

CURE

Written by

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Registered, WGAw

FADE IN:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD (MUNICH, GERMANY) - DAY

A wealthy street in an older neighborhood - tidy hedges, tasteful flower beds. A SQUEALING fan belt breaks the quiet, whining away on a rough-running ENGINE. It grows LOUDER...

A van - white, windowless, rusting - creeps up the street.

INT. VAN - DAY

At the wheel, FRANZ MEIER (58) scans the houses on either side of the street, holding a greasy scrap of paper in his hand. His dark eyes settle on a house set back from the others...

Franz pulls to the curb. With a last glance, he balls up the scrap of paper and drops it on the floorboard. There are a lot of wadded scraps down there.

EXT. VAN - DAY

Franz throws open the back doors of the van. It's dark, a mess of tools, tarps, and whatever else is under the tarps.

Franz opens a canvas duffle bag, revealing an assortment of instruments: utility knives, vise grips, rolls of tape. Franz tosses a pair of gloves on top, and zips it up.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Franz KNOCKS on the door. After a moment, a dead bolt UNLOCKS and the door opens a crack. Too dark to see inside.

WOMAN (O.C.)

Yes?

FRANZ

Klempner.

There's no response from inside.

Franz (cont'd)

(switching to English)

Plumber. Somebody called for--

WOMAN (O.C.)

Sorry...did you talk to my husband?

There's something unusual about the woman's voice - it's coming from down by the door handle. Franz stoops over, trying to get a glimpse of the woman behind the door.

FRANZ

I guess so.

The door opens to reveal MARY (29) - young, pretty, confined to a wheelchair. She pulls her thin robe closed.

MARY

(smiling shyly)

Sorry, I wasn't expecting...

Please, come in.

Franz gives a last look at the street and steps inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mary leads, one wheel SQUEAKING with each revolution.

MARY

Did he say what you were supposed to fix? I'm trying to think...

Franz catches a glimpse of Mary's thigh, exposed where the chair has pulled the robe up. She turns and catches him leering. Embarrassed, Mary tugs it down and rolls faster.

KITCHEN

Mary continues to lead. Franz looms over her, almost close enough to be pushing the chair. Mary stops.

MARY

Maybe the dishwasher? Sometimes water backs up into the sink...

Franz steps forward, tool bag hitting her chair as he passes. Something CLATTERS to the floor and rolls against Mary's chair. Franz starts to stoop down, but Mary grabs it first.

A hawkbill knife - grip wrapped in tape, fresh-sharpened blade made to puncture and tear. Mary offers it to Franz.

FRANZ

Isn't mine.

MARY

(laughing)

Um, I think it must be.

Shaking his head, Franz lifts the bag to inspect it...

Mary lashes out, driving the blade into Franz's ankle just above his ratty sneaker.

Franz drops like a rock, a window-rattling SCREAM cut short by his impact with the cold tile floor. Blood streams...

HOWLING, Franz flails his one good leg, instinctively curling away from his attacker...

FRANZ

Stop, please just--

But the Woman in the Wheelchair is gone.

HALLWAY

Franz drags himself forward, sweat and tears streaming. He GASPS with each inch of progress, repeatedly looking back at the blood trailing down the hardwoods of the empty hallway.

The house around him is silent, still. Ahead, sun streams through the big windows of the front room. He struggles on.

Suddenly, there's a loud BANG in the kitchen. ANOTHER.

Franz looks over his shoulder at the kitchen, then to the distant end of the hallway ahead. May as well be miles. Desperate, his eyes turn to the dark doorway he's passing...

HALL BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Franz drags himself inside the windowless bathroom, his wounded leg smearing blood across the black and white tiles.

It's an old door with a glass knob and no way to lock it without a key. Franz SLAMS IT, turns and presses his back into the door, panicked BREATHS rattling in the small room.

Trembling, Franz fishes a cell phone from his pocket. Bloody fingers fumble it, the slippery plastic CLATTERING across the floor. He starts to chase it, but freezes when he hears...

SQUEAKING -- quiet at first, but growing louder. The sound of the wheelchair ROLLING UP the hallway.

Franz presses against the door, trying to slow his breathing. The SQUEAKING continues to grow louder, until it stops right on the other side of the door. Franz holds his breath.

The doorknob RATTLES. Franz springs up and grabs it with both hands, shoulder pressed into the door to hold it closed.

The knob comes loose in Franz's hand. Through the hole left in its place, Franz can see out into the hallway.

Mary's eye drifts into view.

FRANZ

Let me out of here!

Franz reaches into the hole where the handle had been, but can't find a way to unlatch the door. Something HISSES...

Franz draws his hand back - a clear liquid drips off his fingers. A mist SPRAYS through the hole. Franz coughs.

HALLWAY

Mary holds a spray can of oven cleaner against the door, steadily emptying it through the hole. In her lap, more cans wait at the ready: pesticides, spray paint, other chemicals. A towel blocks the gap under the door.

FRANZ (O.C.)

Why are you doing this? What do you want?

A blow SHAKES the door. The spraying continues.

BATHROOM

The air is getting cloudy in the windowless bathroom. Franz sinks his fist into the door. The wood RATTLES, but holds.

Franz's coughs become gags, his eyes red and burning. Fingers growing clumsy, he tries to block the hole in the door. Spray continues to stream around his hand...

FRANZ

Please...

Franz loses his balance, head CRACKING against the toilet.

Through the fog of chemicals in the air, Franz's eyes settle on something on the floor a few inches in front of his face. He struggles to focus, eyelids sagging closed...

A tooth.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: TWO MONTHS EARLIER

INT. BEDROOM - DAWN

Morning light warms the windows, not yet bright enough to overpower the glowing alarm clock on the night stand: '6:59'

Mary lies awake in the bed under heavy blankets, those same mysterious, intelligent eyes fixed on the clock. An arm drapes over her, its SNORING OWNER hidden in the darkness.

Careful not to disturb the sleeping figure beside her, Mary finds the little plastic switch that controls the alarm...

...but her fingertips won't obey - they drag clumsily over the controls, too weak and numb to slide the switch.

She keeps trying, trembling muscles rebelling. Mary's eyes glare at the glowing red alarm icon, frustration mounting...

The clock BARKS, obnoxious alarm peeling through the silence.

JEFF EDEN (29) stirs. Without opening his eyes, he lifts the arm draped over Mary and finds the clock. Jealously, she watches him kill the ALARM with a deft flick of his finger.

Jeff wraps his arm over her again, pulling Mary's body close to his as he gives her a gentle shake.

JEFF
(whispered, eyes closed)
Time to get up.

She nods, bitterness fading as she lets herself be pulled into Jeff's arms. Mary rests her crippled hand over his...

BEDROOM - LATER

Mary sits in her wheelchair at the foot of the bed, nearly dressed. Her shirt hangs open, revealing her emaciated body. She fumbles with the buttons, one hand completely useless...

Crouching close at Mary's side, Jeff puts Mary's earrings on for her, his clumsy fingers gently threading the posts...

JEFF
We're not even late, for once.

Methodically, Jeff turns from the earrings to the buttons.

MARY
They can bite me. We're paying a fortune, we'll get there when we get there.

JEFF
Is that why you were trying to make sure we overslept?

Mary give him a look - she didn't realize she'd been caught.

JEFF (cont'd)
(emphatic)
You're acting like you know what
they're going to say. You don't.

Mary nods, but her eyes have drifted away from Jeff and to a door across the room. Jeff catches her longing look...

JEFF (cont'd)
Do you need to go before we get in
the car?

MARY
I suppose I could have thought of
that before...

Without complaint, Jeff gets up and crosses the room, positioning himself in the bathroom door. Mary wheels over, letting Jeff guide her through the narrow doorway...

BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Running a routine he's clearly practiced hundreds of times, Jeff locks the wheels on Mary's chair beside a toilet outfitted with a scaffolding of bars around the seat...

Equally familiar with her role, Mary wraps her arms around Jeff's neck so that he can hoist her up. Sexless, matter-of-fact, Jeff reaches down and unbuckles Mary's belt.

Mary clings tightly to his neck, muscles in her arms and legs beginning to shake. She turns her face away, so that the humiliation in her eyes remains hidden from Jeff's view...

EXT. MUNICH - DAY

Jeff fights through morning traffic leading into the city center. He swivels his neck to catch signs as they fly past, frowning anxiously at the long and unfamiliar German words...

Slumped in the passenger seat, Mary watches the beautiful old city sail past her window. In no hurry to arrive...

EXT. TREATMENT FACILITY - DAY

Parked on a pristine, tree-lined block in the heart of the city, Jeff wheels Mary towards a building whose glass-and-steel facade is almost more art gallery than hospital.

INT. TREATMENT FACILITY - MAIN LOBBY - DAY

Inside, the building reveals itself to be a cutting-edge medical facility.

Jeff and Mary pass patients from all over the globe, all here for the same reason: it's the last hope for the desperately ill who can afford the price of admission.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Mary and Jeff flip uncomprehendingly through old magazines - Jeff on the examination table, Mary in her wheelchair.

The door opens and DOCTOR RICHTER - a severe woman in her mid-forties - goes directly to Mary, kneeling down to gently prod at her knees. Mary seems familiar with the routine.

DR. RICHTER
(lightly accented English)
Any new pain in your legs?

MARY
It's certainly possible, I guess...

Richter gives a polite grin, moving to the other leg.

DR. RICHTER
That one never gets old.
(to Jeff)
How's she doing?

Jeff and Mary exchange a look.

JEFF
Not so good.
(beat)
Her hands.

MARY
(quickly)
My hands are fine.

Richter steps back with a sigh, a little concern creeping in.

DR. RICHTER
Great. Let me see.

Defiantly, Mary raises her left hand and wiggles the fingers. She pauses with the middle finger raised, grinning wickedly.

DR. RICHTER (cont'd)
Now the right?

MARY
I'm left-handed.

Richter takes her right hand and begins to examine the wrist.

DR. RICHTER
(more serious)
When did this start?

MARY
Hard to say, really.

DR. RICHTER
You should have called immediately--

JEFF
We did. It happened last night,
all at once.

Richter gently places Mary's hand back in her lap.

Jeff watches, terrified, as Richter stands and goes to the other side of the room, somber face hinting at the prognosis.

MARY
Why would anyone ever become a specialist in neuromuscular diseases? Oncologist I get, ego-wise, because that's announcing to the world that you can cure cancer. Psychiatrist, same thing, that tells everyone you meet that you're sane and they aren't.

Jeff tries to give her a smile, but he's watching Richter.

MARY (cont'd)
But if you have to actually explain your job to people, how impressed are they ultimately going to be?
(to Richter)
How do you start off, do you say--

DR. RICHTER
(interrupting, final)
I'm very sorry, Mary.

Richter's statement hangs in the air. Mary looks away.

DR. RICHTER (cont'd)
I'll schedule another set of tests, but a sudden acceleration in your phase of Creutzfeldt-Jakob's is...it's going to go fast, now.

Mary nods, stunned but quietly accepting her worst fears. Jeff isn't ready for that, yet.

JEFF

What about a different medicine,
another category of polysulfate?

DR. RICHTER

(scrawling a prescription)
I'm giving her something stronger
for the pain. The thing now is to
try and make Mary as comfortable--

JEFF

What is that supposed to mean?

MARY

Jeff, it's okay.

JEFF

No, it's not. We came halfway
around the world because you people
are supposed to be experts, and now
you're just giving up?
(angry, louder)
What is your next plan of action
for her treatment?

MARY

She's done everything she can.

Mary takes the prescription, solemnly gathering her things.

DR. RICHTER

(genuinely upset)
I'm very sorry. I know you don't
want to think about this, but we
need to start talking about loss of
respiratory function, loss of--

MARY

We understand. Thank you for
everything.

WAITING ROOM

Richter stands at the front desk, somberly looking out the
front windows to where Jeff wheels Mary through the parking
lot. NURSE WEBER (35) approaches, taking Mary's file.

NURSE WEBER

(in German, subtitled)
Should I schedule a follow-up?

Richter watches Jeff load Mary's chair into the trunk. Too
disappointed to answer, she shakes her head and moves away.

Nurse Weber opens the file and begins skimming Richter's notes, looking up in time to see Jeff's car pull away.

INT. JEFF'S CAR - DAY

Jeff and Mary ride through a quieter part of the city - each staring out of a different window at open plazas and ornate architecture, stunned into silence by Richter's words.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Jeff turns the covers down, lifting Mary from her chair to bed. He tries to hold her upright, but Mary pulls free and falls back to the mattress. He starts to unbutton her jeans.

MARY

Leave 'em. I'm tired.

JEFF

Let's just get these off, so you'll be more--

MARY

(exploding)

Can we stop pretending now? You know I can't tell the difference.

Jeff stops fussing with her clothes, but doesn't move away.

JEFF

What do you mean, now?

Mary won't look at him.

JEFF (cont'd)

We're going to figure this out, Mary. It's not hopeless yet.

Mary looks up at Jeff: the desperation in his eyes, the faith he's holding onto growing thinner by the minute...

MARY

You're right. I just need some sleep, I'll feel better later.

(flirty)

Maybe I'll let you take my jeans off then.

Grateful, Jeff musters a weak smile for her joke.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Framed photographs line the walls of the silent bedroom, commemorating beach trips, weddings, family reunions...

It's too dark to see much detail in the pictures, but the impression is of a cool young couple, lots of sun and smiles.

Deeper in the room, Jeff and Mary BREATHE soft and rhythmic, motionless in the bed. Neither are really asleep, though...

Facing one way, Jeff's eyes show the fear he won't let Mary see during the day, the doubt he's desperately fighting...

Facing the other way, Mary's eyes hold the same fears, and something even darker: a stark, faithless kind of peace.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - OFFICE - DAWN

Early light seeps through the closed shutters of Jeff's makeshift home office. Computer monitors line the back edge of the desk, each showing a looped piece of footage:

An actor raises his arms in a dramatic gesture, the rest of the cast recoiling from some unseen supernatural display...

On one of the monitors, a wire-frame computer model tracks along with the actor's movements, beginning to fill in the missing visual effects necessary to make his gesture scary.

Jeff sits at the desk, eyes bleary as the shot loops over and over. He isn't watching the monitors, though: open in his lap, he scours a medical text already heavily highlighted...

Barely audible, Mary's VOICE reaches him. He hides the book.

BEDROOM

Jeff hurries through the doorway, immediately seeing in her eyes that Mary had an equally sleepless night.

JEFF

I'm sorry, I didn't know you--

MARY

What are you doing in there?

JEFF

(upbeat)

Working. You ready to get up?

Mary shakes her head, even that small movement bringing pain.

MARY

Would you mind going out to fill
that new prescription for me? I
woke up feeling a lot worse.

JEFF

Should I call Suzanne? I don't
want to leave you here alone, if
you're feeling--

MARY

I'll be fine. I'm just gonna try
to sleep until you get back.

Jeff nods, and turns to leave.

MARY (cont'd)

Hey, come here.

Mary motions for him to lean down.

MARY (cont'd)

I love you.

She wraps her arms around his neck, hugging him tightly.

EXT. MUNICH STREET - DAY

Jeff climbs up out of a metro station, making his way to a
shop on the corner with a red 'A' in its window.

INT. DRUG STORE - DAY

Jeff walks through the sliding doors of the shop. A long
line of customers snakes back from the drug counter.

Sighing, Jeff takes out his prescription and joins the line.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Morning light creeps through the curtains and over the bed.

The covers are thrown back. Mary is gone.

LIVING ROOM

Mary pushes herself through the living room, eyes drifting
but not settling on any one object...

HALLWAY

Without pausing, Mary passes through the hall and into...

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

...where she drifts to a stop. Mary starts to turn in another direction, but it seems that her momentum is gone.

An antique gas oven is the focal point of the room - squat, almost automotive-looking, with chipped enamel and a forgotten kettle on the burner.

Wiping away tears, Mary takes the kettle to the sink, turning the faucet on and leaving it to fill.

She turns back to the oven, eyes lingering on the knobs...

INT. DRUG STORE - DAY

Jeff is stalled in the pharmacy line by an aisle of greeting cards. Balloons and birthday cakes, graduation caps...he can't read the writing, but the impact isn't lost on Jeff: all the happy moments that are starting to feel lost forever.

The line moves forward. Jaw set, Jeff tears his eyes away...

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jeff steps inside, careful not to make a sound.

BEDROOM

Jeff opens the door slowly. He sees the empty bed.

Sniffing, the smell finally registers...

HALLWAY

Jeff sprints down the hallway.

JEFF
(calling, frantic)
Mary...

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jeff bursts into the room.

The oven door hangs open.

The chair faces its gaping black mouth. Mary's slumped over, head lolling, ready to fall. Envelope clutched in her hand.

He never breaks stride: choking on the gas fumes, Jeff scoops Mary up, half-dragging her to the back door...

EXT. BACK YARD - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Jeff stumbles on the steps, reaching the grass before landing in a heap with Mary. Jeff gets to his knees, coughing.

Jeff looks down at Mary, helpless. He takes her limp body by the shoulders, giving a few tentative shakes.

JEFF

Mary...fuck...Mary...

Mary's eyelids begin to flutter. She gasps for breath.

In a neighboring yard, an older German couple working in their garden hears Jeff's frantic voice. Dropping their tools, they rush over to the fence to see what's going on.

JEFF (cont'd)

(shaking harder)

Wake up...

Mary's eyes open, unfocused, pupils big and blank.

MARY

(whisper, slurred)

Jeff?

Jeff leans in, taking her hand. She coughs weakly, glassy eyes starting to follow his face. Jeff smiles.

JEFF

I'm here. You're okay.

Jeff notices to the elderly couple glaring over the fence at them, their careful gardening outfits a contrast to the sorry state Jeff and Mary are currently in. Jeff starts to explain, but realizes he doesn't have the vocabulary.

JEFF (cont'd)

(awkward, urgent)

Bitte...ambulance?

Mary grows more alert, lifting her head to look at the open back door, then down at her twisted legs...

Mary lets her head fall back, tears welling in her eyes.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Mary sleeps under thin hospital blankets. Around her, machines monitor her recovery. IV tubes. Beeps and clicks.

Jeff sleeps in a chair, the stressful day replaced by hours of waiting. He startles as the curtain wall slides open.

Nurse Weber steps inside. In uniform, Jeff doesn't recognize her from Richter's office. She inspects Mary's IV.

JEFF
Everything look okay?

Weber nods, taking Mary's chart from the foot of the bed.

JEFF (cont'd)
The ER doctor didn't seem to think
there's been any permanent damage.

