

OVER BLACK... a cold winter WIND whistles through the dark theatre. Faint, in a far distance, SLEIGH BELLS; the jangle eerie, rather than seasonal and familial.

In the darkness... the VOICE... rises; a wise and older adult female. MS. MACHENRY, although only in her mid fifties, she has a folksy tone of a matron telling a Christmas story... yet... aware this tale has a twisted... disturbing... edge...

MS. MAC (V.O.)

I'd like to tell you all a different kind of a Christmas tale; one 'bout comin' home for the holidays...

FADE IN:

EXT. LENZ'S HOUSE - NIGHT - (1977)

Falling snow drifts upon the Mansard rooftop of a large decrepit New England colonial. The paned windows in the gables are cracked and broken. Worn stone steps lead to a rotting open porch. An equally ragged late sixties pick-up truck sits in the driveway.

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)

Now, the first part of the story took place on the night before Christmas, way back; years and years ago.

Christmas lights are strung, but many bulbs are burned out. Beyond the house lies a void of evergreen and leafless birch clutching at a waning moon strangled by winter storm clouds.

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)

It's a story 'bout someone who could see when you are sleepin' and know when you're awake.

(beat)

No... he didn't wear a big red suit but, he was... big.

The building appears like a haunted house on Christmas Eve. Most of the windows are dark, except for a cold pale flickering light in the living room window...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - (1977)

CAMERA TRACKS ACROSS the back of a ratty sofa, what can be seen of the room in the darkness The black and white console T.V. plays "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer."

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 Billy Edward Lenz was 6 foot 2,
 when he was only thirteen.

A hulking form, 13 year old BILLY EDWARD LENZ, ENTERS FRAME,
 BACK TO CAMERA, alone; eating a T.V. dinner on a T.V. tray.
 A pink aluminum Christmas tree stands in the corner.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - (1977) - CLOSE - BILLY'S EYES

Although yellowed irises appear inhuman, the 13 year old
 boy's eyes are emotionless. Lonely.

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 'Course, he didn't have a long
 white beard, but chronic jaundice
 left him with yellow skin and eyes.

WIDER - A KITCHEN CUPBOARD

is ajar. Dim light falls on the yellow eye of a pre-teen boy
 inside the cupboard. Looking out. Watching...

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 His parents... hated each other.
 They both... hated Billy.

BILLY'S FATHER

A dark form, sits at a red linoleum kitchen table. What can
 be seen of the room conveys a pig sty.

EXTREMELY CLOSE - A DENTED ZIPPO LIGHTER

rises INTO FRAME. Inscribed in the metal: an outline of the
 map of Vietnam. "QUANG TRI '72." The flint sparks...

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 'Cause whenever the father took a
 look at his son... he'd see his
 wife.

CLOSE - BILLY'S FATHER'S EYES

turn toward the cupboard REVEALING his gaunt face and
 weathered eyes as he inhales. The eyes hold on his son
 without acknowledging him until... turning away.

KITCHEN CUPBOARD

Longing and afraid... Billy's eyes retreat into the dark.

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 And whenever the mother took a
 look at Billy... she'd see nothing
 but her husband.

CUT TO:

INT. A BEDROOM - NIGHT - (1978)

Billy's mother's face flops INTO FRAME from the TOP OF FRAME.
 Upside down, she rocks violently; sweaty hair flopping...

REVERSE - BILLY'S EYES

hide under the bed; locked, unemotionally, on his mother. The
 back of her head is TO CAMERA and upside down...

WIDER

Over a single bed, atop a greasy mattress, Billy's mother is
 flat on her stomach, hips lifted while being taken from
 behind by an obese, hairy, sweaty male LOVER.

BILLY'S POV - HIS MOTHER

Amidst intercourse, stares at her son, sadistically smirking
 as if her husband has caught her... and she doesn't care.

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 When Billy's mother got pregnant,
 ... his father disappeared.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - (1978)

The table is vacant, except for a full pack of cigarettes...

CUPBOARD

Billy's eyes stare at the empty chair...

MS. MAC (CONT'D, O.S.)
 The mother said the father took
 off 'cause the baby wasn't his...

EXT. BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - (1978)

CAMERA TRACKS along lattice at the base of the house. Under
 the house, a flashlight shines REVEALING Billy's mother and
 her lover digging a hole in the cold ground.

MS. MAC (CONT'D, O.S.)
 But, most folks think she killed
 him. Never could be proved, though.

INT. BENEATH BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - (1978)

The flashlight beam rolls onto the bloodied face of Billy's
 father; skull crushed by a blunt object across the eyes.

LOW ANGLE - BILLY'S MOTHER

blood soaked hair clings to her face as she pulls up dirt.
 CAMERA RISES, PASSING the mother until finding a hole in the
 house floor. Above it, a yellow eye... watches.

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 The baby was a girl, named Agnes.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY - A BASSINET - (1979)

A beautiful pink baby lies swaddled in a white wicker
 bassinet, sleeping beneath a soft amber night light.

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 And she was perfect. Bright blue
 eyes. Pink skin. Agnes was her
 mother's angel...

LOW ANGLE - BILLY'S MOTHER & STEP FATHER

The couple peer over the crib INTO CAMERA...

BILLY'S MOTHER
 She's our family, now.

CAMERA BEGINS RISING ABOVE the crib...

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 It was like poor Billy was an
 orphan even though his family
 wasn't dead. He wasn't even
 allowed to look at Agnes.

CAMERA ARCS... BECOMING an OVERHEAD ANGLE on BILLY, on the
 floor encircled by dolls, stuffed animals, and dozens of
 plastic detached eyes, which he is removing from their heads.

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 Billy decided if he wasn't allowed
 to look at anyone or anyone to
 look at him...

(more)

MS. MAC (cont'd; CONT'D, V.O.)
 well, then, he'd make sure sure
 they couldn't see *anything*.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT - (1979)

CAMERA TRAVELS toward the darkness region of the hallway,
 then TILTS UP REVEALING a combination lock on the attic door.

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 His mother became afraid Billy'd
 take to hurting baby Agnes or,
 some say, she saw too much of
herself in Billy... in any case,
 she locked Billy away.

INT. ATTIC - BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - (1980)

CAMERA MOVES ALONG the attic floor. Half of the area is
 uncovered and beamed, filled with aging loose-fill rock wool.
 The floor constructed of wood lathe and plaster. Boxes and
 furniture have been stored precariously across the beams. A
 path of wood planks leads to a ten foot area of solid floor.

BILLY'S FORM ENTERS FRAME, older now; larger, but
 malnourished. CAMERA PUSHES IN ON HIS HULKING FORM as he sits
 at the attic window...

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 Billy was kept in the attic for
 years. Never allowed to go to
 school or talk to any children.
 Only let him out to eat or shit.

As snow flurries begin to float past the window, the haunting
 woodwinds of the "Nutcracker's" "Arabian Dance" RISE...

MS. MAC (CONT'D, V.O.)
 Then... twenty-five years ago
 tonight... all Billy wanted for
 Christmas was his family back...
 so, he took them.

The MUSIC OVERLAPS...

CUT TO:

EXT. BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - (1981)

It's snowing, softly. Some lights are strung, but they are
 cheap and creepy...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - (1980) - CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS

Blue and green tinsel hang from the pink aluminum tree...

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

Not many and wrapped in cheap paper beneath the tree...

A RADIO

the source of the Tchaikovsky...

INT. ATTIC - BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - (1981) - BILLY'S EYES

FILL THE FRAME, slashed with noir shadows, only of color, from a string of spare Christmas lights lining the attic wall.

CAMERA PULLS BACK, LOW to the FLOOR, REVEALING the spiked tipped legs of a cheap tripod. CAMERA RISES, REVEALING a used 50mm Tasco telescope atop the unstable tripod; all in, twenty-five bucks. A bow is stuck on the top along with an envelope.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT - (1981)

Billy's step-father and mother climb down the attic ladder. She closes the door and secures the combination lock...

INT. ATTIC - BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - (1981) - AN ENVELOPE

tears open. A Rite-Aid calibre Christmas card displays Santa Claus checking an open scroll with graphics reading, "I see you when you're sleeping. I know when you're awake..." Inside, "Be good for goodness sake!" Signed; "Mommy and Phil."

THE WINDOW

The telescope ENTERS FRAME and looks out over the neighborhood. Only a few houses with large yards decorated for Christmas populate the area.

REVERSE - END OF THE TELESCOPE

A house reflects over Billy's magnified eye...

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD HOME - DUSK - TELESCOPE MATTE

A family gathers for Christmas appearing like a Norman Rockwell painting. Americana. Warm. Filled with happiness and love. A teenage boy opens a present and reacts, overwhelmed. He moves to his father and gives him a hug.

TELESCOPE MATTE

CAMERA PUSHES DOWN THE BARREL OF THE SCOPE TOWARD BILLY'S CLOSED EYE. Once IT FILLS FRAME, the lid opens exposing the yellowed iris; flaring with envy and hatred...

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (1981)

Agnes, two years old, awkwardly tears Christmas wrapping off a box revealing a brand new Cabbage Patch doll.

BILLY'S MOTHER

reacts with animated joy, for the baby. The mother gathers the wrapping paper and stuffs it in a black plastic trash bag. She takes a drink from a highball glass...

BESIDE BILLY'S MOTHER

A pack of cigarettes, a butane lighter, and a bottle of Wild Turkey sit just behind Billy's mother.

BILLY'S MOTHER & AGNES

While the mother removes the doll from the box, she offers Agnes a homemade Christmas cookie.

MOTHER

Christmas cookie, my angel?

The baby takes the cookie. Her mother smiles.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

You're my Christmas cookie. I could eat you up!

Pleased, the mother watches Agnes with the doll. Billy's mother reaches back and grabs the pack of cigarettes, puts one in her mouth, then feels blindly behind her...

CLOSE - FLOOR

The lighter is gone.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - (1981)

Billy's mother moves into the kitchen, ignites a gas burner, leans down, and lights her cigarette...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (1981)

Billy's mother approaches, pausing in the threshold of the kitchen door. CAMERA PUSHES IN AS she takes an anxious step...

MOTHER

Agnes?

BILLY'S MOTHER'S POV - THE FLOOR

Agnes is gone, as is the plastic Hefty bag. The wrapping paper, removed and left on the floor.

BILLY'S MOTHER

looks to her husband on the sofa...

BILLY'S MOTHER'S POV - THE COUCH

Billy's step-father is curled asleep and stoned on the sofa. Behind him, the living room is vacant. Agnes' playpen sits just behind and right of the Christmas tree...

LOWER ANGLE - BILLY'S MOTHER

Anxiously steps toward the playpen...

BILLY'S MOTHER'S POV - THE PLAYPEN

Inside... Agnes' new Cabbage Patch doll lies presented in the playpen with its eyes... pulled out.

BILLY'S MOTHER - LOWER ANGLE

CAMERA now SWEEPS INTO HER horrified reaction...

MOTHER

Bill-lly!

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT - (1981)

CAMERA IS LOW TO THE GROUND, MOVING RAPIDLY ALONG the hallway as Billy's mother and step-father OUTPACE CAMERA and ENTER FRAME. CAMERA CONTINUES as they run to the attic ladder...

MOTHER (CONT'D)

What have you done?!

As she climbs, the step-father pauses. Puzzled by...

STEP FATHER'S POV - THE COMBINATION LOCK

Remains locked from the outside. The mother's fingers, agitated, frightened, and drunk, fumble with the lock...

STEP-FATHER (O.S.)
*What your mother and I must know
 is...*

INT. ATTIC - BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - (1981) - TRAP DOOR
 BANGS open!

STEP-FATHER (CONT'D)
Where did you put the baby?

Billy's mother sticks her head into the attic. CAMERA SWEEPS
 IN ON HER as she freezes, stunned...

BILLY'S MOTHER'S POV - THE ATTIC

Vacant. Billy is nowhere in sight.

BILLY'S MOTHER AND STEP FATHER

O.S., downstairs, Agnes SCREAMS!

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT - (1981)

CAMERA IS WIDE as the parents run toward the stairs...

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT - (1981) - EXTREMELY LOW ANGLE

As the parents bound down the stairs, CAMERA RISES to Billy's
 mother...

MOTHER
Billy!? What have you done?!

THE FAR WALL

The shadow of the Christmas tree shakes violently as Billy's
 shadow stands on a chair before Agnes' struggling, choking
silhouette, hanging atop the tree like a living angel.

EXTREMELY CLOSE - A 10 FRAME CUT - BILLY'S EYES

turn toward his mother, exposing their yellow tint...

CLOSE - A 10 FRAME CUT - BILLY'S LEFT HAND

Holds a briloette ornament, blood dripping tip facing out...

CLOSE - A 10 FRAME CUT - BILLY'S MOUTH

opens. An eyeball, iris bright blue, is placed inside...

BILLY'S MOTHER

SCREAMS!

BILLY'S STEP-FATHER

Charges Billy...

BILLY

Backlit against the Christmas lights, reaches out for Agnes...

A 10 FRAME CUT - AGNES

CAMERA RISES TOWARD HER struggling for life, the black plastic Hefty bag over her head... one hole in the bag over her right eye indicating Billy has removed one eye, so far...

CHRISTMAS TREE

The Step-father ENTERS FRAME, reaching upwards for Agnes.

BILLY'S HAND

THRUSTS the tear shaped ornament outward.

REVERSE - STEP-FATHER

the back of his skull erupts. Dangling at the end of the impaling ornament, with the consistency of an egg yolk, the step father's eye; pushed through the skull.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

TOPPLES! CRASHES! covering Agnes and her father...

BILLY'S MOTHER

A string of Christmas tree lights quickly wrap around her neck. Her hands whip to her throat, clutching the cord...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - (1981)

Billy drags his struggling mother into the kitchen...

CLOSE - COUNTER

Billy's hand grabs a rolling pin, coated with flour...

A PLATE OF CHRISTMAS COOKIES

CAMERA INCHES on a plate of freshly baked cookies while, in the dark background, Billy raises the rolling pin above his head. The cookies shake from the unseen impact. CAMERA CONTINUES as the cookies tremble with each THUD...

ON THE COUNTER

Sit metal Christmas cookie cutters dusted with flour. Billy's hand ENTERS FRAME and grabs an angel shaped cutter...

BILLY'S MOTHER

The back of her lifeless head lies on the floor. The angel shaped cutter ENTERS FRAME. As it presses to her face...

CLOSE - OVEN

A silhouette against the glowing red coils inside the oven, Billy ENTERS FRAME with a cookie sheet, dripping blood...

As the oven opens... the hollow radio purrs with the flowing harp strings of "The Nutcracker's" "Intrada..."

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - (1981)

POLICE OFFICERS, BLUDWORTH and COLQUITT weapons drawn, enter the house, alarmed, yet cautious. Colquitt moves directly toward the fallen Christmas tree, attending to Agnes. Bludworth continues to the kitchen.

Bludworth freezes, expression mortified. CAMERA PULLS BACK REVEALING Billy sitting at the table in the dark; drinking a glass of milk and eating... his Christmas cookies, appearing like shapes of charred jerky with frosting and sprinkles.

As Billy calmly finishes his snack, CAMERA CRANES DOWN until the corpse of his mother ENTERS THE F.G...

CUT TO:

EXT. INSTITUTIONAL FACILITY - NIGHT - (1994)

CAMERA MOVES ALONG a decrepit institution. The image is absolutely counter to the sweet "Intrada."

MS. MAC (O.S.)
Declared insane, Billy was sent
away to the Clark sanitarium.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. INSTITUTIONAL HALLWAY - NIGHT - (1994)

CAMERA MATCHES THE SPEED OF THE PREVIOUS MOVE; the tempo of "Intrada." CAMERA TURNS into a doorway and finds a figure sitting in the dark, presumably Billy...

MS. MAC (CONT'D, O.S.)

Paramedics saved Agnes, but she lost her right eye. Scarred, parents dead, brother a murderer, she was sent to an orphanage. Not even a foster family would take her.

CAMERA PANS... REVEALING, however, AGNES in a rocking chair. Fifteen years old, but appearing forty. Heavy scar tissue encircles her neck. Her prosthetic eye is cheap and colorless and, therefore, eerie as it stares straight ahead while the natural bright blue eye looks at an object in her lap...

MS. MAC (CONT'D, O.S.)

Released when she was eighteen... Agnes was never seen again.

CAMERA TILTS to Agnes' lap, finding her lovingly stroking the hair of the eye-less Cabbage Patch doll.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. INSANE ASYLUM - NIGHT - (2005)

CAMERA MOVES ALONG a Hellish prison-like institution; high walls encased by rusty razor wire, while snow falls outside.

CAMERA CONTINUES until finding a room, set apart from the others, outlined by a string of colored Christmas lights. Inside, a figure, Billy's silhouette, stands in the window.

MS. MAC (CONT'D, O.S.)

One year ago... on Christmas Eve, Billy used cleaning fluid and a string of Christmas lights, decorating his cell... to set himself on fire.

Suddenly, the lights turn off. Inside, the room erupts with violent orange flame. The figure vanishes within the fire...

MS. MAC (CONT'D, O.S.)

The fire became so hot, the attendants couldn't open the cell. All that was found of Billy, were ashes.

EXT. ASYLUM CEMETERY - NIGHT (2005)

CAMERA TRACKS ACROSS several gravestones, many unmarked... until STOPPING upon "WILLAM EDWARD LENZ. 1964-2004."

MS. MAC (CONT'D, O.S.)

And, now, that's his home. Where he'll be spending the rest of his Christmases. Alone, in an unmarked grave in the asylum cemetery.

Snow falls gently on Billy's lonely tombstone. After a beat... a form ENTERS and holds over the grave.

FADE OUT:

OVER BLACK... A TITLE CARD RISES... CENTER FRAME...

