

Barbarian
by
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EXT. BARBARY STREET - NIGHT

RAIN pours down on a small rented car as it pulls to a stop in front of a MID CENTURY CRAFTSMAN.

-- **INSIDE CAR:** TESS (20's - EXHAUSTED, but ALERT) puts the car in park and grabs her phone. She opens it to an email with a heading that reads: '476 BARBARY'.

She scrolls down to a section titled: ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS.

TESS
(reading)
Eight eight three one.

-- **STREET:** Tess steps out into the drilling rain and pulls her coat over her head. She opens the rear door and pulls out a BACKPACK and a piece of LUGGAGE.

TESS
Eight eight three one.

She kicks the door closed and slings her pack over her shoulder. Head low against the rain, she drags her luggage across the sidewalk, over a narrow yard and up the steps leading to the FRONT DOOR.

TESS
Eight eight three one.

On the wall by the door is a LOCK BOX with a number pad.

TESS
(entering combo)
Eight... Eight... three... one...

She tugs at the box.

Nope.

TESS
Come on.
(trying again)
Eight eight three one.

She pulls at the box.

Nope.

TESS
Motherfuck.

She digs out her phone and pulls up the e-mail.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Her screen wipes to an incoming call from 'MARCUS'. Tess grimaces, presses *decline* and scrolls through the email again.

TESS

...Eight *three three* one! Jesus.

Here we go.

TESS

(entering)

Eight... Three... Three... One!

The lock-box OPENS revealing...

NOTHING.

She drops her backpack and stares at the empty box.

TESS

Are you kidding me?

She looks at her phone. 11:14 pm.

TESS

Are you *seriously* kidding me?

She grabs the doorknob and twists. LOCKED, of course.

Tess KICKS the door and fights the urge to throw her phone.

Deep breath. A tantrum isn't going to help anything.

She collects herself and pulls up the e-mail and scrolls to a headline reading: CONTACT INFORMATION.

-- Moments later she's calling.

BONNIE (O.S.)

Hi you've reached Bonnie Zane with Greater Wayne property management. I can't come to the--

TESS

You gotta be fucking kidding me!

BONNIE

--phone right now so please leave a message and I'll call you back.

BEEEEEP.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TESS

Hi. This is Tess Duncan. I just got into town and I'm renting the house on Barbary Street for the night, aaaand I'm on the front porch and it's pouring rain and the key is not in the lock-box. Call me back, please. My number is 202-865-0336. Thank you.

She hangs up.

TESS

Goddam it!

Tess spins and gives the doorknob another angry YANK.

Easy. Get a grip.

She looks down the block. Every other house on this street is dark. Lifeless.

She notices the STREETLIGHTS are OUT. In fact, the only light on this entire block comes from the small dim SCONCE above this door.

There are no sounds. No horns, no radios, no dogs, nothing. Just rain.

The reality of her situation sets in. She's now shelterless. In a strange city. Late at night.

Alone.

Maybe standing out here isn't such a great idea.

She pulls her coat over her head once more, grabs her backpack and luggage, and steps off the porch.

She moves back down the steps, across the yard and tosses her bags back in her car.

Then, a sound other than rain: *Whoooooop.*

Tess freezes.

What the fuck was that?

Again: *Whoooooop.*

OK, that was definitely a person. Someone was making a high pitched holler, like an Indian brave or something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tess scans the block. Is someone signaling to her? Is someone signaling someone else about her?

Who gives a fuck? Let's get out of here.

Tess moves to the driver's door and yanks it open. Then she notices...

There's a LIGHT ON INSIDE the HOUSE. That definitely was not on when she parked.

Was it?

-- Tess is on the PORCH laying into the doorbell.

Soon she hears footsteps and then a new light turns on in the living room.

The door opens and KEITH - 30's (HANDSOME, SLEEPY) pokes his head out.

KEITH

Yes?

Tess looks at him a beat.

TESS

I'm sorry, who are you?

KEITH

Who are *you*?

TESS

I'm Tess. I'm the renter... or, tenant or whatever.

KEITH

You're the what?

TESS

This is 476 Barbary right?

Tess steps back to look for the house number.

KEITH

I think... I think so.

TESS

You don't *know*?

KEITH

(sharp)
No. I don't *live* here. I'm renting this place.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEITH (CONT'D)

It's the middle of the night. I don't have the address on the... top of my head.

TESS

I'm supposed to be renting this place.

KEITH

What?

TESS

I'm renting this place! I booked it on AirBnB like a month ago!

KEITH

I booked it on HomeAway.

TESS

Are you fucking kidding?

KEITH

Are you sure you have the right place?

TESS

My e-mail says 476 Barbary. That's here. My code for the lockbox worked. *I'm* supposed to be in here.

KEITH

Did you call somebody and tell them?

TESS

Yes! Nobody answered.

KEITH

You sure you have the right date?

TESS

Look!

Tess pulls up her phone and Keith looks through the e-mail.

KEITH

Yeah, it looks... It looks right.
(then)
This is unbelievable.

TESS

What am I supposed to do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Keith rubs his face and thinks over his options.

KEITH

Look. Just... Come in out of the rain. Let's call this idiot.

He steps back and holds the door open. Tess eyes him for a beat and then looks past him to the warm glow of the living room.

Is this a bad idea?

Tess STEPS INSIDE.

INT. 476 BARBARY - CONTINUOUS

-- **LIVING ROOM:** The room she steps into is small, cozy and furnished modestly with a couch, coffee table and TV. At back of the room is a HALLWAY leading to a KITCHEN at the rear of the house.

Keith shuts the door behind her.

TESS

Would it be OK if...

KEITH

Yeah?

TESS

I need to use the bathroom.

KEITH

Yeah sure. It's down the hall there. On the left.

TESS

Thanks. I'll be right back.

She pauses.

TESS

Also, would you mind...

He looks at her, eyebrows raised.

TESS

Pulling up your reservation confirmation... just so I can see it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEITH

Just in case I'm some kinda weirdo
who's broken in here to sleep?

She isn't sure how to answer.

KEITH

Lemme find my phone. Yeah no
problem.

Tess turns back down the hall and steps into the
bathroom.

-- **BATHROOM:** It's small and looks like it was put in
during the 50's.

She looks at herself in the mirror. Dripping wet. Not at
her best.

She sits on the toilet.

On the sink beside her is a MEN'S TRAVEL TOILETRY CASE.
She peeks inside. Usual fare - moisturizer, mini shave
cream, etc.

She sees an ELECTRIC TOOTHBRUSH plugged in below the
sink, charging on the ground.

-- **HALLWAY:** Tess steps out of the bathroom and moves
toward the living room.

It's EMPTY.

Just furniture. No Keith. Where did he--

KEITH (O.S.)

Here you go.

TESS

GAH!!

Both jump at each other as he materializes behind her.

KEITH

Jesus!

TESS

Oh my God! I'm sorry I didn't
think you were back--

KEITH

I went to get my phone.

She catches her breath.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TESS

Sorry.

KEITH

Here.

Tess takes it and scrolls through an e-mail.

TESS

...yep. OK, looks right to me.
Great.

She hands it back.

KEITH

Maybe I have a different number
through HomeAway. Is this what you
called? 303...?

Tess looks at her phone.

TESS

303 509 21--

KEITH

Yup. Same number. Lemme just try
it anyway.

Keith dials.

KEITH

This asshole better pick up.

Tess shifts uncomfortably.

KEITH

Come on....

(disappointed)

Voicemail.

(to phone)

Hi *Bonnie Zane*, this is your
tenant - well I guess I should say
one of your tenants, Keith
Ellicott. At the Barbary place.
Uhhh... looks like you double
booked the house. Call me or call
her... 'cause this sucks.

He hangs up. They look at each other for an awkward beat.

KEITH

I'm not really sure what the
protocol is for this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TESS

Me neither.

Each waits for the other to offer some plan.

TESS

I guess... I should... find
somewhere else?

KEITH

I mean...

TESS

...yeah. I guess I'm gonna do
that. I'll let you get back to
sleep.

KEITH

I feel bad.

Tess moves to the door.

TESS

It's clearly not your fault.

KEITH

What are you gonna do, just go
drive around looking for a hotel?

TESS

I'll use my phone. I'll make some
calls I guess.

KEITH

In your car?

She gives him an exhausted shrug.

KEITH

Well I don't think that's a
good... Why don't you at least
hang in here till you get yourself
sorted. I don't know if you got a
great look at this neighborhood
but... I don't think it's safe to
just be sitting out there in your
car this late... I just wouldn't
do that.

She pulls at her lip and weighs her options.

KEITH

Look obviously you do whatever you
want.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

KEITH (CONT'D)

I'm just saying if you want to do it inside here where it's dry and there's a lock on the door it's OK with me.

-- Tess sits on the couch. She's out of her wet coat and tapping on her phone. Keith enters, holding a small laminated card.

KEITH

Here's the wifi info if you want it.

TESS

Thanks.

She takes it and starts punching it in.

KEITH

By the way, my name is Keith.

TESS

Tess.

KEITH

Tess. Pretty name.

That wasn't necessary. She didn't love that.

TESS

Thanks.

KEITH

Can I get you anything? I think there's like some tea in the kitchen.

TESS

I'm OK. Thanks.

KEITH

Somebody left out a bottle of wine with a ribbon on it. Like a housewarming thing. And some nuts.

She looks at him, blank.

KEITH

Just saying.

TESS

I'm OK.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

KEITH

Ok, well I'm gonna have some tea.
I'll make you a cup.

She watches him disappear into the kitchen, then turns her attention to her phone. She does some tapping and scrolling and holds it to her ear.

TESS

Hi, yes, I'm wondering if you have any rooms available?... For tonight, that's right... Really? OK thank you.

She hangs up. Swing and a miss.

More tapping and scrolling. Another INCOMING CALL from MARCUS takes over the screen. Again she DECLINES.

KEITH (O.S.)

There's milk in here. You want milk?

She looks up.

TESS

Ummmm.... That's OK. I'm good.

She can hear him rummaging through cabinets.

KEITH (O.S.)

I don't see any sugar.

She does more scrolling and tapping before holding the phone to her ear.

TESS

Hi, I'm calling to see if you have any available rooms for tonight? ... OK, thank you.

She hangs up. Keith returns.

KEITH

You know what I just realized?
Water's heating up, by the way.
You know what I realized?

TESS

What's that?

KEITH

There's a convention in town.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

TESS

What?

KEITH

Yeah, there's some huge... I think it's like a medical thing. You're not going to get a room.

Tess drops her head.

TESS

I can't believe this.

Keith leans against the doorway and rubs his face.

KEITH

OK. Here's what I propose: Why don't you just crash here?

TESS

I don't think--

KEITH

You take the bedroom. I'll sleep out here on the couch. And in the morning we'll call these idiots together and we'll tear them a new one and get our money back. Free stay for both of us.

Tess rubs her eyes.

TESS

I really can't believe this.

He shrugs.

KEITH

I don't know what else there is to do.

Tess looks around the room.

TESS

I can take the couch.

KEITH

No way. Call me what you want but there's no way I'm sleeping in the bed while a young lady is on the couch. Blame it on my upbringing but it's not up for discussion. I'm sleeping on the couch. You take the bedroom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

TESS

Well, no offense but I kinda have
a thing about clean sheets.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

The WASHER and DRYER are stacked in the kitchen, humming
away as the WHITE SHEETS CHURN inside.

Tess sits at a small table staring at a steaming CUP OF
TEA in front of her.

Keith steps through the front door with her luggage and
backpack. She rises and moves down the hall to him.

TESS

You really didn't have to do that.

KEITH

Not even up for discussion.
Besides, I have a raincoat. You
don't.

Keith sets down the luggage and hangs up his slicker.

KEITH

(re: luggage)
Want these in your room?

TESS

I can take them.

KEITH

Sure.

He steps back as she grabs her bags.

KEITH

It's the door across from the
bathroom there.

-- **BEDROOM:** Again, cozy and sparse in here. In the center
of the room is a bed, stripped bare.

She drops her backpack on the floor and hoists her
luggage onto the mattress.

She shuts the door and locks it, giving the knob a little
jiggle. Seems solid enough.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tess digs through her luggage for a dry outfit when she notices--

His WALLET sits on top of the dresser.

She picks it up, glances at the door and then opens it. She plucks out his DRIVERS LICENSE.

It's from New York State.

KEITH ELLICOTT DOB: 3-1-86

She digs her phone out of her pocket and TAKES A PHOTO of the LICENSE.

-- **HALLWAY:** Tess steps out, clutching some clothes and a toiletry bag. In the living room Keith pulls cushions off the sofa.

TESS

You left this in the room there.

She holds up his wallet.

KEITH

Oh yikes.

He jogs over and takes it from her.

KEITH

Thanks. Good eyes.

TESS

I really need a shower.

KEITH

Of course. Go nuts.

-- **BATHROOM:** Tess shuts and locks the door and sets her things down.

-- She showers with the curtain drawn, finally able to relax.

-- She puts her bed clothes on.

-- Brushes her teeth.

-- Washes her face.

-- **KITCHEN:** Tess emerges from the bathroom holding her dirty clothes and bag.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Keith sits at the kitchen table. The sheets continue churning in the washer behind him.

KEITH
(re: laundry)
Still on wash.

On the table in front of Keith is the BOTTLE OF WINE (unopened) and TWO GLASSES.

Tess eyes the setup.

KEITH
So it's gonna be a bit. I'm wide awake aaand I think I'm gonna have a glass of this wine that the idiots left us. But I didn't want to open it til you were out of the bathroom because I noticed you didn't drink your tea. Which by the way, *I totally get*. You don't know me. This is a weird situation. Makes total sense. I just thought maybe you would like some of this but if I opened it while you weren't here... Jesus Christ I'm rambling. Look I thought you might not want any if you didn't see me open it so I waited.

TESS
I'm good but you go ahead.

KEITH
You sure?

TESS
Yeah.

KEITH
OK.

Keith picks up a corkscrew and starts opening the bottle.

KEITH
I'd say you got about an hour and change til the bedding's ready. You gonna make it? I looked around for some clean ones and couldn't find any.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TESS

What are you going to do on the couch?

KEITH

Oh I'll be fine.

TESS

I'm really sorry about all this.

KEITH

It's not your fault! You're just as put out as me.

Keith pours himself some wine.

KEITH

If you want I can make you a new cup of tea. You can watch.

TESS

That's OK.

KEITH

Suit yourself.

He takes a sip. Tess sits across from him.

TESS

How is it?

He picks up the bottle, examining the label.

KEITH

It's not bad actually.

He takes another sip and makes a *'yeah it's good'* face. She smiles politely.

KEITH

So can I ask what brings you to town?

TESS

Job interview.

KEITH

Oh yeah? Tomorrow?

TESS

Yep.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

KEITH

What's the job? If you don't mind me asking.

TESS

...No. That's OK. Ummm. It's for a researcher position for a documentary filmmaker.

KEITH

Really? That's cool. Who's the filmmaker?

TESS

Her name is Catherine Crottie.

KEITH

I don't know her. Has she done anything I'd have seen?

TESS

She made a movie about jazz last year called 'Blue Easy'.

KEITH

I saw that.

She raises her eyebrows.

TESS

You saw Blue Easy?

KEITH

I thought it was awesome.

TESS

Are you kidding? No one saw that movie.

KEITH

About the makeshift brass band? And there's that scene with the kids on the roof playing the Coltrane stuff?

TESS

I can't believe you saw that!

KEITH

Yeah it was great.

She leans back and takes him in with new eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

KEITH

Wait, you're meeting with the director tomorrow? That's *so cool!*

TESS

(smiling)
Yeah. It is cool.

