

Brian

BRAINSCAN

Story by
Brian Owens

Screenplay by
Andrew Kevin Walker

*Set up the
rules*

*→ Hayden a little
more unlikable.*

THIRD DRAFT
30 January 1989

A whole day of life is like
a whole day of television.

-Andy Warhol

FADE IN:

CLOSE-UP

on the frightened eyes of YOUNG MICHAEL BROWER, 8, lit by the flickering glow of a television screen. ERRIE MUSIC is HEARD from the tv. Young Michael watches transfixed.

The SOUND of a WEREWOLF'S HOWL is HEARD. Young Michael covers his eyes with his hands, terrified.

DAD'S VOICE (O.S.)

Damn kid. Begs all night to watch this crap, and now look at him.

MOM'S HAND reaches to touch Michael's hands. Her hand carresses and comforts.

MOM'S VOICE (O.S.)

Don't be afraid, Michael. I'm here to protect you. I'm here.

The WEREWOLF GROWLS FEROCIOUSLY and the SOUNDS of A BRUTAL ATTACK are HEARD. The MUSIC POUNDS dramatically.

Michael slowly parts his fingers. He stares out with one eye, watching, unblinking.

MOM'S VOICE (O.S.)

It's not real, Honey. It's not real.

From the television, a WOMAN SCREAMS in horror.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

MICHAEL BROWER, 18, is asleep on his bed. He is fully clothed. His mathbook lies open beside him.

His eyes shift wildly beneath their lids, for he is deep in a dream. There is a barely audible SOUND -- a SCRAPING SOUND, not recognizable.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY (MICHAEL'S NIGHTMARE) -- NIGHT

On the road, there is a thin trail of blood. It runs through specks of broken glass which cover the ground.

(CONTINUED)

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The scraping sound grows SLOWLY LOUDER: a moist sound, stopping, then starting, stopping, then starting again.

The scene is lit by offscreen headlights. FOLLOW the crimson trail through the bits of glittering glass, across black skid marks and over the roadway's double yellow line. Here is the source: YOUNG MICHAEL, 9, who crawls along the asphalt, dragging his wounded right knee behind.

The Boy's clothing is torn and dirty. The pain of the knee shows on his tear streaked face. He pulls desperately towards, and cries out to, an objective unseen to us.

We cannot hear his cries. All we can hear is the now deafeningly LOUD sound of moist scraping: the sound of the knee -- the sound of flesh and bone on asphalt.

CUT TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The sound of the knee is GONE. Michael's eyes continue their nightmare dance. A new SOUND is HEARD in the room. It's METAL INSTRUMENTS CLINKING TOGETHER, like silverware being handled. A light CLICKS on and shines on Michael's face. Michael begins to awaken. Slowly, he opens his eyes.

MICHAEL'S P.O.V. -- BEDROOM

A SURGICAL TEAM is leaning over the bed. Medical lamps shine down from above them. Their gloves and gowns are mottled with blood.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael sits up weak and confused. He is now dressed in the exact same ripped clothing as Young Michael from the dream.

MICHAEL

What the hell is...?

Words jam in his throat as he looks across the bed to see his right knee is splayed open. The skin is held back by silver clamps, exposing muscle, cartilage and bone. Blood is thick on the sheets, seeping from the knee which a SURGEON is leaning over with scalpel in hand.

SURGEON

(looking up)

Jesus. This boy is not under!
Nurse!

(CONTINUED)

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MICHAEL
(wide awake)
What is this!?

Michael tries to sit up farther, but TWO MEN on the surgical team grab him and force him down.

SURGEON
He's in shock. Sedate him, now!

A FEMALE NURSE pushes her way to the head of the bed. She is a voluptuous woman with a low-cut uniform revealing a good deal of her overly large cleavage. She holds out an anesthetic inhaler which hisses loudly.

MICHAEL
No, no, no. Not for me. I...

The inhaler is wet and the rubber rim is beginning to throb like a living thing. Michael's eyes widen in fear.

MICHAEL (cont)
You've got to be kidding me!

The inhaler is forced over Michael's mouth and nose. He tries to turn his head to escape the mouthpiece, but it is no use. Struggle turns to raw panic. He pulls his arms violently to escape the hold of the two men.

The surgeon is trying to continue his work on the knee, still holding the scalpel above it.

SURGEON
Hold him still! Hold him down!

Michael's knee jerks upward in the struggle, pulling the skin tight in the clamps. The surgeon looks up.

The skin rips! Michael's knee bends, causing the surgeon's scalpel to slice deeply into the muscle. Incredible amounts of blood burst forth. The knee is like a ridiculous fountain of blood, covering the cringing surgical team.

Suddenly, eighteen-year-old Michael has been replaced by Young Michael, the boy who was crawling on the highway. It is now Young Michael lying on the blood soaked bed, his body arching in pain, knee spurting, inhaler over his face. The ONLY SOUND: the SCREAM OF EIGHTEEN-YEAR MICHAEL issuing from Young Michael's mouth -- piercingly harsh, even from under the firmly held inhaler.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Silence. Michael, 18, sits up in his bed, gasping. A TELEPHONE RINGS. He is covered in sweat. He turns on the lamp beside the bed. He is shaken.

The room is an attic bedroom. Almost every inch of wall is covered with horror film posters, horror magazine clippings and photos. Images of death, decapitation, monsters and mutilations are everywhere.

Michael breathes a sigh of relief.

The phone rings on. Michael pulls up his right pant leg and examines his knee. He runs his fingers across the thick scars that criss-cross the skin. Satisfied, Michael pushes the pants back down. He sits forward, resting his head in his hands, trying to pull himself together.

He reaches and picks up the phone.

MICHAEL
(into phone)

Hello.

From the phone comes HEAVY-METAL MUSIC.

KYLE (V.O.)
(from phone)
Hey, Sausage-dick, listen up.

Michael looks slightly disgusted. He picks up his alarm clock and looks at it. It's 8:34.

MICHAEL
Kyle, please don't use my Christian name.

INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Kyle's room is adorned with posters of Heavy-Metal rock groups. The loud music is coming from the room's centerpiece; a complicated stereo system with huge speakers. Kyle is dressed in torn jeans and a leather jacket. His hair is long. He is seated at his desk with a magazine open in front of him, his ear to the phone. He reads dramatically from the magazine.

KYLE
(into phone)
"Brainscan, the ultimate experience in interactive terror. We..."

(CONTINUED)

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INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael stands and starts across the room, taking the phone with him. He walks with a limp, favoring the right leg.

MICHAEL
(into phone)
Whoa, Kyle. What the hell are you talking about?

Michael goes to his entertainment center where there are two VCRs, a large television set, a stereo and shelves of video cassettes. Michael turns on the television.

KYLE (V.O.)
Videos, Dude. Hot new videos.

Michael limps to a refrigerator in the room. This area is a small kitchenette with all the comforts, including a microwave oven. This room is a home unto itself.

MICHAEL
I've heard that before.

KYLE (V.O.)
This one will scare the hell out of you.

Michael looks through the refrigerator. It's packed.

MICHAEL
I've heard that before too. Like that tape "Pus Suckers". Or "Gore Beast". Remember "Gore Beast"? I'll never look at a flying squirrel with the same misplaced trust again.

Michael closes the refrigerator door apathetically.

KYLE (V.O.)
This is different. It's interactive. Look at the ad at least. Fangoria.

Michael walks over to his desk, near the bed. He begins to go through a pile of horror books and magazines.

KYLE (V.O.,cont)
It's the new issue with the woman and the screwdriver.

Michael finds the issue. On the cover is a woman with a screwdriver driven into her eye socket.

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MICHAEL

Okay. Where?

KYLE (V.O.)

Page thirty-six. After the picture of the guy's head exploding.

Michael finds the picture of a man's head bursting bloodily. On the opposite page is a plain ad, with red letters on a black background. Kyle reads it as Michael looks it over.

KYLE (V.O.)

"Brainscan tapes are state of the art. We dare you to participate in the most frightening experience available: A look inside yourself."

Michael seems interested now as he listens.

KYLE (V.O.,cont)

"Enter a game of fear that feels more more real than reality."

Michael glances up, across the room. He walks quickly over to the only window in the room, phone in hand. Being careful to stay out of sight, he looks out to a window on the side of a house about ten yards away from his. In the window, KIMBERLY, 18, moves about.

KYLE (V.O.,cont)

Interactive. That's the difference. You do it. It sounds fucked up.

Michael is not listening. He stares out the window.

INT. KIMBERLY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Kimberly stands in front of a full length mirror. She fixes her hair, then slides out of her shirt. She's a beauty.

INT. MICHAEL'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Michael's eyes widen. He swallows, watching Kimberly with adoration.

INT. KIMBERLY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Kimberly walks across the room to her dresser. She begins to sort through the expensive perfumes and cosmetics there, then looks into a small vanity mirror. She looks closer into the mirror.

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INSERT -- VANITY MIRROR

In the mirror, Kimberly sees herself, but can also see Michael's window outside of hers. There is Michael, in the shadows, watching her. She sees him and a smile crosses her lips, not cruel, but pleased.

INT. KIMBRLY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Kimberly steps back from the dresser and begins to remove her bra.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael can see Kimberly taking off the bra. He bites his lip, stepping away from the window, still watching, not knowing she knows.

KYLE (V.O.,cont)
Michael? Hey, dude. Hello?

MICHAEL
(absently)
What?

There is a pause. Michael wipes sweat from his forehead. Kimberly is standing in her window, admiring herself in the mirror, topless.

KYLE (V.O.)
You watching her again?

This takes Michael by surprise. He walks away from his window, feeling caught in the act.

MICHAEL
What do you mean?

KYLE (V.O.)
Kimberly, of course. Listen, you better make your move soon, because I heard some Jock-guy from the football team is about to make his.

MICHAEL
Who told you that?

KYLE (V.O.)
Common knowlege. Come on, Dude-boy, get with the program. Ask her out.

Michael is getting angry.

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MICHAEL

I'll get around to it.

KYLE (V.O.)

What are you afraid of?

MICHAEL

You know, Kyle, telling you something personal is like handing you a hot needle. It's like: "Here Kyle, here's a hot needle. I'm trusting you with this hot needle, don't stick it in my back." And I never learn, and you always stick that hot needle in my spine.

KYLE (V.O.)

Jeez, I was just trying to help.

MICHAEL

Thanks, Kyle. Goodbye, Kyle.

Michael goes to hang up.

KYLE (V.O.)

Wait. What about Brainscan?

MICHAEL

Let's spend Michael's money, right?

KYLE (V.O.)

Well, no. I just thought you would be interested. I could always rent it.

MICHAEL

You're not old enough to rent it.

KYLE (V.O.)

I meant I could rent it from you.

MICHAEL

Goodbye.

KYLE (V.O.)

Wait, Michael.

Michael listens.

KYLE

Buddies forever?

Michael softens a bit.

(CONTINUED)

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MICHAEL

Yeah, okay.

KYLE

Buddies forever?

Kyle is waiting.

MICHAEL

Talk to you tommorrow.

Michael hangs up. He goes to his bedside table and turns off the lamp.

In the dark, Michael moves quickly about. He picks a video camera off the floor, mounts it on a tripod window and points it out the window. He checks the cables running off the back of the camera and follows them over to the entertainment center.

Michael flops down in a lounge chair facing the entertainment center. He picks the remote control out from underneath him and points it at the large television.

On the screen, there is a flash of static, then the image of Kimberly's window appears. Kimberly is slipping into a new shirt and fixing her hair.

Michael sits forward a bit. He watches her move. She holds herself with confidence and grace. Michael reaches forward and touches her image on the screen. His eyes hold such love and desire for her. Static crackles as he moves his fingers across her body.

Michael realizes the strangeness of his actions. He sits back with a sigh.

MICHAEL

(to himself)

Michael, you are one sick puppy.

He looks over to the phone. He looks back at Kimberly on the screen. He reaches over and places the telephone on his lap. He drums his fingers on it. The SOUND of a CAR PULLING UP is HEARD from outside Michael's window. The CAR'S HORN BEEPS TWICE.

On the t.v., Kimberly goes to look out her window.

Michael goes over to his window. Being sure he isn't seen by Kimberly, he looks out to see the car has stopped in front of Kimberly's house.

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A BOY, 19, stands by the car. He is well built, wearing a football t-shirt.

Michael looks back to Kimberly's window. It is dark. He looks back down to the street.

Kimberly is crossing her lawn as the Boy goes to hold the car door open for her.

Michael comes away from the window. He goes to the television chair and sits, sinking sullenly in. He uses the remote control to switch the VCR to television mode. "The Bride of Frankenstein" comes on.

Michael points the remote and turns on the sound. The Bride is coming down the stairs to be introduced to her mate, The Frankenstein Monster. The Bride looks at the Monster, and she lets out a horrible SCREAM.

Michael points the remote at the television.

MICHAEL
(to television)

Bitch.

He flicks it off. Silence fills the room. The Boy's CAR can be HEARD PULLING AWAY in the street.

Michael sighs. He gets up and goes over to his desk. He turns on the light, illuminating the Brainscan advertisement: "The Brainscan Tapes will introduce you to a new sense of fear. YOU interact. YOU participate. YOU feel." There is a toll-free number at the bottom.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Michael is in his television chair. He has the Brainscan ad in his hand and the phone to his ear. The phone RINGS twice as he studies the ad.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
(from phone)
This is Brainscan tape systems.

Michael pauses. The Voice is a strange, electronic speech synthesizer, yet it has all the nuance and clarity of a human being. Michael waits, but The Voice says nothing else. Michael is confused.

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MICHAEL

(into phone)

I have some questions about the
Brainscan Tapes, so if you get this
message you can reach me at seven one
seven...

THE VOICE (V.O.)

Excuse me.

MICHAEL

Hello?

THE VOICE (V.O.)

If you have questions, I can assist.

Michael straightens in the chair, surprised at the machine's
ability. He smiles.

MICHAEL

Okay. I wanted to know what kind of
films they are.

THE VOICE (V.O.)

They are the most frightening
experience you will ever have the
displeasure of coming in contact with.

Michael sneers, sceptically.

MICHAEL

Sure it is. Look, I read the ad.
It's pretty vague.

THE VOICE (V.O.)

Brainscan is a game. A series of tapes.
If you win the first, you go on to the
second, and so on. You interact, you...

MICHAEL

(looking at ad)

...participate. You feel. I know, I
know. But, what are they about?

THE VOICE (V.O.)

It depends on the individual. The
tapes are different for each person.
We tailor the content to fit the
viewer's needs and expectations.

Michael is growing frustrated.

(CONTINUED)

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MICHAEL

Look, R2-D2. You really expect
me to --

Suddenly, Michael is halted in mid-sentence by a LOUD
ELECTRONIC TONE from the phone! The tone makes his body go
immediately rigid. He is frozen, mouth still open.

The tone's pitch goes higher. Michael's head begins to
quake. His eyes roll up in their sockets, showing white.
His limbs and torso begin to shake, like he's having a
seizure; like electricity is charging through him, but he
holds the receiver to his ear, as if it were glued there.

Drool spews from his quivering lips and runs down his chin.
The tone gets LOUDER and LOUDER...then, suddenly, the tone
is gone. Silence. Michael returns to normal instantly.

MICHAEL (cont)

-- believe that?

Michael has no idea, no clue, this just happened to him.
He did not feel a thing. To him, it never happened.

THE VOICE (V.O.)

Don't worry about the little details,
Michael. It's been decided you will
play a series of four tapes called
"Death by Design."

Michael notices the saliva all over his chin. He wipes at
it in confusion. He looks at the ceiling to see if there's
a leak.

THE VOICE (V.O., cont)

You will experience the thoughts and
feelings of a murderer as he stalks and
murders innocent victims. The first
tape will arrive soon.

There is a CLICK as The Voice hangs up.

MICHAEL (cont)

What the hell?

Michael hangs up the phone, totally puzzled. He continues
wiping his chin as he stands and walks towards the bed. He
stops in realization and turns.

MICHAEL

I didn't tell him my name.

(CONTINUED)

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He grabs the phone and the magazine. He dials the phone number and waits. BUSY SIGNAL. He puts the receiver down, shaking his head in confusion.

INSERT -- TELEVISION SCREEN

SUSPENSEFUL MUSIC is PLAYING. A buxom HIGH SCHOOL AGED GIRL in a black negligee sits in a bathroom on the closed toilet. She talks on a cordless telephone while the shower runs behind translucent glass doors at her back.

NEGLIGEE GIRL

(into phone)

Well, now that I've tried it, I think
permarital sex is a good thing.

She giggles and her breasts bounce in CLOSE-UP.

Suddenly, a FIGURE IN BLACK rises behind the shower doors. The MUSIC RISES with him.

INT. CLASSROOM -- DAY

EIGHT STUDENTS jump in their seats, reacting to the Figure in Black on the television which they are crowded around. There is a school VCR on top of the t.v..

The suspenseful music continues. The students are a collection of the high school's misfits. There's a dumpy looking nerd, a burn out in a Jams, two girls in 50's outfits, etc. They are watching intently in this dark, shuttered classroom.

Michael is seated at the back of the group. He watches the students' tense reaction more than the film itself. Kyle, dressed like a rock and roll leather warrior, sits beside Michael.

NEGLIGEE GIRL (cont,V.O.)

...Yeah, I heard all about that. Can
you believe it? A psychopathic killer
in our town. How...rude.

MICHAEL

This is very disappointing. Only
thing that can save it is a healthy
dose of full-frontal nudity.

KYLE

It's not so bad. When does he eat
her gall bladder?

(CONTINUED)

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Michael shrugs. Kyle looks behind him, then nudges Michael.

KYLE

Man, Miss Keller's going to have a stroke this time. Swear to God, she's losing it. Her brain'll pop.

Michael looks.

The teacher, MISS KELLER, 40, is seated at her desk in the back of the room. She stares at the television and chews fearfully on a yellow pencil.

INSERT -- TELEVISION SCREEN

The Figure in the shower begins to slide one door open --

NEGLIGEE GIRL (O.S.)

I heard one girl's teeth are still missing. They found her kidney in Ohio.

-- and he holds a large meat cleaver in his gloved hand. The soundtrack music mixes with the SOUND of HEAVY BREATHING.

IN THE CLASSROOM

The students watch in horror, except Michael and Kyle, who watch Miss Keller chew the paint off the pencil. They are enjoying this.

KYLE

She's freaking out.

MICHAEL

She's headed for a bad case of lead poisoning at the very least.

Miss Keller doesn't notice when the pencil snaps in two between her teeth. She keeps watching.

INSERT -- TELEVISION SCREEN

The cleaver is held, about to fall. The music climaxes.

NEGLIGEE GIRL (O.S.)

The whole thing gives me the creeps.

IN THE CLASSROOM

The door to the classroom flies open with a bang. A MAN stands in the doorway, silhouetted by the hall lights.

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The students shriek and cower collectively.

Miss Keller leaps up quickly, knocking papers off the desk, spitting out bits of broken pencil.

Michael and Kyle flip forward in their seats.

INSERT -- TELEVISION SCREEN

The Figure in Black, wearing a leather face mask, pulls back the zipper over his mouth and holds a small, brown human organ to his lips.

IN THE CLASSROOM

The man in the doorway, DR. FOMBERG, 49, flips the light on.

The students moan as the light blinds them.

Fomberg, a fat man in a three-piece-suit, walks to the television and hits stop on the VCR, killing the film. He turns to Michael.

FOMBERG

(to Michael)

What, exactly, was that, Mr. Brower?

MICHAEL

A gall bladder, Sir.

A few students giggle. Fomberg silences them with a glance. He snaps his fingers and points at Michael.

INT. DR. FOMBERG'S OFFICE -- DAY

Michael sits in the straight backed chair before Fomberg's desk. It's a plain office with a few trophies and plaques here and there. Dr. Fomberg stands by the window near the American flag. He is looking outside.

