SOLID DOOR, you can't see the pendulum or any of the insides.

MARK

It's not going.

Mark's right. It's not ticking.

The hands read 20 past 4.

David gently pushes a hand. It's stuck.

He tries to open the door in the body of the clock but there's no handle, just a keyhole with no key.

He can't get a hold on the door with his fingers. It's either stuck or locked.

TOM

It's rubbish.

Tom wanders off, Mark follows.

David stares at the clock. Annoyed.

DAVID

There was no paperwork?

SARA

Ring Henry. Say thanks for the clock. Ask what it's about.

DAVID

I'm not bothering Henry at the weekend. It might not even be from work. It might've been delivered by mistake.

SARA

David. They knew our name.

David and Sara look at the clock, standing very out of place in their designer hall.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Sara sits on Mark's bed with a storybook.

She watches as Mark loops the ribbon of his spelling medal over the doorknob of one of the slatted doors of his built-in wardrobes.

The medal dangles against the white door, catching the light.

He turns to face his mum.

She smiles proudly at him.

**INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

David, in his pyjamas, browses the contents of the massive double fridge.

He pours a glass of milk and stands at the island drinking it.

He stops mid-drink.

He turns his head.

He's heard something. He frowns, listening.

Seconds pass.

He puts down the glass and walks into:

**INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS**

David switches on the main light.

He stands looking at the ceiling, listening.

Nothing.

His gaze drifts down to the silent grandfather clock.

He approaches it.

He looks at the face.

The hands are still stuck at 20 past 4.

Below the dial, there are two SMALL METAL DOORS, one either side of the face-plate.

A brass TRACK runs between them - one you might expect figures to travel along when the clock strikes the hour, like on a Swiss clock.

David wipes dust from the track with a finger.

He prods at the tiny doors. They're stuck fast.

He looks down at the big wooden door in the body of the clock.

He bends down. He's going to look through the keyhole.

His face gets closer.

Level with the hole now, a foot away ...

He brings his EYE closer to the hole.

Closer. Half a foot away.

He leans in.

Three inches.

Two ...

He suddenly straightens.

He frowns at his own ridiculousness. He gives the clock a last dismissive glance and heads for the stairs.

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Sara and David lie asleep in their huge bed.

The digital clock on David's bedside table reads 11:37.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Mark sprawls asleep in bed surrounded by toys.

**INT. HALL - NIGHT**

The grandfather clock stands silently in the hall.

The hands stuck at 20 past 4.

**INT. TOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Tom sleeps open-mouthed in bed.

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

David shifts in his sleep.

His digital clock reads 03:24.

**INT. HALL - NIGHT**

The clock stands in the hall.

Silence - then a single quiet SCRATCH.

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

David mutters in his sleep.

Near his head, his clock reads 04:19.

The digits change.

It's 04:20.

**INT. HALL - THE SAME TIME**

The hands on the face of the grandfather clock point at 20 past 4.

The minute hand starts to SHUDDER.

It JOLTS to 21 minutes past 4.

The clock starts to TICK.

And then slowly, very slowly, the door in the body of the clock STARTS TO OPEN ...

The door swings gradually fully open. From our angle, we can't see inside, or what might have pushed it from within.

**EXT. CAMPSITE, FOREST - NIGHT**

Tom looks wide-eyed across the fire at the Storyteller. At his side, his younger brother looks worried.

MARK

I don't like it. I don't understand.

The Storyteller shifts back on his log.

He eyes Mark carefully.

STORYTELLER

I'll tell a simpler story.

TOM

But what about the clock?

The Storyteller takes a small log from a pile at his feet.

STORYTELLER

We'll come back to it.

He tosses the log onto the fire.

Sparks crackle up into the darkness.

STORYTELLER

Once there was a man --

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. PINE FOREST - NIGHT**

STORYTELLER (CONT'D)(V.O)

-- who took a shortcut home through a dark forest.

David, wearing different clothes, with a different haircut, walks along a dirt path through a pine forest.

Strangely, a succession of modern-day STREET LAMPS line the path, casting sterile pools of light. Outside the glow of the lamps, the forest is dark.

David slows, something up ahead has caught his eye.

A hundred yards ahead, a bench sits by the path. There's a MAN sprawled on it.

David approaches slowly, curious.

As he nears the bench, we hear SNORING.

David looks down at the man.

He's late 50s, portly, wearing a crumpled tweed suit and lying belly up on the bench, mouth open, snoring loudly.

A couple of empty wine bottles lie nearby. The PORTLY MAN is sound-asleep and drunk.

On the ground, littered below the bench are a scrunched handkerchief and a few coins.

David's about to walk on. He stops. He looks back at the handkerchief.

He moves it with his foot.

Beneath the handkerchief, the man's WALLET lies on the ground.

David glances along the path. The man continues to snore.

David stoops. He reaches for the wallet.

**EXT. PINE FOREST - HALF A MINUTE LATER**

David continues along the well-lit path. Behind him we see the bench with the sleeping man as David walks away from it.

David's preoccupied going through the wallet. As he walks, the trees widen out to either side, the lamp-lit path heading onto HEATH-LAND.

David strolls on, pulling out a couple of credit cards. He drops them on the path as he goes.

We start to get the strange sensation that David is getting larger - then we realize that it's the street lamps he's passing - each one is PROGRESSIVELY SMALLER than the last.

David walks on, focused on the wallet. He pulls out a blood-donor card. He drops it.

A snapshot of the man's family. He drops it.

All that's left in the wallet is a wad of bank notes. David pulls them out and drops the empty wallet.

David counts the money as he walks.

The street lamps are shorter than he is now. David walks on, oblivious.

He finishes counting. He stops, sensing it's got darker. He looks at his feet.

The path has dwindled to nothing.

He's standing in unmarked heath-land. There's a tiny street lamp by his feet - not six inches tall - giving out a weedy glow.

David turns round.

Behind him there is no path, no street lamps, just dark open heath-land ringed by the ominous silhouettes of pine trees.

David glances about, confused.

His gaze stops.

There's SOMETHING WHITE by the treeline, a couple of hundred yards away.

A WHITE FIGURE. Motionless.

There's no detail, just a long white body with a head-sized shape on top. Like a body in a shroud.

David shuffles back a step.

The FIGURE starts to move, to DRIFT forward.

David freezes.

He watches wide-eyed in growing terror.

The Figure is heading towards him.

David turns and RUNS.

He dashes across the uneven grass.

He falls, pulls himself up. Runs on.

Dropped banknotes flutter behind him.

He splashes down into a ditch. He's up again. Running.

He risks a glance backwards.

The Figure is catching up. Indistinct, white, silent.

David ploughs into a barbed wire fence. The wire RIPS into his legs as he collapses over it.

The Figure is close now. Relentless. Effortless.

David tears himself free of the barbed wire.

The Figure's featureless head SPLITS into a JAGGED MOUTH OF SHARK-LIKE TEETH.

It's only feet away.

David flees, out of control, crashing over the grass.

He glances back.

The Figure's nearly on him. Head gaping wide.

David turns ... and TRIPS.

He sprawls onto the ground.

He looks up.

The Figure is on him. Dagger-like teeth lunge at his face.

David SCREAMS as we

ABRUPT CUT TO:

**EXT. GOLF COURSE - MORNING**

A PLANE flies overhead, ENGINES LOUD.

Henry stands on his own as his THREE GOLF BUDDIES wait for him.

He blocks an ear, trying to hear his phone.

HENRY (INTO PHONE)  
What? Speak up!

The noise of the plane diminishes.

HENRY  
A clock? Why would I send you a clock?

He nods at his companions. They smile back, annoyed. He turns his back to them.

HENRY  
(angry)  
David. I'm playing golf.

**INT. HALL - MORNING**

David stands in front of the clock, his phone forgotten in his hand. He stares at the clock's open door. The clock ticks.

Sara, in her dressing gown, heads down stairs.

SARA  
You got it working?

David glances back at her.

DAVID  
Must've just started in the night.

Sara walks over and joins him.

Through the open door we see the pendulum swing.

SARA  
How'd you open the door?

DAVID  
I didn't.

David squats down in front of the open door and peers inside.

The inside of the clock and the back of the door are lined with FAMILIAR OLD WALLPAPER - BLOOD-RED ROSES repeating, barbed stems form a spiked forest.

David gently runs his fingers across the inside of the door.

DAVID  
(uneasy)  
Must've unstuck itself. Probably the central heating.

SCRATCH MARKS have shredded the paper and splintered the wood around the inside of the door.

**INT. LANDING/STAIRS/HALL - LATER, MORNING**

An ACTION MAN straddles the banister. Around it's neck hangs Mark's medal on it's long ribbon, stupidly big on the doll.

Mark walks out of his room, sees Tom standing by the banister.

Tom smiles.

Mark spots the doll - his new medal around it's neck.

MARK  
Hey, that's --

TOM  
Speller of the week!

Tom pokes the action man. It slips off the banister and falls.

The doll hits the hall floor below with a CRACK. It lies in a tangle, throttled by the ribbon.

Up on the landing, Mark rushes angrily past his older brother.

MARK  
Idiot!

Tom gloats as Mark starts down stairs to reclaim his medal.

From her open bedroom door, Sara watches silently with a face like thunder.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - A MINUTE LATER**

Mark sniffs back a tear as he loops his medal back round the doorknob of his wardrobe door.