"BLACK CHRISTMAS"

Then... a stand up bass with harmonica accents begins a bouncing ball tempo, introducing Mitch Miller and his Orchestra's rendition of "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus."

As the male chorus begins singing, the TITLE CARD FADES...

CHORUS (V.O.)

I saw Mommy kissing Santa Claus...

SLOW FADE UP:

EXT. FRONT YARD - SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE - A PAIR OF EYES - COMPOSED FAR LEFT OF FRAME

A pair of plastic female eyes on an internally illuminated Nativity figure, presumably Mary's, appears afraid, taken out of context. The statue sways in the freezing air...

CHORUS (V.O.)

... Underneath the mistletoe last night...

WIDER - A MANGER

A Magus stands in the snow amongst animals gazing upon a haloed baby in a straw crib beneath His mother and an illuminated star extending above the tableau.

CHORUS (CONT'D, V.O.)

She didn't see me creep down the stares to have a peep...

A SNOWMAN

of real snow, shape malformed, wears a Pi Kappa Sigma baseball cap, a school colors scarf, rocks for eyes, and, as a nose, a pink G-spot vibrator...

CHORUS (CONT'D, V.O.)

*She thought that I was tucked up
in my bedroom fast asleep...*

CLOSE - A STRING OF OUTDOOR CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Extend ACROSS FRAME along the rain gutter of a large sorority house. Blue, green, red, and white bulbs tremble and TINK in the wind of an approaching harsh Winter storm.

O.S., GIRLS can be heard having a PARTY; warm, inviting, plenty of laughter and CLINKING glasses...

EXT. PHI KAPPA SIGMA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT

The Nativity, the snowman, and the lights decorate the front yard of the New England colonial that was once home to Billy Lenz and his family.

ACROSS THE LOWER LEFT OF FRAME, A TITLE CARD INDICATES...

"TWENTY-FIVE YEARS LATER"

The exterior of the house, including the gabled windows and Mansard roof, has been significantly restored in the last twenty-five years, reflecting the money and privilege of the present day occupants.

Tonight, pools of color glow in the snow from decorative Christmas lights while long thick icicles hang like crystalline fangs from the lip of the roof.

CHORUS (CONT'D, V.O.)

*Then, I saw Mommy tickle Santa
Claus/Underneath his beard so
snowy white...*

A '66 Pontiac Parisienne tuna boat is parked in the driveway, just before the garage door. Above, gray smoke floats out the chimney, to be whipped by an angry wind. An intense winter storm approaches, reflecting in the evening clouds.

In contrast, the safety of the interior pulses with a warm amber glow from a fireplace.

CLOSER - BESIDE THE FRONT DOOR

Greek letters identify the Phi Kappa Sigma sorority.

THE FRONT WINDOW

Inside, a silver and gold Victorian Christmas tree glitters. Discernible behind the tree, a few sorority sisters are drinking, gossiping, and celebrating the Holidays.

Now... CAMERA MOVES... not a hand-held wide angle subjective "killer's P.O.V.," but, rather, on TRACKS along the front facade. The MOVEMENT'S texture remains voyeuristic...

CAMERA eerily, unexpectedly, begins RISING... toward the second story... REVEALING windows of individual bedrooms.

CHORUS (CONT'D, V.O.)

*What a laugh it would have been/
if daddy had only seen/Mommy
kissing Santa Claus last night!*

CAMERA TRACKS parallel to the rooms, REVEALING a window in which hangs a small holly wreath with white micro lights.

Although obscured by the wreath, MEGAN HELMS, 23, can be seen at her desk, crying. Megan appears more worldly than the other sorority sisters, yet she is just as vulnerable. Her impulsive curiosity often negates her common sense.

Presently, Megan is arguing with a webcam image on her laptop of a young man, KYLE AUTRY, 26.

CAMERA MOVES PAST HER WINDOW just as Megan angrily flips off Kyle and SLAMS her laptop closed.

The next room is dark, yet not vacant. Attractive and urban, LAUREN HANNON, 21, wears a blue sweater as she leans out over the sill of her open window smoking a cigarette. CAMERA CONTINUES as she exhales, somewhat sad, before snubbing the butt in a Coke can.

CHORUS (CONT'D, V.O.)

*I saw Mommy kissing Santa Claus
underneath the mistletoe last
night.*

CAMERA CONTINUES TO the next room room in which CLAIR CROSBY, 20, appears excited, yet anxious while pacing with a sheet of high quality gift wrapping paper, cellophane tape, ribbons and scissors. As she sits, Clair disappears from view...

CAMERA BEGINS RISING... toward the third story, while also PUSHING IN ON a gabled window framed with Christmas lights on the top level of the house. Behind the weathered mutins stands an illuminated plastic Santa Claus.

The window is ajar; softly KNOCKING against the sill...

CHORUS (CONT'D, V.O.)

*She didn't see me creep down the
stares to have a peep...*

From the dim spill of the decorative lights, it is apparent the large area behind the window is not a living space, but, rather, the attic which was once Billy Lenz's room.

Cardboard storage cartons and discarded furniture are stacked and dusty. A carousel horse mounted on a brass pole rears its hooves; fixed eyes flaring.

Oddly, the horse appears to be shooting streams of strained breaths, visible in the cold. A shadow... moves.

CHORUS (CONT'D, V.O.)

*She thought that I was tucked up
in my bedroom fast asleep/Then, I
saw Mommy tickle Santa Claus...*

With a startling SCREECH an old rocking chair is placed at the window and released. The vacant chair gently rocks...

INT. ATTIC - SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT - THE KILLER'S P.O.V.

WIDE ANGLE and HAND HELD, strained arhythmic human breaths jet from behind CAMERA as it MOVES TOWARD a closed square door in the floor, partially framed by faint light seeping from below.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT - ATTIC TRAP DOOR

CAMERA MOVES THROUGH a corridor of dark wood walls and hardwood floors lit with a string of Christmas lights. The sconces are turned off. CAMERA PUSHES toward a corner of the ceiling at the shadowy end of the hall, REVEALING an attic trap door.

The door lifts. CREAKS...

INT. CLAIR'S ROOM - NIGHT - CLOSE - A WINE CORK

Is PLUCKED from a bottle...

EXTREMELY CLOSE - A SMALL GIFT BOX

wrapped with tasteful paper and great care sits on the floor amongst scraps of paper and ribbon. The wine cork drops INTO FRAME followed by the CORKSCREW. At this IMAGE SIZE, the corkscrew appears like a threatening auger bit. Thick. Sharp.

CHORUS (CONT'D, V.O.)

*What a laugh it would have
been/If daddy had only seen...*

CLAIR CROSBY

Appears mixed with dreaded apprehension and excited anticipation as she opens a blank Christmas card and gathers her thoughts. The first being, her thoughts could use some wine. She pours the pinot into a glass.

ON THE BED

Above her, a couple travel bags are packed, but open. Her cell phone's red power indicator light blinks...

IN THE OPEN CLOSET

Hang two dry cleaned outfits, wrapped in clear plastic...

ON THE FLOOR

Just behind Clair, sit plastic shopping bags and a store wrapped gift...

CLOSE - A GIFT

The tag reads *"To: Lauren Fr: Secret Santa."*

CLOSER - ANOTHER GIFT

Enwrapped with different paper; special. The tag reads...

"To: My big sister, Leigh. Fr: Her baby sister, Clair."

CLOSE - THE WINE BOTTLE

Is set down beside her, alongside a pair of open scissors..

CLOSE - A FOUNTAIN PEN

The nub, sharp. It is picked up from the floor...

CLOSE - CLAIR

Considers...

CLOSE - BLANK CHRISTMAS CARD

She writes... *"Leigh..."*

CLAIR

SIGHS, then takes a long sip of wine...

THE FOUNTAIN PEN

Is returned to the floor...

CLOSE - CLAIR

Behind her, the dry cleaning plastic RUSTLES. She turns...

CLAIR'S POV - DRY CLEANING PLASTIC

Flutters...

CLAIR

Looks to...

CLAIR'S POV - BASE OF THE FLOOR

Air wisps through the heating vent...

CLAIR

takes another sip of wine before her expression conveys she has caught hold of some words for which she has been searching to express complex emotions. She quickly sets down the wine glass and reaches back for the pen...

CLOSE - THE FLOOR

Reminiscent of Billy's mother's missing butane lighter, Clair's hand reaches for the pen, but it is no longer there...

CLOSE - CLAIR

Puzzled, turns a quarter and looks to the floor...

CLAIR'S POV - THE FLOOR

The pen is gone. A shadow approaches...

CLAIR

As she turns to see which of her sorority sisters has entered... a clear plastic bag whips over her head.

CLOSE - CLAIR'S MOUTH

Like a vacuum, the plastic CLASPS to her face; mouth wide with horror and pain as she takes her last GASP...

CLOSE - THE FOUNTAIN PEN

Is THRUST through the bag and into her eye.

OVERLAPPING...

SANTA'S ELVES (O.S.)
Ho! Ho! Ho! We are Santa's elves!

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - T.V. MONITOR

Elves from "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer" dance with stop motion animation grace. The female elves are decked in pink dresses with fur trim, and conical hats with a pink ribbon...

PI KAPPA SIGMA SISTERS (O.S.)
Oh-ho! I want that outfit! Those hats are so amazing!

REVERSE

Several Phi Kappa Sigma sisters are hanging out around a 48" flat panel plasma T.V., kicking on sofas, in chairs and on the floor. Each with a glass of wine, beer, or a shooter.

CAMERA BEGINS CREEPING... ARCING... while the girls LAUGH, buzzed from the alcohol and holiday respite from college.

The interior decor is tasteful and reflects the upper economic class background of its members. Comfortable and inviting, the room is warmed by an amber glow from a fire in the hearth. The house feels safe and Christmassy.

CAMERA CONTINUES MOVING... OMINOUS... as a touch tone house phone ENTERS FRAME... It RINGS; AMPLIFIED to create a startle.

KELLI PRESLEY, 19, athletic and down to earth, is the most affable of the Phi Kappa sisters. Her girl next door humility prevents her from any awareness that she is also the pretty of the girls. Kelli stands and moves to answer the phone.

KELLI
Phi Kappa...

CAMERA INCHES IN as she reacts, absently tilting her head as if this will help her better understand the caller...

KELLI (CONT'D)
What...? Who?
(beat)
Oh. Yeah. Yeah. Hang on.

CAMERA HOLDS as Kelli palms the receiver...

KELLI (CONT'D)
Dana... it's that Carl guy.

The girls break into stifled SNIGGERS at DANA MATHIS, 20, a dark haired daddy's girl Manhattan ice princess with fashion conscious eyeglasses. Annoyed, Dana looks up from painting her nails a tasteful Christmas red...

DANA

And you answered it?

KELLI

Caller I.D. said Delta Gamma.

INSERT - CALLER I.D. DISPLAY

The L.E.D., indicates "ALPHA DELTA GAMMA."

RETURN

As Dana blows on her nails...

DANA

D-uh. A.D.G.'s all went skiing.

KELLI

Kyle's not a frat guy, so I wouldn't know.

She pointedly extends the receiver toward Dana...

DANA

Blow 'im off. If I wanted him to call, I'd've given him my cell.

MELISSA KITT, 20, Asian, geek chick, sits with her feet propped on the coffee table...

MELISSA

Um, dude, thwarting *your* stalkers is not, like, her *life's* work.

Pissed, Dana, makes theatre out of stowing her nail polish and moving to the phone...

DANA

This dick's not even an A.D.G. He has some way of hacking their caller I.D. so I'll answer...

(into phone, lifeless)

What?

Of course, every girl's focus turns to Dana's conversation...

DANA (CONT'D)

No. We're in the middle of our Christmas party... Can't. Going home, tonight. Yeah, sure! I'll call you!.. right after Jesus drops by to open his presents.

The sorority sisters break into a DERISIVE CLAMOR as Dana drops the phone into the cradle. Dana smirks, pleased with herself as she exchanges a freshly painted nails careful high-five with Melissa.

KELLI

Aww-ah! I've been on the other end of that call. I feel bad for Carl.

As Dana returns to painting her nails red...

DANA

Don't. Carl's a serial killer.

HEATHER LEE, 20, a Charleston, South Carolina blonde, not a hair out of place and a touch self righteous, wearing a red Christmas sweater, appears uncomfortable...

HEATHER

My oldest sister says you shouldn't criticize someone 'til you've walked a mile in their shoes.

DANA

Carl's shoes? Like, I'm ever going to put on a pair of Dr. Scholl's.

As Heather sighs, impatient with Dana, a MUTED, RINGTONE plays "JINGLE BELLS." Melissa lifts her behind and removes a cell phone from her back pocket and answers.

MELISSA

Hello... Hey.

Dana rolls her eyes at Melissa's holiday ringtone.

DANA

That is *so* gay.

Melissa shrugs. She thinks it's cool. So does Kelli. She removes her phone from her back pocket...

KELLI

I have the same phone. Mine plays "The Sugar Plum Fairies."

She hits a button and the ring tone begins the tinkling introduction of "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies..."

DANA
I'm so sad for you.

KELLI
Does your phone do anything?

Dana holds up her Blackberry...

DANA
Validates me.

As Dana wheels her thumbs, checking e-mail...

MS. MAC (O.S.)
Ho! Ho! Ho! Secret Santa!

MRS. MACHENRY, mid to late fifties, bounds into the room wearing a smile and a Santa Claus hat. The Sigma Kappa house mother, Ms. Mac doesn't care what the girls do as long as it doesn't make waves and jeopardize her own comfort.

MS. MAC (CONT'D)
Secret Santa! Ho ho ho!

While turning off the T.V. and putting on some Christmas music, Ms. Mac blurts to herself, but for the world to hear..

MS. MAC (CONT'D)
Come on you spoiled bitches let's
let this over with so I can get
the hell outta here and on to my
big brother's house...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

CAMERA IS MOVING past the blinking Christmas lights in the dark vacant hallway. A bedroom door opens. Lauren exits and steps into the dim hallway with a grimace.

O.S., a cell PHONE RINGS. Lauren looks up as another door opens and Megan exits, eyes swollen from crying. Megan removes the RINGING CELL PHONE from her back pocket, opens it, checks caller I.D., and immediately turns it off.

LAUREN
You okay?

Embarrassed, Megan nods, opens her door, and tosses the cell phone back onto her bed before quickly heading downstairs. Lauren studies her for a beat before moving PAST CAMERA, which CONTINUES DOWN THE HALL...

CAMERA RISES to the trap door in the ceiling... REVEALING the attic portal... slightly open.

A remaining piece of plastic shopping bag is pulled up into the attic. The door quietly closes...

MS. MAC (O.S.)
Bil-l-ly! Bil-l-ly!

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - UNDER THE TREE

A dozen wrapped presents are rummaged by Ms. Mac's hands...

MS. MAC (O.S.)
 Where's Billy's?

WIDER

Standing at the tree, Ms. MacHenry turns to the gathered sorority sisters in the name of gallows humor, yet, there remains an unavoidable inauspicious tension...

MS. MAC (CONT'D)
 I don't see Billy's present under the tree, here.

Heather's expression tightens, anxious. The sisters are not as into this tradition as the house mother.

In the b.g., Megan moves down the stairs into the living room, followed by Lauren...

LAUREN
 He's gonna be *pih-issed*, then come back here and eat us.

Ms. Mac reacts to the residue smell of cigarettes left in Lauren's wake.

MS. MAC
 Not as pissed as *I'm* gonna be if you've been smoking in your room.

Lauren shakes her head with feigned innocence as she swipes someone's full glass of red wine and as she takes a sip...

LAUREN
 Must've been Billy's ghost.

As Melissa hangs up her cell phone call...

MELISSA
 I don't think he's dead. Is he?

Megan is about to sit on the sofa by Kelli, but hesitates, guiltily, and opts for an area on the floor. Oblivious to Megan's hesitation, Kelli is preoccupied with getting off the couch to help Ms. Mac search through the presents.

HEATHER

Kelli CROSSES FRAME before Heather, concealing her discomfort.

HEATHER

Why don't you open the present we got you, Ms. Mac?

MS. MAC

Billy always gets his present first. Twenty-three year Kappa Sigma tradition.

DANA

Can we just get on with this? I'm on the red eye tonight and I still have to go pack, whatever, I get here.

MELISSA

Red eye? You're not going anywhere. Suppose to rain hail the size of canned hams, any time.

MS. MAC

Who drew Billy's name?

LAUREN

Um, dude... "secret"... santa.

MS. MAC

Who's not here?

She takes a look around the room...

MELISSA

Everyone.

MS. MAC

Chelsea?

KELLI

Went home, already.

MS. MAC

Greer?

MELISSA

She and Erin blew outta here,
yesterday. Went skiing with all
the A.D.G.'s.

MS. MAC

Where's Clair? Didn't I see her,
earlier?

KELLI

Isn't she upstairs writing a card
to her sister? 'Member, this is
that... "occasion for Clair and
her older sister and her mom to
bury the hatchet and get to know
each other."

Lauren averts her eyes with a touch of envy at the thought,
then downs her glass of wine while reaching for a re-fill...

LAUREN

Wish I could bury the hatchet with
my older sister... right in her
head.

MELISSA

Yeah, but, I think, maybe, Clair's
sister already might've picked her
up. I know she lives around here.

INT. ATTIC - SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT

CAMERA LOOKS OUT THE ATTIC WINDOW. A figure approaches the
house, not up the walkway, but across the front yard toward
the picture window...

Suddenly! Clair's dead body ROCKS INTO and FILLS FRAME. The
clear plastic shopping bag clings to her frozen horrified
expression; skull-like as her eye sockets are empty.

As the chair slowly rocks... CREAK... CREAK... CREAK...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ms. Mac is on her hands and knees searching the presents
under the tree, in front of the picture window.