FOMBERG

The activities period was created for the enrichment of the student body, not their degradation. That is why I have such a problem with this Horror Club of yours.

Fomberg goes to his desk and looks at an open file.

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FOMBERG (cont)

Surely you know these films you're showing will ruin good minds, with their violence, brutality and gore.

(sits at desk)

For example, what was that film you were watching today?

MICHAEL

(quietly)

Death Death Death...

FOMBERG

Death Death Death?

MICHAEL

...Part Two.

Fomberg rests his head in his hands in total despair.

FOMBERG

(to himself)

Oh, Lord.

(looking up)

Don't you see? Senseless violence is not entertainment!

Fomberg stands, his fists clenched in frustration.

MICHAEL

(holds hands up to protect himself)

Please, please don't hit me, Sir.

Fomberg regards Michael with exasperation, moving back to the window. His hands go into his pockets. He tries to be patient.

FOMBERG

Why? Why do you watch these films?

MICHAEL

What? Really?

FOMBERG

Yes. Help me understand.

MICHAEL

I don't know...

Michael looks at Fomberg's back for a moment, unsure.

(CONTINUED)

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MICHAEL (cont)

If a film can frighten me...but, it's not real, then it's like a roller-coaster ride. It's not real, see. It's like...like...

FOMBERG

...like lighting up a marijuana cigarette and escaping the real world!?

Fomberg turns to Michael, furious.

FOMBERG (cont)

Like watching a pornographic sex film, getting an erection and raping someone!? Is that what you mean!? Where will it end!?

MICHAEL

(off guard)

Erections don't rape people. People rape people.

Fomberg stops dead in his tracks. He stares at Michael like he has serious doubts about this boy's sanity.

MICHAEL (cont)

It was the pressure, I'm sorry. I couldn't think of a better rebuttal.

FOMBERG

Don't you have anything to say for yourself? I mean something that makes a modicum of sense.

MICHAEL

I guess it wouldn't mean anything to you if I were to say they're only movies.

FOMBERG

Consider the Horror Club banned.

Michael opens his mouth, but Fomberg snaps his fingers.

FOMBERG (cont)

You bring me the next video tape you plan to show. I will watch the film, if I can stand it, and if I approve, you will be allowed to show it. Until you bring me that film, the club is cancelled.

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- 18 -

Fomberg begins writing in the file before him. Michael is angry. He is debating whether to argue or not. With a sigh he gets up and goes to the door.

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY

Coming down the hall from Dr. Fomberg's office, Michael is feeling low. Now that he's walking full gait, Michael's limp is quite noticeable.

It is between classes, and Michael makes his way through the crowds of blabbering students at their lockers. He takes out a pair of dark sunglasses and puts them on, ignoring the occasional whispering and pointing, on the part of the students, directed at him.

Michael turns a corner. This hall is less crowded and a small group of students is gathered ahead, looking at something on the wall and laughing. One of the students notices Michael, and the group breaks up quickly, walking away.

Michael frowns. There is a poster for the Senior Class Play hanging on the wall. It is a poster for "The Glass Menagerie" with the cast listed at the bottom. Someone has crossed out the name of the actress who will play Laura, the shy cripple. The name MICHAEL BROWER has been written in its place.

Michael looks at the poster for a moment, then steps forward and slowly tears off the part with his name on it. He crumples the paper into a tight ball in his fist as he limps on down the hall.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET -- DAY

Michael tools through the streets in his beaten MG convertible. He passes typical suburban home after typical suburban home: nice green lawns, two-car garages, sprinklers, birdbaths, open front doors and kids playing. It seems to go on forever.

EXT. MICHAEL'S DRIVEWAY -- DAY

Michael gets out of the car and goes to the mailbox. He takes a few letters from the box and starts across the large lawn towards his two-story house. He sees KIMBERLY'S FATHER standing in the other yard, watering the trees.

Kimberly's father is watching him. Michael waves, but Kimberly's Father does not wave back, just stares.

(CONTINUED)

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- 19 -

Michael lets his arm drop.

MICHAEL
(to himself)
Jeez. What a friendly man. I've
made so many friends today. I'm so
very happy.

He continues to the house, which is nestled at the edge of a wooded area so that the forest is practically the backyard.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, HALLWAY -- DAY

Michael enters and walks (limps) through the empty hall.

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Michael walks on. The kitchen is fully stocked, but it looks untouched. Nothing is out of place. Michael throws the letters onto the kitchen table where there is already a pile of letters and packages. He goes on.

All the letters on the table are addressed to a Mr. Michael Brower Sr.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Michael passes by. This room looks uninhabited, like a museum display.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Michael comes up a staircase to the attic bedroom. He closes the door behind him.

He goes to the refrigerator, picking up the t.v. remote on the way. He opens and searches the fridge's freezer section on top. While he does this, he points the remote over his shoulder and turns on the television.

He takes a small television dinner out and goes to put it in the microwave, still pointing the remote behind him, switching channels on the television and listening to the different shows.

He pushes a few buttons on the microwave and walks towards the t.v., but a flashing light on the telephone's answering machine captures his attention. He turns on the answering machine. It rewinds as he begins to look over the titles of videocassettes on the entertainment center's shelves.

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DAD'S VOICE
(from answering machine)
Hello, Michael. It's Dad.

Michael turns his head, happy to hear the voice. He hits mute on the remote, silencing the television, and turns up the volume on the machine.

DAD'S VOICE (V.O., cont)
I guess you know that. Just calling to say hello. So, how are you getting along?

MICHAEL
(without thinking)
Okay, I guess.

DAD'S VOICE (V.O.)
How's school?

MICHAEL
Don't ask.

DAD'S VOICE (V.O.)
I really hate these machines. Business is going well here. I'll try to call later on...

A long pause. Michael is hanging on every word.

DAD'S VOICE (V.O.)
...I love you, Mike.

Michael nods.

DAD'S VOICE (V.O., cont)
I'll be back in a few weeks. I know I said it would be sooner, but I'm sorry. We'll do some things together then. I promise. I'll speak with you soon.

Michael is sad. The ANSWERING MACHINE BEEPS.

EXT. HIGHWAY (MICHAEL'S NIGHTMARE) -- NIGHT

The SOUND OF THE DRAGGING KNEE is HEARD as young Michael continues crawling across the highway. He is still shouting, but we cannot hear him.

Behind him, there is the twisted wreckage of two cars which have collided. One is beginning to burn.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The glass on the ground cuts into his hands. He moves very slowly, now on his elbows, pulling himself and reaching out -- reaching towards a BODY lying in the road ahead. The body is face down, unmoving. The body of a woman.

Young Michael tries to get up, but when he stands, putting weight on the ravaged right leg, the knee gives out. He lands hard.

The sound of the knee is FADING. Now, his shouts are heard as he tries to keep moving.

YOUNG MICHAEL
(weeping)
Mommy! Mommy! MOMMY!

CUT TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael awakes in his television lounge chair. The scream of "Mommy" seems to echo in the room. There are tears in Michael's eyes.

The television is on. The glow of the test pattern is the only light. Michael looks around confused, then wipes at his eyes with trembling hands.

MICHAEL
(to himself)
Jesus. Jesus. This is ridiculous.

He gets up slowly, going to the door.

INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The door open, letting in a shaft of light. Michael enters. He switches on the light in the well kept room. He looks around as if he hasn't seen this room for some time. There are twin beds. One bed, his mother's bed, has several feminine throw pillows on the comforter. Michael goes to this bed and slides onto its softness. He rests.

Sitting up, he pulls back the comforter and takes the pillow from underneath. He holds the pillow, fluffing it.

MICHAEL
(laughing sadly
at the irony)
I've been having some bad dreams.
Can I sleep with you tonight?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Michael lies down, putting the pillow under his head. He lays there, staring at the ceiling, tears beginning again in his eyes.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL LUNCHROOM -- DAY

Kimberly wears her 35mm camera around her neck and carries a purple folder under her arm. (Both wear expensive clothing and jewelry.)

STACIE

How many do we have?

KIMBERLY

I don't know. Like four.

STACIE

Four? Only four? Fine.

(mock announcement)

Excuse me, everybody. Pardon moi. It seems there'll be no newspaper this month. Seems Kim's been too busy to bother. She's...

KIMBERLY

Shut up. I'll get it done. Don't start bitching.

STACIE

I just don't get it. You were in the lab all day yesterday. What about all those photos in your folder?

Kimberly smiles, almost slyly.

KIMBERLY

Those are personal.

STACIE

Oh, forgive me for prying into your top secret lifestyle. Sorry.

They sit at a table where a few of the school's most popular, beautiful girls are sitting.

Kimberly smiles, looking across the room, and nudges Stacie.

KIMBERLY

There's that Michael Brower kid. I still can't figure him out at all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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STACIE

Why bother? He is a very strange boy. I can't believe you have to live beside him. I've heard kids say he killed his mother.

KIMBERLY

That's ridiculous.

They can see Michael, across the room, kind of peeking out from behind Kyle.

KIMBERLY (cont)

He's just different. Doesn't fit into any clique, dresses so weird. He seems so...cool.

STACIE

He's a clique unto himself and it should stay that way. There's a very fine line between cool, aloof behavior and the behavior of the mentally unbalanced.

Kimberly looks at Stacie.

STACIE (cont)

I mean it. President of the Horror Club? Give me a break. In the yearbook, he'll be voted Most Likely to Hurt Small Animals.

Kimberly pushes her food with her fork.

KIMBERLY

(accusingly)

Still. You did ask him to the party like I asked you to...didn't you?

STACIE

Yes.

Kimberly looks at her.

STACIE (cont)

I did. He said he was busy. I wouldn't lie to you.

KIMBERLY

Okay, but maybe I better ask him myself, since he's so shy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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STACIE

Kim. Forget it. Everybody would be uncomfortable.

KIMBERLY

Wouldn't want to ruin the all the fun. Everybody vomiting up their beer. All those sweet guys, trying to get their hands in our pants.

STACIE

Oh, I can see you're going to be the life of the party.

Kimberly looks towards Michael, thinking.

AT MICHAEL'S TABLE

Kyle and Michael are alone at the table. Michael puts on his sunglasses. Kyle is playing with the Ninja throwing star around his neck as he talks.

KYLE

Major league party tonight.

MICHAEL

My invitation must have gotten lost in the mail.

KYLE

(rapidly)

Ask her out, ask her out, ask her out, ask her out.

MICHAEL

Hot needles, Kyle, hot needles.

Michael looks towards Kimberly.

MICHAEL (cont)^{over}

I don't care about her ~~of~~ the party. I'm used to the way things are. I like it that way.

He looks at Kyle.

MICHAEL (cont)

Look at the company I keep. Who's going to invite me to a party if they think Bon Jovi Junior will be tagging along.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-25-

Kyle shrugs, insulted. He leans over his plate and begins cutting his grilled cheese sandwich in half, using the Ninja throwing star.

MICHAEL

What a pair we are.

(sarcastic)

Buddies forever, right?

Michael sits back, pushing his lunch tray away.

MICHAEL (cont)

We deserve each other.

Kyle eats in silence.

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE -- DAY

Michael's MG pulls up. Michael gets out.

At the mailbox, he pulls out a hefty manila envelope which he eyes curiously. Brainscan is written across the top of the envelope, but there is no return address.

MICHAEL

(to himself)

How did this get here?

He walks to the house.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The room is dark. Michael is sitting in his desk chair, looking out the window. PARTY MUSIC is HEARD coming from Kimberly's house. Out Michael's window, many cars are parked on the street. Teenagers are walking towards Kimberly's front door. They are laughing and drinking beer.

DRUNKEN BOY

Let's party!

The boy lets out a huge, wet burp, then begins laughing.

Kimberly's bedroom window is dark. Michael stands and closes his window. The music and SOUNDS of PARTYING YOUTHS are still HEARD clearly. Michael pulls the drapes shut and walks into the bedroom.

He goes to the lounge chair and sits, depressed. The television is on with the sound off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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On the table beside the chair is a tall glass of milk and a t.v. dinner of fried chicken, corn and mashed potatoes. Beside the dinner is the Brainscan envelope.

Michael picks up the envelope and takes out a single video cassette pressed of blood red plastic. The label reads, "BRAINSCAN TAPE ONE, CALL 1-800-MURDERS BEFORE VIEWING.

Michael gets the phone and dials the number. It RINGS once.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
(from phone)

Hello.

The Voice again gives Michael pause with its strange, electronic tone.

MICHAEL
(into phone)

You again.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
Are you prepared to play?

MICHAEL
Yes, but...

THE VOICE (V.O.)
Then, listen very carefully. For the next two hours you will experience Mind Program Entry. It is a powerful force, not unlike hypnosis. It is transmitted through the television's blanking signal. It will alter your reality.

MICHAEL
Sure it will.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
Take this seriously, Michael. You will be watching a brutal murder through the eyes of a killer, and you will affect his actions. It won't be pretty.

MICHAEL
No kidding.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
There is a time limitation.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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THE VOICE (V.O.,cont)
You must stalk and kill within the
reality of the tape and then hit
stop on the VCR, before time runs
out.

MICHAEL
Like a video game.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
Not quite. This is the first tape
in a series of four. If time runs
out, you will not continue. Do not,
under any circumstances, let that
happen.

INT. KIMBERLY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The party is proceeding loudly outside the door. Kimberly
enters, closes the door and goes quickly to the phone. She
dials, looking out her window to Michael's.

She HEARS a BUSY SIGNAL. She hangs up, disappointed.

Stacie opens the door and looks in. She is drunk.

STACIE
Kimmy! Come on. What are you
doing?

KIMBERLY
I'll be right there.

STACIE
Well, hurry.

Kimberly looks one last time to Michael's window, then gets
up to rejoin the party.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael is eating a drumstick from the t.v. dinner, still on
the phone.

MICHAEL
I have to warn you. My expectations
are pretty high.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
And I must warn you; your expectations
will be exceeded.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Michael is realizing how weird all of this is.

THE VOICE (V.O.,cont)

One final detail; as you interact,
you must strive to think like a killer.
Cover up any clues, and, more importantly,
enjoy the fear. Revel in the violence.
Creativity will serve you well. Good
luck, Michael

MICHAEL

Wait a minute...

CLICK. The Voice hangs up.

MICHAEL (cont)

I hate rude robots.

Michael hangs up. He picks up Brainscan Tape One and stands.

At the VCR, Michael inserts the tape. He turns up the television's volume and pushes a button on the stereo system, sending the television's audio through the big stereo speakers. The television's snow filled screen is the only light.

Michael sits. He pulls the lounge chair closer to the screen. He points the remote.

MICHAEL

(to himself)

Let's party.

He hits the remote's play button. The VCR hums to life.

A bright flash of light comes from the t.v. screen.

Michael's eyes lock open, pupils wide. He is suddenly frozen stiff.

The scan lines of the television begin to pulse and waver, till they are moving in glowing waves. A TONE comes from the speakers.

Michael's face is expressionless. He's in a trance. There is a CRACKLE OF STATIC in the air.

The screen's pulsing quickens.

The hair on Michael's arm stands on end and his hand shakes on the arm of the chair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Tears are welling up in Michael's eyes.

CLOSE ON

one eye. The pupil begins to expand. The pulsing light begins to strobe. The pupil is continuing its expansion -- wider -- wider still, till the eye is completely black.

INSERT -- TELEVISION SCREEN

The strobing light and tone stop. The screen is red. A digital counter appears: 75:00:00. The red fades, replaced by an image. It is a suburban street at night and we are MOVING down it. The digital counter begins counting down.

MOVE CLOSER

on the screen, till the edges are out of frame.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET, P.O.V. -- NIGHT

The exact same image, moving down the street, only the digital counter is gone now, as are the television screen's scan lines. We are part of the video, seeing through someone else's P.O.V. as we run along.

We move off the street, between two houses. We HEAR ALL THE SOUNDS OF THIS EXPERIENCE. We enter the bushes of one home and look all directions. Nobody is around. The street is empty and most porch lights are out.

We walk along the side of this home, to the back door. Our hand reaches and tries the knob. It's open. We enter a dark KITCHEN. We move to the sink, which is full of unwashed dishes. We open a few drawers till we find one full of knives. We choose a long, thin carving knife and examine it in the moonlight.

We move out of the kitchen, into a HALLWAY. We go to the stairs leading up. We climb them, slowly. At the top of the stairs is a HALLWAY with several doors. The hall's light is on.

We move to a door. We push it open, blade ready in our hand, pointed up.

Inside this BEDROOM, by the light of the hall, we can see a MAN under the sheets of a bed. He is snoring lightly. We move to the side of the bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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We stand a moment and hold the knife over the Man.

A long pause. The only sound is the Man's snoring. The knife is trembling in our hand.

We withdrawl the knife. We move to the other side of the bed. Here, we can see the Man's face. We have never seen him before.

We hold the knife over the Man's face. Our hand is shaking. We get closer to him, pointing the knife, ready to push it into the Man's eye socket. The tip of the blade is an inch from the oblivious Man's tender eyelid. Our hand is trembling too much. We steps back again.

We look over the Man's body.

We step forward, raising the knife, over the Man's back. We thrust down, the knife jabbing hard into the sheets with the POP of flesh breaking and a SICKENING CRACK.

With a horrifying roar of fear, the Man is instantly awake, rising in pain. We have to fall back, unable to stab a second time.

The Man is standing up on his bed, gagging and gurgling, twisting in the sheets, screaming and clutching helplessly at his back.

We look at the knife in our hand. The blade broke.

The Man is yelling wetly, his lung punctured. He spins, lashing out with his arms, sheets around him flowing. He is knocking things off the bedside table. A lamp shatters. We are low, watching from a corner.

The Man loses footing and falls to the ground. He stands, continuing his dance of death, trying to kill anything around him. His hands swing. He grabs at a bookshelf and knocks it to the ground, books and pictures flying.

The sheets around him are growing red and wet. He flops against the room's window, leaving behind a dripping smear of blood.

Finally, he crashes into a chest of drawers, hanging on for support, then, with a wet mew, falls face down on the floor.

We stay where we are, looking at the twisted body. There are patterns of blood on the bed, walls, window and carpet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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We move slowly to the corpse and look at it. We kick the Man's head lightly. The Man does not move.

We move through the room, to the adjoining BATHROOM. We switch on the light and go to the sink. We turn on the hot water, then stop.

We look back into the bedroom, where the body is lying. The Man's bare foot is sticking out from under the sheets.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
...a little creativity...

We look at the broken knife in our hand, then around the bathroom. We take a large bathtowel off a hook and go back into the BEDROOM.

We work quickly, kneeling and wrapping the Man's foot in the towel. We then reach under the towel with the broke knife. We begin to cut, cutting at the foot, soaking up the blood in the towel. We move our hand in a sawing motion.

We look across the motionless body, then back to our work. We HEAR the MOIST CUTTING. We pull at the towel with the foot, almost done, when suddenly, the Man screams!

We jump back.

MAN
(gurgling)
What are you doing to me?!

The Man is trying to lift himself with his arms, as if he were doing a push-up. We move on top of him, grabbing his hair in our hand. We place the broken knife at his throat.

MAN (cont)
What are you doing to me?

We pull the knife across his throat. Slit. The knife silences him.

We stand and back away. A pool of blood is forming under the Man's throat. He does not move. After a second, he shutters -- death rattle. The Man is still.

We go to the BATHROOM where the water is still running. We wash at the blood on our hands. The knife slips off the edge of the sink. We have to reach behind the back of the toilet to get it. It comes up covered in pubic hair and filth. We run it under the water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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We watch the blood thin and wash down the drain.

We pick up a washcloth and the broken knife. We go into the BEDROOM and carefully pick up the towel with the foot inside it. We must give it a yank. The last bit of skin snaps and we take our prize.