**INT. KITCHEN - A LITTLE LATER, MORNING**

The TV on the wall blares out a Saturday morning show.

Tom sits at the kitchen island. Sara whacks a bowl of cereal down in front of him. She sits.

TOM  
I didn't mean to.

SARA  
Yes. You did.

She mutes the TV.

SARA  
Look at me.

Tom looks at her, almost afraid.

SARA  
(with cold anger)  
Family is everything. Some day it  
might be all you have.  
(then)  
It is the only thing that matters.

Tom swallows.

SARA  
(softer)  
D'you understand me?

Tom nods.

SARA  
Good. Eat that, then apologize to  
your brother.

Tom, ashamed, drops his attention to his cereal.

**INT. HALL - JUST AFTERWARDS**

David stands looking at the clock.

The clock's door is still open. The pendulum swings. The  
clock ticks.

David crouches down in front of the open door.

He studies the scratch marks on the inside of the door. They  
look like CLAW MARKS ...

Suddenly - a LOUD SCRAPING NOISE.

David whirls round.

SCRAPE!

It came from upstairs.

He dashes for the stairs and pounds up them.

**INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING - CONTINUOUS**

David rounds the top of the stairs.

SCRAPE! - it came from a door ahead.

The door has a sign: MARK'S ROOM. KEEP OUT.

David flings the door open.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Mark looks up, still red-eyed from crying. He's dragging a wooden toy-chest across the wood floor.

MARK

What?

David sags against the door-frame as he realizes it was Mark making the noise.

Mark has started setting up an elaborate Scalatrex track around his room. David smiles sickly.

DAVID

Don't ... just be careful of the floor.

Mark looks at his Dad, confused by his panicked entrance.

MARK

Yes Dad ... sorry.

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

The house is dark. All the lights are off.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

The Scalatrex track is complete, the cars glint in the glow of the night-light.

Mark's toys cast strange shadows across the walls.

Mark's bedside clock shows a sleeping animated star and the time. It's 4:18.

Mark is half-awake in bed.

He flaps back his duvet.

Clutching his teddy bear, he clambers out of bed.

**INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING - CONTINUOUS**

Mark traipses across the landing.

He heads into the bathroom. He switches on the bathroom light. Light spills out across the landing.

We hear him pee.

He switches off the light and comes back out onto the landing. He starts back towards his room ... and stops.

He's HEARD SOMETHING.

He looks down through the banisters at the hall below.

The grandfather clock stands, caught in the moonlight.

Now we hear it too, as well as the ticking, a new sound - a FAINT MECHANICAL WHIRRING.

**INT. STAIRS/HALL - CONTINUOUS**

Mark clutches his teddy bear to his chest. He starts down the stairs. The whirring is getting a little louder.

Mark reaches the bottom stair and steps onto the hall floor.

Cautiously, he approaches the clock.

It towers over him.

The pendulum swings back and forth, back and forth.

The whirring is louder still. It's coming from behind the face of the clock.

Mark cranes his neck to look.

The hands on the clock point at twenty past four. The minute hand ticks forward. It's 4:21.

At the bottom of the clock-face are the two little metal doors with their linking rail.

Slowly, the LEFT-HAND DOOR starts to CREAK OPEN.

Mark watches open-mouthed.

Now the right-hand door opens too.

As Mark watches, the rail between the doors starts to move - left to right.

Through the left hand door a SMALL BRASS CUT-OUT FIGURE slides into view, mounted on the travelling rail. IT'S A LITTLE BOY.

A second figure follows close behind - a SECOND BOY.

CUT TO:

CLOSE - MARK'S REACTION

We hear the mechanism working as Mark watches, spell-bound.

But his expression changes - something is not right, not right at all ...

He squeezes his teddy tight as he looks up at the mechanism with growing dread.

His eyes widen.

His face drains of colour as he sees SOMETHING BAD, then floods with HORROR as he UNDERSTANDS ...

ABRUPT CUT TO:

BACK TO SCENE

Terrified, Mark bolts for the stairs.

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

MARK (O.S.)

MUMMY!

David is the first to wake. He levers himself out of bed.

MARK (O.S.)

MUMMY!

DAVID

I'll go.

Sara mutters something and shifts in bed.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - JUST AFTER**

David enters. Mark is sitting up in bed. He's scared, obviously distressed.

DAVID  
Hey buddy. It's just a bad dream --

But Mark's not having it, he beats his fists against the duvet.

MARK  
NO! NOT DADDY! I WANT MUMMY! I WANT MUMMY!

David realizes this isn't going to work.

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - JUST AFTER**

David climbs back into bed.

DAVID  
He's gonna go postal. He wants you.

SARA  
God's sake!

She swings her legs out of bed.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - FIVE MINUTES LATER**

Sara sits on the chair by Mark's bed. She's managed to soothe him a little. She rubs his back.

He's now just a bit tearful.

MARK  
Mummy?

SARA  
Hmm?

MARK  
Daddy ... Daddy would never hurt anyone, would he?

Sara looks down at her son, surprised and a little concerned.

SARA  
Of course not.  
(MORE)

SARA (CONT'D)  
 (then)  
 Go to sleep.

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING/ STAIRS/ HALL - NIGHT**

Silence.

We are gliding slowly towards the stairs.

As we float down the stairs - we start to hear the TICKING of the clock, quiet, slower than it should be.

As we near the bottom of the stairs, we see a FIGURE in the stark, moonlit hall.

Back towards us, naked beneath a hospital gown is a FRAIL, VERY OLD MAN. His skeletal arm clutches the stand of his portable drip for support.

The ticking is louder but the grandfather clock is nowhere to be seen. We drift towards the man.

He starts to turn his liver-spotted head towards us ...

ABRUPT CUT TO:

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

David whimpers in his sleep. His hand grasps his pillow.

Beside him, Sara sleeps soundly on.

**INT. HIGH-RISE OFFICE, THE CITY, LONDON - DAY**

David stands behind Seb, who sits in front of his monitor.

DAVID  
 Seven front companies?

SEB  
 Yeah. If anyone traces the money this far --

DAVID  
 Which they won't.

Seb nods.

SEB  
It ends up with this holding company  
in Switzerland. A perfect dead end.

David smiles.

DAVID  
It's legal and they're fucked.

SEB  
And we're rich. I'll have the papers  
back from legal end of tomorrow. On  
Wednesday we're sixty two million  
richer.

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. DAVID'S CAR, TRAVELLING - EARLY EVENING**

David slows as he approaches his house.

Worry registers on his face.

On his driveway is a RENTOKIL VAN. The house front door is open.

He pulls his car up beside the van.

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - JUST AFTER**

David walks to the front door.

As he enters the house, he has to stand aside for the RENTOKIL GUY coming out.

RENTOKIL GUY  
All right?

David nods.

RENTOKIL GUY  
Your wife's in the kitchen.

The Rentokil Guy heads for his van. David looks towards the kitchen.

**INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

David enters. Sara looks up from the Rentokil paperwork on the counter.

SARA  
I heard something.  
(then)  
There's something in the house ...

David glances at a new rodent trap tucked against the wall.

DAVID  
What, mice?

SARA  
Bigger than mice. I was down here, I  
heard it through the ceiling.  
Scratching.

DAVID  
A rat?

Sara shivers at the thought.

DAVID  
They find anything?

SARA  
No. He said they'd be droppings if it  
was rats.  
(then)  
David. It was in that horrible clock.  
I know it. And now it's in our house!

DAVID  
Come here. It's nothing. Probably a  
noise outside.

David puts his arms round Sara, trying to comfort her.

DAVID  
You're getting upset over nothing.

Behind him, we see Mark standing in the doorway unnoticed by his parents. He's heard everything.

**INT. HALL - NIGHT**

David is crouched down in front of the clock.

He examines the scratch marks on the inside of the door.

He peers up inside the clock, past the swinging pendulum.

He spots something.

He reaches up inside the clock. He fumbles awkwardly around, arm fully stretched.

CLOSE - INSIDE THE CLOCK

David's fingers reach as high as they can. There's something white up there.

His fingertips brush it.

He snags it between two fingers, dislodging it.

BACK TO SCENE

A SMALL WHITE CARD falls out of the clock onto the floor. It looks like a business card.

David picks it up.

The business card is old, yellowing at the edges.

There's an old-fashioned picture of a PAIR OF SCALES. Below it, the type reads:

SAMAEL & SONS

147 PORTERS ROAD, LIMEHOUSE, LONDON, E14 3HL

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

David sits by Mark's bed, finishing a bedtime story.

DAVID

"-- and queen celebrated their wedding and lived happily ever after."

David closes the book and looks at his youngest son, tucked up in bed, already half-asleep.

DAVID

(quietly)

If there was a boy, he had less than you but you wanted what he had. Would you take it?

Mark sleepily shakes his head.

David smooths a ruck in the duvet.

DAVID  
If it wasn't stealing? If the teacher  
said you could?

Mark yawns.

MARK  
No. It'd make me bad.

David switches off the bedside light. The room is  
illuminated by the glow of the night-light.

DAVID  
Good boy.

David sits in the chair, lost in thought.

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

The house is dark, both cars sit on the drive.

**INT. DAVID'S CAR, STATION CAR PARK - DAY**

Dressed for work, David sits in his parked BMW, making a  
phone call.

He studies the yellowing SAMAEL & SONS business card in his  
hand as he waits for his call to be answered.