Weber keeps reading, not commenting one way or the other.
Jeff slows his speech down, not sure if she's understanding:

JEFF (cont'd)
They said most of this is just to
help clean out her system.
(beat)
Lucky I came home when I did...

NURSE WEBER
(still reading)
I wonder if she'd agree.

JEFF
Excuse me?

She continues her duties. Jeff stands, face growing red.

JEFF (cont'd)
What did you just say?

Weber turns to face Jeff. A flicker of recognition...

JEFF (cont'd)
(confused)
Don't you work for Dr. Richter?

NURSE WEBER
I work for a lot of different
people. We need to talk, Mr. Eden.
(watching a passing nurse)
Walk me out to my car.

HALLWAY

Weber walks out into the hallway and turns towards a bank of elevators. Jeff follows close behind...

SUZANNE
(American accent)
Jeff!

SUZANNE (28) races up the hallway from the other direction. About Mary's age and six months pregnant, she rushes up to Jeff and gives him a worried embrace.

SUZANNE (cont'd)
I came as soon as we heard.

JEFF
She's okay, everything's...

Jeff looks over his shoulder and sees that Weber isn't going to wait for him. The elevator doors slide open.

JEFF (cont'd)
Go on in and sit with her for a
minute. I'll be right back...

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Nurse Weber stands in the elevator, watching the numbers rise. Jeff stands beside her, uneasy in the silence.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

The elevator doors open to the top level. Stepping out, Jeff takes a look around. The only car up here looks abandoned. Munich spreads out below them, a night breeze blowing.

JEFF
Where's your car?

NURSE WEBER
At a meter, out on the street.

They stand in silence for a moment, Jeff looking impatient.

NURSE WEBER (cont'd)
Richter can't save your wife.

The Nurse pulls something out of her pocket...a note card.

Jeff takes the card. One side is blank; the other has a typed phone number. No name, nothing else on the card.

JEFF
What's this?

NURSE WEBER

I'm sure it wouldn't surprise you to know that there are effective treatments not available to the public, for one reason or another. That's why you came here, isn't it?

JEFF

I don't understand. Doctor Richter is referring us to a different--

NURSE WEBER

She can't know anything about this.

Jeff frowns.

JEFF

Why not?

NURSE WEBER

Because those are the rules.

Jeff tries to hand the card back to the Nurse.

NURSE WEBER (cont'd)

Not interested? Not even curious?

Jeff walks back to the elevator, hitting the call button.

NURSE WEBER (cont'd)

Mary's nervous system is completely shutting down. The foremost treatment facility in the world has said they can't do anything else for her. And still, you saved her when she's clearly decided to give up.

Jeff gives up on the elevator and starts for the stairs.

JEFF

Leave us alone.

NURSE WEBER

Now I'm offering you a way, but you don't even consider it. So what exactly is your plan?

Jeff doesn't reply. But as he starts down the steps, Weber sees him slip the card into his pocket. She smiles.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mary lies in bed, eyes fixed on the black window panes. Jeff leans in the doorway, watching her shoulders rise and fall. Satisfied that she's asleep, Jeff turns to leave.

MARY

Jeff, you have to let me go.

Jeff pauses in the doorway.

MARY (cont'd)

I can't take the pain anymore, I
shouldn't have to just wait around
for it to get even worse...

(beat)

I'm ready.

Mary's chair sits by her side of the bed. Without a word, Jeff wheels it into the corner, far out of Mary's reach.

MARY (cont'd)

(growing more desperate)

This is not your decision to make.

The door SHUTS. Helpless, Mary's eyes fill with tears.

KITCHEN

Slumped at the kitchen table, Jeff no longer seems to hear Mary's hoarse CRIES drifting down the hall. Completely lost.

Through windows left open to clear out the last of the trapped gas, a stiff breeze cuts across Jeff's bare arms...

Jeff escapes his thoughts with a shiver, suddenly aware that the night has grown cold. One by one, he SLAMS the windows.

Filled with hate, Jeff turns to the stove and checks all the knobs. Before turning away, something catches his eye:

A crisp white envelope peaks out from underneath the stove.

We hear a DIAL TONE superimposed above the kitchen sounds.

Jeff gets closer, crouching down to see the envelope better. 'JEFF,' written in shaky handwriting on the front.

The TONE is replaced by the CHIMES of a number being dialed.

Jeff studies the envelope. Mary's suicide note.

The last DIGIT sounds, then the PURR of the number ringing.

Jeff kicks the letter the rest of the way under the stove.

STUDY

Jeff holds the phone to his ear. We continue to hear it RING. The note card sits in front of him on the desk.

With a CLICK, the line is ALIVE. No answer, just BREATHING.

JEFF
(on phone)
Hello?
(beat, louder)
Hello? Is there--

VOICE (V.O.)
Are you the patient?

Jeff nervously fingers the card, creasing a corner.

JEFF
(quickly, rehearsed)
Hello, I'm calling to get some
information on your--

The line goes DEAD. Jeff re-dials.

VOICE (V.O.)
Are you the patient?

JEFF
No.

VOICE (V.O.)
Can the patient speak?

JEFF
Yes.

VOICE (V.O.)
Put the patient on the line.

JEFF
Well, before she does that, I
wanted... please don't hang up, I
just want to know a little more
about the treatment...
(beat)
Hello?

Over the line, the sound of BREATHING and MUSIC continues.

VOICE (V.O.)
Are you the patient?

JEFF
No.

VOICE (V.O.)
Can the patient speak?

Jeff stares down at the card. He takes a deep breath.

JEFF
No. She can't. I'm her husband.

A pause.

VOICE (V.O.)
Tomorrow at two.

The line CLICKS.

LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mary waits by the front window, watching the street. Some color has returned to her face. A suitcase sits beside her.

BEDROOM

Jeff stuffs a few pairs of socks into a duffle bag.

MARY (O.C.)
I think they're here.

LIVING ROOM

Jeff comes in, dropping his bag next to Mary's suitcase.

JEFF
Okay, I've still got some room in my bag, if you need to add--

It's an ambulance: spotlessly clean, but from an older model year. It eases to a stop in front of their house.

MARY
Explain again why we can't just drive ourselves?

The DRIVER climbs out of the ambulance, dressed in something between scrubs and an institutional orderly's uniform.

JEFF
(recovering)
Because this is first class, all
the way.

On the street, the Driver opens the passenger door. An older man in a suit climbs out, briefcase in his hand - RICHARD GAINES. Checking the address, he starts up the walk.

JEFF (cont'd)
You have no idea what kind of
favors I had to call in to get
these people to review your case.
Please, let's just see what they--

MARY
I know, I know.

Mary tenses as Gaines gets closer. She reaches out for Jeff's hand. He's just as nervous as she is.

The doorbell RINGS.

EXT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

Gaines stands on the doorstep, hands folded behind his back. The door opens, revealing Mary and Jeff clinging together.

GAINES
Are you the patient?

MARY
What, are you joking?

Gaines gives a stiff smile and motions for the Driver, who steps behind Mary's chair and begins to wheel her away.

MARY (cont'd)
I can get it.

DRIVER
(ignoring her request)
Yes, ma'am.

Jeff starts to follow her, but Gaines stands in his way.

GAINES
These are Mary's bags?

Jeff looks to the street, where Mary is being helped into the ambulance by the Driver. Gaines gives Jeff a long stare.

GAINES (cont'd)
You'll receive word when the
treatment is complete.

Jeff turns back to Gaines, frowning.

JEFF
She's isn't going without me.

GAINES
That's out of the question.

JEFF
Excuse me?

Gaines takes a small step closer, lowering his voice.

GAINES
Mr. Eden, this invitation will
likely be the most important event
in Mary's life.

The Driver CLOSES Mary's door. Jeff flinches at the noise.

GAINES (cont'd)
There are many others in her
situation who will not be so lucky.
In return, all we ask is for you to
respect our process.

JEFF
I can't just let you take her--

GAINES
Of course. We understand if you're
satisfied with her current level of
care.

For a long, anguished moment, Jeff looks at the ambulance.
The dark tinted glass blocks any sign of Mary.

JEFF
Mary doesn't even know how I really
found you people. I had to lie,
just to get her to go this far...
(emotional)
She's already tried to hurt
herself. She can't be--

GAINES
We understand completely. Our
staff has been informed, and
safeguards are in place.

INT. AMBULANCE - DAY

Mary sits in the back, wheels locked into channels in the floor. A closed hatch separates her from the front seats.

She watches Jeff talking to Gaines at their doorstep. Gaines extends his hand, which Jeff refuses. Gaines takes Mary's suitcase from the step and walks back to the ambulance.

Concerned when Jeff doesn't follow, Mary tries to open the door. Her paralyzed fingers drag clumsily over the latch.

MARY

Hey! Jeff...

If Jeff hears, he doesn't react. Mary bangs on the window.

MARY (cont'd)

Jeff!

(to the front)

Hey! Can someone open this door...

The ambulance's engine ROARS to life. Mary's panic grows...

MARY (cont'd)

No, do you hear me?

(screaming)

I want you to open--

The ambulance lurches away from the curb.

Mary slams into the door, tears streaming down her face. Jeff waves, a weak 'goodbye' that she misses in her panic.

MARY (cont'd)

(screaming)

Let me out!

The only answer she gets back is the sound of the road. Mary looks out the window as her block quietly fades away...

EXT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Jeff walks out to the street, craning his neck to see the last of the ambulance as it disappears down the street.

FADE OUT.

INT. CAR - DAY

Suzanne drives up the same street, trees thinning under cold grey skies. Her pregnant belly has grown dramatically in the lapsed time, now barely fitting behind the steering wheel.

EXT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

With great effort, Suzanne climbs out of her car and starts up Jeff and Mary's driveway, her balance coming and going...

Reaching the house, Suzanne's face wrinkles in disgust: the garbage cans are overflowing, one bag torn open by animals.

FRONT PORCH

Resting for a moment on the shady porch, Suzanne KNOCKS.

Startlingly fast, the door flies open: Jeff's face appears, agitated with hope and winded from his sprint to the door.

Disappointed to see Suzanne, he looks past her to the street and cranes his neck in both directions. His spirits fall.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Without a word, Jeff leads Suzanne inside - the air is still, the shades drawn on most of the windows. Quiet as a tomb. Anxious to get off of her feet, Suzanne takes a seat on the couch between piles of clean clothes awaiting folding.

An awkward silence passes - two people with no connection to each other except Mary, each acutely feeling her absence...

SUZANNE

I was on my way to the embassy,
thought I'd see if there was
anything new...

Jeff digs under the dirty plates on the coffee table and produces an envelope. He hands Suzanne the typed letter.

JEFF

One came yesterday.

SUZANNE

(skimming the letter)
Sounds like she's doing great.

Jeff picks up a stack of similar letters, thumbing through them with obvious familiarity. A stack of maybe twenty.

JEFF

It's just like all the others.
She's happy, the people are nice...

SUZANNE

That's good, then.

JEFF

It doesn't sound like Mary.

Suzanne reads a little farther, a slight frown forming.

SUZANNE

Sure, it does. A little less
profanity, maybe...
(setting the letter aside)
Still no calls, I guess?

JEFF

It's been a month - if there were a
way around the rule, she would have
figured it out by now.

Suzanne studies the side of Jeff's face: he looks ten years
older, the constant worry wearing him down to nothing.

SUZANNE

If you hadn't done something, the
doctors here were just going to let
her die.

JEFF

She may still die, only now I won't
be there with her.

SUZANNE

What matters is that you knew that,
and you still wanted her to go.
(beat)
Mary would have done the same thing
for you.

Jeff looks up, finally finding some comfort in her words.

JEFF'S OFFICE - DAWN

Jeff sleeps at his desk. It's early the next morning, the
first grey light seeping through the front windows.

On the monitors, a pale-faced actor soars through the air,
the wires suspending him only partially erased.

Jeff jolts awake - disoriented, searching the room...

KITCHEN

Jeff shuffles in, carrying dirty plates to the sink.

The light on the answering machine flashes, catching his eye.
Jeff hits the button on his way to the refrigerator.

The machine rewinds, and begins to play back: loud BUZZING and STATIC, the sound of a cell phone with a bad signal. Jeff winces at the racket, starting to delete the message.

Before he hits the button, something emerges from the noise: a moment, a single syllable of MARY'S VOICE breaks through.

The sound suddenly has Jeff's complete attention. The STATIC intensifies, threatening to drop the call, then fades away...

MARY (V.O.)
(through heavy static)
--making me do things, Jeff, I--

With a few words now discernible, the frantic tone of Mary's voice is also painfully clear: she's crying, voice shaking.

Jeff leans closer to the machine, helpless panic on his face. A blast of STATIC pushes him back, then...

MARY (V.O.) (cont'd)
--the middle of nowhere, but--
(static)
--get me, before--

The line is suddenly silent. Jeff waits, holding his breath. After a moment, the line ROARS back, clearer than before...

MARY (V.O.) (cont'd)
(crying harder)
--with a knife...I saw it. You
have to believe me...

In the background, a LOUD BANG scares Mary, and she SCREAMS.

The machine BEEPS. The kitchen is silent.

EXT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - MORNING

A police car is parked on the curb in front of Jeff's house. Up and down the block, people are walking their kids to school. The children point, the parents discreetly whisper.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Jeff paces across the floor, frantic. A POLICE OFFICER - pen poised to make a note - watches Jeff's movements suspiciously. ANOTHER OFFICER studies Jeff's passport.

OFFICER #1
One more time. For what purpose
did you and your wife come to
Germany?

JEFF

Medical treatment, my wife is very sick--

OFFICER #1

And you believe that she was on her way to a treatment facility when she was abducted?

JEFF

No, I watched them take her. Right outside.

The officers exchange an incredulous look.

JEFF (cont'd)

At the time, though, I didn't know they were kidnapping...I've already tried to explain this.

OFFICER #2

Please, try again. Why did it take you so long to contact the police after your wife went missing?

Jeff stops pacing and spins to face the cop.

JEFF

(exploding)

Why are you still here? You heard the message, why aren't you--

OFFICER #1

Mr. Eden, we're going to do everything in our power to find your wife. But we can't start until you tell us what happened.
(raising the pad)
So let's begin again...

EXT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

Jeff sits on the front porch step, lost in thought. The police cruiser pulls away from the curb, one of the cops giving Jeff a curt wave that he doesn't return.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jeff stands in the kitchen, one lonely light burning.

The telephone and answering machine sit on the counter in front of him, pulled out a little from the wall.

Jeff watches them both, powerless to do anything more.

LIVING ROOM

Jeff moves across the room, shoulders low, cutting off lamps.

BEDROOM

Jeff lies in bed, wide awake. He stares out, BREATHING...

Gritting his teeth, he closes his eyes and tries to relax. It seems to be working: gradually, his respiration slows...

That's when he hears the second set of BREATHS in the room.

Jeff's eyes open again, alarmed, listening intently.

Carefully, he starts to survey the dark shadows around him. At the doorway, something shiny catches his eye...

It's a puddle, black in the moonlight. It looks like blood.

Panic rising, Jeff tries to get a better view without moving, the other LUNGS still drawing air somewhere close by...

A trail of blood leads into the room from the doorway, growing thicker as it progresses, sopping the carpet....

Jeff leans forward, following the trail with his eyes...

A hand grabs Jeff's wrist from the other side of the bed.

Terrified, Jeff looks down to see Mary staring up at him from the floor beside the bed: her eyes wide with terror...

Jeff instinctively tries to pull free, but her grip is tight. Mary's body is laced with scars and fresh cuts across her face, her neck...

JEFF
(finding his voice)
Mary, what--

MARY
You left me.

Mary's fingers sink deeper into Jeff's wrist, blood beginning to pool up around her fingernails. Her eyes flash.

MARY (cont'd)
They made me do things.

CUT TO:

Jolted from his nightmare, Jeff's eyes pop open.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeff sits up, pushing the covers away. Sweat beads his forehead. In the background, there's a faint KNOCKING.

The bedroom is dark and silent. He sits for a moment. The KNOCKING sound returns, louder this time...

LIVING ROOM

The KNOCKING comes from the front door, with the frustrated cadence of someone who's been at it for a while. Jeff enters a moment later, unlocks the door and opening it a crack.

The front yard is empty. Jeff leans out onto the porch, checking the sidewalk in either direction. Nobody.

From somewhere inside, the sound of TAPPING on glass...

KITCHEN

Jeff rushes to the back door. He throws it open...

BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Moonlight illuminates the middle of the yard, but tall trees leave everything at the edges of the property in deep shadow.

JEFF

Is somebody out here?

SOMETHING MOVES in the shadows on the other side of the yard. Jeff squints into the darkness. A FIGURE comes towards him.

JEFF (cont'd)

What do you want?

Mary moves out into the moonlight. Under her own power.

Walking.

Jeff jumps off the back step, rushing to his wife...

Mary's face explodes into a wide grin, tears of joy flowing.

Jeff races across the yard, wrapping Mary in a crushing hug.

Mary throws her arms around Jeff and clings with all of her might. For a long moment, they hold each other in silence.

Tears rushing down her face, Mary starts to laugh.

MARY
I lost my key again.

Jeff smiles but keeps holding on tight, afraid to let her go.

MARY (cont'd)
If you hadn't heard me, I was going
to have to sleep in the hammock...

Mary tries to pull away, staring up into Jeff's eyes.

MARY (cont'd)
Hey. Look at me.

Speechless, Jeff tries to absorb the changes in Mary - face full and healthy, body no longer decades older than her eyes.

MARY (cont'd)
(as much for herself)
I'm home. I really am.

Arms around each other, they walk up the back steps and disappear inside. As the lights come on in the kitchen, we hear the sound of Mary's LAUGHTER.

FADE OUT.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S BEDROOM - DUSK

Amber light seeps through the curtains, wrapping Mary in soft sunset. Jeff sits on the edge of the bed, amazed, watching her sleep. Not so much as a blemish on Mary's ivory skin.

Mary wakes with a start. She looks up at Jeff, disoriented, a momentary flash of fear passing behind her eyes...

JEFF
Sorry, I didn't mean to--

Mary smiles and shakes her head, sitting up a little.

MARY
What time is it?

JEFF
About six.

Mary nods vaguely, not wanting to ask...

JEFF (cont'd)
In the evening. You must've really
needed some sleep.

MARY

It's a better bed than I'm used to.

JEFF

(too eager)

What was wrong with the beds there?

Mary smirks at the clumsy transition.

JEFF (cont'd)

I'm sorry, I know you're just waking up, but after the message you left I've been going crazy--

MARY

What message?

Bewildered, Jeff shakes his head in disbelief.

JEFF

The one where you were begging me to come rescue you.

MARY

I don't remember doing that.