HEATHER

Watches, then sighs, confessional...

HEATHER

Okay... I drew that name.

MRS. MacHENRY

beneath the tree, looks to Heather...

THE OTHER GIRLS

Lauren pauses mid sip of wine. Dana eyes Melissa and flashes a catty grimace and mouths "oops." Heather, sitting upright, inches up on the edge of the sofa; posture defensive...

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Can I just say... I'm sorry, I am very not okay with any of this. I mean, buying a *Christmas*... present for a serial killer?

MELISSA

Technically, William Edward Lenz was a *spree* killer.

HEATHER

What-ever. As a Christian, I am offended by a... *pagan sacrifice* to ward off evil spirits on a day that celebrates the birth of Christ.

Ms. Mac moves toward the fireplace and picks up a foot and a half long, two pronged barbecue fork. She sticks a marshmallow on the end and places it over the fire...

MS. MAC

Oh, come on, Heather, it's just a bit of fun...

Lauren cuts her off...

LAUREN

Christmas is more about warding off evil spirits than Halloween.

WIDER - LIVING ROOM

At the top of the staircase, looking through the rails of the dark wood banister. CAMERA is INCHING FORWARD, as if the P.O.V. of an unidentified person... watching.

HEATHER

What would you know about Christmas?

LAUREN

More than you about Chanukah.

CLOSER - LIVING ROOM

Heather is rattled and not as good at rancorous debate as Lauren, who knows it...

HEATHER

You'd think, at least, as a woman, you'd have a little respect for a day celebrating not just a birth but the mother of the child.

MELISSA

Heather, let it go. Just be happy you had to buy a present for a spree killer instead of Lauren.

LAUREN

What Christmas shit in this room reflects Jesus' birth? Huh?

The girls pause, then look about the room as Lauren randomly points at various Christmas decorations...

LAUREN (CONT'D)

It's all neo-pagan magik bullshit. Christmas tree's a magical rite ensuring the return of the crops when Winter's over. Holly is said to have protective powers against witches. Mistletoe is a conception charm.

MELISSA

Then, get that shit away from me.

MS. MAC

Pulls a toasted marshmallow off the fork and into her mouth while searching around the hearth. Then, eyeing the mantle, with a full mouth and a friendly tone, asks...

MS. MAC

What happened to those nice red and silver Christmas candles?

Receiving no response, she gives up, continues searching while grumbling...

MS. MAC (CONT'D)

"Oh yeah, I know where they are, Ms. Mac, I shoved 'em up my ass."

LIVING ROOM

Lauren's drunken momentum gathers...

LAUREN

Fifth century Christians jacked a popular Roman winter festival. Twelve days in December, when the nights were long and the demons of chaos roamed the earth.

MELISSA

I saw them at Wal-Mart, yesterday.
(beat)
Not shopping. They work there.

LAUREN

Even the real St. Nicholas, destroyed a Roman temple to rid it of demons. And fuckin' Santa Claus... this voyeur that watches you all year and determines if you've behaved to his standards of decency before breaking into your house in the middle of the night? And that's different from what Billy did, how?

MRS. MACHENRY

Looks up from her search of the presents...

MS. MAC

He didn't break in. Billy lived here.

Behind her, in the window, a dark figure KNOCKS on the glass. The house mother SHRIEKS!

THE GIRLS

Everyone jolts, except Lauren who continues drinking. Kelli peeks around the tree and beams.

KELLI

Kyle!

Kelli starts toward the front door as the other girls laugh with nervous release while Ms. Mac catches her breath...

MS. MAC

Why didn't he just climb down the fuckin' chimney?

While the girls are LAUGHING, KYLE AUTRY, 26, dark and handsome, quickly and covertly gestures toward himself, then toward an unidentified girl in the room while mouthing "we need to talk, now!"

LAUREN

Sees him, then shifts her eyes toward the girls to find...

LAUREN'S POV - MEGAN

averts her eyes from the window, mortified and angry...

LAUREN

Reads the exchange, cocks an eyebrow and files it. Lauren takes another drink while behind her, Kelli stands in the open front door threshold to greet Kyle with a hug.

KYLE

keeps his eyes off Megan. Not a college student, Kyle is a local; blue collar. Although lacking the aplomb of a frat brother, Kyle is not a dope. He's an edgy street wise kid.

Wearing a large worn parka, Kyle's forced smile and focus are on Kelli, who beams. He shoots the others a cool wave.

THE OTHER GIRLS

Return the greeting, but with a bit of attitude. They like him, but feel he is below their economic class.

DANA

Kelli buying you a new coat for
Christmas?

WIDER

Kyle smiles, but overall ignores the crack as he moves toward the tree and bends to check out the gifts, with a laugh...

KYLE

Whoa. Ni-hce! Check this loot!
More stuff, here, than ever's been
under my tree.

MEGAN

Expression hard, yet not looking toward Kyle and Kelli, cuts through her sisters' greeting to Kyle...

MEGAN

We said, "no guys."

WIDER - THE LIVING ROOM

The girls tense. Everyone looks to Megan who keeps her fiery eyes averted.

Kyle forces an apologetic and charming smile as he defensively and playfully holds up his hands and backs away from the tree...

KYLE

Sorry. Just got off work and my apartment sucks. Figured you'd be done, by now.

As Dana impatiently checks her watch...

DANA

Hmmmmmm. You're not the only one.

MEGAN

We're not. So, get out.

Everyone, especially Kelli, reacts to the severity of Megan's demand. All except Lauren who, processing what she just witnessed, can't help but smile as she drinks.

MS. MAC

Megan!

KYLE

If I'm in the way, it's no big...

He starts out, but Kelli wants to see him...

KELLI

Come on, he's already here.

MS. MAC

We're running behind because we can't find Billy's present.

KYLE

Why's he need a present? Been dead for, like, over a year.

HEATHER

Then, we should just skip him and open our presents.

MEGAN

We said... no... guys.

As Kelli flashes Megan a hurt expression, Kyle's eyes turn angrily toward Megan, hinting at a darker side to the charmer. He catches himself, as if aware he is on the cusp of revealing too much. Composing, Kyle turns affectionately toward Kelli...

KYLE

Just call me when you're done,
'kay? I'll come back.

They kiss, but, as he exits Kyle throws a glance over his shoulder at Megan, which only she would read as threatening.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Merry Christmas.

Frustrated that he's leaving, Kelli turns back and fires an angry whisper at Megan...

KELLI

Thanks. What was *that*?

MEGAN

Unable to answer, stands and starts toward the stairs...

THE GIRLS

Subtly enjoy the unfolding drama. Lauren eyes the others, keeping any suspicions to herself...

KELLI

Turns, begins to follow Kyle outside... but is stopped as the PHONE RINGS.

THE HOUSE PHONE

Large in the f.g., RINGS! LOUD! Startling. In the b.g., Kelli, the dutiful one, is closest to the phone.

THE RECEIVER

CAMERA RISES with the receiver as Kelli lifts it to her ear...

KELLI

Hello.

CAMERA CREEPS TOWARD HER...

KELLI (CONT'D)

Hello?

Kelli grows alarmed. She turns to the other girls...

KELLI (CONT'D)

I think someone's in trouble...

She quickly presses the "hold" button, sets the receiver in the cradle and hits the "speaker" button. CAMERA TILTS DOWN to the PHONE which FILLS THE FRAME...

The SOUND emitting through the speaker is like the low wailing of a wounded animal, yet with an edge of unsettling perversity. Although not discernibly obscene, it is quite sexually chilling.

LIVING ROOM

The SOUND freezes the girls with a collective anxiety. They are absently drawn together; listening...

LAUREN

Yeah, he's in trouble. Dude's whackin' off with egg nog for lube.

Melissa GIGGLES and begins adding to the joke, until...

The PHONE ERUPTS with a nightmarish cacophony of VOICES; women, men, a crying baby. INSANE and DEMONIC; intertwined with one another. GROANS, DISTANT SHRIEKS, CACKLES; it SOUNDS as if a Dore etching of Hell could speak.

Meanwhile, Bing Crosby's rendition of "I'll Be Home For Christmas" plays low on the living room C.D. Meant to be comforting, it subliminally adds to the tension...

CAMERA SLOWLY CIRCLES the stunned Phi Kappa sisters' FACES listening to the awful SOUNDS emitting from the phone.

Then, cutting through the STATIC of eerie VOICES... yet remaining distant... a woman's VOICE...

CALLER (V.O.)

Billy! What have you done?!

A MALE VOICE begs...

CALLER (V.O.)

What I need to know, Billy... is what did you do with the baby?

A COARSE, GRAVELY adult male's voice, intense, insanely lascivious, and yet, mischievous, like an pre-pubescent boy, JUMPS THROUGH the speakers...

CALLER (CONT'D, V.O.)

Lick it... Lick your tongue in my ass, you fucking bitch...

Heather throws her hands over her ears, turns, and rushes away. Lauren sighs at, what she considers, her prude sorority sister. This causes Lauren to play the tough guy...

LAUREN

What bitch are you talkin' about?
There's a bunch here. Ms. Mac
excluded.

Ms. Mac gestures for Lauren to keep quiet...

CALLER (V.O.)

YOU... *I'm going to stick my
tongue up your hairy cunt...*

LAUREN

"Hairy?!" No way, dude, Brazilian
wax.

While Melissa LAUGHS, Dana and Ms. Mac gesture for Lauren to stop inciting him and hang up. Lauren gestures, as if, "don't worry." Then, into the phone..

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Shouldn't you get goin'? You've
got lots of toys to deliver
tonight to good little boys and
girls.

CAMERA FOLLOWS Lauren's finger toward the phone consul. As her finger is a quarter of an inch from the button, the voice lowers an octave with insane intensity and, most chilling, extremely matter of fact...

CALLER (V.O.)

I'm going to kill you.

In Lauren's alarmed hesitation, an eerie, pathetic and sad MAN-CHILD declares...

CALLER (V.O.)

She's my family, now.

Lauren disconnects. The room turns deathly SILENT except for Bing's crooning. The girls look to one another, rattled...

KELLI

Call the police.

LAUREN

Puh-lease. On Christmas Eve?
Police won't do shit about some
pathetic whack job.

MELISSA

Campus security is down to, like,
one guy 'til after Christmas.

LAUREN

Campus security? That's probably
who just called.

MELISSA

What was the caller I.D.? Was it
on campus?

KELLI

Sorry, didn't even look. My brain
was on Kyle...

DANA

(to Melissa)

Why? You think it was, maybe, Carl
bein' all disgruntled 'nd shit?

KELLI

That couldn't have been one person.

DANA

Dial *69.

MELISSA

That just calls *him* back. Unless
there's something you need him to
clarify...

While Melissa taps some buttons on the phone, Heather returns
to the gathered group of girls, remaining angry at Lauren...

HEATHER

You shouldn't provoke someone like
that.

Melissa reacts, puzzled, while looking at the phone.

MELISSA

Call log says it came from Clair's
cell.

The information goes unregistered as everyone is focused on
the rising confrontation...

LAUREN

What would you know about "someone
like that?" other than the fear
mongering bullshit they force down
you in church?

Heather's eyes flare with anger. She steps aggressively toward Laura. Kelli places a restraining hand on Heather...

KELLI

Blow it off, Heather, she's drunk.

HEATHER

I'm going home.

Heather shakes her head with disgust and starts toward the stairs. Ms. Mac steps away from the tree..

MS. MAC

Wait 'til morning. It's dangerous outside.

Heather shoots Lauren a glare...

HEATHER

It's not in here?

Impressed with Heather's come back, Lauren smirks and raises her glass in a derisive toast. Heather starts upstairs...

LAUREN

This is a sorority house not a convent.

(to others)

How'd she even get in?

DANA

Like the rest of us. Her family has money.

Heather looks pointedly at Lauren...

HEATHER

Least my family wants me to come home.

From Lauren's reaction, Heather has gone straight for the heart and scored a bull's-eye. The other girls know it and stay silent, trying to stay out of it... except Kelli.

KELLI

Guys... it's Christmas Eve.

LIVING ROOM - FROM TOP OF THE STAIRS

RETURNING to the PREVIOUS ANGLE, *suggesting* a P.O.V. A figure, however, steps INTO the F.G., remaining at the top of the darkened stairwell... watching the others.

MS. MAC

And we haven't opened any presents!

REVERSE - MS. MAC

As she turns away from the girls, toward the tree to gather the presents, she mumbles...

MS. MAC (CONT'D)

Goddamned drama queens.

LIVING ROOM - FROM THE TOP OF THE STAIRS

The figure starts down the stairs. CAMERA FOLLOWS, just over the shoulder of the descending form. Melissa moves with sincere concern to the drunken Lauren...

MELISSA

You're fucked up. Go to bed.

Heather starts up the stairs...

HEATHER

Yeah, Lauren. By the time you wake up, everyone'll've gone home and you'll have the whole place to yourself.

LAUREN

CAMERA PUSHES IN, glaring at Heather with a look that could kill...

RETURN - HIGH ANGLE

Desperate to break the increasing tension, Ms. Mac returns to the idea of Christmas cheer...

MS. MAC

Heather, what about your present?

HEATHER

Give it to Billy.

The figure steps directly in front of Heather, who stops cold.

LOWER ANGLE - EVE

In sorority terms, EVE GUARALDI is a "mistake." A quiet girl whom events in her life could have caused her either to blossom into a social butterfly or an intense, sullen creepy misfit. The later is the case.

Wearing a coat and duffel bag over her shoulder, Eve appears ready to leave. She extends a present, wrapped in newspaper, to Heather.

EVE

Merry Christmas, Heather.

As Eve looks up and smiles... CAMERA INCHES IN... unnerving.

EVE (CONT'D)

Merry Christmas, everyone.

(beat)

You're, like... my family, now.

KELLI & MELISSA

Kelli looks to Melissa, acknowledging the similarity of Eve's statement with the last comment made during the phone call.

The other girls do not risk teasing Eve or encouraging any relationship. Heather forces a smile and takes the present without looking at Eve.

MS. MAC

That's so sweet, Eve.

EVE

Sorry, I didn't put it under the tree. Forgot about it, 'til I was packing.

CLOSE - GIFT

The newspaper tears away revealing a cardboard box. The lid opens, REVEALING a piece of bric-a-brac; a glass unicorn. The horn is six inches long and sharp. It bends the colored lights of the Christmas tree and amber of the fireplace.

THE GIRLS

Don't quite know what to make of it, but force smiles.

EVE

I know you like the Bible 'n' stuff.

The others exchange "*she is so weird*" glances. Ms. Mac seizes upon the gift exchange goodwill, albeit a creepy one, to get things back to a lighter mood...

MS. MAC

That's the Christmas spirit! Come on, let's keep it rolling.

HEATHER AND EVE

Heather continues up the stairs while Eve starts down, averting her eyes, as if sad and troubled as Heather passes...

LIVING ROOM

Eve continues through the living room while Ms. Mac hands out presents from under the tree...

MS. MAC

Melissa... Here, Dana...

NEAR THE DOOR - EVE

BACK TO CAMERA, CAMERA FOLLOWS EVE toward the front door. She pauses near the tree. CAMERA INCHES IN ON EVE as she turns back one quarter, checking if anyone is watching her...

MRS. MAC AND THE GIRLS

The girls tear off the wrapping and react with proper warm smiles and appreciation...

MS. MAC

I don't see one for Lauren.

DANA

Just give her a tequila shot, wish her "Merry Christmas," and she's good to go.

Lauren agrees. Ms. Mac looks about, pausing as she sees, O.S.

MS. MAC

Eve, is Lauren's present under the tree?

NEAR THE DOOR

The FRAME IS CLEAR, Eve has disappeared until CAMERA ADJUSTS, REVEALING Eve is already at the base of the tree.

EVE

Is there one for me?

MRS. MAC & THE GIRLS

Hesitate, a bit mortified, they eye one another and exchange subtle head shakes and glances as if, "I didn't draw her name" or "I didn't get her anything."

MS. MAC
I'm sure it's around there, Eve.
Keep looking.

EVE

CAMERA INCHES IN ON HER as she sadly eyes the empty space beneath the tree.

MRS. MAC & THE GIRLS

Ms. MacHenry feels bad about the oversight and turns, lowering her voice to consult with Lauren and Melissa...

MS. MAC
Was her name drawn by any of the girls that went home, already, and forgot to leave the present?

The girls consider, all but Lauren; she drinks.

MELISSA
I know Clair drew Lauren's name.

LAUREN
She get me anything good?

MELISSA
A music box.

Lauren winces...

KELLI
I'll see if it's in Clair's room.

MS. MAC
While you're up there, see if Eve's present is around, anywhere.

Ms. Mac turns to check Eve, then reacts, puzzled...

MRS. MAC'S POV - BY THE CHRISTMAS TREE

The area in which Eve was searching for a present, just a moment ago, is vacant...

MS. MAC (CONT'D, O.S.)
What, did Eve leave?

RETURN - MRS. MAC & THE GIRLS

The girls look around. Not spotting Eve on a perfunctory glance, they shrug.

MELISSA

Didn't she have someplace she had to be?

DANA

The Island of Misfit Toys.

MS. MAC

Dana. Her mother is a legacy.

DANA

So? Her mother's dead. She'd never know if we threw her out. Father's... wherever. No boyfriend. No family. Like, where does she have to go?

LAUREN

Hey, Mel... um... this music box deal? Is there, like, a cigarette inside it, or anything?

MELISSA

It plays "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies."

LAUREN

Oh, hell no!

But Kelli starts up the stairs. Lauren sighs, drunken...

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I'm startin' to see sugar plum fairies, I don't need to hear the little fuckers, too.

EXT. PI KAPPA SIGMA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT

Behind a freezing rain, the plastic face of Mary FILLS THE FRAME. Then... CAMERA, WIDE and HANDHELD, MOVES from behind the manger and TOWARD the house, the motion reflecting the P.O.V. of an intense individual. Hurried. Covert.