At the door, we use the washcloth to wipe the doorknob.

We go quickly through the HALL, down the stairs, through this HALL to the KITCHEN. We wipe the handles of the drawers and go to the door.

We're OUTSIDE. The coast is clear. We begin to walk faster, across the empty street, into the darkness between two houses.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTREME CLOSE-UP, MICHAEL'S EYE

The pupil shrinks. The iris appears. The eye is normal again.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael's face is dotted with sweat. He holds the remote control, pointing it at the television. He is breathing like a drowning man just saved. He drops the remote and wipes at the sweat on his forehead.

MICHAEL

(to himself)

Oh, shit, man...

The ROCK MUSIC and HAPPY VOICES are HEARD from Kimberly's party. Michael stands, disoriented. He looks around.

MICHAEL (cont)

That's some fucking movie. That was insane.

He breathes deeply. He is exhilarated. He picks up the t.v. dinner and begins to eat the cold chicken ravenously.

MICHAEL (cont)

(to himself)

Holy shit.

He laughs to himself. He picks up the glass of milk and drinks, too quickly. Milk spills down his chin and shirt. He laughs again, full of energy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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He looks at the t.v. screen. The digital counter is frozen there: 25:34:05.

MICHAEL (cont)
(smiling)
Kicked ass with time to spare.

He puts down the food and looks at his hands. They are shaky.

MICHAEL (cont)
Wow.

The MUSIC from the party gets LOUDER. Michael looks towards his window. He can HEAR a GIRL LAUGHING wildly.

MICHAEL (cont)
(to window, defiant)
Oh, yeah?

He walks to the entertainment center.

MICHAEL (cont)
(to window)
Yeah?!

He hits a button on the stereo, kicking in an incredibly LOUD ROCK SONG off the radio.

MICHAEL (cont)
(shouts, to window)
Try that! How 'bout that!

He laughs and begins moving to the music. He is clumsy, dancing, lost in his happiness. He is alone, getting into the music.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. KIMBERLY'S LAWN -- NIGHT

The lawn is strewn with beer cans and fast food trash. Kimberly's house is dark and silent, except for a light in Kimberly's window.

INT. KIMBERLY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Kimberly is on the bed, reading a fashion magazine. She is dressed in a sheer, black negligee, exactly the same as the negligee in the film Michael showed to the Horror Club. The door to the room flies open. Kimberly jumps in fright.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Michael is standing in the doorway.

Kimberly smiles, lying back in a sexy position.

Michael walks to her. He does not limp. His expression is serious. He stands close to her, then reaches down to run his fingers through her hair.

MICHAEL

God, I love you, Kimberly.

KIMBERLY

I want you to make love to me.

Michael leans over and kisses her on the lips.

They both ease back onto the bed. Kimberly embraces him. Michael's hands begin to travel her body. Their lips move with increasing passion, their bodies press together.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

all of this is being seen through Kimberly's window from Michael's window.

CUT TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael is sleeping serenely. There is a smile on his lips.

EXT. SCHOOL LAWN -- DAY

School's out. Michael and Kyle are crossing the lawn towards the school's parking lot. Michael is in great spirits.

MICHAEL

I felt everything, man. It was so weird. It was so frightening. It was so real.

KYLE

What happens in it? What's the plot?

MICHAEL

Well...I can't remember all of the details. That's what's strange. I remember someone was stabbed, with a knife. Forget plot.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL (cont)

I don't remember any story. There was all this blood, and, and... I was shaking. I mean, it was sick!

KYLE

I told you it'd be a mind-blower.

MICHAEL

You were right this time, Junior. Man, the feeling...I can't...I, I loved it.

KYLE

Got it with you?

Michael slows down. He seems hesitant.

MICHAEL

Be patient, Kyle.

KYLE

Yeah, but if it's as good as you say...

MICHAEL

I just want to watch it a few more times. Okay. You'll get it.

Kyle shrugs. They walk on. Kyle is disappointed.

MICHAEL (cont)

Look. Don't worry. You can see it soon.

KYLE

Well, maybe tonight, I could...

MICHAEL

Not tonight.

(happily)

I've got plans tonight.

KYLE

Oh.

Kyle feels left out.

MICHAEL

Look. I promise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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KYLE

Yeah.

MICHAEL

(with feeling for
the first time)

Hey. Buddies forever, right?

Michael gives Kyle a friendly shove. Kyle smiles.

KYLE

Buddies forever.

Kyle shoves Michael back. Michael falls to the ground, like his knee has given out. He grabs the right knee in pain!

MICHAEL

You bastard! My knee!

Kyle is fraught with concern.

KYLE

Jeez, Michael! I'm sorry...

He leans over to help Michael up, but Michael laughs.

MICHAEL

Just kidding.

Kyle is relieved and bewildered. He's never seen Michael act like this; never seen him joke about the knee.

KYLE

Holy shit, man. That's not funny!

MICHAEL

(standing up)

Sure it is.

KYLE

I thought it snapped.

MICHAEL

Right, like my knee's going to snap.

They walk on. Kyle is ill at ease.

KYLE

I could have sworn I heard it snap.

Michael puts his arm around Kyle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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KYLE (cont)

Don't play jokes like that anymore,
okay. I don't like that shit.

Michael laughs.

In the street, in the background, two police cars race by,
sirens screaming.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- LATE DAY

Michael is at the entertainment center. He looks at
Brainscan Tape One, which is rewind, and puts it into the
VCR. He sits down in the lounge chair and points the
remote. The VCR starts and Michael sits forward, ready.

Only snow appears on the television screen.

Michael doesn't understand. He goes to the VCR and hit
fast-forward/search. Still, just snow.

MICHAEL

Blank.

He ejects the tape and examines it.

MICHAEL

It erased itself?

There is the SOUND of a CAR from outside the window.
Michael puts the tape down and rushes to the window.

Kimberly is getting out of her car on the street.

Michael smiles.

INT. KIMBERLY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

A well-appointed living room. Kimberly's PARENTS, the
Kellers, are sitting in their respective easy chairs. Mr.
Keller is reading a book while Mrs. Keller watches the local
evening news begin on the television.

The DOORBELL RINGS and they look at each other, not
expecting a visitor. Mr. Keller gets up with a groan to
answer the door and Mrs. Keller uses the remote control to
turn off the television's sound.

(CONTINUED)

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IN THE FOYER

Mr. Keller opens the door. Michael is standing on the porch, smiling. Mr. Keller looks wary.

MICHAEL

Hello, Mr. Keller. Would it be possible for me to speak to Kimberly for a moment?

Mr. Keller does not seem pleased.

MR KELLER

Come in. I'll go get her.

MICHAEL

(enters)

Thank you.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Michael follows Mr. Keller. Mrs. Keller stands, looking surprised and a bit uncomfortable with Michael's visit. Michael nods hello to her.

MICHAEL

Mrs. Keller.

MR KELLER

(to Mrs Keller)

He came to speak with Kim.

MRS KELLER

Oh, really?

MR KELLER

(shouts upstairs)

Kim! Somebody here to see you!

KIMBERLY (o.s.)

(from upstairs)

Okay. Just a minute.

Michael is smiling, a little forced.

Mr. Keller flops down in his chair and picks up his book. Mrs. Keller is not sure whether to sit or remain standing, but she sits, smiling fakely back to Michael.

Michael is growing nervous, standing in the middle of the living room, not knowing what to do with his hands. Mr. Keller is studying him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MR KELLER

You know, we don't usually like to have men stopping unannounced to see Kim.

Michael shifts his weight. What can he say to that?

MICHAEL

I, uh...I'm sorry about that. It's kind of important.

Michael is sweating.

MR KELLER

What is so important?

Michael is now very uncomfortable.

MICHAEL

Maybe I should come back when...

MR KELLER

No. You're here now.

(shouting)

Kim!

Michael is startled. Mr. Keller is staring at him.

KIMBERLY (o.s.)

Just a minute!

Michael is straining to keep his smile. A long, painful silence.

MRS KELLER

(to Michael)

Did you hear the news today.

MICHAEL

(thankful)

Pardon me, Mrs Keller?

MRS KELLER

Have you heard today, about the murder?

MICHAEL

I'm sorry. A murder?

MRS KELLER

Yes. It's on all the local news. It's horrible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Mrs Keller points the remote and the television's sound returns. Michael looks. The NEWS ANCHOR is on the screen with a graphic: MURDER!.

NEWS ANCHOR
(from t.v.)
...murder in a quiet suburban town.

MR KELLER
Kimberly! Get down here!!

Michael is startled again, but he looks back to the television, trying to concentrate.

On the screen, there is footage of a suburban home. The yard is roped off by yellow police-barrior ribbon. A body is being carried out on a stretcher.

MRS KELLER
Poor man. It happened nearby here.

Michael is watching with a queer look on his face. He's staring at the screen, biting his lip, trying to remember something.

NEWS ANCHOR
(from t.v.)
...body was discovered late this
afternoon...

On the television, footage of a wrecked bedroom is shown. There is blood everywhere. It is the room from Brainscan Tape One!

Michael's eyes widen. He recognizes the room. He is filled with numbing fear and disbelief.

MICHAEL
(weak)
Jesus.

MRS KELLER
Did you say something?

Michael looks at the parents.

MICHAEL
I, just was thinking, that I have
to get going...

Michael is backing towards the foyer. He almost trips over a chair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL (cont)

...I can come back some other time.
I have to get back.

Michael turns and goes out the front door.

Kimberly comes down the stairs. Mr. and Mrs. Keller are looking at each other.

KIMBERLY

What?

Mr. Keller stands up.

KIMBERLY (cont)

Who was that?

MR KELLER

That, was our mentally retarded neighbor.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael rushes in, breathing hard. He limps over to the television and turns it on, switching channel frantically till, on the screen, the news report about the murder continues. Police cars are shown outside the victim's house. Neighbors are standing, watching.

NEWS ANCHOR (v.o.)

(from t.v.)

...was William Tebbs, forty-two years of age. He was brutally stabbed and had had his throat slit.

MICHAEL

How? How?

Michael falls to his knees. He holds his head in his hands, rocking back and forth, moaning.

NEWS ANCHOR (v.o.)

(from t.v.)

Local police have not found the murder weapon as of yet. A search has begun...

Michael sits up, remembering something. He stands.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, MOTHER'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael slams the door open and turns on the light.

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CONTINUED:

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He walks over to his mother's bed, slowly, in a sort of state of shock. He gets on his knees and reaches under the bed.

He reaches around, not wanting to find anything. He stops, his face registering fear. He takes his arm out from under the bed and looks at what he is holding: the broken kitchen knife from the first Brainscan murder.

Michael trembles in disgust. He drops the knife and backs away, staring at it.

INT. HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Michael backs out of his mother's room, pushing against the wall to support himself.

MICHAEL

This can't be...it can't...

The NEWS REPORT is HEARD from upstairs.

NEWS ANCHOR (v.o.)

(from t.v.)

...has found from a reliable source that the Mr. Tebb's foot was severed from his body for reasons unknown.

Michael's mouth drops. He looks upstairs, listening.

NEWS ANCHOR (v.o., cont)

(from t.v.)

The foot has not been found.

Michael brings his hands to his forehead, dizzy.

MICHAEL

Oh my God! No.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael enters, seemingly in a stupor. He stares across the room. Stares at --

-- the freezer section of the refrigerator.

NEWS ANCHOR (v.o.)

(from t.v., o.s.)

...This area has never been touched by a tragedy such as this. Now come the questions...of who...and why.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Michael walks towards the freezer. He goes and puts his unsteady hand on the handle.

MICHAEL

Please, no.

He takes a deep breath, then pulls the door open hard.

MICHAEL (cont)

No!

The frozen, severed foot falls out! It hits the floor with a crack! Two toes snap off --

-- and they roll across the floor like uneven marbles.

Michael falls to his knees in awe. He holds his hands over his mouth, trying to hold back sickness, eyes locked open, unbelieving.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- MORNING

Rain is falling. The school's parking lot is full. Buses are dropping off students at the front entrance.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

Michael lies on his bed, holding the phone to his ear. He looks tired from lack of sleep. Brainscan Tape One and Fangoria magazine are on the bed beside him.

The phone RINGS in Michael's ear. Rings. Rings. Finally, Michael hangs up. He turns onto his side, wiped out. The PHONE RINGS.

Michael sits up and looks at it. He picks it up.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Hello, Michael.

Michael leans into the phone, now pumped up with adrenalin.

MICHAEL

Motherfucker! What did you do?!
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL (cont)

Who are you?!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

At this point, if I were you, I would address that question to myself.

MICHAEL

Who killed that man?! What was on that tape?

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You saw.

MICHAEL

But I can't remember most of it. Surely you know that. You seem to know everything else.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You may not remember the minutiae, but I am positive you remember that you controlled the tape's content.

MICHAEL

How did the murder become real? And, how did those things get in my house?!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You affected the act. Now you take responsibility.

Michael stands and begins to pace with the phone.

MICHAEL

This is impossible! This can't be happening!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Calm down.

MICHAEL

I didn't kill anybody! I don't even know that man!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

There lies the beauty. You have no motive. A totally random victim. And, congratulations are in order.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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THE VOICE (v.o.)

Severing the foot was a brilliant
stroke on your murderous canvas.

(pause)

I am very anxious to see what strides
of inventiveness you will make when
you watch the second tape.

Michael freezes.

MICHAEL

Second tape? Second tape?! There
won't be anymore tapes!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You must play the second tape.

Michael laughs.

MICHAEL

I don't think so.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You are in the thick of it, Michael.
In the first tape you took a life.
In the second tape, you will
eliminate a witness.

MICHAEL

How could there possibly be a
witness?!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Trust me.

MICHAEL

(sarcastic)

Yeah. Maybe you're right. You've
been so good to me so far. You're
my buddy.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

I can get you through this, but
you must play the tapes.

MICHAEL

Forget it.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You are more than just the voyeur
you wished to be. You won't survive
on your own.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL

I've done pretty good so far.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Have you?

MICHAEL

Hey, Hal. Kiss my ass.

Michael slams down the phone. It begins to ring again. Michael picks the whole thing up and pulls the cord out of the back, silencing it.

He sits in the lounge chair, on the edge, thinking, looking back at the phone.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET -- DAY

Rain continues. Michael is driving his MG down the street slowly.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR -- DAY

Michael looks out the windows as he approaches the home where the murder took place. The house is still roped off. Two police cars are parked out front along side two news vans.

As the car gets closer to the house, Michael looks at neighbors standing at the edge of the street under umbrellas. They look toward Michael as he passes and Michael avoids their glances, feeling the weight of guilt.

Michael drives in front of the house, slowing even more, till he is almost stopped. He watches several police officers in rain gear speak with one of the neighbors. Other policemen come out of the front door.

Bright headlights shine on Michael from behind. A HORN HONKS LOUDLY. Red lights flash through the car's back window and a POLICE SIREN SOUNDS.

MICHAEL

Shit!

Michael raises his hands over his head, stopping the car and closing his eyes.

MICHAEL (cont)

Don't shoot! Please, don't shoot!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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The horn honks again. Michael looks back to see a black car on his tail with its high beams on. Two police cars are escorting it, lights flashing.

MAN'S VOICE (o.s.)

Hey! Idiot!

Michael looks through the windshield to see a POLICEMAN shouting and waving for Michael to get the car forward and make room for those behind.

POLICEMAN (cont)

Get out of the way! Move!

Michael steers quickly and pulls away.

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Michael's car makes way. The black car and escorts pull up right in front of the murder house.

DOWN THE BLOCK

Michael stops and leans onto the passenger seat. He opens the window and looks back.

IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE

The doors of the black car open. Policemen and plain-clothes detectives rush from the house with umbrellas.

Members of the press are coming from the news vans, video cameras and microphones ready. They all converge on the black car.

DOWN THE BLOCK

Michael cranes his neck, trying to see. Rain is pouring down on his face.

IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE

Somebody is getting out of the black car, but they are surrounded by umbrellas, cameras and bodies; unseen. The police and press are making quite a fuss.

DOWN THE BLOCK

Michael can't see. He pulls his head back in the car and rolls up the window.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Michael is in the lounge chair watching the television. The local news is on. On the screen, the ANCHOR is introducing the story.

ANCHOR

(on t.v.)

...shocked us all. The police have begun a difficult investigation.

On the screen, a crowd of policemen and press members are gathering around a black car. This is the same scene Michael just witnessed, but now from the news camera's point of view.

ANCHOR (v.o.)

(from t.v.)

Detective Jack Hayden arrived in Blairton from the New York City Police Department.

On the screen, JACK HAYDEN, 37, gets out of the black car. He is very handsome, muscular, and well-groomed, wearing an expensive suit. He is an expert speaker with a warm voice and an intense air of confidence.

ANCHOR (v.o.,cont)

(from t.v.)

He will be investigating the murder with full cooperation of local forces. Hayden is one of the most decorated officers in the history of the NYPD. He spoke with reporters outside the victim's home.

The news report cuts to the porch of the murder house where Hayden is speaking. His partner, MARTIN, 38, a bulldog of a man, stands behind him with his arms crossed.

HAYDEN

(on t.v.)

I personally promise that the people of this community will not live in fear. I mean what I say.

Michael leans forward, watching in dismay.

HAYDEN (cont)

(on t.v.)

You have me on loan from New York because of the nature of this crime.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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HAYDEN (cont)

(on t.v.)

I will not leave till the job is done. I am here to serve you. As you are outraged, so am I. You yearn for justice, and I will make sure justice is done.

Hayden smiles warmly, reassuringly. The press pushes forward with a barrage of questions, but Hayden gives a wave and goes into the house. Martin steps forward, holding the press away.

Michael reaches over and shuts the television off with a sigh.

He sits back in the lounge chair and looks across the room.

On his desk lies the broken kitchen knife.

INT. MURDER VICTIM'S HOUSE, BEDROOM -- LATE DAY

The room has been dusted with fingerprint powder and there is a tape outline on the floor where the corpse was. The blood stains all over the room are now brown with age. Hayden stands in the middle of the room with his hands in his pockets. Martin is standing in one corner. Local Detective TERRI GWEN, 55, is standing with Hayden, looking over a sheet of paper.

GWEN

We've even dusted along the siding around the back of the house. We're positive that's where the killer entered.

Detective Gwen folds the paper. Hayden stands silent for a moment. He is studying the room.

HAYDEN

I can't believe you haven't found anything. I cannot fucking believe it.

GWEN

We were over everything. My men haven't missed an inch.

Hayden looks at Detective Gwen, then walks over to the bathroom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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IN THE BATHROOM

Hayden stands beside the sink, hands still in his pockets. Gwen moves to the doorway. The sink has been dusted.

HAYDEN

This is where he washed up. Your men have made that astute deduction, correct?

Gwen is getting tired of Hayden's tone.

GWEN

Correct.

Hayden uses his foot to open the small cabinet under the sink, revealing the sink's pipes.

HAYDEN

But, these pipes have not been disassembled. These pipes have not been scraped for blood or hair or skin.

Gwen is at a loss.

GWEN

Look here, Hayden, we've...

HAYDEN

No! You look! This should have been done in the first hour. It may be too late now!

GWEN

I...

Hayden kicks open the lid of the toilet.

HAYDEN

Was a sample taken of this water?
Was this inner rim scraped?

GWEN

You're joking.

HAYDEN

I'm deadly serious, Detective.

GWEN

You seriously think the murderer took the time to go to the bathroom?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Hayden moves to stand inches from Gwen.

HAYDEN

I worked on a case where the killer slit a woman's throat, hung her over the tub by the shower head, then took a shit while the woman bled to death.

GWEN

Christ.

HAYDEN

You going to work with me?

GWEN

I'll get my men on it.

HAYDEN

No. Don't bother. Your Cub Scouts have trampled this place enough.

Hayden pushes past Gwen and goes into the bedroom.