It's answered.

DAVID  
(putting on an 'ill'  
voice)  
Hi Fiona? David Marsh.  
(pause)  
Yeah, not so well.  
(pause)  
Yeah, in bed. A temperature.  
Hopefully a twenty four hour thing.  
I'm still on email --  
(pause)  
I will. Thanks.

He cuts off the call. He looks towards the platforms.

CAMPFIRE TOM (V.O.)  
I'm cold.

**EXT. CAMPSITE, FOREST - NIGHT**

Despite being a couple of feet from the fire, Tom's hands are dug deep in the folds of his coat.

The Storyteller looks at him, he seems unsurprised.

STORYTELLER

Yeah.

He pulls a burning stick from the fire.

He examines it - the flames dance in front of his face.

STORYTELLER

(to himself)

It gets cold.

A brief pause, then:

STORYTELLER

Once there was a lady --

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. PARK - DAY**

Sara walks through an idyllic park in the height of summer.

She is on a slight hill overlooking the rest of the park, it's peaceful here.

STORYTELLER (CONT'D)(V.O)

-- who went for a walk --

Further off, Sara can see CHILDREN playing, MUMS with pushchairs, a YOUNG COUPLE jogging.

STORYTELLER (CONT'D)(V.O)

-- and found a man digging a hole.

Sara slows, she's seen something odd.

Ahead, just off the path, a MAN stands in a hole he's digging in the grass. The hole is large and already up to his knees.

Sara stops and looks down at him. The man stops digging and turns to face her.

He's PORTLY, wearing a crumpled tweed suit and is hot from digging. He wipes his kindly face. We've seen him before - asleep on a bench in a forest.

SARA  
What're you doing?

The Portly Man clammers out of his hole. He rests against his spade.

PORTLY MAN  
Digging a hole, my dear. But it's hard work. I'm not as young as I was.

Sara peers into the hole.

SARA  
Why?

PORTLY MAN  
Well, a man said I could have this --

He nods at a large bag of gold coins that now stands by the side of the hole - it wasn't there a moment ago.

PORTLY MAN  
-- if I dig a pit and put those dogs in it.

He gestures at FIVE OR SIX DOGS that are now tied to a nearby tree.

The dogs whine and shiver. They are little more than bones wrapped in skin. The horrific results of heart-breaking cruelty.

PORTLY MAN  
Then if I throw stones at them until they're dead, the money is mine.

He smiles kindly, dabbing his sweaty forehead.

PORTLY MAN  
But it's a bit much for me. At my age.  
(then)  
I don't suppose ... if you help me dig, I'd happily share the money with you?

Sara looks at the cowering dogs.

SARA  
They do look old ...

PORTLY MAN  
Oh yes.  
(then)  
It would be a mercy.

CUT TO:

**LATER**

Sara digs. Mounds of earth surround the hole. The pit must be nearly six feet deep, Sara can barely see out of it.

The Portly Man sits on the edge, happily dangling his legs into the hole. He sips tea from a tartan Thermos.

Sara stops to wipe sweat from her face.

PORTLY MAN  
Just a little deeper, I think.

Sara glares at him but stabs the spade back into the dirt.

CUT TO:

**A LITTLE LATER**

The mounds of earth are larger still.

In the pit, Sara looks around. She can't see out any more, the hole is well over six feet deep.

She lets the spade fall from her hand.

SARA  
There! Done.

A SHADOW falls across her from behind. She turns, expecting to see the Portly Man.

HALF A DOZEN PEOPLE stare down at her - the Mums from the park, the Children, the Joggers.

They look at her with anger and disgust.

SARA  
Hi ... hey ... This isn't --

Above the pit, Sara can't see but TWENTY OR THIRTY PEOPLE are heading towards the hole, the makings of an angry mob. The Portly Man is nowhere in sight.

TWO MEN untie the dogs, trying to comfort them.

A Mum at the top of the hole kicks some soil back into the hole. It hits Sara in the face.

SARA  
Hey! Don't ...

Suddenly, everyone is kicking and pushing the mounds of earth into the pit, showering Sara with soil and stones.

SARA  
No! Don't ... it wasn't me ...

Sara flounders around, trying to protect herself, blinded by dirt and tears.

She stumbles and falls. We hear WATER BOILING.

SARA  
GOD! HELP ME!

She tries to claw herself to her feet but earth rains down, starting to bury her alive.

MARK (O.S.)  
Mum.

Sara SCREAMS, incoherent. Soil fills her mouth.

ABRUPT CUT TO:

**INT. KITCHEN, DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - DAY**

MARK  
Mum?

Sara looks wildly around, disoriented, shaken. She's gripping the kitchen counter with white knuckles.

A boiled kettle steams in front of her.

Mark tugs at her jumper, looking up at her, concerned.

SARA  
(faking normality)  
What is it, dear?

Mark blinks back tears.

MARK

I said I don't like the clock, Mummy.

Mark starts to cry.

Sara hugs her son.

**INT. TUBE TRAIN, TRAVELLING - DAY**

David sits in an empty carriage, a faulty light buzzes and flickers overhead.

He holds the Samael & Sons business card on his lap, staring at it.

The train clatters along in the dark.

**EXT. COUNCIL ESTATE - DAY**

David crosses a litter-strewn plaza, dwarfed by grim blocks of flats.

SURLY YOUTHS lounge on a bench as David walks past, head-down and intimidated. Out of place in his expensive suit.

He glances back at them.

**QUICK - ALMOST SUBLIMINAL**

The youths heads are the yellow-eyed heads of WOLVES, teeth bared and snarling.

**DAVID'S REACTION**

David goes white, he blinks. He glances back again.

The Youths are human again. Catching his panicked look, they smirk at him.

David walks on, drops of cold sweat prickling his forehead.

**EXT. RUN-DOWN SHOPPING STREET - DAY**

David walks past boarded-up shops, fried chicken takeaways and cab companies with grills on the windows.

He passes a BAG-LADY pushing her pathetic belongings in a shopping trolley. As he strides past, he accidentally glances at her face.

The Bag-lady's face is that of a SCREAMING BABY.

David hurries past.

Behind him, the Bag-Lady is back to normal, rooting through a bin.

Shaken, David walks on. As he walks, there are more and more boarded-up shops.

He checks the card in his fist.

SAMAEL & SONS

147 PORTERS ROAD, LIMEHOUSE, LONDON, E14 3HL

He glances at the number sprayed on the boarded-up shop he's passing - 143.

145 is boarded up too.

He stops and stares at 147.

It looks long abandoned.

SAMAEL & SONS and the picture of the scales are just legible on the peeling sign above the window.

David looks at the front door. It was nailed shut long ago.

Yellowing newspaper has been stuck to the inside of the front window. Half the sheets have fallen off.

David approaches the window, cups his hand to the glass and peers into darkness.

The shop is empty, just rotting floorboards, old junk mail behind the door and a bulb hanging from the ceiling.

David catches his breath.

The back wall is covered with PEELING WALLPAPER - familiar BLOOD-RED ROSES, barbed stems form a spiked forest.

David's gaze drifts down to an OBJECT at the back of the room at the base of the wallpapered wall.

The only object in the otherwise empty room - a large, NEW vicious BUTCHER'S KNIFE embedded point-down in the dusty floor.

**EXT. CAMPSITE, FOREST - NIGHT**

TOM  
I need to pee.

The Storyteller nods.

Tom stands and turns round. He looks at the gnarled trees ringing the clearing, disappearing into blackness.

He glances down at Mark and then starts towards the darkness.

STORYTELLER  
Make sure you can see the light.

Mark looks into the fire as behind him, his older brother disappears into the blackness.

MARK  
Do you know lots of stories?

STORYTELLER  
More than I can count.  
(then)  
My brother tells wonderful stories.  
Of light and joy and laughter.

MARK  
Tell us one of those. Please.

STORYTELLER  
I'm sorry. They're his stories not mine --

**EXT. JUST OUTSIDE THE FIRELIGHT - THE SAME TIME**

Tom has stepped a few feet into the wood, past the first ring of trees.

STORYTELLER (CONT'D)(V.O)  
-- and this isn't his place.

He starts to pee, the steam rising.

The forest ahead is a black twisted mass. Spiked brambles creep round trees like barbed wire.

Tom strains to look back over his shoulder.

The fire is half visible between trees.

He looks down, he's nearly finished.

His head snaps up.

There was a NOISE.

It was quiet but definitely there ...

Tom holds his breath. Listening.

Something slow and heavy is moving out there in the blackness.

The scrunch of dead leaves.

The subtle groan of a branch.

Something massive. Sliding ...

Slithering slowly through the dark.

Getting closer.

Wide-eyed, Tom swallows.

He shakes quickly, turns and hurries back out of the wood into the firelight, zipping himself up.

The Storyteller smiles as Tom sits hurriedly down next to his brother.

Tom glances back over his shoulder.

The trees are dark and silent.

STORYTELLER

Where was I?

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. CHILDREN'S HOME - NIGHT**

A large, gloomy building. A sign by the gates reads:

SAINT JOSEPH'S CHILDREN'S HOME

At a lit window on the top floor, the silhouette of a BOY shows against the light.

STORYTELLER(V.O)  
Once there was a boy --

**INT. BOY'S BEDROOM, CHILDREN'S HOME - NIGHT**

A SERIES OF SHOTS:

Looking up at a sturdy light fitting in the middle of the ceiling.

