

I Know Who Killed Me

by
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Green revisions
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"I Know Who Killed Me"

OVER BLACK:

An eerie percussive sound: Like bamboo wind chimes clacking lazily--only bigger, hollower sounding.

FADE IN:

EXT. STRIP T'S -- NIGHT

The unhurried, restless clacking sound continues.

The flickering, half-dead neon of a strip joint: **Strip T's**

The blue neon outlines a shapely woman with perky breasts. Some of the neon is burned out:

The lower half of the right leg--dark.

The right hand--also dark.

INT. STRIP T'S -- CONTINUOUS

Every movement inside this firetrap seems just as sluggish as the hollow clacking sound that continues over. It's the only sound we hear.

Rays from a lazy mirror ball slither over every surface.

A dozen freakish MEN--most smoking--occupy rickety old theater seats on three sides of a stage.

Knife-fight scars, grease-ball hair, a milky eye, a port-wine birthmark, an eye patch, thick chest hair merging with 5-o'clock shadow, a completely tattooed face.

Dancing onstage: A beautiful young STRIPPER in long blood-red gloves, a red-lace brassiere, a matching thong, cash stuffed into its straps.

The Stripper is only 19, and though beautiful, carries an aura of doom about her. Drug-glazed eyes.

AUBREY (V.O.)

She knew a trick.

She drops first one, then the other bra strap. The Stripper lets the bra sink slowly to the tips of her breasts, hang there for a moment, then fall.

AUBREY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

She knew how to turn her life into a movie...

Topless, the Stripper grabs a pole with her right hand and spins slowly down it...

...Leaving a smeared spiral of fresh blood in the path her hand took.

The Stripper doesn't seem to notice.

AUBREY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And watch things happen. Not to her--

CUT TO:

INT. NEW SALEM JUNIOR COLLEGE -- CORRIDOR -- DAY

An undistinguished linoleum-and-concrete-block corridor, deserted. A large bulletin board between banks of lockers has the usual clutter of notices, banners.

AUBREY (V.O.)
(CONT'D)
--But to a girl who looked just like her...

Through the windowed door of a classroom: 19-year-old AUBREY FLEMING stands before class, reading a story from a paper.

Aubrey looks enough like the stripper to be her double. But dressed in the latest casual fashion, it's hard to believe the two could have any connection at all.

AUBREY (CONT'D)
Was she the runaway with everything she owned in a ratty old backpack?

INT. CLASSROOM -- CONTINUOUS

A dozen STUDENTS sit at desks listening intently to Aubrey.

AUBREY (CONT'D)
Or was she watching a movie about a hitchhiking runaway on a lonely highway? A truck slowed till the girl squinted in his headlights. But one good look at her and the trucker couldn't get out of there fast enough. She didn't even have the strength to curse him as she choked on the dust of his spinning wheels.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS -- MOMENTS LATER

Sitting under a tree, Aubrey seems distracted as her boyfriend JERROD POINTER, 19--a beefy, sexy jock in a letter jacket--strokes the back of her neck. The "New Salem Junior College" sign is prominent nearby.

AUBREY

It's all wrong. I have to start over.

JERROD

You need to do something to take your mind off it.

AUBREY

Why is she running away?

JERROD

I know something that might help.

AUBREY

I don't know where she's going. I don't even know why the trucker wouldn't pick her up.

Jerrod sighs and removes his hand from her neck.

JERROD

Then why'd you write it that way? Why'd you have him drive off? Why didn't you make him pick her up? You just didn't want to write a sex scene.

AUBREY

She scared him. But I don't know why. She knows why but she hasn't shown me that part yet.

JERROD

You talk about her like she's real. She's just made up. It's just a stupid assignment for a stupid class. Don't make yourself crazy.

AUBREY

You're not helping, Jerrod.

JERROD

That's because you won't let me...

Aubrey shrugs away from his hand, starting the engine.

AUBREY

I don't know why I bother trying to talk to you about anything but sex. You're late for football practice.

JERROD

Shit!

He pecks Aubrey on the cheek and hurries out of the car. Aubrey watches him run across the parking lot, then she drives off.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. AUBREY FLEMING'S HOUSE -- DAY

A shiny gardener's truck sits at the curb in front of a mini-mansion that backs to a golf course.

Near one of the front windows, a gardener, KENNY SCAIFE, 29, good-looking in a bad-boy way, dressed in a neat blue uniform, rocks to tunes on an iPod as he trims a shrub. His movements are incongruous with:

SOUND of piano heard over, a classical tune.

INT. FLEMING LIVING ROOM -- AFTERNOON

As a metronome ticks away: Aubrey struggles through a difficult passage at a grand piano in a large living room overlooking the golf course.

Aubrey's teacher DOUGLAS NORQUIST, 35, a soft, pasty man in tinted aviator glasses, short-sleeve dress shirt and tie, stands over Aubrey. She stops playing. The metronome keeps ticking.

AUBREY

I'm sorry, Mr. Norquist. I know I should have this by now.

Aubrey catches sight of Scaife at the window. He waves and smiles. She nods.

NORQUIST

You've been distracted lately, Aubrey. The Young Artist competition is less than a month away.

AUBREY

I know...I--

NORQUIST

(holds up right hand)
Watch this hand.

Mr. Norquist sits down beside Aubrey and perfectly plays the passage Aubrey struggled through.

Aubrey stares at the thick curling hair on his fingers and the back of his hand. He wears a large ring, a blue sapphire overlaid with a distinctive gold treble clef.

NORQUIST (CONT'D)

See how easy?

Aubrey looks conflicted. She opens her mouth a few times before she gets the nerve to speak.

AUBREY

Mr. Norquist. I've been, uh, meaning to talk to... I mean, I'm, I started thinking, you know, that I'm not really cut out for the piano.

NORQUIST

Aubrey. All artists feel that way. It's normal.

Aubrey looks down at her fidgeting hands.

AUBREY

No. I want to--I want to quit. I barely made my winter admit to Yale. I could still blow it. I need to concentrate all my efforts on my writing.

NORQUIST

But you have a gift, an innate talent. You won the Young Artists competition. How much more validation--

AUBREY

That was a long time ago, Mr. Norquist.

Aubrey stares down at her hands.

NORQUIST

I want you to take some time to think about this. Regret is a terrible thing. People punish themselves for a lifetime over decisions like this.

AUBREY

I won't.

INT. FLEMING FOYER -- MOMENTS LATER

Aubrey closes the front door softly and watches:

Mr. Norquist stride down the front walk to his old car.

Aubrey's pretty mother SUSAN FLEMING, 39, enters wearing a business suit and sunglasses, briefcase in hand. Susan is not the kind of woman you'd ever see scrubbing a sink.

AUBREY

I did it, Mom. I finally got the nerve to tell him. I finally quit.

Susan pulls off her sunglasses and, with a weary sigh, stares hard at Aubrey for a beat.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

What?! Why are you looking at me like--!

SUSAN

You're telling your father.

AUBREY

Mother, I know what I'm doing. Why are you guilt-tripping me?

Susan stares at Aubrey for a beat, almost betraying admiration.

SUSAN

Aubrey, it's been a long day...

Susan exits. Aubrey leans back against the door and groans. At the sound of a plaintive meow, she looks down, then picks up her fat kitty Mitts. She hugs Mitts, petting him absently.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLEMING HOUSE -- NIGHT

A single light at a second story window. The sound of fingers on a computer keyboard.

A New Salem Security Company car, blue and white with a big blue light bar, drives past the house, its spotlight darting about, tracing the perimeter of the Fleming house.

INT. AUBREY'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

A typical upscale bedroom. Aubrey sits at her desk in front of the window, bent over her laptop. From her iPod earpieces, a muffled pop tune plays.

She consults a post-it note, one of dozens, slapped on the wall to the side of her desk. She tears it away, wads it up, tosses it aside. Looks at the other notes, then sighs. She switches her iPod to a piano concerto.

She looks up at her reflection in the dark glass of the window for a beat. She watches herself bite a nail.

Her hands hover indecisively above the keyboard. Then she begins typing very fast.

AUBREY (V.O.)

She had always felt like half a person--
half a person with half a soul.

(MORE)

AUBREY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Sometimes if she dreamed hard enough,
she could bring the two halves
together. But she always woke to the
same feelings of loneliness and loss.
(FADING UNDER)

FADE TO:

EXT. CAMPUS -- MORNING

Crowded. Jerrod holds out a single blue rose to Aubrey, who has a backpack slung over her shoulder.

They look at each other for a beat.

AUBREY

Where'd you find a blue rose?

JERROD

(shrugs)

On the street. I passed a place.

Aubrey reaches for it, then pulls back her hand in pain. A drop of blood appears on her right middle finger. She looks at it, then puts it in her mouth.

ANGLE ON - BULLETIN BOARD

As we leave Aubrey and Jerrod, we see the corridor bulletin board.

On it are 2 posters labeled:

Missing! Help us find Jennifer Toland!
Missing! Have you seen Fiona Gerritt!

Each poster features a yearbook photo of a teenage girl and the details of her disappearance.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WATERFALL -- MORNING

Deep in a forest, the rush of a waterfall is the only sound.

A tangle of jeans, shirts, hiking boots, and backpacks on top of a smooth rock with a commanding view of the waterfall.

Nearby: GORDON and FAITH, both mid-20s, sunbathe in the nude. Gordon turns on his side and lets his fingertips trail slowly down Faith's shapely backside.

GORDON

You're sweating already.

FAITH

No kidding.

GORDON

I'm thirsty.

Gordon cracks open a bottle of water. He holds it over the small of Faith's back. Then tilts it until it drizzles onto her back. She flinches but doesn't protest.

FAITH

What would my daddy say if he saw this side of you?

GORDON

He'd probably just start shooting.

Panting like a dog, Gordon gets on all fours straddling Faith's legs. He laps up the water where it puddled in the hollow at the small of her back. Then he barks happily.

FAITH

Mmm. I can feel your tail wagging.

GORDON

Won't be waggin' for long.

He slides his tongue up her spine, reaching her neck. She angles her head to kiss him.

As they kiss, she reacts in horror to:

The BODY of a teenage girl washing over the waterfall, veiled by the rushing water. It sinks into the froth below.

She breaks off the kiss and shrieks.

GORDON (CONT'D)

What?

But Faith can only point.

Moments later: Gordon and Faith stand at the edge of the cliff looking down into the huge pool below.

GORDON (CONT'D)

I don't see anything.

FAITH

One of us has to go down there.

GORDON

Let's just go back to town. We can tell the Sheriff.

FAITH

That's going to take two hours.
...Never mind. I'll go.

Faith steps closer to the edge of the cliff, preparing to dive. Gordon jerks her back.

GORDON

Okay. Okay.

Without any preparation, and scared as hell, Gordon runs toward the edge and dives. His naked body knifes into the deep pool at the bottom of the fall.

A few seconds go by. Faith watches anxiously, starting to get dressed.

Then Gordon comes up for air. He treads water.

GORDON (CONT'D)

There's nothing down here! It's freezing.

FAITH

I am not a person who sees things!

Muttering in disgust, Gordon takes a deep breath and disappears underwater again.

Faith finishes dressing. And then Gordon appears again, this time, flailing around in a panic, gagging, choking, screaming. Faith freezes, watching...

Next to Gordon: Something floats just below the surface...

The nude body of a dead teenage GIRL, mutilated in ways that register only subliminally. It looks as if she is missing an her right arm at the wrist and her right leg just above her ankle.

Still in a panic, Gordon swims away from the body, which sinks slowly back underwater.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW SALEM CITY HALL -- DAY

A stone public building. A grinding noise OVER as...

INT. CITY MORGUE OFFICES -- DAY

...One after another: **Missing! Help us find Jennifer Toland!** posters are fed into a noisy paper shredder.

Doing the shredding: Clerk MERRIBETH HAMBLIN, 44. Fellow clerk, KATEY FRYE, 41, approaches.

KATEY

Maybe I oughtta see if they want something to eat.

On the other side of a window: FRED and MARNIE TOLAND, a middle-aged couple waiting on a wooden bench in the corridor. Both look distraught. Standing nearby, looking uneasy, holding his hat respectfully, SHERIFF LEON CARDERO, 58.

MERRIBETH

I don't expect anybody'd be hungry at a time like this.

Katey and Merribeth look up as:

DR. ALEX DUPREE, 47, the intense, studious medical examiner, enters a small scrub room that can be seen from the offices.

Dupree rips off his mask, apron, and blue-latex gloves, tossing all in a bin under the sink. He braces against the sink lip for a moment, head bowed, obviously upset.

Katey and Merribeth share a concerned look.

MERRIBETH (CONT'D)

Dr. Dupree?

Dupree cranks on the water and washes his hands, moving them ever slower till they are motionless under the scalding water.

KATEY

Are you all right?

He looks up and then turns off the tap. Drying his hands, he approaches the office area, looks around.

DUPREE

Where's MacBreen?

MERRIBETH

He's at lunch. Is there anything I can do?

DUPREE

I need MacBreen to do a transcription.

KATEY

One of us could do it. I mean, if you're in a hurry.

DUPREE

Buzz me the minute he gets back.

MERRIBETH

You think we can't handle it because we're women. Right?

Dupree turns away, then remembers something.

DUPREE

In the meantime...

KATEY

Yes, doctor?

DUPREE

Get MacBreen's transcriber set up in the mayor's office.

MERRIBETH

The mayor's out of town.

Dupree ignores the statement.

KATEY

What about the Tolands?

On the other side of the window, the Tolands watch in concern.

DUPREE

They'll have to identify the body.

Dupree exits wearily into the waiting area.

The Tolands stand as he approaches. Merribeth and Katey watch.

MERRIBETH

MacBreen is a sworn officer of the court.

Katey turns, looks at her without understanding.

MERRIBETH (CONT'D)

They need someone who's under oath not to talk.

(beat)

...Prepare to be invaded by the FBI, honey.

KATEY

They think it's a serial killer, don't they?

CUT TO:

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE -- LATER

DENNIS MACBREEN, 35, an amiable, efficient geek, sits in front of a laptop computer at the Mayor's big desk, typing with demonic speed.

His foot pumps the pedal of the transcriber.

Dr. Dupree's deliberate diction is audible but indecipherable through the muff of the headset.

BEGIN INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MORGUE VIEWING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The sound of MacBreen's keyboard tapping and Dupree's muffled diction continues over:

Dupree leading the grieving Tolands into a cold blue room with a covered body on a table.

Dupree says something to them we can't hear, and then starts to pull aside the sheet...AND:

In the Mayor's office: MacBreen's fingers fly over the keyboard. On his laptop screen, we glimpse isolated phrases:

...19-year-old female... ...5'4" tall...

In the viewing room: With Sheriff Cardero standing to one side, the Tolands stare fixedly down at the body as Dupree gently lifts the sheet.

In the Mayor's office: MacBreen continues to type and more isolated phrases appear on the laptop screen--

...amputation of individual digits, possibly on the same or successive days...

...evidence of necrosis, possibly from frostbite...

...full metacarpal amputation approximately 2 weeks later...

In the viewing room: Marnie Toland's hand flies to her mouth.

In the Mayor's office: More phrases on the laptop screen--

...below-knee amputation... ...ragged cuts indicate...

...near-lethal levels of amphetamines...

The sound of MacBreen's typing has grown slower and slower.

In the viewing room: Marnie Toland collapses, wailing, in her husband's arms. Sheriff Cardero moves in to help.

In the Mayor's office: MacBreen's typing gets even slower. And then, appearing on the screen, character by character:

...inducing a state of forced alertness...

...suggesting the killer wanted the victim fully conscious during each limb removal...

Unable to take anymore, MacBreen rips off his headset, ashen. We hear Dupree's voice quite clearly now:

DUPREE (V.O.)

Water in the lungs indicates drowning--
not blood loss or trauma--as the
final cause of death.

(Dupree's voice catches
with emotion)

...between 4 and 8 hours before the
discovery of her body.

CUT TO:

UNDER A MICROSCOPE: AN EARTHWORM DISSECTION

The body pinned open.

MRS. POST (O.S.)

Who has not found the aortic arches?

INT. BIOLOGY LAB -- DAY

Most of the STUDENTS have heads bent over microscopes,
including Aubrey who shares a lab table with Jerrod.

The instructor, MRS. POST, circulates, occasionally looking
into one of the microscopes.

MRS. POST

And the supratharangeal ganglia. The
brain. Yes, you can barely see it
even with the microscope.

Jerrod reaches over and puts his hand on Aubrey's leg. She
stops his hand mid-thigh and holds it there.

JERROD

(whispers)

Aubrey. Aubrey...

AUBREY

Is that all I am to you? Something
to relax you before the game?

JERROD

You're twisting my words.

STUDENT

If I cut a worm in half will it become
two worms?

MRS. POST

No, Pete, that's a myth. The half
with the brain might survive. But
the other half will definitely die.

JERROD

What's it gonna take for me and you?

AUBREY

A lot more than one blue rose.

JERROD

(difficult beat)

Aubrey, I think I'm falling in love
with you.

It takes Aubrey a beat to recover from this unexpected
declaration.

AUBREY

(feeling it too)

We barely know each other. You're
delusional, Jerrod.

JERROD

No I'm not. You're all I think about.
You're all I want to think about.

AUBREY

Totally delusional.

Mrs. Post steps between them. They release hands. Mrs. Post
doesn't seem to mind young love.

MRS. POST

Jerrod? Can you point out the female
reproductive organs, the seminal
receptacles?

Jerrod reddens as he looks into his microscope.

JERROD

Let's see. Uh, yeah. Right here.

He lets Mrs. Post have a look.

MRS. POST

I have to respectfully disagree with
you, Jerrod. Those are the male
reproductive organs. The female organs
are at the other end of the worm.

An administrator, MR. GUERRERO, motions to Mrs. Post from
the doorway. As Mrs. Post walks away, Aubrey sighs
exaggeratedly.

AUBREY

Looks like you need a little more
experience with the female anatomy.