KEITH

What's her new one gonna be about?

TESS

It's gonna be about this place. Detroit.

KEITH

Like Detroit music?

TESS

It's gonna be about some of the artists that have come here in the last ten years and set up collectives and creative communities on the edges of the uh, you know, where the houses are basically free.

KEITH

That sounds pretty cool. You know who you should interview for that?

TESS

Who?

KEITH

Me.

TESS

(wry smile)
Why's that?

KEITH

I'm actually one of the founders of the Lion Tamers.

TESS

Are you kidding?

KEITH

I mean, I'm not like THE guy but yeah. I'm ground up.

TESS

That's insane!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

KEITH

That *is* insane!

TESS

Wait, why are you staying in an airbnb? Don't you guys have like a whole block or something?

KEITH

We do but we're looking for some new spaces and this neighborhood is pretty ripe. I'm over here all week basically scouring this side of town for our next little nest.

TESS

(smiling)

Oh. My. God.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

The washing machine has stopped and the sheets sit motionless inside.

-- **LIVING ROOM:** Tess and Keith sit on the couch. Her body language has relaxed. She's drinking a glass of wine and smiling.

TESS

It's cliché. And it's embarrassing.

KEITH

That's not a cliché I've heard before.

TESS

It's *such* a cliché! The mean guy who thinks love and control are the same thing and the girl who just lets herself get turned into a... pet or something? It's *so* cliché that it's boring and I can't believe it's happening to me.

KEITH

Is it *still* happening? I mean... Look at you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TESS

What?

KEITH

You're here right? You're *out!* You got a new job already lined up!

TESS

Job *interview*. I don't have the job. I'm not home free *yet*.

KEITH

But it's kind of up to you if you're free or not. Regardless of what happens with the job.

Tess sips her wine and looks at her lap.

KEITH

I mean... And look forgive me if I'm reading this wrong - we just met - but there's always gonna be people in our lives that try and project some... dynamic onto us that serves them. But really it's up to us whether we play ball or not.

TESS

Is that the lesson here?

Keith smiles and shrugs.

KEITH

It might be. I don't know.

TESS

I just need to stop going back. I keep going back.

KEITH

Maybe that's it.

TESS

Or maybe my lesson is just that guys will walk all over you as much as you let them. There. That's my lesson.

KEITH

I take issue with that sentence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TESS

Cause you're a *guy*. It's a different world for you. Guys get to blast their way through life and make messes. Girls have to be careful. That's not even a relationship thing, that's just a life thing!

KEITH

Elaborate.

TESS

Take tonight. If I had been the one who checked in first and you showed up late at night--

KEITH

You wouldn't have let me in?

TESS

(smiling)
Of course I wouldn't have let you in! Are you crazy!? But if I had been dumb enough to let you in you probably wouldn't even think twice, you'd just march on in.

KEITH

Wait a minute! *You just marched on in!*

TESS

Yeah cause I basically had no choice and it was *scary!*

KEITH

What do I look like a monster?

TESS

Not my point!

KEITH

No, I get it. I know there are bad dudes out there, and it sucks. It totally fuckin' sucks. The question is what do you do about it, you know?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KEITH (CONT'D)

You gonna stay locked into some fucked up toxic dynamic that somebody else picked for you or are you gonna move on, meet somebody new and take a risk, even if it means you might get your heart ripped out of your chest all over again?

TESS

Why is it always the girl who gets her heart ripped out of her chest in these things?

KEITH

Girls can rip. Trust me.

She smiles at him.

The LAUNDRY BUZZES from the kitchen.

KEITH

Jesus that's buzzed like five times now.

TESS

I know. We're being bad.

KEITH

We are?

TESS

I am! I have a friggin' interview tomorrow!

KEITH

You're right. Want a hand with the sheets?

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Tess giggles as Keith stands at the foot of the bed, with his body completely inside the duvet cover stretching both arms to fit the corners of the duvet properly.

TESS

I've never seen this done this way.

KEITH

This is the best way to do this!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He wriggles his way out and tosses the duvet on the bed. His hair is a mess. Tess laughs.

TESS
You look ridiculous!

KEITH
What? You gotta get in there and straighten it out or it bunches up inside the cover!

She covers her mouth, stifling her laugh.

KEITH
(laughing)
You'll thank me later when you're laying under a perfectly even duvet, all right? Trust me.

TESS
I'm very grateful.

KEITH
You'll see!

TESS
I believe you!

They grin at each other they tug the duvet into place.

KEITH
All right. You are officially situated.

TESS
I guess... that about does it.

They stare at each other for a loaded beat. If this was gonna go that direction now would be the time.

KEITH
OK. Well good night. Sorry to keep you up so late before the big day.

TESS
No, it was... it was fun. I liked it.

KEITH
Me too.

He smiles. She smiles back.

Keith claps his hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KEITH

Time to go get this couch in gear!

TESS

I'm so sorry.

KEITH

Don't be! I'm a good sleeper!
Really, I'll be fine.

He moves to the doorway and stops.

KEITH

Good night Tess.

TESS

Good night Keith.

He shuts the door. She stares at it for a beat. Then she flops on the bed and smiles big.

For a couple seconds she's fourteen years old.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - HOURS LATER

It's dark. Tess wakes. Something CREAKS behind her, like walking on floorboards. She opens her eyes but doesn't move. She's not even sure she heard anything. And then...

From close behind her... A LONG WET KISSING SOUND.

Tess WHIPS AROUND and SITS UP in bed. Heart pounding in her throat.

There's NO ONE there. The room is empty.

... But, the DOOR is OPEN.

Keith closed that door and it stayed closed.

She looks around the darkened room. Nothing out of place.

Then from farther into the house: a long low GROANING.

Fully adrenalized, she steps out of bed and moves toward the door.

Another LOW GROAN. But this one ends with a SHARP BARK.

Is that Keith?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- **HALLWAY:** From her doorway she can see Keith laying on the couch. He's TWITCHING.

KEITH
(guttural)
Mmmrrrrr. Ah! Ah!

TESS
Keith?

His face contorts, like he's dreaming of some kind of attack.

TESS
Keith?

He begins trembling.

KEITH
(hoarse)
Help.

Tess moves down the hall, all concern now.

-- **LIVING ROOM:** She crosses the room and stands over him, clutching herself, unsure of what to do.

She bends forward and reaches out to shake him awake when...

His eyes POP OPEN.

KEITH
JESUS!

TESS
Gaaaah!

Keith scrambles back. Tess almost falls over the coffee table.

KEITH
What the fuck!

TESS
I'm sorry!

KEITH
What are you doing?!

TESS
Oh my God! I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to scare you! My door was open.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KEITH

What?

TESS

My door was open and I didn't... I didn't open it. I didn't know if you were up and then I heard you making noise.

She catches her breath.

KEITH

What? Making noise?

TESS

You were having some sort of dream.

Keith stares at her, bewildered.

KEITH

What?

TESS

I'm so sorry. Go back to sleep.

KEITH

You scared the shit out of me.

Tess moves toward the bedroom.

TESS

Sorry! Seriously. I got freaked out. You didn't open my door?

KEITH

Nope.

Keith rubs his face as Tess retreats down the hall.

-- **BEDROOM:** Tess shuts the door and locks it. She flops onto the bed and pulls a pillow over her face.

TESS

Jesus fucking Christ.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Tess wakes. SUNLIGHT comes through the window. She rolls over and looks at the door. STILL CLOSED. She sits up and grabs her phone to check the time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TESS

Shit!

-- **HALLWAY:** Tess steps out. Keith isn't on the couch. He's not in the kitchen either.

TESS

Keith?

Nothing. She moves into the bathroom and shuts the door.

-- **LIVING ROOM:** Tess hurries toward the front door, now dressed. She stops when she sees a NOTE on the coffee tables

It reads: HEY. I HOPE YOU GOT SOME SLEEP. I HAD TO RUN BUT I'LL BE BACK LATER TONIGHT AND WE CAN SORT OUT THE LIVING SITUATION. PLEASE LEAVE THE KEY IN THE LOCKBOX AND I'LL DO THE SAME IF I BEAT YOU HOME. BREAK A LEG TODAY! YOU'RE GONNA CRUSH IT! - K

Then a little lower: P.S. - HAD A GREAT NIGHT LAST NIGHT.

Tess smiles.

EXT. BARBARY STREET - CONTINUOUS

A BEAMING Tess exits the house and locks the door. She puts the KEY in the LOCK BOX and snaps it shut. She turns toward her car, starts down the steps and STOPS.

Her SMILE FADES as she sees the NEIGHBORHOOD in the LIGHT OF DAY for the FIRST TIME.

It's one of those Detroit neighborhoods we've seen on television but hope never to set foot in. Every other house looks ABANDONED, BURNED OUT, or BOARDED UP.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

Tess cruises out of the neighborhood taking it all in with her jaw in her lap. It's a WAR ZONE. Blocks and blocks of decrepit uninhabited buildings.

What. The. Fuck.

INT. TESS'S CAR - DAY

On the highway now, Tess holds her phone up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TESS

Call Marcus.

SIRI

Calling Marcus.

It rings a few times before it's answered.

MARCUS

Hold on.

Sounds of Marcus moving to another room.

MARCUS

(hushed, edgy)

It's seven thirty.

TESS

I needed to--

MARCUS

This is breakfast time. I'm with my family.

TESS

I need to talk to you.

MARCUS

Can it wait an hour and we can talk about whatever this is at the office? I don't want Carol seeing your name pop up on my phone at the breakfast table. Come on Tess!

TESS

I'm not going to be in the office today.

MARCUS

What? Why?

TESS

I won't be in today because I'm in Detroit.

MARCUS

(solving a riddle)

You're in *Detroit*...

TESS

I have a job interview in Detroit and I'm... I'm here doing that.

Beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARCUS

Tess you *have* a job. You have a job *here*.

TESS

I just really think--

MARCUS

And I can't believe I have to say this to you, but it's incredibly unprofessional to call and tell me the *morning of--*

TESS

Unprofessional? Really? That's the word you're going to use?

Beat.

MARCUS

Can we please talk about this in an hour? This is horrible timing.

TESS

I can't do this anymore. I'm either your employee that you treat like shit or your girlfriend that you treat like shit.

MARCUS

I do not treat you like... I treat you like every other employee.

TESS

So you and every other employee are--

MARCUS

You know what I meant.

TESS

I just think that... I just think that it's not fair to... everyone involved right now.

Beat.

TESS

And I'm really sorry. I'm really sorry to be telling you like this at 7:30 in the morning on this particular day of all days... and I know it's really bad timing but--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARCUS

You're fired.

She raises her eyebrows.

MARCUS

Is that better? I'll make it easy for you. *You're fired.*

TESS

Is that what you want?

MARCUS

No. That's not what I want but if... hang on.

Sounds of shuffling.

MARCUS

I'm getting in my car hold on...
(muffled door
shutting)

If it's about the whole mixing of work and the other thing and we have to simplify it, then OK. Let's lose the work thing.

TESS

It's... Marcus it's... *You have a family!*

MARCUS

Don't do this to me. Don't leave like this.

Beat.

MARCUS

Please don't leave me like this.

She drives, tears welling.

TESS

I already... I already have everything set up. I'm meeting the person in 15 minutes.

MARCUS

I love you.

She bites her lip and rolls her eyes. A tear slides down her face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MARCUS

I love you.

She shakes her head.

Stay cool. Breathe.

MARCUS

When are you coming back?

She wipes her face.

TESS

Thursday.

MARCUS

I wanna see you Thursday night.

TESS

Marcus--

MARCUS

Thursday night. You and me. We'll figure this all out.

Beat.

MARCUS

Take the interview. I get it. Take the interview but promise me, you'll see me Thursday.

She cracks.

TESS

I'll see you Thursday.

MARCUS

I love you.

Beat.

MARCUS

Tess?

TESS

I love you too.

MARCUS

I gotta go.

Click.

Push in on Tess's face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Pain.

EXT. BUSINESS DISTRICT - DAY

20 minutes later, everything is different. Tess parks in a SPARKLING NEIGHBORHOOD that is alive with PEDESTRIANS, FOOD CARTS, and NOISE.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

She sits at a table nursing a coffee and scrolling through Insta. She backs out and opens her PHOTOS app.

She taps the shot she took of KEITH'S DRIVER'S LICENSE. She uses both thumbs to zoom in on his face. He's cute. She half smiles.

CATHERINE (O.S.)

Tess?

She looks up to see CATHERINE (40's, KIND).

TESS

Catherine! Hi!

She stands and they shake hands.

TESS

Nice to meet you!

CATHERINE

Nice to meet you! Thanks for making the trip all the way out here!

-- From across the shop we watch as Tess and Catherine's chat. It seems to be going well.

EXT. BUSINESS DISTRICT - LATER

Tess and Catherine step out onto the sidewalk.

CATHERINE

Where you staying while you're in town?

TESS

AirBnB.

CATHERINE

Oh that's nice. Where-a-bouts?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TESS

Ummm... It's in Petosky Otsego?
You know where that is?

CATHERINE

What?!

TESS

Yeah, you know it?

Her smile evaporates.

CATHERINE

Are you kidding?

TESS

It seemed a little rough honestly.

CATHERINE

You shouldn't be there.

TESS

What do you mean?

CATHERINE

That's not... You're in an AirBnB
in *Petoskey Otsago*?

TESS

It's a really cute house.

Catherine doesn't even know how to process that.

TESS

But yeah the neighborhood seemed a
little...

CATHERINE

Tess--

TESS

You know, I tried to get a
different place yesterday but I
guess there's some convention or
something in town. I actually have
a roommate there, too, so it's not
quite so...

CATHERINE

A roommate? In an airbnb?

TESS

It's a little complicated.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CATHERINE

Uhhh, I *guess*. Well, be careful over there. Seriously.

TESS

I will. I'm tough. It was really nice meeting you.

CATHERINE

Hey! I'm excited. This is gonna be great!

TESS

I think so too!

They move off in different directions. She's smiling but it slowly fades to something else. Worry.

EXT. PETOSKY OTSEGO - LATER

Tess cruises through the neighborhood toward her new 'home', gawking all over again at the post apocalyptic homes.

TESS

Jesus.

EXT. BARBARY STREET - AFTERNOON

Tess parks at the house, gets out and opens the rear door for her backpack.

She stops. Something's not right. The HAIRS on the BACK OF HER NECK stand on end and she scans the street.

And then she sees it...

About five houses down, loping out of the trees, comes a tall EMACIATED MAN in a filthy trench coat. He's so covered in dirt and grease that it's impossible to even make out his race. He BOUNDS STRAIGHT AT HER.

MAN

Hey!

Tess is paralyzed with fear. The man raises his arms wildly and GAINS SPEED, - his red eyes bulging at her.

MAN

Hey!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tess yanks her backpack from the car, slams the door and moves toward the house.

He's CLOSER now, only two houses away. Tess can see ropes of saliva falling from his mouth as he yells.

MAN

Lil' girl!

She turns and SPRINTS up the stairs.

Tess grabs the door-knob but it's LOCKED. Fuck.

The lock-box!

She frantically punches in the numbers on the lock-box but she's got too much adrenaline and can't get it right.

MAN

Lil' girl!

He's crossing the street now just ONE HOUSE AWAY.

MAN

Hey!

Tess tries again and the BOX OPENS. The KEY falls into her hands. She lets out a sob of relief.

Tess PLUNGES the KEY into the doorknob and twists it.

MAN

No!

Just as the man has crossed the lawn and is bounding up the front steps, Tess slips inside and SLAMS the door.