JEFF

(agitated)

It was only two days ago. You were crying, you were freaked out.

MARY

They had me on heavy medication the whole time, so most of it's just sort of a blur. To be honest, I don't really remember much at all.

(beat)

Whatever it was, I think it's safe to say now I was overreacting...

Mary tries to smile reassuringly, but Jeff can't let it go.

JEFF

Well, what kind of medicine--

MARY

Look, I'm so glad to be home...do you think all that can wait a little while? I just don't want to think about being sick right now.

It's not what he wants to hear, but Jeff nods.

MARY (cont'd)

Good, because I really gotta pee.

Out of habit, Jeff gets up and goes to the bathroom door, pushing it open and preparing to assist. He stares as Mary stands and stretches, a sleepy grace to her movements.

Mary sees him waiting at the door and grins as she pads past.

MARY (cont'd)

It's okay, I've got it from here.

Embarrassed, Jeff steps away to give Mary the privacy that hadn't been possible when she was in the wheelchair. He sits down on the bed again, feeling a little useless.

BATHROOM

From where she sits, Mary can just see through the open door to where Jeff perches on the bed, waiting for her to return.

Her eyes grow distant for a moment, as if she's searching her memory for something and having difficulty finding it.

MARY

(calling through the door)

There wasn't anything wrong with the beds, to answer your question. People just sleep better at home.

BEDROOM

Jeff perks up, savoring the first detail of Mary's treatment.

JEFF

Could have been noise, too. Did you share the room with anyone? Somebody moving around could've--

MARY (O.C.)

Well, you were actually in bed with me last night and I managed to sleep for like twenty hours, so...

JEFF

I slept in the chair.

Mary strides out of the bathroom, surprised and frowning.

She looks past Jeff to a recliner beside the bed, made up with blankets into an uncomfortable-looking pallet.

MARY
What? Why?

JEFF
I just...you were so exhausted, I
didn't want to--

MARY
All I've been looking forward to
was sleeping next to you again.

JEFF
I'm sorry. I just thought you
needed your sleep, in case--

MARY
Well, you need to stop that.

Jeff nods, not really accepting. Mary moves closer, intent.

MARY (cont'd)
I mean it. I don't want you to
think of me that way anymore, okay?

Mary comes closer, pushing against his knees. Jeff
instinctively gives way, missing the point of the contact.

MARY (cont'd)
I'm not going to break.

Mary pushes against him again, purposefully rough. Jeff
looks up and sees the tears welling in Mary's eyes. She
takes hold of his shoulders, grasping tight, leaning close...

MARY (cont'd)
I'm okay, now. I really am.

Jeff's hands drift up to Mary, fingers delicately tracing her
hips. Mary kisses him, pushing forward with her weight...

MARY (cont'd)
I'm okay.

Jeff's hands finally take hold, grasping Mary and rolling her
to the bed. She falls back, tears pouring down her cheeks...

Mary starts pulling Jeff's shirt off - almost rough, finding
the strength in her arms again, testing what her body can do.

Jeff's hesitation fades. He pushes her nightgown up, hands
running over Mary's unmarked skin as she rips at his belt...

Throughout, their eyes never break contact, excitedly rediscovering the physical connection they'd lost forever...

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

A bright, sunny morning...

Opening the shower curtain, Jeff reveals a small chair mounted inside the tub - sickly pink plastic, a color only used for medical equipment. With contempt, he jerks it free.

LIVING ROOM

Jeff carries the shower seat into the living room, dropping it into a stack of similar gear: leg braces, a walker...

Mary smiles from across the room, busy with her own pile of donations: loose night gowns and loud flowered housedresses, a faded rainbow of sweatpants filling garbage bags.

CUT TO:

EXT. MUNICH STREETS - DUSK

Jeff and Mary wander lazily down a narrow street, arms around each other. Exploring with no fixed destination, pausing whenever something in a shop window catches their eye...

CUT TO:

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Jeff hunches in the corner, tools spread out on the floor around him. He's dismantling the scaffolding of bars framing the toilet, working on a stubborn mounting bolt. Mary passes by the open door, pausing to watch...

Teeth gritted with effort, Jeff puts his weight behind the wrench...it finally gives way and the scaffolding comes free.

CUT TO:

EXT. MUNICH PARK - NIGHT

Jeff and Mary walk through pools of lamp light along the path around a lighted fountain. Jeff carries a corked bottle of wine back from the restaurant; Mary carries her shoes.

They pass other couples taking the same walk, for the first time indistinguishable from everyone else their age...

CUT TO:

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeff's in a deep sleep, arm hanging over the edge of the bed. He rolls over, reaching out to put his arm over Mary...

Mary isn't there.

LIVING ROOM

Jeff steps into the darkness of the living room. There's no sign of movement, not a single light burning. Silence.

JEFF

Mary?

Jeff's voice carries through the house. Nothing answers.

KITCHEN

Jeff shuffles into the room, switching on the overhead light.

JEFF

(growing concerned)

Mary?

LIVING ROOM

Jeff turns on the last lamp, unsure where to look next. The whole house lit up, no remaining hiding place. He shivers...

The front door stands open a crack, swaying in the wind.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT

Jeff walks down the street, zipping up his coat. The neighborhood stretches out in front of him, peaceful under flickering street lamps. Shadows swallow hedgerows and pool around parked cars. Only Jeff's FOOTSTEPS break the silence.

At the end of the block, a flash - a FIGURE IN WHITE, a woman, rushes from the shadows and down a side street.

Jeff hesitates, at first not sure of what he's seen.

SIDE STREET

Jeff turns the corner, just in time to see the woman slip into the shadows of a yard up the block. Dogs start to BARK.

Jeff hurries after. A row of tall hedges blocks the dark yard from its closest neighbor. The ECHO of Jeff's footsteps gradually drowned out by the FURIOUS BARKING ahead.

Jeff draws closer, craning his neck to see past the hedge...

Suddenly, branches EXPLODE - something crashing through the hedgerow, nearly knocking Jeff from his feet...

A big black dog, WHIMPERING and SQUEALING as it charges past. Jeff watches it disappear up the block -- broken chain JANGLING, drops of blood speckling the pavement behind it.

Shaken, Jeff continues up the sidewalk...

CONSTRUCTION LOT

Jeff moves past the hedges, and finds the reason for the darkness: a new house going up, no glass in the windows, much less a porch light. Somewhere inside, a dog BARKS FURIOUSLY.

Jeff steps into the muddy yard, squinting up at the building.

JEFF
(calling out, sheepish)
Mary?

A flash of white fabric moves past a second story window.

INT. UNFINISHED HOUSE - FIRST FLOOR - NIGHT

Jeff steps inside. The exterior walls are sheathed in plywood, but inside the rooms are only divided by bare pine studs - Jeff can see from one end of the floor to the other.

The walls ring with BARKS AND GROWLS, coming from the floor above. Jeff threads his way through the framed walls and reaches a temporary staircase leading up to the second story.

On the steps, a trail of small, muddy footprints.

SECOND LEVEL

Jeff climbs up the stairs, rising into the ear-splitting ROAR. In the corner, a thick-necked mutt is chained to a pile of tools and equipment, GROWLING and FROTHING.

Mary stands with her back to the stairs, white nightgown glowing in the moonlight. She reaches out for the dog.

JEFF
Mary...

The dog lunges and SNAPS, the chain pulling taught mere inches before its flashing jaws touch Mary's hand.

JEFF (cont'd)
Mary! Stop!

Mary doesn't seem to hear. She takes a step forward...

With a sharp CRY, the dog cowers back from Mary. It continues to bare its teeth and GROWL, but shrinks under the table saw it's chained to, hunching low against the floor.

Mary takes another step forward.

Jeff rushes up and grabs her arm, jerking her back.

Mary spins, eyes wild for a moment, but just as quickly softening into a smile. She puts her hand on her heart.

MARY
God, you scared me...

Jaw clenched, Jeff pulls her to the stairs. His attention stays on the dog glaring at them, bare white teeth shining.

MARY (cont'd)
Can you believe someone would do
this?

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT

Jeff and Mary walk home. Jeff's jacket is wrapped over her nightgown, and she has her arm threaded through his. Jeff's still freaked out, and Mary does her best to calm him down.

MARY
I thought a walk would help me get
back to sleep. On my way home, I
passed the house and heard the dog
crying. I thought he must have
been lost, but obviously...
(beat)
Should we call somebody?

JEFF
You should have told me you were
going out.

MARY
I'm sorry, I really didn't mean to
scare you...
(beat)

MARY (cont'd)

It's hard to explain what it was like, being sick for so long...not being able to do anything for yourself, never getting to be totally alone. And it was such a nice night out, I just wanted to go for a walk without having to discuss it with anyone first. I just sort of wanted to go.

Jeff, starting to relax, nods at her explanation.

JEFF

I know how much you've been through-

MARY

We went through it together. And if you hadn't been keeping an eye on me the way you were...

(beat)

You really shouldn't have to worry about me ever again. I'm sorry.

Jeff looks at Mary, a little guilty over the apology.

JEFF

In the future, just...leave a note?

Mary gives a little laugh. Reaching their house, Jeff holds the door open for Mary. We hear the dead bolt LOCK.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Jeff and Mary sit at a table in a nice restaurant. They're dressed for a night out, and look great - healthy, relaxed, enjoying themselves. Mary's chair is pulled close to Jeff's.

Around the table, other American COUPLES - similar ages, wardrobes. Across from Jeff and Mary, Suzanne sits with her husband JOHN, dressed in an American military uniform. Glancing over the table, Mary catches them staring.

JOHN

Sorry. Jeff said you were better, but we weren't expecting...this.

SUZANNE

(a little slurred)

That's right, it calls for...

With a slight wobble, Suzanne stands up with her wine glass. Several GROANS go up around the table. John WINCES.

SUZANNE (cont'd)

What?

JOHN

I haven't even heard it yet, but
I'm going to apologize in advance
to whoever this toast offends--

SUZANNE

It's not a toast.

MARY

It's a toast if you hold your glass
up like that. Technically.

Suzanne sets her glass down dramatically, sloshing a little.

SUZANNE

Okay, fine. I was going to say a
bunch of nice stuff about missing
you and how happy we all are, but
now that you're a bitch again...

The table LAUGHS, Mary playfully feigning outrage.

Suzanne studies Mary for a long beat, growing more emotional.

SUZANNE (cont'd)

You were already so sick by the
time you moved over here. The more
we got to know each other, though,
I felt like I could see the real
you underneath...

Jeff puts his arm around Mary.

SUZANNE (cont'd)

And I just want to say, it's...
(starting to cry)
It's a miracle that everybody else
is finally getting to see you like
this, too. Absolutely a miracle.

Mary smiles. Too overcome to continue, Suzanne sits down.

SUZANNE (cont'd)

(defiantly lifting her
glass)

So here's to those doctors for
finally figuring it out, though
they took their sweet-ass time...

Around the table, MURMURS of agreement. Mary nods appreciatively, uncomfortable being the center of attention.

To escape, Mary returns to the plate in front of her, deftly slicing roasted vegetables with her steak knife.

JOHN

So when are you guys heading back?

JEFF

We haven't really made any plans yet. We're just relaxing, finally getting to explore a little...

Mary starts on a second tomato, but something is different: her hand shakes, smashing the fruit with a trembling cut.

Mary looks down at her hand, frightened. She opens and closes the fingers, their movement stiff and jittering.

JEFF (cont'd)

Did you cut yourself?

Mary quickly cups her shaking hand, putting on a smile and shaking her head. A CELL PHONE rings, distracting Jeff...

JOHN

(checking his phone)

Sorry, it's the sitter.

Equally jumpy, Suzanne watches him step away from the table.

SUZANNE

This is our first time leaving her, and he's a little crazy.

JEFF

John showed me some pictures. She's beautiful.

SUZANNE

You should come by and introduce yourself, once you have a chance. Be careful, though, that's made a few people want one of their own...

JEFF

Maybe someday.

He looks at Mary, their future real again. She smiles, distracted...

Under the table, Mary clenches her fist, testing the range of movement in her fingers. She pushes away from the table...

JEFF (cont'd)
We're just kind of enjoying it
being the two of us, right now...

RESTAURANT BATHROOM

Mary holds her hand under steaming water, frantically rubbing the knuckles, the trembling fingers bringing back memories...

The bathroom door swings open, and Suzanne shuffles in. She sees Mary and immediately frowns at her expression.

SUZANNE
Is everything alright?

MARY
Yeah, of course.

Mary takes a paper towel and dries her hands, using the motion to disguise the rubbing of her knuckles.

SUZANNE
Okay, good. Because John talked
the sitter into staying later, and
people are talking about ordering
another bottle of wine...

Willing herself to smile, Mary tosses the towel in the trash and shoves the trembling hand into her pocket.

MARY
Definitely. Make it two.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The back door rattles, swinging open. Jeff steps inside, followed by a very drunk Mary. He finds the lights.

JEFF
Try to get all the way undressed
before you pass out.

MARY
(slurred)
No way. You and me got business to
attend to, first.

Mary stumbles out of the room, headed for the bedroom.

MARY (O.S.) (cont'd)
Freaky stuff, that's what I'm
promising you...

Jeff nods, amused, taking out his wallet and keys.

BEDROOM

Jeff comes through the door, carrying a glass of water.

JEFF
Drink some of this now, or...

Mary isn't listening. She's out cold, face down in her pillow. Softly SNORING, already drooling. Jeff smiles.

He sets the glass on Mary's night stand and cuts the lights.

MORNING

First light creeps through the window, shining on the bed where Jeff and Mary sleep peacefully. Burrowed in the blankets, all that's visible of Mary is a tangle of her hair. She starts to stir, lifting her head from the pillow...

...but her cheek sticks. Eyelids fluttering, Mary keeps pulling away, confused by whatever's holding her back...

Black blood - dry rivers from her nose and the corner of her mouth, poured down and caked into the white pillowcase.

Another sensation reaches her. Mary touches her face, tenderly inspecting her eyes, her nose, her jaw. We've already seen it, though, what she's only starting to feel:

Mary has been brutally beaten.

MASTER BATHROOM

Slowly closing the door so it won't wake Jeff, Mary turns and sees herself in the mirror above the sink. GASPING.

She trembles, touching her wounds in disbelief. Mary sees fingernail gashes running the length of her forearms...

Staggering away from the mirror, Mary SCREAMS.

BEDROOM

Jeff lurches awake, Mary's SCREAMS ringing off the walls.

He opens his eyes to see Mary stumbling out of the bathroom, blood and bruises obscuring her face. He springs up...

JEFF
(shocked)
What's going on? What happened?

MARY
I don't know...

JEFF
Who did this to you?

MARY
(screaming)
I don't know!

Still half-asleep, Jeff balls his fists and storms towards the door. Mary grabs his arm, holding him back.

MARY (cont'd)
No, there's nobody here. I just...
I woke up like this.

Jeff uncocks his fists, trying to find his bearings.

JEFF
I don't understand. What happened?

Mary shakes her head frantically, tears flowing. Speechless.

JEFF (cont'd)
Calm down and try to think.

MARY
We got home last night, I went to
sleep...and then I woke up like
this.
(beat)
I was pretty drunk. Could I have
fallen down, or something?

JEFF
Not that I heard. Not like that.

Jeff watches her, mind racing.

JEFF (cont'd)
Did you go out again?

MARY
No.

JEFF
Are you sure?

Something about that question makes Mary even more emotional.

MARY

Of course, I'm sure!

Mary backs away, shaking her head. Trying to calm herself.

MARY (cont'd)

It's not what it looks like. It
could be an allergic reaction,
something I ate last night...

Taking her gently by the arm, Jeff leads Mary to the window.
Tipping her chin back, he squints at the black welts.

MARY (cont'd)

Maybe something irritated my skin.

JEFF

No. These are bruises.

Fear sweeps through Mary again. Jeff moves closer.

JEFF (cont'd)

Whatever happened, you can tell me.

MARY

I know that. I'm not hiding
anything from you, Jeff, I swear.
I don't know what happened to my
face. I don't know.

JEFF

We need to go to the doctor, then.

Mary looks into Jeff's eyes. Shaking, she nods.

MARY

Okay. You're right.

KITCHEN

Mary has thrown on clothes and scrubbed the dried blood off
her face. The bruises seem a little lighter.

She rifles through objects on the kitchen table, looking for
something. Her fingers move deftly through the clutter...

MARY

(calling out)

They're not in here.

JEFF AND MARY'S BEDROOM

Jeff scans the junk on his dresser. Mary waits in the door.

MARY

Maybe you left them in the car?

Jeff searches the pockets of a pair of pants on the floor.

JEFF

I don't know, maybe.

EXT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

Mary steps out of the back door, following a path through the yard to an ancient two-car garage on the far side of the lot.

The garage door is open, and a dim glow escapes from inside. Mary hears a faint CHIME that gets louder as she approaches.

GARAGE

Mary steps inside the dark garage, the CHIME growing louder as she approaches their car. Its interior light are on, giving off a faint glow.

Mary opens the driver's door, feeling the ignition for the keys. No luck, and she SLAMS the door. The CHIME continues.

Mary circles the car, finding one of the back doors not completely closed. A seat belt is caught in the door, and Mary swings it open to fix it. Something catches her eye.

The back seat sits at an odd angle, the cushion bulging out.

Mary leans in closer. The whole bench has been broken free from its mounting bolts - a thin gap now showing behind the seat, revealing the darkness of the trunk on the other side.

Mary walks back to the trunk, glancing around the dark garage before pressing the button. The trunk swings open...

The interior - every surface - has been thoroughly torn apart: brake wires and molding dangle down from the trunk lid, carpet pulled from the floor and the sides.

The exterior of the car is pristine; this isn't normal wear-and-tear. Bewildered, Mary takes in the destruction.

MARY

(calling out)

Jeff?

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jeff pushes aside cushions, running his hands down the creases of the couch. Frustration building.

An object in the corner catches his eye. Mary's purse, dropped behind a chair in a spot continually in shadow. Jeff picks it up. Once in the light, he sees something else:

A single red spot, right below the clasp.

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

Mary leans into the shredded trunk. Spattered stains, like the ones on her purse, have soaked the ripped carpet.

On the far side of the trunk - the back of the back seat - the fabric is also torn, handfuls of yellow foam shredded and pulled free. In one spot, the tear is more severe.

Mary climbs farther in, pulling the ripped fabric away from the gash in the seat back. Loose foam falls from the hole...

Finger marks. Four trenches - the shape made by a hand clawing at the seat. Trembling, Mary reaches up to lay her fingers into the gashes, the color draining from her face.

As she does, her sleeve pulls back to reveal the same four scratches down the back of her arm, cut skin burning red...

Mary jerks her arm back, pulling something out of the trench:

A fingernail, torn whole from someone's hand.

Mary staggers back, SCREAMING.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jeff stares at the purse, more red liquid seeping through the teeth of the zipper. Hesitantly, he begins to open it...

From outside, Mary's SCREAMS suddenly reach him. Jeff's attention snaps from the blood to the back door.

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

Jeff sprints through the yard to the garage, purse still clutched in his hand. Mary stands in the driveway, shaking.

JEFF

What happened? Are you okay?

Speechless, Mary points at the trunk. Jeff stoops to look inside, absently setting the purse on the bumper when the extent of the damage hits him. Mary sees her bag.

Jeff crawls into the trunk, seeing stains, claw marks...

Mary picks up the purse, trembling as she opens the zipper...

MARY
(quiet, terrified)
Jeff?

Ghost-white, she's pulling her hand out of the purse, red pooling between her knuckles. She opens her fingers...

A ring of car keys, slick with blood.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - DAY

Mary hunches over the toilet, VOMITING. Her shoulders shake as she heaves, violent SOBBING making her whole body tremble. Jeff stands rigidly in the doorway, watching her.

JEFF
Mary, what is going on?

MARY
(between sobs)
I don't know, I just woke up and--

JEFF
Stop saying that.
(beat)
Does this have something to do with them, with what happened out there?

Mary looks up, startled by the question.

MARY
I've already told you--

JEFF
(erupting)
No, you haven't. You haven't told me anything.

MARY
I don't know what happened, I can't remember anything--

Jeff slams his hand onto the sink, old pill bottles flying.

JEFF

Tell me the truth.

MARY

(screaming back)

I am. I didn't even know how long I was gone until you told me. I remember waiting in the backyard for you to open the door, but I can't remember how I got there. Even since I've been back...I wake up, but I don't remember falling sleep. There are gaps, empty spaces. I get flashes, but...none of it makes sense.

(touching her face)

I'm scared, Jeff.

JEFF

I don't care if it makes sense.
Tell me everything you remember.

Mary curls up tighter, eyes drifting down to the tiles...

MARY

(soft)

It wasn't like a hospital.

Jeff's full attention is suddenly captured.

MARY (cont'd)

I don't know how I know that, I can't picture what it looked like from the outside, but there was something about my room that wasn't right.

JEFF

What else?

MARY

There was a man. An old man.

JEFF

(quick, intent)

Could you recognize him?

With a shudder, Mary nods.

MARY

Hoxsey. I remember someone calling him that. Doctor Hoxsey.

JEFF

Was he the one who--

MARY

I don't know. I don't remember anything about what they did to me.

(beat)

I have this...sensation, though. I don't think I want to remember.

Jaw tight, Jeff nods his agreement.

MARY (cont'd)

We need to call the police about the trunk.

Mary looks at Jeff. He nods again, but with less conviction.

MARY (cont'd)

It's okay, I know we have to.

Mary stands, wiping away tears. She moves closer to Jeff, ready to be strong for him now. Jeff looks at his wife.

JEFF

Do you really not remember?

He studies Mary, begging for the truth. She shakes her head.

JEFF (cont'd)

Then I think we should wait.

MARY

Why?

JEFF

Because the police won't believe that. They'll think you're lying.

MARY

My purse...it looks like blood. Someone might be hurt, we can't--

JEFF

We could have this completely wrong, too. Until we know more, we shouldn't jump to conclusions.

Jeff puts his hands on Mary's shoulders, looking into her eyes. Mary looks up at him, still scared. Lost.

JEFF (cont'd)

It's going to be okay. I promise.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

For the second time, we see Jeff and Mary waiting in this room. Though Mary's healthy, they seem even more fearful. The door flies open, and Dr. Richter bounds inside.

DR. RICHTER
Sorry, I just wanted to double-
check these results with the lab.

Richter takes another moment to scan back through her file while Mary and Jeff wait. She shakes her head in disbelief.

DR. RICHTER (cont'd)
Unbelievable...

MARY
What is it?

DR. RICHTER
You're not only in remission, but
damage that should have been
permanent has spontaneously healed.

Richter closes the chart, expecting to find them as happy as she is. Instead, Jeff and Mary keep their worried looks. Undaunted, Richter begins to inspect Mary's joints, feeling the smoothness of their movement and smiling.

DR. RICHTER (cont'd)
Statistically, the chances of this--

MARY
I'm still having pain, sometimes.

Jeff didn't know that, and he gives her a worried glance.

DR. RICHTER
Where?

Mary starts to show Richter her hand, but the fingers move effortlessly. Frowning, Mary feels around for the soreness.

MARY
It comes and goes...

DR. RICHTER
A few phantom aches are to be
expected, after what your body's
been through. You said something
to the nurse about your skin?

JEFF
(sharp)
She has a black eye.

Startled by Jeff's tone, Richter inspects Mary's face.

MARY
(pointing, embarrassed)
It looked worse, earlier...

Richter doesn't seem particularly concerned, the bruises now much lighter than they had been earlier that morning.

MARY (cont'd)
I've also been having some memory
loss.

With a sigh, Richter puts a reassuring hand on Mary's arm.

DR. RICHTER
It's natural to be paranoid after
what you've been through. People
just forget sometimes, especially
when something this emotional--

MARY
No. It's more than that.

Richter sees that Jeff is equally agitated. Nodding, the doctor goes to the series of head x-rays on the light box.

DR. RICHTER
Okay, then. Memory loss could
point to cancer. Looking here,
though, there's no sign of a tumor
or lesion anywhere--

JEFF
What about a blow to the head?

The final straw, Richter shuts off the light box and turns.

DR. RICHTER
Mary, do you mind if I talk to your
husband in the hall for a moment?

HALLWAY

Jeff marches out of the room, watching as Richter checks the hallway in both directions before leaning in close.

DR. RICHTER
What's really going on here?

Jeff studies the doctor, picking his words carefully.

JEFF

After you told us Mary was going to die, we took a chance on a different kind of treatment.

DR. RICHTER

(excited)

I need to see their records, then, as soon as possible. What sort of treatment was it?

JEFF

Something experimental.

DR. RICHTER

What do you mean, experimental? What did they give her?

JEFF

I was hoping you could help us figure that out.

Frustrated, Richter turns towards the door to Mary's room.

JEFF (cont'd)

Wait...

DR. RICHTER

I shouldn't be talking to you about my patient, anyway--

JEFF

She doesn't remember anything.

(pleading)

Please, she's scared enough as it is...

Richter hesitates a little, hand on the door.

JEFF (cont'd)

The doctor's name was Hoxsey. That's all she can remember.

Richter frowns, the depths of Jeff's ignorance hitting her.

DR. RICHTER

How could you not talk to me before--

JEFF

Because you told us she was going to die, with or without your help.

JEFF (cont'd)

(beat)

Is there something they could have given Mary to damage her memory?

DR. RICHTER

There's no telling. Some poisons--

JEFF

But that would have shown up in your tests, right?

DR. RICHTER

No, because I didn't realize I needed to order toxicology.

JEFF

As far as you can tell, though, Mary's healthy. Right?

Begrudgingly, Richter nods. Something else occurs to her.

DR. RICHTER

During this treatment, was there ever a point when Mary was out of your sight?

Unable to express just how long he lost sight, Jeff nods.

DR. RICHTER (cont'd)

Listen, I'm not a psychiatrist, but it's also possible that emotionally traumatic events can cause a person to forget. The mind will block out experiences it isn't able to process yet. You see it with children who've been abused, survivors of genocide...

Jeff recoils, horrified by where that idea is leading.

DR. RICHTER (cont'd)

I'll start running tests to see what I can find on this end. In the meantime, you need to figure out exactly what they did to her.

Jeff nods. Richter looks at his worried expression.

DR. RICHTER (cont'd)

If I were you, I'd want to know.

Nothing more to say, Richter starts away. Jeff watches her leave, struggling to find a way to ask one final question.

JEFF
(nonchalant)
There was a nurse who worked here.

Richter slows, glancing back at Jeff.

JEFF (cont'd)
She really took an interest in
Mary. I just wanted to let her
know everything's okay.

DR. RICHTER
I'll pass it along. Which nurse?

JEFF
I don't know her name...tall, red
hair.

DR. RICHTER
Edda Weber. We let her go.
(beat, softening)
Ask at the front desk, they may
have a number for her.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mary's purse sits on the coffee table, open where Jeff left
it that morning. The blood inside dried to a rust brown.

At the opposite end of the couch, as far away as possible,
Mary sits anxiously. She tries to find something else to
focus on, but her eyes keep drifting back to the purse.

BEDROOM

Jeff paces, telephone held to his ear. After the last RING,
an answering machine immediately BEEPS, no message.

JEFF
(on phone, frustrated)
Edda, this is Jeff Eden again...

LIVING ROOM

As Jeff storms into the room, Mary springs up from the couch.

MARY
Did you talk to her?

Jeff shakes his head. He continues to pace, frustrated.

JEFF
(deciding)
I need you to wait here.

Mary tries to grab Jeff's hand, but he pulls away.

MARY
Please, I don't want to be alone.
Can't we just--

Jeff wraps Mary in his arms, kissing her on top of the head.

JEFF
(softly)
Keep the door locked. I'll be
right back.

Mary buries her face into Jeff's chest, forcing a nod.

EXT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

Jeff backs his car into the street, eyes intent on the road.
Standing in the front window, Mary watches him pull away.

INT. JEFF'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Jeff steers with the hand holding a scrawled number, phone to his ear. He waits through an answering machine BEEP.

JEFF
(on phone, angry)
Pick up the phone.
(beat)
I have your address. I'm coming
over, and I'm going to stay there
until you answer my questions.
(beat, raising his voice)
You hear me? I'm not going away.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DUSK

The television lights the room, taking over for the setting sun. Mary's on the couch, not paying attention to the show.

The contents of her purse are spread out on a piece of newspaper. Mary runs a paper towel over a tube of lipstick.

The house is silent. Mary looks around. She stands, drops the lipstick in the trash on her way out of the room...

HALLWAY

Mary steps into the hallway, turning on the overhead lights. She walks quietly, on guard, listening to the house.

She pauses by a closed door. She opens it carefully, braced for something to leap out. Embarrassed, even as she tenses.

Clean linens, stacked neatly in the narrow closet.

Mary moves farther down the hall, opening a different door. Stairs descend into darkness. Mary searches for a switch...

BASEMENT

One by one, the bare bulbs flicker to life...

For all the renovation in the rest of the house, there has been no attempt to hide the age of the basement: sagging beams, cracked floor, unfinished walls. Long shadows.

Mary steps down, pausing on each stair, eyes scanning the strange shapes cast by the piles of junk filling the room.

Halfway down the stairs, Mary stops. Fear seeming to get the better of her, she turns around and quickly pads upstairs.

The door SHUTS. The lights go out.

EXT. MUNICH OUTSKIRTS - NIGHT

Jeff drives into an outlying section of the city - utilitarian construction, built without the aesthetic sensibility of the city center that we've seen so far.

With a few hesitant stabs at the brakes, Jeff pulls into the parking lot of a nondescript clump of apartment buildings.

EXT. APARTMENT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jeff's sits behind the wheel in the parking lot, staring up at the first of several hulking buildings rising up into the night sky. These aren't like American apartment buildings - smaller units packed into a more rigid grid, fewer concessions made to dress up the exterior of the buildings.

With less bravado than he was demonstrating on the phone, Jeff climbs out of his car and moves closer.

In a dark corner of the lot, some sort of van sits with its lights off. Inside, the silhouettes of PASSENGERS watch Jeff as he reaches the gap leading between the buildings...

COMMON AREA

Jeff passes into the dark common area at the base of the tall buildings, squinting down at the scrawled address...

Signs are few and far between, all lacking the handy English translations that Jeff has become accustomed to in the city. The VOICES he hears speak German exclusively, the suspicious glances suggesting that outsiders don't often wander in here.

Finally finding the building he's looking for, Jeff looks up as a window on the third floor fills with light, the shadow of someone in the room falling against the drawn blinds.

EXT. LANDING - NIGHT

Jeff climbs the stairs and into the deserted landing. Approaching one of the doors, Jeff's hand balls into a fist. He KNOCKS on the door, breaking the silence of the night.

JEFF

Edda?

Jeff KNOCKS again, loud and long.

JEFF (cont'd)

I saw the lights, I know you're--

Jeff tries the handle. The door swings open.

INT. NURSE WEBER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Jeff steps inside, quickly pulling the door closed. The entryway is dark, but there's a dim glow filtering around the corner. Slow, droning MUSIC fills the air.

LIVING ROOM

Nurse Weber sits at a cluttered table, lit only by the light spilling through the kitchen door behind her. She looks up as Jeff enters, eyes heavy-lidded and emotionless.

JEFF

Tell me what they did to Mary.

Weber's lips spread into a smile. Jeff moves closer.

JEFF (cont'd)

I don't want to threaten you, but I swear to God--

No longer blocked by the stacks of dirty dishes, Jeff sees a handgun on the table in front of her. He freezes mid-stride.

WEBER

Did you ever think a good thought
about me?

Jeff stares at the gun. Weber watches him, smiling.

WEBER (cont'd)

Before she scared you that first
time...did you remember me and
think how glad you were we'd met?

JEFF

(carefully)

I just want to know what happened
to my wife--

WEBER

She's not your wife, anymore.

Weber runs her fingertips over the scarred table top, inching
closer to the pistol.

WEBER (cont'd)

I had good thoughts about them, at
first. A terminal patient calls
the number, and I get something in
the mail. Never had to know why,
never even had to meet them in
person. Easiest money anybody ever
made.

Weber picks up an envelope with a few bills tucked inside.
As she does, a syringe tumbles out of the junk on the table.

WEBER (cont'd)

They didn't tell me about this,
though. You saw something, right?
Something horrible, and you want me
to explain how it isn't what it
looks like...

Weber starts to cry, shoulders shaking.

WEBER (cont'd)

I can't take this anymore. They
can fucking explain for themselves.

JEFF

So you'll tell me how to find them?

With his back to it, Jeff can't see the front door open, a
beam of bright light from the landing spilling inside. A
FIGURE passes silently inside, the door closing again...

Weber nods. Jeff waits anxiously for her to continue.

JEFF (cont'd)
I tried to call the number again,
but it didn't work.

WEBER
They change it after it's been used
once. That was just for...Sarah?

JEFF
Mary.

Hearing FOOTSTEPS behind him, Jeff spins around...

WEBER
(smiling sadly)
Mary. Just for Mary.

Hoxsey's assistant Gaines steps out of the shadows.

GAINES
Mister Eden, if you'll follow me...

JEFF
What do you want?

GAINES
It was my understanding that you
have some questions for Doctor
Hoxsey. He'll see you now.

Jeff hesitates, defensive posture fading but still not quite ready to trust. Gaines watches him with flat, bored eyes. With a deep breath, Jeff nods and takes a step forward.

WEBER
I'm so sorry for your loss.

Jeff slows, frowning at Weber as Gaines waits by the door.

EXT. NURSE WEBER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

The ambulance waits at the foot of the stairs. One back door stands open, the same Driver waiting silently beside it.

At the sight of the ambulance, Jeff slows. Without a word, Gaines brushes past him and climbs into the front passenger side. Jeff moves closer. The open door waits for him...

Jeff pauses at the door, looking back to the building behind him. From her window, Weber's silhouette watches.

Jeff stares up her for a moment, then climbs into the back.

INT. NURSE WEBER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Weber backs away from the window. Outside, a door SLAMS.

Overwhelmed with emotion, Weber turns aimlessly, manic tears starting to flow down her face. She crosses the room, no apparent destination until her eyes fall on the table...

Weber picks up the pistol and plants the barrel into the roof of her mouth. Without ceremony, she pulls the TRIGGER.

EXT. NURSE WEBER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The muzzle flash flickers in Weber's window.

The ambulance rolls away into the night...

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mary sits at the kitchen table. The house is dark and quiet.

Mary's knee bounces erratically, shaking the table. Sweat pours down her face and stings her darting eyes.

She takes a sip of water, hands violently shaking. Suddenly, all of her nervous movement stops at once. Eyes wide, Mary brings her hand up and gently touches her cheek.

A spasm of pain runs through her body. The other hand flies up to her jaw. Tears stream from her eyes.

Mary pitches forward and lets out a muffled SCREAM through her hands. She struggles to her feet...

HALL BATHROOM

Mary rushes through the doorway, hands still clamped over her mouth. Her breathing is RAGGED and frantic. She looks into the mirror and slowly pulls her hands away.

Blood seeps past her tight-pursed lips, pooling in the corners of her mouth. She begins to shake, HYPERVENTILATING.

Mary leans over, eyes closed, and opens her mouth...

Blood and saliva spill out across the pure white basin. Mary doubles over, COUGHING, GASPING for air...

Something falls out of her mouth, RATTLING across the floor. Mary crouches, head between her knees. She opens her eyes...

A tooth CLATTERS to a stop on the tile.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. ROOM - DAY

A beam of light splits the darkness, growing wider as a door swings open. Morning light fills a filthy, cluttered room. A FIGURE passes through the doorway, interrupting the sun.

Light gleams on tarnished steel and through old, milky glass. Medical equipment from another era, each sinister-looking piece's purpose a mystery. Blades, mirrors, stirrups...

Jeff slumps forward in an ancient wheelchair in the center of the room. Hearing FOOTSTEPS, his eyelids flutter...

An emaciated teenaged GIRL drifts behind Jeff's chair, moving to a table in the corner. She hovers over a propane burner, blue flame BOILING water in a small pot.

Jeff sees the girl and startles, finding both his wrists handcuffed to the armrests of the chair. A thick chain through the wheels is padlocked to an eye bolt in the floor.

JEFF
(mumbled)
Please, help me...

From a pile of bloody gauze, the Girl lifts a syringe - made of glass, as old as everything else in the room - and lowers it into the boiling water. Her eyes are hollow, vacant.

Frightened, Jeff strains at the cuffs, RATTLING the chain.

DR. HOXSEY (O.C.)
Let me say from the very beginning
that you are in no danger.

Jeff looks up as a silhouette passes through the doorway, deliberate steps and hunched posture making him seem ancient and shrunken inside loose clothing. DOCTOR HOXSEY. His accent is hard to place, but definitely not German:

DR. HOXSEY (cont'd)
You were given a sedative in the
car, and now you've been
temporarily restrained for my
protection. Once I've left the
room, you will be free to go.

JEFF
(groggy, defiant)
Fuck you. Let me go.

Hoxsey lowers himself into an ancient recliner in front of Jeff's chair, patient smile on his deeply wrinkled face.

DR. HOXSEY
As I said, in a moment.

Slowly coming to his senses, Jeff studies the old man.

JEFF
You're him. You're Hoxsey.

DR. HOXSEY
Did Mary tell you about me?

Anger rips through Jeff, his STRUGGLING at once more intense.

JEFF
(growling)
What did you do to her?

DR. HOXSEY
Only what you asked me to do. She
made a full recovery, correct?

JEFF
What did you do?

DR. HOXSEY
I'm not sure exactly how to answer
that for someone like you. How
much do you know about evolutionary
biology?

Jeff stares at Hoxsey, rage building.

JEFF
What happened to her memory?

As the words echo, Hoxsey considers how best to begin.

JEFF (cont'd)
(louder)
What the fuck did you do?

DR. HOXSEY
Memory loss is just a side effect.
The body is able to adjust more
quickly than the mind.

DR. HOXSEY (cont'd)

Once Mary's ready to accept the reality of her new condition, her memory will return.

JEFF

What condition?

The moment of truth. Hoxsey leans forward with a patient expression, taking a deep breath and then stating plainly:

DR. HOXSEY

In nature there are diseases that actually protect their hosts from other, weaker illnesses, but always at a cost. Sickle-cell anemia makes its carrier immune to malaria, for example, but it exacts a terrible payment in return.

Hoxsey's eyes gleam, caught up for a moment in his passion.

DR. HOXSEY (cont'd)

I've travelled the world in search of the purest strains of these diseases, refining my understanding of how such infections work. I've made my life's work available to unfortunate people like your wife, in turn studying how they react to improve--

JEFF

You're saying you gave her a disease?

Jeff shakes his head, trying to understand...

JEFF (cont'd)

She's been to the doctor. They've done all kinds of tests, there's no sign of illness anywhere in her body.

DR. HOXSEY

Do you know what causes epilepsy?

JEFF

What does that have to do with--

DR. HOXSEY

Angry spirits. Demonic possession.
(beat)

DR. HOXSEY (cont'd)
Superstition fills the gaps where
science has yet to spread. Those
doctors may as well be priests.

JEFF
Are you fucking insane?

DR. HOXSEY
(sharper)
Have you forgotten what your wife
looked like when I took her in?

Jeff thrusts his hands forward, the metal chair CREAKING.

JEFF
I'm warning you. Leave us alone.

DR. HOXSEY
Us?
(sneering)
I'm not sure you fully understand
what you're living with.

Jeff stops struggling, curiosity getting the better of him.

DR. HOXSEY (cont'd)
I did for your wife what no other
doctor on earth could do. And
while my process may not yet be
without its side effects, she has
more time now than she did before.

JEFF
What side effects?

DR. HOXSEY
You tell me. Does Mary seem
different since she's been home?

Jeff shakes his head, unwilling to give him the satisfaction.

JEFF
You don't know anything about her.

DR. HOXSEY
At this moment, Mr. Eden, I know
more about your wife than anyone
else in the world.
(beat)
Are there still bruises, or has she
learned how to hunt?

Jeff stops struggling for a moment, shaken by the question.

DR. HOXSEY (cont'd)
You can never go back to her.

The words ring out. Jeff stares at Hoxsey in disbelief.

DR. HOXSEY (cont'd)
You're a persistent man, Mr. Eden,
and I've granted you this visit
because I sympathize with your
situation. But you simply do not
understand the danger you're in--

JEFF
Mary would never hurt me.

Hoxsey gives a polite, but bored, smile.

DR. HOXSEY
Mary will do exactly what her body
tells her to do.

Hoxsey takes a step forward. Jeff strains to reach him.

DR. HOXSEY (cont'd)
She doesn't have a choice.

Hoxsey drops something on the spattered floor at Jeff's feet.
As Jeff struggles, Hoxsey calmly walks towards the door...

Jeff LUNGES forward, TIPPING the chair over, straining his
fingers toward the tiny handcuff keys just out of reach.

COURTYARD

Jeff rushes out of the room, momentarily blinded by the
intense sunlight. Rubbing his wrists, he looks around...

Three stories of walls rise around him. The windows all
cracked or covered over, the doors propped open to reveal
black rooms beyond. One section of the roof collapsed.

From somewhere inside one of the rooms, a muffled COUGH.

Jeff spins around. More COUGHING, farther away. Slowly,
Jeff becomes aware of the collective BREATHING of a crowd.

Jeff backs away, edging closer to another set of rooms...

Suddenly, something explodes out of a dark doorway...
slashing teeth, snarling growls and rumbling barks...

Jeff ducks and tumbles away, just escaping the snapping
yellow teeth. An old electrical cord leash strains...

The guard dog is as sick as its masters: patchy fur, milk-skinned eyes and bleeding gums. It keeps growling, lungs wheezing with exhaustion after the outburst...

Heart racing, Jeff raises his eyes from the animal to the room beyond, where a pale face looks out at him from the shadows. A WOMAN, wrapped in blankets on an unmade bed.

Adjusting to the light, Jeff can see more FACES staring out, huddling together in the corner of the room. Watching him.

All around him, the MURMURING voices grow louder and mix with the dog's growls. More pale faces in the doors and windows.

Jeff keeps spinning to make sure he isn't being approached from behind, searching for some way out...

Down one corridor, a flash of sunlight catches his eye.

CORRIDOR

Jeff begins to jog as he nears the end of the dark tunnel, at the end of which a cracked sidewalk bakes in the noon sun.

Jeff looks over his shoulder. Silhouetted FIGURES have followed him from the courtyard, movements awkward and slow.

EXT. DESOLATE STREET - DAY

Jeff races out of the corridor and into the sun. For the first time, he's able to see exactly where he's been taken...

A long city block of nearly identical ash-grey buildings stretch out in either direction. Tiny windows set into thick walls, glass broken or sooted over years ago.

No sign of life.

Eager to escape from whatever seemed to be following him out of the building, Jeff hurries to the end of the block...

ANOTHER STREET

...and darts up another street just like the one he came from. More of the same crumbling buildings, oppressive architecture of a forgotten era left to rot in silence.

Jeff changes course haphazardly, searching in vain for something modern to break through the strange squalor around him. He keeps checking over his shoulder, growing lost as he veers off in a different direction at each intersection...

He finally slows to catch his breath. Once he's still for a moment, Jeff sees a welcome sight just ahead in the distance:

A single operating storefront in an otherwise empty block.

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Jeff stumbles up to a couple of OLD MEN drinking coffee at a table on the sidewalk in front of a humble restaurant.

JEFF

Excuse me, which way...I need to
get back to Bogenhausen.

They look up at Jeff incredulously, taking in his disheveled appearance and the direction he's approaching from...

OLD MAN #1

Bogenhausen?

JEFF

Yes, I live in Herzogpark, near...

Jeff looks around, scanning the skyline for something familiar...panic rising when he can't find anything at all tall enough to be seen over the low buildings around him.

JEFF (cont'd)

I'm sorry...what part of Munich are
we in?

OLD MAN #2

(sneering)

Munich?

Desperation rising, Jeff keeps looking around for something to orient himself. He finally finds a break in the buildings, but it only reveals something more alarming:

Open green fields, leading out to endless rolling hills. No sign of the teeming city of millions he expected to find.

A fine fence line cuts the field, wire glinting in the sun.

Dumbfounded, Jeff staggers away from the cafe...

EXT. FORMER EAST GERMAN BORDER CROSSING - DAY

Jeff reaches the edge of the town, now able to look back and see its full scope: once a mid-sized industrial city, where the population seems to have all but disappeared overnight.

The fence runs along the edge of the town, six feet of tangled wire that hasn't been maintained in decades. Rusting watchtowers rise above the fence on either end of town.

In the distance, eight lanes of Autobahn cut across the old East German border, most of the passengers unaware that this town even exists. The ROAR just barely reaches Jeff.

Jeff approaches a wide gap in the fence, the gates themselves long ago pushed off of their tracks. Concrete blast guards, warning signs with lettering nearly faded by the sun.

Jeff steps over the old border, motioning frantically to a passing car. Eventually, it slows...

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Mary sleeps on top of a neatly-made bed, fully dressed.

Shadows play over the windows behind her, the silhouette of a FIGURE moving past the drawn blinds. The front door SLAMS.

Mary's eyes pop open. Frantic, confused, she looks around...

After a moment, John's voice CALLS in from the living room. Mary relaxes a little, but still seems disoriented...

MARY
(calling out)
In here...

Mary touches her jaw, feeling around for some remembered pain. Her teeth are perfect, straight and white...

John appears in the doorway, timidly sticking his head in.

JOHN
(seeing her in bed)
Sorry, I didn't mean to--

MARY
No, it's fine. I guess I fell
asleep.

JOHN
We were in the area, and Suzanne
thought you wouldn't mind us
barging in. If it's a bad time--

Mary shakes her head, putting on a convincing smile.

JOHN (cont'd)
It looks great in here.

Mary frowns, not knowing what he means...

HALLWAY

John steps out of the bedroom, followed after a moment by Mary. Her bare feet touch the hardwood floors and she stops.

The old wood gleams, scrubbed and waxed to a wet shine.

JOHN

Suzanne will be right in. She's
really been excited for you to--

John opens the bathroom door and recoils. Mary freezes.

JOHN (cont'd)

(covering his mouth)

Holy shit...

Mary moves closer, dreading what she'll see in the bathroom.

The room sparkles, pure black and white tiles like mirrors.

JOHN (cont'd)

Whatever you sprayed in there...you
need to let this air out.

Mary lingers in the doorway, slowly growing more agitated, something in the gleaming surfaces disturbing her...

KITCHEN

Mary follows John inside, suspiciously inspecting the room.

JOHN

Where's Jeff?

Mary struggles for an answer, when something draws her eye...

The hawk-billed knife, forgotten under the kitchen table.

MARY

I think you need to go.

John turns, startled by the abrupt shift in her tone. Mary keeps her eyes on the knife, fighting back confused panic.

MARY (cont'd)

I'm sorry...this just really isn't
a good time. I don't feel--

JOHN

Sure, of course. We didn't mean
to...

Just then, the kitchen door swings open. Suzanne steps
through, a bundle of blankets held tight in her arms.

SUZANNE

(to the baby, cheery)
Hey, big girl. I want you to meet
somebody...

She pulls the blankets away, revealing an infant squirming in
the bundle. Tiny hands clasping the air, reaching out...

Mary freezes abruptly, struck by a physical sensation.

Suzanne motions for Mary to move closer. She can't, though,
muscles rigid. John notices her reaction, uncomfortable...

SUZANNE (cont'd)

Okay Mary, your turn to say hello.

Mary shakes her head. She stares at the baby, eyes frantic.

JOHN

Suzie, I think we should come back
some other time...

Mary takes a step back. Suzanne gives a bemused frown.

SUZANNE

Come hold her already. It's easy,
there's nothing to worry--

MARY

I don't want to touch it.

JOHN

(uncomfortable)
Her name's Grace.

Suzanne walks closer to Mary, who backpedals...

SUZANNE

Mary, you're being ridiculous.
Here, it's not a big deal...

Suzanne holds the baby out, thrusting him towards Mary...

Suddenly, Mary lashes out with her hands, pushing Suzanne
away. A spastic gesture, accumulated tension exploding.

Suzanne stumbles back, the baby jostling in her hands...

She slams her tailbone down onto the tile, landing harder because her hands are too busy with the baby to break the fall. Her teeth CLICK on impact. The baby begins to SCREAM.

A shocked, airless moment. John and Suzanne stare at Mary.

MARY

I told you to keep it away from me.

INT. JEFF'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Jeff flies up the street. Swinging wide to turn into their driveway, he notices a battered white van parked across the street...

The plumber's van, just where he left it in the first scene.

Before Jeff can think twice about it, he's distracted by the sight of John and Suzanne rushing out of his front door...

EXT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Jeff pulls to the curb, throwing open his door and rushing across his perfect front lawn to meet the fleeing couple.

JEFF

What happened, what's going on?

John and Suzanne don't answer, moving quickly for their car in the driveway. Jeff keeps coming, trying to head them off.

JEFF (cont'd)

Slow down, what--

Jeff steps in front of John, holding up his hands to slow them. John explodes towards him, violently pushing him away.

In the stunned silence that follows, Jeff hears a muffled CRASH filter out from inside his house. He looks back at John and Suzanne hiding behind him, crying near their car.

JEFF (cont'd)

Did Mary do something? Is that what happened?

John glares at him, fist still balled in startled rage.

SUZANNE

John, let's just go.

JEFF
What did she do?

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

Jeff rushes inside and SLAMS the door.

JEFF
(calling out)
Mary? Where are you?

No response. Jeff looks around at the living room: cushions pulled up from the couch and tossed aside, the clutter of the coffee table scattered onto the floor.

Echoing up through the floor below, something CRASHES.

Jeff bolts out of the room...

BASEMENT

Jeff throws the door open and starts down the stairs.

JEFF
(calling out)
Are you down here? Answer me.

He moves down the stairs, squinting out into the darkness of the basement, boxes and shapes blending together in the shadows. Somewhere in the jumble, Jeff can see movement.

JEFF (cont'd)
Mary?

In a far corner, Mary works frantically on something, keeping her back to the stairs. Jeff moves closer, slamming his shin into a box. He curses to himself, stumbling ahead.

Face in shadow, hands buried in a box, Mary ignores him.

JEFF (cont'd)
What did you do to Suzanne?

He gets close enough to see Mary's face. She's sweating, wild-eyed, frantically emptying a moving box onto the floor.

MARY
These aren't our clothes. Whose clothes are these?

JEFF
What the fuck is going on here,
Mary?

MARY

I don't know.

(waving her hands)

This is wrong, though. Everything,
all of this is wrong. You
shouldn't have left me alone like
that...

Mary lashes out, sending a box CRASHING to the floor.

MARY (cont'd)

I feel like I've been awake for
weeks, I can't even remember--

JEFF

What do you mean, awake? Are you
getting up at night when I'm not--

MARY

And when I do sleep, the dreams I
have are...they're horrible. I see
myself doing things you can't
even...

JEFF

You're sure they're dreams?

Mary nods vaguely, looking down at the scattered boxes.

JEFF (cont'd)

(louder)

You're sure?

Mary finally looks up at him, dismayed by the question.

MARY

I'm not crazy. Something is wrong.

Jeff glares at her, frustration and confusion washing over
him. He stands apart, at a loss for what to do next...

Mary watches his face, a different kind of fear surfacing.

MARY (cont'd)

(hesitant)

You're glad I came back, right?

JEFF

What?

MARY

You must've started thinking about
what would happen when I didn't get
better.

Jeff moves closer, grabbing her to silence the thought. Mary
tries to pull away, but Jeff keeps clutching at her.

MARY (cont'd)

You could have had a whole new
life, maybe a new wife--

Jeff pulls her chin up to face his, roughly when she won't go
easy, eyes boring down into hers...

JEFF

I never thought like that. Never.
You are the wife I want.

Mary tries to turn her head away as Jeff kisses her. It
becomes a struggle, Jeff in his desperation trying to make
her physically feel the things he's trying to say...

Mary finally relents, opening her eyes to look into his.

JEFF (cont'd)

I just want you to tell me what's
going on here. Whatever it is, we
can handle it. I can help you.

Mary studies his face for a very long beat.

MARY

The thing is...I died, I think.
(starting to cry)
I think maybe I died.

Mary pulls away, beginning to BAWL. He can't hold on.

MARY (cont'd)

I'm not the same. I can't...
(beat)
I wish you'd wanted a new wife,
because I think you got one.

Mary backs away, racing up the steps and out of the basement.

JEFF

Mary, wait.

Jeff chases after her. A door SLAMS somewhere upstairs...

HALLWAY

Jeff rushes to the closed bedroom door, BANGING on the jamb.

JEFF

Mary.

Jeff twists the handle, finds it locked. He knocks HARDER.

JEFF (cont'd)

Mary, open the door.

He waits, listening to the silence on the other side. Jeff's face begins to flush, frustration and rage welling up...

JEFF (cont'd)

Open the door.

CRACK! Jeff slams the palm of his hand against the door.

JEFF (cont'd)

Come out here, and tell me what is going on. Right now.

Jeff starts to slam his hands into the door HARDER, FASTER.

JEFF (cont'd)

You open this door, and talk to me.

BEDROOM

Mary lies on the bed, curled away from the RATTLING door.

JEFF (O.S.)

Mary!

Mary pulls a pillow against her ears, crying uncontrollably.

Jeff's POUNDING on the door continues, growing louder...

INT. DR. RICHTER'S OFFICE - FRONT DESK - DAY

Richter steps into the waiting area of his office, making a note in a file. She hands the folder to a NURSE at the desk.

NURSE

Those tests you asked me to watch out for just came in.

Fighting back her enthusiasm, Richter casually takes the envelope from the Nurse. The tab reads 'EDEN, MARY C.'

Flipping through the pages, Richter sighs and shakes her head at the results - every line item marked 'NEGATIVE'...

RICHTER
(frowning at the file)
Did you have a chance to track down
that doctor for me?

NURSE
No one with that name. I checked
the international database, too...

Richter nods. After a moment of deliberation, she sets Mary's test results aside and heads for the front door.

RICHTER
I'm going to lunch.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Richter walks through the stacks of a library. She scans the spines, checking them against a scrap of paper in his hand.

She stops, pulling a dusty medical journal off of the shelf. Richter finds the index and flips the brittle pages...

'VIRUS AS PHYSICIAN IN PRE-MEDICAL CULTURE' by Dr. J. Hoxsey.

Accompanying dense blocks of text, chemical formulas and detailed anatomical illustrations make a case for something.

Richter's eyes skim down the pages. 'PLASMA'...'CURATIVE PROPERTIES'... The more she reads, the deeper the frown.

Turning the page, a grainy black and white photo shows a middle-aged Hoxsey beside a hut, surrounded by dense jungle.

It's difficult to see detail in the faded picture, but Hoxsey seems to be smiling. Richter squints at the small caption.

"The author in Papua New Guinea, 1949."

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jeff, eyes heavy, sits where we left him - in a chair directly in front of the bedroom door. The house is silent.

Jeff stands and take a careful step towards the bedroom door, putting his ear to the wood. He checks the handle. Locked.

Jeff moves away from the door, careful not to make a sound...

LIVING ROOM

Jeff picks up Mary's purse, setting it on the coffee table. With a glance at the bedroom door, he unzips the hand bag. Make-up, keys, change. Nothing suspicious.

Jeff does his best to replace the purse exactly as he'd found it. He scans the room, searching for anything out of place.

His eyes fall on the basement door.

HALLWAY

Jeff creeps to his chair, carrying it to the bedroom door...

Not to making any noise, he wedges it tightly under the knob.

BASEMENT

In the rafters, filaments in bare bulbs SPATTER and glow. Jeff creeps down the steps, careful not to make a sound.

He looks around the room from the foot of the stairs, familiar shadows now sinister for what they might be hiding.

Jeff moves deeper, lifting a tarp to look underneath...

BEDROOM

The bedroom is dark and silent. Mary lies on top of the covers, still dressed. Her BREATHING is rhythmic, soft.

Suddenly, Mary's breathing begins to QUICKEN...

BASEMENT

Jeff continues deeper into the shadows...

He reaches the farthest point in the basement - a corner holding an ancient water heater, dark under a dead bulb.

Jeff squints into the tangle of pipes rising from the heater, the darkest hiding place in the basement. Nothing.

Turning back, Jeff stumbles over the clothing Mary was unpacking. He gathers a handful to shove back into the box.

Jeff hesitates, frowning at one of the shirts...

HALLWAY

In the silent hall, the chair stills blocks the bedroom door.

Slowly, the knob begins to turn...

BASEMENT

Jeff lets the other clothes fall, focusing his attention on one T-shirt, spreading open the wadded fabric...

It's decorated with a faded drawing of a skull, words written above it in lightning bolt letters. A heavy metal concert T-shirt, far too small for Jeff and not exactly his style.

Jeff moves under one of the bare bulbs, holding the shirt up for a closer look in the dim light. He notices something...

A spatter of rust-colored stains, more intense at the neck.

Somewhere upstairs, a floorboard CREAKS.

Jeff startles, head whipping back to the dark stairs.

Satisfied the noise was nothing, Jeff turns his attention back to the box Mary had been unpacking. He forces his hands deeper into the clothing until his hand hits something...

With a dismayed frown, Jeff pulls up a rusted claw hammer.

A heavy THUD rumbles down from upstairs.

Jeff spins. He drops the tool and moves through the boxes...

STAIRWAY

Jeff pauses at the foot of the stairs, looking up at the open door and the hall beyond. He slows his breath to listen...

Silence.

HALLWAY

Jeff reaches the top step. Carefully, he leans over the threshold, immediately checking in both directions...

At the end of the hall, the chair blocks the bedroom door.

A little relieved, Jeff carefully climbs up into the hallway and moves towards the bedroom. He keeps his eyes moving, pausing occasionally to listen to the rest of the house.

He stops at the bedroom door. No sound on the other side. Gently, Jeff pulls the chair away, the handle going slack...

Forcing his breathing slower, he gently turns the knob...

BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door swings open, old hinge SQUEAKING...

Suddenly, Jeff tenses at movement in the shadows...

It's a curtain, billowing in the breeze from an open window.

The room is empty.

CUT TO:

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S CAR - NIGHT

Mary jolts.

She's seated. A seat belt strapped across her chest.

Disoriented, Mary realizes she's at the wheel of their car. The engine is silent. The windows are black.

Shaking, she removes the belt and reaches for the door...

EXT. VACANT LOT - NIGHT

Mary's feet step down into tall, dead grass.

An elevated stretch of Autobahn towers above her, the RUMBLE of traffic vibrating down through the concrete supports.

A tract of undeveloped land stretches underneath the overpass. Jeff's car is parked on a pair of dirt tracks through the grass, a road for service vehicles.

Shivering, Mary looks around. Under the shelter of the overpass, flickering fires are visible through the grass.

With all the courage she has, Mary leaves her car behind...

HOMELESS CAMP

Under the soaring off ramp, the shadows are alive with FACES obscured by patchy beards and caked grime. Specters milling around the burning pyres, drifting in and out of the light.

Something RUSTLES in the dry grass. Pure white catching the moonlight. It's Mary, working her way closer to the fires.

Inside the camp, the grass has been smashed down to bare dirt. Mary stops at the threshold, terrified to go farther.

Eyes start to find her. Mary's clean clothes and fair skin absorb what little light there is. Everything else is murky.

MARY
(quiet, shaking)
Excuse me, I'm...

Mary takes a nervous step into the camp...

The homeless men shrink back.

Mary watches in shock as her next step pushes them a little farther away, retreating from the warmth of their fires.

Mary stops, aware of the fear in the eyes surrounding her.

RED BEARD(O.C.)
Ich wusste, sie ist nicht ein
Krüppel.

The man who spoke is young, healthier than the rest, with a long RED BEARD. He gives Mary a hard look, jaw clenched.

MARY
Do you know me?

Something HITS Mary's back - a rock, more tossed than thrown.

Mary spins around, anxiously searching for the source.
Shapes move in the shadows, moving closer to the light.

Another rock flies, scattering dust at Mary's feet. Another sails out from behind a different shadow, grazing her arm.

RED BEARD
(labored English)
Leave us alone.

Mary looks at Red Beard, sees the anger in his expression.

MARY
Why would you say that?
(pleading)
What did I--

CRACK! A fist-sized piece of brick slams into Mary's skull, just above her ear. Mary SCREAMS, staggering back...

Out in the darkness, VOICES grow louder. Somebody LAUGHS.

Mary struggles to keep her balance, holding her head. She looks up at Red Beard, who watches her pain without any pity.

Mary staggers, blood rushing over her ear. Emboldened, the men still instinctively retreat as she lurches towards them.

MARY (cont'd)
Stay away from me.

In response, Red Beard stoops down to pick up a bent pipe.
At the sight of his knuckles tightening over it, Mary bolts.

Red Beard follows after her...

VACANT LOT - CONTINUOUS

Mary runs with all of her might, free of the shadows cast by
the overpass but still a long way from Jeff's gleaming car.

Red Beard is right behind her, followed by countless sets of
feet POUNDING closer in the shadows...

RED BEARD
Helfen Sie mir schnappen sie.

...Mary's legs pump, brittle grass lashing at her arms...

...Red Beard bearing down, gaining on her...

Mary breaks out of the grass, her car in sight. Crying,
fumbling in her pocket for the keys. The alarm CHIRPS.

A bottle sails past her ear, smashing into the windshield.

Five feet from safety, Mary reaches the front bumper...

Red Beard dives and tackles Mary into the hood of the car. A
hollow CRACK as her forehead hits the windshield...

SCREAMING, Mary flails her arms, the metal hood RUMBLING as
she fights for traction. Red Beard slings her forward again.

RED BEARD (cont'd)
(shouting at Mary)
Where are they?

Mary struggles, but is no match for Red Beard's strength.

Using one hand to hold her down against the hood, Red Beard
turns his attention back to his companions in the shadows.

Fighting helplessly, Mary's eyes drift to her blood smeared
on the windshield, black as tar in the bright blue moonlight.

RED BEARD (cont'd)
(to the shadows)
Komm schon, ich habe sie...

Mary's attention is captured by the drips of sticky liquid...

...her crying gets softer...

...her eyes grow wide...

Inside Mary, something awakens at the sight of the blood.

Towering above her limp body, Red Beard turns back to Mary...

As Mary spins, a blur of motion surging towards Red Beard.

Startled, Red Beard retreats so abruptly that he loses his footing, stumbling to stay away from Mary's flailing arms.

Mary surges towards him, holding the broken bottle by its neck. The green glass flashes again in the moonlight...

Red Beard SCREAMS.

And as his voice reaches her, Mary looks down at the bottle in her hand and seems somehow surprised to find it there.

When she looks up again, the tall grass is studded with dirty faces. The Homeless Men seem to feel none of the shock Mary's showing on her face. They've seen all this before.

Terrified, Mary lets the bottle fall and stumbles toward Jeff's car, the horror of what she's just done taking hold.

INT. JEFF'S CAR - NIGHT

Mary falls into the seat, trembling as she LOCKS the doors.

Mary touches the steering wheel, hands sticky with Red Beard's blood. Shaking, CRYING as she starts the engine.

Mary spins the tires, exhaust and scattered dust in the taillights blotting out the accusatory Faces in the grass.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - OFFICE - NIGHT

Jeff leans against his desk, working the bloody T-shirt from the basement between his fingers. He picks up the phone...

INT. DR. RICHTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dr. Richter sits at a table in her kitchen. The television is on but muted, a morning cup of coffee by her side.

The table is covered with old books and brittle mimeographs - medical texts and illustrations. Richter's eyes fall on a photo in a book that's at least forty years old:

An athlete covered with electrodes has been submerged in a clear plastic tank. Hoxsey stands next to his distorted image, lecturing to a group of Soviet-looking scientists.

Richter jumps as the telephone RINGS. She answers--

INTERCUT: JEFF'S OFFICE/RICHTER'S LIVING ROOM

JEFF

I'm sorry to wake you.

RICHTER

No, it's okay...

(pushing the photo aside)

I'm up.

JEFF

There's something wrong with Mary.

RICHTER

What is it? Has she relapsed?

JEFF

No, it's something else.

(beat)

The people who took Mary told her some things that...I think she's really confused about how she got better.

As he's talking, Richter's eyes drift to another photograph:

It's a low pile of human skulls, roughly stacked in a pyramid. Hoxsey kneels beside them, listening attentively as a tribal doctor explains something through a translator.

RICHTER

I think I understand how that might be.

JEFF

We need to take her somewhere safe.

RICHTER

What do you mean?

Richter listens to the STATIC on the line, Jeff's BREATHING.

JEFF

She just needs to go somewhere quiet so she can calm down and see what's real, who she really is...

RICHTER
If you're talking about having Mary
committed, I could make some calls--

JEFF
Today. We need to do this today.

RICHTER
(startled by his tone)
Okay. I'm on my way.

Richter springs up, collecting her keys and bag to leave.

JEFF
Bring something to give her.

RICHTER
I don't understand.

JEFF
A sedative, something strong.

RICHTER
I'm sure that won't be--

JEFF
Can you bring something, or not?

Richter stops her preparations, glancing back to the pile of
books, the grainy photographs of bodies blending together.

RICHTER
Jeff, has Mary done something that
I need to know about?
(beat)
Because if you think that's really
necessary, then the police are much
better equipped--

Without a final look, Jeff drops the shirt into the trash.

JEFF
Just make your calls and come
straight over. I'll keep her here.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mary steps inside, quietly closing the door behind herself.
She wears the same bewildered expression from the field, some
blood from where the brick struck her, some from Red Beard.

Seeing the light in the kitchen, Mary moves closer...

KITCHEN

Jeff sits at the table, under the only light in the house. He doesn't lift his eyes as Mary comes through the door.

Dazed, Mary takes a seat at the table across from Jeff.

Jeff springs up, chair SCRAPING back. He stomps across the room, lifting something heavy that CLANKS as he moves it...

Jeff SLAMS Franz the plumber's tool bag down onto the table. Mary stares at it, canvas sprayed with the same brown flecks.

JEFF

Whose tools are these?

MARY

(barely audible)

I don't know.

Jeff SLAMS his fists down on the table, RATTLING the tools.

JEFF

Stop.

Mary trembles, cowering away from Jeff.

MARY

I don't--

JEFF

Stop. Just stop fucking lying to me, Mary.

(beat)

I found Hoxsey. I saw him.

Mary looks up at Jeff.

MARY

What? When?

(beat, stronger)

Did he tell you anything?

Jeff studies her, evaluating her performance. In the silence Mary's mind goes farther, confusion giving way to betrayal.

MARY (cont'd)

I've been going crazy, trying to figure out--

JEFF

I think you know what happened.

MARY

What?

JEFF

I think you remember everything.

Mary stands up from the table - knees POPPING, sore. Jeff watches her move away, his words hanging in the air.

Without a word, Mary leaves the room. Jeff springs up...

HALL BATHROOM

Mary leans over the sink, steam rising from the tap. Testing the water, she begins washing the blood off of her hands...

The bathroom door flies open, RATTLING against the wall. Jeff storms in, but Mary barely looks up, continues washing.

MARY

Get out.

Mary turns, coldly observing Jeff's confusion and rage.

MARY (cont'd)

I want to be alone.

Jeff scowls, frustration now physical.

JEFF

I don't care what you want. You're going to start explaining what you did to get blood on your clothes--

MARY

Could you hear me screaming?

A dead beat.

JEFF

(startled)

What?

Mary leans over the sink, eyes shut as she inhales the steam.

MARY

When they took me away in the ambulance that morning...you could hear me, couldn't you?

Jeff's face goes dark. He's reliving the moment, lost, and the look in his eye gives away that Mary's guess is right...

MARY (cont'd)
I need to use the bathroom.

Off balance and unable to answer her question, Jeff surveys the room - no other exits, nothing sharp lying by the sink.

MARY (cont'd)
(shouting)
Get out!

JEFF
Leave the door open.

Mary nods, a sad smile on her lips. Suspicious, Jeff backs into the hall, but Mary has already turned back to the sink.

Running her fingers under the faucet, Mary sees something ghostly floating on the surface of the water...

...strands of her hair, dozens of them shimmering on the surface of the water. As she watches, more float down.

Mary shoots a glance at the door, but Jeff is out of sight.

Hands beginning to tremble like that night in the restaurant, Mary reaches up and gingerly touches her scalp, wincing...

Thick clumps of hair comes free, caught between her fingers.

MARY
No.

Panic sweeps through Mary's body. She looks up at the mirror - skin blanched, a hint of red in the corners of her mouth...

MARY (cont'd)
(terrified)
Please, no...

LIVING ROOM

Mary moves into the room with anxious steps, fear barely contained behind her eyes. She sees Jeff at the window, expectantly watching the street. The horizon is just starting to lighten with the first grey of dawn...

MARY
Who are you waiting for?

JEFF
What?

MARY
(sharper)
Did you call someone?

JEFF
Are you worried about the police?

MARY
I'm worried, because the last time
you made a call behind my back...

JEFF
(angry)
You were dying, Mary. You tried to
kill yourself. There wasn't
anything else.
(beat)
I'm sorry, but I'd do it again.

Mary smirks, picking up her purse from the couch.

MARY
(half to herself)
Not if you knew.

JEFF
What did you say?

Mary starts for the front door. Jeff gets there first,
towering over his wife and cutting off her escape.

MARY
Fuck you, Jeff. You're as much a
part of this as I am.

The words hit Jeff like a shot of cold water.

MARY (cont'd)
All of this was almost over. I was
at peace.
(beat, aggressive)
But you sent me away with them, and
now I'm worse than I ever--

JEFF
Mary, look to yourself. That's
just not true.

Giving up on the front door, Mary turns towards the hallway.

MARY
I need to go out now.

JEFF

There is nothing wrong with you.

Mary isn't listening, focussed on the hallway and her escape.

MARY

I need to leave.

Jeff strides over to her, grabbing her arm and jerking Mary to an abrupt halt. He leans in close, trying to reach her.

JEFF

Listen to me. Nothing he told you--

MARY

Jeff, you're hurting me.

Instinctively, Jeff loosens his grip a little. Mary uses that moment to pull free and rush towards the hallway.

JEFF

(louder, chasing)

There's nothing wrong with--

Mary's ankle SNAPS.

Jeff hears the bone's sickening CRACK, and it silences him.

Mary stumbles, reaching out to grab the back of a chair to keep her balance as her limp foot buckles under, useless.

Stunned, Jeff sees the agony flash across his wife's face...

...but he doesn't go to her - for the first time in their marriage keeping his distance while Mary CRIES OUT in pain.

JEFF (cont'd)

(stunned)

What happened to your foot?

Mary looking down at her ballooning ankle - not surprise, just dread washing across her face.

MARY

(teeth gritted)

I need to go.

Mary looks up to see if she's getting through to him, but instead finds Jeff anxiously looking out the window again.

Frightened by what that might mean, Mary scrambles for the end of the hallway, wounded leg dragging behind her...

JEFF

Mary, stop.

HALLWAY

Mary hobbles up the hallway, holding the wall for support.

Jeff thunders around the corner, quickly catching up and clamping his hand onto Mary's arm. She CRIES OUT.

MARY

Let go of me.

Mary struggles, but this time Jeff doesn't relax his grip.

JEFF

You don't have to do this. Just talk to me, I'll--

MARY

I'm warning you.

Jeff blinks, stunned.

MARY (cont'd)

Get out of my way.

JEFF

Or what?

Mary struggles furiously to break free, but Jeff squeezes her arm harder, crowding in closer to block her against the wall.

JEFF (cont'd)

Or what, Mary? What are you saying?

Mary's eyes flash Jeff a look of real, genuine menace.

JEFF (cont'd)

Well?

Mary's breathing grows FASTER, muscles shaking from the strain. Tears flow, trailing dirty streaks down her face.

MARY

Please, just...get away from me.

JEFF

Why?

Mary looks up at Jeff, her anger cut through with fear.

MARY
(soft)
Because I love you.

A KNOCK AT THE FRONT DOOR SHATTERS THE SILENCE.

Jeff's eyes dart anxiously to the sound at the front door.

Mary's gaze doesn't follow: she stays with Jeff, consumed with rage and betrayal at the look of relief on his face.

Jeff turns back, drawing a breath to start explaining...

Mary's fingernails slash across his face before he can begin.

Jeff staggers back, blinded by the flurry of blows clouding his face. Mary works her arms like pistons, painting Jeff's face with hard and deep scratches, no hesitation...

JEFF
Mary, stop...

Jeff stumbles towards an open doorway, off-balance and unable to block more than half of what Mary's throwing at him. Losing his balance, Jeff falls through the doorway...

...only to find himself hanging in empty space, a single nauseous moment when no floorboards rise up to meet him...

BASEMENT STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Jeff's body sails backwards through the basement door, hands flailing at the rail but powerless to slow his fall...

He doesn't connect with the rotting steps until his body has fallen half the way down - a shoulder connecting first, flipping Jeff into a tumbling roll down to the landing.

His skull slams down onto the shadowed platform at the bottom of the stairs, a hollow crack ringing out into the basement.

Consciousness rushes away, Jeff's eyelids fluttering as he fights to stay awake, pupils reflecting the light streaming through the doorway at the top of the stairs...

Up in the hallway, Mary's motionless silhouette looks down at Jeff - her posture calm, impassive. We can't see any detail in her face, just a black mask rimmed with glowing hair.

A silent beat, Jeff's fading eyes searching her dark face...

Another KNOCK.

Mary pushes the hall door closed, extinguishing all light.

JEFF
(unintelligible, silent)
Wait...

In the darkness, all we have of Jeff are his rasping BREATHS.

Upstairs, the KNOCKING continues. The two gaps in the light spilling under the basement door slowly move off, the sound of Mary's dragging FOOTSTEPS echoing away down the hall.

EXT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAWN

Dr. Richter stands at Jeff and Mary's front door, her sharp KNOCKS echoing out into the sleeping neighborhood street. The sky has faded to grey, a warm glow building in the east.

From out here, the house is as still and peaceful as its neighbors. Frowning at the bright light escaping from the living room windows, Richter knocks again. Concerned.

She tries the handle. Unlocked. Richter steps inside...

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frowning at the disheveled living room, Richter moves inside but hovers close by the front door for a moment...

DR. RICHTER
(calling out)
Jeff? Mary?

The house is airless, silent. No sight or sound of Mary.

BASEMENT

Richter's voice filters down into the basement where Jeff lies as he fell, motionless at the base of the stairs.

At the sound of her voice, Jeff's body begins to stir.

LIVING ROOM

Richter moves into the wrecked living room, dread growing...

DR. RICHTER
Is anyone--

Mary springs out, tackling Richter from behind.

Richter's first scream is pure panic and surprise, no concept yet of who or what has slammed her into the ground.

Without a word, Mary begins to claw and punch Richter's face, as the doctor thrashes helplessly.

As pain cuts through her panic, Richter's screams change.

BASEMENT

SHRIEKS and the RUMBLING struggle filter into the basement.

Stiff with pain, Jeff frees his arm and reaches up for the bottom step, pulling himself the first inch towards the door.

LIVING ROOM

Richter struggles to her feet - clothes torn, hair flying, bloody scrapes over her face and neck. She SCREAMS hysterically, fleeing deeper into the room...

Mary catches Richter from behind and Richter tumbles forward into the end table, striking her head on the corner.

BASEMENT

Jeff has pulled himself halfway up the steps - coordination failing, the blow to his head clouding his vision and making every movement clumsy. One stair at a time, he climbs...

JEFF

(slurred)

Mary, wait...

LIVING ROOM

Emotionless, Mary lets the body fall in a heap. Richter lands face down, hiding the damage done by Mary's attack.

Muscles shaking from exertion, Mary's eyes skip past the body and fall instead on the table. Blood shines on the sharp corner.

Some life returns to Mary's eyes. Her hand reaches out to roll Richter's body over...

JEFF (O.C.)

(faint)

Mary?

Mary shakes for a different reason, now: waves of nausea sweep through her. She starts to cry...

But she doesn't pull away.

Slowly, convulsing with revolted SOBS, she leans closer...

BASEMENT

Jeff has made it to his knees, weakly crawling up the last few basement steps, swaying unsteadily as he goes.

JEFF
(calling, slurred)
Mary, please don't...

The house is silent in response - more terrifying than the screams. Jeff raises a numb arm up and opens the door...

Light floods into the dark stairwell, revealing the bad gash across Jeff's forehead, pale skin frosted with sweat...

Exhausted, Jeff catches his wind before pulling himself into the hall. In that moment, he hears the night's last sound:

Mary CRYING.

HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jeff tries to stand but stumbles, his eyes foggy and threatening to collapse back into unconsciousness again.

He settles for a stumbling crawl, pushing himself frantically towards the amber sunlight spilling around the corner into the hallway from the living room ahead...

JEFF
(slurred)
Mary, listen to me.

In response to his voice, her sobbing grows more intense, becoming a WAILING CRY that echoes through the house...

JEFF (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Mary, please...it's okay...

Vision blurring, Jeff uses the wall to pull himself to his feet as he flings himself around the corner into the...

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mary kneels, the lifeless body of Richter draped across her lap. Almost gentle, cradling the woman's head in her hands.

As the first direct rays of the rising sun spill over her, Mary raises her eyes at the sound of Jeff's FOOTSTEPS...

Blood streams from Mary's open mouth.

For a split second, the shock of what he's seeing turns Jeff to stone, giving back the balance that his concussion took.

Mary lets out a choked SOB. Jeff collapses to his knees.

Mary watches him helplessly, mouthing his name.

Jeff slumps to his side, RETCHING, unable to look at her.

Mary lets Richter fall, shakily climbing to her feet. Staring down at Jeff's heaving body, her cries grow softer...

MARY

Don't follow me.

Consciousness fading away for good this time, Jeff can only lift his eyes to watch Mary move away towards the door...

Face pressed to the floor, his view is of her feet padding away, each step more confident and steady than the last...

Her broken ankle completely healed.

Mary turns the handle and steps out into the light. She leaves the door open behind her, leaving without a look back.

Jeff watches Mary's shape swallowed up by shadows in the front yard, the house chilled by a gust of spring air.

In the silence she leaves behind, the heater RUMBLES to life.

Jeff's eyes finally drift closed.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Jeff and Mary's car winds down a narrow road, the lush greenery of the countryside just beginning to bloom.

A crumbling border crossing appears over the next hill. No other traffic moves between it and the forgotten town on the other side.

EXT. HOXSEY'S BUILDING - DAY

The car rattles to a stop on the pot-holed street, directly across from the building Jeff escaped from the day before.

The engine cuts, and Mary steps out. She looks up at the building with dread...but not uncertainty.

She remembers this.

Steeling herself for what she'll find inside, Mary doesn't see the AMBULANCE parked in an alley farther up the street.

After a moment, she takes a hesitant step forward into the tunnel leading into the center of the structure...

COURTYARD

Mary's feet CRUNCH through the dry grass, shoulders stiff in awareness of all the windows and doors looking down on her. There's no other sound in the building...

Mary keeps her eyes ahead, fixed on the door of the room where Jeff woke up. It's closed. Mary reaches the door, choking back nausea to turn the handle and fling it open...

INT. HOXSEY'S ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Sunlight spills past her. The room is empty.

Mary's breath catches -- all of the medical equipment is gone. There's no wheelchair. Nothing but a dirty floor.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Stunned, Mary turns to the courtyard, starting to question the tomb-like stillness of the place for the first time.

Mary pushes the next door open...

Where haunted faces once gazed out at Jeff, now not so much as a rat moves in the shadows. A bit of trash left behind.

She moves to another, less careful now to keep her feet from scuffing across the cracked sidewalk. The door BANGS open:

Nobody there, either. There's no sign that this place was ever used for anything more sinister than a homeless squat.

MARY

Hello?

She spins around. Nothing answers. Her eyes finally fall on something hanging limp from a doorknob across the way...

The dog's empty leash.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Mary leans against the hood of her car, keys in hand, no will to choose her next step. Lost in thought...

VOICES at the end of the next block catch her attention:

Two men have a hushed conversation across the hood of an expensive German touring car. Just beyond them, a battered old motor home slumps in the shade against the curb.

TOMA (25, Romanian) seems to be completing a negotiation with the DRIVER of the car, an older German in business attire: after a few final gruff words, the businessman removes his wallet and begins counting out bills on the hood of his car.

Mary creeps closer, trying to hear what they're saying...

Suddenly, the door of the motor home swings open. CRINA (early 20s, gaunt) straightens her clothes as she climbs out.

Mary crouches back into an alley as Crina moves past. From where she hides, the swinging door of the motor home reveals a filthy mattress taking up most of the shadowy space inside.

Pocketing the money, Toma nods to Crina as the businessman drives away.

CRINA

Bun?

TOMA

E un început.

With an exhausted nod, Crina marches down to the far side of the block, standing on the corner and searching anxiously in either direction for more cars. Mary watches her...

VOICE (O.S.)

Ce dracu faci aici?

Mary spins, startled to find Toma standing very close, studying Mary the way she's been studying Crina.

TOMA

Ei bine? Ce vrei?

The words hiss out, but his tone is flat and business-like. His hands are buried in his pockets, his face blank.

MARY

Sorry, I--

Hearing English, Toma cocks his head. Calculating.

TOMA

(thick accent)

What are you sorry for?

He takes a step closer, hands unfolding out of his pockets: webbed with scars and tiny tattoos, thick with callouses.

TOMA (cont'd)
You look upset.

MARY
I came a long way to see some
people, and they're gone now.

Mary watches him edge closer and smile. Down on the corner, Crina has struck out with the only other car for miles. She turns and notices the conversation taking place...

TOMA (CONT'D)
You sure your friends live in this
neighborhood?

MARY
They're not my friends.

TOMA
Oh.

Mary sees Crina start to approach. Not losing a beat, Toma turns and waves her off. Concerned, she returns to her post at the corner...

TOMA (cont'd)
Maybe I could be your friend.

MARY
I don't think that's such a good
idea.

Toma moves closer, stepping between Mary and Crina. Mary catches a glimpse of her before his big shoulders block her out: she doesn't like this at all.

TOMA
(smiling)
There's no need to be nervous.

MARY
I'm not...

Mary looks down and sees that the hand holding her car keys has started to shake with that same painful tremor.

Before she can react, Toma lays his hand over hers, thick fingers clamping down and muting the rattling keys.

Mary feels his thighs pressing up against her, hot breath fogging out between his crooked teeth. That smile.

MARY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I'm not nervous.
(deciding something)
I'm cold.

INT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sunlight glows in the front windows, afternoon light cutting through the trees and casting hard shadows into the room.

Jeff sits against the wall near where he fell, the lamp still burning beside him long ago overtaken by the sun.

The top half of Richter's body has been covered with something from the laundry, deep red stains soaking through.

Jeff stares at the misshapen form of her face. His eyes are glazed, somewhere just below full consciousness. Lost.

Jeff stands. Stiffly, he goes to the windows...

EXT. JEFF AND MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

A group of WOMEN push strollers up the tree-lined street.

They pass Jeff's house, its architecture and landscaping identical to houses on either side. Lost in conversation, the women barely glance at Jeff and Mary's front windows...

...where, one by one, the curtains in the living room close.

EXT. BORDER TOWN - RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The sunset is brilliant, its final reds and purples shining over the crumbling buildings of the old East German town.

The block's lone business is shuttered for the night, the tables all pushed together and chained up with the chairs.

Jeff's footsteps ECHO down the deserted street, hesitantly finding his way back into the maze of identical buildings...

EXT. HOXSEY'S BUILDING - NIGHT

Approaching the black husk of the building, Jeff immediately hears a frantic BANGING ring out from somewhere inside...

INT. HOXSEY'S BUILDING - COURTYARD - NIGHT

Crina SLAMS her fists into the door of an empty room. Sweat frosts her pale skin; she looks sick.

She moves from room to room, throwing open doors, knocking, calling out in a mixture of Romanian and English.

CRINA
Stiu ca esti aici?
(calling out)
I'm not leaving, do you hear me?

From behind a cracked door on the other side of the courtyard, Mary watches her progress with dread.

As Crina changes direction and begins careening towards her door, Mary accepts the inevitable and opens up.

CRINA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
You. Where is he?

MARY
Who?

CRINA
I saw you with him.

Mary steps out to meet the woman, trying to inconspicuously pull the door closed behind her as she goes...

MARY
He was just--

CRINA
I know what he was doing.

Crina looks at Mary, real desperation in her eyes.

CRINA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Where is he?

MARY
I don't know.

Crina lets out a blood-curdling SHRIEK of frustration that bounces around in the courtyard for a while before escaping out into the neighborhood.

MARY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
(cringing)
Please, just calm down.

Distracted, Mary doesn't notice the new movement on the far side of the courtyard...

Jeff creeps to the end of the dark corridor, keeping to the shadows. He freezes when he sees Mary and Crina, crouching back into the shadows to watch their interaction:

CRINA

He didn't come home. Where...

Crina looks past Mary, focusing instead on the door of the room she walked out of.

CRINA (cont'd)

(gritting her teeth)

Is he in there?

MARY

No, he's not, and you--

Crina begins to push past Mary towards the door.

CRINA

(much louder)

Esti

Mary looks up at the open sky, listens to her voice ECHOING.

Rather than continuing to grapple with her, Mary steps aside and lets Crina crash through the door of her room...

INT. ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

There's no sign of Toma. Just a pile of dirty clothes, a camping stove heating a can in the middle of the room...

MARY

You see?

CRINA

(eyes narrowing)

These are our things.

MARY

No, they're not.

She looks back at Mary, who is stepping in and closing the door behind herself. Mary brushes past her into the room.

CRINA

Our things. Why do you...where did he go?

MARY
I don't know.
(beat)
But he's gone.

Crina freezes, terrified.

CRINA
Why do you say that?

MARY
He told me.

CRINA
Told you what? That he was
leaving?
(shaking her head)
No. Bullshit.

She looks past Mary, sees the door to an en suite bathroom.
Pulled tight. Mary studies the woman for a moment.

MARY
Listen to me: he's gone. You don't
have to...

Crina takes a step towards the bathroom door, but this time
Mary steps in front of her with more authority.

MARY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
You can do whatever you want, now.
You can go--

CRINA
Really? Where can I go?
(to the bathroom door)
Come out here and face me.

She takes another step towards the door, and Mary pushes her
back with unexpected force. Crina starts to SCREAM--

MARY
Stop that.

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

Jeff moves closer, their MUFFLED voices filtering through the
door. He reaches the end of the shadows he's used for cover.

All around Jeff, black windows and open doors watch his
movements, each one potentially hiding a pair of eyes...

INT. MARY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Unable to charge through Mary, Crina shouts with all of her might at the bathroom door - furious, frightened...

CRINA (CONT'D)
You think you can do this to me?
You think I'm not going to keep
coming back--

She looks down --

Mary's hand is on her wrist.

CRINA (cont'd)
(pulling away)
Keep your--

She turns to reach for the door leading out to the courtyard, but Mary grabs her wrist again. This time, much harder.

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

Jeff has taken one hesitant step into the moonlight, hunching over as he passes by the bare black windows of a room...

Suddenly, a different kind of SCREAM escapes Mary's room.

Jeff freezes, caught out in the open...

INT. MARY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Crina takes a step back, hand shaking as she pulls a knife out of her purse. Mary doesn't stop advancing.

CRINA
What are you doing?

Crina grabs at the door, a sliver of moonlight opening...she tries to break for it, almost free...

At once, Mary pounces - she drives forward into Crina, using their collective mass to slam the door.

Mary wraps her hands around Crina's neck from behind, nails biting skin as she clasps tight around her windpipe.

The knife flashes, swinging wildly but nowhere near Mary. Slowly and steadily, Mary holds tight and rides Crina down to the floor. The knife CLATTERS away into the corner.

And then it's silent and still, Mary BREATHING in the dark.

Without a moment to reflect, she grabs Crina by one limp arm and begins dragging her towards the bathroom...

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

Crouching, Jeff waits in the suddenly silent courtyard, his own BREATHING now the only sound to be heard...

Suddenly, the door to Mary's room flies open.

No time to think, Jeff dives through a dark doorway...

INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

Jeff pulls against the wall, out of sight from the courtyard. Jeff scans the room, expecting to find the same ghostly faces he saw huddled in the rooms when he fled before...

The room is filthy, rancid mattress covered with dirty blankets. It appears to be unoccupied, though. Jeff sighs.

Out in the courtyard, FOOTSTEPS grow closer...

Mary drifts into the doorway. A hard halo of moonlight glows around her. A spray of fresh blood soaks her skin.

She studies the room, looking for anything out of place.

Only inches away, Jeff holds his breath...

Mary moves on.

COURTYARD

Jeff's eye drifts past the door frame, cautiously checking the courtyard in both directions. No sign of Mary.

He creeps out, crossing the courtyard to Mary's room...

MARY'S ROOM

The door drifts open...

...and CLANKS into a six-pack of bottles left on the floor.

In the doorway, Jeff tenses at the noise. Nothing in the room seems to respond. Jeff squeezes inside...

Jeff takes it in, not seeing any sign of whoever screamed. Behind the closed door at the back of the room, Jeff hears a faint SCRAPING coming from the other side.

Glancing towards the courtyard, Jeff opens the door...

BATHROOM

Jeff pushes the flimsy door aside, entering a grimy bathroom.

Moonlight shines through a window on the far side of the room, blocked from view behind a drawn shower curtain.

The old plastic curtain is cloudy with mildew, and Jeff can only make out a dark shape in the bathtub on the other side. The SCRAPING is coming from behind the curtain.

Jeff's shoes slide over filthy tile, closing on the shower. He pushes the curtain aside, plastic rings CLICKING...

Crina lies in the tub, dead. Below her, Toma's body is half-submerged in a mixture of their blood. Their limbs tangled together in a kind of embrace.

Jeff staggers, backing into the door and pushing it closed.

Crina's eyes are frozen open, seeming to gaze at Toma. One of her arms floats, bracelets SCRAPING against the tub.

Stunned, Jeff stands with his back to the door...

Behind it in the main room, bottles CLANK.

Jeff whips around, attention suddenly drawn to the soft sounds of MOVEMENT just beyond the thin bathroom door.

ROOM

Mary steps into the room, pushing the noisy six-pack away from the door and shutting it behind herself again.

Mary scans the room, cold eyes searching for anything out of place. Satisfied, she takes up the charred can of food.

BATHROOM

Jeff creeps across the bathroom, steps slow and deliberate.

Trying not to look down at the tub, Jeff peers through the window and sees his car parked on the street just outside.

Jeff steps up onto the edge of the bathtub, balancing on the slick porcelain. He leans across and opens the lock on the window, but countless coats of paint have frozen it closed.

Jeff strains, but he gets no leverage standing that far back.

Jeff looks at the bathroom door, trying to control his fear.

Carefully, Jeff places one foot on the other side of the tub, straddling the dead bodies below.

Jeff tries to force the sash open again, face growing red...

This time, paint starts to CRACK, wood GROANS, ready to...

Suddenly, Jeff's foot slips off the edge, noisily SPLASHING down into the tub...

ROOM

Mary sits up, shaken out of her reverie.

In the bathroom, a faint SLOSHING filters through the door.

Mary stands, whatever vulnerability in her eyes disappearing again. She moves closer...

BATHROOM

Shoe sopping, Jeff moves away from the tub, listening for movement in the room beyond the door.

He examines the handle, looking for a way to lock it...

ROOM

Mary stands on the other side of the door, listening.

Cautiously, Mary reaches out for the knob...

BATHROOM

Every nerve screaming, Jeff keeps his eyes on the handle...

ROOM

With a deep breath, Mary wraps her fingers around the knob--

Suddenly, the door explodes.

Jeff flies through, shoulder splitting the flimsy particle board and carrying his mass slamming into Mary...

She tumbles back under Jeff and the splintered door, head slamming into the floor, eyes instantly losing their light.

LATER

Mary comes to, one fine drip of blood rolling down her cheek.

She's slumped against the wall, hands and feet bound by countless strips of rags. She COUGHS as she sits up.

MARY

We're--

JEFF

(eyes on the courtyard)

Quiet.

Jeff crouches at the door, anxiously watching for movement.

MARY

Jeff, it's true. By the time I got here, they were already gone. Moved on to the next place...

The dark doorways and windows are believably silent, still.

JEFF

(still suspicious)

I said, keep your voice down.

MARY

It's not a trick. If any of them are still around, they don't seem to want us to know about it...

Jeff turns to face Mary, taken by the loneliness in her eyes.

MARY (cont'd)

How long have I been out?

JEFF

A few hours.

As Jeff watches, a stream of blood flows out of her other nostril. He frowns - the bleeding seems to be getting worse.

Mary looks at the bathroom, shards hanging from the hinges.

MARY

I need to get in there.

JEFF

(disgusted)

You're asking me to help you--

MARY

Of course I am.

Mary looks up at him, the request matter-of-fact.

MARY (cont'd)
I don't have a choice.

JEFF
I saw you with her, Mary. Nobody
was here forcing you--

Mary begins to struggle against her restraints, flexing the
rags, desperately looking for a weakness that isn't there.

The more she fights, the more blood flows. Jeff sees it...

MARY
You know me better than anyone else
in the world. Do you really
believe I would do these things if
there were another way?

Mary flails her arms, an animal caught in a trap...

Jeff watches in horror as she strains, veins bulging...

Something SNAPS. Mary SCREAMS. Jeff goes pale.

One arm clearly broken, Mary slowly resumes her struggles.

MARY (cont'd)
(breathless, whimpering)
Please. Just untie me.

Jeff watches the pathetic display, a realization dawning:

JEFF
(quiet)
You can't stop.

MARY
Jeff, I don't have very long before
it...

Mary looks up to see him take a step back, towards the door.

MARY (cont'd)
(soft, with dread)
What are you doing?

JEFF
You're never going to stop.

Jeff turns away, taking another step towards the door.

MARY

Wait! Okay, just wait...
(nodding her head)
There's a knife. Over there.

The terror in Mary's voice is enough to turn Jeff's head.

MARY (cont'd)

I'm asking you for mercy.

Hand shaking, he kneels to pick up Crina's knife...

MARY (cont'd)

You don't understand. It feels
like everything inside me is
starting to tear apart...

Without a look back at Mary, Jeff walks out the door.

MARY (cont'd)

(panic rising)
Please, you at least owe me this.

Hopeless, Mary watches the empty doorway.

MARY (cont'd)

(screaming)
Jeff!

EXT. HOXSEY'S BUILDING - NIGHT

Jeff stumbles into the street, feet SCRAPING over the cracked pavement. Mary's CRIES follow him from the open courtyard.

Jeff fumbles with his keys as he approaches their car. Numb. The ring slips through his fingers, Jeff kneels to find it...

Not covered by his steps, Mary's SCREAMS echo in the night.

Slowly, Jeff looks back at the crumbling building...

COURTYARD

Jeff trudges through the dry lawn, eyes showing the darkness of his mission. So lost in thought, in fact, that the silence doesn't quite register...

Jeff reaches the room and pushes the door open --

INT. ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Mary is gone.

Twisted scraps of bloody cloth litter the floor...

Fragments of broken bathroom door sway on their hinges...

Outside, something RUSTLES.

Jeff spins around, every shadow suddenly a threat.

EXT. HOXSEY'S BUILDING - COURTYARD - NIGHT

Jeff stumbles out of the room, checking in both directions.
Mary seems to have disappeared into thin air.

Jeff's focus widens to include the whole courtyard. Nothing moving in the moonlight. He stands for a moment, listening.

Jeff starts to move again, trying not to make any noise himself. He passes dark doorways, looking in.

JEFF
(calling out)
Mary?

Jeff scans the darkness all around him, muscles tensing.

On the second story balcony above him, something moves in the shadows - mirroring Jeff's progress, stalking after him...

Jeff moves faster, no longer being as cautious about the sound of his FOOTSTEPS.

JEFF (cont'd)
Mary?

Jeff reaches the long hall that leads to the street...

CORRIDOR

Jeff hurries up the dark corridor. There's nothing but shadow in here, only a bright rectangle of moonlight ahead.

Jeff's FOOTSTEPS echo in the enclosed concrete walls. More than half way to the end, Jeff's pace increases. He gives a nervous glance back to the courtyard's dim light...

Mary steps in front of the light at the end of the tunnel.

Jeff turns back from the courtyard to see her silhouette standing between him and the street. He freezes. Mary's shape stands motionless, relaxed. Watching him.

JEFF
Mary?

She's only an outline against the moonlight, faceless.

Mary takes a step towards Jeff.

JEFF (cont'd)
What are you doing?

Mary keeps moving closer, her outline growing larger.

Jeff takes a step back.

JEFF (cont'd)
Say something. Answer me.

Mary keeps coming closer, gradually blocking more and more of the light at the end of the tunnel.

Jeff backpedals faster, eventually turning and running...

COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

...into the courtyard, planting himself in a bright patch of moonlight before turning to the dark entrance to the hallway.

Jeff waits, muscles rigid, for Mary to emerge.

Something SCRAPES. Jeff jumps, turning to find the source.

A rotten shingle tumbles down to the dry grass, blown from a collapsed section of the roof above.

Anxiety rising, Jeff starts moving again. He finds another corridor on the other side of the courtyard, just as long and dark as the other one. Jeff takes a tentative step closer...

At the far end of the hall, Mary's silhouette stands waiting.

Jeff stumbles back, desperately looking for another way out.

His eyes lift up to the crumbling roof line. One room on the second floor is almost completely open to the air, its outside wall mostly gone. Jeff hurries for the stairs...

COLLAPSING ROOM

Jeff steps into the room. Beyond the crumbling wall, a welcome glimpse of open countryside. The street below is a reasonable drop...

Jeff starts to step over the rubble, almost home free...

Something arcs through the air, SMASHING into Jeff's back.

Jeff tumbles forward, feet tangled in the debris...

Mary steps out of the shadows, a splintered 2x4 in her hand.

Wind knocked from his lungs, Jeff struggles to turn and face Mary. Before he can, she SLAMS the board into his face.

Jeff sprawls into the rotting drywall. Mary stands over him.

MARY

How could you leave me like that?

JEFF

(slurred)

I couldn't--

Mary CRACKS the wood across the back of Jeff's skull.

Jeff fights to stay lucid, struggling to his knees. Mary's eyes flash in the moonlight.

MARY

(screaming)

I was begging you!

Jeff pulls something from his pocket - Crina's knife. He fumbles it open, the blade shining darkly...

Mary raises the board, readying the knockout blow...

Jeff explodes up from his crouch, driving his shoulder into Mary before she can bring the board down. As momentum SLAMS Mary's back into the wall, the board falls from her fingers.

Mary starts to slip away, but Jeff grabs her with his free hand and SLINGS her back into the wall. Mary's teeth RATTLE.

She tries to run, dizzy, but Jeff boxes Mary into the corner.

With brutality we couldn't have predicted, Jeff clamps his hand over Mary's throat, pinning her to the wall.

With his other hand, Jeff pushes the knife closer.

Mary struggles, swatting at the blade, trying to BREATHE...

Ultimately, they both grab the knife: Jeff's fist curled around the handle, Mary's hands clutching the blade and trying to hold it away. Her fingers begin to bleed...

The cheap knife starts to flex, flimsy handle CREAKING...

Choking under Jeff's other hand, Mary GASPS for breath as the gleaming point of the knife inching closer to her chest...

Suddenly, something CRACKS.

The knife breaks apart, blade snapping free...

With all of her strength still trying to force it back, the now disconnected blade is thrust away from Mary...

Into Jeff's stomach.

The impact sends a bass drum THUD echoing through Jeff's chest, the blade buried all the way to its jagged hilt.

Air RUSHES out of Jeff, gone before he can form a SCREAM...

The instant Jeff's grip loosens, Mary pulls free and races out of the corner, COUGHING and struggling for breath.

She spins, ready to defend herself against another attack.

Jeff hasn't moved. Blood streams out of his stomach, the blade buried so deep that only the jagged end is visible.

MARY (cont'd)
(hoarse)
I told you.

Mary balls her cut fingers into fists, braced for his charge.

Jeff isn't listening, hands gently touching the broken blade. Blood flows faster, a slick puddle around him growing wider.

MARY (cont'd)
I warned you not to follow me, I
didn't want to--

Jeff drops to one knee.

He tries to stand again. He can't.

Mary lowers her hands, expression starting to change...

Jeff crumples forward. He lands hard on the side of his face, hands too busy holding the blade to break his fall.

Mary takes a tentative step closer. Jeff curls into a ball. His shoulders shake with every breath...

Mary crouches down. She reaches out to touch Jeff's arm - concerned about him, but braced for another attack...

Jeff doesn't react to Mary's touch.

MARY (cont'd)

Jeff.

Skin gone pale, frosted with sweat. Shallow, CHOKED breaths.

Mary starts to cry, helpless, tightening her grip on Jeff.

He's fading away.

MARY (cont'd)

Jeff, don't...

He opens his mouth to speak. Nothing.

MARY (cont'd)

(crying, louder)

Jeff.

Jeff draws in a RAGGED BREATH. Mary watches the side of his face, subconsciously breathing along with him...

A weak stream of air slips past Jeff's lips. He goes limp.

All at once, Mary is alone in the room.

FADE OUT.

EXT. BORDER TOWN - DAWN

The sky is slate grey, dingy and overcast before sunrise. An aging police car tools down the road, a perfunctory patrol.

Hoxsey's building whips past - identical to all the others, easy to miss. Jeff's expensive car stands out, though...

The police car's brake lights pop on.

HOXSEY'S BUILDING

The police car turns down the street, pulling alongside Jeff's car. The COP climbs out, sluggish and stiff. He approaches Jeff's car, leaning down to peak into the windows.

Frowning, he glances up and down the street again, then up at the building's crumbling shell...

LATER

The street is suddenly alive with activity: more police cars, a handful of the town's remaining residents rubbernecking...

The Cop who found Jeff's car approaches the LEAD INVESTIGATOR, now just a spectator at his own crime scene.

COP
(German, subtitled)
Anything new inside?

LEAD INVESTIGATOR
No, just the two in the tub...

He trails off as his ASSISTANT rushes around the corner.

JUNIOR INVESTIGATOR
Sir, we need you upstairs.

COURTYARD

His subordinate leads the Investigator through the courtyard. Around building, cops drift in and out of abandoned rooms with little urgency, taking pictures and making notes.

JUNIOR INVESTIGATOR
We were starting to get our hopes
up that upstairs would be clean...

Off his gesture, the Investigator looks to the second story. A CROWD gathers around the door to the collapsing room.

COLLAPSING ROOM

The Investigator parts the crowd on the balcony outside the room, all MURMURING and trying to get a glimpse inside.

He finally reaches the doorway and stops short:

Blood, everywhere. The Investigator steps into the room...

Blood in smeared streaks on the floor, the walls...

Bloody footprints. Dozens of them.

There's no body, though.

Jeff is gone.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Surrounded by white, Jeff's face is pale and motionless...

MARY (O.C.)
I want you to read this letter
knowing that the only thing in my
heart as I leave this place is you.

Slowly, Jeff's eyelids begin to flutter...

He's in a reclined bed, wearing a hospital gown. Pure white fabric surrounds him. An IV runs into the back of his hand.

MARY (O.C.) (cont'd)
I don't feel any need to think back
on any other part of my life. I
don't miss a moment before we met.

Mary sits at the foot of the bed, reading a letter written in sloppy handwriting. We recognize the envelope - it's the one she was holding in front of the oven, her own suicide note.

MARY (cont'd)
(reading)
I wasn't really the person writing
this until the day I found you.

She smiles at Jeff as he stirs, genuinely happy to see him.

MARY (cont'd)
Too bad it's sort of tainted. Some
of that came out pretty well...

Mary stands, moving around to the side of the bed.

As she comes closer, Jeff instinctively flinches back.

JEFF
(barely audible)
Stay away from me.

MARY
You don't need to worry, I'm...
(beat)
I'm sorry.

Details about his injuries seem to be returning to Jeff. Fear sweeps through him, and his eyes snap to the door.

JEFF
(weakly)
Help! Please, somebody...

He doubles over, holding his stomach where the knife went in. Mary winces, as if she can feel the pain in her own body.

MARY

You don't have to do that. I just
wanted to stay until you woke up...

(beat)

I need to say something before I
go. Will you let me?

While Jeff doesn't say anything, he stops struggling.

MARY (cont'd)

I hated you for what you did to me,
but I understand it now.

Confused, Jeff watches Mary's face start to crumble...

MARY (cont'd)

Seeing you lying there like that,
bleeding...dying...

(tearing up)

Before that, I didn't really
realize what it had been like for
you to watch me fade away.

Mary comes even closer, sitting on the edge of the bed.

MARY (cont'd)

When you love someone, it isn't
really a choice at all.

FOOTSTEPS in the hallway outside his door. It OPENS....

James Hoxsey's decrepit face drifts into view.

They lock eyes, the shock of Hoxsey's appearance ripping
through Jeff. Hoxsey smiles reassuringly, closing the door.

JEFF

Why is he here?

A sad smile is her only answer.

JEFF (cont'd)

Mary, what's going on?

Breathless, Jeff reaches for the bed's 'nurse call' button...

Pulling back the sheet, Jeff finds battered plaid fabric.
Confused, Jeff touches the arm. He's in a recliner, not a
hospital bed. He looks at the rest of the room...

The fabric surrounding him isn't hospital curtains, but
regular bed sheets hung from a water-stained and moldy
ceiling. There's a television on bricks in the corner...

JEFF (cont'd)
This isn't a hospital.

Jeff's eyes fill with terror, more details hitting him...

MARY
It's okay. You just lost so much
blood...

Jeff struggles to sit up, trying to climb out of bed. His IV tube pulls tight, tipping the metal tree off balance...

It HITS the filthy floor, ancient glass bottle SHATTERING.

MARY (cont'd)
I'm sorry. I couldn't do it.

Jeff looks up, her words freezing his blood solid.

JEFF
What--

Confused, Jeff's eyes drift to his stomach. No blood stains, no bulky bandages visible underneath the thin fabric.

JEFF (cont'd)
You couldn't do what?

Frantic, Jeff pushes the covers down, pawing at his gown...

JEFF (cont'd)
What couldn't you...

Jeff finally pulls the cloth away, revealing his stomach.

There's no wound...no stitches...just a faint scar.

MARY
I couldn't let you go.

SCREAMING, Jeff tumbles out of the bed - no plan, really, just fear surging through him, a helpless desire to flee...

Mary moves closer, a sympathetic look in her eyes. Jeff YELLS, tangled in his IV, pushing himself into the corner...

The door opens again - Hoxsey, joined this time by Gaines and a few DEAD-EYED PATIENTS. They fan out, closing in on Jeff.

HOXSEY
Mister Eden, that's not necessary.

As Jeff thrashes harder, Hoxsey smiles reassuringly.

HOXSEY (cont'd)
I've done the best for you I can...

Jeff's SCREAMS ring out, muffled as they surround him...

FADE OUT.

EXT. ELECTRONICS SUPERSTORE - NIGHT

A big, bright store in the center of a parking lot that seems to stretch on for miles. By the new cars in the parking lot, we're in a wealthy suburb on the edge of an American city.

KYLE, middle-aged but with a gym membership, walks into the parking lot unwrapping a CD. Passing between a row of cars, he surreptitiously lets the plastic fall on the ground...

Up ahead, a WOMAN is struggling to fit a large flat-screen television into the back seat of a small car by herself.

Her outfit might not generally be revealing, but the way she's having to bend and twist to force the TV into the back of her car is leaving her exposed all over the place.

Kyle enjoys the show for a moment, then does a careful scan around. She seems to be alone. He steps forward...

KYLE
Listen, I don't mean to state the obvious--

The woman looks back...

It's Mary.

MARY
Then don't.

Scolded, Kyle nods and backs away.

Brushing the sweaty hair out of her face, Mary rests for a moment. She looks down at the flat screen and then at Kyle.

MARY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Hey.

Climbing into a big SUV parked nearby, Kyle turns quickly.

MARY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Sorry.

Kyle smiles and shrugs. "No biggie."

INT. KYLE'S SUV - NIGHT

Kyle drives down a block of homogenous new houses - all big, brick, and set far away from the empty sidewalks...

Mary rides in the passenger seat, her television in the back.

KYLE

You were smart to buy out here. It feels far from the city now, but the way things are growing--

MARY

It's lonely. Don't you think?

There's a new tone to her voice - whatever other game she's playing, Mary seems to know something about loneliness now.

Kyle looks at Mary, confused and eager to keep things light.

KYLE

I mean...it doesn't have to be.

Pushing her feelings down again, Mary looks over and smiles.

MARY

Up here on the left. The brick one with the ridiculous double doors.

The house she's indicating still has a 'FOR SALE' sign in the front yard. Kyle pulls into the empty driveway...

INT. NEW HOUSE - NIGHT

They struggle to carry the television into the vaulted entry hall, only getting a few feet inside before needing to rest.

Mary shuts the front door while Kyle looks around - it's completely unfurnished, vacuum cleaner tracks on the carpet.

His attention turns to the cardboard moving boxes stacked along the entry hall: all covered with ornate international postage, battered and torn from a long overseas voyage.

KYLE

I like your priorities. TV before unpacking.

An awkward silence. Kyle looks at Mary, suddenly nervous...

She isn't.

MARY
Should you call your wife?

KYLE
(startled)
Excuse me?

MARY
Look, I don't care. But will you
have a better time if you call your
wife first and tell her that you
ran into some people from work?

KYLE
Maybe I should...

Mary nods, padding away into the darkness of the house.

Before rounding the corner, Kyle sees her unbutton her
shirt...

LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kyle comes into the dark room, a spring in his step...

Three more big television boxes are stacked against the wall.

Confused, Kyle turns to find Mary sitting on the kitchen
counter - she continued undressing after she left him, but to
Kyle's disappointment it had only been so that she could
change into something easier to move in...

He waits for an explanation, but Mary doesn't seem to care.

KYLE
What's going on here?

Something stirs in the shadows right behind him...

Jeff.

He looks good, hair grown out a little. Relaxed.

Kyle spins around, startled...

KYLE (cont'd)
(to Mary)
Who the fuck is he?

Mary looks at Jeff. All loneliness in her eyes banished by
the sight of him.

He smiles back at her, feeling the same.

Kyle nods, unwittingly backing deeper into the living room...

KYLE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Okay, I get it. I know what this
is...

Jeff and Mary follow Kyle into the room, moving as one.

JEFF
No, you don't.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END