Aubrey smiles mysteriously.

At the door, Mrs. Post consults quietly with Mr. Guerrero.

MRS. POST

Oh my Lord!

Mrs. Post covers her mouth in horror. Sensing the gravity, the class grows quiet. After a moment, Mr. Guerrero moves on. Mrs. Post returns to the class, looking pale.

MRS. POST (CONT'D)

Jennifer Toland's body was discovered early this morning. Don't ask me any questions. I don't know the details.

Horrified, Aubrey reaches out for Jerrod's hand.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW SALEM CITY HALL -- DAY

Sheriff Cardero climbs the steps with REPORTERS on his heels, shouting questions over each other.

FIRST REPORTER

Several federal agents were observed entering City Hall about an hour ago--

SECOND REPORTER

Sheriff, why has the coroner's report been sealed?

THIRD REPORTER

Jennifer Toland disappeared almost two months ago. Can you confirm the rumors that the actual cause of death was drowning?

FIRST REPORTER

The time of death was placed at around midnight last night. Can you confirm?

SECOND REPORTER

Serial killers typically--

CARDERO

One dead girl and you're talking serial killer. You people are astounding.

THIRD REPORTER

But the other missing girl, Sheriff.

Cardero continues climbing the steps, ignoring the questions. He disappears through the doors of City Hall.

CUT TO:

EXT. BASEBALL DUGOUT -- AFTERNOON

Sitting on the bench in the privacy of the abandoned dugout: Jerrod's arms are wrapped around Aubrey's waist. She leans back against his chest, staring beyond the deserted baseball field.

As he kisses her neck, Jerrod lets one hand slide up to a breast. Aubrey pushes it back down with distracted annoyance.

AUBREY

Every girl I know is afraid. Everybody thinks Fiona Gerritt is dead too and that whoever did it is going to keep on killing.

JERROD

Girls sure do like to freak themselves out.

AUBREY

It's not like I knew Jennifer. But I'm still sad.

JERROD

Everybody's sad.

AUBREY

I think I would have liked her. ...It's stupid. When they first put up the flyers? I pictured her having this grand adventure. Running off to Hollywood with some famous, I don't know, snowboarder.

JERROD

That's why you get A's in Creative Writing.

AUBREY

I feel like he's out there right now watching.

JERROD

I won't let him get you.

Aubrey continues to stare off into the distance as Jerrod pulls her closer.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLEMING HOUSE -- AFTERNOON

The same gardener's truck we saw earlier is parked in front of Aubrey's house. It's splattered with mud from off-roading, a fender is crumpled, a headlight hangs from its wires like an eyeball out of its socket.

On a trailer behind the truck, a chipper/shredder.

Scaife prunes a tree in the front yard. His face set in a perpetual scowl. He wears cowboy boots, and his neat uniform has been replaced by grimy jeans and a T-shirt that shows his muscular tattooed arms. He looks up as:

The garage door opens and Aubrey's BMW pulls up.

INT./EXT. AUBREY'S BMW/GARAGE/FRONT LAWN -- CONTINUOUS

Aubrey pauses before opening her car door. Feeling she's being watched, she looks in her rear-view mirror, muttering.

AUBREY

(to herself)

Creepy. Creepy guys with creepy ideas of fun.

In the mirror: Scaife stares toward the BMW. Very deliberately, he peels his tee over his head, exposing a lean, heavily tattooed chest. He mops the sweat from his chest with the shirt, then tosses it aside.

Aubrey continues watching him. She moistens her lips.

Still staring at Aubrey's car, Scaife starts sawing a thick branch from a tree. It falls. He drags it toward the chipper.

Aubrey gets out of the car now. Scaife stops in his tracks.

An intense beat. Sexual tension...or animosity? Hard to tell.

Aubrey abruptly flips him the bird, then turns and enters the house through the garage.

As the garage door closes, Scaife's smile turns into a laugh as he feeds the branch into the noisy chipper.

DISSOLVE TO:

A LIGHTED AMERICAN FLAG

at half mast.

EXT. NEW SALEM J.C. FOOTBALL STADIUM -- EVENING

The CROWD in the bleachers is totally silent. Standing, many have their heads bowed.

The silence is broken by a soft, reverent male voice:

ANNOUNCER

Now let's get out there and win this one for Jennifer Toland.

The crowd erupts in a roar of agreement.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD -- LATER

Game in progress. The CHEERLEADERS, dressed in blue and white, rev up the crowd.

Aubrey, wearing a light brown sweater with a brown-and-orange scarf, sits with her friends MARCIA and ANYA. All of them cheering themselves hoarse. Aubrey holds the blue rose.

The home team is up by 3 with less than 30 seconds to go. Time out called.

From the huddle, Jerrod pulls off his helmet and makes eye contact with Aubrey. She waves the blue rose at him.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET -- LATER

Crowded with CELEBRANTS. Decorated cars clog the street, honking relentlessly.

Wads of paper, empty beer cans, streamers of toilet paper fly through the air.

Screaming, painted faces: "Go, Owls, Go!" "We're #1!" And so on.

A slow-moving, shadowy point of view, seems to be observing:

Aubrey, Marcia, and Anya walk along--Aubrey clearly looking for Jerrod. Her friends giving her a tough time.

AUBREY

No way. I'm done sleeping with guys
I'm not in love with.

ANYA

Like you were some sort of sex addict.

MARCIA

But Jerrod's in love with you.

AUBREY

I'll be 3000 miles away in January.
I can't afford to fall in love.

The New Salem Security Car moves through the crowd, letting out a burp of its siren, a flash of its blue lights to clear the street ahead.

Behind the wheel, LANNY RIERDEN, 28, a bodybuilder in a too-tight uniform stares out at the crowd, passing Aubrey and her friends. He sucks on a cigarette, the red glow illuminating a chiseled face with a deep scar running diagonally from forehead to jaw. He puts a mike to his mouth.

On the streets: Aubrey and her companions instinctively duck as a roll of toilet paper hurtles toward them, unfurling.

RIERDEN (V.O.)

(from speaker on car)

Curfew is one hour away. Attention:
Curfew for under 21 begins in one hour.

MARCIA

Somebody could stab you in this mob
and you'd never know who did it.
Like at Mardi Gras, you know?

AUBREY

I read about this killer who sits
behind people at movies and jabs you
with a needle right here.

(touches back of Anya's
neck)

You die, like, instantly. And nobody
even knows you're dead till the
movie's over and you don't get up.

Suddenly, a GUY with a blue-painted face pops up in front of them, bellowing like a madman.

PAINTED GUY

Undefeated!!!! Undefeated!!!!

All three girls scream. Then the painted guy is gone.

From the same shadowy, moving point of view, Aubrey is still being observed.

Aubrey hops up and down trying to see over heads.

AUBREY

How are you supposed to find anybody?

Marcia stops to talk with a GIRL. Aubrey keeps looking around.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

There he is. Jerrod!!

Aubrey starts making her way through the crowd.

ANYA

Aubrey! Wait!

AUBREY

I'll meet you in front of the Fremont
at 11:45.

As Aubrey turns, she is distracted by:

Scaife's gardener's truck among the slow-moving traffic,
still filthy, its headlight still hanging out of the socket,
shining off at an odd angle as the truck slowly passes.

Behind the wheel, Scaife stares straight ahead.

From the other direction: Lanny Rierden's security car passes
Scaife's truck. Rierden stares at Scaife as they pass.

As Scaife turns to look Aubrey's way, she shrinks into the
shadows.

When the truck is gone, Aubrey looks around for Jerrod. But
she's lost sight of him.

CUT TO:

EXT. FREMONT THEATER -- LATER

The streets are nearly deserted now. Littered with TP, cans,
bottles, cups. Anya and Marcia stand under the bright marquee
of the theater. Starting to look worried.

MARCIA

Aubreeeeeeeeeeeeey!!!

(listens, then:)

Okay. I'm officially freaking out.

ANYA

I'll try her cell again. You try
Jerrod's.

Marcia and Anya dial their cellphones, listen. After a beat:
the sound of an actual cell phone ringing.

MARCIA

Over there! It's coming from over
there.

ANYA

Don't hang up!

The girls run around the corner and stop:

Jerrod curses as he struggles to get his ringing cell phone
out of the pocket of his jeans.

MARCIA
Never mind it's me.

JERROD

Oh. Hey. You seen Aubrey?

Everyone absorbs the meaning for a beat.

Now gripped with sudden sobering fear, Jerrod cups his hands around his mouth and calls for Aubrey in every direction.

JERROD (CONT'D)

Aubrey! Aubrey!!!

Everybody waits. No response except a distant barking dog.

JERROD (CONT'D)

Where'd she park? ...Where'd she park her fucking car?!

The girls look at each other. They don't know.

JERROD (CONT'D)

You fucking rode with her!

MARCIA

I think it was on that street--you know the one.

JERROD

No, I don't know the one!

ANYA

Yeah, yeah, yeah. You know. In front of that little art gallery with the gate.

Jerrod starts running. The girls hesitate, then follow along.

GIRLS

Wait! Wait for us!

EXT. ART GALLERY -- MOMENTS LATER

Marcia, Anya, and Jerrod run down a street, panic in their voices:

MARCIA

Aubrey!!!!

ANYA

Aubrey, for fucksake, come on!!

JERROD

There it is!

Aubrey's BMW parked in front of the little art gallery.

They rush up to the car. Jerrod presses his hands to the window to look inside.

The blue rose lies across the dash.

Suddenly the BMW's ALARM blares.

Jerrod leaps back. The girls scream.

Holding hands over their ears, the three look at each other for a long beat as the alarm continues. It's clear from their expressions that they now fear the worst.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CELLAR -- NIGHT

A percussive, irregular clacking sound accompanies...

Blurry images coming in and out of focus as Aubrey regains consciousness:

Gently swaying objects of varying sizes, most flesh-colored, not-quite-human-like forms. A crowd of dancers, naked dancers?

The restless shadows cast by the swaying objects further animate the space.

A face shrouded in darkness moves toward Aubrey.

The face comes into focus, then out, giving us just a glimpse of malevolent blue eyes glinting from a bluish shadow.

Then the image remains in focus: The BLUE MAN'S face is shaded into near invisibility under a tattered and faded blue baseball cap.

Then the beam of a flashlight, held by a hand in a blue-latex exam glove, blinds us to the face.

A hint of glittering blue dust drifts through the air in the beam of the flashlight.

The flashlight shines on Aubrey. Gagged, she lies on her back on a steel autopsy table, eyes bleary with drugs.

Her wrists and ankles are each strapped tightly to the table.

Suddenly, Aubrey is fully alert. She struggles against her bonds, her helpless cry stifled as she stares in horror at the Blue Man.

Satisfied, the Blue Man leaves Aubrey for a moment. Her frantic eyes scan the shadowy cellar room.

What looked like a group of swaying dancers is instead:

Dozens of artificial limbs--full-length arms, half-length arms, plastic hands, steel hooks, full legs, half legs, peg legs, feet--hanging from the rafters around the room, occasionally clacking against each other. Each clack creates a puff of sparkling blue dust.

It's difficult to imagine a more complete collection of antique and modern prosthetics; the cellar is a museum.

Blue-latex gloves pull the gag aside and force a blue pill between Aubrey's lips. She tries to resist. But the Blue Man is successful. He holds her mouth closed. After a moment, he puts the gag back in place.

Now, he opens the lid of a picnic cooler. Thick vapor roils out, spilling its mass across the cement floor of the cellar. With large tongs, he pulls a slab of dry ice from the cooler.

He slides the slab of dry ice under the fingers of Aubrey's clamped right hand.

Aubrey cries out in pain and struggles, but to no avail.

Another slab of vaporous ice goes on top of Aubrey's fingers. Aubrey whimpers as the Blue Man packs a towel over the ice.

Time passes: Aubrey's eyes wide, bloodshot, blinking rapidly. Various angles indicate the passing of time. The blue latex-gloved hand grips her chin, forces another blue pill past her lips. Aubrey is wide awake the entire time. A grinding sound fades up, louder and louder.

The Blue Man's gloved hands guide a large shard of blue glass along a spinning grinder, shaping it into a bizarre weapon.

Shimmering blue dust plumes out from the point where the glass touches the grinder.

The grinding stops. Aubrey strains against her gag try to see the Blue Man as the dust begins to fill the air around her.

When she turns her head the other way, the Blue Man is by her side again.

Aubrey's lips are parched now. It's difficult to tell how long she has been here. She tries to cough.

The Blue Man cracks the neck of a blue wine bottle against the edge of a utility sink. He lets the neck fall away, then rinses and fills the broken bottle bottom with water.

The Blue Man soaks Aubrey's gag with this water. A little at a time, bringing the jagged edge of the broken glass alarmingly close to her face. Aubrey flinches, but sucks at the welcome moisture.

Satisfied she's had enough, the Blue Man sets the bottle aside and peels the towel off the dry ice.

He pries the top piece of dry ice from her hand. It rips away a few layers of skin from her fingers, which are blue and black, the flesh already frostbitten and dying.

Next, the Blue Man removes the bottom slab of ice and flings both pieces toward a drain in the cement floor, where they sizzle and steam.

The Blue Man holds up a weapon, examines it in the light: A triangle of blue glass, two edges broken, sharp as razor blades, the third edge a blunt, smooth handle.

Watching, Aubrey pleads into her gag. Ignoring her, the Blue Man nudges a white plastic bucket under the table's drain.

Now his hand--in the blue-latex glove--palpates each of Aubrey's frozen fingers, deciding on the middle finger.

Aubrey's muffled cries grow more desperate. No, she tries to say. Please. No.

Cradling the chosen finger in one blue-gloved hand, the Blue Man drizzles inky blue germicide from Aubrey's wrist to her fingertips with the other.

The stream of blue liquid runs down the slanted surface of the steel table and through the drain.

The blue drizzles into the white bucket below the table.

Then...a scream as loud as possible through a gag.

And a moment later...the drizzle of blue is replaced by a steady thread of blood.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FLEMING HOUSE -- DAY

To establish.

INT. DINING ROOM -- DAY

Aubrey's father, DANIEL, 39, attractive, but haggard with the ordeal, sits at the dining table sipping coffee with Sheriff Cardero while:

Wearing blue latex gloves, Federal Agent PHIL LAZARUS, late 30s, goes through Aubrey's book bag. He takes out a laptop computer and slips it into a clear evidence bag.

DANIEL

She spends hours on this thing. It's her life. Writing. She loves to write.

Daniel places a hand on the computer, overwhelmed by his loss.

LAZARUS

I just need to copy the hard drive.

DANIEL

Take it. Take anything you need.

LAZARUS

Mr. Fleming, is there any chance your daughter ran away? Was she unhappy?

Daniel looks genuinely surprised by the question.

DANIEL

Aubrey? Unhappy? No. Not at all.

INT. AUBREY'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Susan stands in the doorway to Aubrey's room. Mitts the cat meows relentlessly, rubbing back and forth against her legs.

SUSAN

She wasn't happy about waiting a semester to get into Yale, I'll tell you that. But she's making the most of it. My daughter is driven.

Susan watches as Federal Agent JULIE BASCOMBE, 33, businesslike, attractive--also wearing blue latex gloves--feels her way through the clothes hanging in Aubrey's closet.

A couple of other gloved AGENTS dust for fingerprints and take hair samples from a brush.

BASCOMBE

Could you get the cat out of here? And please don't touch anything.

SUSAN
(picking up the cat)
Of course.

BASCOMBE
Who else has been in this room?

SUSAN
No one. Her friends.

BASCOMBE
Make me a list. As complete as possible.

Bascombe moves on to the dresser, starts opening drawers. She removes a single blue nylon stocking from Aubrey's drawer. She holds it in her hand during:

BASCOMBE (CONT'D)
What were you doing when Aubrey left for the game?

SUSAN
I was on a conference call. I was in the dining room. Pacing. I always pace when I'm--

BASCOMBE
Do you remember saying goodbye to her?

Tears come to Susan's eyes. She shakes her head.

BASCOMBE (CONT'D)

Can you describe how she looked,
what her mood was?

Bascombe puts the blue stocking back in Aubrey's drawer,
closes it.

SUSAN

You don't always think to take a
mental picture of your daughter every
time she leaves the house. I used to
do that, you know. The worrier, Daniel
called me. Then... Do you have kids?

(no answer)

It falls away. Because they always
come back. They never don't come
back.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE -- VARIOUS ANGLES -- SERIES OF DISSOLVES

Day: A line of SEARCHERS combs through a large open field. A
couple of search dogs race back and forth ahead of the line,
noses to the ground.

Afternoon: The Searchers continue through a wooded area.

Sunset: The line of Searchers disbands and scatters toward
parked cars along the highway. Looking weary, dejected.

These dissolves are...

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. FEDERAL AGENTS' WAR ROOM -- NIGHT

Indistinguishable chatter of phone calls, typing, and
conversations, as we get a look at:

A huge hand-drawn and in-progress, multi-colored time line
on butcher paper. Taped to the wall, the paper runs from one
corner of the room to another.

The chronology is chaotic with post-it notes of various sizes.
On them: details, questions, tasks; e.g., "Research location
similarities?" "Out-of-town friends?" "Lab report: When?"

An air conditioner vent kicks on, and all the post-it notes
shimmy in the breeze.

The chronology starts with a tick mark for Jennifer Toland's
disappearance. A photo of Jennifer has been taped there.

Then a photo of Fiona Gerritt taped above the tick mark for
her date.

Then a big red X the date Jennifer's body was found; above that, a gruesome post-autopsy photo of Jennifer.

A hasty red arc has been sketched between the date of Jennifer's disappearance and the date of her death.

In the middle of this arc: "Jennifer Toland - 43 days."

Intersecting, another arc in green: "Fiona Gerritt - 43 days + [16 hash marks for the additional days she's been gone]"

Then at last, a MAN'S HAND tapes a photo of Aubrey above the date of her disappearance, written in blue.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL: A big, messy war room--a large windowless office space with folding tables, crisscrossed with phone and computer cables. Perhaps a dozen FEDERAL AGENTS, among them Bascombe and Lazarus, speak on cell phones, others work on laptops. One slaps another post-it note on the time line.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. CELLAR -- NIGHT

Aubrey is alone, her eyes wilder and more bloodshot than ever. She shivers and she sweats.