STORYTELLER(V.O)  
-- who was so sad --

The boy places a chair in the centre of the room. WE DON'T SEE ENOUGH TO IDENTIFY HIM.

He places a plastic crate on the chair.

STORYTELLER (CONT'D)(V.O)  
-- and so lonely --

The ACTION MAN sits on a shelf. The SPELLER OF THE WEEK MEDAL round it's neck on it's ribbon.

The boy's hands loop the long ribbon over the light fitting. He must be high up to do this, standing on something ...

The boy's feet are positioned centrally on the crate.

He deliberately moves a foot - to the edge - where the crate sticks out over the edge of the chair.

STORYTELLER (CONT'D)(V.O)  
-- he went to find his brother.

The boy moves his other foot.

The crate FLIPS. The boy DROPS.

ABRUPT CUT TO:

**EXT. CAMPSITE, FOREST - NIGHT**

The Storyteller smiles.

STORYTELLER  
But I'm getting ahead of myself.

CUT TO:

**INT. TUBE PLATFORM - NIGHT**

David stands waiting. He looks shaken, unwell.

The lights flicker. Litter blows across the floor as a TRAIN thunders into the platform.

**INT. TUBE TRAIN - NIGHT**

The carriage is packed.

David stands, holding onto an overhead strap. People are pressed in, uncomfortably close.

David looks down at the Samael business card in his hand.

He SCRUNCHES the card in his fist and stuffs it into his suit pocket.

The carriage LURCHES. David bumps against a man's back.

DAVID

Sorry.

The MAN twists round.

He's late-40s, in a business suit, everything about him looks tired - but his eyes LIGHT UP as he sees -

MAN

David! It's --

David stares in shock.

DAVID

(panic, disbelief)

Steve Cray.

CRAY

That's right! How are you?

David backs as far as the crush of commuters allows. His face a map of confusion and fear.

DAVID

(weakly)

Fine.

STEVE CRAY nods and smiles and nods and ...

DAVID  
 (like he's about to  
 faint)  
 How ... how are you?

CRAY  
 They said I could come back. Been two  
 years ... no one'll take my calls,  
 David. Maybe you could --

David glances around at nearby faces but they're all perfect  
 commuters - blank, no eye contact. Isolated. Unreadable.  
 Unreachable.

DAVID  
 Sure. Sure. How's ... the kids?

Cray grins. He looks deranged.

CRAY  
 Yvette took them.  
 (then)  
 Never lose the money, David. Lose it,  
 your family goes with it.

The train starts to slow, coming into a station.

CRAY  
 I'm all alone, David.

David wipes his brow - he's in a cold sweat.

DAVID  
 (distracted, looking  
 around for an  
 escape)  
 Well, good to see you Steve. Because  
 I'm sorry, I ... I thought I heard --

CRAY  
 Without money, why'd they want us,  
 right?

David glances back at Cray.

DAVID  
 Thought I heard ...

CRAY  
 What?

DAVID  
 -- you'd ...

David's gaze drops to Cray's WRISTS.

Which are HACKED WIDE OPEN - butchered ribbons of skin and blood. Multiple razor slashes. Blood drenching his hands, soaking his trousers.

David recoils in horror.

CRAY  
I made one mistake --

TERRIFIED, David turns and RAMS his way through the crush, aiming for the nearest door.

The doors open.

CRAY (O.S.)  
DAVID, WAIT!

David thrusts his way out. Hard, fast. People SWEAR and SHOUT at him as he bursts out onto the:

**INT. TUBE STATION PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS**

David pushes his way along the crowded platform towards the exit.

Behind him the train doors shut.

He risks a look back - he can't see Cray on the platform - perhaps he's safe ...

**INT. TUBE STATION FOOT TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS**

David hurries through a foot tunnel, jostling people rudely out of the way.

He glances back - in the crowd behind him, he spots Cray.

CRAY  
(calling out)  
Just one chance! Please!

But David runs reckless on, barging past people.

**INT. ESCALATOR HALL - A MOMENT LATER**

A CROWD mills round the bottom of the escalators - David frantically pushes his way onto the rising escalator.

He runs up the free left-hand side of the escalator.

He turns - Cray is climbing the escalator below him, clutching the hand rail, a bloody trail behind him.

They make eye contact. Cray holds out a gory red hand, pleading.

CRAY

I'll make them money! I promise.  
Don't leave --

DAVID

(screaming)  
FUCK OFF!

Suddenly everyone is staring at David - at the madman screaming obscenities in the middle of rush hour.

David turns and bolts for the top of the escalator.

**EXT. LOCAL HIGH STREET, LONDON - NIGHT**

David runs down a dark high street. Cars rush past, headlights on.

He glances over his shoulder.

There are PEDESTRIANS around - little more than dark figures. It's hard to tell if he's being followed.

He spots an open Starbucks across the street.

CAR HORNS blare as David dashes across the road towards the safety of the coffee shop.

**INT. STARBUCKS - NIGHT**

David peers nervously out of the window, scanning the dark street outside. He has his phone to his ear, waiting for it to be answered.

Outside, pedestrians hurry past, heads down, difficult to identify.

David's call is answered.

DAVID (INTO PHONE)

I need a cab.

**INT. MINICAB, TRAVELLING - NIGHT**

David is slumped on the back seat, head resting against the side window.

He watches night-time London slide past outside.

**EXT. STATION CAR PARK - NIGHT**

The MINICAB idles in the middle of the near empty car park. The interior light on.

Inside, David finishes paying the DRIVER and then gets out.

The taxi drives away, leaving David alone.

All other cars are gone, only David's BMW remains in the middle of the shadowy concrete space.

Glancing nervously around, David unlocks his car and slips inside. He locks himself in immediately.

**INT. DAVID'S CAR, STATION CAR PARK - CONTINUOUS**

David turns on the ignition, reaches for the gear stick and freezes.

He slowly turns his head, inch by inch, to check the dark back seats of the car.

Empty.

David exhales.

DAVID

Fuck.

He shoves the car into gear.

**INT. BATHROOM, DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

David stares at his frightened, grey reflection in the mirrored door of the bathroom cabinet.

He opens the cabinet and reaches for a bottle of Aspirin.

**INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

David sloshes wine into a glass with a shaky hand.



It ticks quietly, the rest of the house silent.

He stands in front of it.

He watches the pendulum swing back and forth. Back and forth.

He GRABS the pendulum and yanks. Twists violently. Rams it back up into the innards of the clock.

He lets go. The pendulum is bent, wedged at an angle.

The ticking has stopped.

The clock is silent.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - 5 MINUTES LATER**

David has the grandfather clock resting on the sheet to protect the floor.

He hauls it towards the bi-fold doors at the back of the house. The doors are already open.

**EXT. BACK GARDEN - A COUPLE OF MINUTES LATER, NIGHT**

By the light spilling out of the living room, David drags the clock towards a HEAP OF BRANCHES at the bottom of the garden.

He lets the clock fall onto the heap.

It lands, propped up at an angle.

**INT. GARDEN SHED - MOMENTS LATER**

David flips on the bare bulb interior light.

He picks up a can of PETROL from the floor.

**EXT. BACK GARDEN - JUST AFTER**

David unscrews the can and splashes the branches and clock with petrol.

He stands in front of the bonfire, staring at the clock.

He pulls a matchbox from his pocket.

He lights a match and throws it at the clock.

The petrol catches instantly. The bonfire starts to BURN, flames eating at the clock.

David turns and heads back to the house.

**CLOSE - THE CLOCK-FACE**

Beneath the crackle of the flames - a sudden WHIRRING sound. A mechanism starting.

The small doors at either end of the curved brass track judder open.

Through the flames, a procession of TINY CUT-OUT FIGURES slide out of the left-hand door, along the track - heading for the right-hand door.

The first figures are two running boys, followed closely by a woman.

After a brief pause comes the figure of a MAN. In his hand, he brandishes a sharp brass KNIFE.

CUT TO:

**ON TV:**

A LION hurtles after a ZEBRA.

It launches itself at the panicked animal ...

The channel changes:

A rap video. A RAPPER and BIKINI-CLAD MODELS in a jacuzzi.

The channel changes:

A PENSIONER struggles to open a can of dog food with arthritic fingers. Beside the can are a plate and knife and fork.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
 -- food bank closed, Harold can't  
 afford to buy meat and so --

The TV switches off as we

CUT TO:

**INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

David sits on the sofa. Disgusted by the TV, he chucks the remote onto a spare cushion.

The lights are turned low. Red shadows dance on the walls, cast by the bonfire outside.

David puts his head in his hands.

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING/ STAIRS/ HALL - NIGHT**

We are drifting down the stairs - we hear the TICKING of the clock, quiet, slower than it should be.

As we near the bottom of the stairs, we see the FIGURE in the stark, moonlit hall.

Back towards us, naked beneath his hospital gown is the Frail Old Man. His skeletal arm clutching his portable drip.

The ticking is louder now. We drift towards the man.

He turns his head and stares at us with white, BLIND eyes as we drift past.

We're heading for the open living room door. The ticking getting louder, faster ...

**INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

The living room looks like a HOSPITAL WARD for the distressed elderly.

Ancient husks of MEN and WOMEN lie dying in hospital beds.

The TICKING of the missing clock is joined by the wheezing of an iron lung.