INT. 476 BARBARY - CONTINUOUS

The moment she gets the door shut, he COLLIDES with it.

MAN (O.S.)

Lil' girl! Come out that house!
Come out that house!

Tess backs away in terror as he POUNDS on the door.

TESS

Go away!

MAN

Come out that house!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TESS
I'm calling the police!

Frantic, she digs out her PHONE and dials 911.

Tess moves from room to room checking that all the windows are closed tight.

TESS
(to phone)
Answer!

OPERATOR (O.S.)
911 what is your emergency?

TESS
Yes! There's a man outside my house and he's screaming at me and I think he's trying to get inside!

The operator is quiet.

TESS
Hello?!

OPERATOR
What is your address ma'am?

TESS
476 Barbary Lane... I think. Yes.

OPERATOR
Just a moment.

Tess steps out into the living room and looks toward the front door. There's NO SIGN of the man.

OPERATOR
Can you describe the man?

TESS
(whispering)
He's tall. He's wearing--

OPERATOR
You'll have to speak up, I can't hear you.

TESS
He's *tall*. He's wearing a trench coat.

OPERATOR
Is the man white or black?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TESS

I'm not sure. It's hard to say.

She peeks out a window. Just yard. No man.

TESS

I can't see him anymore.

OPERATOR

He left?

TESS

I don't know! ... Are you sending someone?

OPERATOR

We don't have any available units at the moment.

Tess processes.

TESS

So no one's coming?!

OPERATOR

Ma'am. Calm down. I don't *have* any units available at *this time*. If a unit becomes available I'll direct one to you. My advice is to remain indoors-

Tess HANGS UP. She stands perfectly still and listens.

No sound. Just her own breathing.

She peers out the front window again. Just yard and burned out houses.

She moves to another window. Not a soul.

-- **BEDROOM:** Tess crams her clothes into her suitcase.

- She yanks chargers out of the wall and tosses them in her backpack.

-- **BATHROOM:** Tess collects her products. She catches herself in the mirror. She looks insane.

She sets down her toiletry bag, grabs the sink, shuts her eyes and takes a DEEP BREATH.

TESS

Get it together.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Deep breath.

TESS

You're OK. You're safe.

She opens her eyes and stares at herself.

TESS

The doors are locked. The man is gone. You're OK. Keith will be home soon and you can tell him you got the job and have some wine and everything is gonna be OK. You're OK.

It's working. She's calming down. She almost smiles at how ridiculous she looks.

- Tess washes her face. Self soothing.

- She sits on the toilet. Then she notices. NO TOILET PAPER.

- She looks under the sink. Nothing.

-- **HALLWAY:** She opens a closet and digs through the shelves. No luck.

TESS

Oh come on.

-- **KITCHEN:** She looks under the sink. Of course there's none in there.

-- **HALLWAY:** Tess moves down the hall and tries the door next to the closet. It opens to reveal...

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Tess stands at the top of the basement stairs and flips on the lights.

Sitting on a shelf near the bottom of the steps is a large economy sized BAG of TOILET PAPER. Jackpot.

She jogs down the steps. GRABS a roll, and takes in the rest of the basement. Nothing too out of the ordinary down here. It's cluttered with the usual cabinets, equipment, etc.

No reason to linger. She turns and starts back up the stairs when the DOOR CREAKS SHUT above her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Fuck. Did that just happen?

She runs up and tries the knob... LOCKED.

Fuck!

She jiggles the knob. Panic rises. She YANKS it harder and it's SOLID.

TESS

No!

It's not giving. She's trapped.

TESS

Oh my God, no!

Tess sits down next to the doorknob and presses her fists to her eyes, resisting the urge to scream. She pats at her pockets.

TESS

Fuck!

-- **BEDROOM:** CU on her PHONE sitting on the dresser.

-- **BASEMENT:** Tess rubs her legs and takes a couple deep breaths.

TESS

You're OK. Cool it... Calm down.

She shakes it off.

You're OK. You're just locked in a basement. Keith will be home and you'll have some wine and you'll laugh about this. Bottom line is, you're safe. You're OK.

Then a horrible thought hits her. She digs in her POCKET and pulls out the LOCKBOX KEY.

I didn't put it back.

-- **FRONT PORCH:** CU on the LOCKBOX hanging open. EMPTY.

Keith can't get in.

-- **BASEMENT:** A SMALL WINDOW near the ceiling lets in a shaft of sunlight. Tess stands on her tip toes and peaks out. The glass is filthy but she can just see above the grass in the front yard and into the street. She pulls at it but it's STUCK tight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

- Tess looks through the shelves pushing odds and ends aside. Looking for... what? A key? A hammer?

Behind some rotten cardboard boxes something catches her eye. A two foot LENGTH OF THICK ROPE juts out of a hole in the wall at waist level.

What is this?

Beside the rope is a VERTICAL SEAM in the wall. A long straight CRACK running from the floor almost to the ceiling.

Tess steps forward and pulls the rope. The crack in the wall widens and Tess realizes what she's found.

Holy shit, it's a secret door.

With nothing to lose Tess PULLS it with both hands dragging it SLOWLY OPEN. When she's done she finds herself standing in front of...

DARKNESS.

A BLACK CORRIDOR stretches before her. Impossible to say how far it goes. The light ends a few feet in.

TESS

Nope. Fuck that.

- Tess sits on the stairs waiting for Keith. Across the room, the corridor waits just as patiently.

Then she spots a FULL BODY MIRROR leaning against the wall. She considers the mirror for a moment and then looks up at the CEILING LIGHT.

- Tess DRAGS the MIRROR across the room to directly beneath the ceiling light. It bounces a long RECTANGLE OF LIGHT against the wall. She TILTS the mirror, AIMING the LIGHT into the hallway.

TESS

Here we go.

Now she can see the walls are made of rough plywood, the floor is dirt and it seems to go on for some 25 feet at least. The end is beyond the reach of the mirror.

She catches the glint of something else.

A BRASS DOORKNOB pokes out of the wall about fifteen feet in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

- Tess LEANS THE MIRROR against some old furniture that she's dragged into the center of the room so that it AIMS PERFECTLY down the corridor.

- She PROPS the SECRET DOOR OPEN with heavy paint cans.

Then she takes a deep breath and STEPS INSIDE.

INT. SECRET HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

One foot in front of the other. Slow and steady.

Even with the light from the mirror helping her, it's difficult to see in here. But before long she reaches the DOORKNOB. She turns it.

Tess gives a push and the DOOR GROANS OPEN. Inside is total blackness.

Her heart is beating so loud she can hear it. She sticks one trembling hand into the darkness and feels along the wall. Miraculously she finds a LIGHT SWITCH. She flicks it on to reveal...

INT. TINY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Pale electric light fills the room with a clap.

It's SMALL, BARE, CONCRETE and DIRTY. Not much bigger than a garden shed.

It has only THREE OBJECTS inside.

OBJECT 1 is a RUSTY METAL BED FRAME with a bare MATTRESS.

OBJECT 2 is in the back corner. It's a 80's VHS CAMERA sitting atop a TRIPOD.

OBJECT 3 is sitting beside the bed. It's a plastic drywall BUCKET.

Gears turn in her mind. Secret room. BED. CAMERA. BUCKET.

Then the kicker. Beside her on the door-frame she sees BLOODY HANDPRINTS.

Get. The. Fuck. Out. Now.

Tess BOLTS.

-- **BASEMENT:** Tess bounds out of the corridor no longer able to fight off the panic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Tess SCREAMS as a POUNDING comes from above her. Then she realizes. The FRONT DOOR!

She runs to the small WINDOW and cranes to see KEITH'S CAR parked behind hers. She POUNDS on the GLASS.

TESS

Keith! Help me!

Soon Keith steps off the front steps and into view. Looking around for the source of her screams.

TESS

Keith!

He bends down and spots her in the window.

KEITH

Tess? What the fuck?

TESS

I'm stuck!

KEITH

Where's the key?

She digs it out of her pocket as he crouches to pull at the window. Together they manage to SLIDE IT OPEN an inch. She passes it through.

INT. 476 BARBARY - MOMENTS LATER

Keith opens the basement door and Tess spills out, grabbing him.

KEITH

What the hell were you doing down there? Are you OK?

She tries to speak but can barely breathe.

KEITH

What happened? Come, sit down.

TESS

We have to... we have to go!

KEITH

What are you saying? Why were you in the *basement*?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TESS

We have to go! We have to get out of here!

KEITH

What?! What's going on?

TESS

I got... I got locked in the basement and I found a hidden area. I found a room.

KEITH

You found a hidden room?

TESS

There's something bad here!

KEITH

Tess calm down. *Tess!* Relax! You're OK. You're safe, alright?

She swallows and looks at him.

TESS

I don't think I am.

KEITH

Talk to me. What's down there? What did you see?

Tess takes a deep slow breath.

TESS

I was locked in the basement getting toilet paper. I was down there for hours and I found this... hidden passageway. And there's a room in there that's... like a dungeon.

KEITH

What's in there?

TESS

There's a bed. And a camera. And a... bucket.

KEITH

A bed and a... What? A bucket and camera? Is that... OK I'm gonna go take a look.

She grabs him tighter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TESS

No! Don't go down there! There were these handprints and--

KEITH

Tess, you're not really making sense. So there's a room down there with a bed and a bucket? It's a *basement*. There's old junk in basements. It doesn't sound that weird.

Tess hardens.

TESS

I'm leaving. If you want to go look, then suit yourself but I'm leaving.

She stands up.

KEITH

Right now?

TESS

Yep.

-- **BEDROOM:** Tess grabs her phone off the table, and her bags off the bed.

-- **HALLWAY:** Tess steps out and Keith blocks her path.

KEITH

Tess, just stop. Please.

TESS

Move. I'm going.

KEITH

That's fine. Can you just wait one moment and hear me out?

She tries to move around him but he sidesteps, BLOCKING her.

KEITH

Can you give me twenty seconds?

She stares at him.

KEITH

I'm sorry if I don't seem like I'm taking whatever it was you saw seriously. I just...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KEITH (CONT'D)

I didn't see it. I just want to take a look and then I'll know what you saw and I'll be able to--

TESS

To what?

KEITH

I don't know! Tell the police with you? Get the hell out of here too? I just can't run off with you in a panic cause there's a room with a bed downstairs!

Tess moves past him and he doesn't stop her.

KEITH

All I'm asking you to do is wait here while I go look. You don't even have to come with me if you don't want to.

TESS

I'm not going down there again.

KEITH

OK fine. Just hang out in case I get locked down there OK? Just promise me you won't leave til I'm back up here. Can you do that?

She so doesn't want to do that.

TESS

I will wait.

KEITH

You promise?

TESS

Yes.

Keith is satisfied.

KEITH

OK. *Thank you.* I'm gonna go right now. I'll be right back. Thirty seconds.

Keith pushes the basement door open as wide as it will go and it seems to hold. He DESCENDS out of sight.

She sets her bags down and moves to the top of the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

She waits there a beat.

TESS
You see it?

KEITH (O.S.)
(very faint)
Yeah.

She waits another beat.

Silence.

TESS
OK, come back up.

Nothing.

TESS
Jesus Christ. *Keith?!*

Nothing.

-- **BASEMENT:** She moves down a few steps and squats. She can see the mouth of the secret hallway but nothing else.

ANGLE ON the DOOR above her SLOWLY CLOSING. She's too focused on finding Keith to notice.

TESS
Keith!

The door makes a FAINT CREAK and she hears it. She SPRINGS UP THE STEPS and GRABS it just before it locks her down there a second time.

-- **LIVING ROOM:** Tess paces, frantic, on the PHONE.

OPERATOR
911 what is your emergency?

TESS
Hi, I'm at 476 Barbary Lane and I need you to send someone here right away.

OPERATOR
What's going on?

TESS
Just send someone please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

OPERATOR

Ma'am, I need to know the nature of the emergency.

TESS

I'm staying in a house and I found a hidden room... and my friend went in it and he hasn't come back. I think something happened to him.

Long beat.

TESS

Hello?

OPERATOR

I'm sorry. You're in a house with a... with a what?

TESS

A secret... a hidden room.

OPERATOR

And what's in the room? I'm not understanding you.

TESS

(racing)

It has a bed and bloody handprints and there's a tunnel thing and I think my friend is stuck.

OPERATOR

You think your friend is stuck?

TESS

Or he might be hurt or missing or something.

OPERATOR

He's stuck or he's missing?

TESS

He's missing.

OPERATOR

How long has your friend been gone?

TESS

Like... five minutes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

OPERATOR

Uh huh.

TESS

Can you please just send someone
out here? Please?

OPERATOR

We don't have any available units
at this moment but--

Tess HANGS UP.

TESS

Aaaaauugh!

She strides to the top of the stairs.

TESS

Keith! I'm leaving! Where are you?

Nothing.

-- **LIVING ROOM:** She grabs her keys and stands at the front door, hand on the knob. She looks back at the hallway.

She can't do it. She can't leave him.

You promised.

-- **KITCHEN:** Tess DROPS her KEYS on the KITCHEN TABLE and DRAGS A CHAIR into the hall. She WEDGES the CHAIR tight against the basement door, PROPPING IT OPEN.

-- **BASEMENT:** She moves down the stairs and walks to the mouth of the secret hallway.

The dark tunnel stands before her. Deep within, the light from the tiny room hits the opposite wall. No sign of Keith.

TESS

Keith!

No response.

Tess wills herself to step forwards but her feet don't want to listen. She pulls out her PHONE and turns on the FLASHLIGHT. Deep breath.

-- **SECRET HALLWAY:** Tess moves slowly forwards. One foot in front of the other. The sound of her own breathing feels unnaturally loud.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

Before long she's at the doorway.

-- **TINY ROOM:** EMPTY. Everything is as it was before.

TESS

Keith?

She bends and looks under the bed. NOTHING.

This is IMPOSSIBLE. There's literally nowhere he could be.

-- **SECRET HALLWAY:** Tess steps out, dumbfounded. Then her the light catches something she couldn't see before.

On the farthest wall of the hallway there is actually ANOTHER DOOR. This one has no knob or rope but it's slightly ajar.

Tess steps to this new door and PUSHES IT OPEN. Her flashlight barely cuts through the darkness but she can tell what's in here.

A STAIRCASE leading DOWN...

Down into pure BLACKNESS. Tess is terrified.

TESS

Keith!

No response.

TESS

KEITH!

A beat.

Then, ever so FAINT...

KEITH (O.S.)

(distant)

Tess!

She almost sobs with relief.

TESS

Keith!

KEITH (O.S.)

Help me!

TESS

Come up here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

KEITH (O.S.)

Help!

Tess turns and looks down the hall behind her. Through the doorway she sees the MIRROR aiming straight up at the light. She stares at it for a beat. Her mind is so filled with dread and shock that somehow it's almost blank.

Then she turns and STEPS DOWN into the DARKNESS.

INT. NEST - CONTINUOUS

Tess moves on shaky legs down the stairway. The STEPS are sloppily assembled with RAW TWO BY FOURS. The WALLS are narrow and made of UNFINISHED PLYWOOD. Patches of DIRT and ROCKS poke through here and there.

The steps lead steadily down.

And down.

And down.

TESS

Keith!

Nothing.

She turns and shines her light up the way she came. She can't even see the top of the staircase. Just more blackness.

TESS

Keith!!

Somewhere down there something MOANS. Could be Keith in pain. Could be something else.

TESS

Keith! Answer me!

KEITH (O.S.)

(distant/urgent)

Tess! Help!

Crying now, she continues down.