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWAY - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kelli continues up the stairs toward the second floor...

CUT TO:

EXT. PI KAPPA SIGMA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT

CAMERA moves off toward the side of the house... HOLDS, then TILTS UP to Megan's second level window with the small holly wreath and white micro lights...

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT - THE HOLLY WREATH

CAMERA PULLS BACK from the REVERSE SIDE of the wreath hanging in the window, REVEALING Megan sitting at her desk, balled up; feet on the chair, arms hugging her knees.

Megan's eyes are red from crying as she stares at her open laptop screen which is AWAY FROM CAMERA; the specifics on the monitor cannot be seen.

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWAY - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kelli climbs the stairs toward the hallway; dark except for a string of Christmas lights...

CUT TO:

EXT. PI KAPPA SIGMA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT

CAMERA TILTS from the window to a lattice, covered with bare Winter vines, running the height of the house.

As breath exhaust huffs INTO FRAME, a gloved hand reaches out and grabs the lattice. CAMERA RISES as the unseen climber begins toward Megan's window...

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

CAMERA IS LOW, near the floor and obliquely angled; voyeuristic. The texture within THE FRAME is grainy and coarse. A bed is in the b.g., the lighting is low.

Visible IN FRAME, a poster of "Alex de Large," Malcolm McDowell in "Clockwork Orange," driving a convertible, false eyelash accentuating his maniacal eye, is set directly over the bed with clear push pins.

Megan ENTERS FRAME and sits on the bed...

CAMERA BEGINS PULLING BACK REVEALING CAMERA has actually been watching Megan's laptop monitor. An mpg. file plays within a frame on a website entitled: "RICHBITCHES.COM" A banner explains "Our working stiffs get stiff for rich bitches!"

CAMERA PANS OFF THE MONITOR just as a MALE FIGURE ENTERS FRAME.

Megan's VOICE emits from the speakers but it is indiscernible. But, the male's response is clear...

MALE FIGURE (V.O.)

Kelli'll never find out 'less one of us tells her.

CAMERA PANS ACROSS the dark room FINDING Megan at her desk, crying, ashamed and angry.

MONITOR

The boy turns over onto his back REVEALING Kyle Autry, Kelli's boyfriend, as he pulls his pants down...

MEGAN

Shuts her eyes, intense with regret. O.S., a subtle THUMP; location, indiscernible. On reflex, Megan stops the media player. She holds, listens; afraid of being busted.

FOOTSTEPS APPROACH. She looks toward her door...

MEGAN'S POV - BASE OF THE DOOR

Red and green light spills from the hall beneath the closed doorway. The colors turn to shadows as feet pass...

MEGAN

Holds, listens. O.S., a muted KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

KELLI (O.S.)

Clair?

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kelli knocks at a door two rooms down from Megan's...

KELLI (CONT'D)

Clair?

She listens, then, as she cautiously turns the doorknob...

CUT TO:

EXT. PI KAPPA SIGMA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT - LATTICE

The gloved hand reaches INTO FRAME and grabs the wood...

CUT TO:

INT. CLAIR'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kelli's darkened figure stands in the threshold.

KELLI
Clair? It's Kelli. You in here?

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Megan listens to Kelli's MUTED VOICE. O.S., another THUMP...

CUT TO:

EXT. PI KAPPA SIGMA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT - LATTICE

As the climber's foot steps on the lattice, the woods BREAKS.

LOW ANGLE

The figure's body slips, twisting as it hangs by its hands.

NEAR THE ROOF - THE TOP OF THE LATTICE

twists causing a thick icicle to break free...

OVER THE CLIMBER'S SHOULDER - LOOKING UP

The icicle plummets TOWARD CAMERA. The climber turns, hanging by one hand and evades the dagger, which STREAKS PAST FRAME...

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Megan reacts to the O.S. SOUND and stretches toward her window to look out at the source... until...

O.S... the MUTED tinkle of a music box playing "DANCE OF THE SUGAR PLUM FAIRIES" begins. In this situation, the MUSIC is eerie, rather than candy cane sweet.

Megan holds, listening to discern its location. Then, as suddenly as it began... the MUSIC stops.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Clair's door opens. Kelli exits, her figure dark in the hallway. She turns and starts toward the stairs...

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT - BASE OF THE DOOR

Kelli's feet create shadows as they pass...

MEGAN

Waits for Kelli to move off, then returns to the window...

The MUSIC starts, again. Puzzled, Megan listens, then stands. She moves from the window and toward the center of the room. The ghostly SOUND seems to emanate from within the wall.

The MUSIC begins travelling, up the wall and to the ceiling.

OVERHEAD ANGLE

CAMERA LOOKS DIRECTLY DOWN on Megan following the MUSIC. As she reaches her door and turns the knob...

EXT. PHI KAPPA SIGMA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT

Having steadied and composed, the climbing figure begins ascending toward Megan's window...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

As Megan opens her door, the MUSIC turns silent. She holds in the doorway, listening. Nothing. SILENCE.

Then, down the hall... "The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies" begins, again. CAMERA PUSHES INTO MEGAN as she turns toward...

MEGAN'S POV - CEILING

The MUSIC is behind the attic trap door...

MEGAN

Moves toward the dark end of the hallway...

CUT TO:

INT. HEATHER'S ROOM - NIGHT

A duffel bag sits on Heather's bed as she packs. Behind her, the local news plays from an internet feed on her laptop...

WEATHERMAN (V.O.)

Ice accumulations are expected to be three to *four inches* in most areas. Again... in *most areas*.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kelli returns to the living room. She shrugs as she sits...

KELLI

Couldn't find it.

LAUREN
 (derisive)
 Damn! If I don't hear "The Sugar
 Plum Fairies," I'll just die!

OVERLAPPING... the afore-mentioned MUSIC begins...

CUT TO:

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT - OVERHEAD

Megan steps INTO FRAME looking up...

MEGAN'S POV - TRAP DOOR

Lit only by Christmas lights at the opposite end of the hall.

MEGAN

not afraid, but quite curious. The crystalline MUSIC continues. Megan reaches out and grasps a rung on the wood ladder. She begins climbing...

CUT TO:

EXT. PI KAPPA SIGMA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT - MEGAN'S WINDOW

MATCHING MEGAN'S MOVEMENT, the climbing figure reaches the window and cautiously looks inside. As it reaches out and pushes on the glass, the window swings open...

CUT TO:

INT. ATTIC - SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT - TRAP DOOR

Spill light from the illuminated plastic Santa in the window brings a dim red cast to the usually pitch black room.

The attic door opens, MATCHING the MOVEMENT of Megan's window. The MUSIC BOX sounds clean; definitely in this room.

MEGAN'S POV - IN THE SPILL LIGHT

A tiny ballerina twirls within an open box, reflecting glass and rhinestone. DOWNSTAIRS, O.S., a RAUCOUS LAUGH ERUPTS...

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dana wiggles a Jeff Stryker silicon dildo. She eyes Lauren...

DANA
 Hmm. Wonder who drew my name?

As Lauren smirks and raises her glass in a toast...

CUT TO:

INT. ATTIC - SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT - THE MUSIC BOX

"Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies" warbles; SLOWING...

MEGAN'S EYES

turn from the figurine and into the red light tinted room...

MEGAN

Alright... who's fucking with me?

O.S., CREAK... CREAK... CREAK. CAMERA PUSHES IN ON HER...

MEGAN'S POV - THE ROCKING CHAIR

A dark figure, silhouetted against the illuminated Santa Claus, rocks in the creaking chair...

MEGAN

remaining with only her head and shoulders through the attic trapdoor, she absently leans closer for a better look...

MEGAN

Clair..? What are you doing?

FWWPMP! From the darkness, a green plastic Christmas shopping bag WHIPS over Megan's head...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT - ATTIC TRAP DOOR

Megan's body, struggles... then slumps. Her feet slip from the ladder rungs. Her lifeless body doesn't fall. As the killer lifts her corpse into the cold dark attic.

CUT TO:

INT. HEATHER'S ROOM - NIGHT - HEATHER

pauses, as if reacting to the subtle THUMP of the closing attic door, however, she is actually considering the news...

WEATHERMAN (V.O.)

Wireless services are reporting that several cell phone microwave relay stations are off-line. This is why some of you cannot send or receive long distance calls...

As she sighs, LAUGHTER ERUPTS from the living room...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ms. Mac sheepishly displays Victoria's Secret lingerie against her body. The drunken girls APPLAUD and LAUGH while Ms. Mac playfully looks inside the gift box...

MS. MAC

Does it come with a man to wear it for?

More LAUGHS, until Kelli, concerned Ms. Mac may think the joke present is actually *the* Christmas gift, moves to the tree and searches for another wrapped box.

KELLI

Here's our real present.

Kelli pauses, puzzled by a box wrapped in newspaper. She grabs a professionally decorated present and as she hands it to Ms. Mac... the house phone RINGS.

Everyone tenses. Melissa moves cautiously toward the phone and checks the caller I.D...

MELISSA'S POV - CALLER I.D.

Megan Helms.

RETURN

Melissa smiles nervously and breathes a sigh of relief...

MELISSA

It's Megan.

As she hits the speaker phone button...

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Bitch, where you at?

Her question is cut off by a horrific SCREAM as if deep within Hell. It is difficult to discern if the SOUNDS are more than one person. The first voice is like a crone...

CALLER (V.O.)

Billl-ly!!

Everyone freezes. Shocked. Horrified.

CALLER (CONT'D, V.O.)

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!

Within the call, a heartbroken wail. Suddenly an older male, voice coarse from cigarettes and whiskey, intensely WHISPERS.

CALLER (V.O.)
*What your mother and I must know
 is... where did you put the baby?*

Kelli looks to the others and mouths a sincere "Fu-hck!" From the phone, a harsher, commanding tone...

CALLER (V.O.)
Where did you put Agnes, Billy?

The VOICE transitions to a witch-like cackle...

CALLER (V.O.)
*I see you when you're sleeping. I
 know when you're awake...*

Then, a voice... cuts through. Present during the first call, but much more pronounced... an eerie man-child voice...

CALLER (CONT'D)
They're my family, now.

Upon reflex, Melissa cuts off the call. Christmas MUSIC and the CRACKLE of the FIRE are the only sounds.

LAUREN
What is up Megan's ass, anyway?

All the incredulous eyes turns toward Lauren, moving on to Vodka since the wine is empty...

DANA
*You seriously believe that was
 Megan?*

LAUREN
*She knew how weirded out you were
 by the first call.*

MELISSA
She wasn't even down here.

LAUREN
*Heather probably told her about it
 when she went upstairs.*

Everyone reluctantly concedes... "possible." Dana moves to the phone and taps a few buttons. She sighs upon receiving a recording...

CAMPUS SECURITY (V.O.)

You have reached the main menu of Clement University campus security. During the Christmas break, our office will be closed from six p.m. December 23rd until nine a.m. December 26...

As Dana picks up the receiver...

DANA

This is Dana Mathis at Phi Kappa. We've been receiving some pretty sick phone calls...

As Kelli starts toward the stairs...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT - LOW ANGLE - HEATHER

Exits her room, closes the door, and starts down the dark hallway. CAMERA HOLDS on the attic door as she PASSES FRAME..

INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Kelli angrily hustles up the stairs...

KELLI

MEGAN!

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Heather continues toward the stairway as Kelli passes...

KELLI

Megan in her room?

HEATHER

I don't know. I was packing.

Kelli opens Megan's door and is startled by a dark figure. Kelli and Heather SCREAM!

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The SCREAMS can be HEARD downstairs. The girls and Ms. Mac immediately race toward the stairs. Lauren stands, but drunkenly swoons, before moving toward the stairs.

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kyle steps out of the shadows and into the dim hallway light. Kelli reacts, puzzled, while Heather catches her breath...

KELLI

What are you doing in there?

KYLE

Trying to see you. I saw her window was open, it was dark, so I figured she wasn't in it and I climbed up to get to your room.

Kelli wants to believe this, but remains suspicious as her sorority sisters appear at the top of the stairs.

KELLI

Megan in there?

As Kelli moves toward the doorknob, Kyle subtly blocks her...

KYLE

Room's dark. I didn't see her.

LAUREN

How fuckin' dumb you think we are?

Unaware of the recent phone calls, Kyle assumes this is an accusation of infidelity and tenses, acts innocent...

LAUREN (CONT'D)

The call was from Megan's cell. You were in Megan's room.

KYLE

I have no idea what the fuck you are talking about.

The girls remain suspicious. With Kyle distracted, Kelli reaches out, turns the knob, and moves past Kyle. He tenses, but realizes restraining her would look bad...

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Megan's laptop sits on her desk in the f.g., turned toward CAMERA and AWAY from the door. A paused image of Megan and Kyle having sex is frozen on the website.

Kelli turns on a light. Megan is nowhere to be seen. Kelli moves toward the open closet and peeks inside. Filled with clothes, but no Megan...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kyle keeps a cautious eye on Kelli inside the room while Lauren keeps a suspicious eye on Kyle...

MELISSA

Can I just say, I'm sorry, but
that call was not Megan or Kyle.
That was the fucking devil.

Lauren's eyes are drunk, but holding with suspicion on Kyle...

LAUREN

Why's Megan so pissed off at you?

KYLE

I didn't get that.

MELISSA

Are you people deaf or in serious
denial? Those freaks on the phone
weren't talking to us. They were
talking to Billy.

A beat of tension, no one denies this...

KYLE

Then, you're definitely bein'
punked, 'cause Billy's dead.

DANA

Creep-y. Creep-y. Creep-y!

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT - MEGAN'S DESK

Kelli starts toward Megan's desk. Just as she reaches the desk, the screensaver kicks in. The monitor turns black while a winged eyeball flies around the screen.

Kelli searches the desk for Megan's cell, but it is not in sight. She closes the open window, while looking outside...

EXT. SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT - KELLI'S POV

HAIL and SLEET rain violently upon the house, shrouding the Christmas lights and icicles, which have doubled in size.

Accumulated ice causes a branch to SPLIT from the trunk of an oak tree. It hangs precariously over the street...

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT - KELLI

As she twists the window lock...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lauren's eyes burn a hole in Kyle. Her tone, accusatory...

LAUREN

Seem to know a lot about Billy.

KYLE

I grew up in this town. My brother ran around this neighborhood before it became Frat Row, when it was still just normal homes. I've been told my whole life about what happened in this house.

CAMERA INCHES IN on Kyle...

KYLE (CONT'D)

Billy was my childhood monster.

OUTSIDE, the TREE BRANCH BREAKS and collapses... sounding exactly like a GUNSHOT! The girls flinch, increasingly anxious; growing afraid...

KYLE (CONT'D)

Just a tree branch.

Dana removes a cell phone from her pocket and speed dials...

DANA

Well, I have something in common with Billy... I won't be home for Christmas, either.

The line BEEP BEEP BEEPS, like a busy signal...

DANA (CONT'D)

Shit. Daddy's gonna be worried.

As she dials, again, downstairs, the front door CLOSES. The girls look at one another as if, "who's that?" Ms. Mac moves to the top of the stairs, followed by Dana

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - MRS. MAC'S POV - MOVING

The hallway wall acts as a WIPE as CAMERA APPROACHES the top of the stairs... REVEALING... in the living room... a mysterious figure; BACK to CAMERA, wearing a long dark coat, gloves, and covered head, looking toward the Christmas tree.

INT. TOP OF THE STAIRS - NIGHT

The girls tense at the sight of a stranger in the house. With a cautious tone, Ms. Mac calls down the stairs...

MS. MAC

Can we help you?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - CLOSE - THE FIGURE

CAMERA PUSHES IN ON the back of the figure's head as it turns toward CAMERA and removes the hood REVEALING a beautiful brunette woman in her early thirties; noir-dark and with an edge of mystery. She is LEIGH CROSBY and doesn't appear very enthused about being here. Her voice is sensual and husky...

LEIGH

She was suppose to call.

LOWER ANGLE - TOP OF THE STAIRS

The girls eye one another, uncertain. Suspicious.

RETURN - LEIGH

CAMERA STOPS as LEIGH is in CLOSE-UP...

LEIGH

Clair. I'm her sister. Cell phones are working on local calls, but she doesn't answer.

(beat)

So, where is she?

THE GIRLS AND MS. MAC

Their alarm heightens, as Clair is now officially "missing."

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kyle steps halfway into the room, appearing impatient with Kelli as she continues searching Megan's room...

KYLE

What're you doin'? I almost killed myself trying to be with you. Let's go.

KELLI

I'm worried about Megan. Somethin' was wrong with her, before. Don't you think she was being kind of a bitch to you? It's not like her.

KYLE

I never really deal with her...

KELLI

Then, that weird call from her phone and, now, her window's open and she's just gone in the middle of this weather?

KYLE

Who knows what her deal is? Can we
just go to my apartment?

(beat)

Got your Christmas present.

KELLI

Just give me a second...

Kelli continues searching. Kyle tenses as he steps further
into Megan's room...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Leigh eyes the room with an expression of one returning to a
location purposefully blocked from memory. Melissa, Heather,
and Dana remain guarded. Lauren has another drink.

LEIGH

Never thought I'd be back here.

MS. MAC

You're a legacy?

LEIGH

Not so you'd notice.

MS. MAC

What year?

LEIGH

'92... I guess.

Ms. MacHenry reacts, puzzled...

MS. MAC

Really? That's the year I started
as house mother, here. I don't
remember...

LEIGH

I dropped out. She say where she
was going?

The collective no response is derived from suspicion...

LEIGH (CONT'D)

'Cause, I mean, this was suppose to be such a big fucking weekend for her and I blew off a trip to Vale with this Cardiologist and now I don't hear from her, so I have to drive all the way over here in such shitty weather?