IN THE BEDROOM

HAYDEN (cont)

No more play time. They've done enough damage.

Martin is still standing in the corner.

HAYDEN (cont)

(to Martin)

Redust. Everything they've done, we're going to do over. This is our home for the next three days. We own this place now.

Gwen has followed behind Hayden.

GWEN

Cut the bullshit, Hayden! I'm prepared to give you anything you need, but I will not allow you to insult our methods! You Big City Guys may think you can shut us out, but it won't happen. This is my jurisdiction!

Hayden smiles, condescendingly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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HAYDEN

Detective Gwen. Have you ever seen a man whose hands have been smashed by a sledgehammer?

Gwen does not understand.

HAYDEN (cont)

My partner and I have. It's a very strange sight, especially when the man is still alive.

(pause)

We've seen a corpse, disemboweled, lying under the Christmas tree on Christmas Day.

Hayden begins to walk around the room.

HAYDEN (cont)

We've seen a man who was strangled with razor wire. We've seen countless heads which have been turned brain-side out by shotgun blasts.

Hayden is speaking very calmly, smiling.

HAYDEN (cont)

We've seen a dead body after it spent ten days forced, literally jammed, inside a garbage can. The smell of it, I can't describe.

MARTIN

(to Gwen)

Ever get a murderer because a piece of his hair was found caught in a spider's web?

HAYDEN

(forceful)

Or because his dental imprint matched the bite marks on the corpse where the ear used to be?! I doubt you have.

Hayden stops and pounds his foot down on the floor beside the dead man's tape out line.

HAYDEN (cont)

This! This isn't running a red light. This isn't under-aged drinking.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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HAYDEN (cont)

This isn't robbery or date-rape. This is a purposeful murder. And the Big City Guys are here! You and I don't work with each other. You, and all your men, work for me.

Detective Gwen is seething, but he nods in agreement.

EXT. FOREST -- LATE DAY

The rain has stopped. Michael is limping through the thick undergrowth, deep in the wooded area behind his house. He is carrying a small plastic bag and a shovel.

He walks a bit farther, then stops. He looks in all directions. Birds are chirping. Nobody is in sight.

Michael drops the bag on the ground and kicks at the leaves and branches in front of him. He clears a small area and pushes the blade of the shovel into the dirt.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FOREST -- LATER

Michael has dug a hole about three feet deep. He stands back and puts down the shovel, tired from the work. He picks the plastic bag up. There is a loud WHISTLE from inside the woods. Michael drops the bag, turning and ducking down. He moves behind a tree, peering into the distance.

On a far path, a MAN is walking. The Man does not see Michael. He puts his hands to his mouth and whistles harshly again. Michael is trying to figure out what the man is doing, when there is the SOUND of RUSTLING LEAVES behind him.

Michael turns. He is horrified to see --

-- a GERMAN SHEPARD standing by the hole. The dog is sniffing the severed foot which is sticking out of the small plastic bag.

MICHAEL

(to dog)

Oh, no. Don't touch that. Come here, boy. Please, come here....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Michael moves towards the dog, coaxing it. The dog looks at Michael.

MICHAEL (cont)
...that's right. Here, boy, good...

Michael inches closer, a few feet away from the dog. Suddenly, the dog grabs the foot in it's mouth and runs.

MICHAEL (cont)
No. Come here! Oh, no!

Michael chases after the dog, hampered by his knee.

The dog is really trotting along, an all out run, foot in mouth.

Michael runs, gasping. He slips and falls into wet mud and leaves. He jumps up and continues, covered in muck.

The dog changes direction, running for the fun of it.

The Master's whistle is heard. The dog changes direction, heading towards it's Master.

Michael follows, struggling through the weeds and over fallen trees. The dog is way ahead, almost on the path the Master is walking on. Michael gets behind a tree to avoid being seen.

The Master sees the dog coming.

MASTER
Come here!

The dog runs up on the trail.

Michael can only watch helplessly.

The dog rushes past it's Master, running in circles.

MASTER
(claps his hands)
Come here. What've you got there,
boy? What is that?

The dog runs away, off the path and into the woods, excited and happy.

Michael sees the dog heading back toward him. He searches the ground and picks up a stick.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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The dog is close. Michael steps from behind the tree, keeping an eye on the Master. He throws the stick at the dog.

The stick bounces off the dog's back and the dog yipes, dropping the foot. The dog runs away, back towards the trail.

Michael rushes to where the foot is. He stays low and starts to wrap it in leaves so he can pick it up, relieved.

AT THE HOLE

The severed foot drops into the hole.

Michael picks up the plastic bag and turns it upside down over the hole. The two toes fall out. Michael reaches into his pocket and takes out the broken knife which is in a clear plastic bag. He throws it in, picks the shovel up and begins filling the hole.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM -- EARLY EVENING

Michael tosses the bloody towel which once held the foot into the fireplace. He is still covered in dirt and leaves from the forest. He looks down at his clothing in disgust.

He slips his sneakers off and slides out of the pants. He pulls off his shirt and then throws it and the pants into the fireplace.

Now, in only his underwear, Michael uses matches to light a pile of newspapers underneath the clothing. The paper catches quickly.

Michael watches it burn. He turns his back to it, rubs at the splotches of dried mud on his face, sighing.

Behind him, smoke from the fire begins to billow out, black and thick, filling the room.

Michael sniffs, then looks.

MICHAEL

The flue!

He goes to the fireplace. He reaches up inside, into the terrible smoke. The flames grow higher. Michael is struggles, tries to avoid the flame, chokes on soot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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He backs out, coughing. He grabs a metal poker from beside the fireplace and charges forward, using the poker to reach up into the chimney. With a graon, he pulls down. The flue is HEARD CREAKING open.

Michael throws the poker down. He is black as pitch. The smoke is heading up the chimney.

Michael wipes his filthy face with filthy hands.

MICHAEL
(to himself)
What next?

The DOORBELL RINGS. Michael looks out the hall to the door, looks at the deep smoke collected on the ceiling and looks at himself; in his underwear, muddy and ash-covered.

KYLE (o.s.)
(from front door)
Hey, Michael! Dude!

MICHAEL
Wonderful.

The doorbell begins to ring over and over again.

EXT. MICHAEL'S FRONT PORCH -- EARLY EVENING

Kyle rings the bell and stands on his toes, trying to look through the small window at the top of the door.

The door opens a crack. Michael's blackened face looks out.

MICHAEL
Yes?

KYLE
Hey Dick-lick, I've been calling
all...

Kyle looks at Michael in wonder.

KYLE (cont)
Your face is all black.

MICHAEL
You have an amazing flair for the
obvious, Kyle.

KYLE
Can I come in?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL
No.

KYLE
What happened?

MICHAEL
Don't ask.

KYLE
Okay.

Smoke is coming out the top of the open door, sucked by the draft.

KYLE
Michael.

MICHAEL
What?

KYLE
Is your house on fire and you're embarrassed to tell me?

MICHAEL
No. Look, don't worry about that.
I'm cleaning the chimney.

Kyle is finding this very strange.

KYLE
You skipped school?

MICHAEL
I have mono.

KYLE
I'm not a doctor or anything, but
is it really a good idea to clean
the chimney when you have mono?
All that soot...

MICHAEL
Don't worry about it. Just do me
a favor. I need you to take a
doctor's excuse into school.

KYLE
Go get it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL

I haven't written it yet.

Kyle nods.

MICHAEL (cont)

I have to get going...

KYLE

Hey, did you hear about the murder?

MICHAEL

Yeah, I heard about it.

KYLE

Pretty wild, huh? They took that guy's foot. Whoever did it must be an ultra-fucking-freak. I mean, the guy's foot! What a sicko.

MICHAEL

(weakly)

Yeah.

KYLE

It's cool having a murder around here. It's like...

MICHAEL

What? What's cool about it?

KYLE

Like, maybe not cool, but it's like, like in a movie or something. I...

MICHAEL

A guy is dead and you think it's cool. That's really sick.

KYLE

I don't mean cool, but interesting or...

MICHAEL

Forget it. I'll see you.

Kyle stops the door from closing.

KYLE

Michael. If you're going to be laid up and all...how about letting me borrow that Brainscan tape?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL

Kyle! Jackass! Would you please get off my back about that damn tape?! That's all you talk about anymore.

Kyle is angry.

KYLE

You're the one who was raving out all your holes about it. If you don't want to let me see it, if you want to be a Jerk-off about it, just say so. Just say it. That's all.

MICHAEL

I don't want to loan it to you. Okay? Just forget that tape ever existed.

KYLE

Why?

MICHAEL

Jesus! Get out of here. I'm having the shitiest day of my life today. I don't need you to be the big cherry on top.

KYLE

You're acting really bizzare, Michael. I mean more bizzare than usual.

MICHAEL

Too bad.

Michael closes the door in Kyle's face.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, FRONT HALL -- EARLY EVENING

Michael locks the door and walks away. There is a tapping sound behind him. Michael looks back.

Kyle's hand is in front of the door's small window, giving Michael the finger.

MICHAEL

You too.

Michael starts up the stairs.

INT. KIMBERLY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael is lying behind Kimberly on the bed, kissing the back of her neck, her ears, her eager lips. His hands move across her waist, her stomach, her breasts. Kimberly's black negligee and Michael's clothing are soaked with sweat. They are shaking with passion.

KIMBERLY

Make love to me, Michael.

Michael stands. He begins to take off his shirt. His fingers work at the buttons. He looks at Kimberly.

She smiles and licks her lips seductively.

KIMBERLY

I want you.

Michael slips off the shirt and turns his back to her. He starts undoing his pants. He grows nervous. He slides the pants down, leaving the underwear on. There is not a single scar on his right knee.

MICHAEL

(facing away)

Just, be patient with me. I've...

I've never really...

(swallows)

...I do love you. I do want to be with you. I know you'll be patient.

He turns and falls back onto the bed, but Kimberly is gone and he is face to face, lying on top of, the decaying, footless corpse from the first Brainscan tape. Michael wants to scream, but nothing comes.

CUT TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael sits up in his bed. He looks around the room, breathing hard.

He gets out of bed and limps over to the lounge chair. He sits and uses the remote. The Odd Couple comes on the screen.

Michael slumps back in the chair and watches.

MONTAGE

A) CLOSE on Michael's blank eyes, watching the television.

(CONTINUED)

MONTAGE (cont)

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- B) CLOSE on Hayden's eyes, intense and focused.
 - C) Hayden's hand uses tweezers to pull up pieces of bloodsoaked carpet fiber. The fibers are placed in a small plastic bag.
 - D) CLOSE on a 35mm camera lens. The lens is lowered to reveal Kimberly's eyes.
 - E) White fingerprinting powder is sprinkled on a wooden surface, then blown away, leaving traces of smeared fingerprints.
 - F) Hayden's face is on television. He is speaking at a press conference.
 - G) Michael is in his room, flipping through channels on the television. His room is a mess, with newspapers, clothing and empty food packages on the floor.
 - H) A piece of white photographic paper is put in a developing bath. The paper floats in the water and an image of the murder victim's house appears.
 - I) CLOSE on a sheet of paper which reads, "Autopsy Results." The sheet is replaced by another which reads, "Lab Analysis."
- Hayden is studying these sheets carefully. He is at the local Police Station with Martin nearby.
- Hayden shakes his head as he finishes. He throws the sheet into a trashcan, then kicks the trashcan in anger and frustration.
- J) Michael is in his room, sitting in front of the television. The room is worse than before. Michael looks like hell.
 - K) Kimberly is in the school cafeteria. Stacie comes and shoves the school paper in her face. The headline reads: LOCAL MURDER STUNS COMMUNITY. Kimberly's photo of the murder house is on the front page.
 - L) CLOSE on a map of interconnecting neighborhoods. A finger points out one section. There is a red X in the middle of that section.
 - M) On a television screen: the test pattern.

Michael sits watching it.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, MOTHER'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Michael stands by the window. This window faces the front lawn from the second floor. Michael is looking out, looking down the street.

There is a news van down the street beside a police patrol car. A video camera man films two officers as they cross a lawn and go to the front door of one neighbor's home.

DISSOLVE TO:

INSERT -- TELEVISION SCREEN

The news is on. This report shows the exact same scene we just saw, but from the video cameraman's point of view.

FEMALE ANCHOR (v.o.)
(from t.v.)

Police are continuing their door-to-door questioning of neighbors. Detective Hayden has said that this task will take time.

Hayden appears on the screen with microphones held up to him.

HAYDEN
(from t.v.)

This type of questioning will often turn up a witness who has seen something important without realizing it. We can hope for that.

(pause)
It's also a good way for me, and even a few of the local officers to get to know you better.

Hayden smiles a good, winning, all-American smile.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael watches the report from his lounge chair. He has dark rings under his eyes. He gets up and goes to the telephone as the report continues.

The phone is sitting on his desk, off the hook. Michael stares at it for a long moment. Finally, he picks up the receiver and places it back in its cradle.

He stands there, staring at it. The DOORBELL RINGS. Michael turns his head towards the sound.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, FRONT HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Michael comes into the hall slowly. He tries to be silent so whoever is at the door will not hear him. He strains up to look out the door's small window. He is surprised and leans against the door, tries to straighten his shirt and neaten his unwashed hair.

He unlocks the door and opens it to reveal Kimberly. She holds a stack of books, papers and mail.

MICHAEL

Hi.

KIMBERLY

(smiles)

Hi, Michael. I'm sorry. Were you sleeping?

MICHAEL

No, no.

Kimberly looks at his horrible appearance.

KIMBERLY

Oh.

MICHAEL

I mean, yeah, I may have dozed off.

KIMBERLY

(nodding)

I had mono once.

MICHAEL

What?

(realizing)

Oh, yeah, yeah. It's really draining.

KIMBERLY

Can I...come in?

MICHAEL

Yes. Yes.

Michael lets her in and closes the door.

KIMBERLY

I went to all your teachers. Dr. Fomberg wanted me to bring your homework from the week.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL

That Dr. Fomberg. He's always
spoiling me. He's so sweet.

Kimberly laughs. Michael takes the pile from Kimberly.
He weights it in his arms.

MICHAEL

This is really perfect, cause when
I'm laying in bed, burning up with
fever and barely able to move, I'm
always wishing for a good calculus
assignment to cheer me up.

Kimberly laughs again and Michael smiles; the first time
he's smiled in a long time. This moment passes quickly.
They both stand for a long uncomfortable moment.

KIMBERLY

My parents said you stopped by...

MICHAEL

Oh, yeah. I did.

Michael stares at his feet.

MICHAEL (cont)

Just wanted to ask about some homework.

KIMBERLY

We...we don't have any classes together,
Michael.

MICHAEL

Really? Boy, that girl in History
looks just like you.

Michael chuckles at his own joke and continues studying his
shoes.

KIMBERLY

Are you sure that was it?

Michael looks up at her. She is so beautiful.

MICHAEL

I'll tell you about it someday.
It's a long story, and it
interconnects with about five
other long stories.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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KIMBERLY

Okay.

Michael stares down again. Kimberly can see he is shy.

KIMBERLY (cont)

I brought the school paper. I have
a lot of pictures in it this week.

MICHAEL

Really? That's great...

He sorts through the top of the pile and takes out the
paper, unfolding it in one hand. Headline: LOCAL MURDER
STUNS COMMUNITY.

MICHAEL

(less enthused)

...super. Really good.

Michael folds the paper into the pile. He begins to look
at all the items she's brought --

MICHAEL (cont)

You shouldn't have gone to all the
trouble. I really...

--and he pulls out a brown manila envelope with Brainscan
printed across the top. He drops it in shock.

MICHAEL (cont)

...oh, Christ!!

Kimberly doesn't understand. She cautiously goes to pick
the envelope up.

MICHAEL (cont)

No, I'll get it...

Michael hurries to beat her to it, dropping everything else
in the process.

MICHAEL (cont)

...no problem.

Michael, stooped, puts the Brainscan envelope under his arm
and starts to pick up the mess. Kimberly tries to help.

KIMBERLY

Is everything okay?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-66-

MICHAEL

Yeah, I'm fine. It's just, for a moment, I thought that was a draft notice.

Michael laughs, forced. Kimberly does not laugh at all.

MICHAEL (cont)

You probably have to get going. I can get this.

Kimberly stands and takes a step back.

KIMBERLY

Okay.

MICHAEL

It's just that I remembered the doctor said my mono might still be contagious.

KIMBERLY

I'll see you soon.

Kimberly opens the door. Michaels stands, juggling the books and papers.

MICHAEL

Thanks for stopping over.

Kimberly nods, looking strangely at Michael.

KIMBERLY

Call me, if you need anything.

MICHAEL

I will. Thanks.

Kimberly leaves, closing the door.

Michael drops everything and looks at the Brainscan envelope. He tears it open and takes out a video cassette formed of red plastic. The label: BRAINSCAN TAPE TWO, CALL 1-800-MURDERS BEFORE VIEWING.

Michael throws the cassette down. He leaves it all behind, limping to the stairs.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael sits before the television.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The local news is beginning with a display of flashy computer graphics. Michael is barely awake; at the point between the two. His eyes close slowly and his head falls back, then jerks forward. He rubs his eyes, tries to shake off the drowsiness.

NEWS ANCHOR

(on t.v.)

Good evening. Welcome to the eleven o'clock edition of Action News. Tonight, Detective Jack Hayden speaks out.

MICHAEL

Just what I've been waiting for.

Michael gets up and heads to the bed.

Hayden's face appears on the t.v. screen.

HAYDEN

(from t.v.)

The killer is out there, I know that. He will be punished.

Michael climbs in bed.

HAYDEN (o.s.,cont)

(from t.v.)

A hatred has grown inside me these last few days. Grown like a cancer. I have...

(pause)

Hey!!

Michael pulls stops.

HAYDEN (o.s.,cont)

(from t.v.)

Hey, you son-of-a-bitch! I'm talking to you!!

Michael stands and looks to the television.

Hayden looks out from the t.v. screen, directly at Michael.

Michael is very confused.

MICHAEL

(to t.v.)

Me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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HAYDEN
(from t.v.)

Yes. You.

On the screen, calmly takes out his gun and points it towards Michael.

Michael's eyes widen.

HAYDEN
(from t.v.)

Murderer.

On the screen, Hayden pulls the trigger.

BANG. Michael's head explodes. His body flies backwards.

CUT TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael jerks awake in the lounge chair. Johnny Carson is on the television.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, FRONT HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Michael rushes down the stairs. He goes to the pile of mail and homework and he picks up the second Brainscan cassette. He throws it against the floor with all his might.

It bounces and cracks.

He picks it up. Throws it against the door.

It smashes. Pieces of plastic flying off.

Michael picks it up and throws it again.

It breaks in half. Video tape unspools.

Michael, breathing heavily, looks at it on the floor.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael lies down in bed, still breathing hard. He closes his eyes and tries to relax. TELEPHONE RINGS. Michael sits up and turns on the light, looking at the phone. He gets up and answers.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
(from phone)
Hello, Michael.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL
(into phone)
Hello, Bestest Pal. So glad to
hear from you.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Where should we begin?

Michael walks around the room with the phone.

MICHAEL
I will not kill again.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
You must play the game.

MICHAEL
No.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
What will you say to them?

MICHAEL
What?

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Why did you leave school the day after
the murder, Mr. Brower? Where were you
on the night of the murder, Mr.
Brower? Were you alone, Mr. Brower?
Did...

MICHAEL
Shut up.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
I do not believe they will find that
response satisfactory.

MICHAEL
They haven't found me yet.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
The witness has yet to speak. There is
still time to play the second tape.

MICHAEL
No. I don't have the second tape.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
You received it today.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL
(smiles)
Can't play it.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
You mean you do not want to play it.

MICHAEL
No, I mean I destroyed it. I smashed
it into tiny pieces. Does that compute?