Then the STAIRS END and she finds herself on a SOLID DIRT FLOOR. Before her is a new clapboard TUNNEL stretching once again into darkness.

TESS

Keith!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEITH (O.S.)

Tess!

He's closer now. She moves down the tunnel toward his voice.

TESS

I'm coming!

Her foot catches something and she FALLS to her knees but picks herself up and pushes forward.

Soon she comes to a SMALL OPENING on the right. She shines her phone inside to reveal ANOTHER SMALL ROOM. Arranged against the walls are five empty LARGE METAL CAGES, like one would use to house a LARGE DOG.

Tess doesn't enter. She shines her light back down the hall into the dark.

TESS

Keith!

No answer.

TESS

Answer me! Keith!

She staggers on.

And then in the distance her light finds a SHAPE on the GROUND. It's MOVING.

She SCREAMS, but stops when she sees that it's KEITH. He's CRAWLING toward her, eyes wide with terror.

KEITH

Tess!

Keith scampers toward her on his hands and knees reaching wildly. She stoops and they embrace.

TESS

Keith!

She looks at him, hoping to read some logic in his face but he can only stare beyond her, terrified.

TESS

Why?! Why did you come down here?!

KEITH

(hissing)
There's someone else down here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TESS

Why did you come down here!?

He shakes her hard.

KEITH

Listen to me! *Listen!* There's someone else down here!

TESS

What?

KEITH

Someone bit me!

Tess gasps.

TESS

Let's get out of here! This way!

She pulls him back the way she came.

KEITH

No! That's where they were!

TESS

Keith! This is the way out!

KEITH

No!

He starts pulling her DEEPER INTO THE TUNNEL. She resists.

TESS

I'm not going down there! Stop!

KEITH

Tess! Come this way now!

He YANKS her violently by the wrists. Tess shoves him back but he holds tight.

TESS

Stop! Keith!

And then it happens...

An enormous NAKED FIGURE with IVORY WHITE SKIN rushes from the blackness, and with a deafening high pitched SHRIEK like a cat in a blender, it THROWS ITSELF onto Keith.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The figure is a blur of WHITE SKIN, KNOBBY JOINTS and LONG BLACK GREASY HAIR.

It SEIZES KEITH'S HEAD with both hands and SLAMS it into the wall.

Tess watches in mute horror as the figure SMASHES Keith's HEAD into the wall with almost supernatural power again and again like a JACKHAMMER.

Soon his head is a MELON, just a sphere splattered with it's own PULP. The figure SPINS HIM AROUND and STICKS ONE HAND INTO HIS MOUTH and with a decisive YANK it tugs his LOWER JAW COMPLETELY OFF, and then just as fast it SLAMS it INTO HIS EYES, leaving it there.

Tess finally lets out a long horrified SCREAM. The figure turns and steps fully into the light of her phone.

It's a WOMAN. Naked, gigantic, pale and wild. Two shining beads look through her matted filthy hair. She TOWERS over Tess in the darkness and SCREAMS BACK.

EXT. HIGHWAY 1, MALIBU CALIFORNIA - DAY

CALE, 30's drives a bright red CONVERTIBLE down the PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY along the BEACH. He's blasting Mac DeMarco's "My Kind of Woman" on the stereo and drumming on the wheel.

The sun is shining. Traffic is light. He's handsome and paid and a little stoned.

His music cuts out as his PHONE RINGS through the bluetooth.

CALE

Yello.

ASSISTANT

Hi Cale, I have David Stern and Melissa Herberts for you.

CALE

Love it.

ASSISTANT

Guys, you're on with Cale.

CALE

Hello! What's the good news?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

Hey Cale, listen Melissa and I need to talk with you about something that's just come through.

CALE

Cool. What's up?

MELISSA

Hi Cale. This is a bit of an awkward conversation but there's been a... troubling development.

CALE

...OK. What?

MELISSA

Apparently Megan Maddox has contacted the network through her lawyer and she's made a very serious accusation against you.

Cale swallows.

CALE

Really? ... What did she say?

MELISSA

She has claimed that you were sexually aggressive during the filming of the pilot and she says she no longer wants to move forward if you're involved.

CALE

She... What?!

MELISSA

The network is taking this very seriously.

CALE

What does that mean?

MELISSA

That means that at this time they're going to start an investigation and--

CALE

So are we not picked up any more?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MELISSA

Well, they're going to conduct an investigation and then decide how to proceed.

DAVID

I'm gonna be honest with you Cale, what I think is likely to happen is that regardless of the outcome of the investigation it's very unlikely that even if the show goes forward, that you will be involved.

CALE

I'm *fired*?

DAVID

Not yet but I think essentially that is the most likely outcome.

CALE

That fucking bitch! Guys this is totally blown out of proportion!

MELISSA

OK, I think it's important to say right now that it's probably not in your best interest go into details with us on this call.

CALE

What the fuck does that mean?

DAVID

Cale, I think you should take a little bit of time and get yourself together--

CALE

This can't be real! Just like that? I'm out? Are you fucking kidding?

DAVID

Cale? Just take a beat and get yourself together.

MELISSA

I think we should tell him the other--

DAVID

I think first thing--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CALE

What other?

DAVID

For now, buddy you just need to cool your head--

CALE

No fuck that. What *other*? What else?

MELISSA

Cale, there's going to be a story tomorrow in the Hollywood Reporter about this.

CALE

About *what*? About *me*? Are you kidding?

MELISSA

The allegations are very serious.

CALE

This is unbelievable! What is she saying I did? Is she saying I raped her or something?

DAVID

Buddy calm down.

CALE

Well, what the fuck is she saying?

MELISSA

Yes. She is. She's saying that you raped her.

Cale is stunned. No one speaks for a bit. He cruises down paradise just like before but now in total agony.

DAVID

Are you there--

CALE

I'm gonna call you back.

He HANGS UP. A few more seconds of stunned driving and then he YANKS THE WHEEL, turning onto the shoulder and skids to a stop.

He stares out at the sea.

He's fucked.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Cale sits across a desk from JEFF, 50's his BUSINESS MANAGER who types into his laptop sending numbers to a SPREADSHEET on a wall-mounted TV.

JEFF

So lets assume that the income we have for the year is what we're going to have at years end. No new money coming in.

CALE

I think that's pretty safe to say.

JEFF

And how much do you anticipate your legal expenses to be?

CALE

I talked it over with my lawyer and we're looking at two separate cases here. There's the defense against the... *charge*, which is one hundred percent not true by the way.

Jeff nods, giving nothing. Cale can't tell if he believes him or not.

CALE

So there's that and then there's the countersuit for defamation that I am one hundred percent going to win. I'm gonna ruin this fucking bitch.

Jeff holds his hand up *'I don't need to hear it'*.

JEFF

How much?

CALE

I imagine seventy thousand for both.

JEFF

So one hundred and forty thousand?

Jeff punches some numbers into a spreadsheet.

CALE

What's that do to me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

With your current rate of spending, that's gonna put you at zero in...

More number punching.

JEFF

... three months.

CALE

Fuck me.

JEFF

You have some small income from your properties in Michigan but your mortgage here is what's killing you.

CALE

You saying I need to sell my house?

JEFF

You're going to have to make some tough choices.

CALE

What if I sell my Michigan properties? Some of those make money.

JEFF

Some don't. You could sell those, and that'll buy you some time but only a couple months. Those aren't exactly hot properties--

CALE

I can't *believe* this!

JEFF

Listen, Cale I have to tell you...

CALE

What?

JEFF

At the end of this week I'm going to give you your files back.

CALE

What does *that* mean?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JEFF

I'm going to ask you to find
alternate wealth management.

CALE

You're dropping me too?

Jeff stares.

INT. DTW AIRPORT - DAY

Cale walks out of the JET-BRIDGE INTO the DETROIT
AIRPORT, scrolling on his phone.

He opens an email, clicks on a link and is redirected to
the HOLLYWOOD REPORTER site. It's the ARTICLE. He stops
in place. People move past him as he reads.

CALE

Oh fuck me.

EXT. RENTAL LOT - LATER

Cale walks through rows of parked cars, on his phone.

CALE

Hi this is Cale Gade for Robert.

Beat.

CALE

Hey Robert. Cale. Hi. Did you see
the article? It's out... It's
insane! It's like I'm sitting on
the sidelines watching this thing
just spiral out of control and...

He arrives at his car and pops the trunk, tosses in his
bag.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Cale sits in the drivers seat.

CALE

Robert hang on. I'm gonna put you
on speaker. I'm getting in the
rental.

He puts the phone in speaker mode and sets it on the
dash.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Hear me?

ROBERT

I hear you.

CALE

I was saying I really think that if I just have a conversation with her I could probably nip this whole thing in the--

ROBERT

Absolutely not. Under no circumstances are you to contact her.

He starts the engine.

CALE

I'm just saying I could call her--

ROBERT

Listen, to me! There's zero chance at this point that you calling her is going to bring about anything but more problems for you. Do hear me? Any communication goes through us from now on, with no exceptions... I'm sorry what do you mean you're getting in the rental? What rental?

CALE

I'm in Detroit. I rented a car.

ROBERT

You're in Detroit *Michigan*?

CALE

Yeah?

ROBERT

Cale. You aren't supposed to leave the state.

CALE

I'm not under arrest. I'm allowed to travel.

ROBERT

This is not advisable. You really need to be here in case there are developments.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CALE

Developments? You think they're gonna arrest me?

ROBERT

I think that is a very distinct possibility. I think that flying off to another state is not a good look right now.

CALE

Well Robert, I'm sorry to say it but unless you plan on taking me on pro bono, I need to scrape up some money. I'm not here on the *lam*. I'm not here on *vacation*. I'm here to do some fucking liquidating.

INT. GREATER WAYNE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT - AFTERNOON

Cale pushes through the door of a small poorly furnished office building.

ASSISTANT

May I help you?

CALE

I'm Cale Gade. I'm an owner. I wanted to pick up a set of keys.

ASSISTANT

Oh! Yes! Bonnie said you'd be coming.

She digs around her desk and produces an envelope. She reads off it.

ASSISTANT

This is for 476 Barbary is that right?

CALE

Uh... That sounds right.

ASSISTANT

Can I see some ID?

Cale stares at her a beat. *Really?* He pulls out his wallet.

BONNIE (40's, SMILEY) steps out of the back room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BONNIE

Cale? Hey there!

CALE

Bonnie, hi.

She strides around the desk and shakes his hand.

BONNIE

You just get in?

CALE

Yeah, just now, yeah.

BONNIE

How's Los Angeles?

CALE

Uhhhh... It's great.

BONNIE

Can't beat that weather I bet!

CALE

Yeah it's great.

BONNIE

Ya workin on anything new?

CALE

Not... not at the moment but you know...

BONNIE

(to assistant)

We have a celebrity in our midst!
Cale here is on TV.

The assistant stares at him with new fascination.

ASSISTANT

What show?

CALE

At the moment nothing. Thanks for these, Bonnie.

BONNIE

I gotta tell ya I'm surprised you're selling. The market around here is coming back fast. What gives?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CALE

Well you know how it goes.

BONNIE

I really think holding onto property at this time is gonna pay out big time in a few years. I know that neighborhood isn't exactly Park Avenue but it's--

CALE

No it's not that, it's just--

BONNIE

You know how they always say '*buy land cause god ain't makin any more of it*'? Well that's true, you know!

CALE

Yeah I just found a pretty amazing investment in some property in LA and I need the uh... cash.

BONNIE

Well I can't argue with that. What'd you find?

CALE

Oh uhhh... An apartment building out by me. You know I gotta get going. I'm sorry to grab these and jet but I'm in a bit of a time crunch.

BONNIE

Oh well don't let me keep you.

He moves to the door.

BONNIE

We'll be looking for you on the TV!

ASSISTANT

What show were you on?

Cale exits.

EXT. BARBARY STREET - DUSK

Cale parks outside 476 Barbary. He steps out and takes in the block. The neighborhood is just as shitty as when we last saw it.

TESS'S CAR is parked a few yards away, covered in a layer of grime.

INT. 476 BARBARY - MOMENTS LATER

Cale unlocks the door and steps in. The place looks just as it did.

He moves down the hall flicking on the overhead light as he goes.

The BASEMENT DOOR is still held open by the CHAIR that Tess placed there.

CALE

The fuck?

He slides the chair out of the way and tosses the door shut.

-- **BATHROOM:** He takes a leak. He clocks the toiletry bag is perched on the sink.

-- **BEDROOM:** He pushes the door open and sees that the bed isn't made.

CALE

The fuck, dude?

-- **HALLWAY:** He steps out, tense now. He looks to the kitchen and sees Tess's bags sitting there. He cocks his head, listening.

CALE

Hello?

-- **LIVING ROOM:** Cale paces on his phone.

CALE

Hey Bonnie? Cale. Hi. Uhhh... Is someone staying here at the moment?

BONNIE (O.S.)

Not that I'm... I don't think so.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Well someone's here. There's a
suitcase and toothbrushes and...

He spots Keith's luggage on the floor. The couch has
blankets on it.

CALE

...Yeah, no. People are staying
here.

BONNIE

We haven't rented it out in a
couple weeks.

CALE

Well do we know if the last
tenants checked out? Do I have
squatters?

BONNIE

Their term ended, certainly. They
shouldn't be there anymore.

CALE

Well did the maids come and check
them out?

BONNIE

It's not so much a check out
process as a--

CALE

Has no one come by to look at this
place since the last tenants? No
maid or anything?

BONNIE

The maids come to prep the houses
before the arrival of the next
tenants. No new renters, no maid
service.

CALE

What if someone trashed the place?
How would I know?

BONNIE

Is the place trashed?

CALE

No, but that's not the point. What
kind of system is that? That's
fucking idiotic!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BONNIE

Have a nice day.

CALE

So who the fuck is staying in my house? *Hello?*

-- **PORCH:** Cale steps out and opens the LOCKBOX. NO KEY.

CALE

Goddamit.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Cale washes his face. His PHONE rests on the sink.

MOM

Cale, I can't hear you. It sounds like you're in a race car.

CALE

I'm washing my face.

MOM

What?

CALE

I'm washing my face!

MOM

Well could you stop please?

He rolls his eyes and shuts the sink off.

CALE

Happy?

MOM

Of course I'm not happy! I don't know what to tell people! What do you want us to say?

CALE

Say she's a lying fucking bitch.

MOM

Don't talk like that.

CALE

What? She is.

MOM

That's not nice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Nice? Really? Ruining my reputation and career isn't nice either! I think I'm well within my... *rights* to call her a fucking bitch.

MOM

I know sweetie. I know you wouldn't do those things. When are you coming back home? It's only a three hour flight to Detroit. We want to see you.

CALE

Dad wants to see me? Did he say that?

Beat.

MOM

You know how he is. He's just upset.

Cale deflates.

His phone beeps.

CALE

Mom, I gotta go. I got an important call on the other line.

MOM

OK baby, I love--

He pushes a button.

CALE

What's up faggot? Guess who's back in town?

EVERETT

Awww shit. Let's get fucked up!

INT. TEMPLE BAR - NIGHT

Temple bar is a dive, crowded with hipsters.

Cale is VERY DRUNK and yelling over the music into the ear of his ALSO VERY DRUNK friend EVERETT, (30's, BRO-ISH).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

I'm fucking *ready* for court bro!
I'm fucking *dying* for court!

EVERETT

But dude. Can we real talk for a
bit? Can we real talk?

CALE

Fuck yeah dude!

EVERETT

Like, what really happened between
you two?

Cale steps back and shoots a glassy disappointed stare.