Moonlight from a dirty window well casts a pale light on the swaying and clacking artificial limbs, the restless blue dust.

Thick vapor rises from below the knee of her right leg, her calf and foot packed in dry ice.

Aubrey raises her head slightly to look around, wincing with pain as she does.

A rusty old TV tray-table is next to her. On it, the bloody triangle of blue glass we saw before. Alongside, more bizarre glass weapons lined up as if for surgery: blue-glass blades, some like scalpels, some long and sharp, others serrated.

The lip of the tray-table is nearly within reach of Aubrey's still-intact left hand.

She wriggles her fingers, stretching--only millimeters away from the tray.

Her fingers flail blindly, not quite grazing the lip of the tray.

Straining, her fingers finally touch the edge of the tray. The tray tilts a bit.

Then it nearly topples in the opposite direction of her hand.
Aubrey manages to steady it.

Now, she tries to pinch the edge of the tray between the ends of her index and middle finger. She pulls. She loses her tenuous grip. She tries again.

The corroded brass legs of the tray-table scoot a fraction of an inch closer to the autopsy table.

Aubrey concentrates with all her might, breathing fast. Her fingers slip again. The tray-table tips precariously.

Then it starts to fall. She stops it just in time, but...

Screams in agony into her gag.

Then she listens, scared out of her mind, gasping for air.

Now we see that her hand managed to grasp one of the more unusual glass knives...by its blade. A mixed blessing.

The glass slices easily into her hand. But she won't let go. Blood begins to drip from its tip.

Concentrating very hard, she begins working her grip up the blade toward the smooth handle, cutting her hand worse with every millimeter of progress.

She moans, blood flowing freely from her hand now.

Then, she very carefully loosens her grip on the blade just enough that gravity can take over.

She lets the glass slide down through her hand, and at the last possible moment:

She snaps her bleeding hand around the blue-glass handle.

Weeping in relief, she grips the handle tightly.

Aubrey's eyeballs almost tremble she's so wide awake. She looks one nerve-ending away from insanity.

She stares at the hanging limbs, gently bumping one another. The limbs blur and...

DISSOLVE INTO:

THE TRUNKS OF TREES

alongside a highway at twilight, passing in a blur.

INT./EXT. CAR/HIGHWAY -- VARIOUS ANGLES -- EVENING

A rabbit bounds once, twice, across the highway, then disappears as a car swooshes past.

Driving: A beautiful woman of 25, VICKY REDFEATHER. She cries the tears of the heartsick as she speaks into a cell phone.

VICKY

....It's just--I started to feel like half a person. It hit me all of a sudden. Steve and Vicky this, Steve and Vicky that. Finishing each other's sentences. Hell, finishing each other's thoughts.

Suddenly, a fox ambles in front of the car.

Vicky screams. She slams on the brakes.

The car 180s, skidding off the shoulder, a cloud of dust rising as it stops. The engine dies. The headlights go out.

Almost hyperventilating, Vicky looks back toward the road.

The fox trots off into the weeds, unharmed.

Vicky takes a moment to compose herself. Then restarts the car. She turns on the headlights.

She puts the car in reverse. About to look over her shoulder, she freezes, staring through the windshield at:

A bloody human form coiled among the weeds, motionless in the headlight beams.

VICKY (CONT'D)

(perplexed beat)

Hey! ...Are you okay?! ...Hey!!

Vicky gets out of the car and warily approaches the body.

It's Aubrey. She doesn't move. Covered with blood, some dried, some fresh. Vicky puts her hand on Aubrey's shoulder.

VICKY (CONT'D)

Ohmygod, ohmygod, honey, ohmygod.

Then, with great effort, Aubrey turns her head till we can see her wild, bloodshot eyes. She groans and in the barest whisper, through her bloodied, parched lips:

AUBREY

Help...me...

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

An ambulance and the Sheriff's car, lights flashing. The headlights of Vicky's car still illuminate the spot where Aubrey lay.

PARAMEDICS lift Aubrey into the back of the ambulance, already hooked to IVs.

The Medics climb in after the gurney and close the door. Siren blaring, the ambulance races off.

Sitting in the passenger seat of the Sheriff's car, door open, feet out, Vicky can't stop sobbing.

Sheriff Cardero inspects the front end of Vicky's car. He reaches into the car and shuts off the engine.

Seeing her purse on the front seat, the Sheriff picks it up, finds a billfold, opens it and examines a drivers' license. He puts it back, then takes out a pack of tissues.

He crosses to Vicky and holds out the tissues.

CARDERO

You didn't hit her, Miss Redfeather.

VICKY

But...

CARDERO

You didn't hit her.

VICKY

But... She was right in front of--!

CARDERO

She'd been there for hours. She must have dragged herself here and collapsed. In fact, you probably even saved her life.

CUT TO:

OMITTED

INT. LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

A cordless phone rests in Daniel's slack hand. Suddenly it flashes...its blue information screen blinking. The piercing ring raises Daniel from the couch--rumped clothes, foggy with sleep. He answers before the first ring is finished.

DANIEL

Yes!

He listens for a moment. Anxiety tightens his face.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Is she alive?

He looks up. Susan rushes into the room. She presses her ear next to Daniel's.

SUSAN
Ohmygod, my baby.

DANIEL
How bad?

SUSAN
We're on our way.

CUT TO:

INT. OPERATING ROOM -- NIGHT

Under anesthesia, Aubrey lies on the operating table, breathing with a ventilator. A team of SURGEONS and NURSES surrounds her--all wearing blue-latex gloves.

ANESTHESIOLOGIST
Her blood pressure is rising.

Aubrey's eyes flutter open.

SURGEON
She's fucking awake!

Above her, Aubrey sees a kaleidoscope of surgical masks and caps, blue latex gloves moving. She starts to struggle, tries to scream. Among the surgeons: DR. HANNAH SOMMERLY, 45, attractive, caring but professional.

DR. SOMMERLY
For god's sake!

ANESTHESIOLOGIST
Increasing her thiopental.

As the anesthesiologist works, Aubrey stops struggling and drifts off again.

SURGEON
Jesus. What was that?

ANESTHESIOLOGIST
Her body's going through the sevoflurane like it's lemonade.

DR. SOMMERLY
This looks like a classic amphetamine overdose.

ANESTHESIOLOGIST
I told you. There are no amphetamines in her blood. Zip. zero.

DR. SOMMERLY
(beat)
Put her out. Just to be safe.

More silent but efficient activity around Aubrey.

DR. SOMMERLY (CONT'D)
Orthopedic saw.

One of the Nurse's looks questioningly at Dr. Sommerly.

DR. SOMMERLY (CONT'D)
The orthopedic saw. Now.

The Nurse exits, then returns a moment later with a battery-powered oscillating saw.

Dr. Sommerly takes it, switches it on. It's the kind of instrument that could give you nightmares.

DISSOLVE TO:

OMITTED

INT. WAR ROOM -- NIGHT

A new notation at the current end of the expanding timeline.
"Aubrey Fleming found alive."

Using a stylus, a young AGENT is recreating the hand-drawn time line on a tablet computer.

As he works, an entire wall covered with large plasma panels comes to life: The chaotic chronology on the butcher paper becomes digitized, orderly, and weirdly beautiful in its new high-tech format.

The medical examiner, Dr. Dupree, examines several x-rays of Aubrey's amputation points, holding them up to the harsh fluorescent lights above.

Sheriff Cardero, Agents Lazarus and Bascombe watch him. All the other feds are gone.

CARDERO
The press is asking questions.

BASCOMBE

No comment. No leaks. Aubrey Fleming is still missing as far as the world is concerned and I want to keep it that way as long as possible.

LAZARUS

Everyone at the hospital has been threatened with dismissal and obstruction of justice charges if they leak a word of this.

On the plasma wall, Lazarus brings up a slide of Aubrey's crumpled body by the side of the road. One of those harshly photographed crime scene pictures. A sobering beat.

BASCOMBE

Plausible explanations. Okay. Number one. He was done with her. He left her by the side of the road to die.

CARDERO

But he didn't count on her will to live.

LAZARUS

I don't buy it. He wasn't finished with Aubrey Fleming, not by a long shot. He only had her for what, 17, 18 days? The sectioning was just getting started. Her leg wasn't even completely off. And why the hell would he sew her fingers back on her hand and her hand back on her--?

BASCOMBE

Remember Jennifer Toland drowned. It's too early for an accurate profile, but I think the cutting is about punishment. When the punishment is over, he finds a way for the death to happen so he doesn't have to be there. He doesn't like the dying part, but he has to make sure it happens. Death freaks him out.

LAZARUS

I think she escaped. It's the only answer that makes sense.

DUPREE

Aubrey Fleming didn't escape.

BASCOMBE

Never underestimate the power of adrenaline.

(MORE)

BASCOMBE (CONT'D)

They had a hard time keeping her under in the O.R. They thought she was still full of speed.

CARDERO

There was enough speed left in
Jennifer Toland to win the Indy 500.

DUPREE

But there were only traces of street
drugs in Aubrey Fleming.

CARDERO

Maybe this is a different killer. A
copycat.

LAZARUS

Copycat? No way. None of the details
about Jennifer's physical sectioning
have been released.

BASCOMBE

(to Dupree)

What's the half-life of speed? The
kind that was in Jennifer Toland?

DUPREE

It varies. Anywhere from 7 to 32
hours.

LAZARUS

So it could be out of her system--
she's wandering around out there a
day or two?

DUPREE

Nobody with her kind of--

BASCOMBE

Just give us the answer.

DUPREE

Yes. It could be out of her sys--

BASCOMBE

We have two victims. One dead. One
not. We can't expect complete
consistency from the killer yet.

LAZARUS

So, we operate under the assumption
Aubrey escaped and dragged herself--

Dupree waves a blood panel print-out.

DUPREE

People! Can you read one of these? I
can. It's my job. Aubrey Fleming
lost a hand and a leg and a minimum
of two quarts of blood. A minimum.

(MORE)

DUPREE (CONT'D)

Do you know what that means? Shock.
People in shock don't drag themselves
anyplace!

(beat)

I think the killer wanted us to find
Aubrey.

A beat as everyone absorbs this.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL -- NIGHT

To establish.

INT. ICU -- CONTINUOUS

Aubrey is out of the oxygen tent now, wearing oxygen prongs
at her nostrils.

Her eyes are closed, lids quivering with a dream. The monitors
beep with comforting regularity.

A hand in a blue-latex glove reaches out for the oxygen prongs
at her nose.

Suddenly, Aubrey's eyes snap open and she cries out, trying
to twist her head away from the blue glove.

But it's only nurse IRMA BECK, 40, kind, checking Aubrey's
vital signs.

IRMA

Hey, beautiful. Nobody expected to
see those eyes for awhile.

Calming down, Aubrey looks around as best she can, orienting herself slowly. Her voice is hoarse, but urgent.

AUBREY
I'm in a hospital.

IRMA
You're safe now.

AUBREY
What hospital? Where?

IRMA
I'll get the doctor.

Irma hurries out.

Alone in the ICU now, Aubrey winces in pain and finally summons the nerve to lift her right arm.

She looks--without shock or surprise--at the stump.

Next, she raises her head enough to take in her missing leg.

She lets her head drop back. Staring at the ceiling, tears begin to flow.

AUBREY
Oh, oh god. Oh god.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

Daniel and Susan rush along, putting on masks and gloves as they move. Dr. Sommerly hurries to keep up.

DR. SOMMERLY
...don't recover overnight from such an ordeal. The complications aren't just physical. They're emotional. In stressful situations, the brain--understandably--finds ways to cope with the trauma being inflicted on the body.

By now they've reached the ICU. Daniel and Susan fit on their masks.

INT. ICU -- MOMENTS LATER

Looking nervous, Daniel and Susan sit on either side of Aubrey, who seems confused by the attention. Their mouths hidden behind the sterile masks doesn't help.

DANIEL

You don't know how happy we are to see you, Aubrey, sweetheart.

SUSAN

You'll be back home in no time. And we can put this all behind us.

AUBREY

Home.

SUSAN

Isn't that right, doctor?

DR. SOMMERLY

Aubrey has been very brave. With any luck, we can move her out of the ICU tomorrow.

Aubrey motions Daniel closer. With her remaining hand, she grips his wrist fiercely. She whispers.

AUBREY

Who...is Aubrey?

Daniel looks stunned. Susan turns her back to hide her devastation.

SUSAN

Ohmygod. What did he do to her?

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL -- DAY

To establish.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Aubrey is in a normal hospital room now.

DR. GREG JAMESON, 52, sits on a chair. Maybe it's the sweater and chinos, but we recognize Jameson instantly as the psychiatrist he is.

Aubrey is stronger now, and with her strength has come a tougher demeanor.

Jameson turns on and speaks into a digital micro recorder.

JAMESON

Aubrey Fleming. Session number 1.
10:30 a.m.--

AUBREY

I'm not Aubrey Fleming.

JAMESON

What should I call you?

AUBREY

My real name would be nice.

There is a momentary standoff between the two.

JAMESON

Session number 1. 10:30 a.m.
(then pointedly:)
Dakota Moss.

AUBREY/DAKOTA

Nobody fucking believes anything I
say.

Jameson puts the micro-recorder on a cart between them.

JAMESON

Well, it's my job to believe people.

DAKOTA

I'm hacked up and maybe I look a
little like this Aubrey chick or
whatever her name is, but I am so
not her.

JAMESON

Just a little housekeeping to get
out of the way. Date of birth?

DAKOTA

June 9th, 1988.

Jameson makes notes with a pen that can alternate between
blue and red ink. His legal pad is divided into 2 columns
headed: **Aubrey Fleming** (in blue) and **Dakota Moss** (in red)

He writes down 6/9/88 in Dakota's column, matching the date
already in Aubrey's column.

JAMESON

Social Security number?

DAKOTA

I don't have one.

(MORE)

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

(beat)

Look, you get raised by a crack addict
who thinks the less people know about
you the better, it kinda sticks.

(MORE)

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

I made up a Social Security number when I needed one. I never kept a job long enough for it to matter.

JAMESON

A job. You're pretty young to be working.

DAKOTA

Yeah, well, I didn't grow up in New Salem. I grew up in the real world.

JAMESON

You mentioned your mother.

DAKOTA

Dead.

JAMESON

Your father?

DAKOTA

If you find out who he is, let me know. On second thought, don't bother.

JAMESON

How did your mother die?

DAKOTA

O.D. ...Duh.

JAMESON

How long ago?

BEGIN INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CRACK HOUSE -- NIGHT

Wearing jeans and a top that look like they came off the rack at Target, but becoming nonetheless, Dakota moves through a condemned property that has been appropriated by addicts, sprawled out everywhere.

DAKOTA (V.O.)

6, 7 months now. We weren't what you'd call close. Not after she started using again.

Somewhere O.C. a bottle overturns. Dakota stops, listens. The bottle rolls along loudly, then...

A blue wine bottle crashes down from above, just missing her. She shields herself from the shattering blue glass.

Dakota ventures down a dark hallway and up a dangerously unstable staircase.

DAKOTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But I could always count on seeing the palm of her hand on payday. Know what I mean? When she didn't come around, I knew it probably meant she was dead. Wasn't too hard to see that one coming.

Dakota tries a door. She pushes against it. Then as it pops open, she reels back from the overpowering stench.

DAKOTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

A stinking dead body--nobody fucking noticed. Believe that? All puffed up. Touch her anywhere, she's gonna pop open like a hot dog on a grill.

Dakota kneels down next to the grotesque, bloated dead body. The eyes are tight puffy slits, a line of dried blood comes from one corner of the mouth.

In the hospital room: Dakota's eyes glisten with tears that never make it out of her eyes.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

She was stupid. Pathetic. Junkie.

In the crack house: We see Dakota remove a filthy envelope from her mother's clenched hand.

Dakota opens the envelope. It's has some cash inside.

We watch her count the cash, 11 dollars. Nothing else in the envelope.

She looks at the front of the envelope. No return address. But the postmark is "New Salem."

JAMESON (V.O.)

Did your mother leave you anything?

DAKOTA

11 dollars.

Watching him, Dakota has a dawning realization:

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Why does a shrink need your Social Security number?

JAMESON

I like to have it for my files.

DAKOTA

You're fuzz, aren't you?

Jameson takes off his glasses, looks at Dakota for a beat.

JAMESON

I'm not going to lie to you, Dakota.
I'm a psychiatrist, but I do work
for the FBI.

DAKOTA

I fucking knew it.

JAMESON

It doesn't mean I care any less about
the work we do here.

DAKOTA

You're wasting your time. I don't
have anything to tell you.

JAMESON

So you don't believe you have any
information that could help us.

Jameson's eyes shift to her missing leg, making sure she
sees him looking. You can see her wish she could hide.

DAKOTA

Fuck you, Doctor Fuzz.

JAMESON

I'm going to tell you something,
Dakota. In full confidence. Can I
trust you?

DAKOTA

Why should you trust me? I don't
trust you.

JAMESON

(beat)

In cases like this, there are specific
details we withhold from the public
to separate the serial confessors
from the serial killer.

Dakota stares at him as he waits for some response from her.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

The pattern of your injuries is
identical--not just similar, Dakota--
identical to those on another girl
from New Salem. A murdered girl.
You, me, and a handful of fuzz are
the only ones who know that.

Dakota absorbs this, intrigued in spite of herself.

DAKOTA

Prove it.

CUT TO:

OMITTED

INT. DAKOTA'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- EVENING

A series of gruesome autopsy photos of Jennifer Toland.

Dakota looks at them one after another, staring at the jagged injuries, the missing limbs on the dead girl. The similarities to her own injuries are undeniable.