The Voice lets out a strange, electronic laugh. Michael
loses the upper hand; put in his place.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Pure fantasy. You did nothing of the
sort.

(pause)
You must have dreamt that, Michael.

Michael looks to the door. He drops the phone and goes out.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, FRONT HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Michael comes down the stairs into the hall.

The second Brainscan envelope is on the floor where Michael
dropped it just after Kimberly left. Michael is at his
wit's end.

MICHAEL
What is going on?!

Michael grabs the envelope, tears it, pulls out Brainscan
Tape Two. It's in perfect condition.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The phone is on the floor. Michael picks it up.

MICHAEL
(into phone)
You fucking, motherfucking, bastard!

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Your irrational behavior wastes
both your time and mine. Time is
one commodity you cannot afford to
squander.

Michael paces, looking at the tape.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL
(thinking hard)
I cannot believe any of this.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Play the tape. The witness must die.

MICHAEL
Maybe I should play it. I'll play it
for the police.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
(angry)
Don't entertain that notion for long.
It is a very dangerous thought.

MICHAEL
I'll tell them what happened. I've
got nothing to lose.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Yes. Invite the officers up to watch
"Death Death Death." "Part Two," I
believe. Then pour them some tea and
calmly explain.

Michael looks around the room -- at the images of death and
horror which decorate all the walls -- and his face drops in
realization. Yet, he is determined.

MICHAEL
I don't care.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
What is on the tape?

MICHAEL
Another murder.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Or, is it blank? And if it is, you
incriminate yourself for no reason!

Michael sits on the bed, trying to sort his thoughts.

MICHAEL
I don't care.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Please, tell me what you will say.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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THE VOICE (v.o., cont)

Tell me what you could possibly say
after you tell your tale, and the tape
is blank?! You're no pillar in this
community.

MICHAEL

Shut-up a minute!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

If you still have little conception
of what you think you saw on the
first tape...

MICHAEL

Shut-up!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

...how can you take them this tape
without viewing it first, just to be
sure!

MICHAEL

Oh, no! No, no, no!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Watch the tape, damn you! This is
no time for trickery!

Michael smiles.

MICHAEL

No.

There is a long pause. Michael waits for The Voice's next
move.

THE VOICE

(suddenly calm)

Very well. Take it to the police.
I wish you luck.

Michael's smile slowly fades.

MICHAEL

I...

The Voice hangs up. Michael does the same. He grips the
videotape tightly in both hands and presses it against his
forehead. He looks around the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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The video camera rests on its tripod by the window.

Michael's smile slowly returns as an idea formulates.

DISSOLVE TO:

INSERT -- THROUGH THE VIDEO CAMERA'S VIEWFINDER

The viewfinder frames Michael, the lounge chair and the television set. Michael has his back to the television. He addresses the camera.

MICHAEL

...the second tape has arrived. So,
I have to find some way to prove
what's on it, if anything.

He points to the television.

MICHAEL (cont)

I have to record the tape. The
first one was black after I watched
it.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael continues.

MICHAEL (cont)

I don't know if this makes sense.
All I know is, if something happens
again...if I see another murder,
you'll see it with me. And if this
murder becomes real, I didn't do it.

Michael shrugs, sits down in his lounge chair, faces the television, his back to the video camera and tripod.

He picks up the remote control and looks over his shoulder.

MICHAEL

(to videocamera)

Here it goes.

Michael points the remote control at the VCR. There is an INSTANTANEOUS FLASH of BRILLIANT LIGHT from the screen.

Michael is still pointing the remote, but he is now, a split second later, covered in sweat and breathing heavily. His hair is messed up and his hand is unsteady.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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The television screen is red with a digital counter frozen on it at: 11:23:44.

Michael stands, drops the remote.

MICHAEL

Oh, shit.

He wipes his sweaty face with his hands.

MICHAEL (cont)

(weak)

Oh, my God.

He goes to the VCR and ejects the Brainscan Tape Two. It has been played.

MICHAEL

Oh, God. I played...

(thinking hard)

What happened...?

He rushes to the video camera, hits stop and then rewind.

TIME CUT TO:

Michael goes to the entertainment center and puts the rewound cassette, from the camera, into the VCR.

Michael, frantic, sits in the lounge chair and points the remote. He sits forward.

ON THE TELEVISION

Michael is addressing the camera, as we have just seen.

MICHAEL

(from t.v.)

..if something happens...if I see
another murder, you'll see it with
me. And if this murder becomes real,
I didn't do it.

He goes to sit in the lounge chair, his back to us. He looks over his shoulder.

MICHAEL

(from t.v.)

Here it goes.

He points the remote.

(CONTINUED)

ON THE TELEVISION (cont)

There is a brilliant flash of light from the television. Michael's body goes immediately rigid. The scan lines of the t.v. begin to pulse. A TONE comes from the television.

IN THE ROOM

Michael leans closer to the television.

MICHAEL

What?!

He remembers none of this.

ON THE TELEVISION

There is HEARD a CRACKLE of STATIC. The screen's pulsing quickens. Michael, on the t.v., begins to shutter; his body vibrating violently.

IN THE ROOM

Michael watches with growing terror.

ON THE TELEVISION

The television's pulse stops. Michael is still. A bright red glow appears on the t.v. screen. A digital counter appears: 60:00:00.

IN THE ROOM

A small spark of recognition for Michael.

MICHAEL

The timer. Yes...

ON THE TELEVISION

Michael stands up and walks away, out of the video camera's frame, leaving the room!

IN THE ROOM

Michael jumps up.

MICHAEL

What?!!! What?!!!

He goes and touches the screen, stricken to his very foundation with sick, sudden horror.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL (cont)
I didn't leave! I sat here! I
couldn't have left!

He's really freaking out. On the television: the television screen remains red with only the digital counter counting down.

Mihcael, in the room, falls away from the screen, watching in shock.

MICHAEL (cont)
I didn't leave! I...

He stops in mid-sentence. A memory hits him like a bullet in the head.

MICHAEL (cont)
.....oh, no.....

He bounds towards the door.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, MOTHER'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael slams the door open and enters, swatting at the light switch. He knocks over a lamp as he passes.

At his mother's bed, Michael falls to his knees and reaches underneath. He searches with his hands, then stops.

MICHAEL
No.

He pulls out and object which fits in the palm of his hand. We do not see the object, but when he does he lets out a cry of terror and pain.

MICHAEL
NO!!! NOT THIS!!!!

He stands and runs, limping.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, STAIRS -- NIGHT

Michael limps, runs, stumbles, falls, gets up; blindly rushing to his room.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael thrusts in, falls, gets up. Weak.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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He gets to the phone and is barely able to dial it.

MICHAEL
Please, please...please...

He holds the phone to his ear. He is starting to cry big rolling tears. The PHONE RINGS.

MICHAEL (cont)
...please answer...

He looks at the object in his hand -- the object from under his mother's bed -- the Ninja throwing star Kyle always wore round his neck. Phone rings.

MICHAEL (cont)
(out of control)
...Kyle. Please, Kyle, answer...

INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A hand reaches to pick up Kyle's ringing phone.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The PHONE is HEARD BEING PICKED UP. Michael's face fills with hope.

MICHAEL
(still crying)
Kyle! Oh, Jesus, Kyle, talk to me!

INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Detective Jack Hayden puts the phone to his ear.

MICHAEL (v.o.)
(from phone)
Kyle! Please...

HAYDEN
Who is this?!

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael's mouth drops, lips quivering. He falls, like he's been hit in the back of the legs by a baseball bat.

HAYDEN (v.o.)
(from phone)
Answer me!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Michael hangs up the phone. He curls up into a ball of the floor, sobbing openly.

He weeps outrageously.

ON THE TELEVISION

is the empty lounge chair in front of the television which shows only the decending digital counter.

INT. KYLE'S BEROOM -- NIGHT

Hayden hangs up Kyle's phone. Police lights are flashing outside Kyle's window. Blood has splattered up on the heavy-metal posters on Kyle's walls.

Martin is standing by the door of the room. He watches uniformed officers hold back Kyle's weeping parents who are trying to get down the hall to the room. Martin closes the door with his gloved hand.

Both Martin and Hayden look down on the floor. Hayden examines the scene around them. He smiles.

HAYDEN

(to Martin)

We'll get this fucker yet.

DISSOLVE TO:

INSERT -- MICHAEL'S TELEVISION

On the screen, the television is framed along with the empty lounge chair. On that television, the digital counter continues its countdown. Michael walks into frame, picks up the remote control and sits, pointing it at the television, his back to us. The counter stops: 11:23:44.

He stands, dropping the remote.

MICHAEL

(on t.v.)

Oh shit.

He wipes his sweaty face.

MICHAEL (cont)

(on t.v., weak)

Oh, my God.

He goes to the VCR above the television and ejects the Brainscan tape. He studies it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL (cont)
(on t.v.)
Oh, God. I played...
(thinking hard)
What happened...?

He moves towards the camera, then out of frame to stop the video camera as we saw before. The screen goes blank, fills with snow.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MICHAEL'S FRONT PORCH -- MORNING

HAPPY BIRDS are HEARD SINGING. A newspaper lands on the porch. Headline: SECOND BRUTAL MURDER. Below the headline: Kyle's high school yearbook photo. He is smiling.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

Michael is lying on his back, where he fell to the night before. His eyes are red. Michael looks over the Brainscan tape in his hand. The morning news is on the television.

ON THE TELEVISION

ANCHOR WOMAN
(from t.v.)
...throat was slit with a sharp
object. This is the second murder
in this group of neighborhoods...

On the screen, police are working at night, roping the yard off with plastic yellow ribbon.

ANCHOR WOMAN (cont)
...and the people living in the area
are shocked and frightened. Head of
the investigation, Detective Jack
Hayden, was unusually noncommittal
when we tried to speak to him this
morning.

On the screen, Hayden is being followed as he walks towards his car from Kyle's yard.

REPORTER'S VOICE (o.s.)
(from t.v.)
What is your next move? What will you
do next?

Hayden slows a bit, facing the camera.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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HAYDEN

(on t.v.)

I will do exactly what I have been doing. It won't be long.

REPORTER'S VOICE (o.s.)

(from t.v.)

Will this happen again? The people want to know. What kind of protection can they expect?

Hayden stops.

HAYDEN

(on t.v.)

A young boy has been killed. His parent's tears haven't even dried yet. What do you say we save this for some other time.

Hayden walks on. The reporter does not follow.

IN THE ROOM

Michael pulls the videotape out from the front of the Brainscan video. DOORBELL RINGS. Michael turns his head towards the sound.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, FRONT HALL -- MORNING

Michael unlocks the front door and opens it. It's Kimberly. She looks both concerned and uncomfortable.

KIMBERLY

Hello, Michael. I...I heard...

Michael just stands there, looking half dead. He nods.

KIMBERLY (cont)

Are you okay?

MICHAEL

I will be.

KIMBERLY

I just want you to know, like, if you need anything...

MICHAEL

I just need some time alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-8/-

Kimberly reaches into her purse and takes out a sheet of folded paper. She looks at a moment, pensive.

KIMBERLY

Michael, I...

(pause)

I don't know if this is right.

Michael doesn't understand.

KIMBERLY (cont)

I didn't really know him...

She sighs, caught in some sort of dilemma.

KIMBERLY (cont)

Kyle came to my house last night...
and brought me this.

She hands Michael the paper. Michael takes the paper and unfolds it.

KIMBERLY (cont)

He started a petition to restart the
Horror Club. He said he only got a
few people to sign it...

Michael looks at the sheet. It is hand written on notebook paper. "Petition to save Michael Brower's Spectacular Horror Club," it reads. About five people have signed it.

KIMBERLY (cont)

(upset)

He said you guys had had a fight, and
he wanted me to bring it to you
personally.

At the bottom of the sheet, Kyle's has written: BUDDIES
FOREVER?, KYLE.

Tears are forming in Michael's eyes.

KIMBERLY (cont)

I didn't even know him...

(slight laugh)

...my Dad didn't want to let him in
the house.

MICHAEL

(sad laugh)

That's Kyle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Michael struggles to hold back the tears.

Tears are forming in Kimberly's eyes now.

KIMBERLY

It was just last night, and I can't believe...

(pause)

It must have been a few hours before he was...

She trails off. Michael backs against the wall, brings his hands to hide his face. He cries.

Kimberly stands, feeling helpless, on the verge of breaking down herself.

MICHAEL

I just need some time alone.

Kimberly moves closer. She puts her hand on Michael's arm.

MICHAEL (cont)

You better go. You'll be late.

Kimberly embraces Michael awkwardly. Michael wraps his arms around her and holds on, tight, as if for his very life.

MICHAEL (cont)

I miss him. God, I miss him already.

Kimberly tries to comfort him, not sure how. She runs her hand through his hair. He holds tight and weeps.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael is slumped in the lounge chair, watching the evening news.

ON THE TELEVISION

Hayden and Martin are shown walking towards the entrance of Michael's high school, followed by reporters which they wave off.

REPORTER (v.o.)

...spent most of the day questioning students and faculty at the Blairton Senior High School...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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IN THE ROOM

Michael watches, emotionless. PHONE RINGS. Michael looks at it immediately. It rings again. Michael stands and picks it up. He says nothing.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
(from phone)
Hello, Michael.

MICHAEL
(into phone)
You cocksucker! You killed, Kyle!!

THE VOICE (v.o.)
You killed the witness.

MICHAEL
What are you talking about?!

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Calmly.

MICHAEL
Fuck that!

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Calm yourself.

MICHAEL
Kyle wasn't a witness! He didn't see anything!

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Not a witness in the strictest sense, but he had knowlege no one else had. He knew of the Brainscan tapes, and that you viewed a stabbing on the same night the first murder took place.

MICHAEL
He was my only friend!

THE VOICE (v.o.)
And yet, you alienated him! He could have been an ally, or a friend with a knowlege of coincidence, but you hurt him! You heightened his interest in your strange behavior. If you had let me advise you, that may not have happened.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL

He wouldn't have figured anything...

THE VOICE (v.o.)

A loose end like that cannot be left to dangle. Hayden would deftly tie it round your neck like a noose.

MICHAEL

Why are you doing this to me?

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You chose me, Michael. I did not choose you.

MICHAEL

Who are you? How are you making this happen?!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Don't waste energy on such trifles. You must focus on survival now. It's time for me to help you.

(pause)

You left a clue behind. In the third tape you will...

MICHAEL

Whoa! Wrong!! I'm done. Honeymoon's over.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

I know Kyle's death still stings you, but this will pass.

MICHAEL

No, it won't. I'm tired of your game.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Search your heart, Michael. Search for guilt. Sort out the sorrow. Can you find guilt for what you've done?

Michael sits, drained, listening.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You will find none. The part of you which did these things...it's deep inside, and it is in all people. It does not pervade your personality.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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THE VOICE (v.o.)
Be honest. If you cannot feel the
guilt, why will you accept the
punishment?

MICHAEL
The police can have me. I just want
this all to be over.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
You are extremely hard on yourself.
I am disappointed in you.

MICHAEL
Gee, and I wanted so much to please
you.

DOORBELL RINGS.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Do not answer the door.

MICHAEL
What?

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Trust me. Do not answer the door.
It could be Kimberly. You must stay
isolated.

MICHAEL
That's sweet. You're jealous.

The doorbell rings again.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
I know what you think of her.
And, I know what see thinks of you.

Michael waits.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
Do not answer the door.

Michael hangs up.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, FRONT HALL -- NIGHT

Michael opens the front door and looks. He tries not to
appear surprised and horrified, but that is exactly what he
is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Hayden and Martin are on the porch. Hayden holds out his badge.

HAYDEN
I'm Detective Hayden and this is my partner Martin.

MICHAEL
I...uh, can I help you?

Hayden enters, walks past Michael and goes into the hallway, putting away his badge.

HAYDEN
I think you can help me, Michael, is it? Michael Brower?

Michael has turned to face Hayden. Martin enters behind Michael and closes the door.

MICHAEL
Yes.

Hayden nods and turns, entering the living room. He looks about while he speaks.

HAYDEN
Haven't been in school lately.

MICHAEL
I've been sick. It's...

HAYDEN
Yes, I've heard. Heard quite a lot about you today, from your fellow classmates.

Martin stands beside Michael, staring at him.

MICHAEL
Good things, I hope.

HAYDEN
No. To be perfectly honest, Mr. Brower, you were described as...
(looks to Martin)
as...what was the word?

MARTIN
"Frightening."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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HAYDEN

And "weird," and "strange." "Freak"
came up a few times.

MICHAEL

Really? More than once?

HAYDEN

My friend Martin has something I
would like you to see.

Martin takes a thin newspaper from his pocket. He hands it
to Michael.

HAYDEN (cont)

Hot off the press.

Michael looks at it. It is the Blairton Senior High School
Newspaper. On the front page: KYLE HILLARD MURDERED.
Kyle's picture is there. At the bottom of the page:
INTERVIEW WITH CLOSEST FRIEND, "I MISS HIM."

Michael cannot believe it. Kimberly has betrayed him.

HAYDEN (cont)

By all accounts, a good friend of
yours.

Michael is reeling from the blow. He folds the paper under
his arm.

MICHAEL

He was my best friend.

Hayden is at the fireplace mantle. He picks up a vase and
studies the craftsmanship.

HAYDEN

By what I can see, you don't have
many friends.

Michael is angry.

MICHAEL

Is there something that you want?

HAYDEN

I want to find a killer.

MICHAEL

I'm sure you will.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MARTIN

We want to be the ones who catch him.

HAYDEN

We want to be the ones who kill him.

MICHAEL

It's good to have goals in life.

Martin steps beside Michael and puts his arm around him.

MARTIN

How do you spend your free time, Michael?

MICHAEL

Reading Mandate and Honcho magazine.

Martin removes his arm from Michael's shoulder.

HAYDEN

You're a clever one. Quick witted.

(pause)

Your voice sounds familiar to me.

MICHAEL

It's a very common voice. A lot of people make the same mistake.

HAYDEN

No. You see, I remember the little things. That's my job. I could swear you called Kyle's house right after his murder. You seemed distressed.

MICHAEL

It wasn't me.

Hayden smiles, staring at Michael.

MICHAEL(cont)

It's been nice talking to you guys and all, but, if you want to invade my privacy, don't you need some official-looking papers?

HAYDEN

We'll go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Martin slaps Michael on the back.

MARTIN
But, we'll be back.

Hayden passes Michael and follows as Martin goes out the front door. Hayden stops on the porch and turns back to Michael.

HAYDEN
(very serious)
If you're anything more than just
the class cripple, I'm going to
find out.

He closes the door.

Michael gasps. He puts his back against the door.

INT. MICHAEL'S FRONT LAWN -- NIGHT

Hayden and Martin cross the lawn towards their car.

MARTIN
Something's there.

HAYDEN
Yeah. Ashes.

MARTIN
What's that?

HAYDEN
There were fresh ashes in the
fireplace. It's summer, but he
was burning something.

Hayden looks over his shoulder at the house.

HAYDEN (cont)
(smiles)
I don't know what's going on exactly,
but I think we just got very lucky.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael enters, throwing down the school newspaper. He goes straight to the phone. Dials desperately. It RINGS once.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
(from phone)
Hello, Michael.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL

(into phone)

Hayden was just here, with his
Neanderthal friend.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

If they did not take you into custody
then they must not have found
the clue yet.

MICHAEL

They sure acted like I was number
one on their hit list.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

It's not surprising. You've garnered
their attention. When they do
discover the clue, your fate will be
sealed.

MICHAEL

What's the clue?

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Play the tape. The investigation is
still only hours old. They...

MICHAEL

No.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You must finish the series.

MICHAEL

How many times do I have to say it?

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You will not remember the clue unless
you re-enter the mind program trance.