EVERETT

Dude, you're my homie. Whatever
you say I believe. I just wanna
hear you say it. I know what the
website said and I don't give a
fuck. I got your back no matter
what! But, I wanna ask you man to
man. Real talk. What *did* go down?

CALE

Dude, I'll be real with you.

EVERETT

That's all I'm ask--

CALE

Lemme be real with you! We fucked.
We *did* fuck. Ok?

EVERETT

Ok.

CALE

She took some convincing is all.

EVERETT

Did she say 'no'?

CALE

At first. But like I wasn't
like... 'Come here bitch I'm gonna
rape you'. It was like in the
beginning she was like 'no' and
then we fooled around a bit longer
and then she was down.

(laughing)

I'm a persistent dude, right?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CALE (CONT'D)

I'm like eye of the fucking tiger,
right?

EVERETT

Yep.

CALE

And she came around. And that's
it. That's what happened.

INT. 476 BARBARY STREET - NIGHT

Cale stumbles through the front door, phone to his ear.

CALE

Hi Megan... This is Cale. Uhhh,
I'm guessing you probably don't
want to talk to me but I just
wanted to say that I'm really
really sorry if I did anything
that night that might have... like
offended you or...

We watch from the living room as Cale totters down the
hall and disappears into his bedroom.

CALE (O.S.)

Sometimes people can have
different versions of the same
thing and I'm not even mad at you
about it and I hope you're not mad
at me cause I really... I really
am sorry and if you call me
back... I'll apologize to you
again. So please call me back.

INT. 476 BARBARY - MORNING

-- **BEDROOM:** Cale wakes up in his bed looking awful. He
looks around, putting together what city he's in. What
life he's in.

CALE

Fuck.

-- **BATHROOM:** Cale PUKES in the toilet. He doesn't even
seem upset about it. This is a routine.

He sits back on the floor and wipes emotionless tears
from his face. His eyes land on KEITH'S TOILETRY BAG on
the sink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- **LIVING ROOM:** Still in his underwear, he pulls open KEITH'S LUGGAGE. He yanks clothes out onto the floor. He pulls out a book, *Jane Eyre*, and tosses it aside. He empties the rest of the bag. Nothing significant.

-- **BEDROOM:** He drops Tess's bag on the bed and ransacks her things. He holds up her underwear and stares at it a beat before tossing it.

CALE

Who the fuck are you?

He digs in her backpack and pulls out her LAPTOP. He opens it.

There's a lock-screen with the profile image and the word *TESS* hovering over a password prompt.

CALE

Tess.

He types gibberish into the password prompt, hits enter and the little black dots do a hostile *wrong guess* shake.

He shuts it and tosses it carelessly onto the dresser.

-- **KITCHEN:** Cale steps into the kitchen and opens the fridge. Nothing inside but some bottled water.

CALE

Come on.

He twists the top off the water and chugs it where he stands. All of it.

Fuck that's good.

-- He opens the cabinets and pulls out some instant coffee and filter.

-- He starts up the coffee maker and then moves to the table.

He pulls the CHAIR out and then stops. He looks at it.

Then he looks back to the BASEMENT DOOR in the hallway.

-- **BASEMENT:** PITCH BLACK. Until the door opens and Cale stands there in his underwear. Hungover. Miserable. Curious.

CALE

Hello?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He FLICKS the LIGHT SWITCH and nothing happens. Still dark down there.

CALE

Is someone here?

He listens. From deep in the basement comes a small, SCRAPING NOISE, like someone tapping a COAT HANGER on a CHALKBOARD. Fear lumps in his throat.

CALE

OK here's the deal. I have a gun. I'm gonna come down there and just open up on whoever I see in about thirty seconds! Or you can just come up here now and I'll let you go.

He listens. Nothing.

CALE

I'm not fucking around! Who's down there?

Nothing.

-- **BEDROOM:** His pants on now, he laces up his shoes.

CALE

Squat in my fuckin house? Hide in my basement? I'm a fuckin man! I'll fuck you up.

-- **KITCHEN:** Cale digs a small KITCHEN KNIFE out of a drawer. It's probably not gonna cut a steak let alone an intruder but it gives him confidence.

-- He snatches a flashlight off the top of the fridge.

-- **BASEMENT:** Cale stands at the top of the stairs with his knife.

CALE

All right bitch! Get ready to get fucked!

He MOVES DOWN the STAIRS brandishing his knife like he's in an action movie.

His LIGHT moves over SHELVES, BOXES and other CRAP.

It stops on the MIRROR propped up in the middle of the room - clearly out of place.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Cale steps around to the front of the mirror and shines his light back onto himself. Behind him the SECRET DOOR is CLOSED.

CALE

(sotto)

Why?

Behind him comes that SCRAPING SOUND again. Like a fingernail on concrete.

Cale TURNS and now his LIGHT finds the LENGTH OF ROPE coming from the door.

What is this now?

He steps forward and takes the ROPE in his hand. He notices the SEAM of the door. He steps back and follows it up, over and then back down.

CALE

(Sotto)

What the fuck is *this*?

Cale grabs the rope and PULLS. The door GROANS OPEN and he stands in front of the pitch dark passage.

His flashlight weakly defines the ceiling and walls. Then he sees the GLINT of the DOORKNOB.

-- **TINY ROOM:** Cale stands in the doorway shining his light around, taking in the BED, the CAMERA and the BUCKET.

CALE

(grinning)

Far out.

-- **LIVING ROOM:** Cale is on the couch with his computer on his lap. In a Google search bar Cale types: **CAN UNDERGROUND ROOMS BE LISTED AS SQUARE FOOTAGE WHEN SELLING HOME.**

He hits enter and the first result to pop up reads: **AS FOR ROOMS IN THE HOUSE THAT AREN'T FINISHED--**

CALE

(reading)

-- *like basements or attics, they should not be included in the total square footage.*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CALE (CONT'D)

In fact, any part of the house that is below ground level -- even if it is only partially so -- should not be included under any circumstances.

(not reading anymore)

Oh come on. Really?

He scrolls down looking at NEW RESULTS.

CALE

(reading)

Below grade spaces such as basements, dens, etc do not usually count - ha! USUALLY! - toward a home's square footage. Even a finished basement can't be counted toward a home's Gross Living Area (GLA) but it can be noted separately in the listing.

He looks up and grins to himself.

CALE

Sweet.

He types a new search: HOW TO CALCULATE BASEMENT SQUARE FOOTAGE.

He hits enter.

-- **BASEMENT:** A light-bulb screws into the ceiling socket and the room is lit once again.

Reveal: Cale standing on a ladder. The mirror now sits against a wall.

He hops down and takes in the secret corridor. Not much brighter.

Cale has the KNIFE tucked into his belt. He snatches up his FLASHLIGHT and a TAPE MEASURE and steps to the mouth of the passage.

-- **SECRET HALLWAY:** Cale shuffles backwards UNSPOOLING the tape. It's not easy work while holding a flashlight but he's managing.

-- **TINY ROOM:** Cale stretches the tape along walls.

-- He slides the bed aside to make room.

-- He sucks the tape up and does some math.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

CALE

Ten by twelve... Ten times twelve
is ... One twenty.

-- **SECRET HALLWAY:** Cale stands at the back of the
passage.

CALE

Thirty by four. Uhhh... One
twenty? So two-forty? That right?

He takes a step back and bumps the REAR DOOR. It creaks
open.

CALE

Oh shit.

Cale pushes the new door open and takes in the staircase
leading into darkness.

He smiles.

CALE

Oh *shit!*

INT. NEST - MOMENTS LATER

Cale descends.

CALE

Thirty three. Thirty four. Thirty
five. Thirty six.

His light finds the dirt floor at the bottom of the
stairs.

CALE

There we go. Holy crap.

He reaches the bottom and shines his light down the
seemingly endless dark passage.

CALE

Hellooooo?

No sound.

CALE

Anybody down here? Yo-yo?

Nothing.

Cale bends and measures the width of the hallway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Four feet.

He hooks the tooth of the tape to the bottom stair and begins shuffling backward, unspooling it down the dark hallway.

He stops at the opening to the ROOM with the KENNEL CAGES inside.

-- Cale steps nimbly around the CAGES measuring the walls.

-- Back in the hall he continues measuring into the darkness. He stops to wipe his head. He shines his light behind him and takes in the seemingly endless corridor before him.

CALE

Jesus.

Something catches his eye.

He clicks his FLASHLIGHT OFF and some fifty yards down the corridor is a FAINT BLUE LIGHT.

CALE

Hello?

Cale flicks his flashlight on again and moves toward the light.

CALE

Yo yo! Anyone here?

As he nears the light we can see it's spilling from another doorway into the hall. We can't see in but a womans voice becomes audible as we approach.

WOMAN (O.S.)

...And this is why it's so important to practice regular feedings.

Cale continues toward the open door letting the tape measure unspool behind him as he goes.

CALE

Hello?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WOMAN (O.S.)

Rather than waiting for your baby to cry you can anticipate when it may be getting hungry by looking for indicators.

Cale reaches the doorway and peaks in, immediately recoiling at a new RANCID ODOR.

CALE

Jesus.

It's a small room with stained and faded pink walls. On the floor is a tangle of rotten sheets. The source of light, a TV/VHS combo sits on the ground in one corner showing a VIDEO of a WOMAN NURSING a BABY.

WOMAN

I like to let my baby determine how long he likes to nurse. It's important that this process is relaxing. Not just for the baby but for me as well. This is a time for us to bond. To share this tender intimate moment with each other.

CALE

...the fuck?

PHWOOOOM!

The TAPE MEASURE in his hand whirs to life. Cale watches in dumb confusion as the TAPE UNSPOOLS rapidly. Flowing in a blur out of his hands and into the dark in front of him.

Just as he processes what's happening - that something must be pulling it like a shark on a fishing line - the tape runs out and the whole thing is YANKED from his hand and rattles off into the blackness.

Now he's SCARED.

WOMAN

Remember that your little one knows how much they need more than you do. Don't worry if feeding only lasts ten minutes.

He searches the tunnel with his trembling light but it shows him nothing but walls, floor and emptiness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He fumbles his KNIFE from his belt and brandishes it against the dark.

CALE

Hey! Who's there?

Cale's hair stands on end. His ears, actually flexing with attention.

WOMAN

And don't be alarmed if they last up to forty five.

And a new sound does come.

BREATHING.

Deep, congested, uneven breaths from the dark. Something or someone is standing just beyond the reach of his light. Watching him.

Cale's blood freezes.

He turns and RUNS.

The tunnel flies by him in jagged rhythm.

He comes to a T in the hallway and turns left, moving down another long passage.

He STUMBLES on the uneven ground and DROPS his FLASHLIGHT. It hits the ground and GOES OUT. In the PITCH BLACK Cale drops to his knees feeling around in pure panic until his hand finds it.

He snatches it up and CLICKS the BUTTON but NOTHING.

CALE

(crying)

Please!

He pounds the light against his hand and tries again.

For an instant it FLICKS ON in that moment Cale can see a GIANT WHITE FIGURE some thirty feet down the hallway moving SILENTLY TOWARD HIM.

But then the LIGHT DIES again and he's in darkness once more.

He turns and RUNS, his flashlight occasionally sputtering awake to help him navigate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

But before long it stops it's flickering and it's too dark to go any further. He slows to a trot and turns holding out his knife defensively against the dark.

Cale is hyperventilating. He tries to steady himself, willing his breathing to slow so he can listen. He holds his breath for a moment and pricks up his ears.

All he can hear is his own breathing, until...

SMACK

A WET SLOPPY KISS smacks in the air right in front of him.

CALE

Ahhh!!

Cale STEPS BACKWARD swinging his knife. And then...

There's no more floor.

He FALLS.

INT. PIT - CONTINUOUS

He falls some ten feet and lands in a heap. His FLASHLIGHT hits the ground beside him and TURNS ON again, revealing that he now lays in a ROUND PIT.

He clutches his chest and it takes a few seconds before his lungs remember how to do their job.

Above him at the mouth of the hole stands something GIGANTIC and PALE. Cale watches in horror as the figure slams a massive METAL GRATE over the opening.

Through it's wide interlocking slats he can only partially make out the pale figure now standing directly overhead. It kneels and pokes a LONG WHITE FINGER through the grate curling it back and forth almost PLAYFULLY. Then, with a grunt it steps away and is gone.

Cale Pulls himself up to his knees and looks himself over. He sees a DEEP GASH along the side of his FORE-ARM. Blood runs down to his fingers and drips steadily to the ground.

The KNIFE. He fell on the knife.

CALE

Ahhhh!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Panic rises.

CALE

Ahhhhhh!! Help me! Help meeee!!!

From the darkness in front of him a WOMAN RUSHES FORWARD and grabs his face, covering his mouth with FILTHY HANDS.

CALE

Ahhhh!!

TESS

SHHHHHH!!!

It's Tess. She's still alive.

EXT. 476 BARBARY STREET - DAY

Establishing shot of our house. Something's DIFFERENT. The LAWN is freshly MOWED. The paint looks a little brighter.

The front door opens and a man, FRANK (40's, VERY TALL) exits. We pan to follow him into the yard and see that the street is different.

Instead of a wasteland of boarded up wrecks it's a HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD with people walking dogs, sprinklers whisking and kids playing. Rock and Roll plays from somebody's window.

Frank hops into his 1970 Lincoln and fires it up.

We notice that the other cars here are of the same era.

We must be BACK IN TIME.

INT. DRUGSTORE - DAY

A CLERK (FEMALE, 40's) wearing a blue vest over her shirt moves down an aisle restocking shelves. FRANK pushes a cart toward her from the other end.

CLERK

Find everything OK?

FRANK

Plastic sheets?

CLERK

Plastic sheets? We have some on 7.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK
Diapers? Baby stuff?

CLERK
Infant needs is this way. I'll
take you.

She leads him.

CLERK
How old is your little one?

FRANK
Not here yet.

CLERK
Oh! Well, this is an exciting
time! When's the due date?

FRANK
Any day.

CLERK
She holding up alright?

FRANK
She's good.

CLERK
You taking her to Mercy for the
big day?

FRANK
Home birth.

The clerk presses her hand to her chest.

CLERK
Bless your hearts...
(realizing)
Plastic sheets! I see!

FRANK
Right.

CLERK
Bless your hearts! What else do
you need?

Frank shrugs.

CLERK
You got a midwife right? She
should have given you a list.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FRANK

Just me.

CLERK

Oh my word!

She stares at him with both sympathy and rebuke.

FRANK

Diapers?

CLERK

Yep. You're gonna want.... these ones. Others'll be too big.

She drops a bag of diapers in his cart.

She grabs a VHS TAPE and drops it in. Frank picks it up. It reads NEW MOTHERHOOD: YOUR FIRST YEAR above an image of a smiling woman nuzzling a baby.

CLERK

You got latex gloves? You're gonna need those.

FRANK

I think maybe.

CLERK

You gotta have em. Here. You got clean towels?

FRANK

Yes.

CLERK

Well trust me you're gonna need more. This way. Come on.

Frank follows.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Frank carries large bags of baby products through the parking lot and opens his trunk. Across the lot he spies a YOUNG WOMAN loading groceries into her car.

Something in him goes rigid as he watches her. He puts the bags in his trunk, shuts it and gets behind the wheel.

Frank watches as she bends into her car, arranging her goods. He grips the wheel. Fully alert.

EXT. STREET - MINUTES LATER

Frank winds through the city, pacing the young woman's car from a distance.

She turns onto a residential street and parks at a SMALL SINGLE FAMILY HOME. Frank drives past her and PARKS a few houses down, WATCHING in his rear view mirror as she unloads the groceries and carries them up the yard and inside.