A couple of the still-mobile elderly shuffle vacantly about in open-backed hospital gowns.

BLOOD smears the mirror over the mantelpiece as an OLD LADY beats her head compulsively against it.

She has used her own blood to daub:

across the cracked mirror with her bloody fingers.

The ticking is loud now, faster, as we drift past the accusing stares of the elderly.

We're heading for the open bi-fold doors, towards the dark garden.

ABRUPT CUT TO:

**EXT. BACK GARDEN - EARLY MORNING**

The bonfire has burnt itself out.

The charred remains of the clock are barely recognizable.

David stares down at the bonfire, from between the half-drawn curtains at his bedroom window. He's buttoning his work shirt.

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Sara is still in bed, propped up on the pillows. David, half-dressed, ties his tie in the mirror.

SARA  
It's the big day ...

David nods.

SARA  
I've been thinking, with your bonus --

DAVID  
I don't think I should do it.

SARA  
What?

David turns to face her.

DAVID  
Sure, cut up the company. Everyone loses their jobs but ... someone would do that anyway. But the pensions ... it's ... wrong.

SARA  
Wrong? Wrong? It's legal, right?

DAVID  
Well, yeah but --

SARA  
So someone else'll do that too! Jesus  
Christ, we went through this!

David pulls on his trousers.

SARA  
I'll tell you what's wrong. Not  
getting your bonus is wrong! Not  
being able to afford their --

Sara stabs a finger at a photograph of her sons on the  
bedside table.

SARA  
-- school is wrong! Not being able to  
hold my head up with my friends is  
wrong! I thought I'd married someone  
with balls. Someone who'd look after  
his family and --

DAVID  
Jesus Christ! Enough!

**INT. TOM'S BEDROOM - AN HOUR LATER, MORNING**

Mark is at the window, looking over the back garden. He too  
studies the remains of the bonfire.

Tom sits on his bed, pulling on his school jumper.

MARK  
It's all burnt up.

TOM  
Going loony. Both of 'em.

Mark turns.

MARK  
Are not! Mum told Dad there was  
something in the clock and now it's  
in the house, I heard her.

TOM  
Told you. Loony.

Annoyed, Mark turns back to the window. He stares at the  
remains of the clock.

Behind him, Tom slips silently off the bed.

MARK  
I'm glad Dad burnt it.

Tom sneaks up behind Mark. He raises a claw-like hand above Mark's shoulder ...

MARK  
Maybe everything'll be --

and GRABS HIM.

TOM  
CLOCK MONSTER!

Mark SCREAMS and JUMPS. He swots at his older brother.

MARK  
's not funny!

Mark runs for the door, trying to hide that he's started to cry.

TOM  
Scaredy cat! Made you shat!

**EXT. DAVID'S OFFICE BUILDING - DAY**

The clock-face and giant CDS International sign mark out David's office building.

It towers over it's neighbours, casting them into shadow.

**INT. DAVID'S OFFICE - DAY**

David sits at his desk, gazing into space.

SARA (V.O.)  
Being a fucking laughing stock at work. That's wrong.

DAVID  
(out loud)  
Enough!

David rises abruptly and walks to the window. He presses his head against the glass.

He stares down at the people crossing the windswept plaza far below.

SEB (O.S.)  
We're all set.

David turns.

Seb stands in the doorway, holding paperwork.

SEB  
You've just got to sign a few things,  
we're done.

Seb enters. He puts the paperwork on the desk. He looks up.

David is hesitating. He glances at Seb but breaks eye contact. He looks away.

A brief uncomfortable pause.

SEB  
We ... we don't have to do this.  
Nineteen mil would be ... it would be  
...

David looks at the framed PHOTOGRAPH on his desk - Sara and the kids.

He glances at the paperwork and then at Seb. Seb holds a pen, forgotten in his hand.

SEB  
You see it one way, it's all fine ...  
another way, does it kind of ... make  
us a monster?

DAVID  
It's my name on this.

David studies the photo again.

Sara stares accusingly at him, out of the image.

David drags his gaze away from the photo - all his attention now on Seb.

DAVID  
If I don't do it, someone else will.  
(then)  
Give me the fuckin' pen.

Seb offers the pen reluctantly. David plucks it out of Seb's hand.

David leans over the paperwork, starts to sign his name.

DAVID  
(grimly)  
Let's get rich.

**INT. LANDING, DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - DAY**

Mark walks towards his room carrying a sandwich.

SCRATCH!

Mark freezes. His eyes track up to the ceiling.

He waits.

Nothing.

MARK  
You're a bird on the roof. I'm not  
scared of you.

But he is.

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - DUSK**

David's BMW pulls into the drive.

David turns the engine off and sits in the car, staring at the house, lost in thought.

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. STAIRS/ HALL - NIGHT**

We drift across the hall - the TICKING of the clock, quiet, slower than it should be.

Ahead of us the Frail Old Man in the hospital gown turns to stare at us with blind eyes as we drift past.

We're heading for the open living room door. The ticking of the clock getting louder, faster ...

**INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

The living room looks like a HOSPITAL WARD for the distressed elderly.

Ancient husks of men and women lie dying in hospital beds.

The TICKING of the absent clock is joined by the wheezing of the iron lung.

A couple of the still-mobile elderly shuffle vacantly about in open-backed hospital gowns.

BLOOD smears the mirror over the mantelpiece as the OLD LADY beats her head compulsively against it.

She has used the blood to daub:

2 late

across the cracked mirror with her fingers.

She turns her bloody head and GRINS crazily at us as we float past.

The ticking is loud now, faster, as we drift out through the open bi-fold doors and into:

#### **EXT. BACK GARDEN - CONTINUOUS**

The garden is dark, lit only by flickering firelight.

We float over the grass. A shadow falls in front of us, there's SOMEONE ahead.

It's Tom, bare-foot in pyjamas. Shockingly RED, drenched in BLOOD. It's streaming over him. His mouth is open. Screaming silently as we drift past.

The ticking is loud, fast. The firelight brighter.

Another figure. Sara. In a nightdress. Saturated with blood, drowning in it. Screaming noiselessly as we glide past.

Passing Mark, in pyjamas, a dreadful silent screaming horror show.

Flames fill our vision. Flickering and dancing over the burning clock. The ticking frantic, DEAFENING.

The CRACK of wood as the burning clock SPLITS APART - revealing David's SCREAMING bloody face - and this time the scream is ear-splitting and real and racked with sorrow.

Through the flames we can see a HUGE FIGURE behind the bonfire. It leans forward.

It's Henry, but huge, monstrous. The flames lick his face as he LAUGHS. Behind him bank notes fall like confetti into the fire.

ABRUPT CUT TO:

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - DAWN**

David lies in bed. He wipes a tear from his eye.

He drags himself out of bed.

He glances back at Sara - who's fast asleep - and then plods towards the door.

**INT. TOM'S BEDROOM - JUST AFTER**

David pushes open the door and looks in at his son, sprawled asleep in bed.

He crosses to the bed and adjusts the duvet over a stray leg.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - JUST AFTER**

David looks at Mark sleeping.

He looks around the room, at the toy's of Mark's childhood, at the SPELLING MEDAL hanging from the wardrobe door.

Mark's teddy lies face-down on the floor near the bed.

David picks it up and places it under Mark's arm. Mark nuzzles it, still asleep.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - DAWN**

David stares at his grey reflection in the unbroken mirror over the mantelpiece.

Next to the flower arrangement is one of David and Sara's framed WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHS.

The wedding dress looks beautiful but David and Sara's smiles seem strangely false.

DAVID

Too late.

**INT. HENRY'S OFFICE - DAY**

Henry studies paperwork, sitting behind his polished concrete desk.

He looks up as the office door opens.

His P.A. ushers in David and Seb.

Henry looks at them coldly.

HENRY

Gentlemen.

He gestures at an uncomfortably low designer sofa.

HENRY

Take a seat.

**EXT. PICK-UP POINT, PRIVATE SCHOOL - DAY**

David sits in his BMW, picking distractedly at the perfect stitching on the steering wheel.

He spots Mark approaching, weighed down by his school bag.

David plasters a smile onto his face.

Mark opens the rear door and clambers inside.

DAVID

Hey.

MARK

Where's Mum?

DAVID

I got the afternoon off. I told her to go to the spa with the girls. Where's Tom?

Mark slams the door shut.

MARK

Athletics. Ollie's mum gives him a lift home after.

DAVID

You're sure?

MARK

Yep. She always does.

DAVID  
Well, how about you and me stop on  
the way home then? Ice cream sundaes.

Mark nods, beaming.

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - DAY**

David's BM pulls onto the drive.

**INT. HALL - JUST AFTERWARDS**

David unlocks the door and comes in.

Mark follows, drops his school bag and shuts the door as David heads for the kitchen.

**INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

David drops his car keys into the key bowl on the side.

Out of sight of his son, his face sags. He looks drained and worried.

He opens the door of the huge fridge and stares at the contents, blankly, unfocused.

MARK (O.S.)  
Dad ...

David turns.

Mark hesitates in the kitchen doorway.

MARK  
Did you hear it?

DAVID  
(with dawning dread)  
What?

MARK  
Upstairs. A noise. A sort of ...

David and Mark stand there, eyes on the ceiling, listening to the silence of the house.

Suddenly the silence is broken - a QUICK, SHARP, SCRABBLING SOUND. It came from upstairs.

MARK

Daddy ...