Dakota places the last photo on the bed beside her. Looking deeply disturbed, she barely notices:

Susan enters, carrying a large shopping bag.

SUSAN

All right. I brought some of your things to make you feel more at home.

Dakota manages to slide the photos under the covers of her bed before Susan notices.

Susan pulls a worn old teddy bear from the bag and holds it in front of Dakota.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

This is Mr. Jervis.

DAKOTA

Look, I'm sure you're a very nice woman. But I don't have a home. I just want to know, when do I get to leave?

SUSAN

You don't remember Mr. Jervis?
Sleeping with him?

Dakota turns her head away. Susan mutters in frustration as she reaches into a shopping bag. She pulls out an iPod.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

And this has some of your...some of Aubrey's favorite music on it.

(MORE)

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Where are the--? Shit. How could I forget the earphones?

(starting to lose it)

This was the most important thing in here. You love your music. They use music to help people come out of comas. Did you know that?

DAKOTA

Do I look like I'm in a fucking coma?

Susan pretends to search through the bag to hide her incipient tears. Dakota softens.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

So what else you got in there? What's that?

She nods toward something else in the bag. Susan pulls out a framed photograph.

Dakota takes it from her.

It's a picture of a little girl at the beach, squinting in the sun. Dakota stares intently at it.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Where'd you get--? Who gave you this?

SUSAN

You were seven. We all went to Hawaii for Christmas.

DAKOTA

When I was a little girl...

SUSAN

Oh my god! Ohmygod, yes!

DAKOTA

(shakes head)

The pictures are almost the same. My bathing suit was different, but trust me, the water wasn't blue. It was brown. My mom took me there like it was supposed to be some kind of treat to watch garbage float.

Dakota stares hard at the photo for a long beat.

SUSAN

What is it, honey?

DAKOTA

A lot of little girls look alike, I
guess.

Susan spies a corner of an autopsy photograph from under
Dakota's blanket.

SUSAN

What's this?

Before Dakota can stop her, she has the entire collection in
her hands and she's beginning to seethe.

CUT TO:

OMITTED

INT. HOSPITAL ICU -- MOMENTS LATER

Susan and Bascombe are in the middle of a heated discussion.
Susan holds the autopsy photos. Though Bascombe is trying to
keep her cool, she is in no mood to coddle Susan.

BASCOMBE

--trying to help your--

SUSAN

This is what you call help?!

BASCOMBE

--daughter, Mrs. Fleming.

SUSAN

This isn't help! This is just more
torture!

BASCOMBE

I have full authority to conduct
this investigation--

SUSAN

You do not have full
authority to subject
my daughter-- Hasn't
she suffered enough?
Are you trying to
prolong our pain? My
god, where's your
sympathy?

BASCOMBE

--in any way I see fit. I
am trying to prevent this--
(holds up photo)
--from happening to another
girl and another mother!
Because it will, Mrs.
Fleming. It will!

BASCOMBE (CONT'D)

Your daughter is lucky to be alive,
Mrs. Fleming. But she will not be
safe until whoever did this to her
is behind bars.

A flicker of grudging acknowledgement from Susan, before she exits, slamming the door. Bascombe stares after her.

CUT TO:

OMITTED

INT. CELLAR -- NIGHT

The Blue Man is hunched over the glass grinder fashioning another wicked-looking weapon, as the blue dust fills the dank air of the cellar.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

OMITTED

INT. HOSPITAL SOLARIUM -- DAY

Dakota sits in her wheelchair staring out the window.

JAMESON (O.S.)

Dakota?

Dakota turns her wheelchair around to face them.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

This is Julie Bascombe and Phil Lazarus.

DAKOTA

Yeah, I've seen 'em around. Two of my prison guards.

LAZARUS

The security measures are all for your own comfort.

Dakota turns away. Heard that before.

BASCOMBE

Dakota. Who cut you? That's all we want to know.

LAZARUS

Once he finds out you're still alive, he's going to come after you. We've been able to keep it out of the press-- but it's bound to get out sooner or later.

DAKOTA

You're going to use me as bait if I don't cooperate, is that what you're saying? You would, I'm sure.

Bascombe freezes Lazarus with her glare. He shrugs.

BASCOMBE

Help us, Dakota, please. You saw the pictures of Jennifer. The same person who cut her cut you. You can't deny that.

Silence from Dakota. It feels strangely like progress.

JAMESON

What do you remember about the last few weeks, Dakota?

Another pause. Then:

DAKOTA

Everything.

JAMESON

Everything. That's unusual.

DAKOTA

Watching body parts fall off...it tends to get burned into your memory.

BASCOMBE

(gently)

Who did this to you, Dakota?

Dakota keeps staring out the window.

DAKOTA

I don't know.

BASCOMBE

You were blindfolded?

Dakota shakes her head no.

LAZARUS

You were locked up.

No answer.

BASCOMBE

It doesn't matter if it makes sense to you, Dakota. Let us figure out how to put the pieces together.

Dakota stares out the windows of the solarium, as she makes her decision to talk.

DAKOTA

So I had this new job. Nightshift.

BASCOMBE

What kind of a job?

BEGIN INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. STRIP T'S -- THE PAST -- NIGHT

The sign with the burned out neon: The missing leg...the missing hand...

DAKOTA (V.O.)

A hostess. In a gentleman's club.

INT. STRIP T'S BAR AREA -- THE PAST -- NIGHT

Dakota, in a sexy low-cut dress, stands near the bar of the deserted club. An obese woman, FAT TEENA, cigarillo dangling from her lips, give's Dakota's ID back to her, pours herself a drink.

FAT TEENA

Don't care how old you really are, kiddo. Don't wanna know. Your ID says you're 21? You're fuckin' 21 to me.

DAKOTA (V.O.)

An exotic dancer--that's what the hostess job turned out to be.

In the solarium: Dakota shrugs.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

So...you gonna arrest me for, what do they call it, indecency?

The Agents just wait for her to go on.

CONTINUE INTERCUT WITH:

INT. STRIP T'S -- THE PAST -- NIGHT

The other end of the stage is shielded by a sparkling but tattered blue curtain. Music begins to play.

The audience of a few dozen freakish MEN continues to smoke while they wait in silence for the next act.

DAKOTA (V.O.)

Fat Teena used to say the real show wasn't onstage, it was the freaks in the audience. And young skin was good for bringing freaks in from the cold.

Knife-fight scars, grease-ball hair, a milky eye, a port-wine birthmark, an eye patch, thick chest hair merging with 5-o'clock shadow, a completely tattooed face.

Newspapers, hats, jackets covering laps. Hands working the flesh beneath them.

The curtain parts to reveal Dakota posing in silhouette against a blue light. She is posed in the same position as the neon outside the club, and the way she stands, you could swear for a moment that, just like the neon, she is missing her right arm and right leg below the knee.

Then Dakota is gradually illuminated by a variety of colored lights. She wears a lacy red gown and long red gloves.

She begins to dance, flipping her hair, prancing down the runway, exposing then covering each shoulder.

She drops the gown to reveal a skimpy see-thru bra and matching thong.

She begins to grind her pelvis against the pole.

She lets one bra strap fall. She leans down and wriggles her breasts in the face of a MAN in the front row. He puts a sawbuck in her thong.

Another MAN reaches out for her and tucks in a 20.

As his reward, she grabs the pole and leans as far backward as she can. She looks over her shoulder at him seductively, saying something we can't hear. A pouty request.

Eagerly, he reaches out and unfastens her bra. Just as he gets his hands inside the loosened cups of the bra, Dakota spins back to full upright, out of his reach. She waves a bad-boy finger at him.

In the solarium: Bascombe and Jameson watch Dakota intently. She is lost in the memory.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

He coulda been there the first time
I danced. I don't know.

In the strip club: Dakota dances again. Currency sprouts from her thong.

The AUDIENCE is larger tonight, the smoke thicker.

While she's dancing, she notices:

A beam from the mirror ball slides over: the Blue Man in his baseball cap in the back row. His cowboy boots, crossed at the ankles on the back of the row in front of him.

The beam slips away. When the next beam passes, the seat is empty. The next beam from the mirror ball reveals him again. Then he's gone. Then he's here. Then he's gone.

Dakota is captivated for a moment, going through the motions of her dance, and then she shakes off the vision and turns her attention to a paying CUSTOMER.

After he puts a 20 in her thong, she takes the cigarette from his hand.

After a drag, she rubs the filter end over the crotch of her thong, pretending orgasmic excitement.

She then passes the cigarette back to the Man.

The man stands and makes a big show of savoring the filter before he wraps his lips around it and sucks. Cunnilingus by proxy.

As the audience applauds the man, Dakota turns to see that every beam of the mirror ball now reveals an empty seat.

DAKOTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I saw a lot of creepy guys. Creepy guys with creepy ideas of fun.

CONTINUE INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. STRIP T'S -- THE PAST -- NIGHT

Wind howls along the deserted street by the strip joint.

DAKOTA (V.O.)

I could handle creepy guys. This guy was different.

Dakota, hugging her coat around her, walks down a sidewalk bathed in pale blue streetlights.

The sound of boots following her.

Dakota looks over her shoulder.

The sidewalk is empty, but the footsteps continue.

She looks the other way, and...

The Blue Man stands three feet in front of her, looking more wraith-like than human. More shadow than substance.

In the solarium: Bascombe studies Dakota's faraway look.

BASCOMBE

Different how?

DAKOTA

Everything about him was, I don't know, intense.

On the sidewalk: When headlights zip down the road, you could swear they were shining right through the Blue Man.

Dakota recoils. She takes a step back, finding herself against the graffiti-covered billboard on the side of the bus shelter.

For a brief moment, a passing semi lights the Blue Man's face. The glimpse suggests a face either disfigured or distorted. It's as if his eyes look out from behind a blue shadow--almost from another dimension.

DAKOTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I didn't get a good look at his face.

In the solarium: Bascombe leans closer.

BASCOMBE

Tell us anything you remember. The color of his eyes. The shape of his nose.

DAKOTA

I don't know. I couldn't really see him.

Back at the bus stop: The Blue Man's malevolent face sinks back into its blue shadow, some no man's land between flesh and spirit.

DAKOTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It was dark. He had on a baseball cap.

In the solarium: Bascombe shares a frustrated look with Lazarus. This isn't going where they wanted it too.

JAMESON

So you couldn't see his face at all.

LAZARUS

How do you know it was even the same guy from the club?

DAKOTA

(shrugs)
I just knew.

BASCOMBE

How tall was he? Was he stocky, thin?

Dakota shakes her head.

Back at the bus stop: Dakota is unable to move, can't tear her eyes from the Blue Man.

And then the Blue Man is 2 feet closer to Dakota without ever seeming to have moved.

DAKOTA

What do you want with me?

Dakota's eyes fall to his hands, which hang limply at his side. They are clad in blue-latex examination gloves.

The Blue Man comes even closer. Now hanging down from his right hand: a large, blue-glass blade glints.

The noisy bus approaches, brakes squealing. Dakota glances over her shoulder, relieved.

When she looks back, the Blue Man is gone.

In the solarium: Dakota looks up from her reverie.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

He was wearing blue gloves. The rubber kind doctors wear.

LAZARUS

Are you sure?

DAKOTA

I'm not sure about anything. Maybe the street lights made them look blue. That was the only time I saw him.

BASCOMBE

What about when he cut you? You didn't see him then?

DAKOTA

No.

LAZARUS

But he gave you drugs. To keep you awake. So you'd have to watch. You had to have seen him.

DAKOTA

I don't lie. When I tell you I didn't see him, I mean I did not see him.

LAZARUS

Then how do you know he's even the one who cut you?

DAKOTA

I guess you're right. I don't know
if he's the one who cut me.

A long moment of frustrated silence.

BASCOMBE

Aubrey.

(evenly, but angrily)

You have got to stop playing games
with us. Am I making myself clear?
We have to know the truth.

DAKOTA

You want to know the truth?! What
about me? You think I don't?! How
the fuck would you feel?! Tell me!

(holds up stump)

Fingers! Leg! Hand! I practically
fucking died. And now I'm a fucking
prisoner.

Dakota wheels angrily out of the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLEMING HOUSE -- NIGHT

To establish. Muffled sound of television over.

OMITTED

INT. FLEMING MEDIA ROOM -- NIGHT

Daniel sits red-eyed, sleepless on the couch, surfing the
channels. Suddenly he stops. He sits up.

On the TV screen: Aubrey's yearbook photo.

TV REPORTER (V.O.)

...unconfirmed reports tonight in
this News5 exclusive that the abducted
teen is alive and has been held
secretly at New Salem hospital for
more than a week...

DANIEL

Shit.

Daniel picks up the phone and punches in a number.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BLUE MAN'S CELLAR -- NIGHT

We hear muffled snippets of a TV news report from deep O.C.:

TV REPORTER (O.S.)

...You can bet the FBI is counting on Aubrey to positively identify the killer who has been terrorizing this sleepy suburb...

The Blue Man raises a huge piece of smoking dry ice with his gloved hands and hurls it at the hanging artificial limbs.

The limbs clatter madly. Scraps of dry ice steam, mixing eerily with the blue-glass dust in the air.

The Blue Man paces back and forth furiously. Kicking at the bits of dry ice with the toe of his cowboy boot.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

Dakota sleeps restlessly, her eyelids fluttering with a dream.

BEGIN INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CELLAR -- NIGHT

Aubrey's bloodshot, wild eyes, pleading.

The tip of a blue-glass blade dimpling the soft flesh of her inner arm, dusted with blue glass particles.

Pressing slowly, but with ever more pressure...until the skin beneath it finally gives, opens, bleeds.

In the hospital room: Dakota sleeps even more fitfully.

And on her arm, in the exact same location, an identical wound appears, as if by magic. It starts to bleed.

Dakota awakens with a gasp of pain. She looks at the wound on her arm, still growing, the blood flowing freely over the white sheets.

Dakota screams just as:

Daniel bursts into the room. He stops in his tracks, taking in the scene, horrified. He rushes to Dakota's side. There is blood everywhere now.

Not knowing friend from foe, Dakota bats at him with her good hand. He presses the call button.

DANIEL

Hold on, sweetheart. It's me. It's
Daddy.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(yells)
Somebody get in here!

Lazarus and Bascombe storm into the room. See the blood.

Bascombe runs to the door, hurries down the hallway into a flurry of growing activity, shouting.

BASCOMBE (O.S.)

Seal all the exits! Now!

DANIEL

(calling after them)
I want my daughter protected! 24
fucking hours a day! Do you hear me?
Christ! Why weren't you prepared for
this?!

Dakota continues to cower.

DAKOTA

Why does he want to kill me? Who am
I to him? Who am I?

OMITTED

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL -- DAY

Scaife's gardener's truck.

Shirtless, Scaife rakes grass clippings near a rear entrance of the hospital. Sound of VOICES.

Scaife stops raking. He listens. The voices become more distinct.

The voices are coming from...

Just around the corner: Nurse Irma Beck and orderly STUART DELANY, 25, sit on the concrete step leading to the door. They're having a smoke.

Scaife continues to make the motions of raking, but makes as little sound as possible so he can overhear:

IRMA

There was a guard right outside her door! Nobody was in that room with her till Daddy came flying in. I was just across the hall when it happened.

STUART

They think she cut herself?

IRMA

Wasn't anything for her to cut herself with! Razor blade? Broken glass? They searched high and low. It was freaky.

STUART

She still think she's somebody else?

IRMA

The FBI has had it up to here. They say she's crazy? She lost her mind because of what happened? But ya know what? I'm not so sure.

(off his laugh)

Hey, I spent 17 years in the mental ward.

(MORE)

IRMA (CONT'D)

I've taken care of this girl. She's walking truth. I'm not saying it makes any sense. The real Aubrey Fleming gets nabbed. And a girl who looks just like her shows up here slashed to ribbons.

(beat)

It makes no sense. Some things in life don't.

Scaife leans back against the building, absorbing this information.

CUT TO:

INT. WAR ROOM -- NIGHT

A couple of Agents are sorting through a huge box of blue baseball caps.

Nearby, another agent is laying out 6 or 7 blue-latex gloves in progressively deeper hues.

On one of the plasma screens, time-coded video of an agent interviewing Jerrod. The screen is divided into 11 other images from interviews: an unidentified MAN; nurse Irma Beck, Aubrey's friends, Marcia and Anya; Daniel, Susan. Only one interview plays at a time, controlled by a FEDERAL AGENT wearing a headset, furiously taking notes at a computer as he switches back and forth, pausing and playing snippets from each interview.

Further down the plasma wall, Bascombe and Lazarus mull over the chronology. Jameson sits nearby with a tablet computer in his lap, working.

A few other Agents mill around in the background, working on laptops and making calls.

JAMESON

...Usually it's easy to find the inconsistencies, the holes in the fantasy. Even in the most extreme cases of post-traumatic stress, you get a tiny measure of the original person.

LAZARUS

We're wasting our time on her; she's obviously lying.

JAMESON

She's not lying. She's--

He scrawls on the tablet computer and the word "Delusional" appears over Aubrey's image.

BASCOMBE

It's not that simple. She was withholding. Deliberately.

LAZARUS

I thought she just ran out of imagination.

BASCOMBE

Aubrey Fleming is not short on imagination.

JAMESON

That's for sure.

LAZARUS

So she gets to a point in her story and she stops talking. Why?

JAMESON

Sometimes people create alter egos to relay information that the primary personality would never reveal.

BASCOMBE

So why would the alter ego withhold?

JAMESON

I don't know. Every alter ego has a different agenda.

BASCOMBE

I think Dakota doesn't tell the whole story, because she doesn't think anybody will believe her. She's not even sure she believes what happened to her.

Everyone ponders this for a beat as we...

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

OMITTED

INT. HOSPITAL -- ARTIFICIAL LIMBS CLINIC -- DAY

A display rack of modern prosthetics--legs, arms, hands, all surprisingly lifelike--covering an entire wall of the clinic. Dakota waits here, alone in her wheelchair. She stares at the prosthetics.