He sits for a moment, as if lost in thought and then steps out of the car.

He moves to the trunk and pops it open. Under the snuggies, baby formula and plastic sheets are some BLUE COVERALLS. He steps into them and there's a name tag sewn to his chest that says "CARL". He zips it up and shuts the trunk.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Frank doesn't approach the front door. Instead he moves around the SIDE OF THE HOUSE, studying the windows. He bends to inspect a basement window. He cranes to better eye a BATHROOM WINDOW.

He moves around the back of the house and notes the dead-bolt above the knob.

He completes his circling of the home and then moves up the front steps. The main door is open and through the screen he sees the woman in the kitchen.

He smiles and rings the bell. She turns startles when she sees him but then smiles, pressing her hand to her chest.

WOMAN

You scared me!

FRANK

Sorry bout that.

She moves to the door and pushes it open, beaming at him.

FRANK

DWP ma'am. Sorry to bother.

WOMAN

No bother.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK

We got some outages in the neighborhood and I'm just checking to make sure everything's up to par. You had any interruptions in the 'lectricity here?

WOMAN

No. I just got home so I can't say for sure about all day but it seems fine.

FRANK

Water coming through OK?

WOMAN

I... I believe so.

FRANK

Mind if I take a look?

WOMAN

Of course.

She steps back to make room for him.

FRANK

Thank you ma'am.

Frank enters.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Frank steps into the living room.

WOMAN

Would you like a tea or a coffee or something?

FRANK

No thank you ma'am. I'll be out of your hair in twenty seconds. Can I just check the kitchen?

WOMAN

Of course.

She moves down the small hall toward the kitchen and Frank follows close behind.

In the kitchen she resumes loading groceries into the fridge and he moves to the sink and cranks both knobs. The water pours out on cue.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK

Looks good.

He moves to the wall and flicks the light switch. The overhead lamp shines weak. He nods.

FRANK

Check your bathroom?

WOMAN

Behind you there.

Frank smiles and moves down the hall.

He steps into the bathroom, turns on the sink and as the water splashes into the basin he FLICKS THE BOLT on the WINDOW, UNLOCKING it.

He cranks the sink off and steps into the hall.

FRANK

Thanks for your time, ma'am. Sorry for the intrusion.

WOMAN

Everything's OK then?

FRANK

Looks fine to me. Do give us a call if there's any issues.

She comes to the mouth of the hall and smiles at him.

He smiles big at her.

FRANK

You have a nice day now.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Frank parks the car once again in front of 476 BARBARY. He steps out and pops the trunk again, to retrieve his baby supplies.

DOUG

Frank!

He turns to see his neighbor DOUG (30's) approach.

DOUG

How goes it, buddy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK

Hey Doug.

Doug sidles up uninterested in the contents of Frank's trunk. Frank shuts it, cradling his baby supplies, maybe slightly self conscious of his goods, maybe not.

DOUG

Listen, pal. Uhhh... I wanted to tell you before you saw it for yourself. We're gonna have a sign on our yard tomorrow morning.

Frank doesn't get it.

FRANK

Sign?

DOUG

A for sale sign. We're moving, Frank.

Frank nods, conveying nothing.

DOUG

I hate to do it, you know. It's just that the wife is worried that if we don't get out now we may not be able to this time next year. This neighborhood's going to hell Frank.

Frank looks around at the block as if this was news.

DOUG

You plan on staying?

FRANK

I'm not going anywhere.

Doug nods as if Frank just said something heroic.

DOUG

Good on you buddy. Goddamn right.

Frank pulls his bags out of the trunk.

DOUG

I'd like to dig my heels in and tell 'em all to go to hell, myself but I gotta fammily to think about, you know? If I was in your shoes - single guy, no kids - it'd be a different story, you betcha.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Frank offers no reaction.

DOUG

Well, I'm sorry we never did have that supper. Time has a funny way of sliding past, don't it?

FRANK

Take care, Doug.

Frank turns and walks to his front door.

DOUG

Hey Frank?

Frank stops and turns.

DOUG

I have to ask. I hope it's not...

Doug folds his arms. Nervous.

FRANK

Yes?

Doug checks that no one is in earshot and jogs over toward Frank.

DOUG

Well, about two years back. My wife was up late - she gets insomnia sometimes. And she was up around three in the morning. And she...

(nervous chuckle)

She got this crazy notion that you were...

He lowers his voice.

DOUG

She has it in her mind that you were in our backyard.

FRANK

She said I was in your backyard?

DOUG

She did. And she's got it in her head that you... Now mind you I told her she was being ridiculous... but she's got it in her head that you...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FRANK

What'd she say Doug?

DOUG

She says you took our dog.

Doug shifts awkwardly and squints at Frank. Frank returns his stare, dead calm. He looks past Doug to the house.

FRANK

She says that?

DOUG

Yeah but I told her she was just being... she's up late and not sleeping and the mind just... you know?

Frank nods.

FRANK

I suppose so.

Beat. Doug's not going to get an answer.

DOUG

Well anyway. I didn't want you to be surprised when you see that sign on our yard tomorrow. Some folks around here are getting testy about all the moves. Take care Frank. Shame we didn't get that supper.

FRANK

So long Doug.

Frank enters his home.

INT. 476 BARBARY - CONTINUOUS

Frank carries his bag of baby products through the living room which is now decorated with the sterile kitsch of the time, as if someone ordered everything from a catalogue but put no further thought into it.

He moves into the hallway and opens the basement door. A woman's voice echoes up from below.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Aaaaaauuuuggghhhhhhh! Help meeee!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

He carries the birthing supplies into the darkness and shuts the door behind him, muting her cries.

INT. PIT - PRESENT DAY

TESS looks gaunt. Her eyes darker than when we last saw her.

Cale sits bare chested on the ground. Tess wraps his shirt around his arm and tying it as tight as she can.

TESS
I think that might have stopped bleeding.

CALE
Where the fuck are we?

She squats in front of him, her face stern.

TESS
Listen to me. This is very important.

CALE
No! Where the fuck are we?

TESS
I don't fucking know! OK?

CALE
I gotta get out of here.

TESS
It's really really important that you be calm. OK? You can't freak out around her. Trust me.

CALE
Don't... Don't *freak out*? I GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE! I CAN'T BE--

TESS
(hissing)
You think I wanna fucking be here? Hello? Wake up!

Cale breathes.

TESS
If you want to stay alive you need to listen to me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Who are you?

TESS

I'm Tess. Are you calming down?
You ready to listen?

He nods.

TESS

She doesn't do well with people
getting upset. If you get upset
she gets upset.

CALE

Who's she?

TESS

I... I don't really know. She
lives here.

CALE

How long have you been here?

TESS

...I don't know.

CALE

I mean... Are we just gonna--

A stirring above them. They watch the grate above them as the shape of whatever it is comes into view, squatting over them.

WHITE FINGERS POKE through and then long tendrils of BLACK HAIR dangle down past the slats as the woman above PRESSES her FACE to grate - her YELLOW EYES fixed upon Cale.

CALE

(whisper)

Jesus...

A long white ARM snakes down into their space. Cale recoils as it reaches gently for him.

He looks to Tess who shoots him a reproachful look - *'Don't Scream'*.

The woman grunts the arm slides back up. She stirs with some activity that Cale can't make out.

Before long, the arm comes down again but this time it clutches a filthy BABY BOTTLE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Liquid drips from it's flesh colored NIPPLE that jabs toward his face. Cale DUCKS from it.

The bottle pokes toward him again he dodges once more.

TESS

(whisper)

Do it. *Drink it.*

Cale wriggles down out of reach.

MOTHER

Grrruuuhhh!!

Her yellow eyes shift to Tess and the arm sways the bottle to her.

Tess shuts her eyes and takes the bottle into her mouth, DRINKING stoicly.

MOTHER

(approving)

Mmmmmmuuuhhh...

Then the bottle comes at Cale again. The woman stretches to reach him but he's too low.

MOTHER

GRRRUUUHHHH!!

TESS

(hissing)

Drink it!

Cale stares in horror at the bottle, dripping onto him inches above his face.

CALE

No!

MOTHER

AAAHHH!!

The HAND SUCKS fluidly UP and OUT of the pit and the mother rises away from them.

Tess shakes her head. *'Now you've done it'.*

The grate wrenches up from and the MOTHER DROPS DOWN, filling the space.

Her size is incredible. She stands at 7 FEET TALL. LANKY, MUSCULAR and IVORY WHITE. Her face, obscured by her TANGLED BLACK HAIR.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

In one move she's on him, SEIZING him by the THROAT and slamming him FLAT on his BACK, knocking the wind from his lungs. She plants one foot on either side of his hips and squats over him, one powerful alabaster arm pinning him to the ground by the neck. Her hair dangles toward him in greasy tentacles shrouding her face.

Cale can't make a sound. He can't breathe.

She lowers her head and SNIFFS him. Drool falls onto his face. Her OTHER HAND moves to his CHEEK and he flinches but it's GENTLE.

MOTHER

B-b-b-ba-ba...

Cale stares up in pure terror as the filthy hand strokes his face.

MOTHER

Ba-ba-ba-ba-ba...

Her voice is low and simple. Like the muttering of a toddler.

He looks over to Tess who stands rigid, nodding at him. Imploring something.

MOTHER

Ba-by...

Her GRIP LOOSENS and Cale takes in a LOUD GASP of air, STARTLING her. She jerks back and suddenly he's HOISTED off the ground. She stands and holds him out before her by his armpits, feet dangling.

CALE

Aahhh!!

MOTHER

(mimicking him)

Aaaaahhh!!

She pulls him to her bosom in an act of apparent maternity, one giant hand wrapped around his head.

MOTHER

Ba-by.

Cale gasps for air, struggling to pull free.

And then they're MOVING. She scales the wall of the pit with Cale under one arm and disappears down the corridor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Tess stares up at the NOW OPEN MOUTH OF THE PIT.

It's open. She left it open.

-- **TUNNEL:** The woman totes Cale down the dark passage
MUTTERING rhythmically to herself.

MOTHER

Ba! Ba! Ba! Ba!

Before long she comes to a small doorway and ducks
inside.

-- **PINK ROOM:** The pink room, lit with PALE BLUE LIGHT of
the maternity video in which the happy woman bounces a
baby on her knee.

WOMAN

*A crying baby could be saying any
number of things and it's not your
fault if you don't know exactly
what they want.*

The woman tosses Cale onto a pile of FILTHY BLANKETS. He
scrambles back but she SEIZES HIS ANKLE and yanks him to
her.

She squats over him chattering to herself.

He takes her face in with new terror.

She has the broad exaggerated features of the INBRED.
HUGE CHEEKBONES, with EYES TOO CLOSE TOGETHER. Her
swollen, cracked and asymmetrical LIPS DRIBBLE DUMB SPIT
and behind them LARGE YELLOW TEETH that seem to be all
roots and decay move up and down with her muttering.

MOTHER

Bababababababbba...

The woman makes a LOUD WET KISSING SMACK with her lips.

She SITS CROSS LEGGED and lays him across her lap,
PULLING HIS HEAD to HER BREAST.

CALE

No.

WOMAN

*It's important to remember that
crying is inevitable and its not
realistic to have a baby that's
always content.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

-- **PIT:** Tess squats low, takes a deep breath and BOUNDS across the base of the pit, plants one foot on the wall and JUMPS UP, reaching for the lip. She grabs it but LOOSES HER HOLD and drops back down.

TESS

Come on.

She shakes her hands, returns to her starting position and plants her feet again.

TESS

Come on.

At the top of the pit we watch Tess's hands slap into view and then she's PULLING HERSELF UP onto her elbows and rolling her body up and OUT.

She picks herself up and pulls Cale's FLASHLIGHT from her waistband.

-- **PINK ROOM:** Cale can't help it. He STRUGGLES. He TUGS at her HANDS but they're immovable. She may as well be made of marble. She shoves his face into her chest and with her other hand she guides her NIPPLE to him.

CALE

No!

She thrusts her large grey shining nipple against his mouth but he won't open his jaw.

MOTHER

Baaaah. Bahhh.

Cale SQUIRMS against her, but she shifts her grip and somehow hooks TWO FINGERS into his mouth SPREADING his JAW OPEN.

MOTHER

Bah!

He GAGS for a moment and she SLIPS her NIPPLE IN. His eyes bulge with revulsion.

MOTHER

(low soothing)
Brrrrrrrrrruuuhhhhhh....

Cale jerks his head away from the nipple.

CALE

Nooooo!! Unnnnggghh!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

The hand on his head goes rigid.

MOTHER

BAH!

She yanks him up with both hands, and BELLOWS a huge mammoth scream.

MOTHER

BAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHH!!!!

-- **TUNNEL:** Tess creeps down the hall cupping the flashlight in her hands to minimize the light. She pauses when she hears the Mother shrieking. Soon the scream is done and Tess presses on.

Ahead the light from the pink room spills out. She slinks closer and the sounds of struggle grow louder. She pauses near the doorway and peaks in.

The mother's back is to her and all she can see of Cale is his feet, writhing in protest.

Tess looks down the corridor, toward the exit.

Nothing to do for him. Freedom is that way.

She continues down the hall quick and quiet as she can.

-- **PINK ROOM:** The mother cups Cale's face in her hands and looks at him with IMPLORING EYES.

MOTHER

(panicked sobs)

Baaaa! Baaa! Ba-ba-ba-ba...

Her eyes dart off to the side. She JERKS out an arm quick, cat-like and Cale hears a startled SQUEAK. She pulls her hand back, now clutching a panicked, writhing BLACK RAT.

Cale watches with fresh horror as she moves it toward her mouth and then, unthinkably she BITES IT.

Her eyes stay locked on him as she CRUNCHES into the spasming little creature. She CHEWS it slowly and deliberately.

Then, she ROCKS FORWARD and Cale finds himself being LAID down on his BACK, her head HOVERING just INCHES above his. Rat blood, drips onto his face.

CALE

No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

TWO gigantic fingers probe at his mouth and manage their way in, forcing him to open.

Cale trembles with horror as she CHEWS and then--

-- **TUNNEL:** Tess is putting distance in and picking up speed.

Her feet pat on the hard ground in a steady rythm, her stride entering a full sprint and then...

She steps into the METAL TANGLE OF CALE'S TAPE MEASURE which goes CLACKING down the hall with her.

-- **PINK ROOM:** Tess's racket echoes from the hallway and the Mother's eyes go wide. She snaps bolt upright leaving Cale sputtering on the ground.

-- **TUNNEL:** Tess freezes, heart pounding, looking at the tape measure wrapped around her ankle with bewilderment.

MOTHER (O.S.)
MWWAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHH!!!!

Go!

Tess sprints for the stairs.

-- **PINK ROOM:** Cale is dropped into the blankets as the mother bolts from the room.

-- **NEST STAIRS:** Tess pounds up the endless stairs, refusing to look behind her.

-- **SECRET HALLWAY:** Tess blows past the TINY ROOM.

-- **BASEMENT:** She flies across the basement straight to the STEPS, scales them and...

The BASEMENT DOOR is LOCKED.

Of course it would be fucking locked!

TESS
No!

She YANKS it as hard as she can.

She THROWS her WHOLE BODY against it.

She backs against the wall and KICKS it with everything she's got. It's not budging.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

TESS

Please!!

Tess moves back down the steps and looks at the SMALL WINDOW. Daylight pushing through.

She runs to the base of the window, draws Cale's knife from her waistband and SMASHES OUT THE GLASS, cutting her hand but she doesn't even notice. She leaps up hooking her arms through.

MOTHER (O.S.)