David lurches into action. He grabs Mark by the arm and dashes him towards the back door.

He fumbles the door unlocked and almost throws Mark outside.

DAVID

Stay outside!

David slams the back door shut. Outside, Mark stares through the glass, close to tears.

David turns to face the room.

Silence.

Then again, from upstairs - the scrabbling of CLAWS. Then gone.

David runs to the KNIFE BLOCK on the kitchen counter. He whips out a KNIFE.

The blade catches the light, long and deadly sharp.

Now armed, David runs into:

**INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS**

David stops at the bottom of the stairs. He stands there gripping the knife, listening.

Silence.

David exhales, calming himself.

He starts to creep slowly up the stairs.

**INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING - CONTINUOUS**

David rounds the top of the stairs, knife-first.

The landing is quiet and undisturbed.

He pushes open the door to his and Sara's bedroom. He glances back down the landing and then steps inside.

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

David stalks into the room, looking around.

He drops to his knees and checks under the bed.

Knife at the ready, he wrenches open a wardrobe door. He's confronted by orderly rows of designer shoes.

He yanks back the floor-length curtains.

He stands in the doorway of the en suite bathroom scrutinizing the spotless room.

**INT. TOM'S BEDROOM - JUST AFTER**

On his knees, David whips back the duvet hanging from the unmade bed.

He glares into the darkness under the bed.

**EXT. BACK GARDEN - THE SAME TIME**

In the back garden, Mark nervously watches the house.

**INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING/ STUDY - JUST AFTER**

David quietly grips the door handle to his study.

He sweeps the door open.

He stands, framed in the doorway with the knife.

The room looks undisturbed.

**SMASH!**

David jerks round at the sound of **BREAKING GLASS**. It came from the family bathroom.

David sprints to the shut bathroom door.

He throws it wide.

**INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS**

A glass toothbrush tumbler lies **SMASHED** on the tile floor.

The room seems empty. David scans the room for places to hide.

His knuckles whiten as he grips the knife harder.

The shower screen is frosted.

David edges towards it.

**EXT. BACK GARDEN - THE SAME TIME**

Mark fearfully scans the windows of the house.

**INT. BATHROOM - THE SAME TIME**

David reaches for the handle of the shower screen.

He tenses ... raises the knife, ready to rip the screen open.

**EXT. BACK GARDEN - THE SAME TIME**

Mark's eyes flick between the upstairs windows.

VOICE (O.S.)  
(screaming)  
BOO!

Mark JUMPS LIKE HELL. He whirls around.

Tom stands behind him, laughing.

**INT. BATHROOM - THE SAME TIME**

David yanks open the shower screen.

The shower cubicle is empty.

David almost collapses with relief.

**EXT. BACK GARDEN - THE SAME TIME**

MARK  
Don't do that!

TOM  
Your face!  
(then)  
What's going on?

MARK  
We heard a noise, upstairs. Dad's up  
there now looking for ...

TOM  
(amused)  
What? The clock monster?

Mark turns to watch the house.

MARK  
It has claws.

Tom glances at his younger brother, suddenly not so sure.

**INT. BATHROOM - THE SAME TIME**

David upends the laundry hamper onto the floor. There's nothing inside except dirty clothes.

He drops the hamper and looks around.

There's a dusty smudge on the mirror.

He walks over and peers at it.

It could be the imprint of a bird's wing - but then again, maybe not.

He glances at the windows.

The fan-light window is open.

He walks over and looks at it - there's a big enough gap, a bird could have got in ... but out again?

David looks doubtfully back at the mirror.

**EXT. BACK GARDEN - A MINUTE LATER**

David opens the back door and steps outside.

He trudges towards Mark and Tom, who stand silently waiting for him.

He forces his face into a a sheepish grin as he approaches.

DAVID  
(trying to sound  
convincing)  
It was a bird.

He hugs Mark to him and reaches out and ruffles Tom's hair.

DAVID  
A bird got into the bathroom but it  
got out again.

MARK  
Is it okay now?

DAVID  
Yeah, I guess.

He starts to steer the boys towards the house.

DAVID  
But let's not tell Mum, okay.

All three of them head back towards the house.

DAVID  
Promise?

TOM AND MARK  
Promise.

Tom and Mark walk behind their Dad.

TOM  
(under his breath at  
Mark)  
Scaredy cat!

Mark shoots Tom a black look.

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. BACK GARDEN - NIGHT**

A light shines through Tom's drawn bedroom curtains.

The light goes off.

**INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT**

The clothes are back in the hamper. David empties the broken glass from a dustpan into the bathroom bin.

He straightens and looks around the room.

The KNIFE lies on the window sill. He stares at it for a second and then picks it up.

He turns to leave, carrying the knife and the dustpan and brush.

The front DOORBELL CHIMES downstairs. David frowns - he's not expecting anyone.

**INT. SARA'S CAR, TRAVELLING - NIGHT**

Sara drives, relaxed in the sumptuous interior of her car. Classical music plays, turned down low.

In it's Bluetooth cradle, her phone starts to RING. She glances at the dashboard display. It's David.

She presses a button, the music fades.

SARA

Hi.

DAVID

(on car speaker  
phone)

Hi. You have a nice day?

SARA

Yeah. I didn't realize how tense I was. And now --

DAVID

That's great. The boys are asleep. You nearly home?

SARA

David. What's wrong. You sound --

DAVID

Tell you when you get home.

Sara's manicured nails dig into the steering wheel.

SARA

Tell me now, David.

DAVID

It's ... when you get home, come straight in, okay? Don't talk to anyone. Just get out the car and --

SARA  
 (angry)  
 David, what the fuck?

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S STREET - NIGHT**

Sara drives down the quiet exclusive road.

**INT. SARA'S CAR, TRAVELLING - CONTINUOUS**

She slows as she nears her house.

She cranes forward.

SARA  
 What the ...

TWO TV NEWS VANS are parked at the kerb in front of the house. A REPORTER (REPORTER 1) smokes, leaning against one of the vans.

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

The reporter spots Sara's car slowing. He chucks his cigarette and runs to shout in through the open side door of the van.

Sara drives past and pulls into the drive.

She gets out of her car fast and runs for the house.

The TWO REPORTERS are already chasing her, their CAMERAMEN running to catch up, hoisting cameras onto their shoulders as they run.

REPORTER 1  
 (calling out)  
 Mrs. Marsh! Mrs. Marsh!

REPORTER 2  
 (calling out)  
 Sara! Tell us about the pension raid!

Ahead of her, the front door opens. She's almost there - David holds it open for her, hiding his face.

REPORTER 2  
 (calling out)  
 D'you know what your husband's --

Sara dashes through the open front door.

David SLAMS it in the Reporter's faces.

**INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS**

Sara turns on David.

SARA  
What the fuck have you done!

DAVID  
What d'you mean! What I've done? You  
told me to do it!

SARA  
I didn't tell you to do anything!  
You're a grown fuckin' man --

David grabs Sara by the arm and tugs her away from the door.

DAVID  
They can hear you!

David strides towards the kitchen. Sara storms after him.

**INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

Sara shuts the kitchen door after her.

SARA  
Do the boys know they're here?

DAVID  
They turned up after I got them to  
bed.

SARA  
Thank Christ for small mercies.

DAVID  
If they're here in the morning I'll  
have to go out, give some sort of  
statement.

SARA  
No you won't! CDS will handle this.  
You have told Henry those fuckers are  
out there?

David slumps onto a kitchen stool, all the fight washed out of him.

Fear floods Sara's face.

SARA

What?

DAVID

Henry made me ... Seb Harris and me ... we wrote our resignations.

He looks up at Sara.

Sara stares at him, it isn't sinking in.

DAVID

I had to.

(then)

Seb fucked up. The press was onto it in hours. They're saying about getting the FCA involved.

(then)

Henry cut us loose. They want blood ... If I ever want to work again ... I can't make waves.

Tears well in Sara's eyes.

SARA

(quietly)

But we have money, right?

David grasps her hand.

DAVID

Even with the school, the house, the cars, enough for years.

SARA

(with tears in her eyes)

So we'll be all right?

DAVID

I've done nothing illegal. What's done is done. In six months it'll be forgotten.

He squeezes Sara's hand.

DAVID

People like us are always all right.

**INT. EN SUITE BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Sara is removing her make-up in the mirror. She's been crying, her mascara has run down her cheeks.

She throws a dirty cotton-wool pad into the sink.

**INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

David, in his pyjamas, sits at the island in the dark kitchen. He stares at an untouched glass of wine in front of him.

**INT. LANDING - NIGHT**

David stands in the doorway of Mark's room, watching his son sleep.

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Sara sleeps on her side of the bed. David's side is empty.

David's clock reads: 02:47.

**INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

David peeks out between slates of the drawn blind at the front window.

Outside, the news vans are dark. No movement visible.

DAVID

Cunts.

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

No lights show in the house.

The news vans sit by the kerb in darkness.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Moonlight shines through the bi-fold doors. Furniture casts long shadows across the floor.

**INT. HALL - NIGHT**

The hall is stark and empty.

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

David and Sara sleep turned away from each other on opposite sides of the huge bed.

David's digital clock reads: 04:05.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Mark is curled up, half under his duvet, asleep in the dim glow of his night-light.

Everything is quiet.

His bedside clock shows a sleeping animated star and the time. The digits show 4:19.