(beat)

Where the fuck is she?

The sisters look at one another, unable to answer.

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kelli is at Megan's closet while Kyle, cloaking his anxiety, can't help but pace.

KYLE

What, exactly, are you looking for?

KELLI

Like a note or something that tells me she's okay. All her stuff is there. She didn't take any bags.

CAMERA FOLLOWS KELLI as she moves toward the desk and sits in front of the laptop. The winged eyeball continues flying across the dark screen...

KYLE

Call her cell.

CAMERA CONTINUES... over Kelli's shoulder as she considers, then removes her own cell phone from her back pocket.

CAMERA CONTINUES teasingly TOWARD the laptop... yet... once at the computer, CAMERA unexpectedly CONTINUES MOVING... veering toward the wall which RAKES ACROSS FRAME...

KELLI (O.S.)

Voice mail...

CAMERA CONTINUES, then SKEWS, TILTING to the ceiling. CAMERA CROSSES THE CEILING, passing beneath the poster of Malcolm McDowell in "Clockwork Orange" directly over Megan's bed.

CAMERA PUSHES TO a clear push-pin tack in the poster's upper left corner. As the pin FILLS FRAME...

KELLI (O.S.)
 Hey, Meg, it's Kell. Just
 wondering what happened to you and
 if you're okay and stuff. Call me.
 I'm on my cell. Bye.

Then, from a motionless state... subtly... slightly... the
 tack begins to move; wiggles, as if being worked from the
 other side of the ceiling.

Then... quietly... it falls.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Put upon, Leigh holds out a wallet toward Ms. Mac who checks
 the driver's license...

MS. MAC
 Clair's last name is Crosby. This
 says Colvin.

LEIGH
 Divorce'll be final in March.

No one responds. Leigh sighs...

LEIGH (CONT'D)
 Let's see, um... do you still
 participate in the secret A.D.G.
 Ceremony where you judge their
 naked pledges' balls?

MS. MAC
 Um, no, the university sadly
 stopped that a few years ago.

The sorority sisters eye one another, shocked, while Ms. Mac
 nods, as if recalling the good old days.

LEIGH (CONT'D)
 What else you need? Can't tell you
 any secrets about my sister 'cause
 I don't really know her. Don't
 know much else about this place
 'cause I fucking hated it.

Leigh gestures beneath the tree.

LEIGH (CONT'D)
 I see Billy still gets a Christmas
 present.

Everyone looks at Heather who recoils, then shakes her head. Ms. Mac appears puzzled as Leigh reaches down and picks up a 12" x 4" box wrapped in plain newspaper...

LEIGH (CONT'D)

This is new. It's not for Billy.
Says it's for Phi Kappa... from
Billy.

MS. MAC

That wasn't there, before.

Leigh tears off the paper to find a greasy cardboard box. As she opens it, CAMERA PUSHES IN TO REVEAL its contents... a Cabbage Patch doll. Its eyes have been ripped out.

CUT TO:

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT - COMPUTER MONITOR

The taunting eyeball screen saver flaps across the monitor...

WIDER

Although she and Kyle are alone, Kelli lowers her voice...

KELLI

What if there's something on her
computer, an e-mail, or something,
that says where she is?

Kyle takes an anxious, unconscious step toward her...

KYLE

You know, I don't feel
comfortable... um... whatever...
invading... someone's privacy,
like that. Try the police again.

As she lifts her cell phone... O.S... a subtle THUMP; outside the house... or... possibly... within the wall. Kelli freezes and looks to Kyle...

KELLI (CONT'D)

What was that?

O.S., the WIND and HAIL intensify, overwhelming the ability to discern or locate any subtle sounds...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - CLOSE - CABBAGE PATCH DOLL

Eye-less, macabre, and threatening, lies encased in newspaper.

MS. MAC (O.S.)
How'd it get under the tree?

WIDER

The girls keep their distance from the doll. Each, too anxious to sit. Except Lauren, whose eyes are red and unfocused from drinking. She points to Leigh...

LAUREN
She must of put it there. She
"found" it.

LEIGH
I can't believe you're giving me
shit when none of you can tell me
where my sister is.

DANA
Has to be that fucking freak Carl.

The girls take a moment, recalling the name. Melissa is the first to place it.

MELISSA
Shoulda known to go right to the
story all about Dana.

DANA
What? Wasn't he the first weird
call we got?

MELISSA
That was less than an hour ago!
You saying that after you blew off
Carl, he ran out, on Christmas
eve, bought a Cabbage patch doll,
just like the story we just heard
about Billy, because Carl knew
we'd hear one, rip its eyes out,
wrapped it in newspaper, then
sneak in here?

DANA
Okay! Okay! I guess the box
would've had just my name on it.

HEATHER
Eve's gift was wrapped in
newspaper. Just like that.

Ms. Mac looks at the paper and immediately tenses...

MS. MAC

This newspaper is dated December
25... 1981.

She passes the paper off to Melissa who examines it...

HEATHER

Eve lives in Billy's room.

DANA

They kept him in the attic.

HEATHER

Before that. Eve said it like she
was proud of it. Maybe she's
become obsessed with him. I always
just blew it off, before. What if
she found that paper in the room?

Melissa sighs, skeptical. Heather cuts off any comment...

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Or in the walls, or basement, or
someplace, and knew it would creep
us out.

MELISSA

Oh, come on...

HEATHER

Where is she, then? Gone. When
she's got no where to go?

DANA

She was by the tree just before
she left. She could've put it
there.

MS. MAC

No, it wasn't there, even a half
hour ago. I'm positive.

Heather starts toward the stairs...

HEATHER

I'm going to see if there's any of
that newspaper, or anything, in
her room.

MELISSA

Whoa. Whoa. Whoa. That's pretty
much violating her privacy.

HEATHER

Not if she's done something wrong.

MELISSA

Especially if she's done nothing wrong.

Heather starts up the stairs...

MELISSA

Wait, Heather... look, the gag isn't creepy, well, it's creepy, no matter what, but it's not as creepy if you don't know about Billy's story and Eve couldn't've known Kyle was going to tell us all about Billy.

LAUREN

But... Kyle did.

Everyone freezes, as if "*that's definitely true.*"

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kelli listens in the center of the room... while Kyle's anxiety over being caught intensifies.

O.S., another THUMP. They both pause. She eyes him...

KYLE

You know what it is? The attic window is open.

KELLI

What? Think she's up there?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lauren downs another drink...

LAUREN

Some shit was goin' on between Kyle and Megan. He was talking to her through the window...

The others look to one another, surprised...

DANA

She was kind of a bitch to him.

MS. MAC

When he came in, he went right to the tree.

LAUREN

Probably had the box in that shitty ass coat he's wearing.

MELISSA

Sorta... *did*... go out of his way to tell that story.

DANA

And he grew up in town.

MELISSA

What's that got to do with it?

DANA

He's not one of us.

Heather starts up the stairs, again...

HEATHER

Either is Eve.

Before Melissa can stop her, Lauren VOMITS on the coffee table. As all the girls leap backward...

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

While, the living room breaks into COMMOTION, Kelli, near the desk, has the window open and is trying to look out and up toward the attic. The weather impedes her view...

KELLI

Can't tell.

KYLE

I'm tellin' you, it's the window. Let's go to the attic and I'll close it.

Heather passes Megan's open doorway enroute to Eve's room.

Then... suddenly... the power decreases fifty percent; like a brown out. Kyle instinctively looks to the lights...

KELLI

Pulls away from the window and turns toward the room. The corner of her eye catches...

COMPUTER MONITOR

The surge causes the computer to switch to battery power, the screen saver vanishes REVEALING a frozen website image of Kyle on Megan's bed having sex.

KELLI

As CAMERA SWEEPS IN on her reaction of shock and anger... *all* the electrical power in the house goes out...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Melissa and Ms. Mac help Lauren up the dark stairs. Orange fireplace light creates long, wavering, macabre shadows.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Heather holds in the hallway just outside Eve's room. She reaches into her pocket, removes her cell, and opens it. The light from the display acts as a make-shift flashlight.

THE DOOR

What was once Billy's bedroom door is lit with the cold bluish circle of light from Heather's cell. The door opens.

INT. MEGAN'S ROOM - NIGHT - KELLI

Kyle appears guilty and, somewhat, relieved. Kelli's hurt and anger causes Kyle to hold up his hands, defensively...

KYLE

I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Kelli. But, it's not really what you think...

KELLI

What? Did Megan do this to you?

KYLE

No. No, she just found out about this being on the website, tonight. That's why she's pissed.

Kelli considers, growing angrier...

KELLI

You climbed up here "to be with me." You fucking liar. I can't... I thought I knew you. GET OUT! GET THE FUCK OUT!

She moves aggressively at Kyle, backing him out of the room...

KYLE

Some of the townie guys, came up with this site and... it's just... just... a chance to make money... It's nothing. Nothing. It's not even sex. It's just a job.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ms. Mac and Melissa hustle Lauren toward the bathroom until blocked by Kelli and Kyle storming into the hallway.

KELLI

I can't believe you are you. I can't... compute... how you, Kyle, could do such a thing. I never... ever... saw this was in you. I saw you so differently.

Facing humiliation before the outnumbering girls, Kyle gets indignant and defensive...

KYLE

Yeah, I know. 'Cause you refuse to see what it's like to be *me*. You didn't grow up like I did. With what I *don't* have. Money. School...

Kelli is dumfounded.

KYLE (CONT'D)

See, you don't even know what I'm talking about.

KELLI

'Cause what you're talking about is bullshit.

Kyle steps toward her, aggressively and violently; temples and eyes flaring, frightening the others...

KYLE

No! None of you bitches know. You all got a lot. Just to get in this fucking school. Money. Families. Connections. You got it *all*. I got nothin'...

He eases, eyes looking to Kelli...

KYLE (CONT'D)

That's why you can't understand how I could do such a fucked up thing.

Kelli begins crying. Ms. Mac moves to her while Melissa holds onto Lauren, who *RETCHES*, but holds in from puking...

MELISSA

I got her, Ms. Mac...

Melissa moves Lauren past Kelli and Kyle as Ms. Mac holds Kelli. The house mother shoots Kyle and angry look. He averts his eyes with sincere shame and guilt...

KYLE

I'm sorry, Kelli. I like you so much. I don't blame you for hating me, but... I wasn't dealing or knocking over 7-11s. I didn't hurt anybody.

KELLI

Are you fucking blind?

KYLE

Blind? Nope. I see things better than any of you.

Kyle starts down the hall toward the stairs. He can't move as fast as he'd like because of the darkness...

The house mother holds Kelli, comforting her. Although uncertain as to the details of Kelli's heartache...

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark. The door opens, adding a bit of light. Melissa guides Lauren to her knees over the toilet basin. Lauren holds in that position as Melissa moves to the counter, feels for some matches, and begins lighting candles.

LAUREN

CAMERA IS BEHIND HER, ON the FLOOR as she vomits. An amber glow fills the room. Lauren's vomiting is intense. Her toes curl against the floor of old black and white octagon tiles.

As her toe inadvertently flips one loose...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

O.S., the fire is dying. Puzzled, Leigh looks out the window.

WIDER

As Kyle hustles down the stairs and moves toward the door, Dana stands in his way...

DANA

What's going on up there? Find Megan?

Kyle doesn't answer as he dekes around Dana and storms out, SLAMMING the door.

Concerned, Dana looks to the upstairs, then Leigh at the window.

DANA
What the fuck?

LEIGH
Yeah. What the fuck? Not about him, though.

Leigh gestures Dana to the window...

LEIGH (CONT'D)
This is the only house on the street without power.

REVERSE - OUT THE FRONT WINDOW

Outside, the streetlights are on. The frat houses down the road, although for the most part, dark and vacant, indeed have functioning exterior Christmas lights.

CUT TO:

INT. EVE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Heather moves around Eve's dark room by the light of her cell phone display. She opens some drawers in the bureau and subtly rifles through some underwear and t-shirts.

She moves toward Eve's desk, searches the surface, then opens a drawer.

BOTTOM DRAWER OF EVE'S DESK

Spiral notebooks and loose papers are pushed aside REVEALING print outs and photocopied reports.

HEATHER

Removes them and holds her cell to the sheets of paper...

INSERT - PAPERS

eerie in the cold cell phone light, a collection of reports regarding Billy's massacre twenty-five years ago.

HEATHER

Sickened, digs deeper into the drawer and finds a small box. As she opens it, CAMERA PUSHES INTO HER...

EXTREMELY CLOSE - INSIDE THE BOX

The eyes of a Cabbage Patch doll...

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Even in the candle light, Lauren is pale and clammy as she sits back on her haunches and catches her breath.

LAUREN

Mel... you're a better sister to me than my sister...

Aware Lauren's sentiments derive from intoxication, Melissa smiles...

MELISSA

Dick fucking Cheney's a better sister to you than your sister.

LAUREN

You know what I'm sayin'...

MELISSA

I feel the same way 'bout you, Lauren, but... you reek, dude. You need a shower. Can you handle it?

Lauren nods. Melissa helps Lauren pull off her vomit stained shirt and tosses it aside, then lifts Lauren to her feet.

As they unfasten Lauren's jeans, Lauren wobbles, then grimaces...

LAUREN

Ow...

Having stepped on something, Lauren looks to the floor...

THE FLOOR

Lauren lifts her foot. She has stepped on the loose tile.

MELISSA

Squats and picks up the tile; tests several others. She studies the bad condition of the floor, sighs, and stands...

CLOSE - THE COUNTER

the tile CLACKS as Melissa tosses it on the counter...

LAUREN & MELISSA

Lauren removes her bra, then begins pulling down her jeans...

MELISSA

I'll go put a trash can next to
your bed.

LAUREN'S FEET

She lifts a foot and pulls off her jeans, then the other foot.

Lauren kicks off her pants and steps OUT OF FRAME toward the shower... REVEALING... beneath the floor... in the octagonal hole from the displaced tile... a yellow eye.

The head turns... REVEALING... a pair of eyes...

THE EYES' POV - LAUREN

Encircled by a dark frame, Lauren is partially obscured as she head under the cold stream...

THE EYES

monochromatic in the darkness beneath the floor... recede.

THE FLOOR - WIDE

CAMERA IS JUST OUTSIDE THE SHOWER STALL, A FEW DEGREES ABOVE the floor. After several beats... a tile... closer to CAMERA and the shower... begins rising... slowly... TAP TAP TAP, until the tile pops out of the floor...

THE EYES' POV - LAUREN

Unobscured and unaware, stands nearly over CAMERA...

THE EYES

As they watch her...

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

A circle of flashlight shines on a fuse box. Leigh's hand resets a circuit breaker...

LEIGH & DANA

Are underlit by the flashlight. The power does not return...

DANA

Main breaker's under the house.

Leigh looks to Dana, uncertain. Dana reacts, defensive.

DANA (CONT'D)

You know, I'm not the totally
hopeless daddy's girl princess
these bitches make me out to be.

LEIGH

Then, go outside and turn the
power back on.

DANA

Are you on crack?

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT - A TOWEL

Is grabbed...

LAUREN

As she dries off, the bathroom door OPENS and Melissa returns.

MELISSA

You okay?

MELISSA'S FOOT

Stops before the hole. The eye retreats into the darkness...

LAUREN (O.S.)

Yeah.

CAMERA, however, DIVES TOWARD and ENTERS the hole...

At floor level, the heavily MUTED voices of LEIGH and DANA
can be HEARD...

DANA (O.S.)

I'm not going outside. It's
fucking freezing!

LEIGH (O.S.)

You know where it is. It'll take
two minutes. Then we can, at
least, turn the alarm on.

INT. BENEATH THE BATHROOM FLOOR - DAY

CAMERA CONTINUES through the hole and into an area under the
floor... until... HOLDING on a dim, nearly indiscernible
human outline, alarmingly skeletal; hair, long and filthy
with partial dreadlocks.

DANA (O.S.)

Gimme a cigarette. That, at least,
gives me reason to go outside.

The height between floor and ceiling is, perhaps, twelve inches. There is no room for the figure to maneuver from its back to its stomach.

Like a macabre crab, the human form crawls on its back, clearly adept at this unnerving quick arachnidan movement.

INT. IN THE WALL - NIGHT

CAMERA IS IN THE WALL of the house LOOKING DOWN 25-30 feet as the form appears, limbs outstretched like a spider descending the wall between the support studs and rotted insulation toward the area beneath the house...

INT. BENEATH THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Plumbing pipes, rocks, sheets of screen, and discarded rusted tools create a surreal and nightmarish underground.

At the base of the wall... bare feet appear, crawling down from within the wall. With no room to turn over, the figure traverses on its back across the dirt base toward the lattice along the porch area...

EXT. PORCH - PHI KAPPA HOUSE - NIGHT - A BUTANE LIGHTER

Ignites, but is whipped violently by the wind...

DANA

Sharp icicles cling to the porch overhang. The rain and snow continue falling. As she raises the lighter to the tip of her cigarette, beneath her... MOVEMENT. SCUTTLING.

EXTREMELY CLOSE - PORCH CEILING

A drop of water falls...

DANA

It hits her cigarette with a bull's-eye, extinguishing it...

DANA

Of course.

She sighs then looks down, dropping the extinguished butt into a knot hole...

INT. BENEATH THE PORCH - NIGHT

The form SHIFTS, evading the cigarette butt...

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Hearing the SHIFT, Dana aims the flashlight into the hole...

DANA'S POV - THROUGH THE KNOT HOLE

A flash... a glint... of an eye... moving out of view.

DANA

pauses, considers, then turns her flashlight on, then proceeds to the porch steps.

WIDER - FRONT PORCH STEPS

Dana hustles down the steps. Slipping on the ice and frozen snow, she proceeds toward the side of the porch, kneels to the lattice, and aims her flashlight under the house...