MWAAAAAAAAHHHHH!!!

Tess pulls herself up and wriggles her torso through. She kicks wildly, worming out with her face in the dirt.

MOTHER (O.S.)

GRAAAAAAAAAAWWWW!!

EXT. BARBARY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Total panic. She squirms through the window, gasping, waiting for the inevitable moment when those hands will grab her and she'll be pulled back into the darkness.

And then the moment does happen. HANDS DO GRAB her.

Two powerful hands grip her UNDER HER ARMS and pull her out, toward the daylight.

Tess scrambles away from the house, looking back to see TWO WHITE LONG ARMS coming out the window REACHING at her but catching nothing.

MAN

Let's go!

Tess turns to see her savior. The FILTHY HOMELESS MAN from before.

MAN

This way!

Tess watches the white arms RETRACT into the small dark rectangle of the window and for a moment the Mother's BEADY EYES catch the daylight, locked on Tess.

Then she slides back into the shadows and disappears.

MAN

Come on!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The man pulls Tess to her feet and toward the street.

MAN

You free now! Come on!

TESS

There's someone else in there!
There's someone else in there!

MAN

I know it! I know she in there!

TESS

No! She *has* someone else! We need
to get help!

MAN

Ain't any helping him.

TESS

We have to!

MAN

You wanna go *back in*?

Tess looks at the window.

TESS

We can't leave him in there!

MAN

Listen to me now. *You safe!* You
got out. You count yourself lucky,
you hear? You never shoulda gone
in that house to begin. That's a
*bad place! And she ain't even the
worst thing in there!* Now listen!
You need to worry bout you. Come
with me.

Tess is reeling. Trying to reckon with being out of the
dungeon, Cale's safety and now this man pulling her to...

TESS

Where?

MAN

I stay over here. It's safe. Come.

He points toward the end of a block at a small RUINED
CHURCH.

Entering another dark space with a stranger is not on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TESS

No! Wait!

She pulls her arm free and he stops.

TESS

I can't leave him there. We have to call the police.

The man looks at her like she's crazy.

MAN

The police ain't coming here.

TESS

They will when I tell them what's in there.

MAN

I ain't got no phone.

TESS

She'll *kill him*. I need to get help. I need to bring people back here.

MAN

How you gon' do that?

Tess looks at her car. Her KEYS and PHONE are in the HOUSE.

TESS

I'll walk if I have to.

MAN

Lil' girl, come night time she gon' come out of there and she gon' be looking for you. She come out at night. If you want to get going then you go, but don't you come back. Don't you dare be round here when it get dark. Hear me?

INT. TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Cale clicks on his phones flashlight and staggers down the passage away from Tess and the mother.

He passes the PIT with it's iron grate pulled aside. Farther down, the corridor comes to a 'T'.

Both new directions lead into endless dark.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His light catches something on the wall above his head. A small METAL BELL mounted near the ceiling. It has an attached CHORD that runs along the ceiling to the right and on into the blackness.

He looks back to the passage behind him.

If that thing is that way I'm going this way.

He follows the bell-string into the darkness ahead.

EXT. BARBARY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Tess speed walks down the street passing EMPTY HOME after EMPTY HOME. Not a soul in sight.

The SUN IS LOW in the sky but she's got over an hour of daylight.

INT. TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Cale follows the bell-string. The tunnel here seems cruder, and tighter. More clausterphobic.

MOTHER (O.S.)

(distant)

GAAAAAAAAAUUGHHH!!!!

He freezes, blood pumping.

She knows I left the room.

He presses on.

How much fucking further?

Out of the darkness ahead the tunnel ends at a wooden DOOR. The bell string feeds into a hole in the wall that's already choked with a tangle of extension chords.

Behind him come the sounds of the MOTHER grunting after him in the dark.

Cale darts to the door and grabs it's BRASS KNOB. He turns and shines his light behind him in time to see the MOTHER step from the pitch black. She stops some ten feet from him at the edge of his lamp's reach. Call watches, frozen with fear.

But strangely the Mother is also still. She seems... equally AFRAID.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cale keeps his eyes on her as he slowly TURNS the KNOB behind him.

The sound of the creaking doorknob ripples through the Mother. She shakes her head and takes a NERVOUS STEP BACK.

She's afraid. She's afraid of this place.

Cale has no choice. He OPENS the DOOR and on cue, she steps back and vanishes into the dark behind her.

Cale turns, pushes the door open and looks inside.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A few blocks away, Tess sees a GAS STATION, like an oasis in this wasteland. A few people mill about in front of it, smoking and drinking out of bagged bottles.

She almost cries with joy.

Safety.

INT. GAS STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Tess pushes her way in. A clerk is separated from the sodas and junk food by a thick wall of PLEXI-GLASS.

TESS

Do you have a phone?

The clerk looks over but doesn't respond.

TESS

Hello?? Do you have a phone? I need to call 911!

CLERK

No phone.

TESS

Please! It's an emergency!

CLERK

No phone.

TESS

Any phone! Do you have like a *cell phone*?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns his attention to a little television by the register, ignoring her.

Tess catches her image in the SECURITY MONITOR behind him. She almost does a double take.

She's FILTHY, caked in grime from head to toe. She's lost a severe amount of weight. Her hair is a giant tangle. Her arms are covered in blood from the broken window.

She looks like a BASE-HEAD.

She takes a deep breath.

TESS

Listen... I have a legitimate emergency. I have just been attacked and held prisoner and there is a man in serious danger. I need the police right away. Would you please call them?

The clerk stares at her a beat, then rolls his eyes and digs in his pocket.

INT. BELLROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cale pushes the door open and almost gags at the smell. He pulls his shirt collar over his face and enters.

It's a moderately sized room lit dimly by a tiny ELECTRIC LAMP on a small desk. The ground here is covered in TRASH. Empty cans of food, cardboard boxes of various electronics and old clothing are everywhere.

On the desk beside the lamp sits another TV/VCR combo but it's screen is just SOLID BLUE.

To Cale's left the room is dark and there's a MESSY BED topped with a shadowy tangle of blankets and pillows.

But his attention focuses on something against the far wall. A tall shape perched on a chair. For a moment we think it's a person watching him but when Cale shines his light we make out that it's just a PILE of CLOTHES.

Cale steps closer. They're all womens dresses. Various kinds and patterns but all distinctly female.

He lifts a dress and wrinkles his nose at it.

In the shadows behind him something on the BED STIRS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The room is not empty.

EXT. GAS STATION - LATER

Tess stands outside the gas station looking up at the sky. It's not yet SUNSET but it's getting there.

At the end of the block a SQUAD CAR turns the corner and makes it's slow way toward her.

Tess waves both hands above her head and runs to the car.

The car comes to a stop and the two officers inside look at her blankly. The driver rolls the window down and Tess bends, gripping the door, relief pouring off her.

TESS

Officers! Thank God--

OFFICER 1

Take your hand off the door please.

TESS

There's a man being held--

OFFICER 1

Ma'am! I'm not asking you again.
Take your hand off the door.

She does, momentarily flummoxed.

OFFICER 1

Are you the one who called us?

TESS

I asked the man inside to call you yes. I have just been held prisoner for I don't even know how long at a house near here. I've been a hostage.

The cruisers radio crackles to life. The officer waves one hand for Tess to wait and grabs the receiver.

OFFICER 1

This is 72, go.

RADIO

We have an 815 on 3 mile. Respond.

The officers swap a look and the one in the passenger seat shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OFFICER 1
(to radio)
Copy. 10 minutes.

The officer turns back to Tess.

OFFICER 1
Do you have any ID?

TESS
Wha-- No! Listen to me. I've just been taken *prisoner*. There's a woman who has held me hostage for I don't even know--

OFFICER 1
You don't have any ID?

TESS
I don't have *anything*! She's already killed a man! There's another man that's still there! She could be killing him now!

OFFICER 1
Where do you live?

TESS
(who the fuck cares?)
I-I live in Washington DC.

OFFICER 2
That's a new one.

TESS
I am not a *crackhead*! I am not *crazy*! I am a woman who has been *kidnapped* and escaped, and I am telling you that there is a man who is in *serious danger*!

The officers look at each other. Officer 2 shrugs.

INT. BELLROOM - CONTINUOUS

Behind him the figure in the bed shifts silently, the silhouette of a head appearing now in contrast with the wall behind it.

COUGH

Cale WHIRLS, and in his panic he DROPS his PHONE. The space in front of him too dark to make out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Hey!

The figure in the bed is still now. Cale stares, terrified.

No one moves. Cale gropes for the lamp beside him. He bends the shade up and casts just enough new light to make out what's on the bed.

It's a MAN in his LATE 80S, tangled in the sheets. He's grey, filthy, unshaved, and wearing a stained white t-shirt. He peers at Cale.

Cale swallows as he makes sense of what he's looking at.

On a closer shot we realize what we're looking at.

This is FRANK.

INT. SQUAD CAR - LATER

Tess rides in the back of the car as they roll through the abandoned neighborhood. It's SUNSET.

TESS

Turn left at the stop sign.

OFFICER 2

And how tall is this woman? You said she's a giant?

TESS

She's enormous! She's gotta be seven feet. She's like Andre the Giant!

OFFICER 2

Uh-huh.

TESS

Believe me or not. You'll see for yourself soon enough. Here! Turn here.

The cop swings the car down Barbary street.

INT. BELLROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cale and Frank stare at each other. Franks gaze is guarded - steely.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Jesus Christ man. You scared the
shit out of me!

Frank is hardly intimidating here. He's aged drastically since we last saw him - sitting up on his elbows, one bare leg exposed on the mattress. Just a frail old man.

Frank coughs, wet and painful. He lurches forward in the bed, as his hacking turns into a convulsion.

Cale steps forward, his fear turning to concern.

CALE

Hey...

Frank continues coughing as Cale wades through the garbage to his bedside.

CALE

Hey man. You need water? Huh?

Frank points at a little bed tray off to the side. It's packed with bottles, opened cans of food and other odds and ends.

CALE

Hold on.

Cale steps to the little table and plucks a half empty bottle of water as Frank's cough worsens.

CALE

Here man. Here you go.

He holds the bottle in front of Frank's face. Frank takes in with both hands and slurps at it.

CALE

You OK? Better?

Frank lowers the water bottle and sinks back into his bed, his breathing even.

CALE

Listen man. We're gonna get out of here OK? I mean... I'm gonna get out. I'm gonna get out and I'm gonna get help.

Frank stares at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CALE

I'm gonna let everybody know
what's going on in this place and
that crazy bitch out there is
gonna get what's coming to her OK?

Cale flashes Frank a hopeful grin.

CALE

Hear me? We're gonna get you outta
here. This place is gonna be
swarming with fucking cops real
fuckin soon. Trust me, man!

Frank points again at the LITTLE TABLE.

CALE

What do you want?

Cale steps to the table and picks through the odds and
ends.

CALE

What is it?

Frank makes a weak 'bring' gesture.

CALE

I don't know what you want...
Here.

Cale PICKS THE TABLE UP, spilling some bottles off the
top. He shuffles the WHOLE THING to Franks BEDSIDE.

Frank nods and relaxes, taking another swig from his
bottle.

Cale steps back and his gaze shifts to the TELEVISION
opposite the bed.

Near the desk stands a CABINET displaying row after row
of VHS TAPES. Cale steps closer and sees that each tape
has a white label on the spine with a WOMANS NAME written
in marker. There must be more than forty tapes here.

He moves to the TV. Sticking half out of the VCR is a
cassette with the label 'GAS STATION RED HAIR 2'.

Cale takes a breath.

Do I?

*He pushes the tape and it sucks mechanically into the
VCR.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The screen cuts from blue to black.

EXT. BARBARY STREET - CONTINUOUS

The cops step lazily out of the car and one of them opens the door for Tess.

She hops out and points at the BROKEN WINDOW.

TESS

There! That's where I came out!

Officer 1 ambles across the yard and pulls his flashlight from his belt. He squats down at the window and shines his light inside.

OFFICER 1

You broke this window?

TESS

Yes.

He turns and throws his partner a look. Tess marches across the yard and up the steps to the front door.

TESS

Come in and see for yourself!

She yanks the handle. It's locked.

TESS

You're going to need to get this open.

OFFICER 1

Ma'am if this isn't your house and you don't have the keys, we're not going in.

TESS

Just break it down! There's someone trapped in there!

She KICKS the door.

OFFICER 1

Hey! That's enough! Get away from there. Come here.

TESS

Do you even hear what I'm saying? This is a crime scene! She killed a man already!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TESS (CONT'D)

There could be someone being murdered in there right now!

OFFICER 1

There's no one in there ma'am. If someone was getting murdered in there or if we saw some sign of foul play--

TESS

Are you fucking kidding me? I just fucking told you--

The RADIO SQUAWKS from the car and Officer 2 reaches through the window.

OFFICER 1

OK, Ma'am you need to calm down.

TESS

What do I need to say to get you to listen to me?! I mean, seriously? What the fuck is this?

OFFICER 2

Hey Joe.

Officer 1 turns to his partner.

OFFICER 2

246 in progress.

OFFICER 1

Shit.

Officer 1 moves toward the car.

OFFICER 2

What about her?

TESS

Are you motherfuckers *leaving*?

Officer 1 spins around, pissed now.

OFFICER 1

Hey! I've about had it with you lady. You're lucky I don't take you in and make you sleep it off in jail!

(to Partner)

Let's go Donnie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TESS

Sleep it-- Are you fucking *kidding*
me?

The officers load into the cruiser.

TESS

Where are you *going?*

Officer 2 gives her a blank look as they pull away.

Tess runs after the car.

TESS

You can't go! Come back!

And then they round the corner and she's standing there
once again in front of the house.

Alone.

And the SUN is now dropping BELOW THE HORIZON. It's DARK.

INT. BELLROOM - CONTINUOUS

From over top the TV we watch Cale's face as the screen
switches from solid blue to the pale glow of a broadcast.

WOMAN (O.S.)

(sobbing)

Please stop. No. Please.

His expression immediately darkens and he jabs the STOP
button. Blue light washes his face again.

That was horrible.

Cale presses eject on the TV/VCR and stares at the
screen, processing. He looks at the cabinet of tapes with
womens names. He looks at the pile of dresses on the
chair. REALIZATION washes over him. He cocks his head
hand turns back to Frank.

CALE

You... this is...

Frank is leaning on one elbow, rooting around in the
drawer of the table.

CALE

Hey I'm talking to you.

Franks doesn't respond.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Hey!

Frank leans back and Cale can see he's retrieved a pistol from the drawer. He fixes his eyes on Cale and raises his arm.

CALE

Wait--

Frank's arm rises further and--

BLAM!

A flash of light and Frank's head jerks to the side.

Cale stares, dumstruck.

INT. 476 BARBARY - MOMENTS LATER

The living room is dark. Everything is still and silent. Furniture left as it was. Clock ticking away. Empty.

SMASH

The WINDOW above the sofa EXPLODES inward as a STONE bounces off the coffee table and lands in front of the television.

Next comes Tess's arms as she hoists herself over and in.

She's completely alert, wasting no time. She steps onto the sofa and hops over the table moving quick through the room.

-- **HALLWAY:** Tess walks quick and quiet past the closed BASEMENT DOOR.

-- **KITCHEN:** Her keys sit on the table. Tess walks up, grabs them, wheels around and heads right back for the exit.

-- **HALLWAY:** Tess passes the Basement door expecting it to fly open and giant hands to grab her but it doesn't happen.

-- **LIVING ROOM:** She moves through the room, opens the front door and...