The digits change to 4:20.

The silence is disturbed by a quiet sound. A quiet SCRATCHING, like claws against wood ... once, twice and then gone.

Mark sleeps on.

The SCRATCHING comes again - a little louder now.

Mark shifts in his sleep, he gives a small moan.

Mark's bedside clock changes. 4:20 changes to 4:21.

SCRATCH!

Mark's eyes blink open. He's awake.

He pulls the duvet up to his face and lies there listening, very still.

Silence.

Mark's eyes slowly scan the room.

His stuffed-toy animals look back at him from their shelf with glassy, dead eyes.

His built-in slatted wardrobe doors are shut. His spelling medal glints in the darkness, hanging on it's ribbon from the wardrobe door-knob.

His clothes strewn on a chair make a menacing shadowy heap.

His bedroom door is ajar, outside he can't see much of the dark landing.

Mark slips out of bed. He runs to the chair and yanks the clothes off, onto the floor.

He immediately dashes back to bed.

He hauls the duvet right over his head.

SCRATCH!

Mark peeks out from under the duvet.

His spelling medal SWINGS slightly on it's ribbon. The WARDROBE DOOR HAS OPENED half an inch.

Mark stares at it, frozen, wide-eyed with fear and disbelief.

SCRATCH! Loud. Animal claws against wood.

Mark watches in terror as the wardrobe door creeps quietly open another inch - the blackness between the doors widening.

Now, a BREATHING NOISE, guttural - like an animal sniffing for prey ... a low growl ...

Mark springs from his bed.

He dashes across the room, straight past the wardrobe and flings himself out of his bedroom door.

**INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING - CONTINUOUS**

Mark flies full-pelt towards his parents door.

MARK  
(screaming)  
MUMMY! DADDY! MUMMY!

**INT. DAVID AND SARA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

David and Sara jolt out of sleep. Mark crashes in through their bedroom door.

MARK  
(screaming)  
DADDY! MUMMY!

David launches out of bed, confused, spurred by panicky adrenaline.

DAVID  
What? What?

SARA  
(at the same time)  
What? What is it?

MARK  
(hysterical, at the  
same time)  
IN MY WARDROBE! HEARD IT! IT'S CLAWS!  
IN MY WARDROBE! IT'S GONNA GET ME!  
IT'S GONNA GET ME!

David snatches up the KITCHEN KNIFE from the floor under his side of the bed.

MARK  
GONNA GET ME!

Sara dashes round the bed, grabs her hysterical son - half hugging, half restraining. Mark fights her, irrational with fear.

SARA  
Shush! Shush! It's --

MARK  
GONNA GET ME!

David sprints from the room.

**INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING - CONTINUOUS**

David THUNDERS down the landing, knife-first.

MARK (O.S.)  
GONNA GET ME!

Behind him, Mark's voice breaks into an animal mix of SCREAMING and CRYING.

Mark's bedroom door stands wide open ahead.

David dashes into Mark's room.

As he does so, behind him, Sara runs out of their bedroom, clutching Mark to her chest. Mark is SCREAMING and punching her with his fists.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

David looks wildly about.

The wardrobe doors are further open now - the spelling medal catching the light as it swings gently.

**INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING - THE SAME TIME**

Sara runs along the landing, Mark SCREAMING, trying to wrestle from her grasp.

Sara reaches Tom's bedroom door and flings it open.

SARA

Tom? Tom?

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - THE SAME TIME**

David stands statue-still in the middle of the room. He grips the knife tight in his fist.

Mark is SCREAMING out on the landing.

But suddenly - a different NOISE. From the wardrobe. The creak of coat-hangers.

A SCRATCH on wood.

David LUNGES at the wardrobe doors. He rips the nearest door wide open.

SARA (O.S)

DAVID!

Inside the wardrobe is a confusion of hanging clothes and darkness. A MOVEMENT - something white flits behind the clothes.

David stabs the knife forward with all his weight.

He got something.

Something's SHRIEKING. SCREAMING LIKE A PIG.

**INT. TOM'S BEDROOM - THE SAME TIME**

Sara has dropped Mark but has him by the scruff of his pyjama top.

Tom's bed is empty.

SARA  
DAVID! TOM'S NOT HERE! HE'S --

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - THE SAME TIME**

David falls knife-first into the wardrobe, pulling the clothes rail down.

Whatever he's attacking SHRIEKS frantically, trapped underneath him, underneath the clothes.

David can't see what the hell he's doing.

DAVID  
KILL YOU! YOU FUCKER! I'M FUCKIN' --

He brings the knife back up and stabs down.

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - THE SAME TIME**

The SCREAMING pierces the night.

The interior light clicks on in the front of the nearest news van.

In the van, the REPORTER cranes forward, hand raised to the light-switch, staring up at the bedroom windows.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - THE SAME TIME**

David stabs and stabs and stabs.

Beneath him, the animal SCREAMS.

DAVID  
KILL YOU!

Blood splatters the clothes and walls.

The room FLOODS WITH LIGHT.

David glances back.

Sara stands white-faced in the doorway, one hand on the light-switch. Mark is in front of her.

SARA

What have you done?

With dawning dread, David looks from Sara, back to the bloody mass of clothes in front of him.

He starts to scrabble feverishly through the clothes.

He flings back a blood-soaked shirt, uncovering a CHILD'S ARM, LACERATED - SHAKING SPASTICALLY.

DAVID

Oh no! No!

He hauls off more clothes. He uncovers Tom's head and shoulders. Tom's neck is gashed horribly open.

He's bubbling up blood from his mouth and nose.

DAVID

NO!

TOM

(very faintly,  
through a mouthful  
of blood)

-- a joke, Daddy. It was a ...

Tom splutters to a halt.

DAVID

Don't talk. Don't --

Tom's eyes roll back in his skull.

He's dead.

David clutches Tom to him, Tom's head lulls horribly on his chopped neck.

Suddenly, Sara is on David's back. SCRATCHING him, BEATING him, MAD WITH RAGE.

SARA  
WHAT'VE YOU --

David drops Tom to swing round, to fend off Sara's blows.

She SLAMS into him, SCRATCHING his face, BITING the arm he throws up in defence.

Her manicured nails slash for his eyes.

Without thinking, David defends himself. He drives the KNIFE forward.

It goes cleanly in between her ribs.

Sara twists away SCREAMING. David keeps hold of the knife. It makes a mess coming out.

Sara staggers back SHRIEKING.

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - THE SAME TIME**

The reporter and cameraman sprint towards the house, the cameraman struggling with his equipment.

Behind them, the second reporter and cameraman are running to catch up.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - THE SAME TIME**

Sara SHRIEKS, flailing backwards.

She slips. Her head SMACKS the edge of a dresser as she goes down.

She convulses on the floor, limbs thrashing, teeth snapping, blood everywhere -

and then she's still.

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - THE SAME TIME**

The reporters jostle each other at the front door, fists HAMMERING on the wood.

REPORTER 1  
HEY! HEY! MISTER MARSH!

REPORTER 2  
 (at the same time)  
 LET US IN! DAVID! SARA!

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - THE SAME TIME**

David is frozen in disbelief.

From somewhere, a HAMMERING sound washes over him as if he was underwater.

He stares at the carnage of the room.

He studies the blood patterns on the wall - like BLOOD-RED ROSES repeating, barbed stems forming a spiked forest.

The hammering comes in pulsing waves as he stares at his dead son, slashed and torn in the ruin of the wardrobe.

He looks at the body of his wife, twisted horribly in a growing sea of blood.

The hammering gets louder, crashing in waves. Deafening.

REPORTER 1 (O.S)  
 (shouting but  
 unreal, as if from  
 far, far away)  
 David! Breaking the door down, David!

David turns vacantly.

He sees his youngest son, standing mute and shell-shocked by the door. All sound fades.

DAVID  
 I'm so sorry.

He steps towards Mark. He's still holding the knife.

DAVID  
 I'm just ... I'm ...

Mark flinches.

**EXT. DAVID AND SARA'S HOUSE - THE SAME TIME**

The Reporters SLAM their weight against the front door.

The door's going to give soon.

**INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - THE SAME TIME**

David shuffles backwards into the middle of the room, away from his son.

We can see in Mark's eyes that nothing is registering any more, he's disconnected ...

The knife drops from David's limp fingers onto the floor.

We hear the dull thuds of the reporters throwing themselves at the front door downstairs.

David collapses to his knees.

Mark's eyes are open but his mind has gone.

David lowers himself until he's lying face down on the floor.

Slowly, he starts to push himself backwards.

Feet first, he starts to disappear underneath his son's single bed.

His head and shoulders disappear from view under the bed. He's completely hidden.

Tom is a blood-splattered ruin in the wardrobe.

Sara's body lies broken and twisted in a pool of blood.

Mark stands motionless, blank, by the door.

The knife lies on the floor a couple of feet from the bed.

David's arm slides slowly back out of the darkness under the bed.

His fingers find the knife, he grasps it and drags it out of sight under the bed.

We hear the door break downstairs, slamming back on it's hinges.

The single bed strewn with Mark's colourful duvet, pillows and teddy bear stands by the wall.

We hear the reporters' feet on the stairs but the sound ebbs and flows.

The bed suddenly JOLTS violently, jerks an inch off the floor and bangs back down.

The teddy bear rolls off.

It lands on the floor, on it's side. It's glass eyes stare under the bed.