Michael sits in the lounge chair and drops his head into
his hands, still holding the phone to his ear.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Without tape three, your options are
severely limited. You can go to the
police. They will not believe a word
you say. That is the one certain thing.

MICHAEL

I don't want that. I didn't do these
things. You made me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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THE VOICE (v.o.)

The only other escape I can conceive of
is something you've thought of before,
many times. Even as a young boy.

Michael sits up, listens, mortified. The Voice waits a long
moment.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Forget all these troubles. Take your
own life, and slip, oh so easily, into
death. A death of your own making.

MICHAEL

Damn you.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You have thought of it. Thought long
and hard.

Michael is visibly upset.

MICHAEL

Who are you? How do you know me?

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Kill yourself and leave only pain and
suffering behind. It will be like
beautiful sleep...

MICHAEL

Who are you?!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

...and you will join your mother.

Tears are forming in Michael's eyes.

MICHAEL

No.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

It would be so simple.

MICHAEL

(defiant)

I won't be so weak. I'm not that
low yet. I might be a lot of things,
but I'm not a coward.

Michael wipes at the tears.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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THE VOICE (v.o.)

I only want what you want.

MICHAEL

Your concern overwhelms me.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

I will stike a bargain with you. A bargain between friends. Play tape three, but you need only remove the clue. No killing.

MICHAEL

I can do that?

THE VOICE (v.o.)

It will not be easy. The police are out in force. The neighbors are not sleeping well these days.

MICHAEL

Just the clue? No killing?

THE VOICE (v.o.)

I will send the tape now, rather than on the weekend. This will strengthen your advantage.

Michael looks doubtful in his despair.

MICHAEL

What if there is no clue?

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Michael, you are a spineless worm!

MICHAEL

Bite me.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You doubt me at every turn!

MICHAEL

With good reason!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

I'm trying to get you through this!

MICHAEL

Then, just tell me the clue now!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dr. Fomberg is near the front of the group. It is a tearful occasion. The priest is reading from the Bible.

AMOUNG THE GRAVESTONES

Hayden and Martin stand away from the crowd of mourners, watching them.

MARTIN

(yawns)

A waste of time.

HAYDEN

It isn't, and that's why.

Hayden looks across the cemetery. Martin follows his glance.

Across the cemetery, by the front gates, there is a crowd of members of the press. News vans are parked nearby.

HAYDEN (o.s.)

Now that a kid died, they sent some national talent down from New York.

The press group is swarming, many of them filming the funeral from there.

HAYDEN (cont)

This small-time assignment may be worth more than we thought, because it's all going to be wrapped up soon. In beautiful, living-color, from coast-to-coast.

AT THE GRAVEYARD GATES

The press waits, maneuvering, as the crowd at the gravesight begins to head out.

ONE REPORTER

They're coming out!

The still photographers and video cameramen jockey for position. Location reporters with microphones push to get to the front.

They all point their cameras and follow the mourners, especially Kyle's grieving Mother and Father, who are surrounded by comforting friends. Reporters are shouting questions, but the group moves on towards their cars.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Hayden and Martin walk across across the graveyard and through the gate, behind the mourners. The press-mob changes its focus to them. The reporters shout questions to Hayden, who has stopped in front of his car with Martin at his side. Hayden raises his hands to quiet them. His face is solemn.

HAYDEN

I will make a statement at this time.

The press settles, snapping photos and holding out mics.

HAYDEN (cont)

This is a day of sadness. A boy has been laid to rest, and I thought it was my responsibility to attend.

Some of the mourners have stopped on the way to their cars. They gather behind the press, watching Hayden.

HAYDEN (cont)

Just as it is my responsibility to catch the killer who took his life. The local police have joined with me in an intensification of the search. We are...

KYLE'S MOTHER (o.s.)

That won't help my son!

Hayden looks to see Kyle's mother being restrained by friends. The friends are trying to get her into a black limosine, but she is shouting to Hayden. The press turns around to capture her sorrow.

KYLE'S MOTHER

He's dead! You make promises, but my son is dead!

Kyle's mother gets into the car, weeping. The door is closed. The press turns back to Hayden.

HAYDEN

(to press)

Her anger is understandable. But, we...

The crowd of mourners has grown, and one MAN steps forward.

MAN ONE

(to Hayden)

She's right. You've been promising.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MAN ONE (cont)

But, this guy is still out there.

WOMAN IN CROWD

How do I know it won't be my kid next?!

The members of the press turn to the crowd, Their backs to Hayden. They begin to question the crowd.

Hayden watches, anger and panic in his eyes.

MAN TWO steps before the cameras.

MAN TWO

(to Hayden)

We need more police!

Several others shout approval. One FEMALE REPORTER steps up with her microphone. Her cameraman poises to shoot.

FEMALE REPORTER

(to Man Two)

You don't think the police are doing their job?

MAN TWO

(into mic)

Damn right. I, I mean, yes! If the murderer's still out there, we need more patrol cars, and...

WOMAN TWO steps up.

WOMAN TWO

(furious)

The children are in danger now!

Dr. Fomberg emerges from the group.

DR FOMBERG

The killing has got to stop. I...

HAYDEN (o.s.)

And it will stop!

Hayden is standing on the hood of his car. The crowd and the press turn to him.

HAYDEN (cont)

(calming)

He will be stopped.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MAN IN CROWD (o.s.)

When?!

The crowd shout a barrage of angry questions. Hayden holds up his hands, trying to quiet them.

HAYDEN

We are doing all we can. Every single officer is on the street.

WOMAN (o.s.)

It's not enough!

Hayden is struggling to remain civil and controlled.

HAYDEN

If you feel it is not enough, you have every right. But, then it is my right to call on you to help.

The crowd quiets.

HAYDEN (cont)

It is time for this community to help itself. The police are spread paper thin, but, my partner and I will personally supervise the the formation of a neighborhood watch. A neighborhood watch to be our eyes and ears.

The crowd is quiet.

HAYDEN (cont)

If you feel strongly, then it's time to make some sacrifices. If you will not assist, you have no right to speak against me.

THROUGH VIDEO CAMERA

Hayden stands tall and handsome as ever.

HAYDEN (cont)

You can't do this from your bed. I need men out there with me. On the streets, at all hours of the night.

MAN (o.s.)

I'll do it!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Hayden gets down off the car. The video camera (our P.O.V.) follows.

HAYDEN

(points)

And you, Doctor Fomberg. You are a
community leader.

Fomberg steps forward, into frame, on the spot.

DR FOMBERG

I'll do what ever it takes.

Hayden smiles his most reassuring, winning smile.

HAYDEN

We will get him.

INSERT -- TELEVISION SCREEN (CONTINUOUS)

Several other men step forward to join. A man shakes
Hayden's hand.

The network news ANCHOR appears on the screen, at his desk.

ANCHOR

(from t.v.)

And so, in a once peaceful,
Pennsylvania suburb, the murder of
a young boy has shaken the calm,
and the search for a brutal killer
continues.

The television turns off.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- DUSK

Michael, sitting in the lounge chair, lays down the remote
control. He looks worse then ever. No sleep. His room is
a trashed hell on earth.

He gets up and goes to the desk. The Brainscan Tape Three
is there. He picks it up. DOORBELL RINGS.

Michael ignores it, staring at the video cassette.
The doorbell rings again. Michael goes to the chair and
sits, still looking the cassette over.

A silence in the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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KIMBERLY (o.s.)
(from outside window)

Michael?

Michael looks to the window. The shades are drawn.

KIMBERLY (o.s.,cont)
(louder)

Michael?

Michael does not want to go to the window.

KIMBERLY (o.s.,cont)
Michael...please!

Michael goes to the window. He opens it and looks out.
Kimberly is standing between their houses.

KIMBERLY (cont)
Oh, Michael, I have to talk to you.
We have to talk.

Michael looks down at her with disdain. He leaves the
window and goes to his desk to get the school newspaper.

KIMBERLY (o.s.)
Michael?

EXT. YARD -- DUSK

Kimberly is looking up at Michael's empty window.

KIMBERLY (cont)
Michael, please...

Michael returns to the window, leaning out. He tosses the
school newspapers, and it flutters down to Kimberly.

MICHAEL
No comment.

Michael backs away and slams the window closed.

KIMBERLY
Oh, Michael, no! I didn't mean for
it to happen. Stacie did it!

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- DUSK

Michael looks down at her, closing the drapes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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KIMBERLY (cont)
We were just talking...

Michael crosses to sit in the lounge chair.

KIMBERLY (o.s.,cont)
Please, you have to believe me! I
never meant for Stacie to use what
I told her!

INSERT -- P.O.V. THROUGH BINOCULARS

Kimberly continues her pleading, viewed from this vantage
point; from Michael's backyard.

KIMBERLY (cont)
I was just talking with her. I told
her how I stopped to see you...oh,
Michael...don't do this.

EXT. FOREST'S EDGE -- DUSK

Hayden is the one looking through binoculars, standing at
the edge of the forest in Michael's backyard.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- DUSK

Michael switches on the television. He turns on the volume
to drown Kimberly out. He watches in sorrow.

EXT. YARD -- DUSK

Kimberly can see the flickering light of the television
against Michael's drapes. She is very upset, but gives up,
walking towards the front of her house.

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, BACK DOOR -- DUSK

Hayden calmly inserts a lock picking tool into the
doorknob.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM -- DUSK

Hayden enters. He listens to the sound of the television
coming down from upstairs.

At the fireplace, Hayden crouches, taking a plastic bag and
a spoon from his pocket.

He scoops the spoon into the pile of ashes in the fireplace
and pours the ash into the plastic bag.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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He scoops more, till the clear bag is half full. He stands, zipping the bag closed and puts it in his pocket. He leaves as calmly as he came.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael is dressed entirely in black. He wears black gloves. He inserts Brainscan Tape Three into the VCR.

He sits in the lounge chair. He picks up the remote and points it at the VCR. He pauses, closing his eyes.

MICHAEL
(to himself)
Just the clue.

He opens his eyes and hits play. There is a brilliant flash of light from the television.

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, BACK DOOR -- NIGHT

Michael opens the door and looks out, cautious, listening. His eyes are completely black.

He moves out, towards the forest in the backyard. He runs, as fast as he can with the limp.

INSERT -- TELEVISION SCREEN

The screen is red. The digital counter is counting down. The limit is about forty-five minutes.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET -- NIGHT

Two men stand at the corner, talking with one uniformed policeman. One man is holding a walkie-talkie.

EXT. ANOTHER SUBURBAN STREET -- NIGHT

Two men walk, smoking cigarettes and drinking beer. One man carries a flashlight, which he shines between houses as they walk on.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET -- NIGHT

On the corner, Hayden has gathered about TWENTY MEN, Dr. Fomberg included. Two policemen stand by their patrol car. The men listen to Hayden, who has a map of the neighborhood in his hand and fifteen walkie-talkies on laid out on the hood of his car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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HAYDEN

Stay in pairs. One walkie-talkie per group. Hopefully this will be an uneventful evening. That's what we're here for: to keep things calm. To protect. However, anything unusual you see should be reported to the group leader, Dr. Fomberg.

Fomberg nod, feeling important, holding a portable police radio.

HAYDEN (cont)

He will call it in to officers patrolling by car. There is a lot of ground to cover. You all have your assigned neighborhood.

Hayden motions to the two police officers. They step forward and begin to distribute the walkie-talkies.

HAYDEN (cont)

I have one last thing to say. I've said it to every single group I spoke to tonight. That is, I appreciate the enthusiasm of the members of this area, but I know some are more enthusiastic than others. I know many of you own hunting rifles, and even revolvers.

(pauses)

If I see a gun in civilian hands tonight, I will confiscate that gun and arrest its owner. I don't care if it's a fucking squirt gun. Is that clear?

The group gives a collective murmur of agreement.

HAYDEN (cont)

That's it. Thank you.

The group begins to break up, carrying walkie-talkies and flashlights. One man, JOHN, nudges his friend, BOB.

JOHN

You better get rid of that.

BOB

Fuck him. If I see that murderer first, he's mine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Bob pats the gun which is tucked in his pants, under his shirt.

BOB (cont)

The right to bear arms.

JOHN

Just don't let the cops see it.

(pause)

Let's stop by your house and get that six-pack.

EXT. BACKYARD -- NIGHT

A MIDDLE-AGED MAN stands in his bathrobe by a round, above-ground swimming pool. The yard is lit by lawn torches on long poles which are shoved into the soil.

The man climbs the aluminum ladder to a small platform at water level in the pool. He tests to water with his foot, then slips out of the robe with an expectant sigh. He is nude.

Suddenly, a bright spotlight shines onto his naked form. He turns, cringing and holding his hands over his body.

NUDE MAN

What the hell?! Hey!!

He looks into the bright light, which shoots between the houses from the street, blinding him.

IN THE STREET

KEN and FRANK stand in the back of a pick-up truck. Ken holds a spotlight used for spotting deer, pointing it onto the Nude Man. Frank is holding a hunting rifle.

FRANK

Oh, my Christ! What is that? Is it him?

KEN

No. No.

The Nude Man jumps into the pool with a splash, out of sight.

KEN (cont)

It's just Applebee. He's skinny-dipping again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Ken lowers the spotlight and bangs twice on the roof of the pick-up.

KEN (cont)
(to driver)
Keep moving.

The truck moves on, turning down the street, Ken's spotlight searching.

KEN (cont)
Not a pretty sight.

AT THE POOL

The Nude Man peers over the edge of the pool.

NUDE MAN
What has become of this neighborhood?

EXT. KYLE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

There is one car in front. The yellow police ribbon still ropes the yard off.

INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Martin works, alone. Blood has dried on Kyle's walls and floor. Martin is dusting along the desk, near the outline of the body. PHONE RINGS. Martin answers it.

MARTIN
(into phone)
Martin here.

HAYDEN (v.o.)
(from phone)
How's it coming?

MARTIN
It's pissing me off.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET -- NIGHT

Hayden stands by his car, using the car phone.

HAYDEN
(into phone)
Something has to turn up. There must be something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MARTIN (v.o.)
(from phone)
If I keep picking up smudges, I'm
gonna fucking explode.

HAYDEN
Just be glad you're not out
babysitting these assholes. They're
running around like junior G-men.

INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Martin looks through a few sheet of paper.

MARTIN
(into phone)
There is one thing. Locals talent
found footprints in the soil out back.

HAYDEN (v.o.)
(from phone)
Did you get the molds?

MARTIN
Not till morning.

HAYDEN (v.o.)
If it rains before then, I'll cut
your throat.

MARTIN
Not if I cut yours first.

HAYDEN (v.o.)
When do I get my test on those ashes?

MARTIN
Tommorrow.

HAYDEN (v.o.)
I never thought I'd say this to
someone as ugly as you, Martin, but
you're beautiful.

Martin grunts, hangs up the phone and goes back to work.

EXT. KYLE'S BACKYARD -- NIGHT

Michael moves quickly, stays low. He hides against a tree
just outside of Kyle's yard. He catches his breath, black
eyes searching the darkness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Michael ducks under the police line, heading for the rear of Kyle's house. He goes directly to a line of thick bushes which has been planted parallel to the side of the house.

He gets onto his hands and knees and enters the bushes.

IN THE BUSHES

In the space between the thick bushes and the aluminum siding, Michael searches the dirt. He finds the footprints and begins to destroy them with his gloved hands.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Martin is dusting. PHONE RINGS. Martin stands, bothered by the interruption.

MARTIN
(into phone)
Martin here.

THE VOICE (v.o.)
I believe there is an intruder in the yard.

Martin is confused. The Voice hangs up. Martin pauses briefly, then hangs up. He takes out his gun and goes.

EXT. INSIDE THE BUSHES -- NIGHT

Michael smoothes the soil, moving backwards on all fours. There is a rustling sound nearby. Michael freezes, tensed. There is the CLICK of the HAMMER BEING PULLED BACK ON A GUN.

MARTIN (o.s.)
Don't move in there. Don't move.

OUTSIDE THE BUSHES

Martin stands ready, gun pointed at the bushes.

MARTIN (cont)
Start coming out now. Hands up and head down. Now.

Martins shifts his aim, not sure where to focus.

INSIDE THE BUSHES

Michael is emotionless, thinking it out. He begins to crawl forward, along the edge of the house.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OUTSIDE THE BUSHES

Martin hears the movement.

MARTIN

Not smart!!

He fires!

INSIDE THE BUSHES

Michael falls flat. BANG -- a second shot -- a hole appears in the aluminum siding above his head.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET -- NIGHT

Bob and John are holding beers. They turn their heads.

JOHN

You hear that?

BOB

It's close!

Bob drops his beer and takes out his gun.

EXT. IN THE BUSHES -- NIGHT

A third shot crashes through a small, ground level basement window, shattering it.

Michael pushes through the window and disappears into the darkness of the basement.

INT. BASEMENT -- NIGHT

Michael falls to the hard cement floor. He jumps up and moves through the basement, knocking over shelves which clatter to the ground. At a workbench, Michael searches for a weapon, throwing tools and boxes of nails aside. He picks up a hammer.

He moves on, hammer held ready.

INT. KYLE'S HOUSE, GROUND FLOOR, HALL -- NIGHT

Michael slams open the door from the basement and keeps moving. He uses the hammer to smash the hall's ceiling light.

Darkness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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INT. KYLE'S HOUSE, GROUND FLOOR, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Michael comes from the hall, moving fast. There is lamp lit on a table. He smashes it with the hammer and the room goes black.

EXT. KYLE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Martin is charging around to the front of the house. He heads for the front door. He sees Michael through the home's large, front picture window. Michael sees Martin.

Martin aims, just as Michael slams his hammer into the lamp in the room.

Martin fires as the room goes dark! The picture window explodes.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

Michael falls to the floor, uninjured. His black eyes look up.

He goes through the home's entrance hall to the stairs, heading up to the second floor.

Martin slams open the front door, entering the house. He stops. A DOOR is HEARD CLOSING upstairs.

INT. KYLE'S HOUSE, SECOND FLOOR, PARENT'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Michael switches on the light and looks around. He looks at himself in a large mirror which hangs over a long, low dressing table. He stares at his bizarre reflection.

INT, KYLE'S HOUSE, ENTRANCE HALL, FIRST FLOOR -- NIGHT

Martin slows, at the bottom of the stairs. He hits a light switch, illuminating the hallway above. He starts up the stairs, cocking his gun. There are several closed doors to choose from.

A SOUND is HEARD. FURNITURE is BEING MOVED behind one door. Martin grins, moves to that door, putting his hand on the knob. He listens. Silence.

CLOSE (IN ROOM)

on Michael's pitch black eyes, waiting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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CLOSE (IN ROOM)

on Michael's hand holding the hammer tight.

IN THE HALL, SECOND FLOOR

Martin throws the door wide open with an animal grunt, pointing the gun, and he is face to face with his own reflection -- an infinitesimal moment of confusion.

IN THE ROOM, SECOND FLOOR

Michael has set the large mirror on a chair, reflective side towards the door, and now he flings the hammer with all his might into the back of the mirror!

IN THE HALL, SECOND FLOOR

The hammer shatters the mirror as it flies through and --

--hits Martin full in the face!

Martin falls, his gun flips out of his hand and falls down the stairs.

Michael pushes the ruined mirror aside and goes to pass over Martin's body, but Martin is grabbing, blinded by blood seeping from his face. Martin's hand catches Michael's ankle.

Michael falls down, at the doorway to Kyle's room.

EXT. KYLE'S YARD -- NIGHT

John and Bob run towards the house, crossing the police line. Bob has his gun ready.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Michael leaps up, trying to get away from Martin, but Martin charges forward on his hands and knees, growling in fury. Martin grabs Michael's leg again, tripping Michael.

Michael slams into Kyle's dresser, knocking books, bottles of hairspray and other items onto the floor. Michael bounces off and lands on his back. Martin holds Michael to the ground and begins to strengthen his hold, moving up, grabbing for Michael's throat.