EXT. 476 BARBARY - CONTINUOUS

She's out. Tess steps down the front steps, keys in hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The car chirps happily and it's doors unlock for her.

Tess hops in, shuts the door, presses the ignition button and listens to the ENGINE START on cue.

She shifts into reverse, yanks the wheel, and backs the car into the street, prepping a U turn.

In front of her the headlights sweep over the front yard as the car turns. They move across the house. Her rear tires hit the far curb and as she SHIFTS into DRIVE to complete her turn...

The FRONT DOOR EXPLODES OPEN directly in front of her, lit by the headlights and the MOTHER LUNGES FORTH, eyes wide, mouth all teeth and tongue, arms reaching as she RUSHES DOWN THE STEPS straight at Tess.

Tess grips the wheel and doesn't have a moment to think. She STOMPS ON THE GAS PEDAL and her car LEAPS FORWARDS.

CAR AND MOTHER COLLIDE in the front yard but the car proves to be more powerful and it SMASHES INTO HER WAIST DRIVING HER BACKWARD. Her upper body comes down on the hood and her eyes lock with Tess in a moment of confusion and then...

IMPACT.

The car SLAMS into the front porch with a crunch, boards shattering around her, PINNING THE MOTHER at her waist.

The horn makes a quick toot and for some reason the wiper blades begin doing their thing on the windshield. Tess watches, as the madwoman howls with pain and slams her arms down on the hood and windshield, cracking it.

MOTHER

GRAAAAAA!!

Tess watches the struggle just a few feet in front of her, dazed, confused, but oddly calm.

She shifts the car into reverse and presses the gas again but nothing happens. The ENGINE HAS DIED.

She tries the ignition button but the car is dead.

The mother has calmed a bit. Her frantic pounding has subsided into a low injured mewling. She lays her head on the hood and stares mournfully at Tess and presses one hand against the glass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

They look at each other that way through the glass until the huge woman's BREATHING STOPS and she is STILL. Her eyes remain fixed on Tess's face but there's no more life behind them.

She's dead.

Tess's adrenaline slowly subsides and she cries.

It's over.

She won.

She opens her door and steps out, taking in the bizarre scene before her. This massive white, nude woman laying across this now smoking hood of a car that's half inside of a house, and half in a front yard.

Tess turns and looks at the small window she came out of earlier.

Cale is still down there.

INT. BELLROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cale shines his phone light onto Frank's body. He wades through the trash over to the bed.

Frank lays on his pillow almost as if he were sleeping save for the blood pouring from his nostrils.

Cale's light finds the PISTOL.

-- **TUNNEL:** Cale KICKS OPEN the door and raises the pistol and phone light like he were a cop on TV.

Deep breaths. Come on. You can do this.

He steps slowly down the hall, ready for whatever's coming.

-- **HALLWAY:** Robotically, Tess drags one of the kitchen chairs back into the hallway and props open the basement door.

-- **BASEMENT:** She picks up the flashlight and moves to the secret tunnel.

-- **LOWER TUNNEL:** Cale comes to the first corner. He presses his back to the wall takes a deep breath and whips around snapping the gun in front of him down the next tunnel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- **NEST STAIRCASE:** She descends.

-- **TUNNEL:** Cale creeps forward, slowly - a coiled spring ready to snap.

-- **TUNNEL:** Tess reaches the lower tunnel and her FLASHLIGHT SPUTTERS and DIES.

TESS

Shit.

She looks down the long almost endless corridor and in the distance she sees the FAINT LIGHT of the PINK ROOM.

She starts toward it.

Tess plods down the hall, hearing nothing but the sound of her own feet and then, up ahead past the light of the pink room there's something else...

ANOTHER LIGHT - small and moving. Tess stops and squints to make it out.

She steps closer and as she enters the light from the pink room she calls out...

TESS

Hell--

BANG!

A MUZZLE FLASH and TESS DROPS.

Blinding pain.

Tess lays in the dirt motionless. Blood already pooling beneath her.

Footsteps running.

Cale slides to her side.

CALE

Oh my God! Oh fuck!

Tess looks into the room and sees the TV in the pink room showing a beaming young woman bouncing a baby on her lap.

CALE

Can you hear me? Hello?

She looks at him. Cale's face is all panic. She looks down at the wound on her side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Is that fatal? Am I dying?

CALE

Come on. We gotta get you up.

Cale pulls her off the ground.

TESS

Ahhhh!!

-- Cale moves down the corridor with Tess's arm slung over his shoulders like a wounded soldier.

CALE

Come on. We can do it.

They reach the base of the stairs.

CALE

Come on, she's gonna be on us any second here.

TESS

No. She's not. She's dead.

CALE

She's what?

TESS

She's gone.

CALE

Well thank Christ for that. Come on. You can do it.

They start up the staircase and out of the nest.

EXT. BARBARY STREET - CONTINUOUS

They step out onto the porch. Cale takes in the scene.

CALE

Looks like your car is fucked.

Tess's jaw drops. The car is indeed fucked but there's NO CORPSE splayed over it.

SHE'S GONE.

Tess starts trembling.

TESS

She's not here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

What?

TESS

She's gone!

CALE

What are you talking about? Where the fuck is she?

Cale pulls the gun from his waistband.

TESS

I don't *know!*

They hobble into the yard, scanning the block and fighting panic.

CALE

What do we do?

TESS

Where's your car keys?

CALE

They're somewhere down in the tunnels. I'm not going back in that shit!

Tess looks down the street at the overgrown CHURCH the homeless man pointed out.

TESS

This way.

-- Cale helps Tess down the block, each ready for the worst at any moment.

CALE

How you holding up?

TESS

I'm OK. Almost there.

They duck through a dense layer of underbrush toward the crumbling, building.

CALE

What are we doing? What is this place?

Tess moves to the front doors and pulls at them. LOCKED.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TESS

Please be here. Please.

(to Cale)

Look for a way in.

Cale steps around the side of the building. Tess clutches her ribs and hobbles the other direction, tracing the wall, looking for any form of entry. Her dread growing. Every window is boarded. Every shadow is pregnant with danger.

TESS

(sotto)

Come on. Please.

MAN (O.S.)

(hissing)

Hey!

Tess nearly screams but catches herself. The HOMELESS MAN is bending out from a NARROW BREAK in the WALL. He presses his finger to his lips.

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The man helps Tess and then Cale CLIMB THROUGH the slice of missing wall before he sets a piece of plywood across it.

Cale helps Tess sit against a wall.

They're in what once was a small chapel but now, in place of pews, rows of bare twin beds line the room.

MAN

I told you! I told you not to come back! Now look at you! She got you huh?

CALE

She might have followed us here.
She could be coming!

The man waves a dismissive hand.

MAN

She ain't coming in this place.
Don't you worry.
(re: Tess's wound)
What happened here?

Cale and Tess swap a look as the man kneels and squints at her bloody side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tess pulls her shirt up revealing a bloody hole in her side. Might be one of those clean shots that people walk away from. Might not be.

CALE

(to man)

Do you have any clean cloth or bandages or anything?

MAN

Not much clean in here. You gon' need a real doctor but you gon' have to wait til sun-up. I can't believe she let you get *this* far.

CALE

What the fuck *is* she?

MAN

(*isn't it obvious?*)

She just the crazy lady that lives in that house.

Cale processes the simplicity of the explanation.

MAN

(to Tess)

But look like she got you good huh?

CALE

I did that.

TESS

It was an accident.

CALE

It doesn't matter. I hurt you.

Cale stands.

CALE

I *hurt* somebody! *That matters!* I'm not just gonna pretend that it doesn't!

(soft, introspective)

I don't know if I'm a bad person or if I'm just a person who's done bad things. I think maybe it doesn't matter. I can't change what I've done. But I can goddamn own it. And I can try and fix it. And that's what I'm gonna do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAN

Young man I understand what you saying but I'm telling you it's safer for everybody in here. You ain't gon' be helping nobody if you run off and get yourself killed.

Cale wants to argue but thinks better of it. He sits.

MAN

Right now we safe. This girl gon' last the night. Come morning time we can worry about getting her to town.

TESS

How do you know she can't get in here?

MAN

I been staying in this place for fifteen years and she ain't never--

BRRRRAAACHKKK!!!!

A BOARDED WINDOW behind him EXPLODES inward and the Mother comes ripping her way inside.

Before anyone can even scream she SNATCHES THE MAN INTO THE AIR, one massive hand gripping his head and the other holding his arm.

With one MIGHTY YANK she PULLS HIM ALMOST IN HALF from his neck to his waist.

His insides spill onto her feet and she roars.

MOTHER

RRRRRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!!

Tess and Cale scramble back.

The mother SLAMS the mans BODY into the ground and then begins POUNDING it in a FRENZY.

Tess gawks as she pulverizes the man. She turns to see Cale sliding through the sliver that they came in through.

Tess winces and then she's on her feet, squeezing through the crack in the wall after him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

-- **FIRE ESCAPE:** Tess PULLS herself THROUGH, ignoring the pain. She peeks back into the room to see that the Mother is still tearing at the Man's body in a fit of toddler-like anger.

But then she jerks her head, locks eyes with Tess and screams.

MOTHER
BAAAAAAAAAGGHH!!!

Tess looks up and sees Cale is already scaling the fire escape away from her. She starts after him.

TESS
Wait! *Help!*

She pounds up the thin metal steps as the Mothers long arm slides through the crack and gropes blindly for her.

But the Mother can't squeeze through the crack. She's too big.

Tess scuttles higher after Cale.

TESS
Wait!

CALE
Fucking come on!

Below, the mother pounds on the wall, rattling the metal stairs. Tess slips, catches herself and plods upwards.

Before long she reaches the top. The window here is boarded up. Cale is jumping for the eave of the roof.

CALE
I can't get up! I can't fucking
get up!

Tess wills herself not to faint as pain and exhaustion wash over her.

CALE
Boost me!

She grips the rail and steadies herself.

TESS
I can't.

Cale looks down to see the mother worming herself out onto the fire escape three floors below.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

TESS

Your gun!

Cale had forgotten he had a gun. He SNATCHES at it from his waistband and in his panic he FUMBLES. It DROPS from his hands and CLACKS DOWN the three floors below, past the mother who's now almost free.

CALE

Fuck! FUUCK!!!

Tess looks up to the roof above them.

She puts a foot up on the railing and plants her hands on his shoulder. She pulls herself upward grabbing the eave and Cale manages to shove her up and over. She rolls onto the roof with a wince.

CALE

Now grab me! Hey!

Tess slides to her belly and reaches down to Cale.

CALE

She's coming! Hurry!

He steps up onto the railing and jumps for her arms.

CALE

Fucking lift me!

Together they manage to wriggle him up and onto the roof.

No sooner is he up than he's on his feet and sprinting toward the crest, leaving Tess prone and exhausted behind him.

She peers over the edge to see the Mother is scampering her way up the fire escape toward her.

Tess digs deep, lifts herself to her feet and plods up the roof after Cale who's reached the crest. He looks around, wild with terror.

CALE

There's nowhere to go!

Tess can't muster the strength to climb any more. She drops to her knees and reaches out for Cale.

TESS

Help.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

CALE

There's nowhere to fucking go!
She's gonna get up here!

TESS

Help me!

CALE

*She wants us and she's gonna get
us!*

Behind Tess the Mother comes clawing over the edge,
pulling herself onto the roof.

Cale goes white.

MOTHER

GAAAAAHHHHHH!!!

Cale clenches his jaw and grabs Tess's outstretched arm.

CALE

She's not going to stop.

He PULLS TESS toward him. His eyes wild.

TESS

Cale--

CALE

I can get away...

He grabs Tess's hair with his other hand, pulling her off
balance and she FALLS.

CALE

... but you're gonna have to slow
her down.

TESS

Stop!

CALE

(to Mother)
Here!

Cale SHOVES TESS BY HER HAIR down the roof at a right
angle hoping to bait the mother away from him.

In a flash the Mother sprints up the shingles and then
she's towering over Cale who can only gawk up at her and
LITERALLY PISS HIMSELF.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

Tess continues SLIDING, out of control now toward the edge and the THREE STORY FALL that waits there, but she can't take her eyes off the Mother who GRABS CALE BY HIS THROAT with one hand, HOISTING him up to her eye level.

CALE

Gcckckkk!!!

She wraps her other hand around the first, THROTTLING his neck and Cale's face turns instantly PURPLE.

MOTHER

BAAAAAAHHHHH!!

The next second, Cale's EYES bulge forward and EXPLODE, his TONGUE SHOOTS from his gaping mouth like a SPRING, and GEYSERS of BLOOD erupt from his EARS and NOSE.

She just popped his head like a balloon.

Tess continues sliding, almost to the EDGE of the roof when the mother whips around toward her, dropping Cale like he was nothing.

MOTHER

Bah-bah!

And then Tess is off the roof.

She grabs at the RAFTER and manages to catch hold for a moment slowing herself, but it BREAKS and there's nothing between her and the ground but THREE STORIES OF AIR.

Above she sees the edge of the roof rising away from her and beyond that the purple sky.

Time seems to stop. It's pretty, just the purple up there. Tess watches the sky with no fear, no nothing. She just appreciates it's color.

Then the MOTHER flies into view, ARMS REACHING, eyes big, not with anger but worry.

As Tess falls, the Mother DESCENDS FASTER and soon she's covered the distance, her giant hands GRAB Tess and she PULLS HER CLOSE, wrapping herself around Tess and ROTATING them both so that the MOTHER IS NOW UNDERNEATH.

SMACK.

They LAND. The Mother's body hitting first, CUSHIONING Tess against the ground.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

Tess bounces up and then falls back against the broken body of the mother and then...

They both lie still.

For a moment we think they might both be dead.

Then Tess stirs. Her eyes open.

Around her the Mother groans and then rocks onto her side.

She gently positions Tess onto the ground and groans up onto her knees.

Tess inhales with a shudder as the mother kneels over her, doting.

She strokes Tess's forehead tenderly. Tess notices the mother's left arm is a tangled bloody mess. Bone pokes out from her elbow. The mothers face looks smashed and distorted from the impact.

MOTHER

Ba-ba...

She saved me.

The mother looks Tess over and her eyes well with genuine grief when she see's her wound.

MOTHER

Ba-bah!

Her giant pale hand hovers over Tess's bloody waist. Her breathing deepens to a panicked whine.

MOTHER

Ba... baba...

Tess clocks CALE'S GUN on the ground near her head.

The Mother crying now, strokes Tess's hair.

TESS

I need to go. I need help.

The mother slides her working hand under Tess's back and knees and starts to lift her.

TESS

Ahhh!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

The Mother startles and sets her back down. She points toward the house, pleading with her eyes.

TESS
No. I can't go back...

Tess points the opposite way.

The mother shakes her head and again scoops Tess in her arm.

TESS
I can't go back.

Tess raises her arm and we see that she's holding the PISTOL. The Mother's expression makes no change. She doesn't register what the gun is.

MOTHER
Ba-bah...

She nods again toward the house. Tess PRESSES the GUN to the MOTHERS CHEEK and shakes her head, tears streaming.

MOTHER
Baba.

Tess shakes her head.

TESS
No.

The Mother prepares to lift her once more.

Tess pulls the trigger.

EXT. BARBARY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

The street is empty. Silent.

And then from the undergrowth near the church Tess comes staggering.

As she steps into the road, Phil Spector's iconic drums fill the soundtrack and the RONETTES 'BE MY BABY' starts up.

Tess limps down the middle of the street. Away from the bodies of Cale, Keith the Homeless man and the Mother.

Through the wasteland of block after block of dead homes.

Toward the gas station.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She's leaving.