A pool of BLOOD starts to ooze out from under the bed.

Mark stands motionless.

The running footsteps are just outside now but they sound another world away.

DISSOLVE TO:

**CLOSE - THE CAMPFIRE**

Flames dance up into the darkness.

TOM (O.S.)  
It's nasty. I don't like it. Why did  
...

**EXT. CAMPSITE, FOREST - NIGHT**

The Storyteller looks up from the fire. He studies Tom.

Tom looks very confused - there's something he should remember but he can't quite grasp ... something ...

TOM  
-- why did ... but ...  
(he starts to feel  
the shape of it)  
-- if ...

Tom looks at his younger brother.

Mark gazes at his feet, his face hidden. Tom looks back at the Storyteller.

TOM  
Why's Mark here?

STORYTELLER  
(to Tom)  
You don't remember? You got cold.  
Waiting for your brother.  
(beat)  
But then, he came to find you.  
(beat)  
He hung himself.

The shock hits Tom, he turns to stare at his brother with pity, in disbelief.

Mark raises his head to look at Tom, he's crying. His lip quivers.

MARK  
(mumble)  
I'm sorry.

Tom HUGS him fiercely. Mark buries his face in Tom's jacket.

The Storyteller leans back and waits a moment.

He shrugs.

STORYTELLER  
It is how it is.

The boys pull apart enough to watch the Storyteller.

STORYTELLER  
Sometimes people end up where they shouldn't. Sort of ... an accounting error.

He rubs a hand down his face.

STORYTELLER  
You should be asleep.  
(then)  
When you wake, I'll be gone --

Mark is drying his eyes with his coat sleeve.

STORYTELLER  
-- but my brother will be here.

Tom doesn't understand. But Mark looks up, a glimmer of hope shows in his teary eyes.

MARK  
The one you told me about? With the stories?

The Storyteller nods.

MARK  
(daring to hope)  
Will he take us ...

The Storyteller nods again.

STORYTELLER

He'll take care of you both. It's  
what he is.

Campfire Mark smiles for the first time.

STORYTELLER

Now sleep.

He nods at the tent behind the boys.

STORYTELLER

Everything's in there.

He turns his attention back to the fire.

STORYTELLER

I'm going to sit up. See your fire  
die.

The boys watch him for a moment and then Mark stands.

He gently nudges his older brother. Tom stands too.

MARK

Goodnight Sir.

TOM

Night.

The Storyteller nods.

Mark shepherds Tom to their tent.

Mark lifts the tent flap. Tom starts to crawl inside.

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. CAMPSITE, FOREST - LATER**

The fire has died down. The Storyteller sits staring into  
the glowing embers.

He stands, takes in a deep breath and looks up into the dark  
sky.

As he does so, ROSE PETALS start to fall. Drifting down from  
the sky like red snowflakes.

The Storyteller gazes at the falling petals for a few  
moments, at them settling on the ground, and then turns and  
heads for his own tent.

He lifts the canvas tent flap.

The inside of the flap is lined with fabric. The pattern is BLOOD-RED ROSES repeating, barbed stems form a spiked forest.

The Storyteller bends down and climbs slowly into his tent. He pulls the tent flap shut behind him.

The clearing is empty. Just the dying fire.

The two tents stand silent.

The rose petals fall gently, carpeting the ground red.

**INT. LOBBY, HOTEL - NIGHT**

Sara and David, suitcases in hand, stand just inside the entrance doors looking around, a little dazed, confused.

The lobby is old-fashioned, dusty arrangements of red roses sit on tables.

There's a reception desk. Behind it a RECEPTIONIST studies paperwork.

                  DAVID  
                  (bewildered, to  
                  Sara)  
                  How? How did we --

The receptionist looks up.

He's wearing a red blazer and tie, hair trimmed, slicked back but we recognize him immediately - it's the STORYTELLER.

He smiles.

                  RECEPTIONIST  
                  Mister and Mrs Marsh.

David and Sara step hesitantly forward, only now realizing they are holding suitcases.

                  RECEPTIONIST  
                  If you'd just sign the book.

He pushes forward a big open LEDGER on the desk top. He uncaps an old-fashioned fountain pen.

David and Sara cross the lobby.

As she walks, Sara glances through a pair of half-glazed doors off to one side.

She glimpses a DINING ROOM. OBESE GUESTS are tucking into sumptuous dinners at laden tables.

She doesn't notice the polished sign over the dining room doors inscribed with the word: GLUTTONY.

She catches David up at the desk.

The Receptionist proffers David the pen. David takes it and blinks down at the open handwritten book.

RECEPTIONIST

Just here ...

CLOSE - THE BOOK

Half the page has been filled out in a flowing script and signed by previous guests.

The lowest two entries are filled out except for spaces left for David and Sara's signatures.

David signs in the space indicated.

The rest of David's row has been filled out with his address, and under a column headed REASON FOR STAY is written a single word: Avarice.

BACK TO SCENE

RECEPTIONIST

Thank you. And Mrs Marsh?

In a daze, David hands the pen to Sara.

She leans in to sign the book.

CLOSE - THE BOOK

Sara signs her name.

Her row has the same address and under Reason For Stay is written: Complicity.

BACK TO SCENE

The Receptionist takes back his pen, smiling politely. He reaches over and RINGS a brass bell on the desk.

He pushes two room keys attached to polished wood fobs across the desk.

One reads 421, the other 464.

RECEPTIONIST

Your keys.

DAVID

But, we ... we want a double room.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm afraid everyone here is alone.

Ah --

He's looking past David and Sara. They turn.

Behind them stands an ageing BELL-BOY, the uniform worn and tight.

He smiles. It's the Delivery Guy who delivered the grandfather clock.

BELL-BOY

Your bags.

He takes David and Sara's cases.

Sara frowns, confused. She's sure he reminds her of someone ...

He turns and heads for the LIFT DOOR across the lobby.

David and Sara traipse after him like cattle, passing the doors to the dining room.

#### INT. DINING ROOM - THE SAME TIME

Through the glass panels in the shut doors, we see David and Sara crossing the lobby outside.

We also see the OBESE DINERS closer-up ... and what this room really is ...

The diners are strapped to their chairs and rigged with wires and rusty metal rods into GHASTLY HUMAN PUPPETS.

Their mouths wired open to splitting point.

They are being mechanically forced to shove endless quantities of food into their mouths as they gag and weep.

Eyes bulge, snot and blood bubbles from noses ... but some unholy power is keeping them alive.

There are two attentive waiters -

The PORTLY MAN carefully pops back in a diner's eyeball that was dangling from it's socket.

The WORKMAN FROM THE WAREHOUSE shovels jelly into a guest's already over-flowing mouth.

The diners' faces show agony, regret and hopeless, endless despair.

**INT. LIFT - HALF A MINUTE LATER**

The bell-boy and David and Sara squeeze into the small wood-panelled lift.

BELL-BOY  
Numbers?

DAVID  
Oh ...

David looks down at his key fob.

DAVID  
Four twenty one.

BELL-BOY  
Ah, the fourth circle.

The lift controls are on a brass panel with circular buttons numbered 1 - 9 and another marked V.

The bell-boy presses the circular button marked 4.

The doors start to close.

BELL-BOY  
Going down.

**INT. DAVID'S ROOM, HOTEL - NIGHT**

A large room but the decor and furnishings are faded, unfashionable.

David dashes round the room, scared, pulling clothes from drawers and thrusting them into the suitcase on the bed.

His eyes keep darting towards the DOOR.

Which is SHUT. Security chain in place.

The door is set into a wall of oppressive wallpaper. BLOOD-RED ROSES repeat, barbed stems form a spiked forest.

David grabs another armful of clothes, glances at the door - and stops dead ...

The security chain has MOVED.

David watches in shocked disbelief as the chain works it's way out of it's clasp, as if it's alive.

It falls and hangs uselessly against the door.

The door handle starts to turn.

The lock clicks.

The door starts to open.

David stands eyes-wide, petrified as the door slowly swings wide ...

ABRUPT CUT TO:

**BLACK**

**CREDITS**

FADE UP TO:

**POST-CREDIT SCENE**

**EXT. BLOCK OF FLATS - NIGHT**

A grim block of flats. Front doors opening onto concrete walkways.

In front of the block, security lights illuminate parked cars - among them a DIRTY, OLD WHITE TRANSIT.

**INT. HALLWAY, FLAT - NIGHT**

A cheap mirror screwed to the wall.

A BIG MAN (30's), in a vest and designer jeans checks his reflection.

He turns his head to admire his jaw-line. There's a spot of BLOOD on his vest.

He runs a hand through his hair. His knuckles are raw.

The DOORBELL CHIMES. Annoyed, the Man looks towards the front door at the end of the hall.

Through a frosted pane of glass, there is the SHAPE of someone outside.

BIG MAN  
Fuck's sake.

The Man stalks towards the door.

He yanks back a bolt, twists the lock and opens the door.

Standing out on the walkway is the Delivery Guy. He smiles.

Incongruous on the concrete walkway, the Delivery Guy stands next to a beautiful antique GOLD-FRAMED MIRROR that we've seen before. Obviously hugely valuable, it's larger than he is and rests on two magnificent stylized eagle's feet.

BIG MAN  
(can't help himself)  
What's that?

The Delivery Guy's smile widens.

DELIVERY GUY  
A gift.

FADE OUT