INT. BENEATH THE PORCH - NIGHT

The area is illuminated by the tube of light; nothing but debris; rusted tools, discarded cans, and rotting boxes.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT - ON THE SIDE OF THE PORCH

About to abandon the search... Dana holds. CAMERA INCHES IN on her... squinting...

INT. BENEATH THE PORCH - NIGHT - DANA'S POV

To the side, under the house, rather than the porch... breath exhaust... HUFFS... with a strained rhythm from an unseen person just behind a wall.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT - SIDE OF THE PORCH - DANA

Considers and smiles, assuming this is a game being played with Megan. She moves off toward the rear side of the house...

EXT. SIDE OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Dana quickly scoots along the side of the house, pausing before a trap door, leading under the house...

She tests the door, which pulls out. She crouches; eases her head inside...

DANA

Megan, you dumb bitch, I see your
breath.

WHACK! A 1" diameter lead pipe strikes across the bridge of
Dana's nose. Blood squirts. She crumbles.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

COVERING any SOUNDS below the house, Heather MARCHES down the
stairs into the living room. Kelli is on the couch, crying,
seated beside an increasingly anxious Ms. Mac.

Leigh pokes at the logs with an improvised tool, milking all
the light and heat out of the fire.

Kelli takes a drink from any available alcohol on the table
as Heather moves to the headless Cabbage Patch doll wrapped
in newspaper. She picks it up, then displays Eve's
photocopied news stories about Billy.

HEATHER

Found these.
(beat)
And this.

The girls reacts with alarm as Heather opens her palms and
displays a pair of doll's eyes...

EXT. SIDE OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT - OVERHEAD

Dana's limp body extends from the trap door; her head, just
inside. Her body drags; stops. Drags; stops. It finally
disappears beneath the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Heather continues presenting her case against Eve...

HEATHER

She could have stolen Clair and
Megan's cell phones...

LEIGH

But, where are they?

A FAINT, MUTED, O.S., GROAN causes the girls to pause,
listen. They eye one another.

MELISSA

Better check Lauren.

As Melissa stands and moves toward the stairs...

INT. BENEATH THE HOUSE - NIGHT - DANA

Face soaked with blood, her eyes flutter; an animal functioning on lizard brain defenses. She pushes her arm forward with all her strength attempting to escape; pulling her body forward with the strength in her arms, as if swimming in a dirt lake.

THE FIGURE

Holding a rusted 1/2" thick wire support rod, the dark form lays across Dana's legs.

CLOSE - DANA'S HANDS

Desperately pull along the dirt. CAMERA MOVES BACK, REVEALING a rusted, pronged, hand cultivator. Dana inches toward it.

THE FIGURE

Grips the rod, but, before it can swing it toward Dana, she manages to grab the cultivator. She blindly swings her hand backward...

UNDER THE HOUSE

The tool plunges above the killer's knee. It reacts, muffling a GROAN OF PAIN. It pulls the prongs from its leg...

DANA

pulls her hand back and continues trying to get away...

CLOSE - DANA'S HANDS

Dig at the dirt, exposing several teeth of a mummified, decomposed skull previously buried in a shallow grave.

THE FIGURE

Scuttles ahead of Dana and drives the cultivator into Dana's skull. A prong breaks off from the impact. A sick DULL CRACK and Dana's body turns motionless. Dead.

CAMERA INCHES BACK as Dana's murderer, blood stained, exhausted, HUFFS like an animal.

CAMERA PUSHES IN as the form moves; left arm extends as the left leg bends, pulls forward, then shifts as the right side repeats the move. Lizard like, the form CLEARS FRAME...

As CAMERA TILTS to the ground... a skull FILLS FRAME. An impact fracture splits the skull across the brow. Beside the skull lies a Zippo lighter inscribed with a map of Vietnam.

ACROSS THE AREA

The form reaches up through an open section at the base of the floor and into a vertical space between the walls. Squirring; pulling upward and disappearing OUT OF FRAME...

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM - NIGHT - HIGH ANGLE - BILLY'S POV

Melissa guides Lauren, dressed in t-shirt and thong underwear, into her bed. Melissa pulls up the covers...

MELISSA

Dude... there's a trash can, just right here, 'kay?

Lauren MOANS her understanding, then turns and curls into a fetal position.

MELISSA

Merry fucking Christmas.

Melissa starts out of the room...

THE CEILING

Masked by the overhead chandelier lamp... a small peephole. Behind it... an organic glisten.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - CLOSE - CABBAGE PATCH DOLL

Fabric torn at the neck; eyes, empty.

HEATHER (O.S.)

Aren't there women that marry these psychos on death row? Don't people buy murder memorabilia on ebay?

WIDER

The fire is nearly dead. Outside, the freezing rain HOWLS and intermittently, the roof is pelted with HAIL.

Heather, Ms. Mac, Melissa, Kelli and Leigh are in the dark living room. Their anxiety, intensifying. Delivery, faster, hurried and often whispered.

Reeling from the revelations about Kyle, Kelli senses Leigh's concern as she looks out the window. Kelli approaches...

LEIGH

Worried about Dana. I sent her out there.

KELLI

Did Kyle leave before she went out? Or... did he go out with her?

LEIGH

Think he's got something to do with this?

Kelli shrugs, sighs... unwilling to commit to her suspicions.

HEATHER, MS. MAC, & MELISSA

Melissa examines the discovered doll's eyes, then points at the doll found tonight under the tree...

MELISSA

That doll is new. These eyes are aged. They're not from the same doll.

HEATHER

What if those are from Agnes' doll? Twenty-five years ago? Eve could've found them. She lives in Billy's old room.

MS. MAC

'Lot of girls have lived in that room, before Eve.

HEATHER

She's the first to get it in her head that she's like him. Doesn't have a family, just like him.

MELISSA

He had a family.

MS. MAC

It was pretty random when she said... "we're her family."

HEATHER

No. Eve has no family. We all have parents and brothers and sisters...

KELLI

CAMERA INCHES IN as she realizes...

KELLI

Older... brothers and sisters...

WIDER

Everyone in the cold darkening room looks to Kelli...

KELLI (CONT'D)

Everyone who was in this house tonight, even Ms. Mac, is the youngest child... like Agnes.

A chill circles the room as they consider the fact...

LEIGH

I'm not the youngest sister.

That dampens the theory for a beat...

HEATHER

Eve couldn't have known you would come over here, but everything else... she could've planned.

Leigh moves from the window toward her coat...

LEIGH

I'm going out and find her.

KELLI

I'll go with you.

As Kelli searches for her coat...

MELISSA

Those calls could not have been Eve. Those voices were *fuh-cked* up.

HEATHER

What if she pre-recorded the calls? Changed her voice?

KELLI

That caller responded directly to what Lauren was saying.

MS. MAC

Only said he was going to kill her.

HEATHER

The calls didn't say any specific names or who was going home.

Leigh moves toward the door and holds for Kelli...

LEIGH

Or missing.

CAMERA INCHES IN ON KELLI as she puts on her coat...

KELLI

The second call came after Megan went to her room. The first... after, we thought, Clair was up in her room.

Kelli's eyes dart cautiously toward Leigh, who processes all this information...

KELLI (CONT'D)

The calls came after one of us went missing.

HEATHER

Didn't get a call from Eve.

MS. MAC

She didn't disappear. She left.

MELISSA

Doesn't own a cell phone.

THE PHONE

FILLS nearly three quarters of THE FRAME. The girls hold, silhouettes against the window. In the b.g., a cell RINGTONE goes off... "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies."

THE WOMEN

Tense. Kelli reaches into her pocket for her phone...

KELLI

This must be Kyle...

She pulls out her cell and checks the caller I.D...

KELLI'S CELL PHONE DISPLAY - CALLER I.D.

DANA MATHIS CELL.

KELLI

A raw nerve, Kelli battles to maintain composure...

KELLI
Oh my God, it's Dana's phone.

Frightened... she engages the "send" button.

KELLI
Dana?

A witch-like CRY blares from the phone; Billy's mother.

CALLER (V.O.)
What have you done?

Kelli pulls the phone away. The others crowd around, listening. What SOUNDS like Billy's step father GROWLS...

CALLER (CONT'D, V.O.)
What did you do with the baby?

Kelli closes her eyes as if that could shut out the sound... until, an indiscernible voice declares...

CALLER (CONT'D, V.O.)
We're not Eve! We're not Eve!

The girls look to one another, shocked.

CALLER (V.O.)
They're my family, now.

The caller disconnects. No DIAL TONE. SILENCE, except for the CRACKLE of the dying fire. Ms. Mac WHISPERS above it...

MS. MAC
*"We're not Eve?" How do they know
what we were talking about?*

Realizing, then alarmed, Kelli turns quickly to Leigh...

KELLI
Dana.

CUT TO:

EXT. PI KAPPA SIGMA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT

Crisscrossing flashlight beams backlight a falling sheet of hail and ice as the storm intensifies. Kelli, Melissa, Heather, and Leigh, hustle down the front steps.

KELLI
Dana!

MELISSA
Dude! Where you at?

Melissa slips and falls on the treacherous icy surface. The others help her to her feet. Leigh looks over the ground...

KELLI
No footprints. It's all iced over.

LEIGH
She went around back to the control box.

As Melissa, flashlight in hand, and Kelli start off, gingerly, but with haste... CAMERA INCHES INTO HEATHER, flashlight in her hand, looking with suspicion, O.S.

HEATHER'S POV - UP THE STREET

An '89 Toyota Corolla with a replaced front end side panel painted primer gray, is parked about fifty feet down the street from the front of the sorority house...

HEATHER & LEIGH

Heather reacts, puzzled and incredulous...

HEATHER
That's Eve's car. She never left.

She moves off. Leigh steps INTO FRAME, annoyed with Heather...

LEIGH
Find Dana, first.

Leigh checks Melissa and Kelli, who have advanced along the side of the house. Not wanting anyone to be out here alone, Leigh sighs and starts after Heather...

EXT. SIDE OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Kelli and Melissa proceed along the side of the house. In fact, Melissa uses the wall for support...

MELISSA
Dude! Dude!

Kelli slips, falling near the trap door in the side of the house. Melissa moves to help, aiming the flashlight on Kelli.

Kelli absently places her hand on the frame as a crutch, then looks to Melissa, alarmed. Kelli points to the door.

CAMERA SWEEPS toward Kelli's finger pointing to the doorframe marked with Christmas red nail polish scratches...

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The driver's side front end of Eve's car FILLS THE FRAME as Heather approaches, followed by Leigh. Heather aims her flashlight toward the Corolla's interior...

EXT. SIDE OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Kelli and Melissa are on their hands and knees trying to open the trap door. Kelli quickly looks about the area.

KELLI

Point the light under the house...

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - EVE'S CAR

Heather's flashlight beam FLARES INTO CAMERA as she APPROACHES the rear end of Eve's car. The back of a head and shoulders can be seen resting against the driver's window...

HEATHER & LEIGH

As they near the driver's side door...

HEATHER

What is she doing? Sleeping in her car! It's, like, zero degrees...

Heather reaches out and pulls up on the doorhandle. Leigh reaches GRABS her hand; a startle.

LEIGH

If she's asleep...

(beat)

Why aren't the windows fogged?

Heather releases the handle, steps back, but, the door opens.

LOWER ANGLE - CAR DOOR

Eve's body, streaked with blood, tumbles TOWARD CAMERA...

EXT. BENEATH THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Melissa's panning flashlight beam flares INTO CAMERA. O.S., Heather SCREAMS. Kelli and Melissa tear off toward the street

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Leigh hyperventilates beside the car while Heather has moved away, CRYING. Kelli and Melissa approach and see the corpse..

MELISSA
Holy FUCK!

EVE'S BODY

Lies half in and out of the car, her head on the ground
REVEALING both eyes have been removed.

KELLI

CAMERA PUSHES IN as she realizes...

KELLI
He's out here.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The four women race into the living room and SLAM the DOOR!

MRS. MAC

Startles; frightened.

KELLI, MELISSA, HEATHER & LEIGH

Heather bolts the door while Kelli marches directly to the house phone and picks it up. It's dead.

Kelli removes her cell phone, while pacing, dials "9,1,1."

MS. MAC
WHAT?! WHAT?!

KELLI
Fuck.

Kelli continues pacing as she hits re-dial; listens...

KELLI
FUCK!

As Kelli tries re-dial, again...

MS. MAC
What is going on?!

Melissa, Heather, and Leigh hesitate, unsure of who should tell Ms. Mac, as well as how to tell her...

KELLI
FUHHHHHCK!

Everyone turns toward Kelli as she hits re-dial, yet again...

KELLI (CONT'D)

911 is experiencing heavy caller
traffic because of the storm...

All are rattled and anxious. Leigh looks out the front
window. Heather and Melissa move from window to window,
assuring they are secure.

MS. MAC

911?! Why?! What?!

KELLI

Hello? Yeah... a girl is...
dead... outside. Yes, I know
her... Eve Guaraldi...

Ms. Mac reacts, horrified. She looks to the others...

KELLI (CONT'D)

We're positive she's been
murdered...

MRS. MAC

As CAMERA PUSHES IN on her...

MS. MAC

Billy's home.

WIDER

The girls shoot each other anxious glances...

MELISSA

No. No, Ms. Mac. Billy is dead.

KELLI

(into phone)

Three other girls...

Kelli looks carefully to Leigh, who, anticipating what Kelli
must report, averts her eyes; sickened...

KELLI (CONT'D)

Are missing... and... we're
afraid... Sorry, what? 566
Oakdale. Phi Kappa sorority...
Kelli Presley... how long 'til...
What?! No! No... we...

She hesitates, reluctant to admit...

KELLI (CONT'D)

We think he's still outside...
Would you wait around that long
after what I just told you?

Upon hearing this, Ms. Mac marches across the room and disappears into a small bedroom off the hallway while Heather, Melissa, and Leigh tense, reacting with dread...

KELLI (CONT'D)

Please, isn't there any way..?

(beat)

YOU FUCKER!!

Kelli hits the "end" button; more afraid than angry...

KELLI (CONT'D)

The storm. Pile-ups everywhere on
91. Reservists can't make it in
'cause the streets are all ice.
Trees falling. Power's out all
over. They... maybe... maybe...
can be here... in two hours.

Ms. Mac returns wearing her winter coat, carrying her purse and keys in hand...

MS. MAC

Well, we'll all be out of here in
two minutes. Get your things...

Heather approves of the idea and rushes off for her coat.

MELISSA

I'm not going outside. *He's*
outside.

KELLI

What about Dana?

HEATHER

We'll just go up to the A.D.G.
House. Get help.

MELISSA

They've all gone home or skiing.

KELLI

Whose family lives the closest?
Call them.

MELISSA

Lauren's. Her mother lives in
Boston.

MS. MAC

Even if you could reach her on a cell phone, it'd be at least four or five hours 'til she got here.

MELISSA

And she's in Bermuda with some guy.

Melissa reacts, frightened as she suddenly recalls...

MELISSA

Oh, shit! Lauren!

Melissa takes off, running for the stairs in the darkness..

MS. MAC

Done. Case closed. Let's go!

LEIGH

Dana's missing and she was only going to the back of the house. You feel good about your chances making it to the car?

KELLI

Right. We lock up the house, everyone grabs a fireplace poker, or ski pole, or some shit, and for the next two hours, not let each other out of our sights.

MS. MAC

No! We'll drive to the police. Even if they can't do anything. We'll *all* be safe, there.

KELLI

We're not *all* here. If we were, I'd go.

LEIGH

If Clair comes back... it's not going to be to an empty house.

As Leigh moves away, ending the discussion...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

CAMERA IS MOVING, LOW TO THE FLOOR as Melissa races up the top of the stairs and down the hall.

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM - NIGHT

The door BURST open! Melissa tenses in the doorway, as she looks O.S. CAMERA PULLS BACK, REVEALING a motionless mass beneath comforter and sheets...

Melissa steadies herself, then inches toward the bed. With dread and fear, she reaches out and grabs a piece of the comforter. She whips off the covers...

MELISSA'S POV - BED

Lauren sleeps it off. Drool drips from the corner of her mouth. As Lauren releases a teeth rattling SNORE...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Heather returns wearing her coat, moving directly to the door. Kelli blocks her path, placing her hand on the knob.

KELLI

Please! We're safer sticking together.

HEATHER

Alright.

(beat)

Then, get your coats.

(calls out)

MEL, WE'RE LEAVING! LET'S GO!

MELISSA (O.S.)

I'M NOT LEAVING LAUREN, YOU FUCKING BITCH!!

KELLI

We're sisters. Act like it.

Heather knocks Kelli's hand away and opens the door. The WIND SCREAMS, blowing hail into the entrance. She starts off toward the driveway.

MS. MAC

We'll get the police here, fast as we can.

Ms. Mac hugs Kelli, then moves off after Heather. CAMERA PUSHES INTO KELLI watching them move toward the driveway...

EXT. PI KAPPA SIGMA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT - KELLI'S POV

The porch and the front end of the garage obstructs the view of Ms. Mac's car. Only the rear passenger side is in view.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kelli closes the door, bolts it, and moves toward the stairs, while addressing Leigh...

KELLI

Can't see the driveway. Maybe from
Lauren's room...

As Leigh moves from the window, following Kelli...

EXT. DRIVEWAY - PHI KAPPA SIGMA HOUSE - NIGHT

CAMERA LEADS Ms. Mac and Heather, hustling to the car. Their footsteps CLICK and CRUNCH on the icy surface until Ms. Mac falls. Heather has difficulty with her own footing while helping Ms. Mac to her feet.

They manage to proceed toward the driveway REVEALING a dented and dinged '66 Pontiac Parisienne and not in cherry condition. The wheel wells are rusted.