The new cut on her arm above her stump is stitched but not bandaged. A dark-red scab has formed.

With a little shiver, she turns her wheelchair away, where she finds herself facing a full-length mirror.

She doesn't want to look at herself at first, turning her head away, then something draws her back to the reflection.

Quick memory flashes: The Blue Man looming over her...a jagged blue-glass weapon... blood coursing across a rusty porcelain sink and down the drain... a severed, fingerless hand dropping to a grimy floor.

Dakota wheels her chair close to the mirror and takes a good long look at herself. She pulls her hair to the side. She turns her head to profile, assessing not just the way she looks--which is pretty damn good under the circumstances--but something more. Maybe her entire personality. Facing the mirror again, her lips move, barely giving voice to the line:

DAKOTA

I am Aubrey Fleming.

Then she tries a cheerleader-perfect smile, and speaks:

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

My name is Aubrey Fleming. I enjoy sunsets and walks on the beach and playing the piano.

A sarcastic tone has begun to creep into her voice.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

I've never been arrested. I've never seen the inside of a strip joint or a crack house. And I've never sold my body to fat hairy men with B.O. Because I'm perfect!

Dakota squints at her reflection for a beat longer, can't help a little laugh.

The door opens and a 32-year-old med tech, SAEED enters, carrying an artificial titanium hand sealed in plastic.

SAEED

Say hello to your new state-of-the-art hand.

Later: Saeed is attaching the artificial hand--a complicated device more robot-like than human, its metal fingers and circuitry exposed--to Dakota's stump. She watches dubiously.

*
*
*

SAEED (CONT'D)

Your nerve impulses get picked up by sensors that control six different sets of motors and gears inside the hand. So the movements are incredibly lifelike and precise.

*

DAKOTA

It's so...creepy.

*
*

SAEED

No, it's beautiful.... And once we're sure everything works the way it's supposed to, we'll fit this over it.

*
*
*

He holds up a glove-like, prosthetic flesh hand--limp, but incredibly real looking, fingernails and all. Dakota reaches out and touches it.

*
*
*

SAEED (CONT'D)

With a little practice, you'll even be able to thread a needle.

*
*

DAKOTA

No thanks. I gave up sewing.

SAEED

Well, then...just everyday things.
Like picking up a glass. For
example...

Sure that her new hand is attached securely, Saeed now holds
out a glass of water. *

Dakota extends her new hand and flexes the metal fingers.
They move awkwardly, but they move.

Dakota finally closes the fingers of the titanium hand around
the glass. Takes it from Saeed.

DAKOTA

(laughing)

It's not stopping! Help!

But the fingers keep gripping harder and harder until the glass shatters.

Laughing, Saeed jumps out of the way of the exploding glass.

CUT TO:

OMITTED

INT. FLEMING HOUSE -- FOYER -- CONTINUOUS

Susan opens the door on Lanny Rierden, the bodybuilder security guard.

SUSAN

Lanny. Thank god! I was afraid Daniel had forgotten to call you. Come in.

OMITTED

RIERDEN

I'm here to help in whatever way I can, Mrs. Fleming.

Susan extends her hand. Lanny takes it for a quick beat as he enters. Susan closes the door.

RIERDEN (CONT'D)

I was real sorry to hear about what happened to Aubrey. But I'm glad she's going to be all right.

SUSAN

Thank you, Lanny. It has been difficult.

RIERDEN

I won't take up too much of your time. I'd just like to do a quick assessment. See where your vulnerabilities are.

SUSAN

Of course.

RIERDEN

Once we secure the house, I can concentrate all my energies on protecting your daughter.

OMITTED

CUT TO:

OMITTED

INT. HOSPITAL -- ARTIFICIAL LIMBS CLINIC -- DAY

With Saeed's hand helping hold her up, Dakota stands on her new artificial leg in front of the mirror.

SAEED

Try stepping forward.

She takes an unsteady step.

SAEED (CONT'D)

Now backward.

Dakota takes a step backward.

SAEED (CONT'D)

Good. Now, to the side.

Concentrating very hard, Dakota moves the leg to one side.

SAEED (CONT'D)

Excellent. You'll be back on the dance floor in no time, Dakota.

DAKOTA

Thank you.

SAEED

For...?

DAKOTA

Calling me Dakota.

Saeed smiles, shrugs, and holds up a power cord.

SAEED

Just don't forget to plug it in when you're not wearing it. If the battery runs down, it's like dragging around a wooden leg.

YELLOW

59A.

CUT TO:

OMITTED

INT./EXT FEDERAL AGENTS' CAR/HOSPITAL REAR ENTRANCE -- NIGHT

Pulling away from the rear of the hospital: Dakota rides in the back seat. Staring out at rain-glazed streets through the instrument panel's blue reflection in the window glass.

Daniel rides in front with the Agent driver.

Susan relaxes into the seat beside Dakota.

SUSAN

I think we managed to avoid all those reporters.

Dakota's good hand rests on the seat between them. Susan wants to, but can't quite bring herself to reach out and hold the hand.

As Dakota stares out the window, a trailing streak of red brake lights threads through the blue blur and we...

BEGIN INTERCUT WITH:

INT. DAKOTA'S APARTMENT -- THE PAST -- NIGHT

Dakota is in the grimy shower of her fleabag apartment.

Flashback: The Blue Man standing near the busstop outside Strip-T's...then suddenly moving even closer.

In the shower: She tries to shake the awful memory from her head as she washes her hair, luxuriating under the hot spray for a beat or two, running her fingers through her hair.

Dakota suddenly shrieks in agony...

In the back seat of the car: Dakota winces at the memory, clenching her prosthetic hand. She looks down at the artificial fingers.

CUT TO:

INT. AUBREY'S BEDROOM -- LATER

Dakota looks around Aubrey's room as if she's never seen it before. Daniel and Susan watch anxiously from the doorway.

DAKOTA

Aubrey chose the colors?

SUSAN

...Yes. Aubrey, um, yes. Aubrey chose everything.

DAKOTA

She's got good taste. Better than me. It's nice.

Dakota peers at a photo on the wall of Aubrey clowning around with her friends. She is taken with the photo for a beat-- she and Aubrey do look amazingly alike. Finally, Dakota turns back to Daniel and Susan.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Thanks for putting me up for a while. I appreciate it.

Mitts the Cat slithers out of Aubrey's closet, pushing the door open. He sniffs Dakota's artificial leg for a beat, then starts rubbing against both of her legs, purring loudly. Dakota leans down and pets the cat.

DANIEL

Looks like we're not the only ones glad to see you back home.

Dakota picks up the cat, strokes it.

CUT TO:

INT. WAR ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Lazarus enters Bascombe's cube holding a lab report. Bascombe is intent on her computer screen.

LAZARUS

Latest DNA tests came back.

Bascombe remains absorbed in her screen.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)

Don't you want to know the results?

Bascombe angles the screen of a computer so Lazarus can see.

BASCOMBE

Take a look at this. I thought I
should go through Aubrey's hard drive
one more time.

As they look at the words in the document onscreen, we hear Aubrey's voice reading:

AUBREY (V.O.)

She had always felt like half a person--
half a person with half a soul.
Sometimes if she dreamed hard enough,
she could bring the two halves
together.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CLASSROOM -- THE PAST -- DAY

Aubrey stands before the creative writing class, reading her story.

AUBREY

But she always woke to the same
feelings of loneliness and loss. Her
hands trembled with anticipation as
she opened the folder containing the
birth records. Somewhere in the back
of her mind, she'd been hoping her
biological mother would turn out to
be, oh, Cameron Diaz or Gwen Stefani.

Aubrey's classmates laugh. Caught up in her own story, Aubrey can't help a smile.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

Instead, it was someone called
Virginia Sue Moss. She wrote down
the name and her real mother's last
known address. But it was what she
saw next that slammed into her gut
like a celestial fist. She stared at
the hospital records in disbelief.
It couldn't be true. But there it
was in black and white. Not only did
she have a mother she'd never met...

Aubrey pauses dramatically, as caught up in the story she wrote as is the class.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

She also had an identical twin. But
Virginia Sue Moss had left town with
her twin sister almost 20 years ago.
How would she ever find her other
half? She knew only that she had to
try. She had no choice.

Aubrey folds the manuscript in half, then smiles shyly.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

To be continued.

In the war room: Bascombe and Lazarus share a look.

LAZARUS

Moss.

BASCOMBE

As in Dakota Moss. Yeah.

LAZARUS

This proves...

BASCOMBE

That she's always been and always
will be Aubrey Fleming. She's living
inside a world she made up.

(beat)

So those DNA tests comparing Aubrey
to Dakota?

LAZARUS

Came back identical.

BASCOMBE

Damn right they did.

CUT TO:

INT. AUBREY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

On her back in Aubrey's bed, Dakota stares at the ceiling,
wide awake.

Finally, she turns on the bedside light, sits up. Wearing
just a t-shirt, her artificial leg off, its cord not plugged
in, Dakota gets up, balances herself for a moment, then hops
from the bed over to Aubrey's desk and sits down.

Now, trying her best to make as little noise as possible,
Dakota starts opening the desk drawers, picking up a few
things as if every one is new to her: A brass paperweight in
the shape of an "A"...a DVD movie...iPod earphones...a pack
of cigarettes hidden in a make-up bag.

She reaches deep into the back of the drawer and comes out
with a condom. No big deal. She puts it back.

She opens a cabinet that turns out to be a little refrigerator
stocked with sodas.

Now spinning around in the chair, she looks around the room
some more, noticing:

A shiny trophy partially hidden on the top shelf of a bookcase catching a glint from passing headlights outside the window. It is blue and gold. Something about the trophy holds Dakota's attention.

She hops over to the shelf, but she isn't tall enough to reach the trophy. She gives it another glance, then stops trying to reach it.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLEMING HOUSE -- DAY

The Agents are in various positions around the house.

Jerrod pulls up to the roadblock in his rattling old car. An Agent checks him out, then pulls aside the roadblock and lets him pass.

Jerrod parks in front of the house. He gets out and walks toward the house, passing Rierden who sits behind the wheel of the security car. Jerrod nods. Rierden just stares, suspicious of everybody.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Dakota enters on her crutches, without her artificial leg.

Perched on the piano bench, Jerrod stands up immediately. He holds a bouquet of blue roses in one hand.

Dakota extends her artificial hand.

DAKOTA

Dakota Moss.

JERROD

Jerrod. Jerrod Pointer. Thanks for seeing me.

Jerrod takes her hand and then pulls back with a wince of pain from the strength of it.

DAKOTA

Sorry. Not used to this thing yet. Weird, huh?

(beat)

You might as well sit down. Those are for me? Thanks.

Resuming his perch on the piano bench, Jerrod watches for some sense of recall, but Dakota takes a quick sniff of the bouquet then places it beside her on the couch.

Jerrod can't take his eyes off her. They shift to her missing leg. Dakota notices.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

It's upstairs. I keep forgetting to plug it in at night. The hundred thousand dollar leg. Saeed said I'd even be able to dance again...someday. Slow dance, I guess. You were Aubrey's boyfriend.

Suddenly Jerrod begins to cry. His crying turns into heaving sobs. Dakota lets him continue for a beat or two.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Don't.

JERROD

I promised to protect you.

DAKOTA

I'm not Aubrey.

This makes Jerrod cry even harder.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Listen to me, Jerrod. Very carefully.

I am not Aubrey.

Jerrod wipes away his tears. Then he bursts to his feet and propels himself across the room to her, falling to his knees, taking her face in his hands and kissing her.

Dakota lets him kiss her for a moment, then bites Jerrod's lower lip.

Jerrod pulls back, shocked, touching his lip, checking for blood.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

That wasn't very Aubrey-like was it?

After a confused moment, Jerrod moves to kiss her again, more forcefully. She lets him.

Now Dakota gets into it, kissing him harder and deeper, growing fevered with passion.

SUSAN (O.S.)

Can I get you two anyth...oh!

Dakota and Jerrod cut off the kiss, both panting, sweaty, disheveled. Jerrod is mortified at being caught.

JERROD

Sorry, uh...Mrs. Fleming.

Susan doesn't know quite what to say.

Dakota reaches for her crutches.

DAKOTA

We're going up to Aubrey's room.

Dakota looks at Jerrod, who is just as confused as Susan.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Coming?

Dakota starts to exit past Susan.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Oh...and Susan? Would you mind putting
the blue roses in some water for me?

(to Jerrod)

I could use some help with the stairs.

Jerrod finally follows, lowering his head as he passes Susan,
who watches after them speechlessly.

CUT TO:

INT. AUBREY'S BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Jerrod sits on the bed. He keeps glancing at the artificial
leg leaning against the nightstand, plugged in.

Dakota takes his jaw in her hands and turns his face to hers.
She kisses him long enough to take his mind off it.

Then she hops over to the stereo and puts on music. She closes
the curtains. She lights a candle.

Then she opens the desk drawer and takes out the condom she
found earlier. She holds it up. She smiles.

DAKOTA

The only one. You better make it
last.

Jerrod comes to her, takes her in his arms, kisses her
hungrily, then pulls her sweater over her head...

Dakota and Jerrod: undressing each other...falling into
bed...straining against each other's bodies...

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Meanwhile, Susan, still in her business suit, scrubs the
kitchen sink with furious intent.

INT. AUBREY'S BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Jerrod cups her breasts as Dakota, now on top, draws herself
up the length of his erection, then slowly, teasingly down
again, grinding herself into his pelvis. She smiles as she
watches his reaction.

And then Jerrod can't stop himself from coming.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

At Jerrod's orgasmic cries, Susan turns on the faucet full
blast.

INT. AUBREY'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Dakota collapses on top of Jerrod, laughing. He props himself up on an elbow and searches her face for a beat.

JERROD

Aubrey.

Dakota puts her finger on Jerrod's lips.

JERROD (CONT'D)

Aubrey, why are you doing this?

DAKOTA

Did she ever fuck you like that? Did she ever fuck you at all?

(off his silence)

You think she'd start now?

JERROD

So you want me to call you Dakota-- I'll call you Dakota. But if you're not Aubrey, how'd you get all cut up?

Dakota turns her head on the pillow and stares off for a beat. Darkness has begun to gather at the window.

DAKOTA

I don't know. I couldn't explain it.

BEGIN INTERCUT WITH:

INT. DAKOTA'S SHOWER -- NIGHT

Running her fingers through her hair, luxuriating under the warm water, Dakota suddenly cries out in pain. She jerks her right hand in front of her face.

DAKOTA (V.O.)

When it was happening it just seemed like this nightmare.

At first, nothing looks wrong, then...right before her eyes:

Dakota's middle finger slowly puffs up...then blackens...then splits in a few places oozing yellow pus and red blood.

Dakota screams in agony, bracing herself against the wall of the enclosure, choking on the pain.

In Dakota's apartment -- later: Her finger wrapped in gauze, Dakota sleeps fitfully.

Dakota's dream: Aubrey, dressed in what she was wearing the night she disappeared, walks down the stage at Strip T's looking confused, squinting in the spotlight.

A dense fog swirls around her feet.

AUBREY

(echoing)

Dakota? Dakota? Where are you?

In Dakota's apartment: Dakota cries out as she starts up from the dream. She turns on the light. She carefully examines her bandaged finger.

CONTINUE INTERCUT WITH:

INT. STRIP T'S BACKSTAGE/STAGE -- THE PAST -- NIGHT

Dakota washes down some pain pills backstage. She adjusts the red glove on her right hand, wincing.

DAKOTA (V.O.)

I bought some kicker. It helped, but
it fogged me up, fierce.

The curtain opens, Dakota begins her dance. Halfway down the runway, she notices the Blue Man.

Dakota seems distracted as she dances, turning her head to see the Blue Man, cowboy boots, blue hat shadowing his face.

She catches a glimpse of something glinting in one blue-gloved hand. Broken glass?

And then the light is gone.

And then the Blue Man is gone.

Dakota looks troubled, distracted, and in pain. But she continues with her dance.

She drops first one, then the other bra strap. She lets the bra slide slowly to the tips of her breasts, hang there for a moment, then fall.

Topless now, Dakota takes a spin down the pole.

She leaves a bloody spiral in the path her right hand took down the pole.

She doesn't seem to notice.

CONTINUE INTERCUT WITH:

INT. STRIPPERS' DRESSING ROOM -- THE PAST -- LATER

Looking pale and unsteady, Dakota sits at one of the dressing tables, holding her injured hand in her lap. With her other, she pulls the cash out of her thong and stacks it on the table before her.

A 30-year-old stripper, JAZMIN, affixing tasseled pasties to her unnaturally large and firm tits, eyes Dakota's tips in the mirror. Standing up, she sighs.

JAZMIN

I still don't think you're any 21, cupcake.

DAKOTA

What difference does it make?

Jazmin turns and gets right in Dakota's face. She looks almost grotesque at this proximity, spitting:

JAZMIN

Because it's fucking call-the-cops time if you're fucking not 21!

DAKOTA

Hookers don't call cops.

Dakota nonchalantly scoops up her stack of tips.

JAZMIN

You're funny.

DAKOTA

I'm a nonstop riot.

JAZMIN

I make way more tips than you, Miss Jailbait.

DAKOTA

I'm sure you do.

JAZMIN

Plenty tips more.

Laughing, Jazmin swirls her pasties so close to Dakota's face that the breeze moves her hair.

DAKOTA

Silicone city.

JAZMIN

No way, bitch! These titties--hundred percent organic.

DAKOTA

"Cupcake," your tits are so fucking fake I'm surprised the johns don't stuff your thong with Monopoly money.

For a moment it seems as if Jazmin might strike Dakota, but instead, she laughs demonically and stalks out.

When she's alone, Dakota stuffs her tips deep inside the pocket of a coat hanging on a rack beside the table.

She then looks at herself in the mirror, gathering her nerve.

She lifts the hand with the bloodied glove to the table, wincing.

She stares at it for a moment. Then she begins peeling the glove down her arm, rolling it inside out, revealing her forearm, her wrist, her hand, and then...