MARTIN

You're dead now!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Michael reaches forward, for anything. The air-conditioner is in the window above his head and he can reach the cord.

Martin is straddling Michael and squeezing both hands on Michael's neck.

MARTIN (cont)

You're dead!

Michael gags. Life is being choked out of him. He wraps the air-conditioner cord around Martin's neck. Blood drips from Martin's broken nose onto Michael's face. Martin can still not see because of the blood.

Michael's hands struggle to choke Martin with the cord, but Martin hits them away and continues his choke hold. Martin is enjoying this. Michael is not able to breath. His black eyes are wide.

Michael can turn his head just enough to see a can of spray deodorant beside him. He grabs the can and pops the top off with one hand. He sprays the deodorant into the wet gash in Martin's nose.

Martin screams in pain, flying back in shock, grabbing his face in agony. The air-conditioner's cord tightens round his throat.

Michael scrambles out from under Martin, stands, gasping, looks at the air-conditioner.

MARTIN

You son-of-a-bitch!!

Michael forces the window open.

Martin tries to free his neck from the cord's tangle.

Michael pulls the cord hard, causing Martin to fall forward, creating slack. Now, Michael shoves his shoulder against the air-conditioner, pushing out!

EXT. KYLE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

The air-conditioner comes out of the window sill, falls, then suddenly stops -- a sick SNAP is HEARD from the window. The air-conditioner hangs, swinging, by the cord.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Martin is dead. The air-conditioner's cord has pulled him against the window sill, snapping his neck, and is half hung, half sitting, eye's rolled up in their sockets.

Michael stares at the corpse. There is a clamoring downstairs in the house.

BOB (o.s.)
(from downstairs)
Upstairs. I heard something.

Michael crosses the room to another window on another wall. He opens it.

EXT. GARAGE ROOF -- NIGHT

Michael climbs out of Kyle's window onto the roof of the garage. From here, he can hear shouts in the distance. Some backyards are now lit by porchlights.

TWO MEMBERS of the neighborhood watch, both carrying guns, run across Kyle's backyard, towards the front of the house. They do not notice Michael. Michael waits till they pass, then goes to a low corner of the roof. He jumps.

ON THE GROUND

Michael lands, looks all directions, then hurries off in the direction he came, heading towards trees for cover.

INT. KYLE'S HOUSE, STAIRS TO SECOND FLOOR -- NIGHT

Bob and John walk up the stairs, towards Kyle's room. Bob has his gun out and his finger to his lips to keep John quiet. There is a sound from behind them. They turn, facing back down the stairs.

JOHN
(whispering)
Somebody's down there.

INT. KYLE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM, GROUND FLOOR -- NIGHT

The room is dark. The two men Michael saw cross the lawn have entered the house. Both of them hold their guns ready.

ONE MAN
(whispers)
Someone's up there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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The men crouch and aim. They wait.

EXT. KYLE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

There is a GROUP of SHOTS, BOOMING. Gunfire lights the windows of the house.

EXT. STREET CORNER -- NIGHT

Hayden's car is parked to block another car. Hayden has the driver and three passengers in the glare of the headlight. He is holding a rifle by the barrel and shaking it in the men's faces.

HAYDEN

What did I tell you? What did I say?! You stupid bastards.

The RADIO in Hayden's car SQUALKS.

DR FOMBERG (v.o.)

(from radio)

...Hayden! This is Fomberg. There's something...

Dr. Fomberg's voice fades and is replaced by static.

HAYDEN

Jesus. What's this now?
(points to men)
Wait here!

Hayden goes to his car.

HAYDEN

(into radio mic)

This is Hayden. What is it?

DR FOMBERG (v.o.)

(from radio, static)

...Something is going on....two men
are.....called on the walkie.....

The static over take's Fomberg's voice completely.

HAYDEN

(into mic)

Listen to me. Turn the knob on the
top of the radio. The small knob.

Hayden waits, but the static gets louder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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HAYDEN (cont)

Imbecile!!

Hayden gets into his car and begins to switch channels on the radio.

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT

Michael ducks behind a row of trash can as a police car races by, lights flashing.

He gets up and continues cautiously on his way. He is about to cut between two houses when he stops and listens. SIRENS can be HEARD, far away. Michael smiles. He runs between the houses.

EXT. SUBURBAN BACKYARD -- NIGHT

This is the backyard where the nude man was swimming in his above-ground pool. Michael looks around the corner of the house to see if the way is clear. It is.

Michael runs across the lawn, when suddenly, the Nude Man breaks up through the surface of the pool's water.

Michael freezes in shock. The Nude Man is staring right at him --

NUDE MAN

What are you....?

-- staring right into Michael's black eyes.

NUDE MAN (cont)

...What are you doing?!

Michael looks around quickly. There is a lawn mower nearby, and beside it, a can of gasoline.

Michael rushes to grab the gas can.

NUDE MAN (cont)

Hey...

Michael moves towards the pool, unscrewing the gas can's top.

NUDE MAN (cont)

Hey!!!

Michael throws the open can into the pool.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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NUDE MAN (cont)

No!!!!

The Nude Man scrambles in the water and gas, trying to get to the ladder.

NUDE MAN (cont)

You're crazy!!!

Michael grabs one of the flaming lawn torches and turns to the pool -- he grins sadistically.

MICHAEL

No kidding?

The Nude Man is not going to make it out.

NUDE MAN

No!!!

Michael throws the torch!

The nude man ducks under the water! The torch hits the floating gasoline and the surface of the pool erupts in flame.

Michael falls back, shielding his eyes from the heat and light.

EXT. STREET CORNER -- NIGHT

The four members of the watch are still standing by while Hayden talks to a POLICE DRIVER and his partner who have pulled up in a patrol car.

HAYDEN

What is the fuck is going on out there?! Who talked to...?

Hayden looks up in the sky, his eyes widening in horror. There is a huge cloud of smoke climbing into the sky and the glow of flames can be seen, not far away.

HAYDEN (cont)

Holy shit.

The officers look.

DRIVER

What is it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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HAYDEN
(pointing)
Something big! Go!

The driver hesitates. Hayden kicks the car door.

HAYDEN (cont)
Go!!! Now! Now!

The police car screeches away, lights and sirens coming to life.

Hayden looks up in the sky.

HAYDEN
(to himself)
Michael.

Hayden turns to get into his car. He looks at the four men standing there.

HAYDEN (cont)
Get out of here! Get lost!

Hayden gets into his car and roars off, in the direction opposite that that the patrol car took.

INT. HAYDEN'S CAR -- NIGHT

Hayden drives as fast as possible around a corner.

HAYDEN
(to himself)
You better be home in bed, Michael,
or I'll be waiting for you to get
back.

He drives faster.

EXT. BACKYARD -- NIGHT

The gasoline layer on the surface of the pool's water burns on. Michael tries to look below the flames, searching for the nude man, but it is too bright. He turns his head. He can HEAR SIRENS growing LOUDER.

Michael grabs a second lawn lamp. He knocks the lamp off the pole and uses the pole's pointed tip to put a hole in the pool's aluminum side. Water begins to pour out. Michael continues, punching more holes, trying to create a faster flow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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EXT. STREET -- NIGHT

Members of the watch are running towards the distant flames.

EXT. BACKYARD -- NIGHT

Michael throws down the pole. The water gushs from the hole. The layer of flames lowers, trapping the Nude Man.

Michael runs, down a hill, through adjoining backyards, deeper into the block. The SIRENS are close.

AT THE POOL

The flame layer is falling fast as gallons and gallons of water follow Michael down the hill. The Nude Man's hands come out of the hole, struggling to block the water's escape, but it is no use.

Two policemen run into the backyard, guns drawn. They look at the burning pool, not understanding what is happening.

DOWN THE HILL

Michael runs on. A MAN'S SCREAM cuts through the night from behind. Michael stops and turns to look back.

In the distance, at the top of the hill, the Nude Man is running from the pool. His entire body is burning. The man flails wildly as the policemen try to grab him and put him out. Porch lights are coming on. The flaming Nude Man falls and one of the officers tries to put him out, using the Nude Man's robe to cover the flames.

Michael turns to continue his run when a bright spotlight hits him.

MAN'S VOICE (o.s.)

Look! Look!

Michael sees the light is shining between two houses from the street. A gunshot. The shrubs behind Michael are sliced by bullets. Michael takes off, further into the yards.

IN THE STREET

It's the pick-up truck. Ken pounds on the pick-up's roof.

KEN (o.s.)

Cut him off. Around the block!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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EXT. KYLE'S FRONT YARD -- NIGHT

A police car is parked there and another one screeches to a halt beside it. TWO OFFICERS jump out and run to the front door.

INT. KYLE'S HOUSE, FRONT DOOR -- NIGHT

The Lead Officer enters through the open door.

LEAD OFFICER

Jesus.

The Lead Officer crosses himself. There is blood all over the entrance hall. John and Bob lay dead, full of bullet holes.

ANOTHER OFFICER (o.s.)

(from upstairs)

There's more downstairs! And...

UPSTAIRS, IN KYLE'S ROOM

This officer stands, looking at Martin's corpse. Martin is still hung against the window sill, face bloated.

ANOTHER OFFICER (cont)

...wait till you see this shit!

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT

Hayden's car turns around a corner at breakneck speed.

AT THE WHEEL

Hayden's eyes are wild.

EXT. BACKYARDS -- NIGHT

Michael runs, tiring. VOICES are SHOUTING OUT. There is HEARD an occasional BLAST OF GUNFIRE.

Michael runs past a birdbath, jumps over a garden and ducks under a clothing line.

He crosses a property line, but porch lamps come on ahead. He stops and changes direction to avoid the light.

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT

The pick-up truck with Ken and Frank moves slowly. Ken has his gun up. Frank holds the spotlight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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DIVER

Where is he?

FRANK

I don't know.

KEN

Circle the block again.

DIVER

Forget that!

The truck swerves, pulling up onto a front lawn. The driver speeds up, going between two houses, into the backyards.

EXT. BACKYARD -- NIGHT

Michael gasps for air, leaning against a tall wooden fence. He looks into the yards to see --

-- Porch lights are on everywhere. Red police lights are flashing. Several flashlight beams are moving across the yards, coming this way.

Michael faces the fence and jumps to grab the top. He struggles to climb over to the dark yard on the other side. He gets his left leg over, and is just lifting the other when hands grab the right ankle. It's Dr. Fomberg!

OTHER SIDE OF FENCE

Michael, off-balance, falls over the fence, but is held there, his body upside down, back to the fence on one side and his right leg, from the knee down, held on the other side. He is over a garden and flowers brush his face as he winces in pain.

FOMBERG (o.s.)

(from over fence)

I've got you! I've got you!

Michael tries to free himself.

FOMBERG'S SIDE

Fomberg's hands hold the right ankle tight.

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Hayden stops his car in Michael's driveway. He gets out, heading to the front door. There is a SCREECH from the CAR'S RADIO.

(CONTINUED)

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MAN'S VOICE (v.o.)
(from radio)
Detective Hayden, we have an officer
down.....Martin is down.....

Hayden stops, turning to the car, horrified.

MAN'S VOICE (v.o.)
(from radio)
...Do you read? Martin is down...

Hayden looks toward Michael's house. He clenches his fist in rage. He runs back to the car and gets in. He peels across Michael's yard to the street.

EXT. AT THE FENCE, FOMBERG'S SIDE -- NIGHT

Dr. Fomberg is practically foaming at the mouth as he twists Michael's leg.

DR. FOMBERG
(shouting)
He's here!! I got him! Down here!

ON MICHAEL'S SIDE

Michael's face is bright red. There are gardening tools leaning against the fence. Michael grabs at one of the wooden handles.

ON FOMBERG'S SIDE

Fomberg twists the leg hard. It sounds like cartilage is ripping in the right knee.

ON MICHAEL'S SIDE

Michael lets out a strange weak scream. He grabs at the handle.

FOMBERG (o.s.)
Down here!

UP IN THE BACKYARDS

Several members of the watch are walking with flashlights and pistols.

FOMBERG (o.s.)
(from the distance)
He's here! Down here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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The watch members react. ONE MAN speaks into his walkie-talkie.

ONE MAN
(into walkie-talkie)
He's down at Johnstone's yard.
Jonestone's!

AT THE FENCE, FOMBERG'S SIDE

Fomberg is beaming.

FOMBERG
(shouting)
I got him!!!

ON MICHAEL'S SIDE

Michael's hand grabs the tool handle.

EXT. BACKYARD -- NIGHT

The speeding pick-up truck drives over the birdbath Michael passed. The bird bath smashes into pieces.

They are coming up fast on the clothing line. Frank, holding the spotlight, ducks, but the line slides over the truck's roof and catches Ken in the throat.

Ken flies from the back of the truck, flung by the line.

The truck moves on with Frank looking back in terror.

EXT. AT THE FENCE, MICHAEL'S SIDE -- NIGHT

Michael grips the long handle of the lawn tool. It is a metal rake. Michael, still upside down, takes it in both hands, over his head.

FOMBERG (o.s.)
He's down here!

Michael leans forward, bending his midsection with all his energy, swinging the rack in an arch, towards the top of the fence.

FOMBERG
I got -- *

Glitch. Michael falls backwards, released, into the garden. There is a burbling sound from the other side of the fence.

(CONTINUED)

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The rake's handle jiggles and jerks, pointed up in the air. The other end is obviously embedded in Fomberg's skull. The rake falls, out of sight behind the fence.

Michael gets up and begins to run, gritting his teeth, trying to bear the pain of the knee. The yard he has climbed into is full of lawn ornaments -- stone deers, stone rabbits and other stone animals. Michael heads through the bizarre still-life zoo, heading to a door on the other wall of the fence. The sounds of his pursuers are louder, closer.

At the fence's door, Michael looks out. Porchlights are on everywhere. There is no darkness to run to.

The bright spotlight hits Michael. Michael turns to look, just as the pick-up truck crashes through the fence.

Michael runs, out of the fenced yard.

In the back of the truck, Frank is holding the spotlight and struggling to point a shotgun at the same time. He gives a shout of victory and fires.

The shot knocks the head off a stone lawn deer.

FRANK

Go! Go! He's right there!!

The truck surges forward.

Michael runs, spotlight on him, out in the open yard.

The truck's tire hits the stone lawn deer's head. The deer's antler blows the tire!

Frank screams as the truck goes out of control.

The truck smashes through another side of the fence and hits a telephone pole. The pole tumbles down, snapped power lines sparking and crackling.

A live wire lands on the truck's hood.

Michael turns to look back. All the lights around him go out suddenly. Michael's face and black eyes are lit by blue light. Frank and the driver are heard crying out in pain from offscreen as their bodies fry. Michael smiles. He moves on, leaving it behind, moving into the darkness.

The truck explodes and Frank and the driver's cries are lost.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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INT. KYLE'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Three officers are in the room. One is crouched close to Martin's corpse, which still hangs. Hayden rushes into the room. He sees Martin's body.

HAYDEN

No!!!

He is crazy with rage and sorrow. He pushes past the officers to get to Martin.

HAYDEN

(screaming)

You left him like this!!!

Hayden grabs Martin's body and tries to untangle the cord from Martin's neck.

ONE OFFICER

We haven't got pictures...

HADYEN

Fuck the picture!!!

Hayden finally frees Martin. The air-conditioner is heard crashing to the ground outside the window. Hayden holds Martin's body close to his.

HAYDEN

Martin.

Hayden holds Martin tight. Tears of rage well up in Hayden's eyes.

EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT

Michael is making his way through the trees, slowed by the wounded knee. Far behind him, flashlight beams are searching. GUNFIRE is HEARD.

EXT. MICHAEL'S BACKYARD -- NIGHT

Michael moves from the edge of the forest. He goes through his backyard, towards his house. He is mere yards away.

KIMBERLY (o.s.)

Michael?

Michael stops. He looks to Kimberly's house.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Kimberly is leaning out her window, looking at Michael.

KIMBERLY (cont)
Michael, is that you? What's going
on?

Michael stares up, showing no recognition or emotion.
Voices are shouting in the wood. Michael looks back, then
runs to his house.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael enters. The digital counter in the t.v. screen is
low and falling. Michael walks to the chair, picks up the
remote control and points it at the VCR. There is a bright
flash of light from the television screen. The digital
counter freezes at 00:01:50.

Michael's pupils shrink back to normal. He stands, gasping,
then falls back onto the lounge chair. He is sweating and
shaking.

MICHAEL
Oh, shit. Oh, shit.

Michael touches his knee and hisses, in pain. He sits back,
covering his face in his hands.

MICHAEL (cont)
Oh, what happened?! Oh, fuck...

TELEPHONE RINGS. Michael looks at it, his eyes burning with
anger. He picks it up.

MICHAEL
(shouting into
phone)
I KILLED AGAIN! I KILLED AGAIN!

THE VOICE (v.o.)
(from phone)
You were magnificent! The neighborhood
is covered in blood!

MICHAEL
You said I would not kill!

THE VOICE (v.o.)
You protected yourself! Your hand was
forced!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL

I did not want to kill!

Michael is beginning to sob.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

(calm)

There was a witness.

MICHAEL

(hysterical)

NO!!!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Tape four.

Michael stands, the knee throbbing with pain, and he throws the phone across the room.

He falls back into the lounge chair, insane with furious emotion, screaming at the ceiling.

EXT. KYLE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

The street in front of Kyle's house is teeming with people. Police cars and ambulances are on the scene -- lights flashing. Policemen are trying to hold back neighbors. A local news crew is crossing the lawn, shooting with their video camera. It's pandemonium.

Hayden comes through the front door, shoving policemen out of the way.

HADYEN

Clear the area!!

Hayden walks to the lawn and into a crowd of neighbors.

HADYEN (cont)

Clear this area, now!! This is a crime scene!

The news cameraman is shooting Hayden. The camera's spotlight is shining on Hayden as he shoves the crowd back, knocking people to the ground.

HAYDEN (cont)

Clear out, now!!

Ambulance attendants are bringing out Martin's body, which is covered by a sheet. Policemen are escorting them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Hayden sees the cameraman and the video camera.

HAYDEN (cont)

Get that camera out of here!

Hayden storms over to the cameraman and pushes him. The cameraman backs up, but keeps shooting. Spittle flies from Hayden's lips.

HADYEN (cont)

Turn that camera off, you motherfucker,
of I swear, I'll kill you!!!

Hayden rushes forward, grabbing hold of the camera's lens. The cameraman will not let go.

Hayden pulls out his gun and points it at the cameraman, just as a police officer grabs Hayden's arm. Hayden still hangs onto the camera, dropping his gun. Two officers are on Hayden now, trying to control him. Hayden shakes one off and pulls the camera free. He throws it into the air.

Hayden is taken to the ground by the policemen. They pile on to restrain him.

HAYDEN (cont)

Get these people out of here.

In the street, the flying video camera bounces off the hood of a car and lands on the asphalt with a crunch.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE -- DAWN

It's a beautiful, sunny morning. Birds are singing sweetly.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- DAWN

Michael is asleep in the lounge chair. His face is twitching.

INT. KIMBERLY'S BEDROOM (MICHAEL'S DREAM) -- NIGHT

Michael stands by Kimberly's bed. Kimberly is behind him, pulling at his open shirt and moving her hands across his chest. She kisses his neck and tongues his ear. She pinches Michael's nipples and Michael squirms, uneasy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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KIMBERLY

Make love to me, Michael. I want you now.

Kimberly pulls off Michael's shirt.

MICHAEL

Kimberly...

Kimberly continues stroking Michael's body, kissing him hotly. Michael turns to kiss her.

MICHAEL (cont)

Just, please, be patient...

Kimberly holds Michael's head and forces her tongue into his mouth. She pulls back, smiling.

KIMBERLY

Don't worry. I'll show you how.