Much of this is difficult to discern as the Pontiac is encrusted with ice and snow.

PASSENGER DOOR

Heather pulls on the door handle, ice CRACKS and STRAINS, but the door is sealed shut by ice. She YANKS harder, then looks around, seeing if anyone is approaching, then YANKS again...

DRIVER'S SIDE

Likewise, Ms. Mac's door is frozen closed. She kicks at the car with her heel. A sheet of ice CRACKS and falls away from the metal. She rushes inside, climbing into the driver's seat

INT. PONTIAC PARISIENNE - NIGHT

Ms. Mac inserts the keys into the ignition. In the passenger window, Heather is a silhouette, pulling on the doorhandle, knocking on the window, trying to free the car from ice...

The engine won't turn over. Ms. Mac pumps the gas pedal and tries again. The ENGINE STRAINS...

MS. MAC

C'mon, you piece-a-shit!

THE GAS PEDAL

THUMP... THUMP... THUMP!

THE IGNITION

key is cranked...

THE DASHBOARD

The RADIO COMES TO LIFE... Judy Garland's haunting "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas."

EXT. DRIVEWAY - PHI KAPPA SIGMA HOUSE - NIGHT - TAILPIPE

The Pontiac STARTS. Exhaust BELCHES...

INT. PONTIAC PARISIENNE - NIGHT

Ms. Mac CRANKS the heater and DEFROSTER...

EXT. DRIVEWAY - PHI KAPPA SIGMA HOUSE - NIGHT - HEATHER

CAMERA INCHES IN OVER Heather's shoulder as she desperately tries opening the door. As she turns back...

HEATHER'S POV - EVE'S CAR

The door remains open. Eve's body; in the position it was discovered...

HEATHER - LOW ANGLE

Reminded of Eve's fate, Heather pulls harder on the door. At this angle, the attic window looms above. Unbeknownst to Heather, Clair's body sits at the window in the rocking chair.

OVER HEATHER'S SHOULDER

As Heather turns back around, CRACK! A pane of ice SHATTERS! Heather SCREAMS! The door pops open REVEALING Ms. Mac on her back, having kicked the passenger door open with her feet.

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kelli and Leigh enter and move directly to the window. Melissa crosses to the window, as well...

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT- KELLI'S POV - OUT WINDOW

From this vantage, also, only the rear of the Pontiac can be seen. Exhaust pumps from the tail pipe.

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kelli, Leigh, and Melissa eye one another, relieved...

KELLI

They got the car started.

INT. PONTIAC PARISIENNE - NIGHT

Heather is now in the passenger seat. She locks the door.

HEATHER

Go! Go!

The front windshield appears opaque from the ice and snow. Ms. Mac tries the wipers, but they strain against the ice. The visibility out the window remains nil.

Ms. Mac turns and reaches over the back seat. Incredulous, Heather turns toward the back seat, also...

HEATHER

What are you doing?!

While their attention is away from the front of the car... a shadowy form crosses the front end and disappears.

Ms. Mac produces an ice scraper, then extends it to Heather as if, "go scrape the ice."

HEATHER (CONT'D)

What is that thing?

Ms. Mac sighs, turns, and exits the car...

EXT. DRIVEWAY - PHI KAPPA SIGMA HOUSE - NIGHT

The driver's door remains open as CAMERA ARCS with Ms. Mac around the front end to the windshield. She begins SCRAPING the ice. It is thick and needs plenty of elbow grease.

MS. MAC

(muttering)

Precious... frigid... princess...
southern... privileged... bitch!

Suddenly... the vehicle rocks... lurches... just once. Ms. Mac pauses, anxious, then continues scraping. Faster.

FRONT WINDOW

A piece of ice breaks away creating a three inch diameter window into the front seat.

MOTION... a head turns... REVEALING... a yellow eye.

MRS. MAC

Tenses... frozen with fear...

OVER MS. MAC'S SHOULDER

From the interior, the frosted opaque window suddenly splashes... erupts... with Heather's blood.

MRS. MAC

Leaping back, hyperventilating, backs into the closed garage door with some force, causing, O.S., a LOUD CRACK!

MS. MAC'S POV - LIP OF THE ROOF

Several thick stalactite icicles BREAK OFF.

OVERHEAD ANGLE - MS. MAC

CAMERA RACES TOWARD HER as if a plummeting icicle...

MS. MAC - LOW ANGLE - LOOKING DIRECTLY UP

Upon reflex, backed against the garage, Ms. Mac raises her arms shielding herself. It is futile.

As her head is impaled and split by the ice dagger...

CUT TO:

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM - NIGHT - KELLI'S POV - DRIVEWAY

Outside, the car IDLES. Judy Garland SINGS...

WIDER

Kelli looks to Melissa and Leigh while Lauren remains dead to the world on her bed...

KELLI

Should we go out and check on them?

MELISSA

Car's idling. Radio's on.

Leigh's tone is that of one steeling themselves to face the increasingly inevitable...

LEIGH

Where's Clair's room?

KELLI

We should look for Dana.

LEIGH

Go ahead...

(beat, tough)

But, no one's looked for Clair.
Take me to her room.

Kelli and Melissa eye one another. Melissa nods...

MELISSA

It's only two rooms down.

Kelli looks at Leigh, then heads out of the room. CAMERA PUSHES IN ON Melissa as she looks back to the window and clears the condensation...

INT. CLAIR'S ROOM - NIGHT - THE FLOOR

Kelli's flashlight plays across the wrapping paper and half empty glass of wine.

WIDER - KELLI & LEIGH

Leigh's eyes take in the decor and Clair's personal effects as if looking at the room of a stranger...

LEIGH

There a boyfriend, something, she
could have gone to?

Kelli shrugs, then shakes her head, "no."

KELLI

We love Clair, but she sticks to
herself. It's like her to leave
and not tell anyone.

Leigh picks up the gift, looking at it anxiously; sadly...

INSERT - GIFT

"To: My big sister, Leigh. Fr: Her baby sister, Clair."

KELLI & LEIGH

Leigh's eyes remain on the gift...

LEIGH

You know her better than I do.

(beat)

I'm her half-sister. Twelve years
older. Clair was in second grade
when I moved in here.

(more)

LEIGH (cont'd)
 (to herself)
 My baby sister.
 (beat)
 Weird how, at this age, twelve
 years seems like nothing. We were
 going to bridge that time...
 finally get to know each other.
 Appreciate what we have.
 (softly)
 While we could...

Leigh looks to Kelli...

LEIGH (CONT'D)
 Can choose your friends... but,
 not your family. Right?

Leigh begins unwrapping the paper until Kelli stops her...

KELLI
 Open it in front of her.

Leigh looks up. Her resigned eyes meeting Kelli's hopeful
 innocent eyes. Yet, before any further words are exchanged...
 a CELL RINGTONE... "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies."

CAMERA PUSHES IN on Kelli and Leigh... scared.

MELISSA

Having heard the tone, appears in the doorway... anxious.

WIDER

As Kelli removes her phone and reads the caller I.D. panel,
 she stifles a frightened WHIMPER...

CELL PHONE CALLER I.D. DISPLAY

BARBARA MacHENRY.

KELLI

Quickly answers. With desperate hope...

KELLI
 Ms. Mac?

The eerie man-child voice declares...

CALLER (V.O.)
They're my family, now.

Kelli abruptly disconnects; tries to be strong, battling frightened tears. Leigh looks at Melissa...

LEIGH
Stay with your friend.

Leigh takes Kelli by the arm. As they start out of the room...

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - LEIGH & KELLI

race into the kitchen and look out a side window.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT- KELLI'S POV - OUT KITCHEN WINDOW

This vantage is also partially obscured by the opposite garage wall. The Pontiac driver's side door is open as the vehicle continues IDLING...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kelli and Leigh struggle to see the entire picture...

KELLI
Can't tell if they're out there.

Kelli starts toward another door. CAMERA FOLLOWS as they move to another door off the kitchen. Kelli aims the flashlight at the doorknob and opens the door...

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

The garage holds no vehicles but, rather, acts as a storage area; cluttered and maze-like.

KELLI AND LEIGH

Stepping into the garage, Leigh loses her footing. Kelli catches her, then shines the flashlight onto the floor.

IN THE FLASHLIGHT BEAM

A puddle of water, created by a leak from above...

KELLI (V.O.)
Careful. Roof's leaking.

KELLI AND LEIGH

Continue through the boxes, furniture, and old bicycles toward the closed garage door. As they reach the door, Kelli slips, falling to her knees.

THE FLASHLIGHT

Drops. Rolls; REVEALING not a puddle of water, but one of blood, seeping in through the outside at the base of the garage door...

KELLI AND LEIGH

Kelli SCREAMS!

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kelli's SCREAM is deep within the house, but is nonetheless HEARD by Melissa looking out the window to the driveway.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

Kelli and Leigh try lifting the garage door...

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Ms. Mac's dead body lies slumped against the garage door preventing it from opening.

Then... a form ENTERS FRAME... just a shoulder... and HOLDS.

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Melissa moves to the door and opens it...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Melissa steps into the hallway, looking toward the stairs.

MELISSA

KELLI?!

From the darkness behind her, a black plastic bag is whipped over her head. She reaches for her throat, struggles. The plastic vacuums to her face as she GASPS!

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

Kelli and Leigh desperately push against the garage door...

LEIGH

Feels like... there might be a body blocking it.

Then, OUTSIDE, O.S., the Pontiac ENGINE dies. The radio Christmas MUSIC turns SILENT. Someone is out there.

CUT TO:

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Darkness. O.S., the rhythmic CLICK... CLICK... CLICK... of mechanized winding.

Clair's gift to Lauren, the music box, is SET INTO FRAME by a hand with blood stained fingers. The doll turns as "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies" begins...

LAUREN

Asleep. Her image is odd, distorted; light bending and refracting colors...

A TOUCH WIDER

REVEALS CAMERA is looking at Lauren *through* Eve's gift to Heather, the glass unicorn's horn.

WIDER

The ornament is clutched by a hand stained with sweat and blood. After a beat... the ornament moves... toward Lauren.

CLOSER - MUSIC BOX

The ballerina twirls...

THROUGH THE GLASS ORNAMENT - LAUREN

Her image distorts as the horn approaches. Once over her... the ornament pauses.

Her eyes open... groggy... drunken. Then, as she looks up and see the figure standing over her...

LAUREN

Hmm. Yeah. Merry Fucking Christmas.

Lauren's eyes suddenly flash with horror...

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The fire has died. The room is dark and icy blue. Blood stained and perspiring, even in the cold house, Kelli and Leigh run into the living room from the kitchen.

OUTSIDE, a THUMP, THUMP, like heavy footsteps. Kelli looks toward the front window...

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT - KELLI'S POV

A dark figure crosses the porch toward the front door...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As they turn and hustle toward the staircase...

FRONT DOOR

RATTLES... BANG! BANG! BANG!

KELLI & LEIGH

The womens' urgency intensifies. Kelli bounds up the steps two at a time. Leigh, however, hesitates and quickly reaches out into the living room...

CLOSE - MS. MAC'S BBQ/MARSHMALLOW TOASTING FORK

Leigh's hand grabs it. As it's whisked OUT OF FRAME...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kelli and Leigh tear down the hallway as the POUNDING continues DOWN on the front door...

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM - NIGHT

CAMERA PULLS BACK from the threshold as Kelli and Leigh enter REVEALING... Melissa is gone.

Lauren, however, remains in bed. One bare foot is out over the side outside of the covers. She lies on her back with her arm, the crook of her inner elbow, over her eyes.

KELLI
Awww, fuck, no!
(calls out)
MELISSA?!

LEIGH
He'll hear you!

Leigh closes the door. She BOLTS the LOCK. Kelli tugs at Lauren's foot, while whispering...

KELLI
Lauren, where's Mel?!

DOWNSTAIRS, a window SHATTERS! Kelli tugs on Lauren's foot...

KELLI
Where's Mel?!

Standing just off to the side of the door, Leigh looks at Kelli. Then whispers, intensely...

LEIGH

Shut up!

Leigh clutches the barbecue fork with two hands, turns toward the door and raises it over her head. Ready.

KELLI

Breathes hard; frightened. She reaches into her pocket and pulls out her cell, fingers trembling as she text messages...

INSERT - KELLI'S CELL PHONE DISPLAY

glows with bluish light. She types... "U@?!!" Then, speed dials... MELISSA.

KELLI

Awaits a response. She kicks at Lauren's foot, waves the flashlight beam across her face...

LEIGH

O.S... FOOTSTEPS approach...

KELLI

looks to her phone...

INSERT - KELLI'S CELL PHONE DISPLAY

The illuminated display reads: U@?!!

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

CAMERA BEGINS MOVING DOWN THE HALL, as if a P.O.V. Flashlight seeps from beneath the door inside Lauren's room.

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM - NIGHT - LEIGH

Raises the prongs above her head, readies...

KELLI

Texts, again. This time... *FAINT*... *MUTED*... however, a definitely audible... a cell ring tone can be heard... "JINGLE BELLS."

Kelli looks up. CAMERA PUSHES IN as she spots...

KELLI'S POV - CEILING

From a tiny pinhole in the ceiling, a pale dim hint of bluish light, as if from a cell phone display emits from the hole...

KELLI

CAMERA CONTINUES IN, but just as she reacts...

LAUREN'S DOOR

BANGS open!

KELLI

Swings the light toward the door...

THE DOOR

A figure stands in the threshold...

LEIGH

WHISKS her weapon down...

THE FIGURE

The light hits the figure REVEALING Kyle as he lurches back, the fork tearing his jacket sleeve.

LEIGH & KYLE

Not knowing Kyle, Leigh continues her attack. Not knowing Leigh, he counters, blocking her arm and shoving her back...

LEIGH

Hits the bed, knocking Lauren whose arm *slowly* falls from its position over her eyes.

Leigh looks up just as Lauren's arm clears her face, REVEALING Lauren is, indeed, dead. Her eye sockets are dark and empty; eyes having been removed.

KELLI

SCREAMS!

LEIGH

Is up on her feet away from the bed. She turns back toward Kyle wielding her weapon.

KELLI

Moves toward her...

KELLI
NO! NO!

WIDER

Leigh hesitates, but remains alert and ready to attack. Likewise, Kyle tenses eyes flashing from Kelli to Leigh. The three stand triangulated; breathing hard, frightened...

KYLE
There's two bodies in the driveway.

LEIGH
Maybe you did it.

He points to Lauren...

KYLE
Maybe you did that!

KELLI
No! It's not him!

Leigh's eyes dart to Kelli, as does Kyle's.

LEIGH
How do you know?

Her back to the hole in the ceiling, assuming they are being watched, Kelli blocks her gesture pointing to the ceiling...

LEIGH & KYLE

Subtly look up...

LEIGH & KYLE'S POV - KELLI & THE CEILING

CAMERA MOVES PAST KELLI and RISES to the ceiling. The faint light continues glowing from within the ceiling pinhole...

KELLI

Her "The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies" ringtone SOUNDS. CAMERA INCHES INTO Kelli as she raises the phone with dread... and pushes the "send" button...

CALLER (V.O.)
They're my family, now.

Kelli battles tears, but with a strength derived from anger, she asks in an accusatory whisper...

KELLI
What have you done... Billy?

The call abruptly disconnects. Kelli turns, looks to the ceiling...

KELLI'S POV - THE CEILING

The light is out.

LEIGH & KYLE

Witness the seeping light go out. They look to Kelli...

KELLI

As CAMERA INCHES TO HER... she whispers.

KELLI
He's in the attic.

CUT TO:

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

CAMERA IS CREEPING. In the darkness, barely visible... awaits the trap door to the attic.

KELLI, LEIGH & KYLE

CAMERA INCHES TOWARD Lauren's door as the three appear in the threshold looking toward the dark end of the hall. In low scared *whispers*...

KYLE
No... fucking... way!

LEIGH
What if he has them up there?

KYLE
Eve's not. Heather's not.

KELLI
Maybe we found Eve before he could move her and you found Heather...

LEIGH
I've been in the cellar. Kelli's seen under the house. Where else could they be?

LEIGH

They could still be alive.

He takes Kelli by the arm, for emphasis...

KYLE

They're not.

Kelli and Leigh are unnerved by his certainty...

KYLE (CONT'D)

I saw what he did to Heather.

LEIGH

And we saw Eve...

Kelli considers...

LEIGH (CONT'D)

But, if my sister's up there...

I'm bringing her down.

Leigh doesn't even check Kelli's reaction as she moves past Kyle and Kelli and starts toward the attic trap door, clutching her weapon.

Kelli follows Leigh, then eyes Kyle...

KELLI

You fucking owe me... at least,
this.

Kyle sighs, pissed and afraid. He follows Kelli...

HIGH ANGLE - FROM THE POSITION OF THE DOOR

FRAME IS EMPTY, seemingly dark, until Leigh steps cautiously INTO FRAME, back against the farthest wall. Only a faint rim of reflecting spill light delineates Leigh, Kelli, and Kyle from the darkness.

ATTIC DOOR

CAMERA INCHES TOWARD the trap door...

HALLWAY

The three reach the area just beneath the attic door. Leigh nods to Kelli, then takes a step toward the ladder. Kelli's lifts the flashlight, preparing to turn it on...

Kyle suddenly reaches out and stops Leigh. She looks at him and without acknowledging her, Kyle moves ahead of her toward the base of the ladder.

He turns to Kelli, then mouths and gestures...

KYLE

I open the door, you hit the light.

She nods...

LOW ANGLE - LOOKING DIRECTLY UP

The trap door awaits directly above as Kyle steps on the first rung of the ladder...

CLOSE - KYLE'S FOOT

CAMERA RISES with Kyle's foot as it steps on the next rung..

THE FLASHLIGHT

Kelli raises it; thumb hovering over the "on" switch.