She pulls the glove ever so slowly over her fingers.

Just a glimpse: something falling to the floor.

Dakota's middle finger is gone! A heavily bleeding, bloody stump is all that remains.

Sickened, Dakota shrieks, then bends over and dry heaves, coughing and choking. She sees:

Her gangrenous finger lying on the filthy floor.

She finds a white towel smeared with make-up and wraps it tightly around her bleeding hand.

She picks up her severed finger and wraps it in a tissue.

Dakota stares at her reflection in the mirror for a beat, pale and sweaty.

Then she stands up. She takes a moment to steady herself. She reaches for her coat.

And then she faints.

In Aubrey's bedroom: Jerrod stares at Dakota, deep in her memory.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Jazmin screamed for Fat Teena when she found me... But not till after she stole all the tips out of my coat pocket.

In the strippers' dressing room: Fat Teena and Jazmin crouch over Dakota.

JAZMIN

I found the bitch just like this.

FAT TEENA

What happened to her hand?

JAZMIN

Why you askin' me? How the hell would
I know?

Dakota tries to sit up. Fat Teena helps her. The towel is still wrapped around her hand, but now it's mostly soaked in blood.

FAT TEENA

What happened to your hand, kiddo?

DAKOTA

I'm okay. I'll be okay.

Dakota grows more lucid under Fat Teena's suspicious gaze.

FAT TEENA

What happened to your hand?

JAZMIN

A person could die losing that much
blood.

FAT TEENA

Dance.

JAZMIN

I'm just saying!

FAT TEENA

Dance.

JAZMIN

Marlene's on. She kick my ass I go
out there while she's on.

Fat Teena glares at Jazmin. Finally, she saunters off, exiting through a curtained doorway.

FAT TEENA

So?

DAKOTA

I was... I was having a drink out
back. I dropped the glass. I cut
myself when I picked it up.

Fat Teena tries to decide whether to believe Dakota. Dakota gets slowly to her feet.

FAT TEENA

How you gonna get to the emergency
room?

DAKOTA

Hospitals are for rich people. I'll
be all right.

FAT TEENA
How you gonna get home?

DAKOTA
I'll be fine.

FAT TEENA
You better take an extra towel.

CONTINUE INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CITY BUS -- MOVING -- THE PAST -- NIGHT

Dakota sits on plastic seat in the grimy, nearly empty bus.

Her hand is wrapped in a fresh towel, but the blood is slowly soaking it through.

A big drop of blood falls to the floor of the bus.

GILBERTO (O.S.)
Hold it higher.

Across from Dakota: a young heavily tattooed dude, 21-year-old GILBERTO, the face of an angel, but the posture and colors of a gang member.

GILBERTO (CONT'D)
You got to hold it higher than your heart.

Dakota rests her arm on the seat in front of her. He nods, then looks away.

DAKOTA
You aren't going to ask me what happened?

Gilberto stares straight ahead, not answering for a beat.

GILBERTO
People get cut. That's life.

The bus slows. Gilberto gets up.

Gilberto moves to the exit, ignoring Dakota. The bus stops. He gets off.

As the bus starts up again, Dakota reaches into the pocket of her coat and checks on the tissue containing her severed finger.

In Aubrey's bedroom: Dakota stares off.

DAKOTA
People get cut. That's life.

JERROD

Jesus.

DAKOTA

So my finger got cut off, but nobody did it. Who's going to believe that? Like, nobody. Look at you. You don't even believe it.

JERROD

Yes I do!

DAKOTA

Only because I fucked you.

Jerrod shrugs, smiles.

Both are silent for a moment. Dakota groans in pain, then grits her teeth.

JERROD

What is it?

DAKOTA

My foot.

Jerrod kneels and begins rubbing her foot. Dakota starts laughing.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Uh, wrong foot.

(off Jerrod's confusion)

Phantom limb pain. Now that is enough to make you believe in ghosts.

Jerrod looks helpless.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Maybe that's why ghosts are restless. Because there's nothing left of what they were except pain. Pain in the shape of a body.

(beat)

I need your help, Jerrod.

CUT TO:

INT. AUBREY'S BEDROOM -- LATER

Clothed now, Jerrod and Dakota are in the midst of a passionate kiss. He lifts her onto Aubrey's desk, where the curtains at the window are open. Jerrod puts his hand on the window with a slap, loud enough for...

BEGIN INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. FLEMING HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

...the Agents and Rierden to look up. They can see Dakota and Jerrod making out.

Dakota pushes Jerrod back and slowly, seductively starts to strip. In full view of the Agents.

Their eyes remain riveted to the window.

Jerrod slips Dakota's top over her head.

Topless now, Dakota turns to the window.

Seeing the agents below, Dakota blows them a kiss, in full stripper mode, then she slowly draws the curtains.

The Agents are very disappointed the show is over.

A moment passes outside the house as they return their attention to their job.

Buttoning his shirt, Jerrod bursts out of the house, completely disheveled, fevered. He jumps in his car.

He grinds the engine. But the car doesn't start.

Finally, he gets out of the car. He kicks the door.

He turns to the nearest agent.

JERROD

Got a condom? I'll pay you for it.

With a laugh, the Agent shakes his head no. Jerrod jogs up to the next agent.

JERROD (CONT'D)

I need a rubber, man? Come on, you don't carry a rubber? Just one.

Agent #2 holds up his hands and backs away, laughing. All the Agents are now laughing at Jerrod's predicament. With a muttered "fuck you," Jerrod runs back into the house.

A moment later, with the agents still laughing, the garage door opens and Jerrod squeals out in Aubrey's BMW.

The Agents have to scatter to avoid getting hit. Jerrod screeches up to the roadblock and slams on the brakes.

A laughing Agent comes up to the car.

AGENT #1

Where you headed, boy?

JERROD

Just let me through, okay?

With a glance in the car, the Agent ambles to the roadblock and draws it aside so Jerrod can pass.

He screeches off, giving the Agent the finger as he passes.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET/TOLAND HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Jerrod helps Dakota out of the trunk by her artificial hand.

JERROD

Ow. Not so hard.

She loosens her grip as she gains her footing on the street. She looks off at an expansive suburban house.

DAKOTA

That's the house?

JERROD

You want me to come with you?

DAKOTA

You better go back. They'll get suspicious.

She kisses him. He gets back into the car.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Dakota looks up at the house. She walks a little stiffly toward the front door. She rings the doorbell. She waits.

She looks back at the car. Jerrod waves.

The door opens, and after a beat, Dakota enters.

Jerrod drives off.

CUT TO:

INT. TOLAND LIVING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Jennifer's brother GREG TOLAND, 18, sits on a piano bench with his back to the piano. *

Dakota sits on the couch. She catches Greg looking at her prosthetic hand. He clears his throat. *

Marnie Toland enters with a teapot and cups. She sits down opposite Dakota and starts to pour a cup of tea, her hand shaking, at first just a little, then a lot. *

GREG

Mom, are you okay?

*

*

Then Marnie drops the teapot and it shatters.

*

Dakota starts to mop up the mess off the table.

MARNIE

Why did you have to come here, Aubrey Fleming?! You've still got your life. Nobody in this house has any left! You're not cooperating with the police. Oh, I've heard all about it. You could help find the monster who killed our...

With a sob, Marnie flees the room as Dakota continues to mop up the spilled tea. *

GREG *

(standing up) *
I should go... *

DAKOTA *

It would be enough just to see her room. *

Greg shrugs. *

INT. JENNIFER TOLAND'S ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Dakota stands in the middle of the room. *

The room is just as Jennifer left it. A library's worth of books, a collection of dolls--so many that it's just this side of creepy, their beady blue-glass eyes looking down on Dakota.

Dakota turns in a slow circle. There is too much to take in. Pop-star posters tacked to every surface...stacks of magazines...a collection of decorative jewelry boxes.

Footsteps on the stairs.

Dakota concentrates as she continues to take in the clutter.

She's focusing now on what she can see of a trophy, partially hidden behind several teddy bears. She's almost reached it, almost has a clear view of it when...

The door opens. It's Daniel and Susan.

Dakota gets her hand on the trophy shifting it just enough to see a glimmer of brass against a blue cut-glass background.

SUSAN

(sharply)
Aubrey!

Susan grabs her arm fiercely and pulls her away.

CUT TO:

OMITTED

EXT. TOLAND HOUSE/DANIEL'S CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

Daniel and Susan lead Dakota toward Daniel's car.

DANIEL

This is what they call protecting us? And where was fucking Lanny Rierden?! You can't trust anyone.

SUSAN

All right, Daniel. Just calm down. She's safe.

DAKOTA

He's upset because he knows I'm telling the truth. He knows Aubrey's still out there.

DANIEL

Shut up, Aubrey! Just shut the fuck up.

Daniel opens his car door.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLEMING HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Daniel screeches into the garage.

Rierden's security car is there alongside the federal agents' cars.

Daniel strides angrily toward the security car. Rierden opens the window.

DANIEL

You're fired. Now get the fuck out of here. I never want to see you around here again.

Rierden doesn't react.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Now! Move!

After looking through the windshield at the Agents who are watching, Rierden starts the car and donuts around Daniel, who has to jump out of the way.

Now he turns his attention to the feds.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Why don't you fucking do your job!

CUT TO:

INT. AUBREY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Dakota sleeps fitfully.

Dakota dreams of: Blue-glass blades...blue glass breaking...blue light bars on the security car...blood mixing with blue...blue hands reaching toward her...throbbing blue veins on Dakota's arm in the hospital as the cut appears, the blue turning red, flowing...the trophy almost coming into view on the top shelf of Jennifer Toland's bedroom.

Gasping, Dakota awakens with a start.

She looks around the mostly dark room. An indistinguishable noise nearby.

DAKOTA

Who's there?

Dakota waits breathlessly.

From utter blackness, the Blue Man's shadowed form slowly appears...

Dakota fumbles for the bedside light.

She turns it on. No Blue Man. Then she looks on the other side of the bed and...

The Blue Man is standing over her poised to strike with a giant broken-glass weapon.

She screams.

And then she wakes up for real.

Gasping, panicky. She turns on the light to reveal...

The room is unoccupied, but for her. She sits up in bed and holds her head in her hand for a moment.

Moments later: Sitting at Aubrey's desk with a Diet Coke, Dakota shakes out one of Aubrey's cigarettes. She pops open the Diet Coke, takes a gulp.

=-A[s Dakota lights the cigarette, her eyes fall on Aubrey's laptop computer, closed.

She opens the lid. The computer chimes to life.

A screen appears asking for a password, its username already reads: AUBREY.

Dakota hesitates a beat, then with one finger types in a password:

D - A - K - O - T - A

She draws a deep breath, looks over her shoulder at the closed door, then hits enter. The password was correct. The computer's desktop appears.

Now Dakota is on a Google search page. She enters: **bleeding**. She thinks for a beat more, then adds: **wounds**. Then adds: **unexplained**.

She hits the SEARCH button. A lot of hits come up. One in particular grabs her attention: **Stigmata: Unexplained Spontaneous Bleeding**

Dakota clicks on the link and reaches a Web page where we see image after image of profusely bleeding saints.

Then she notices a link on the page labeled:

Nonreligious Stigmatics

Reaching that Web page, Dakota scans the information then clicks a link for a streaming video. After a beat, the video starts to play. Dakota watches intently...

INTERCUT WITH:

INSERT - COMPUTER SCREEN - STREAMING VIDEO

The title reads "Mysteries of the Mind: The Stigmatic Twins," an excerpt from a network television program. A REPORTER narrates a dramatization.

REPORTER

The best-documented case is that of Joseph K., 35, and his twin brother Jacob.

OMITTED

INT. A BAR -- LONG AGO -- NIGHT

The streaming video now shows a bar. A man, JACOB K., 35, dressed in a Depression-era suit, sits at the bar, lifting a drink to his mouth. A MAN in a trench coat enters.

REPORTER

Jacob K. was a petty thief with a gambling problem, who was more than 5000 dollars in debt to the mob.

Before Jacob K. can react:

A revolver appears at close range. Fires a bullet into Jacob K.'s neck.

His hand flies to his neck, blood pouring between his fingers.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

Unable to pay off his loan, Jacob K. was targeted for assassination on the night of December the 18th, 1944.

Jacob K. topples off the bar stool and convulses on the floor of the bar as he dies.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

The same night Jacob K. was gunned down...

OMITTED

Now the streaming video cuts to:

INT. A BEDROOM -- LONG AGO -- CONTINUOUS

..where Jacob's identical twin, JOSEPH K., lies in bed, asleep.

REPORTER

...a deep puncture wound appeared in Joseph K.'s neck in the same spot.

Closer, we watch as a bullet-shaped hole magically opens up in the side of his neck.

Blood begins to seep, then pour, from the wound, staining his pillow.

Now: side-by-side sepia-toned autopsy photographs of the dead twins Joseph and Jacob in profile, and their matching wounds. A ruler is held against each wound to prove the matching diameters.

Dakota is completely absorbed.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

Lacking all explanation, authorities concluded that Joseph K.'s wound was self-inflicted. They failed, however, to address just how he could have known the precise location of his brother's mortal wound. Or how both men happened to die at the same hour, miles apart.

Dakota looks up from the laptop, deep in thought, takes another drag on her cigarette.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. BEACH - THE PAST -- DAY

Two little girls, identical twins on each side of a SPLIT SCREEN. In different bathing suits, both pose as someone O.C. takes their picture.

The little girl on the right side of the screen, where the water is impossibly blue, reaches toward something in the sand.

SUSAN (O.S.)

Don't touch that, sweetie. It's a jellyfish. They sting.

But young Aubrey touches the blob anyway, jerking back her hand in pain.

At the same time on the other side of the screen, young Dakota grabs her own hand and starts screaming in pain.

Both girls scream in pain.

In Aubrey's bedroom: Dakota is musing over that memory when:

There's a soft knock on the door. Susan enters.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I saw the light. Are you all right?

DAKOTA

I couldn't sleep.

Then Susan notices the cigarette. She walks over to Dakota, takes the cigarette from her, and then has a long drag on it herself.

SUSAN

This is a non-smoking house, dear.

Exhaling, Susan smiles at Dakota. Dakota can't help a laugh. Susan takes another drag and then pushes the rest into the can of Diet Coke. Sizzle.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

And will remain one.

Susan is transfixed by Dakota's face for a moment.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I think that's the first time I've seen you smile.

DAKOTA

There hasn't been an awful lot to smile about.

Susan reaches out instinctively to brush some hair from Dakota's face. Dakota recoils.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Sorry.

SUSAN

No. I shouldn't have--

DAKOTA

(interrupting)

I think I'm Aubrey's twin sister.

Susan can't find a response.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Her identical twin sister. Hospitals make mistakes. Maybe we got separated at birth.

Susan doesn't respond. She sits down on the bed.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Look at this house, this life your daughter had. Why would I pretend to be some loser if all this was mine?

*
*
*

SUSAN

It's like a bad dream, sweetie. Someday very soon, you're going to wake up from it and realize the truth.

DAKOTA

But it's possible, isn't it? Couldn't we be twins?

CUT TO:

INT. FLEMING MEDIA ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

On a massive TV screen, the video of an ultrasound plays. There is only one fetus.

Dakota stares at the image. Susan sits beside her. They watch in silence for a beat.

Neither of them notices Daniel standing in the doorway:

SUSAN

See? You were all by yourself in there. No twin sister. Just you.

Dakota starts to correct her. But then we can see her decide to let it pass. Susan is lost in her memory.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I'm not much of a crier, you know, but I cried when I saw this. They made me stay in bed, flat on my back, for the last 6 weeks. But it was worth it. Every time I thought I couldn't stand another second of it, I'd put both hands on my belly and say, "Kick. Kick the hell outta me, girl. Show me what you've got." And sure enough, you'd kick.

Dakota's attention is focused entirely on Susan.

*

SUSAN (CONT'D)

It was terrifying the night you were born. I barely saw you before they took you away. For two whole days, it was touch and go. But then I finally had you in my arms. My little miracle.

*

Dakota reaches out with her real hand and lays it across Susan's hand. Susan looks at their hands for a beat, then squeezes. She collects herself.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I'm not trying to prove you wrong, you know. I'm just trying to help you see.

DAKOTA

But you don't believe me.

SUSAN

You don't need me to believe you.

Dakota starts to speak, and then doesn't. Susan puts her arm around her. Dakota doesn't move but doesn't shrink away. A beat of silence.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

When I think we'll never be normal again, I see that about you, that strength, and I think, we're going to be all right no matter what. Different, maybe, but all right.

Dakota finally lets herself relax into the embrace.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

You're a kicker, girl, so you go right ahead and kick your way to the other side of this problem, and I'll be there every step of the way if you need me.

Susan lets her chin rest on Dakota's head.

In the hallway outside the media room: Daniel turns from the doorway.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. FLEMING HOUSE -- NIGHT

To establish. A clap of thunder. The air is electric with a coming storm. Multiple chains of lightning fill the distant sky.

INT. AUBREY'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Unsteadily, Dakota climbs up on a chair in front of Aubrey's bookshelves. For support, she grips a shelf with her artificial hand.

Her real hand barely reaches the trophy, which looks--from what we can see of it--identical to the one in Jennifer Toland's room. Dakota has just managed to nudge it to a position for a better look when...

We hear the muffled sounds of a distant struggle, a weak voice begging.

Dakota looks around the room. She focuses on the mirror, where a dim vision reveals the blade of a shovel as it hits Aubrey in the face...and:

Thwack! Groaning in pain, Dakota topples from the chair to the floor. She puts her hand to her nose and mouth. Blood drips from her face onto her t-shirt. She looks around like she doesn't know what hit her...and she doesn't.

Then we hear: An owl hooting...a gurgling stream.

Dakota crawls over to the mirror. The blue roses from Jerrod are in a vase on a table beside the mirror.

In the mirror: Behind Dakota's filmy reflection, the dim vision continues:

An unconscious Aubrey, her face bleeding, is lowered into a blue-glass coffin. The Blue Man leaves the lid off. Then a shovel plunged into dirt. Digging quickly, rhythmically.

All this by a stream...a twisted, distinctive tree growing from its bank...the hoot owl sitting in a hollow of the tree...

DAKOTA

Oh god, no.

Now, the blue petals begin to fall from Dakota's bouquet, slowly at first, then faster, falling steadily, spots of

blue falling not to the floor but into the stream in the mirror, carried magically away by the running water.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

(whispering)

No. No. No. No.

As the last petal falls from the last rose, the flow of blue changes to red: Now it's blood, running from Dakota's mouth and nose.

INT. DANIEL FLEMING'S STUDY -- MOMENTS LATER

Daniel sits at his desk in the book-lined study, going over some paperwork. Sensing something, he looks up.

Dakota stands in the doorway, her face still bleeding.

Daniel jumps up and comes around the desk to her.

DANIEL

My god! What happened? Jesus. Who did this to you?

He tries to take her arm, get a look at her bleeding face.

DAKOTA

If you really want to help me--
(shakes free)
--then help me find Aubrey.

Daniel takes out a handkerchief and begins to blot the blood from Dakota's face, during:

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

He's almost finished with her, Daniel.
And then we'll both be dead.

DANIEL

I'm so tired of our lives being a
crime scene, sweetheart.

DAKOTA

My entire life has been a crime scene.

DANIEL

That's not true, Aubrey.

DAKOTA

I figured it all out, you know. What
you did when I was born.

Daniel pauses in his ministrations. Then he continues to wipe Dakota's face. Her nose has stopped bleeding.

DANIEL

All right. When you were born.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Good place to start. You're the writer. What kind of story have you made up for me?

Daniel tosses aside the bloody towel and drops into a chair.

DAKOTA

Susan had a difficult pregnancy. Her real baby daughter went to an incubator. Where she died. You were young. In love. You panicked. You didn't think Susan could handle the news. They'd already told her she'd never be able to have another baby. So when you found out my deadbeat mom had given birth to twins the same night. You cut her a deal. You'd pay her for one of us. For a little cash on an ongoing basis--oh, yeah, I saw the envelopes of cash you sent her, the New Salem postmark--one of the twins goes home with the Flemings and the other goes with Virginia Sue Moss. And to this day Susan doesn't have a clue what you did.

(beat)

My only question, Daniel. How did you choose? What made you take Aubrey instead of me?

DANIEL

Are you finished?

DAKOTA

Are you going to help me find your daughter?

DANIEL

My daughter is standing right here in front of me.

DAKOTA

No. He's going to bury her soon. Bury her alive, Daniel. I saw it. Bury the girl you raised as your daughter. We're twins, Daniel, identical twins. And you fucking know it.

Daniel doesn't answer. Dakota holds up her artificial hand. She indicates her middle finger.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

She lost this one first. So did I.

BEGIN INTERCUT WITH:

INT. DAKOTA'S BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Drops of blood swirl down the drain of the rusty porcelain sink.

Dakota peels off the blood-soaked towel, exposing the stump of her missing finger. The blood flow has slowed.

Dakota blots away as much blood as possible, working to maintain her composure.

She picks up a bottle of gin resting on the edge of the tub. She takes a long swig, then sets it back down.

She looks at her reflection in the cloudy and cracked mirror.

DAKOTA

You can do this.

She lifts a dark amber bottle and starts pouring blue germicide over the stump.

Tears of pain come to her clenched eyes.

Red blood and blue germicide mingle in the basin.

Dakota grips the edge of the sink and breathes heavily to keep from fainting. Then it passes.

On the edge of the tub: Dakota's severed index finger floats in a bowl of red ice-water.

She takes another swig of gin.

She lifts the finger out of the bowl.

She aligns the finger on top of the faucet spout.

Using a blue silk ribbon, she lashes the finger to the spout.

Another gulp of gin.

Now she holds a large sewing needle in front of her face.

Blood and blue germicide drip from her elbow, but her hand is steady as she threads the needle.

Steadying her arm by leaning her elbow on the edge of the sink, she lines up her stump with the cut end of the finger.

She studies it for a moment, smoothing out the flesh at the junction.

Then, working efficiently but carefully, she pushes the needle against the knuckle side of the wound. She presses harder, the needle finally punching through the skin.

She pauses, letting a wave of lightheadedness pass.

She lifts the gin bottle to her lips and drinks again.

And then she starts stitching her finger back onto her hand.

DAKOTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I lost the rest of the fingers on my
right hand by the end of the week.
One by one.

(MORE)

DAKOTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Lost them all and stitched them all back on. I got pretty good at the stitching part. The thumb was the hardest. I think I really believed they'd grow back together. Anyway, you can't just throw away your finger because it falls off. I mean, it's your finger, for Christ's sake.

In Daniel's study: Daniel looks pale.

DANIEL
Why are you telling me this? This is all just your imagination.

DAKOTA
I couldn't think about anything but the pain. It was like staring into a bright light all the time. You can't close your eyes, you can't turn away.

CONTINUE INTERCUT WITH:

INT. DAKOTA'S APARTMENT -- THE PAST -- NIGHT

Sleeping with a light on, Dakota wears a man's white undershirt, stained with blood. On the table beside the bed, a grimy glass of water and a plastic bag filled with pills.

Her arm, stained blue with germicide, lies elevated on a pillow.

DAKOTA (V.O.)
I got pain pills from one of the dealers in the building. I finally slept, if you can call it that.

Moaning in pain, Dakota slowly awakens. The first thing she sees is her bandaged hand. She lifts it, wincing.

Her good hand emerges from under the blankets.

It is covered in blood...fresh blood.

In a fog, she senses something is wrong. The stickiness. She looks at her hand, back and front. No cut, just a lot of blood.

Wide awake now, she throws back the sheets.

The bed is soaked in blood.

In Dakota's bathroom: Dakota sits on the edge of the tub, faint from blood loss. She lifts her wounded leg and examines a deep cut that encircles her right calf.

A steady flow of blood gushes toward the bathtub drain.

Dakota's good hand shakes as she stitches up the new cut.

Later: A trail of blood leads from the bed to the bathroom.

Pale as death and half delirious, Dakota lies in bed with her stitched leg splayed before her, still oozing blood.

GILBERTO (O.S.)

You've got to elevate it.

Dakota looks up. Emerging from total blackness, Gilberto drags a straight-backed chair across the room to the side of the mattress.

He puts a pillow on the seat and then gently lifts Dakota's injured leg to the seat of the chair.

GILBERTO (CONT'D)

Higher than the heart.

DAKOTA

Higher than the heart.

He kneels before her on the bed. He opens the front of his shirt to expose his bare chest and its large tattoo:

An angel-winged red heart. The heart has been split in a jagged line. The thorny vine of a blue rose is trying to stitch it back together.

The tattoo seems to come to life in Dakota's delirium: The heart pulsing, the wings quivering, the thorny vine snaking.

The two halves of the heart come further apart to reveal the menacing blue eyeball of the Blue Man...darting, blinking, reflecting her image.

Dakota's hand reaches toward the vision.

GILBERTO

Odd, even. Right, left. Rest, motion.
Peace, war. Good, evil. Heaven, hell.
Two halves to everything. People get
cut. Sometimes people get cut in
half.

In Daniel's study: Dakota shakes her head, closes her eyes tight at the memory. Daniel listens in horror.

DAKOTA

What happens to Aubrey happens to
me, Daniel.

DANIEL

No.

DAKOTA

I'd always felt like half a person,
half a person with half a soul? But
it never occurred to me I might
possibly have a twin.

(sighs)

...All I had to go on was the New
Salem postmark and a gut feeling.

CONTINUE INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. HIGHWAY -- THE PAST -- NIGHT

Illuminated by headlights, Dakota, on a single grimy crutch,
tries thumbing a ride, bloody and looking more like a zombie
than a human being.

DAKOTA (V.O.)

...But I figured coming here would
be a good place to start figuring
out what was happening.

The truck slows. The DRIVER'S shocked face can be seen behind
the windshield for a brief moment.

DAKOTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

One good look at me and the trucker
couldn't get out of there fast enough.
I didn't even have the strength to
curse him as I choked on the dust of
his spinning wheels.

Then he speeds up and passes her by. The road grows quiet.
Dakota hobbles on.

DAKOTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Everything was infected. I was
delirious. I slept in abandoned cars.
I didn't know whether I was alive or
dead.

Darkness by the side of the highway: We hear the O.C. screech
of tires, skidding, an engine dying. And then headlights
suddenly shine on: Dakota, curled into a fetal position in
the weeds, very nearly dead, covered in blood.

We hear, muffled:

VICKY (O.S.)

Hey! ...Are you okay?! ...Hey!!

And then the sound of a car door opening, and a beat later:
Vicky Redfeather's hand reaching toward Dakota.

VICKY (CONT'D)

Ohmygod, ohmygod, honey, ohmygod.

With great effort, Dakota turns her head till we can see her wild, bloodshot eyes. She blinks up at the figure crouching over her in the darkness. She groans and in the barest whisper, through her bloodied, parched lips:

DAKOTA

Help...me...

Vicky hurries off to phone for help.

In Daniel's study: Dakota looks up at Daniel. She shrugs.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

And the next thing I remember is waking up in the hospital. Meeting these people who thought I was their daughter.

Daniel begins to cry.

DANIEL

Aubrey.

DAKOTA

Not me, Daniel. Not me.

DANIEL

Aubrey, please come back.

Dakota picks up a framed photo of Aubrey posing clownishly at a ski resort. Aubrey is positioned in the photo so we cannot see her right arm and right leg.

DAKOTA

I need you to take me to her, Daniel.

DANIEL

You're my daughter. Oh, for God's sake, please be my daughter.

DAKOTA

I can't do it if I'm dead. What happens to Aubrey, happens to me, Daniel.

DANIEL

No. It's not possible.

DAKOTA

Are you going to take me?

DANIEL

I can't risk losing...

DAKOTA

You're pathetic.

Dakota continues to stare challengingly at Daniel.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Fuck you.

She storms out.

Daniel stares after her, then agitated, paces across the room. He stops and picks up the ski picture of Aubrey.

He stares at it and begins to cry.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLEMING HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Dakota opens the front door and begins to walk, nearly catatonic, down the front walk.

One of the Agents gets out of his car, and starts toward her.

Daniel appears at the front door. He watches Dakota for a moment as she turns at the corner and disappears into the shadows. A single flash of lightning illuminates her, then she is swallowed by the darkness and rolling thunder.

DANIEL

(to Agents)

It's okay. I'll get her.

He closes the door. The Agents look at each other, perplexed.

A beat later, the garage door opens. Daniel backs out and takes off in the same direction as Dakota.

PALOMA (O.S.)

(hysterical)

I will not calm down! I'm her mother!

CUT TO:

OMITTED

INT. SHERWOOD KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

PALOMA SHERWOOD, 43 and distraught, holds a phone to her ear as she pats a damp cloth against the face of her disheveled 16-year-old daughter, GABRIELLE, who is crying. Her top is ripped.

PALOMA

Because there's a goddamn killer on the loose, that's why. All I know is this man took...advantage...of my daughter and when she said no, he tried to kidnap her. If she hadn't screamed--

(listens)

She doesn't know his last name. I would have told you that off the bat. Do you think I'm an idiot?

(hand over mouthpiece)

They want to hear it from you, Gabrielle. Just tell them anything you can remember, sweetheart. Don't be scared.

Paloma hands the phone to Gabrielle, who tries to stop crying.

GABRIELLE

Hi. ...I was late for curfew. I needed a ride...

CUT TO:

INT. WAR ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The Agents, including Bascombe and Lazarus, are busy strapping on guns and bulletproof vests.

LAZARUS

His only arrest is for petty larceny.

BASCOMBE

And Jeffrey Dahmer didn't have a record at all.

LAZARUS

Statutory rape. It's not much to go on.

AGENT #1

Maybe attempted kidnapping, if we can believe the girl.

LAZARUS

I've developed a severe allergy to believing young girls.

BASCOMBE

It's a fucking lead, Phil. Be grateful.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. DANIEL'S CAR/STREETS -- VARIOUS ANGLES -- NIGHT

Daniel drives slowly along, his window down.

DANIEL

Dakota!

Another street:

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Dakota!! Come on, Dakota.

Thunder and lightning continue with the approaching storm.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. STREETS/CEMETERY -- CONTINUOUS

Dakota limps along. She hears something. She stops, turns, peers into the darkness. Then continues.

Daniel's car: He drives slowly along the streets, calling for Dakota.

On another street: Dakota bends down to massage her aching leg. She lifts the hem of her jeans and checks the LED, which indicates the battery charge is low.

Looking up, she sees the entrance to a cemetery. She limps toward it, threading her way among the tombstones, until she disappears.

Daniel's car: Daniel catches a glimpse of something darting into the shadows. He pulls up on the curb. He gets out, leaving his car door open.

DANIEL
Dakota!! Dakota!!!

He listens for an answer. Nothing.

In the cemetery: Dakota stands, weeping in front of a new grave. It is mounded high and wide with wilted and decaying flowers.

It starts to rain. The thunderstorm is directly overhead. In the lulls between thunder, Daniel's voice can be heard getting closer, calling for Dakota.

The temporary bronze marker in front of the mound of flowers reads: **Aubrey Fleming 1988 - 2007**

Next to it, another marker: **Dakota Moss 1988 - 2007**

Dakota starts to sob. Then:

Among the dead flowers, she spots something:

A blue contest ribbon attached to a basket of dead blue roses, revealed by a flash of lightning.

Dakota bends and pulls the ribbon from the basket. The center rosette of the ribbon has a flowery, interlaced: "Y.A."

Dakota reads the hand-written message on the back of the ribbon's streamers.

DAKOTA
"Blue ribbons are for winners."

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. AUBREY'S GRAVE -- CONTINUOUS

As dirt rains down on the lid of the glass coffin, we can see Aubrey's face through the blue glass. Her lips move in a weak whisper in unison with Dakota.

AUBREY

"Never settle for the red."

DAKOTA (V.O.)

"Never settle for the red."

The Blue Man's frightening visage suddenly reflects in the glass above Aubrey's face.

AUBREY

"Rest in peace, Douglas."

And then a shovelful of soil obscures both the Blue Man's and Aubrey's face.

In the cemetery: Dakota turns the ribbon to see what is written on the other streamer (after Aubrey's words above) and reads:

DAKOTA

"Rest in peace. Douglas."

Dakota continues to study the ribbon when a hand grabs her wrist. She whirls around ready to strike. But it's Daniel.

Dakota holds out the ribbon.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

I know who killed me.

DANIEL

You're not dead, Dakota, honey. You're alive. You're still alive.

DAKOTA

No.

He finally takes the ribbon from her. He looks at it.

DANIEL

Where did you get this?

Dakota can't speak. Looking concerned, Daniel grips Dakota's arm and starts to lead her away.

DAKOTA

We have to stop him.

OMITTED

As Daniel leads Dakota away from the grave, she looks back.

But now, instead of two markers, there is just one.

And it reads: **Jennifer Toland - 1989 - 2007**

SMASH CUT TO:

INT./EXT. DANIEL'S CAR/STREETS/ROADS -- VARIOUS ANGLES

Daniel is behind the wheel driving very fast now.

DANIEL

He lives on a farm up in the hills.

Exhausted but determined, Dakota sits in the passenger seat. She checks the LED on her leg. It has gone from the last green dot into the red area.

Daniel fumbles in his pockets.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

See if my cell phone is in the glove box.

DAKOTA

(looks for a beat)

I don't see it.

DANIEL

We really shouldn't go up there without letting someone know.

DAKOTA

There isn't time.

Daniel looks at Dakota in concern as...

The car leaves the last lights of town behind. The windshield wipers slap madly.

Suddenly, Dakota starts gasping for air. She grips Daniel's arm fiercely. Almost causing him to lose control of the car.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Oh god, I can't breathe.

DANIEL

Hold on.

DAKOTA

No. Nooooo!

DANIEL

What is it, baby?

DAKOTA

There isn't enough air.

DANIEL

It's just a panic attack. Breathe.

Dakota takes several pained deep breaths, then the air comes more easily.

EXT. DIRT ROAD/OLD FARMHOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

The car turns onto a bumpy gravel road, the heavy rain gutting deep rivulets that nearly jerk the steering wheel out of her hands.

Daniel makes another turn, then a few hundred yards down the road, switches off the headlights and the engine. Lets the car roll to a stop by a tall hedge.

Dakota starts to get out of the car. Daniel stops her.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

No. Stay here and keep the doors locked. I mean it. I should have believed you from the start.

Still gasping for breath, Dakota nods.

Daniel gets out, closing the door as quietly as possible. Locking the car. He opens the trunk and takes out a tire iron.

Dakota watches Daniel disappear into the darkness. The rain has nearly stopped.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY -- VARIOUS ANGLES -- CONTINUOUS

A convoy of police and federal agents' cars races along, lights flashing.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLD FARMHOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Daniel steps to the end of the hedge and peers around it as lightning illuminates...

A crumbling, hundred-year-old brick farmhouse. Lights--pale yellow behind rotting curtains--illuminate almost every window.

After the flash of lightning, Daniel crouches and moves as quickly as he can toward the front door. He steps softly into a shadow on the expansive front porch.

He tries to see through the stained glass--mostly blue roses--on the front door. Inside the house seems deserted, at least from this distorted view.

Daniel raises his hand to knock, then changes his mind.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY -- CONTINUOUS

The federal agents' cars and police vehicles are all stopped now. The Agents and Cops leap out of their cars, guns drawn.

BASCOMBE

Step out of the vehicle with your hands up.

And then we see: It's Scaife in his battered old truck.

He gets out with his hands in the air. He starts to speak, but a couple of cops throw him roughly against the side of the truck and start to search him. Bascombe keeps her gun pointed at him.

Meanwhile, Lazarus emerges from the cab of the truck holding up a blue stocking, the mate to the one Bascombe found in Aubrey's drawer. Scaife looks terrified.

BASCOMBE (CONT'D)

Are you going to come clean with me or would you prefer to wait for the DNA test?

SCAIFE

All I did was fuck her.
(MORE)

SCAIFE (CONT'D)

She wanted it. Last summer. That's how I know this girl Dakota--she's not Aubrey. She looks like her, but she not. Once you've fucked somebody, you can tell. How much trouble am I in, anyway?

CUT TO:

OMITTED

INT./EXT DANIEL'S CAR/OLD FARMHOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Dakota suffers another bout of being unable to catch a breath.

DAKOTA

Just breathe Aubrey. Slowly. Don't use up all the air. I'm coming.

Then Dakota starts coughing. She puts her hands over her mouth. She bends over and coughs relentlessly for a moment.

Dakota looks into her hands. They're completely filled with dry, crumbled dirt, sifting through her fingers.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Oh god, oh god, no.

Dakota staggers out of the car. And heads toward the house.

EXT. OLD FARMHOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

She looks down. Drops of fresh blood spot the stoop.

Dakota gently tries the latch. Locked.

Stepping off the porch, she sees the bloodied, blue-glass blade Daniel was stabbed with.

DAKOTA

No, oh no.

Carrying the blade in her good hand, Dakota creeps around the side of the house, crouching as she passes under the windows.

Lightning strikes nearby. An A-bomb of thunder directly overhead. Dakota stifles a scream.

The accompanying flash of lighting illuminates:

A set of concrete steps leading down to a cellar door.

Dakota starts toward them, failing to see:

A rusty old kettle-style grill in her path. She barrels into it. The grill crashes onto the stone patio, scattering ashes.

Dakota steadies herself and hurries to the shadowed wall of the house, pressing herself against the brick between two windows, breathing fast and hard.

The light at the nearest window goes out. Dakota retreats further into the shadows as:

An indistinct figure parts the sheer curtains just enough to look out.

All we can see is a hand holding the curtains aside.

After a breathless moment for Dakota, the curtains drop back together. The light comes back on.

A beat later: The sound of a screen door creaking open and then slamming shut.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Shit.

At the back stoop: We see a pair of cowboy boots.

The boots take another few steps, shuffling first this way then that. Waiting. Watching.

Dakota looks around frantically for a place to hide.

The boots start moving across the wet flagstone patio.

The boots reach the crashed grill. Nudge it. Turn to face the house, the place where Dakota is hiding.

Suddenly, the bright beam of the Blue Man's flashlight illuminates the bare brick between the two windows.

Dakota is gone.

The beam quickly darts to the cement stairwell leading down to a cellar door. The light tarries on the bulky padlock on the heavy-gauge metal door. Nothing amiss here.

Then more clattering from the toppled grill.

The flashlight beam shifts back to the grill to startle:

A raccoon who stumbles across the grill grate and then quickly waddles off to a nearby tree, skittering up its trunk.

The Blue Man turns off the flashlight. Starts to walk away.

Then the faint BEEP of an electronic alarm. Three times.

The Blue Man stops and switches his flashlight back on. The beam slides around the foundation again, stopping at a window well.

The beam remains trained on the window well.

The boots follow the beam toward the window well.

The boots stop at the lip of the window well.

The flashlight beam now shifts so that it shines down inside the deep window well.

But there is nothing inside the window well except dead, wet leaves and an iron-barred cellar window.

After a moment, the beam shifts away.

The boots follow the flashlight back to the house. They go inside. The door closes. Long, low thunder rumbles overhead, then passes.

Back in the window well: The dead wet leaves rustle and Dakota emerges from under their cover. She gasps for air. She checks her leg. The last faint red light of the LED is flashing.

Dakota pulls herself, painfully, out of the window well. Lightning illuminates her as she regains her footing: She is a mess, filthy and bloody and soaking wet.

Dakota cuts a wide path around the grill, then hurries toward the cellar steps.

With a look over her shoulder, Dakota descends the stairs.

She tries the door. But the massive padlock keeps it sealed.

She holds the padlock in her titanium hand. She starts twisting it. The padlock doesn't give, but the hasp holding it to the door and the jamb loosens under the force of her grip, and first one, then all the screws holding the hasp to the jamb pop out.

Dakota pauses, listening. Now she tries the door, pulling it slightly toward her. Its rusty hinges creak. She stops. She waits.

A flash of lightning...then, as more thunder rolls through, Dakota pulls the door open a bit more.

And suddenly, a blue-gloved hand appears in the opening!

Dakota screams.

She pushes against the steel door.

The hand reaches further toward her.

She braces herself against the concrete wall of the stairwell.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Nooo!!

The arm comes further through the opening.

Dakota starts jabbing at it with the blue-glass blade. But keeps missing.

Then she grabs for it with her titanium hand...once, twice, and then she has it in her grip.

She grips tighter and tighter, bones crack, then break. The Blue Man bellows in pain.

Now still braced against the concrete wall, with her artificial leg pressed against the door, Dakota places the blade of the blue-glass knife against the wrist.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

You want to know what it's like,
fucker?! This is what it's like.

And she starts to saw. Lightning illuminates the blood-splattering, but quick, work.

The Blue Man screams in agony.

Soon, the Blue Man's severed hand falls to the wet, mossy concrete at Dakota's foot, and after a second, the blood-spraying stump of his arm disappears through the door. The door slams shut.

Dakota takes a moment to catch her breath. The Blue Man bellows his pain from inside the house. The sound moves, receding...then coming louder again from one of the upstairs windows above Dakota's head.

She takes the opportunity to slip through the door.

INT. CELLAR -- CONTINUOUS

Dakota stands perfectly still in the darkness. Muffled, but nearby, the sound of the artificial limbs clacking lazily against each other.

Dakota shivers with foreboding. She moves ahead slowly, inch-by-inch, hands held in front of her, trying to negotiate her way deeper into the cellar.

The clacking of the limbs becomes more pronounced.

She comes to another door. Her real hand grasps the doorknob. She slowly turns the knob, pushing gently.

From the other side: An old wooden door opens slowly and Dakota peers in. Her face registers shock but not surprise:

The artificial limbs sway, clacking, ever restless--swirls of blue-glass dust fill the air.

Through the ghastly collection, Dakota can catch glimpses of the steel autopsy table at the center of it all. On it is a figure, covered in plastic, motionless, except for blood running steadily into the white bucket below the table.

Dakota reaches out to part the limbs and make her way toward the table. She pauses, listening.

Suddenly, a hand reaches out for her breast. She nearly jumps out of her skin before realizing that it's one of the prosthetics.

She moves further into the thicket of hanging prosthetics, further into the cellar, toward the autopsy table. She stops.

The body on the table is completely covered in dark plastic, motionless.

Blood still drips, but slower now, into the white bucket.

A soft moan comes from under the plastic. Dakota touches the shoulder. And...she pulls back the plastic to reveal:

Daniel lying in a pool of his own blood, three inches deep all around him. It looks like he is floating in a rectangle of blood. His face is white. His hands are bound to the sides of the table.

DAKOTA

Oh god. Oh god. What did he do to--?
Don't you fucking die, Daniel!

She pushes angrily at his body, which causes the blood pooled in the table to pour suddenly into the bucket below.

Daniel's eyes flutter open. He recognizes Dakota. He moves his lips to speak. Dakota leans closer.

DANIEL

Aubrey.

DAKOTA

(crying)

No!

DANIEL

Tell her. I love her.

As Dakota weeps over Daniel's body, she senses something coming up from behind.

She turns just as...

Looming over her: The faded blue baseball cap...the face that looks perpetually shadowed and distorted...malevolent blue eyes glowing.

Dakota screams...and in one deft twist, the Blue Man grabs and disconnects her artificial hand, her only advantage. She cries out in pain as he rips the titanium hand from her arm.

The hand clatters to the floor, trailing its wires.

A suspended beat: Dakota looks into the face of the Blue Man, and the shadow from which the malevolent eyes glare. But the shadow, we now see, is only a blue nylon stocking, distorting the features of the face.

And then a loud crack as the Blue Man swings an artificial arm into Dakota's head. She crumples to the floor, unconscious.

The Blue Man drops the artificial arm. Gripping his own handless, bleeding arm, he bellows his pain loud enough to wake the dead.

He stares down at Dakota for a moment, then savagely kicks her in the face with his cowboy boot.

Breathing heavily and growling in pain, the Blue Man thrashes through the hanging limbs and fills a cup of water at a sink.

He lifts the blue nylon enough to pop some pain pills in his mouth. He gulps the water.

Now he moves back through the hanging limbs and drops to his knees in front of Dakota.

He pats her body along the sides. Then finds something in her pocket.

He pulls out his severed hand, still in a now-blood-filled blue glove.

THE BLUE MAN

You...fucking...bitch!

He kicks her one more time.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BLUE MAN'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

The kitchen sink has been filled with ice. The severed, now gloveless, hand is covered in ice.

Through the ice, we can see the thick hair, matted with blood, that covers the fingers and the back of the hand. And a familiar-looking gold ring with a blue stone.

On the kitchen counter is an empty, overturned blue bottle of Blue Parrot Gin.

Alongside that...a needle and thread.

Now we hear a one-fingered melody being pecked out on a piano.

Moving down a hallway: Drips of blood on threadbare Oriental rugs lead us closer to the one-fingered melody. Past the legs of tables, chairs...

Past the discarded blue baseball cap...past the blue nylon stocking...

Alongside the melody now: soft moaning. Haunting. The cries of a lost soul.

Still following the trail of blood, we reach:

The front parlor: The piano is louder here. The sturdy legs of hundred-year-old furniture. Then the massive wooden legs of a grand piano. And finally:

A booted foot on the silver *forte* pedal, pumping down one last time and holding there...

As the melody ends in a dozen keys hit at once. The chord rolls like thunder.

Now we see: Sitting on the piano bench, Aubrey's piano teacher, Mr. Norquist.

Oblivious to the pain, he smashes his bloody stump against the piano keys again and again.

And then quite abruptly, he stands up.

He reels, holding the edge of the piano to steady himself.

Then he staggers off.

In the kitchen: Norquist cranks on the water, the hot water. He melts all the ice in the sink.

Then he picks up his severed hand. He positions it on the counter. He tries to line up his bloody stump with it. He jabs the needle into his wrist, but can't bear the pain. He howls in anger.

Now he tries to pull the ring off the finger, but he can't do it with only one hand.

Bellowing in anger, Norquist drops the hand on the countertop.

He picks up the empty gin bottle by its neck. He smashes it against the counter.

He positions the jagged edges of the blue glass just above the knuckles of the severed hand.

He grinds the glass into the hand, then pounds it, pulverizing the flesh. Gore flies all over the counter.

The ring falls to the floor and rolls to a stop under the toe of his boot.

Norquist picks up the ring. And we get a good look at it. It has the same blue glass and gold treble clef on the trophies in Aubrey's and Jennifer's rooms. An award from the Young Artist's competition. **Y.A. 1988**

With blood as a lubricant, Norquist manages to slide the ring on a finger of his remaining hand.

He looks down at the ring, a small satisfaction.

He scrapes the pieces of his severed hand into the sink. Then reaches out and flips an electrical switch. The garbage disposal.

Using a dish brush, Norquist jams the pieces of his hand into the disposal. The grinding sound goes on and on and on...

INT. CELLAR -- CONTINUOUS

Lashed to the leg of the autopsy table in a sitting position, her nose bleeding, Dakota grows alert at the persistent sound of the garbage disposal.

Whimpering, her breath coming fast and erratic, she pulls against her bonds, managing to shift the heavy steel table a fraction of an inch but no more, which causes more of Daniel's blood to pour into the bucket.

The garbage disposal continues on, grinding away.

She coughs again. Clods of dirt drop from her mouth.

Dakota surveys her predicament, trying to stay calm. She turns as far as she can in each direction.

Nothing useful is within reach. She looks up.

The blue glass blade that Aubrey managed to steal during her captivity is wedged under one of the supports for the table. It is smudged with dried bloody fingerprints.

Dakota, with great effort, manages to climb to her feet while her hands are still tied to the table leg.

Under the table: We see Dakota's fingers straining to reach the blade.

DAKOTA

Come on. Come on, goddammit!

INT. KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

One last finger sticks up from the drain, spinning wildly, the disposal unable to catch it and finish the job.

Norquist reaches out and turns off the switch. His stump is wrapped in a bloodied towel.

INT. CELLAR -- MOMENTS LATER

Sitting down again, still lashed to the table leg, Dakota tenses at the sound of unsure footsteps descending the stairs.

Norquist staggers through the hanging limbs with a huge, brutal and bizarre-looking blue-glass weapon in his remaining hand.

NORQUIST

Why did you come back? You should be dead by now? Why aren't you dead?

Dakota starts to hyperventilate, choking on her sobs, spitting out dirt, struggling for breath.

NORQUIST (CONT'D)

I fucking buried you! How did you get out? How do you keep getting away from me? Now I have to fucking do it all over again!

Raising the blade to strike, Norquist advances on Dakota. Dakota cringes, sobbing, screaming. She closes her eyes, waiting for the deathblow.

But just as Norquist moves in, we see that she holds the blue-glass knife she was trying to reach in her hand.

Dakota finds a reserve of strength and rolls out of the path of Norquist's weapon. She was only pretending to still be tied up.

DAKOTA

Don't come any closer.

But he lunges for her again. She twists her body enough to avoid his knife. And then crawls under the table to avoid his next strike.

From here, Dakota slashes at Norquist's right leg. But instead of soft flesh, her blade keeps hitting something hard, ripping his pant leg to expose: an artificial leg. Norquist growls.

Dakota rolls out from the other side of the table, and manages to pull herself to her feet by the time Norquist gets to her. She chokes for breath, spitting out more dirt.

Then, as Norquist lunges for her again, Dakota slams her artificial foot into his artificial leg, knocking him off balance. He drops his weapon, which shatters into a thousand pieces on the concrete floor.

Dakota seizes her opportunity. She drives the glass blade into his chest, pulls it out. He looks shocked. She drives the blade into his eye, pulls it out; drives it into his groin, pulls it out; drives it into his neck. And leaves it.

Norquist pirouettes as he tries to get the blade out of his neck. Blood is spurting everywhere.

Dakota steps back and watches as Norquist staggers through the thicket of artificial limbs, reaching for them, pulling them down as he slowly falls.

Norquist lands on his back among the fallen limbs. After a few violent spasms he grows still.

A puddle of blood wells out from Norquist's body.

With a sob of relief, Dakota drops to her knees and picks up her titanium hand from the floor.

Then gasping for breath, she coughs up more dirt. She staggers up the stairs, holding onto anything she can for support.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST -- VARIOUS ANGLES -- NIGHT

Her titanium hand reattached...barely breathing now...a shovel in her hand. Dakota limps along a path, dragging her almost useless artificial leg, following the beam of Norquist's flashlight.

Sheet lightning on the far horizon. Muffled thunder miles away. The storm has passed. Dakota stops, listens.

In the distance: the distinctive call of a hoot owl. A gurgling stream.

Dakota continues on, following her intuition.

The hoot owl. Watching from his perch in the same hollow of the same twisted tree growing from the same bank of the same stream from Dakota's vision in the mirror. The owl cocks his head.

Her breaths coming shorter and fewer and farther between, Dakota stumbles into this clearing and looking around, realizes she's reached her destination.

Choking and barely alive, Dakota starts to dig, growing weaker with every shovelful of earth.

A series of dissolves...the hole gets deeper. Dakota keeps to her task, weakening...and weakening.

Then suddenly, she stops. She gasps for air, and this time draws an almost full breath.

The glass top of the coffin has cracked in a hundred places, sifting dirt into the chamber of the coffin.

Using all her strength, Dakota smashes the glass top of the coffin with her artificial hand.

The glass shatters, revealing Aubrey's face, lifeless.

Working frantically now, Dakota smashes the rest of the glass top and then drags Aubrey's body as far out of the grave as she can.

Dakota puts her lips to Aubrey's and fills her lungs with air. Again. And again. Listening between, checking for a heartbeat. Then Aubrey chokes and seizes a breath on her own.

Dakota cries and laughs, falling against her twin sister in total exhaustion.

DAKOTA

We're going to be okay now. Everything
is going to be all right.

She cradles Aubrey, rocking her gently back and forth.

AUBREY (V.O.)

She had always felt like half a person--
half a person with half a soul.

Dakota brushes dirt from the Aubrey's face. Aubrey smiles weakly up at her.

AUBREY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Sometimes if she dreamed hard enough,
she could bring the two halves
together. But she always woke to the
same feelings of loneliness and loss.
...But she always woke to the same
feelings of loneliness and loss.
...But she always woke to the same...
(fading under)

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FLEMING HOUSE -- EVENING

A summer night. A light at Aubrey's window.

The sound of fingers hunt-pecking at a computer keyboard.

INT. AUBREY'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Sitting at her desk, Aubrey/Dakota stops typing and stares at the laptop screen for a moment.

She absently chews the nail of her left index finger.

Then she starts typing again, even faster.

A mysterious, devious smile forms at her lips as she works.

We begin to roam around the room; everything seems normal. The sound of the typing continues.

With a satisfied meow, Mitts the Cat pokes his fat well-fed body around the mirrored door of the closet. The door keeps moving, creaking open wider and wider, very slowly until...

Aubrey/Dakota's reflection can be seen, sitting at her desk.

Catching this brief glimpse of herself, Aubrey/Dakota screams and leaps to her feet, scared out of her wits. Then, after a beat, laughing that she has frightened herself.

The mirror keeps moving slowly and...

Is it possible that we see...or do we only think we see:
That Aubrey/Dakota has two hands...both intact?
That her two bare feet...are also both whole?

Then the mirror angles Aubrey/Dakota out of view, and:

For an even briefer moment we see another reflection: Standing in shadows at the far corner of Aubrey's bedroom, the Blue Man, gripping one of his blue-glass weapons...

CUT TO BLACK:

The End