Her hands reach down and unbuckle his belt. She is hurried and rough.

KIMBERLY (cont)

I just want you. You want me too, don't you?

Michael closes his eyes, excited and frightened at the same time.

MICHAEL

Please, wait.

KIMBERLY

Are you afraid?

MICHAEL

No.

KIMBERLY

Then, I want to do it now.

Kimberly pulls Michael's pants down. Michael looks down to see his knee's scars are swollen, bleeding.

MICHAEL

Oh, God.

Michael steps away, trying to cover the scars with his hands. Blood streams down his leg.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL (cont)

Don't look at me.

Kimberly moves to him, gets on her knees and pushes Michael's hands away.

KIMBERLY

Don't be afraid, Michael. I don't mind. I like you just the way you are.

Kimberly grabs the knee and begins to kiss the scars. Michael watches in fear. Kimberly begins to lick the scars, sucking up the blood.

KIMBERLY (cont)

Trust me.

Michael cannot watch her. He turns his head and closes his eyes.

KIMBERLY (o.s.,cont)

I love you.

Michael looks down.

It is no longer Kimberly kneeling before him, but Kyle! Kyle's throat is slit from ear to ear and he is covered in blood. He clings to Michael. His eyes plead to Michael for help.

Michael steps back in repulsion. Kyle falls to the floor and crawls towards Michael, unable to speak. KIMBERLY'S SCREAM is HEARD.

Michael looks up. Outside Kimberly's window, in Michael's window, Kimberly is standing in Hayden's arms. Kimberly is pointing at Michael, holding onto Hayden tightly.

KIMBERLY

That's him! It's him!

Hayden raises his gun and points it at Michael.

Michael raises his hands, helpless.

MICHAEL

Kimberly!

Hayden fires.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Michael's right knee is hit and it bursts. Michael spins. He falls face forward towards the floor.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

Young Michael, 8, falls to the asphalt. We are now on the highway where Young Michael crawls, dragging the shattered right knee. Young Michael is close to his mother's body. His screams are only a prodding whimper now.

YOUNG MICHAEL

Please, mother, please...

Finally, he is at the body, which is lying face down in a puddle of blood. Young Michael reaches out to her. He reaches to turn her over. Her body rolls, turns slowly, but the head remains, completely severed from the body!

Blood seeps out, soaking Young Michael's hands as he tires to scream, but nothing comes. A TELEPHONE is HEARD RINGING VERY LOUD and CLEAR.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- DAWN

Michael jerks awake in the lounge chair, crying. He is totally spent. He moves very slowly to where the phone is on the floor, off the hook, where he threw it. He picks up the receiver.

MICHAEL

(into phone)

What do you want from me?

THE VOICE (v.o.)

(from phone)

You know who the witness is, don't you?

Michael closes his eyes, trying to stop the tears. He just nods.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Tape four.

MICHAEL

(sobbing)

No.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

The final tape.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL

Please...

THE VOICE (v.o.)

The tape arrives this morning. Tonight will be perfect.

MICHAEL

Why? Why are you doing this to me?

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Because you wanted the ultimate experience in terror. Because fear and terror are in the doing. True fear isn't sitting and watching horror films, like some little child. Fear is in the sound a knife makes when it hits bone. Fear is in feeling the heat of someone else's blood on your skin. You have to get into it with both hands to truly know what it's all about.

MICHAEL

(weak)

I think I've had enough.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

People have mocked you all your life. Now you tear their laughter from their throats, quite literally. It's poetry. You will never be as respected as you are when you hold another's life in your hands.

MICHAEL

I won't kill her.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

She will hear about the killings performed last night. She won't be able to figure what you were doing out, but, in time, she will tell Hayden she saw you. One plus one...

MICHAEL

She'll come to me first. I'll tell...

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You still think she cares for you?!

The Voice laughs, aa long slow laugh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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THE VOICE (v.o.,cont)

You still cling to the fantasy. I'm not surprised. Even after you held her, and trusted her, told her your intimate feelings, only to see those feelings in print the very next day.

(laughs again)

If you really think, deep down inside, a beautiful girl like Kimberly could love you, or even like you, then even I pity you.

MICHAEL

I love her.

THE VOICE (V.O.)

No matter how much you imagine you love her, she will always think of you as the weak, ugly cripple. And, after you are found out, she will sit with her friends in school and join them as they mock you. She will think back, on how she touched you that day, and she will be sickened. She will want to vomit.

Michael closes his eyes, still crying.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Do you really want to depend on Kimberly, just as you depended on your mother? You will be left behind again.

MICHAEL

Damn you!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Dependency leads to pain. You can no longer be the useless child, born to forever suckle. You are alone. I thought you knew this.

MICHAEL

You're wrong.

THE VOICE (v.o.)

You won't even remember killing her.

MICHAEL

Who are you?!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

Will you suffer more, or save yourself?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL

Who are you?!

MOTHER'S VOICE (v.o.)

(from phone)

I'm here to protect you, honey.

Michael is numbed.

MICHAEL

Mom?

THE VOICE (v.o.)

She's gone, Michael. Long gone!

MICHAEL

Oh, God damn you, who are you?!!

THE VOICE (v.o.)

If you love, you need again.

MICHAEL

WHO ARE YOU?

THE VOICE (v.o.)

I cannot believe you do not know!

The Voice is changing now, becoming more human, slowly.

THE VOICE (v.o.,cont)

I know you, Michael...

The Voice has become Michael's voice!

THE VOICE (v.o.,cont)

(MICHAEL'S VOICE)

I know you because I am you!!! You
know that! I AM YOU!

Michael's eyes are blank as he listens.

THE VOICE (v.o.,cont)

(MICHAEL'S VOICE)

Kill her tonight.

Michael drops the phone and falls forward. He weeps
and begins to pound his fists on the floor, enraged.

MICHAEL

Why am I me?! God, tell me. Why
can't I be somebody else?! Why am I
me?!!

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD YARDS -- DAWN

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Hayden stands with Detective Gwen amidst the damage from the previous evening. Police barrier ribbon is everywhere. Policemen are searching the yards for clues in the grass. Body bags are being carried out of the hole that the truck made in the fence.

Hayden looks disheveled, beaten.

GWEN

I think everybody understands you were distraught when your partner was found dead. I've convinced the cameraman you assaulted not to press charges.

HAYDEN

(bitter)

I appreciate your understanding.

Hayden turns, looking to another area. In the distance, photographers and cameramen are shooting him. He watches, uncaring.

GWEN

I hope you also appreciate the fact that your services will no longer be necessary on this case.

(pause)

I think you've done enough damage, don't you?

Hayden does not acknowledge the taunt.

GWEN (cont)

When you finish your reports, I hope you'll agree to be taken off.

Gwen waits, trying to gloat over this.

HAYDEN

Whatever you feel is best, Detective.

Gwen nods. He stares at Hayden, who has not looked at Gwen once. Hayden is just looking at the destruction before them, emotionless.

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT

Hayden heads to his car. A POLICEMAN follows after him, calling Hayden's name. Hayden waits. The policeman has an envelope.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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POLICEMAN
(hands envelope)
Gwen says you'll need this for the
final report. Philadelphia lab.

The officer starts back the way he came. Hayden tears open the envelope and quickly opens the sheet inside. Some spark has returned to his eyes.

INSERT -- ON SHEET OF PAPER

On the sheet: ANALYSIS OF ASHES/ BLAIRTON/ CASE 11235.

At the bottom: TRACES OF BLOOD TYPE B NEG. FOUND IN ASHES.
SAME BLOOD TYPE AS MURDER VICTIM WILLIAM
TEBBS. OTHER TRACES LISTED BELOW.

EXT. STREET -- DAWN

Hayden looks up from the sheet. He looks around to see nobody is watching him. He tears up the sheet, tearing it into small pieces. He drops the pieces on the ground.

The pieces flutter away.

EXT. MICHAEL'S PORCH -- EARLY EVENING

Kimberly rings the bell anxiously, shifting her weight. She rings it again.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- EARLY EVENING

Michael sits in his lounge chair, watching a sitcom, staring at the screen. DOORBELL RINGS. Michael just keeps watching, blankly. Doorbell rings.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- LATE NIGHT

The room is empty.

The television is on and the Brainscan digital counter is counting down from about fifteen minutes: 14:23:15 and falling.

INT. KIMBERLY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Kimberly lies asleep. She is radiant.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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EXT. MICHAEL'S BACKYARD -- NIGHT

Michael moves around the corner of his house and crosses the space between his house and Kimberly's.

At the side of Kimberly's house, Michael crouches at the basement window. He kicks in the glass, opens the latch and begins to climb in.

AT THE EDGE OF THE FOREST

Hayden stands amongst the trees. He watches Michael enter Kimberly's house. He smiles.

INT. KIMBERLY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Michael enters from the basement door, moving slowly, listening carefully. The house is silent. His black eyes search the room.

There are utensils hanging from a rack above a butcher block table. Michael reaches up and takes down a huge butcher's knife.

INSERT -- TELEVISION SCREEN

The digital counter reads eight minutes and falling.

EXT. KIMBERLY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Hayden waits against the side of Kimberly's house, under her bedroom window. He takes out his gun. He checks the bullets, pushes the gun shut with a click.

INT. KIMBERLY'S HOUSE, HALLWAY, SECOND FLOOR -- NIGHT

Michael moves slowly down the hall, knife in hand.

There is a door at the end of the hall with a paper heart on it. Michael goes to it, opens it.

INT. KIMBERLY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael enters. He closes the door behind him.

He walks to the bed.

Kimberly is beautiful as always.

Michael licks his lips. He raises the knife.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-135-

INSERT -- TELEVISION SCREEN

The digital counter reads five minutes and falling.

INT. KIMBERLY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Kimberly sleeps soundly.

Michael stands, knife still held high. He stands a long moment, biting his lip, staring at Kimberly. A tear rolls down from Michael's black eye.

The knife trembles in his hand.

EXT. KIMBERLY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Hayden pulls back the hammer of his gun.

INT. KIMBERLY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Blood trickles down from Michael's lip, he is biting it so hard. He still holds the knife in the air.

Kimberly turns in her sleep, rolls over, revealing something on the bed.

Michael notices.

It is Kimberly's purple folder. It is open, and there is an 8" by 10" picture of Michael sticking out of it.

Michael lowers the knife.

INSERT -- TELEVISION SCREEN

Digital counter reads three minutes and falling.

INT. KIMBERLY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael picks up the folder. Several other photos slide out. They are all photos of Michael. All were taken through Michael's window from Kimberly's: Michael sitting at his desk, Michael getting undressed, Michael in his underwear doing exercises, etc.

Michael looks across the room. Kimberly's still camera is on a tripod by her window.

Michael lets the knife slip from his hand. He picks up the photos and looks at them. His lips tremble with emotion. He put the photos down and goes to touch Kimberly's face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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Kimberly awakens with a scream. She sees Michael.

KIMBERLY

Michael?! What?! What are you doing
here?! What's going on?!

Michael looks at her with his pitch black eyes.

KIMBERLY (cont)

What's happened to you?!

She is very frightened. Michael faces away.

MICHAEL

I...I...

The door to the room bursts open and Hayden is there, holding his gun in both hands.

Kimberly shrieks.

Michael turns.

Hayden sees them apart, then sees the knife on the floor.

INSERT -- TELEVISION SCREEN

The digital counter is at thirty seconds and counting down.

INT. KIMBERLY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Hayden is crazy with rage. He screams, rushing forward. He picks up the knife and moves toward the bed.

SERIES OF SHOTS (CROSS CUTTING BETWEEN INT. AND INSERT)

- Hayden holds up the knife, blade down.

- Digital counter: 24

- Michael moves toward Kimberly.

- 23

- Hayden swings the knife down.

- 22

- Michael's mouth opens to shout in fear.

- 21

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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- Kimberly's mouth opens.
- 20
- Kimberly screams.
- 19
- Hayden stabs down.
- 18
- The knife plunges into Kimberly's chest.
- 17
- Blood spurts from Kimberly's mouth.
- 16
- Blood splatters onto Hayden's grinning visage.
- 15
- Michael grabs Hayden.
- 14
- Hayden turns.
- 13
- Hayden grabs Michael.
- 12
- Kimberly falls back onto the bed.
- 11
- Blood spews from Kimberly's wound.
- 10
- Blood sprays up on Michael.
- 9
- Hayden holds Michael's throat.
- 8

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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- Hayden brings his gun to Michael's forehead.
- 7
- Hayden's eyes are crazied.
- 6
- Hayden's finger squeezes the trigger.
- 5
- Hayden screams out.

HAYDEN

Murderer!!

- 4
- The gun's hammer clicks forward.
- 3
- The gun erupts, firing!
- 2...1...0.
- A blinding flash of bright light.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael's body jerks in the lounge chair as he shouts at the top of his lungs. He stops, and looks around. He is sitting in front of the television. Loud ROCK MUSIC is HEARD from outside the window. He gasps, breathing hard, heart pounding. He looks all around the room, very quickly.

MICHAEL

Oh, God! Jesus! What the fucking
hell?!!! Shit!

He is shaking, quaking. He no longer looks like he has not slept. He looks at the television. The screen is blank.

He doesn't know what is going on. He looks to the table beside the chair. There: a dinner of chicken, corn and mashed potatoes. A tall glass of milk is beside it.

Michael stands, extremely dizzy. He holds his back in pain.

MICHAEL

Oh, fuck, what the hell is this?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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He goes to the window and pulls the drapes aside. Outside, people are leaving Kimberly's house. Many of them are drunk.

MICHAEL

What's this?! What's this?!

Michael looks back to the table beside the television chair. Chicken, corn, potatoes and milk, barely touched. The same meal as before the first Brainscan tape.

He looks around again. The room is not messy and dirty, like it has been all week. It is relatively clean.

MICHAEL

A dream?! A fucking dream?! Just another dream!? Oh, thank God...

A FEMALE VOICE comes from the television; a gentle, soothing, polite female voice.

FEMALE VOICE (v.o.)

(from t.v.)

Hello there. You have just experienced Brainscan, the ultimate experience in interactive terror. We're glad you decided to play.

Michael goes to the television, confused.

FEMALE VOICE (v.o.)

(from t.v.)

Our special, state of the art cassette releases a powerful reality enhancing signal. We here at Scientific Perception Laboratories, makers of Brainscan and other mood altering tapes, hope you have enjoyed the feeling. However, we understand that reality compression can be traumatic for some.

Michael's mouth drops.

MICHAEL

It wasn't real!

He looks at his hands and feels his face.

MICHAEL (cont)

God, I hope this is real.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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He rushes back to the window and watches more party-goers leaving Kimberly's.

MICHAEL (cont)

The party!

Michael laughs, a broken, thankful laugh.

FEMALE VOICE (v.o.)

(from t.v.)

We offer these simple relaxation techniques to calm you down.

MICHAEL

(still laughing)

There's no Voice. There's no Detective Hayden. I didn't kill anybody!

He is so happy. He is so very, very happy, laughing...slowly, his laugh fades. He looks at the television, realizing he has been royally screwed. He walks back to the television.

FEMALE VOICE (v.o.)

(from t.v.)

In a seated position, place your head between your knees. Now, breath deeply, as deep as you can. Hold it.

MICHAEL

(to t.v.)

You fuckers! What am I, fucking Scrooge?!

FEMALE VOICE (v.o.)

(from t.v.)

Now, exhale. Repeat this procedure till you feel relaxed and complacent.

MICHAEL

Yeah?!

Michael hits stop on the VCR. He ejects the tape. It is Brainscan Tape One. Michael holds it close to his face, screaming at it.

MICHAEL (CONT)

You put me through hell!!!

He throws the tape across the room, where it bounces off the wall and lands on the bed. Michael is pumped with energy. He turns to face the entertainment center.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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He goes wild, grabs the VCR, pulls it till the wires come out the back.

He throws the VCR into the middle of the room, where it lands with a crash.

He goes, picks up the VCR and throws it at the television set. The television's screen cracks.

He goes, pulls on the television, pulls hard, till it unplugs. He struggles with it's weight, then tosses it onto the ground. It lands and the insides are heard shattering.

He picks up the VCR, lifts it over his head and with a grunt, he throws it on top of the wounded television. The television practically explodes, glass crunching and pieces flying.

Michael laughs, very pleased, giving the television the finger.

MICHAEL

(to t.v. and VCR)

Look at you now, fuckers! Look at you

The crumpled t.v. begins to shoot tiny sparks across the room. Michael lets out a whimper of terror.

The sparks stops. The pile sizzles. DOORBELL RINGS.

INT. FRONT HALL -- NIGHT

Michael opens the door. It is Kyle at the door, looking heavy-metal as usual.

KYLE

Hey, Dude-dick. I've been calling for an hour. You don't answer the phone anymore?

MICHAEL

Kyle!

KYLE

I saw this thing on t.v., about...

Michael rushes forward and hugs Kyle, squeezing hard.

KYLE (cont)

Hey! What's up?! Hey...

(pushes Michael off)

...hey, you gone faggot on me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL
Kimberly, don't!

Michael opens his eyes. The light is on and the room is empty. A wrenching sound comes from down the hall. Michael steps out of the room and follows the sound. He goes back to a room he had passed. The door is ajar. Michael pushes it open to see --

IN THE BATHROOM

-- Kimberly holds the head of Taylor, the football player, as he vomits into the toilet. Kimberly looks disgusted.

Michael enters, behind them.

MICHAEL
Kimberly.

Kimberly looks, releasing Taylor's head.

KIMBERLY
Michael?

MICHAEL
I need to talk to you.

Taylor heaves.

MICHAEL (cont)
Alone.

INT. KIMBERLY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael faces Kimberly.

MICHAEL
I just need to ask you one thing.

KIMBERLY
Okay.

MICHAEL
Will you, please, sometime, will you
go out with me?

Kimberly looks perplexed.

KIMBERLY
What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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MICHAEL

Will you go out with me?

KIMBERLY

No.

Michael's face drops, his momentum halted abruptly.

MICHAEL

Pardon me?

KIMBERLY

I mean, I'll think about it, but, you really think this is a good time to ask? I mean...

MICHAEL

You'll think about it?

KIMBERLY

Yes, but...

MICHAEL

Maybe then? Not no? Maybe?

KIMBERLY

Yes, maybe.

MICHAEL

You and Taylor, aren't...steady?

Taylor is heard vomiting again.

KIMBERLY

Are you kidding me?

(looks back)

Listen, I have to go help him finish...

Michael nods, smiling. Kimberly leaves, heads for the bathroom. Michael is ecstatic. He spins around, looking at the bedroom. He turns to leave, but notices Kimberly's purple folder sitting on her dresser.

He looks down the hall to see she is busy, then picks up the folder and sneaks a look. He takes out many pictures. All are photos of gardens and flowers. Michael looks at them, disappointed. He shrugs.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Michael sticks his head in to call Kyle, but stops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There, on the floor, Kyle is making out with Stacie.

Michael is amazed.

EXT. KIMBERLY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Michael steps out, taking a deep breath of air, smiling.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Michael is under his sheets, sleeping soundly.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. DR FOMBERG'S OFFICE -- DAY

Dr. Fomberg sits at his desk, writing. There is a knock at the door.

DR FOMBERG

Come in.

Michael enters.

DR FOMBERG (cont)

(looks up)

Yes, Mr. Brower?

Michael walks up to the desk and opens his backpack.

MICHAEL

Hello, sir. I just wanted to drop off that tape you wanted to see, so you could decide if I can show it in Horror Club.

Fomberg nods, impatient. Michael hands him a video cassette, formed of blood red plastic: BRAINSCAN TAPE ONE.

FOMBERG

(reads label)

Brainscan.

Dr. Fomberg gives Michael a disgusted look.

MICHAEL

(leaving)

Enjoy.

Michael closes the door behind him.

THE END