LEIGH

Grips the barbecue fork, readies...

OVERHEAD

Kyle rises toward CAMERA, reaching the door. He eyes the girls, then holds out his hand and counts off with his fingers... one... two... three!

LOW ANGLE

He KNOCKS open the door, then takes a defensive step down. Kelli turns on the flashlight.

Beat... SILENCE... above Kyle, the flashlight is a tube of illumination on the rafters. Small, one or two inch icicles cling to the leaking ceiling...

Kyle turns around and reaches down, gesturing for Kelli's flashlight...

Suddenly, a black plastic trash bag is whipped over Kyle's head. His upper body is pulled into the attic...

KELLI & LEIGH

step forward, reach out, but cannot grab Kyle's legs.

THE FLASHLIGHT

knocked by Kyle's hand, spins rolls...

KELLI

Begins climbing the ladder, looks up...

THE ATTIC

The flashlight stops bouncing and spinning, its light stops on... a pair of eyes... framed in a black hood. In a mere glimpse, the most illuminated eye, the left iris... is yellow.

KYLE

disappears into the darkness of the attic. The door SLAMS!

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

Extreme elongated shadows caused by the flashlight struggle. The killer straddles Kyle's chest.

KYLE'S FEET

Struggling to escape, Kyle's feet are over the attic door. Kicking; pressing against the floor for leverage. His desperate actions prevent Kelli and Leigh from entering...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT - KELLI & LEIGH

Push up against the door while it BANG BANG BANGS!

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT - KYLE

Blinded and choking from the plastic bag. His arms are pinned down by the assailant straddling his chest.

LOW ANGLE - THE KILLER

Removes the glass unicorn from a pocket. Raises it...

THE GLASS UNICORN

The light glinting off the horn, is plunged OUT OF FRAME...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

O.S., KYLE SCREAMS! Kelli and Leigh intensify their efforts...

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT - LOW ANGLE - KILLER

Again, plunges the glass dagger toward Kyle's head...

KYLE'S FEET

Reacting to the pain... PUSH AGAINST FLOOR and SCUTTLE BACK.

LOW ANGLE - THE KILLER

Is bucked, but maintains the advantage...

KYLE'S FEET

Move off of the door...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT - KELLI & LEIGH

Push! The door flies open! They hurry up the ladder. Once inside, the attic door teeters, then SLAMS closed!

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

Kelli and Leigh charge the figure, just as it plunges the pointed horn into the plastic bag. Kyle's body goes limp.

They grab the killer, who rears, pushing them into the attic.

LEIGH & KELLI

Fall against the base of a rocking chair, which lurches forward, toward them. They look up...

LOW ANGLE - LOOKING UP - KELLI & LEIGH'S POV - CLAIR

The face of Leigh's sister remains frozen in horror, wrapped in plastic. Eye sockets, empty. Seated in the chair, the body nearly tips over on them...

LEIGH

FRAME IS EMPTY until she rears back, terrified...

LEIGH'S FOOT AND LEG

Slips off the plywood covered area and into the rock wool insulation. Her foot CRASHES through the plaster...

LEIGH

One leg falls through the floor to her thigh...

KELLI

On the floor, scoots on her hands and behind, away from Clair. Kelli looks to Leigh...

KELLI'S POV - LEIGH

struggling to pull herself out, yet the movements cause her to slip further into the hole...

KELLI

Her eyes flash to Kyle...

KELLI'S POV - KYLE & KILLER

The Killer straddles Kyle's motionless body. The Killer rises. Nearly indiscernible in the flashlight, the killer clenches several strands of extracolar muscles attached to Kyle's removed eyeballs.

KILLER

He's my family, now.

The killer grabs Kyle's body by the legs and begins dragging it across the room...

KELLI

Her eyes flash toward Leigh...

KELLI'S POV - LEIGH

Slips a few more inches into the floor. She looks to Kelli...

LEIGH

GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE!!

KELLI

Nothin' doin'. Kelli rises to her hands and knees, crawling, quickly, but cautiously across the attic floor toward Leigh...

LEIGH

Tries to pull herself out of the floor. CRACK! She slips further...

KELLI & LEIGH

As Kelli reaches Leigh and grabs her arms...

EXTREMELY CLOSE - A MATCH

Strikes.

KELLI & LEIGH

Turn toward the light...

EXTREMELY CLOSE - A CHRISTMAS CANDLE

Red and silvery; are lit. O.S., the killer softly HUMS "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies."

KELLI & LEIGH

CAMERA INCHES IN ON THEM, reacting with horror...

CLOSE - A FORM

A body, a silhouette in the darkness... until the candle cast an amber glow... REVEALING... Melissa's dead body. The eye sockets are empty and black. O.S., the HUMMING continues...

KELLI & LEIGH

Kelli battles frightened and sickened tears...

A SECOND CANDLE

Is lit...

LAUREN

The flickering light dances across her dead, expressionless, face. Her eyes have been removed...

KELLI & LEIGH

CAMERA CONTINUES TOWARD THEM... both frozen and mortified...

KELLI & LEIGH'S POV - ATTIC

In the corner... a display.

The sincere intent had been a Currier and Ives family at Christmas print, however, it appears as if sculpted by an insane Gothik/Punk artist.

The bodies of the murdered sorority sisters, Megan, Clair, and Melissa are posed, as if exchanging presents, beneath an Evergleam pink aluminum Christmas tree. Seven pairs of actual human eyeballs ornament the tree.

A dozen candles illuminate the area. Placed on the floor are sheets of crumpled wrapping paper, ribbon and bows, as if presents have just been opened.

Clair's music box is placed in Megan's hands.

THE KILLER

HUMMING Tchaikovsky, turns toward Kelli and Leigh. The yellow, unblinking, unmoving eye, catches some spill light.

Then with a tone heard in the phone calls, one that is not not evil or crazed, but rather eerily pathetic with a pleased, happy smile, spoken to Kelli and Leigh as if they will understand...

KILLER

They're my family, now.

KELLI & LEIGH

Terrified...

THE KILLER

Now, the timbre of the voice is reminiscent of Billy's mother, a sick imitation; one heard in the phone calls...

KILLER

You're... my family, now.

It starts toward them...

KELLI AND LEIGH

Trembling and rattled, try pulling Leigh from the floor who grasps the wooden supports; strains...

CLOSE - LEIGH'S LEGS

Slips deeper through the plaster.

THE KILLER

Approaches...

KELLI & LEIGH

Suddenly... CRACK! The floor gives way. Collapses! Leigh falls through the floor and into one of the girls's bedroom.

Kelli turns, checks the killer's position...

THE KILLER

Is a step away...

KELLI

Tries to jump through the hole in the floor, but the killer grabs her shoulders. A plastic bag begins whipping over her head, but Kelli raises an arm and blocks it.

She lunges forward...

CLOSE - THE BBQ FORK

Kelli grabs it...

KELLI

Rolls, turns, then drives the weapon toward the killer...

THE KILLER'S EYES

The prongs plunge into the yellowed iris. The figures' head is thrown back.

KELLI

Kelli rears, looking up to the figure...

THE FIGURE

The hooded head slowly levels. Oddly, the fork remains in the eyeball with no release of blood or fluid. The fork extends out, stuck in the eye.

KELLI

Reacts, shocked, confused...

THE FIGURE

A first true look at the face of the figure, albeit in the eerie flickering amber light, REVEALS an unnerving androgyny. Although the face is large and, somewhat, masculine, the lips and nose are feminine. The skin texture appears shiny, plastic-like and sweaty.

Thick scar tissue encircles the neck.

With no reaction of pain or emotion, the figure reaches up, grabs the fork handle, and with effort, twists the fork and head until the prosthetic eye is pulled from the socket.

CLOSE - THE PROSTHETIC EYE

remains on the tip of the fork. At this image size, it is clear that the iris has been hand painted or tinted yellow...

THE FIGURE

The empty socket is black with scar tissue. The head turns, looking at the eye on the end of the fork and REVEALING the surviving right eye is a brilliant bright blue...

KELLI

CAMERA PUSHES IN, repulsed, frozen with fear. She whispers...

KELLI

Agnes? What have you done?

AGNES

Indeed, the killer, Agnes Lenz, drops the fork and starts toward Kelli...

KELLI

Turns... crawls... tries to stand; escape. A black plastic trash bag whips over her head...

CLOSER - KELLI

GASPS! The plastic vacuums to her face.

AGNES

Turns Kelli onto her back, straddles her...

KELLI

Tears the plastic away...

AGNES - LOW ANGLE

Raises the glass unicorn...

KELLI

Dekes her head. The glass spike catches a piece of her earlobe as it drives into the floor and breaks off.

Kelli grabs Agnes' wrist...

AGNES - LOW ANGLE

looks at the ornament. Now, a block of glass...

KELLI

Quickly grabs for the broken glass spike. Grabs it. She plunges her hand upward...

AGNES - LOW ANGLE

Brings the glass rock downwards, but Kelli's weapon makes impact first, plunging just below the right eye socket. Agnes rears back.

KELLI

Knocks the ornament from Agnes' hand...

THE ORNAMENT

Knocks over a pair of candles...

A CANDLE

Lands atop a piece of wrapping paper on the ground. It begins burning beneath the flammable tree...

THE SECOND CANDLE

Lands in the rotting rock wool insulation. Ignites!

WIDER

As the attic begins burning, Kelli struggles, scoots out from beneath Agnes, who pulls the glass horn from her face.

KELLI'S POV - THE ATTIC DOOR

CAMERA PUSHES IN... on the closed door

KELLI

Races for the door...

KELLI'S FOOT

Slips on a beam, falls, breaks through the plaster, but not far enough for Kelli to react and pull free...

KELLI

Starts reaches the door, however...

CLOSE - THE DOOR

A hatch lifting ring is inset and flush against the wood. Kelli's trembling fingers struggle to lift the ring.

AGNES

Approaches...

KELLI

Suddenly! BAM! The door flies open! Kelli rears back into Agnes, her arms whip around Kelli's arms and shoulders.

ATTIC DOOR

Leigh appears in the doorway...

AGNES

Pulls Kelli back, further into the loft, stumbling blindly toward the wall near the macabre display, now burning angrily.

LEIGH

Races toward them...

KELLI AND AGNES

Stumble backward toward the wall about to fall into the space between the walls. Just as they tumble backward, Leigh reaches out and grabs Kelli's shirt...

Kelli and Agnes fall backwards, but Leigh maintains her grip on Kelli....

BETWEEN THE WALLS

Agnes falls, tumbling grotesquely until lodged between the walls.

KELLI

momentum carries her backward, her legs slip into the space between the walls...

LEIGH

Tries holding up Kelli, but manages only to slow her fall...

KELLI

her arms clutch the attic floor. Leigh tries pulling her up...

BETWEEN THE ATTIC WALLS

Agnes stirs...

KELLI AND LEIGH

Struggle... Kelli's foot is twisted and stuck in the space...

BETWEEN THE WALLS

Agnes begins climbing...

KELLI AND LEIGH

Leigh pulls. Kelli SCREAMS with pain...

AGNES

Continues up the wall...

BETWEEN THE WALLS - KELLI'S FOOT

Agnes reaches up for it...

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Aflame, wilts, melts under the heat. It topples... into the space beneath the walls...

LEIGH AND KELLI

Leigh pulls, GROANS. Kelli rises and finally is pulled from the space between the walls on onto the attic floor.

AGNES

Looks up...

BETWEEN THE WALLS - AGNES' POV - THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Burning... plummets INTO CAMERA.

WIDER

The area between the walls erupts with flame, curling up against the rafters. The room is fiercely ablaze. Leigh pulls Kelli to her feet as they race across the room to the doorway.

They climb down through the hole...

CLOSE - THE PROSTHETIC EYE

On the ground, remains pierced by the fork. In the heat the eye begins blistering, melting.

The VOLUME OF THE FIRE'S ANGRY ROAR FADES... until the screen is silent.

As the eye continues burning... OVERLAPPING... a smooth country jazz guitar begins Eddie Arnold's "Santa Claus is Coming to Town..."

Through the DISSOLVE... what appear, initially to be Christmas lights, are indeed stobbing red siren lights...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT - EMERGENCY MEDICAL VEHICLES

The lights flash and spin, yellow, red and white, from many types of emergency vehicles. Police cars...

INT. CORRIDOR - HOSPITAL - NIGHT - A CHRISTMAS TREE

Sits atop a nurses' station desk. "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" plays from the intercom.

WIDER

CAMERA IS MOVING DOWN THE HALLWAY. The hospital is chaotic due to events at Phi Kappa and the ice storm. STAFF, NURSES, DOCTORS and E.M.T.S are crisscrossing the FRAME...

A REVERSE

REVEALS Leigh moving down the hallway with a thousand yard stare. Her face displays some small lacerations, which appear to have been treated. She wears her coat and holds an 8x10 manila envelope.

She looks up, checks a room number...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

This is a two bed hospital room. An ELDERLY MAN sits up in bed as family members gather around the bed, exchanging Christmas presents. The family appears happy and are LAUGHING. In the b.g., the TELEVISION is on LOW...

As Leigh enters, however, they turn respectfully quiet, as if aware she was involved in the evening's horrific events. Leigh eyes them, forces a smile and continues across the room.

BEYOND THE CURTAINED DIVIDE

The foot of a bed is in the F.G. as Leigh appears from the other side of the curtain and holds.

CAMERA PULLS BACK as she crosses and sits beside Kelli, who is in the bed, ear is bandaged and appearing sedated.

The women look to one another. Leigh lifts her hand, moving it toward Kelli who reaches up and clenches Leigh's hand. Leigh's tone is low as she places the manila envelope on the night table beside Kelli's bed.

LEIGH

Your family will be here in a couple of hours. They're bringing you some clothes.

Kelli nods.

LEIGH

These are the things you had on you when they took you to the emergency room.

Kelli nods, sighs, then looks to Leigh, who averts her eyes and unconsciously shakes her head. Neither know how to pose the question which, both understand, is unanswerable.

LEIGH

We'll never know, Kelli. How could we ever know?

Kelli averts her eyes. Leigh considers, shrugs.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

I think... maybe... it lies in... Agnes was doing the same thing Clair and I were.

(beat)

This Christmas... the first one without Billy alive... she came back home, looking to find her family. But, you don't need to find them... for the same reason you can't escape them.

(without sentiment)

They're always there.

Kelli averts her eyes. O.S., in the adjacent cubicle, the television interrupts for a news report about the events at Phi Kappa Gamma, earlier this evening.

Kelli and Leigh tense. Leigh reaches into her coat and removes Clair's wrapped present.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Kelli... I'll never be able to open this in front of my sister. So... I'll open it in front of you.

Kelli reaches out holds Leigh's forearm, comforting. As Leigh tears open the present...

TELEVISION (O.S., V.O.)

Twenty-five years after William Edward Lenz's Christmas massacre, horrific tragedy strikes again at the same house.

Both appear to ignore the report; their focus on the present.

TELEVISION (CONT'D, O.S., V.O)

Details remain sketchy this evening, but Grafton County officials have confirmed that ten bodies, eight female and two male, have been found dead at the burned remains of the Phi Kappa Sigma sorority near the campus of Clement University...

Leigh's eyes fill with tears before the paper is removed revealing a jewelry box. A beautiful watch is inside. Leigh removes the watch, emotional. She turns it over...

CLOSE - BACK OF THE WATCH

An inscription... *"Let's make up for lost time."*

KELLI & LEIGH

Leigh begins crying. Kelli sits up and holds her. Both women close their eyes and battle tears. Behind the curtain, the family must hear them crying as they whisper...

HOSPITAL VISITOR (O.S.)

Turn that off. They don't want to hear that.

The television turns off. The immediate room is silent. In the hallway, Christmas MUSIC plays. It feels eerie.

CAMERA NOW INCHES IN TOWARD Kelli and Leigh comforting one another. CLOSER... CLOSER... finally... Kelli opens her eyes, staring straight ahead. She whispers...

KELLI

Who's the other male?

Leigh pulls away, her expression, puzzled...

KELLI (CONT'D)

They said... "two males." There's only Kyle.

LEIGH

Could there be a friend of Kyle? Another guy, outside... we didn't know about?

KELLI

Even if there was... wouldn't there be... eleven?

(beat)

Two men... *nine* women?

They appear to count down the numbers in their heads. They look to one another, growing anxious. Leigh tries to be reassuring, but her fear cuts through...

LEIGH

News fucked up. They always do. I mean... we thought Agnes was Billy.

O.S... a cell ringtone... "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies." It is coming from inside the manila envelope.

CAMERA INCHES BACK... then holds as the TONE continues...

KELLI

Must be my parents.

Leigh hands Kelli the manila envelope. She opens it and removes the phone. Kelli freezes as she looks at the caller I.D. display.

CAMERA SWEEPS IN TO the display... "KYLE AUTRY'S CELL."

RETURN

Kelli holds the phone in her hand as the "Sugar Plum Fairies" continues RINGING. Leigh's eyes are locked on the phone, also. Both women are so afraid as to appear emotionless...

CAMERA PULLS BACK as the RINGTONE continues. There is not a SOUND, except the "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies." CAMERA CONTINUES PULLING BACK, then as if passing through the glass of Kelli's hospital room... is outside, looking into the room.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

CAMERA is several stories high, looking through the window, framed with Christmas lights. The phone continues RINGING, HEARD at the volume inside the hospital room. Once outside, the wind WHISTLES... the storm settling.

CAMERA now RISES, leaving Kelli and Leigh, still staring at the phone. They CLEAR FRAME as CAMERA CONTINUES TO RISE UP a brick wall until eight plastic illuminated reindeer and a Santa Claus appear on the roof against the dark snowy sky.

Seeing when you're sleeping. Knowing... when you're awake.

FADE OUT: