

FADE IN:

EXT. DEAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It's the kind of two-story home that screams rich suburbia. Tall, wide, on a roomy plot of land.

Music thumps inside. All the lights are on.

Following KRIS (17, next-door cute) who enters the front door and into the party--

INT. DEAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Clusters of TEENS are immersed in their cliquish school talk. Everyone has a longneck or a plastic cup in their hands.

A few TEENS smile and nod at Kris in hello as she passes by, on her way toward the kitchen.

TEEN GIRL
Hey Kris!

KRIS
Hey. Where's Dean?

TEEN GIRL
Try the den!

Kris nods and continues into

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Lots of beer on the counters. A teen COUPLE kissing by the fridge.

Kris sees a large jar half-filled with crumpled bills on a counter in the corner. She adds some cash to the jar, grabs a beer and moves to

INT. FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kris passes into this darker room where the rest of the party is gathered.

Nearby, NANCY (18, petite, kind of wallflower) leans against a wall, iPod headphones in her ears, beer bottle in hand. She's here but she's not social. There's one in every class.

Yet another group is playing and watching Guitar Hero (or some other rhythm game) on the HDTV.

Kris steps further in to see the star player of the game:

DEAN (18, clean-and-preppy) who's not even watching the screen. He's just rocking out. Yet he's nailing every note.

Kris smiles and starts to approach Dean but then notices Dean's opponent:

JESSE (18, wild hair, coiled, anxious) intensely concentrating on the game.

Kris backs off. The song ends. Scores totaled. Dean wins.

JESSE

What do you do, sleep with this thing?

DEAN

Who says I sleep?
(to crowd)
I'm out. Who's up?

Another student, QUENTIN (18, boyish energy, all smiles) steps up to the guitar.

QUENTIN

Dude I'll play Jesse.

JESSE

Bring it.

Dean steps away and then locks eyes with Kris as the crowd fills in behind him.

DEAN

You made it! Good to see you.

KRIS

Dean, patron saint of parties.

They hug.

KRIS (CONT'D)

Where you keepin' the good stuff?

Dean smiles.

DEAN

C'mon.

He leads her away. Kris gladly follows.

Back at the big-screen TV, Jesse looks over his shoulder and sees the two of them. His smile vanishes.

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Dean digs into an ice-filled cooler of imported beer and wine coolers.

DEAN
You're a wine cooler girl aren't you.

KRIS
Guilty as charged. Where's your beer?

DEAN
Oh I'm not drinking.

Dean fidgets. Kris picks up on it and softens.

KRIS
You okay?

DEAN
Yeah. Just, I got stressed out over finals and all that. So Dad sent me to see a shrink, to 'help with anxiety.' And it just, I dunno, it's weird.

KRIS
I'll bet. I'm sorry.

DEAN
(changing topics)
So, is it cool that Jess is here?

KRIS
Yeah, no it's cool.

DEAN
I didn't know if you two were back together or not.

KRIS
We broke up.

DEAN
A lot of that happening, with graduation coming up.

Kris grins suddenly, and pulls out a folded letter from her small purse.

KRIS
Speaking of.

DEAN
Is it-- is this it?

She nods as he takes the letter and unfolds it.

DEAN (CONT'D)
NYU... Kris, you got in!

Just outside the laundry area a passing TEEN GIRL overhears and answers with a "WOOOO!"

TEEN GIRL
Hey hey, Kris is goin' to New York!

INT. DEN - CONTINUOUS

Everyone in the room raises their cup or bottle in cheers, smiling and whooping...

Except Jesse.

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dean smiles sheepishly in a "Sorry it's public now" way. Then: CRASH. Two punch-drunk GIRLS giggle over a broken beer bottle in the hall, in view of the door to the laundry room.

Dean starts that way, Kris stops him.

KRIS
I got it, you go be host.

EXT. SIDE YARD - LATER

Kris steps out to this narrow space where the trash cans are parked on the side of the house. She's alone here. The music sounds off-kilter and muted now. A mercury-vapor light buzzes overhead like an angry wasp.

She dumps the last of the broken glass in the trash with a dustpan... but then a FIGURE appears behind her as she turns around and Kris nearly bumps into--

Jesse. Holding her acceptance letter.

JESSE
So. This is why you broke up with me?

KRIS
Jesse...

JESSE
You could've told me.

KRIS
I did. I said I was on the waitlist, and if I got in, obviously I was gonna go.

JESSE
Yeah. I get that.

KRIS
(softly)
Yeah?

JESSE
I just don't get why it means we gotta break up. We could make this work. Couldn't we?

KRIS
Could we maybe just enjoy the party tonight, as friends? Please?

Jesse lets out a breath. Unsatisfied.

JESSE
Sure. "Friends." Great.

He holds up his beer and takes a swig.

JESSE (CONT'D)
To friendship.

Jesse walks back inside, leaving Kris alone.

EXT. DEAN'S BACK YARD - NIGHT

A rear view of the house, later in the night. Back here, a pool is enclosed in an atrium.

INT. POOL ATRIUM - CONTINUOUS

TEENS in swimsuits lounge on innertubes or against the edges of the pool. They've partied and now they're crashing hard.

This seems where the party has moved, what's left of it.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Kris walks through the room with a kitchen bag, picking up plastic cups. A couple of TEENS are fast asleep on the sofa.

A loud THUMP startles her. She looks around... No one else heard it.

Beat. THUMP.

Kris zeroes in on the noise: the back hall.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

She steps in, checking left and right.

KRIS
(hushed)
Hello?

At the end of the hall, a set of stairs rise around a corner.

Catching sight of DEAN'S LEGS disappearing around the corner up the stairs, as if he were being dragged while unconscious.

Thump, thump, thump.

Kris frowns. She follows.

AT THE STAIRS, she looks up to the second floor.

No sign of Dean. But shadows play on the wall in the dark.

KRIS (CONT'D)
Dean, you okay?

Kris ascends.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - CONTINUOUS

There are faint sounds of the party downstairs, but the upstairs is quiet and deserted.

Dean's bedroom door closes-- not quite all the way.

Kris looks at the thick-carpet here.

TWO PARALLEL LINES form a path into Dean's room, like the heels of shoes dragged.

The wind picks up. A draft. Kris pushes Dean's door open...

INT. DEAN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Empty energy drink cans rattle when she pushes the door fully open. His bed has been stripped of its sheets and a pile of books and games cover its surface. You can't sleep there.

The small balcony door from his room hangs open. Kris hears:

DEAN (O.S.)
(sotto)
No, no...

Kris looks toward the balcony to see the silhouette of a figure standing outside the doors.

She steps closer to see it's DEAN. His eyes closed. His breathing is shallow; panicked.

KRIS
Dean, wake up.

Dean suddenly stops breathing--

Four parallel slashes RIP through Dean's shirt, as if by an invisible bladed weapon--

His eyes snap open and he stares right at Kris, half-whispering a warning as his last words:

DEAN
He's back--

Some invisible force violently YANKS him backward off the balcony as if he were a rag doll--

INT. ATRIUM BELOW - CONTINUOUS

--smashing through GLASS into the pool room as the Teens in the pool scream--

Glass and blood splashing everywhere--

TITLE SEQUENCE. (Continued through following scene.)

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A hilly plot freckled with yesterday's snow.

A crowd of maybe a hundred MOURNERS sit in rows of fold-out chairs under an open-air tent at a gravesite. The MINISTER stands in front of the open grave, speaking to the group.

Everyone is bundled up, dressed in black.

MINISTER (O.S.)

And so we send Dean to his final resting place, knowing he ascends to the world beyond. The world of eternal dream.

GLIDING past the faces of STUDENTS, among them ones we recognize: Quentin, Jesse, Nancy, one or two others from the house party. Nancy digs at dried paint under her nails, her eyes wet. Quentin steals a glance at her, concerned.

Beside them, their PARENTS. Stoic. Some even seem angry.

MINISTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

And in that world, he will be in the light and the presence of the Lord.

ARRIVING at Kris. The one person in the crowd who looks frightened and nervous.

MINISTER (CONT'D)

Join me in prayer now, to send him on this final journey with grace.

As the Minister speaks, a LITTLE GIRL (maybe 5 years old) in a blue dress with lace collar steps forward, a wilting flower in her hands. The Minister and others seem to ignore her.

Kris looks around-- whose girl is this?-- Then back at the girl who drops the flower into the open grave...

When she turns back around, she reveals FOUR SLASHES down the front of her dress. Just like Dean's wound.

Kris sees it. She stands up.

The Girl looks up at Kris when

A CHARRED, BURNED HAND reaches from the open grave and GRABS the Girl's leg--

EXT. GRAVESITE SERVICE (REALITY) - CONTINUOUS

Kris snaps awake in her seat. The mourners are moving indoors. Her mother NORA has a hand on Kris's shoulder.

NORA

Come on. We're going inside.

Kris nods, adjusting, then glances back at the open grave.

No sign of the little girl.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

The regalia for the wake of a child: Log book, tons of flowers, soothing music, and a wall of PHOTOS chronicling Dean at various ages.

A banner over the collage reads "IN MEMORIAM."

Dean's PARENTS hold onto each other like they were passengers on the Titanic waiting for a life raft.

Quentin and his father Alan are approached by Nancy and her mother, Gwen.

GWEN

Alan. Jerry asked if we'd stay and have a drink with him.

ALAN

Yeah. Sure. Of course.

(to Quentin)

Can you catch a ride home with someone?

QUENTIN

Yeah, Dad.

The two parents leave their two kids behind.

Nancy and Quentin exchange glances. It's a little awkward.

QUENTIN/NANCY

(together)

Hey.

The awkward moment is broken as Nancy moves on. Quentin watches her go.

Across the room: Kris ventures to the photo collection.

THE PHOTOS show Dean's active young life:

- At a soccer game,
- In a stage play in middle school,
- On vacation with his parents at some touristy locale...

Kris smiles even as she starts to tear up. Then she stops cold when her eyes lock onto one photo.

THE PHOTO is of a very young Dean, maybe 5 or 6, smiling for the camera at a playground.

It's not Dean that's the unnerving element, but off to the side, by a swing set--

THE LITTLE GIRL from Kris's daydream. Wearing the exact same dress. She's real, and she's Dean's age. Those eyes, that hair, it's clearer now... This has to be YOUNG KRIS.

Kris leans in closer, suddenly creeped out, when Jesse approaches. It's not a jump scare but Kris is startled nonetheless.

JESSE

Hey hey, it's me. Sorry.

Kris lets out a nervous breath.

KRIS

Yeah.

JESSE

Wow, is that you with Dean?

KRIS

I guess... I don't even remember knowing Dean back then.

(then)

I'm a mess, God I was right there when it happened.

JESSE

Hey, it's okay...

Jesse hugs her. She hugs back. Sniffs. Then says while they're still close:

KRIS

Dean said something right before he died.

Jesse pulls back to face her.

JESSE

...What?

KRIS

He looked at me and said, "He's back." Does that mean anything to you?

JESSE

No.

(beat)

I still can't believe he killed himself.

Kris hesitates. Reluctant.

KRIS

Jess, he didn't jump. I saw it. And before he--

(searching for word)

Before he fell, I saw these cuts on his chest.

NANCY (O.S.)

Four slashes?

Kris and Jesse turn to see NANCY nearby.

Jesse frowns.

JESSE

Do you mind? We're having a private conversation here.

Nancy pauses, anxious to ask Kris more, but moves off under Jesse's glare. Jesse gets close to Kris.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Listen. It was dark. You'd had like an hour of sleep. Your eyes were probably playing tricks on you.

KRIS

Yeah. Probably.

She's unconvinced. Her gaze returns to THE PHOTO on the wall.

INT. KRIS'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kris digs through a low bookshelf filled with photo albums.

She grabs one and sits down, surrounded by albums she's already flipped through.

Opening this new one to reveal

CHILD PHOTOS of Kris as a little girl. The same girl from the photo on Dean's wall.

She gets just two pages in, and the next spread is EMPTY. No photos at all.

Kris frowns. Flips the page.

Nothing here either. Or the next one. Just empty slits where photos should go.

Nearby sits Kris's dog RUFUS, a rescue mutt wagging his tail at her, curious.

Kris's mother emerges from the kitchen.

NORA

Let's keep Rufus inside at night. A skunk sprayed the Jansens' dog last week.

KRIS

Okay, fine mom.

NORA

What are you doing with our photo albums?

KRIS

Hey, where are the photos of me when I was five? They're not here.

NORA

Oh, probably packed away, over the garage. Why?

KRIS

Just looking... I saw one at Dean's funeral with me in it, but I don't remember being around Dean when I was that young.

Nora frowns. This has tripped some silent alarm.

NORA

Maybe it was a birthday party. C'mon, go wash up. Let's eat.

Kris studies her mother a beat before leaving.

INT. KRIS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kris lies in bed. Eyes open, focused on her door.

The light from the hall finally goes out. Mom's in bed.

Kris pulls back the covers: She's still dressed. She gets up.

INT. GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Kris opens the door and turns on the light. She grips a large flashlight in her hands.

A car partially blocks the garage floorspace, and the walls are lined with boxes and paper bags of junk.

Kris struggles with the pull-string to the trap door in the ceiling.

It finally gives way and creaks open.

A set of wooden steps unfolds. Kris goes up into

INT. CRAWLSPACE - CONTINUOUS

The only light in here comes from a single naked bulb high in the center of the storage space.

Kris can't stand fully upright without hitting a support beam. The space is crammed with boxes of more junk, allowing a narrow aisle down the middle.

Kris's flashlight shines into the corners and finds a filebox labeled KRIS - SECOND GRADE.

She looks around finding a FIRST GRADE box and then one at the far end that has no label. Instead, it's SEALED with packing tape.

Kris uses her nail to tear the tape and opens the box.

INSIDE: A photo of Kris at age 5. More photos loose in the box. Also, a glassy-eyed doll with a limp pullstring. And a stash of her early clothes including...

A blue dress with a lace collar. Same as Little Kris's.

Kris holds the dress up, turns it over... to find FOUR SLASHES in its fabric, just like her dream.

The doll's pullstring spools up and in a music-box tune, a little girl sings:

DOLL (V.O.)
One, two, Freddy's coming for you.

Kris picks up the doll, disturbed. On its own, the doll's HEAD TURNS TOWARD KRIS, its face now a painted scowl--

Kris drops it in horror--

Behind her: A set of boxes in shadow is crowned by a FEDORA. The fedora rises to reveal the silhouette of a HEAD and then the sweater-wearing TORSO of a man--

Kris turns and SCREAMS in shock at the sight of him--

--tripping backwards and spilling into some boxes--

The boxes topple, scattering GARDENING TOOLS onto the floor ahead of her--

Kris tries to get up but she can't because--

HER FOOT has slipped into a knothole in the wood plank... yet the hole is barely wider than her ankle. How her foot fell in, or how she could pull it out now, is impossible.

TIGHT ON: A BURNED HAND with bone exposed at the knuckle, as it reaches for something among the spilled tools...

THE GLOVE.

Like a gardening glove, but with a set of razor-sharp blades welded onto the back of the hand.

Kris tries to crab-crawl away from the Man in the room, but she's still stuck.

Half in shadow, his face shrouded by the brim of his hat, the Man says in a raspy, guttural voice:

FREDDY
Remember me?

The blades on the glove GLINT as it's raised up--

Kris SCREAMS and he lunges right at her--

INT. KRIS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

--and she sits straight up awake in her bed, her scream from her nightmare finishing here.

The hall light switches on and her mother Nora comes to her door.

NORA
Kris? You okay?

Kris catches her breath.

KRIS
Yeah mom, just a... just a bad
dream.

NORA
You want me to make you some hot
cocoa? That used to do the trick.

KRIS
I'm not eight anymore, mom.

NORA
All right then.

Nora starts to shut the door when--

KRIS
(sounding eight)
Wait mom! ...Can I have it with
marshmallows?

Nora smiles that mother's knowing smile and heads downstairs.

Beat. Kris absently rubs her ankle--

But then she catches herself doing it. Her ankle is tender to
the touch. Kris then reaches out and lifts a small CRUCIFIX
on a necklace dangling from her bedpost.

She holds onto it, her memory triggering the nursery rhyme...

KRIS (CONT'D)
Five, six...

A bell RINGS.

EXT. SPRINGWOOD HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

Establishing. Students pour into the building entrances as
school is back in session.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALL - MORNING

Nancy approaches her locker, spins her combo lock.

She's dressed inconspicuously. Pretty-girl image is not her
priority. Getting out of town after graduation certainly is.

She opens the locker...

INSIDE, small matte paintings for art class, each painting a
rich, vibrant landscape of some dream-like destination.

The opposite of what you'd think a girl like Nancy would paint.

QUENTIN (O.S.)

That's some beautiful work. That
for art class?

Nancy turns and notices Quentin standing nearby. She shuts her locker door. As if to say: Don't look.

NANCY

No. Those are my rejects.

QUENTIN

Your rejects would be my
masterpieces.

Nancy notices a small stack of flyers in his hands.

NANCY

What do you got?

QUENTIN

I'm doing a podcast tonight, but
it's just for those of us who were,
you know, at the party. Sort of a
group therapy thing, my number's on
there so you can conference in.

He hands her one. The headline-- "INSOMNIA RADIO."

NANCY

Oh. Yeah, cool.

QUENTIN

Seriously? That's the first
positive reaction I've had. People
seem to think I'm a freak.

NANCY

No, people need to talk about it.
Besides, I got the freak market
cornered.

QUENTIN

Well, then I'm in good company.

Nancy grins at Quentin. He's cracked her armor. He grins back; "Yes, I meant it."

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

History class. The round-faced TEACHER drones on at the head of the class, the chalkboard behind him with homework assignments listed.

HISTORY TEACHER
But in the seventeenth century,
peasants couldn't own weapons.

Finding Kris at her desk among the students, by a window.

The sun on her arm and neck is warming her. Making her drowsy. Her eyes get heavy...

She blinks awake. Rubs them.

HISTORY TEACHER (CONT'D)
Open your books and read pages
eighty-four to ninety-six...

Kris flips open her book.

INSERT: TEXTBOOK.

Two illustrations of strange, ancient hardware tools fill pages 84-85.

HISTORY TEACHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
The bloodiest invasion of this
region was fought with improvised
weapons made from common tools.

Flipping to the next spread... Another set of wicked devices. Always with a sharp edge or blade.

KRIS flips again, more concerned now--

INSERT: TEXTBOOK.

--stopping at a page with a diagram of THE GLOVE.

KRIS sucks in a breath, looks up and--

The classroom has changed. It now looks like a small preschool classroom, modified from a living area in a house.

Blankets instead of desks. Only Kris's desk remains.

Immediately, Kris knows what's happened. She snaps her eyes shut and whispers to herself:

KRIS
Wake up, wake up, wake up--

SLAM, a deep sound like a heavy book dropped--

Kris opens her eyes again but now

THE WHOLE ROOM is charred and smoldering as if a fire had devoured it moments before.

Where the Teacher was, now FREDDY stands at the charcoal desk, shrouded in shadow.

Behind him, a crude chalk drawing on the damaged board: A stick-figure girl with X's for eyes and red chalk in lines on her dress. The name KRIS written above it.

FREDDY

Time for a new lesson, Kris.

Kris panics and sprints for the door--

INT. IDENTICAL CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Finding herself entering back INTO a clone of the classroom.

Kris looks back into the first room just as FREDDY grabs her by the hair and pulls her all the way into the room.

Kris struggles. Freddy pins her down.

The air is thick with ash, and the light never seems to fall on Freddy's face. He's still this enigmatic figure.

Short on breath, panicked, Kris looks up at Freddy.

KRIS

Who-- are-- you?

FREDDY

An old friend.

The back of his gloved hand goes to stroke her cheek. Kris recoils.

Freddy FLICKS the blades by her nose, slicing a lock of her hair--

Kris squirms away from it, cutting more of her hair--

Freddy scrapes them along the floor, right for her face--

Sound of some book SLAMMING as if dropped and--

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Kris sits up at her desk, SCREAMING.

She has the attention of everyone in class, and the History Teacher, who picks his book up from his desk. All heads are turned toward her.

HISTORY TEACHER
Did I wake you, Miss Fowles?

Kris tries to gain her composure. She's shaking like a leaf.

KRIS
I... I'm sorry...

HISTORY TEACHER
Everyone, heads down and eyes on
your books. C'mon.

The students obey, not wanting to get in trouble.

Kris then looks down at her own history book.

A lock of her hair rests on the pages.

Kris checks her hair and finds where it had been cut, just like in the dream.

The bell RINGS.

Kris packs up her things. Three rows over, NANCY watches, as she hefts her backpack.

As the room empties, she approaches Kris.

NANCY
Seems like it's all a bad dream.

Kris whips around to face Nancy.

KRIS
What? What did you--?

NANCY
Being back at school, after what
happened to Dean...

KRIS
Oh. I guess so.

NANCY
What did you think I meant?

Kris doesn't know how to start.

KRIS
Nothing. Nothing.

Kris moves off, staring at the lock of hair in her hand...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALL - LATER

Kris stands at her locker and puts her books away.

She grabs a can of some energy drink, cracks the top, and takes a long swig to jolt her awake.

As she sets it back in her locker, Jesse steps in.

JESSE
Hey babe, I need to talk to you.

KRIS
Not now, Jess. I don't have time.

Before she turns away, Jesse steps in front of her.

JESSE
Hey, this is serious. I want to talk about us. You and me.

Kris starts to move around him again.

KRIS
Not now.

JESSE
Jesus-- I don't get it, what did I do wrong?

KRIS
This isn't about you! Okay?!

Her tone and volume causes Jesse to bristle. Other kids are watching, as kids love melodrama. Jesse backs off, troubled.

The bell rings.

EXT. ELM STREET - DAY

Tight on the street sign: "ELM ST."

Drifting off to catch sight of Kris driving home.

EXT. KRIS'S HOUSE - DAY

Kris heads to her door. At the front door Rufus barks excitedly. Kris fumbles with her keys--

KRIS
Okay Rufus, hang on--

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Kris enters from the kitchen and grabs a sack of dry dog food by the door. Rufus wags his tail inside.

Before she takes the food in, she looks up...

The string for the trap door to the crawlspace hangs limply over the hood of her mother's car.

Kris looks around the way someone does when they're about to do something for which they don't want to get caught, then--

She reaches up for the string and pulls on the trap door.

The springs creak as she gets a view of the attic space. Kris begins to reach for the collapsed ladder when a door elsewhere in the house shuts, and:

NORA (O.S.)
Kris, you home?

Kris lets the trapdoor shut and she picks up the dog food. Her mother meets her at the threshold to the kitchen.

NORA (CONT'D)
Hey. I got a red eye tonight, so
we're gonna go over some ground
rules before I leave.

FOLLOWING Nora and Kris as Nora moves to

INT. KRIS'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nora's travel bag stands upright near the front door. She checks she has everything she needs. Kris has dropped off the food in the kitchen now.

NORA
Now, I'll be back on Thursday.
Meantime you aren't to leave this
house except to go to school, and
no one comes over. You hear me?

KRIS
I hear you.

NORA
I mean it. The neighbors know to
look for any cars parked out front.
(softer)
Try and get some sleep, okay?

Nora starts out the front door.

KRIS
I'll try.

Kris watches from the front windows as Nora gets to her car in the driveway. As soon as Nora shuts her car door, Kris lets the curtain fall back into place and--

INT. CRAWLSPACE - NIGHT

From the darkness, light spills in as the trap door opens up.

We're inside the dark storage space looking toward the steps as Kris climbs up.

She pulls the switch for the light and looks around.

Moving quickly to the back of the storage area... Past the SECOND GRADE box and the other ones...

The spot where she found the sealed box is EMPTY. Nothing is there.

But Kris notices: the dust-carved footprint of a box. Something was here, right here. Now it's gone.

Off Kris's look of concern...

INT. KRIS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kris sits at her computer desk. A newspaper lays out on the desk's surface.

Close on: Dean's obituary. The article describes Dean growing up. "...in Springwood since he was two years old..."

Accompanying the story is a PHOTO of Dean as a little boy. He smiles for the camera. The shot was taken outdoors somewhere.

Kris rubs her eyes. Then returns to reviewing the article.

THE PHOTO now shows little Dean crying and FREDDY can be seen just behind him, the photo cropped right at Freddy's neck so we can't see his head.

A faint SCRATCHING sound causes Kris to look around the room...

She notices her window is slightly cracked open... The sound is coming from that direction...

Kris steps to the window and shuts it quickly--

Takes a breath of relief when

BOOM-- A FIGURE at the window on the ledge outside, his hand against the glass-- Kris YELPING--

It's JESSE.

JESSE

Hey! Let me in before I fall.

Beat. Kris doesn't immediately go to the latch.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Come on!

She looks back at the article--

THE PHOTO is as it was before. Little Dean smiles at us.

Kris lets out a breath and opens the window for Jesse.

KRIS

What the hell are you doing here?

JESSE

We gotta talk.

Kris peers out her window for signs of any snooping neighbors.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Don't worry, I parked down the block.

Jesse settles down in her desk chair.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Look, I don't like how we left things at school. It's been eating at me.

Kris goes and sits on the edge of her bed.

KRIS

Don't worry about it, I've just--
I've had a lot on my mind.

Her voice trembles. Jesse sits up.

JESSE

Are you okay?

Kris takes a deep breath.

KRIS

I've been having nightmares.
There's this man in them, I think
he's trying to kill me.

Jesse tenses, his focus drifts off Kris.

JESSE

Yeah. I've been having bad dreams,
too. Really bad.
(back on Kris)
But I mean, considering what
happened it's normal, right?

KRIS

These are different. The same man
is after me every time, with a
burned face and this weird glove
made of knives--

Jesse reacts. Off his look:

KRIS (CONT'D)

What.

JESSE

I've seen him too.

Now the tables have turned. Jesse takes a breath.

JESSE (CONT'D)

How are we dreaming about the same
person? Is that even possible?

KRIS

It's not just us. I think Nancy has
seen him too. It doesn't make
sense...

Kris starts crying. Sleep deprivation and nerves have finally
broken her down.

KRIS (CONT'D)

I don't wanna go to sleep, I'm
scared Jesse, I didn't do anything
wrong, why is he in my head?

Jesse immediately moves to her side, holds her.

JESSE

Hey, hey, shh shh it's gonna be
okay. I'm here.

Their noses touch. They both meet the final inch for a long
kiss. One kiss leads to another.

Hands find their way under shirts and blouses. The tension
and fear converts to raw passion.

Clothes peeling off, Kris pulling them both fully onto the
bed, it's what Jesse has wanted for months and what she wants
only right now.

Before they go all the way, Kris holds him back enough to
plead with wet eyes:

KRIS

Stay with me.

He moves to kiss her again.

INT. KRIS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The couple are under the covers, both sound asleep. Kris is
tucked up against Jesse.

In the distance, a dog BARKS.

Kris's eyes snap open. Oh god-- she'd fallen asleep.

Kris sits up, listening to the dog. Looks around.

All is normal.

She goes to the window.

On the lawn out back, RUFUS is in the corner, barking at
something unseen.

Part of the back yard has been landscaped as a garden with
stone path, large fountain, and two Greek-inspired statues.

Kris opens the window and calls out in that whisper-shout:

KRIS
Rufus! Shh!

Rufus keeps barking. Kris slips into sandals and a nightgown.

EXT. KRIS'S BACK YARD - MOMENTS LATER

Kris steps out the back door and calls to Rufus again.

KRIS
Roofy, get in here! Leave the skunk
alone!

Rufus tears off into the landscaped garden, shrouded in shadows.

KRIS (CONT'D)
(frustrated)
Shit. Damn dog.

Kris goes after Rufus, starting down the path.

The sound of Rufus YELPING in pain puts Kris in motion again--

KRIS (CONT'D)
Rufus!

She approaches a bend in the rock path toward the farthest corner of the lawn, passing between the two statues.

Kris TRIPS to the ground, catching herself before she busts a lip. Kris gets up again--

The statues are now facing her. Mouths open. Marble eyes blank and expressionless, like a shark's eyes.

Kris hears a small, weak WHIMPER of Rufus and turns away from the statues...

KRIS'S POV, rounding a tool shed, revealing Rufus on the ground, lying still, until it's clear he's a bloody mess.

KRIS (CONT'D)
(whispered)
Oh god--

She stumbles back, right into A FIGURE--

Turning around to see it's FREDDY, his glove wet with the dog's blood.

FREDDY
We were just playing.

ON KRIS, reacting--

She flees. PAST the now-smiling statues--

THE BACK DOOR to the house is in sight--

She looks over her shoulder--

Freddy smiles, casually walking for her, thirty yards back--

She keeps running, looking back again--

Still smiling but now he's ten yards away--

Kris gets to the door and tries the knob--

Freddy is suddenly right behind her grabbing for her--

Kris gets the door open and flings herself inside--

INT. PRESCHOOL HALL - NIGHT

She slams the door shut and leans against it, catching her breath. A beat later Kris becomes aware of her surroundings:

She's not home.

This is the interior of a home converted to a children's daycare or preschool. But something about the place is off.

The children's finger-paintings pinned to the bulletin board are a mix of typical happy stick figures and dark, disturbing images in red and black and green crayon.

From a classroom, a dozen FIVE YEAR-OLDS spill out, screaming like hyper little kids, running in all directions.

From the group, a LITTLE GIRL in a blue dress stops and looks up at Kris. This is her self-image, thirteen years ago. It's the same blue dress.

FREDDY (O.S.)
Hide and seeeeek...

The Little Girl looks back into the room, then urgently grabs Kris's hand.

LITTLE GIRL
(hushed)
Hurry. We have to hide.

CREEPY GIRLS (O.S.)
 One, two, Freddy's coming for
 you...

The Little Girl leads Kris down the hall...

Kris looks into the classroom as they pass the open door--

FREDDY stands with his back to the door, in a corner with his
 glove's blades resting on a chalkboard.

Nearby, a set of three little blonde CREEPY GIRLS jump rope
 (two spinning the rope for the third).

 CREEPY GIRLS (CONT'D)
 Three, four, better lock your
 door...

Kris is pulled away and down the hall, past other open doors.

There are no sign of other children now; they've all hidden.

 KRIS
 Wait, wait--

 CREEPY GIRLS (V.O.)
 (echoing)
 Five, six, grab your crucifix...

The Little Girl leads Kris down a set of stairs, into a
 basement room.

 CREEPY GIRLS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Seven, eight, gonna stay up late...
 Nine, ten, never sleep again.

The house gets darker as she goes.

 FREDDY (O.S.)
 Ready or not, here I come!

The Little Girl breaks from Kris as Kris looks up the stairs:

The door at the top of the stairs is framed in creases of
 light leaking in from the hall. Beyond, sounds of children
 SCREAMING but this time it's not the giggly hyper screams
 like before.

Then the light grows dark as a figure steps to the door on
 the other side.

Kris turns back to see the Girl in the blue dress crawl into
 an overturned cardboard box (the size of a TV box).

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)
In here, quick!

KRIS
Damn it Jesse, wake me up!

Boom-boom-boom, someone is coming down the stairs.

Kris crawls into the TV Box--

INT. NARROW TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Crawling through the cardboard walls.

But after a few feet the cardboard starts to resemble something darker and more metallic.

Ahead: the tunnel narrows. Getting tighter and tighter.

Kris looks over her shoulder--

Behind her: The silhouette of Freddy crawling after her, the sound of his bladed glove scraping.

Kris panics and keeps crawling--

The dark passage getting more cramped, but now--

Ahead: An opening. An end to the tunnel.

And beyond it seems to be a room. On the wall facing us, a cot-like BED with blanket and pillow is set against the wall, hanging impossibly.

Kris slows, noting something is off, and then she SLIDES as if falling straight down, onto--

INT. BASEMENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

--the bed in the corner of this underground room.

Cardboard boxes line one wall, and a large toy chest sits in another corner. A shelf is packed with children's games and small pillows. Everything has a thick coat of dust.

Kris gets off the bed and backs along one wall, looking up at the small air duct from which she fell.

No one else drops in. Kris takes in the room a bit more, her focus landing on

THE FEDORA resting on the toy chest.

Kris picks it up, aware she's seen it before but unable to know why it's familiar.

FREDDY (O.S.)
Your mother gave me that...

Kris whirls around-- No sign of Freddy. Stepping more into the center of the room, in search of the voice...

FREDDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
For when I worked out in the sun...

Whirling around again... But he's not there.

FREDDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
So I wouldn't burn my face.

Spinning around a third time and this time he's standing right there--

And now Freddy's face comes into full view. Raw, exposed muscle clings to his jaw-line like overlapping rubber bands. Eyes with no eyelids, ever staring. The teeth of a skull, with a gum-line pulled back so far even a smile is a sneer.

Kris GASPS--

A car alarm BLARES distantly, Freddy turns his head and--

INT. KRIS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kris suddenly sits up awake to the sound of a CAR ALARM outside and down the street. It stops after a second.

She catches her breath. Jesse is asleep next to her.

KRIS
(sotto)
Thanks a lot, asshole.

She nudges him. He rolls away a bit. She nudges him again. Jesse puts the pillow over his head.

Kris notices her hair is damp with sweat. She gets up.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kris looks at herself in the vanity mirror. Water running in the sink.

She bends down, splashes her face... straightens up again...

And it's still just her reflection in the mirror.
All is normal.

Kris pats her face with a towel and leaves.

INT. KRIS'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kris shuffles back into bed, getting under the covers, rolls over to cuddle with Jesse--

But it's FREDDY.

FREDDY

Found you.

Kris SCREAMS--

Freddy is on her in a flash--

INT. KRIS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Out of the dream world. Sleeping Kris is breathing shallowly, arms flailing.

It's enough to wake Jesse.

JESSE

Kris, whoa hey Kris--

He sits up and goes to shake her awake--

Blood soaks into the covers in a widening pool around Kris--

JESSE (CONT'D)

JESUS!

Jesse flings the covers down to reveal several deep cuts into her flesh, through the nightgown.

Kris thrashes and whimpers, still asleep. Jesse tries to hold her down, against the mattress. This only makes Kris (still in the throes of her nightmare) fight harder.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Kris! Wake up baby, wake up!

Kris bucks and another cut slices her arm near where Jesse is trying to hold her.

He lets go and tumbles to the foot of the bed just as--

Kris's body jerks upright. She remains asleep despite the violent motion.

Jesse gapes as Kris vertically levitates out of bed.

Her eyes shut, deep asleep still; arms hanging, legs kicking. Floating in midair. Gurgling on her own blood.

JESSE (CONT'D)
This is a dream, I'm dreaming
again, c'mon wake up--

Kris is SLAMMED, as if by an invisible force, against the ceiling. A sickening CRUNCH as her neck wrenches and her head hangs at an unnaturally skewed angle.

Jesse watches, frozen, as Kris's blood cascades down onto the bed below.

And then, a final act of brutality: Four deep parallel gashes appear in a quick arc down her front -- collarbone to pelvis.

Her eyes snap open, but they're blank. Her mouth gapes, but no sound emerges. She continues to bleed out.

Jesse gulps. He moves, slowly, toward Kris's floating body, his arms extended as though to pluck her out of the air...

Abruptly, Kris drops like a giant broken rag doll back onto the bed, splashing Jesse and the four walls with all the blood that had been pooling beneath her.

Jesse backs to a wall, horrified. He doesn't know whether to puke or run.

He goes with run. Almost sprints off in his boxers.

But before he leaves he grabs his jeans by the door--

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

--putting on his jeans as he makes for the front door--

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Moments later, Jesse bursts out of Kris's house, shirtless and shoeless.

Behind him, the house security alarm for the front door wails in a high-pitched tone for ten seconds then starts BLARING--

Jesse, already in a panic, runs down the sidewalk toward his bike half a block down.

It's the dead of night. Only a few street lights shine on Elm Street. But the alarm--

Over Jesse's shoulder we see porch and interior lights awakening--

And already a MAN in a bathrobe and a broom steps out onto his lawn--

Jesse makes a quick course correction and dives behind a parked minivan in a driveway.

But he moves too close to the garage of this home and trips the motion-activated light.

Jesse stays low and half-runs into the side-lawn corridor between the two houses.

EXT. BACK YARD - MOMENTS LATER

...Landing in a quiet one here, but wrenching his ankle in the process.

Jesse bites down to keep from howling in pain, then tries to walk it off in a tight circle, limping.

After a beat he pauses to listen to the advancing sirens.

With no other direction to go, Jesse feels trapped. He rakes his hands through his hair, then turns around to face the house whose back yard he's trespassed...

The house is dark save for one bedroom on the second floor.

Brief glimpse of NANCY passing by the thin curtains.

INT. NANCY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nancy stands staring at us, her head crooked to her side. She's dressed in a well-worn tank top and sweat pants, her iPod tucked into its waistband on her hip.

Music crackles out the earbuds, something heavy and full of adrenaline. Her hands are black with charcoal as she holds a large stick of it, rolling it around in her fingers.

The walls behind her are papered with amazing art and photography from the great masters.

Nancy adds a few new strokes, then steps back again.

Her hair flutters from a breeze that makes her shiver, and Nancy starts to turn toward the window when

JESSE'S HAND clamps over her mouth from behind--

JESSE

Shh Nancy it's Je--

Nancy freaks out before he can say another word. Her head jerks back and cracks Jesse's nose, hard. He falls back onto her bed, holding his nose.

Now Nancy sees who it is.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Ow...

She pops out her earbuds and lets down her guard.

NANCY

Jesse Braun, what the fuck are you doing?

(beat)

Is that blood?

She notices some has smeared onto her skin.

JESSE

Just listen to me, listen. I was with Kris, and then she-- she just suddenly...

He can't find the words, hysteria sets in as the immediate shock wears off. Before he can continue, Nancy gasps:

NANCY

Holy shit, this is Kris's blood? What did you do?

JESSE

(getting up)

Nothing! I didn't do anything! That's what I'm trying to tell you--

NANCY

Get away from me--

JESSE

Okay, okay. Just hear me out. Something is going on here.

NANCY
What happened to Kris, Jesse.

JESSE
(beat)
Someone killed her in her sleep.

Nancy's expression changes from guarded to vulnerable just like that; with that one statement.

NANCY
...What? What are you talking
about? Who killed her?

Jesse notices her work-in-progress and nods at it.

JESSE
Him.

REVEAL the art: four parallel SLASHES, like the ones that marred Dean's chest, and Freddy's GLOVE at the end, as if reaching into the canvas.

NANCY
This, is just...

JESSE
It's his mark. The man who stalks
you in your sleep, his flesh is all
burned and peeling...

Beat. Nancy is wrestling whether or not to say something.

NANCY
All I can remember is the song.

JESSE
What song.

Nancy half-sings the first lyric:

NANCY
One, two, Freddy's coming for you.

This registers with Jesse.

JESSE
Freddy... That's him. He's in all
our heads, Nancy.

Nancy shakes her head. She doesn't want to believe it.

NANCY
Jesse, how--

GWEN (O.S.)
Nancy? Who's in there?

A knock on Nancy's bedroom door. Her mother GWEN tries it but it's locked.

GWEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Open this right now! If you don't
I'm gonna unlock it.

Jesse makes for the window again, but before he leaves, he makes direct eye contact with Nancy:

JESSE
We gotta stop this.

NANCY
...How? How do you stop a dream?

JESSE
I don't know yet, just... Don't go
to sleep.

Gwen gets the door open, her eyes immediately finding the blood-soaked JESSE--

Jesse bails out the window at Gwen's SHRIEK.

EXT. ELM STREET - NIGHT

A squad car does its best to barricade one end of the block, likely some deputy who wants to be a big-city cop.

Down the block, Jesse makes a dash for his bike.

With a shaky hand he gets the key in the ignition--

KICKS it alive and peels out--

Jesse is in third gear by the time he passes the second driveway--

AHEAD, another squad car (half the local force)--

POLICE hear him coming and run onto the street, guns out--

Jesse really has nowhere to go, he skids and heads the other direction--

But an OFFICER yanks him off the bike before he can get enough momentum.

ANGRY OFFICER
Down! On the ground! Now!

Jesse lies face down like he's about to do push-ups.

AS HE'S BEING HANDCUFFED, Jesse stares at someone O.C.

LOW ANGLE: It's at Nancy, on the front porch with Gwen.

Plenty of other neighbors are here to rubberneck.

Jesse shouts as he's dragged off to the back of a car:

JESSE
I didn't kill her! It wasn't me!
(right at Nancy)
It wasn't me!

Gwen shakes her head in disapproval, clearly believing Jesse is guilty of something.

Beside her, Nancy-- horrified that Jesse speaks the truth.

INT. HOMICIDE OFFICES - NIGHT

Jesse sits cuffed to a bench in the hall of the station.
Kris's blood is still on his jeans and spatter on his face.

Jesse's MOTHER and FATHER arrive. Mom immediately chokes back a tearful reaction to the sight of her son. Frantic.

JESSE
Mom-- Dad--

JESSE'S FATHER
Don't talk to the police, you hear
me son? Roger is on his way, he'll
sort this out.

Jesse is shaking. If his own parents won't believe he's innocent, he's sunk.

JESSE
But, I didn't kill her!

JESSE'S MOTHER
What happened?

JESSE'S FATHER
Carol, what did I tell you in the
car.

JESSE'S MOTHER
I want to hear from him--

JESSE
It wasn't me! Please, I would never hurt her, you know that, she was my girl! She was my girl...

Dad leans in close, speaking low.

JESSE'S FATHER
Son. Kris is dead. Her blood is on your clothes. Do you know how this looks?

Jesse lets it all out in a teary-eyed nervous breakdown:

JESSE
I know how it looks, I was there! I saw what happened to Kris, oh God, she just, was against the wall and he dragged her up to the ceiling and all the blood it spilled everywhere, he just gutted her--

Mom holds Jesse's hand tightly.

JESSE'S MOTHER
Sweetie, who? Who did this?

On Jesse, debating whether or not to say the name...

INT. NANCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nancy sits in bed, leaning against the headboard. The lights are off and it's quiet. Middle-of-the-night quiet. She takes a drink from a glass of water and sets it on her nightstand.

The wind rustles a tree branch outside her window.

Somewhere in the house, there's a soft THUMP.

Nancy sits up, alert. Listening closely. She's on edge.

Looking around the room. All seems normal.

Nancy calms herself, and starts for her glass of water again, but retracts her hand when she notices:

THE CONDENSATION on the outside of the glass... the drips are moving up, in reverse.

Above her, the WALL starts to stretch around the form of a head and two hands-- FREDDY looking down at Nancy, mere inches from her face--

His wall-hands reach for her and Nancy looks up--

INT. NANCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nancy wakes with a start, sucking in a breath to scream.

She turns to check the wall above her headboard. It was a bad dream.

NANCY (V.O.)
(pre-lap)
I need some help.

INT. BOOKSTORE - MORNING

The store is a large upscale retail outlet.

Nancy stands in front of the STORE CLERK at the counter. The Clerk is around Nancy's age.

NANCY
I'm looking for any non-fiction
reference books on nightmares,
sleep disorders, that sort of
thing. Where do I find that?

STORE CLERK
Dreams and nightmares, huh? Seems
to be a popular subject today.

Nancy reacts-- this is news to her.

INT. REFERENCE SECTION - MOMENTS LATER

A tall pile of books sits on a reading table in this section. One look at the titles on the spines tells us it's all about dreams and nightmares.

Quentin sits by the stack and skims through one of them, but it's clear he's tired and unfocused.

He turns another page, and hears a small squeak. Looks around; what was that?

A small RAT sniffs the air on the edge of the table, then crawls off the end, out of sight.

Quentin glances to see if anyone else saw it. He's alone. He hears more squeaking, and gets up, moving around to see

THE RAT scurry down a narrow aisle between bookshelves.

Quentin gets up and follows, crossing the aisle and approaching

THE CHILDREN'S SECTION. Little chairs and tables. From this early, obscured view, he can see young PRESCHOOLERS seated on the floor, all in a trance-like state of rapt attention.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

...But the town betrayed him.

Stepping fully from between the shelves, it's now visible who's reading to the children: FREDDY. His audience seems oblivious to his hideous charred flesh and yellowed teeth.

The large storybook he's reading to them: THE PIED PIPER.

FREDDY

And for that betrayal, the Pied
Piper took their children away.

Quentin stops cold.

QUENTIN

(sotto)

You.

Freddy looks right at Quentin and his storyteller's smile turns to a sneer. He slams the book shut--

And suddenly all the children WAIL as if in agony but it's some unearthly, bestial screech like a chorus of tortured infants--

Quentin SNAPS AWAKE back in the reference section. Nancy stands before him, having gently grabbed him.

NANCY

Nightmares?

QUENTIN

...Yeah. I can't explain--

NANCY

(interrupting)

Freddy?

The name stops Quentin cold. Beat.

QUENTIN

Yes.

NANCY

We need to talk.

QUENTIN

We need coffee.

INT. COUNTY JAIL CELL AREA - MORNING

It's the kind of meager holding facility a small suburban police station would have. Office space nearby.

Jesse sits on his bunk in one cell, dressed in prison orange. His knee bounces nervously.

In the bunk across from him: A rugged INMATE with tattoos. Sleeping in late. Lying still.

Jesse rubs his forehead. On edge. His eyes are hidden from view for a moment.

He lays back down on the bunk and stares up at the ceiling.

JESSE

(sotto)

Stay awake...

Jesse rubs his face.

The moment his hand covers his eyes, a warm amber light clicks on nearby, changing the light of the room.

JESSE'S FATHER (O.S.)

We need to talk, son.

Jesse looks over--

JESSE

Dad?

--but he's no longer in the cell. Instead his bunk is against the wall of:

INT. JESSE'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - NIGHT

Faded baby blue, illustrations of airplanes. Carpet on the floor and a small bed in the corner.

Jesse's FATHER stands by the bed with a little BOY who looks very nervous. And very much like a five-year-old Jesse.

JESSE
What the hell?

The little boy is seated on his bed with his head down.

JESSE'S FATHER
Now I know you and Dean play rough
at school sometimes. So tell me the
truth. Did you hurt him?

LITTLE JESSE
It wasn't me.

JESSE'S FATHER
Then who was it.

LITTLE JESSE
Freddy did it!

JESSE'S FATHER
...What?

LITTLE JESSE
It was Freddy.

Jesse's Father starts to say something when four BLADES punch
out from his shirt--

His eyes roll up in his head and he's thrown aside to reveal
FREDDY standing behind him, with his glove jammed through the
man's back--

INT. JAIL CELL - MORNING

Jesse wakes on his bunk in a breath of panic.

Jesse takes a moment to get his nerves in check. Then he
notices--

The cell door stands open. And his cell-mate is gone.

Jesse stands and steps to the threshold of his cell and looks
around-- No one is there. Either way.

JESSE
Hello?

Beat. All is quiet.

Jesse steps out into--

INT. COUNTY JAIL SHORT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

No sign of guards. Jesse looks left, when from the other direction a small voice calls:

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)

Help me.

He turns and looks the other way to see--

Rows and rows of prison cells. The place is huge. Daunting. Metal and concrete. He's no longer in county lock-up. This is more like Joliet.

And children's VOICES echoing in the dark.

CHILDREN (O.S.)

Let me out / Help / He's coming for
me / Jesse please--

Jesse steps past one cell to see LITTLE KRIS clinging to the bars. Pouting. Wearing pajamas.

In the next cell LITTLE DEAN sits up in his bunk, calling out to Jesse amid the voices.

Jesse keeps moving past a third where LITTLE NANCY sits with her back to the door.

FREDDY (O.S.)

Hello, Jesse.

Freddy stalks toward Jesse from the other end of the cell block, his knife-hand scraping against the iron bars as he goes, the SPARKS from the contact the only thing to illuminate Freddy's face in the dark.

In those strobe-like flashes it's clear: He's smiling. A predatory smile.

Jesse sees Freddy, then turns and RUNS.

FOLLOWING Jesse as little children's hands reach out for him from within the cells, their CRIES suddenly more panicked--

Jesse makes for a thick metal DOOR at the end, reaching it--

Yanking on the handle, looking back as Freddy gets closer and closer--

FREDDY (CONT'D)

Where you going, Jesse? Don't you
want to play?

Finally the door gives way and Jesse practically falls in--

INT. BOILER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

--landing in this underground, industrial room lined with hissing pipes and junk dumped here as surrogate storage.

Jesse gets up, clutching his shoulder from the fall.

The door nearly shuts behind him when the METAL CLAWS of Freddy's glove catch it and he pushes the door aside.

Jesse gets up and runs again, down the pipe-laden space.

FREDDY

Do you remember me now?

ROUNDING A CORNER,

Jesse looks behind him, backs up a few steps, then bumps into the hanging bodies of KRIS and DEAN. Bound tightly to the pipes. Their flesh singed, still cooking against the metal.

He reacts in horror at the sight of them--

JESSE

Kris oh god--

Turning around again--

Freddy blocks his path. Nowhere to run now.

Jesse goes to flee, but it's like he's underwater, his limbs moving sluggishly--

While Freddy's blades rake across Jesse's gut.

Jesse doubles over--

Freddy swings again--

Jesse's face is badly cut now--

Freddy hamstringing Jesse--

Jesse collapses back on the floor, bleeding profusely. He gets up on his hands and knees.

Freddy picks him up.

JESSE (CONT'D)

What do you want from me?

FREDDY

I want you to spill your guts.

Freddy SLICES Jesse along the abdomen.

Jesse falls to the floor at sounds of his guts spilling...

But just before he hits, the boiler room washes away to be replaced by--

INT. COUNTY JAIL CELL - CONTINUOUS

--and Jesse's face hits the floor.

His blood seeps out in all directions.

His Inmate freaks out as GUARDS storm in--

INMATE

Hey! Hey this wasn't me HEY!

They slam the Inmate into a wall as an ALARM goes up--

INT. BOILER ROOM IN NIGHTMARE - CONTINUOUS

--but sounds distant; far off here.

Freddy has hoisted Jesse's bloody frame up next to Kris's.

Jesse coughs up blood, eyes rolling in his head.

FREDDY

The brain keeps working for seven minutes after the body dies.

Freddy leans in close to Jesse's face.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

I still have four minutes with you.

Freddy stabs Jesse again and TWISTS as Jesse SCREAMS--

INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

Nancy is seated at a small table on the fringe of the in-house coffee shop. The stack of books has migrated here.

Quentin arrives with two large coffees.

QUENTIN

I had them add an extra shot. How you holding up?

NANCY

Going on forty-six hours since any actual sleep. Other than that I'm fine.

QUENTIN

Well, I have something for when the caffeine doesn't do the trick.

Nancy's look says: Addict alert.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

What. It's just for pulling all-nighters before finals. I don't take it to trip.

(off another look)

Really!

Quentin leans in on the last line, and Nancy notices he wears a small silver cross on a necklace.

NANCY

Let's just stick to caffeine for now, okay?

(re: necklace)

I didn't know you were religious.

Quentin shrugs it off. As he grabs a notebook and a pen:

QUENTIN

Yeah, well, never too late to start, right?

(then)

Okay, so what do we know.

Nancy notices a thin book among the pile. The Pied Piper.

NANCY

Why is this here?

QUENTIN

It was in a nightmare I had. Could be important, I don't know.

Nancy opens the storybook.

A richly colored ILLUSTRATION shows the Piper leading children out of town. The Piper wears a striped shirt of two contrasting primary colors. A 'pied' shirt.

NANCY

Children is definitely a theme in my nightmares too. And a house, or a school. I can't tell which.

QUENTIN

It's gotta be our childhood. That's the thing we have in common, right?

NANCY

(sipping coffee)

How long have you lived here?

QUENTIN

I was born here. Why do you think I'm so eager to get out?

NANCY

How about kindergarten. I went to Davison for K-through-five.

QUENTIN

I was at Bering until third grade.

They share a look of frustration.

NANCY

This is gonna take some time.

QUENTIN

Yeah but we're running short on that.

NANCY

What do you mean.

Quentin rifles through the books to find one he's bookmarked: "Mastering Sleep."

QUENTIN

(reading)

"At the seventy-hour mark, an insomniac will begin to experience 'micronaps' every eight to ten minutes. These are periods where the brain will shut down some of its cognitive function for several seconds in an attempt to recharge itself. Clinically, the subject is asleep for those brief moments."

Nancy gets worried.

NANCY
That's involuntary?

QUENTIN
(still reading)
"After ninety-six hours, the
insomniac risks permanent brain
damage."

NANCY
We'll figure this out before then.
I'll dig around in mom's old photo
albums.

QUENTIN
And if we don't find any leads?

NANCY
There's always one way to get more
information...

Quentin starts to ask 'What' but then the look on Nancy's
face clues him in. He shakes his head.

QUENTIN
No. Oh no.

NANCY
If I time it right, I could learn
something important and you could
wake me up before he gets to me.

But now Quentin is looking past Nancy, over her shoulder.

Nancy turns to see the muted TV by the barista counter.

ON SCREEN: The caption "Murder Suspect Fatally Stabbed" under
a live report outside the county jail facility as Jesse is
loaded into an ambulance.

QUENTIN
...Shit. He got to Jesse.

INT. NANCY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

A knife SLICES carrots on a chopping block.

Gwen works the carrots and adds them to a salad. The front
door shuts and Nancy passes by.

GWEN
Hey kiddo, how you doing?

Nancy stops and pulls up at the bar in the kitchen, dropping her book bag at her feet.

NANCY

Mom...

GWEN

You look awful. Go take a bath.

NANCY

Well that's confidence-inspiring.
Mom, how long have we known Kris?

GWEN

Oh I don't know. A long while. You
were both learning to walk at the
same time.

NANCY

What about Jesse? Did we ever get
together with his family for
anything?

Gwen's tone changes to suspicion.

GWEN

What has prompted all this?

NANCY

Did we ever know some guy named
Freddy?

Gwen stiffens at mention of the name. The quick look of panic betrays her. Gwen quickly changes the subject.

GWEN

No, honey. Look, I know this must
be really rough, what with all
that's happened... But sometimes
bad things happen to good people.

(beat)

Now, go wash up.

Nancy slowly shakes her head. This was a failure.

Gwen goes back to prepping dinner. Nancy exits and we hear her heading back upstairs.

Gwen grabs the kitchen phone and dials a number. Glancing to make sure Nancy's out of ear shot, Gwen waits for an answer.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Hey. It's Gwen. We need to talk.

(beat)

(MORE)

GWEN (CONT'D)
Nancy is starting to remember. I
don't know what to do.

Gwen turns on the kitchen faucet to help mask the call--

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

The tub's faucet runs hot water.

Nancy plugs the drain and stands up. She's half undressed.
She adds bath salts to the running water.

Foam spreads along the surface of the water.

MOMENTS LATER, Nancy eases into the bubbly bath.

As she settles in, she lets out a long, deep breath. Slicking
her hair back with her hands.

Her cell phone rests on a towel rack nearby.

She grabs it and presses some buttons.

INSERT: CELL PHONE SCREEN

Showing the alarm timer feature: "15 min."

Then, "Timer Set."

ON NANCY, feeling like she can finally relax.

She eases back into the tub. Closes her eyes.

Beat. It's her one moment of peace.

From the bubbly bath water at her knees, FREDDY'S GLOVED HAND
rises, its blades extended--

A knock on the bathroom door sends the hand back underwater
just as Nancy opens her eyes--

GWEN (O.S.)
You okay in there?

NANCY
Fine, mom!

GWEN (O.S.)
Just checking.

Nancy checks her phone's clock.

NANCY
(sotto)
Twelve minutes? No way.

Looking at her fingers: They've pruned.

Nancy climbs out of the tub and puts on a robe.

Opening the door and stepping out to

INT. NANCY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

As she ties her robe at the door, something drifts down from the ceiling past her view. A little globule of soft white.

Nancy looks up, frowning as five more drift down from the ceiling... SNOWFLAKES.

Her mouth opens in shock and she holds out her hand...

THE WHOLE ROOM is covered in a thin layer of snow, the flakes falling from the ceiling as if she were in a snow-globe.

Nancy takes a tentative step farther into the room and a soft crunch beneath her feet pulls her attention to:

NANCY'S POV

Her bare feet are trenched in four inches of standing snow.

ON NANCY as she looks up again, revealing we're now:

EXT. PRESCHOOL BUILDING - DUSK

Outside. The bathroom door is now the front door of the preschool. It's lightly snowing.

Nancy catches her breath and steps back to get a better look at the building.

The place seems deserted.

The SIGN for the school is packed with ice and snow.

Nancy pushes snow off to get a good look at it.

She gets as far as the first six letters: "STILLM--"

FREDDY (O.S.)
Little Nancy. All grown up.

Nancy turns and backs away.

Freddy carries a pitchfork that looks like another one of his personal inventions.

Nancy has backed up to the preschool building. There's nowhere else to run.

Freddy SLAMS the pitchfork at Nancy, trapping her arm and neck in the gaps between the blades as it buries into the wall behind her.

NANCY
I set an alarm.

FREDDY
Yes you did... In your dream.

Nancy panics -- oh shit.

Freddy stands very, very close. Nancy cringes.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
We have plenty of time.

Nancy squeezes her eyes shut.

NANCY
You're just a nightmare.

FREDDY
That's right. No one can prove I
was ever here.

He licks her cheek and she recoils, repulsed.

NANCY
Why are you doing this?

Freddy whispers in her ear:

FREDDY
Why don't you ask your mom?

Somewhere, a phone RINGS.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Nancy snaps awake in the tub, sucking in a breath.

Her phone rings again. She answers it:

NANCY
Hello?

QUENTIN (V.O.)
Hey, just checking in.

NANCY
Ohh, god. Thank you. I fell asleep.

QUENTIN (V.O.)
Did you have a nightmare?

Nancy's panic subsides.

NANCY
I have a lead.

INT. NANCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Quentin sits on her bed, laptop on his legs, typing away on the little keyboard.

Nancy sits nearby, sketching as they brainstorm.

The time on the clock reads 5:16 AM.

QUENTIN
I get a few hits on a Stillman
Preschool here in town that was
around in the '90s, but nothing
more than a brief mention.

NANCY
Does it have a photo of the
building?

QUENTIN
No photo. If it did I might
recognize it.

NANCY
Recognize this?

Nancy holds up the sketch for him.

QUENTIN
That's it. That's the same place I
see in my dreams.

Nancy gets up and goes to her bedroom door. Peeks out.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)
Where you going?

NANCY
My mom used to work for the PTA.

QUENTIN
You think she has some record of
the school?

NANCY
Let's go find out.

INT. UPSTAIRS HOME OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

Nancy thumbs through a tightly-packed file drawer filled with manila folders and loose papers.

Other files have been pulled free. They're scattered along the floor by her feet.

Quentin stands watch at the door to the hall, glancing back at Nancy.

QUENTIN
No luck?

Nancy reaches the files at the end of the drawer -- nothing.

NANCY
Damnit!

She slides the drawer shut.

SOUND of something sliding an inch more after the drawer stops suddenly.

Nancy cocks her head. Pulls the drawer open again and stops it suddenly.

Again, something SLIDES along the bottom.

Nancy pulls out an armful of file folders and looks down at the bottom of the drawer to discover:

A FRAMED PHOTO.

The photo is of the same school from their nightmares.

In front of the school, CHILDREN stand with that year's teaching staff behind them.

Lastly, off to one side, a MAN wearing a FEDORA and leaning against a rake he's planted into the dirt at his feet. The Man is smiling.

Nancy holds it up, inspecting it closely.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 Quentin...

He joins her to examine it.

Nancy slips the photo out of the frame, turns it over to find first initials and last names of everyone in the photo.

QUENTIN
 We're all there. You, me, Jesse,
 Kris, and Dean.

NANCY
 And him.

Pointing at the Man in the Fedora.

TIGHT ON: One name.

"F. KRUEGER"

NANCY (CONT'D)
 Krueger.

GWEN (O.S.)
 What are you doing in here?

GWEN stands at the door, in night gown and robe.

Nancy holds the photo defiantly, showing it to Gwen.

NANCY
Freddy Krueger.

Gwen is suddenly pale.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 You knew him. You know something
 you're not telling me.

GWEN
 Nancy, stop this, stop it right
 now.

NANCY
 That's what I'm trying to do. Tell
 me! Please.

Beat.

GWEN

Listen to me. I didn't want to keep it a secret, I just wanted you to forget all about it. We'd put it past us for good.

NANCY

Forget about what?

Gwen lets out a breath, and takes the photo from Nancy.

GWEN

We didn't know. Not at first.

ON THE PHOTO, pressing in until it fills the screen. Then the children move, scattering to go play, and the parents break off. We're now in:

EXT. PRESCHOOL YARD - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Following one of the little schoolkids around back to the small playground behind the converted house of a school.

(Note that the flashback sequence will retain the same faded-color hues of the original photograph.)

A rather HANDSOME MAN tends to some flowers along the exterior, wearing gardening gloves and using a hand-held gardening claw. It takes a beat to realize: It's Freddy. Without the burns and exposed bone he's a different man.

GWEN (V.O.)

He was just hired help. Walked in from out of town and got a job at the preschool. He was quiet, well-mannered... Moved into the basement as the on-site caretaker.

Little Dean flees from two other Children in a game of tag. Giggling he runs and hides behind Freddy. Freddy smiles and plays like a protective bear, growling at the other kids.

The other Kids just eat it up, fleeing from Freddy. Freddy laughs and it's a joyful, warm laugh. Avuncular. To see him as just a man-- and happy-- he's unrecognizable as the same person in their nightmares.

INT. PRESCHOOL MAIN ENTRY HALL - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The Children are hiding as Freddy has his hands over his eyes, counting silently. One child crawls into a large TV box on its side.

GWEN (V.O.)
You loved to play games with him.

SCHOOLGIRLS
(playing jump rope)
One, two, Freddy's coming for you--

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Little Nancy sits at a tiny school desk with a box of crayons and craft paper. Drawing. Even back then she was a budding artist.

GWEN (V.O.)
And he seemed to love you kids.
Especially you.

Freddy sits across from her with paper and markers of his own. Drawing her. Little Nancy looks up at him--

INT. UPSTAIRS HOME OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

Gwen shakes her head. Ashamed.

GWEN
But sometimes evil hides behind a smile.

INT. KRIS'S HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Nora pulls off Little Kris's dress in the bathroom, getting ready for her bath.

On Kris's back: four long scratch marks. Still fresh.

NORA
Baby... What happened? Did someone
at school do this to you?

CLOSE ON Little Kris's face, fearful. Nods.

INT. QUENTIN'S HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Quentin's Father stands in the kitchen on the phone. He looks over at his son who's sitting at the breakfast table in front of a plate of hot food. Little Quentin stares at the floor. Ignoring the meal.

ALAN
(into phone)
Yeah, he has been acting strange
lately. Why?

INT. JESSE'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Jesse's Father sits with Jesse, like we saw in Jesse's
nightmare earlier.

JESSE
Sometimes, he brings in animals and
makes us watch as he kills them.
(beat)
Then we go in the tunnel.

INT. NANCY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Gwen sits on the couch with Little Nancy, having a similar
conversation.

GWEN
And what happens? In the tunnel?

LITTLE NANCY
He takes us to the secret cave.
Where the monster is.

This scares Gwen half to death. Choking back panicked tears:

GWEN
What does the monster do? Does he
touch you? Does he touch my baby?

Little Nancy starts to cry, afraid she's in trouble.

INT. UPSTAIRS HOME OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

Gwen gets cold at the memories.

NANCY
So what happened? Did you go to the
police?

GWEN
He left. Skipped town before we
could confront him. We never saw
him again.
(beat)
(MORE)

GWEN (CONT'D)
These bad dreams you're having,
they're just repressed memories.
Okay? He can't hurt you anymore.

NANCY
I hope you're right.

Nancy moves past her mother and exits. Quentin follows.

EXT. NANCY'S FRONT DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Quentin follows Nancy out from the front door. Nancy's mind is reeling. She pulls out her key remote and unlocks her car.

QUENTIN
Maybe that's all this is. Our
memories coming back to haunt us.

NANCY
I don't buy it. There's more to it.

Nancy looks down at the preschool photo again.

NANCY (CONT'D)
Maybe one of these other kids knows
something.

Just then, a car pulls up into the driveway, and Quentin's father Alan gets out.

ALAN
Quentin, what the hell are you
doing here?

QUENTIN
Dad? How...

ALAN
Get in the car.

Nancy looks back at the front door and sees Gwen with the cordless phone in her hand. Watching at the entryway. Nancy glares at her mother and turns back to Alan.

ALAN (CONT'D)
Come on. You're late for school.

QUENTIN
I'm not going.

ALAN
The hell you're not. This isn't up
for debate.

Quentin looks to Nancy apologetically. She nods slightly: Go.

Quentin moves for the passenger door. Back at Nancy:

QUENTIN
Meet me after Swim Team.

At the sound of a coach's WHISTLE--

INT. INDOOR OLYMPIC POOL - DAY

A trio of student SWIMMERS rocket down lanes while their female coach KELLY BARBER (short hair, muscular) shouts at them, a stopwatch in her hand.

COACH BARBER
Go, go, go! Two seconds behind!

At three other lanes, another group of STUDENTS wait against the wall, standing in the water.

Quentin is one of them. He rests his head on the concrete lip of the pool and he stares straight up. It's impossible to tell at this angle through his goggles if his eyes are open or closed.

SWIMMER 1
--and Paul was gonna take her to the prom.

SWIMMER 2
No shit?

SWIMMER 1
Yeah she and Jesse were broke up for good this time, I heard.

SWIMMER 2
You think Jesse knew she was--

Drifting to Quentin who doesn't move until the coach's WHISTLE startles him.

COACH BARBER
Team two: Positions!

Quentin shakes off the fatigue and prepares to launch himself forward through the water.

The coach whistles AGAIN and they're off--

Arms wheeling. Legs pumping.

QUENTIN'S POV

- Underwater. The lanes marked on the bottom of the pool. Muted splashing around him.
- Above water. The lip of the pool, a few dozen yards away. The door to the locker room beyond that. Coach Barber with her stopwatch shouting at them.
- Underwater again. He's pulling ahead in his lane.
- Above water and now it's ocean as far as the eye can see.

ON QUENTIN, stopping, in shock.

Pulling back... the pool is gone. He's in the middle of the Atlantic. No sign of land. A fog draping the sky above him.

Quentin looks panicked.

QUENTIN
Oh shit. Oh sh--

Something TUGS at him from underwater--

Quentin sucks in a breath, treading water in fear--

CLOSER ON him as a second time he's YANKED under--

A beat later he surfaces again, gasping for air, to find--

EXT. ABANDONED FACTORY GROUNDS - NIGHT

--he's in a retaining pond at a closed down chemical plant.

He's still in the nightmare.

Quentin climbs out onto the grass and catches his breath.

Over the rise, the silhouette of FREDDY appears, running for him.

Quentin gets up and runs the other way; toward the abandoned plant.

He's out of breath and cramping--

He stumbles and falls--

Freddy gets right up on him--

And keeps running, right past Quentin.

Headlights swing around until they light Freddy's back.

Freddy looks back-- he's not burned. Normal. No glove. (Also, he's not wearing his fedora here. Which makes him look even more normal; you can see his hair.)

And he's terrified. Fleeing for his life.

Quentin gets up as HEADLIGHTS illuminate the building and two cars pull up. Several PARENTS (who look a decade or so younger) get out, in pursuit.

DEAN'S FATHER

Krueger, you sick son of a bitch!

They're all crazy-angry.

JESSE'S FATHER

Pedophile!

They make for the small containment building Freddy entered.

Quentin follows, confused.

Nora and Gwen follow. Nora's face is slick with tears. Gwen seems cautious, watching the others around her.

Dean's Father tries to shoulder his way into the door. Freddy has barricaded it.

DEAN'S FATHER

You come out, or we'll force you out!

Peering in from one narrow window to see Freddy-- frightened, meek. Nearly the opposite of normal nightmare-Freddy.

FREDDY

I didn't do anything! What do you want?

DEAN'S FATHER

You fucking liar! We know what you've been doing!

Gwen, sensing this is going sideways:

GWEN

We should call the police.

JESSE'S FATHER

And do what-- put him on trial? You want to put our kids on the stand, force them to relive the shit he put them through?

DEAN'S FATHER

I'm not doing that to my son.

Jesse's Father swings a baseball bat and bashes a vertical window near the door.

Another MAN steps up by Quentin, holding a flashlight.

QUENTIN

Dad? What are you doing--

ALAN

We end this tonight.

Alan goes to the trunk of one car and pulls out a gasoline can. He stuffs a rag into the nozzle.

GWEN

Wait, Alan--

But Alan is past the point of no return. There's only rage in his heart now.

ALAN

He should burn in hell!

Alan holds up the homemade Molotov cocktail and Dean's Father lights it. Just as Alan hurls it through the broken window--

A glimpse at the variety of FLAMMABLE warning signs precedes the light show when the canister erupts inside.

B O O M !

The blast wave knocks Quentin off his feet.

Inside, Freddy SCREAMS, his voice curdling from within the walls of the building--

ON GWEN, standing outside, rigid, full of anger and fear as the light of the fire dances over her face--

THROUGH THE NARROW WINDOW, Freddy burns alive inside the upper level of the boiler room, arms flailing, SCREAMING--

INT. INDOOR OLYMPIC POOL - DAY

Quentin coughs up pool water, spitting it on the concrete.

He's lying on his back with Coach Barber over him. The Coach looks visibly shaken, eyes wide.

COACH BARBER
Breathe, kid, breathe!
(to swimmer nearby)
Get the school nurse!

Quentin coughs again, wheezing badly. Starts to get up.

QUENTIN
(hoarse)
I'm okay...

He doesn't look okay. He looks like he nearly drowned.

COACH BARBER
Go change. You're not going back in
today.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Quentin shuts a locker, holding a gym bag.

He sets it on a bench and unzips the bag, pulling out a PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE.

Rattling it-- only a few pills left. He pops two.

INT. SCHOOL LIBRARY - DAY

Nancy has just settled in at a school computer.

Tucked between the keyboard and the monitor is the photo of the preschoolers at Stillman.

On screen is a rather archaic internal database home site.
"Springwood Public School Registry Archives."

Quick pops to establish Nancy's process:

- 1) Tight on the back of the photo, a name: "L. HARPER."
- 2) On the monitor, a list of names including "Harper, Lisa Ann --- Stillman Preschool"
- 3) Tight on Nancy as she mentally jumps to the next step--

4) On the monitor, a web search engine with Lisa's name in the text box. The click of a mouse and--

5) A digital version of a newspaper article, with the headline: "TEEN GIRL DROWNS IN BATHTUB."

ON NANCY, nerves wrecked by the news. Trying to keep from shaking as she scans the article.

Nancy tries again. A shorthand coupling of shots now:

1) Another name on the back of the photo: "J. BURKLEO."

2) Another article on the web: "Tragedy: 'He never woke up.'"

ON NANCY again, shaking her head slowly. Her eyes are wet.

1) A third name on the photo: "A. MOORE."

2) A third headline snippet: "--ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL." A photo accompanying the article shows a car wrapped around a tree on some highway.

NANCY has never felt so alone.

Wiping tears from her face, Nancy grabs a red marker and marks on the photo.

Reveal: she's put X's over the faces of the children from her class who are already dead. Little Jesse, Dean, Kris, plus the other kids.

All that's left without X's are Little Nancy, a young boy who looks like he could be Quentin, and...

One more boy.

Nancy flips over the photo. She missed one. "M. GREENE."

A MOMENT LATER, on the monitor a search result page is replaced by the first link--

A video blog site with the author's name prominent at the top of the page: "Marcus Greene."

Videos load in a vertical row on one side of the page.

Nancy leans in, her eyes darting across the page.

On the monitor: Scrolling down the page. Randomly picking one video entry and clicking "PLAY."

Marcus sits at his computer desk in his bedroom. He speaks to the webcam in front of him.

MARCUS

(on screen)

Another nightmare last night. I didn't get much exploration this time. The guy with the burns shows, and I have to run. But I added the school house to my map...

Marcus grabs the webcam and shifts it to reveal...

A large POSTER tacked to his wall, with a variety of lines, sketches, and landmarks in black and red markers.

The title at the top of the poster-paper: NIGHTMARE MAP.

MARCUS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I'll update the digital version on my site too.

ON NANCY, fully engaged in the video blog. She clicks on a link and

THE SCREEN now shows a digital version of the map on Marcus's wall. It's a mural of macabre sketches and landmarks.

NANCY prints it out. The printer next to her whines as it warms up.

ON SCREEN, returning to the video:

MARCUS (CONT'D)

(on screen)

The boiler room is where he kills people. But the preschool... he keeps bringing me there. It's in every dream. Like he's trying to show me something.

The video pauses.

Nancy grabs the printout of the map and circles the preschool Marcus has labeled in one corner.

Nancy returns to the website and finds the most recent video.

She clicks "PLAY."

ON SCREEN, an exhausted looking Marcus sits at his computer, his bedroom partially visible behind him. Bags under his eyes, messy hair... He's about to fall down sleeping.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

(on screen)

Day nine. I'm in and out.

(MORE)

MARCUS (CONT'D)
 Can't last. Gonna sleep here. Set
 cam to record, it will kick in when
 it detects motion.

Marcus clicks around on his own PC, sluggishly.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
 (on screen)
 Okay. Should auto-upload now. Just
 gonna... close... my...

Marcus nods off in his chair.

The image records for a few seconds, then it--

HICCUPS, advancing to the next time the webcam sensed motion.
 Marcus has leaned back in the chair now, still slumbering.
 Another five seconds of stillness, then

HICCUP-- another skip in recording. Marcus is twitchy now.
 The light in the bedroom has changed, it looks darker.

Slowly, Marcus's chair eases backward, away from the webcam.
 It seems to move all on its own. Marcus goes still and then

HICCUP-- the recording skips to find the chair rotating
 around. Now its back is to us. We can't see Marcus. But we
 can hear him. Breathing shallow. Choking. A rending sound.
 His hands spasm on the arms of the chair... then nothing.

Beat. Two. Is it over? Then

THE CHAIR ROTATES again, revealing Marcus slumped, bare-
 chested in the seat, his shirt shredded--

Four slashes have been carved into his chest, just like
 Dean's wounds. Freddy's signature.

Smashing to STATIC--

NANCY'S EYES go wide with fear--

A FIGURE stands right behind her now--

QUENTIN (O.S.)
 Nancy.

--and Nancy practically jumps out of her skin.

NANCY
 Jesus! Quentin--

Quentin's hair is still wet from the swimming pool. The messy
 hair makes him look a little crazy.

QUENTIN
I know what happened to Freddy.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A "fish bowl" office -- glass walls looking out on a maze of cubicles.

Quentin's father Alan stands up from his desk in surprise as

QUENTIN and Nancy step in, leaving the door wide behind them. Quentin immediately spits out:

QUENTIN
You killed him.

ALAN
Quentin, what the hell--

QUENTIN
You killed Krueger.

Alan moves to the door and closes it behind them.

ALAN
What are you doing here? Who have you been talking to?

QUENTIN
Tell me I'm wrong. Tell me to my face you didn't burn him to death.

Alan crosses to his desk and leans against it, as if he aged twenty years in just a few steps. His son's words weigh heavily on him.

NANCY
Is it true?

ALAN
(beat)
Yes.
(off their reaction)
We didn't set out to kill him, but that night was just... the things he did to you...

QUENTIN
How do you know he'd done anything? That he was guilty?

ALAN
You kids. The things you said...

QUENTIN
What, some crap about animal
sacrifices? Really?

NANCY
He chased us into tunnels-- did you
ever find any tunnel?

Alan swallows hard, his body remembering the trauma.

ALAN
No.

NANCY
So it's possible we made it all up.

QUENTIN
And you killed an innocent man.

ALAN
Son... There isn't a day of my life
I don't think about that night.
About what we did.
(beat, regaining)
But, I can't change what happened.

NANCY
The preschool. Stillman. Where is
it.

ALAN
No. Let it go.

QUENTIN
Not until we find the school.

ALAN
It closed down years ago. Forget
about it. As far as anyone knows,
Fred Krueger never existed.

Closing on Nancy, those last words resonating with her.

INT. ELEVATOR LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Nancy and Quentin head to the elevator, in mid-conversation.

NANCY
This is why Freddy is after us.
Because our lies got him killed.

QUENTIN

We were five years old! What does Krueger want from us-- an apology?

NANCY

Whatever he wants, I think we'll find it at the preschool. It's where he lived. It's the one place that ties us all together.

The elevator DINGS. Quentin steps in.

Nancy starts to follow when she notices something on the floor in the lobby area here--

NANCY'S POV

A trail of blood.

NANCY STOPS and looks left, right. Quentin's voice has faded out and suddenly she's alone.

Down one hall, a bloody BODY IN A CORONER'S BAG marks the end of the trail. Inside the clear plastic appears to be Kris.

Something invisible drags her around the corner...

Nancy freezes in fear, then...

KRIS (O.S.)

Naaaaancy...

Nancy squeezes her eyes shut and opens them again--

Quentin stands nearby.

QUENTIN

You okay?

Nancy looks again down the hall. It's empty. No blood trail.

NANCY

What time is it?

QUENTIN

Two fifteen.

Nancy starts to panic.

NANCY

I'm at hour seventy-five.

QUENTIN
(realizing)
Micronaps?

NANCY
I need something strong.

EXT. PHARMACY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The lot is mostly empty. Quentin's Mustang screeches into a spot.

INT. MUSTANG - CONTINUOUS

He puts it in park, shuts off the engine, and looks over at Nancy.

QUENTIN
I'll be right back.

NANCY
Hurry.

QUENTIN
I will. See if you can figure out these landmarks so we can find the preschool.

NANCY
Okay.

He gets out and rushes to the front doors.

Nancy sits in the car. Breathing. Beat.

(It's important to note that at no time does she close her eyes-- micronaps occur while you're still awake, the brain just shutting down for a few moments.)

She grabs the printout of the Nightmare Map and studies it.

INSERT: PRINTOUT

One corner shows a hand-drawn tree dotted with black. Marcus has labeled it "TREE OF CROWS."

Another corner shows a line drawing of the PRESCHOOL.

ON NANCY now, she checks the time on her phone and just then Freddy opens her car door and yanks her out of the car--

He drags her onto the lot which is now dark and foggy--

Nancy SCREAMS and struggles against Freddy--

And Nancy snaps AWAKE back in the passenger seat of the car, catching her breath.

Tears streaming down her cheeks now. She looks around. Zeroes in on the in-dash cigarette lighter.

She punches it in.

Beat. Looking out toward the door to the pharmacy.

NANCY (CONT'D)
C'mon Quentin, where are you...

Pop! The lighter ejects.

Nancy grabs it and turns it over to look at the burner.

It glows orange-hot.

Still shedding tears, Nancy takes the lighter and holds it close to her forearm. Sucks in a breath. Two.

Then she mashes the lighter against her flesh.

Winching in pain, she lets out a primal WAIL.

Pulling back, a nasty BURN on her arm now. Sizzling.

Nancy tries to control her breathing. Wipes her eyes.

Beat. Coming down from the pain-rush.

NANCY (CONT'D)
Come on QUENTIN!

Nancy gets out of the car.

INT. PHARMACY PRESCRIPTION COUNTER - THAT MOMENT

Quentin slaps a wrinkled refill note on the counter, followed by an I.D.

QUENTIN
Need a refill.

A middle-aged PHARMACIST takes the slip, sizes him up.

Quentin stares back with bloodshot eyes, hair askew, almost amaciated.

PHARMACIST

This prescription is two years old.
I'm gonna have to call your doctor
on this one, hang on.

Quentin reaches out and grabs the slip from him.

QUENTIN

Forget it.

EXT. PHARMACY PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Nancy hugs herself and paces a bit. Then goes for the
pharmacy front doors.

They slide away as she enters

INT. PHARMACY - CONTINUOUS

Dull muzak playing on the speaker system. Bright, sterile
lighting. A preoccupied CASHIER at the counter.

Nancy starts down one aisle, looking for Quentin.

Halfway down the aisle, the power shuts off.

The whole pharmacy plunges into darkness. Nancy holds her
breath.

The power then flickers on again and Nancy is in

INT. BOILER ROOM (NIGHTMARE) - CONTINUOUS

Dank, lined with pipes, a basement space to some very old
building above her.

NANCY

No no no no--

Reveal what she sees before her: a row of BODIES tied to the
pipes.

It's Freddy's previous victims. Among them: Dean, Kris, and
Jesse. Nancy pauses and the world seems to flicker BACK TO
REALITY, revealing she's in the aisle at the pharmacy--

But in the next moment it PLUNGES BACK to the boiler room.

This time Freddy is standing RIGHT THERE, catching her by
surprise. He throws her to the floor.

Nancy shakes off the trauma and starts to struggle.

NANCY (CONT'D)

No-- stay-- away--

FREDDY

Shh shh, don't tell.

Freddy holds her down--

Nancy TEARS his sweater, trying to get free--

For a brief moment the ceiling above them flickers back to the pharmacy, the real world pressing in--

Nancy manages to slip from his grasp--

Freddy slashes her, cutting deep into her arm--

Nancy spins like a top, her blood spraying against a wall--

INT. PHARMACY - NIGHT

Quentin rounds a corner when a crash of something falling off a shelf distracts him--

He steps over one aisle to look down and discover NANCY on the floor, her blood having sprayed across a display and a few shelves of merchandise.

Quentin rushes to her and sees her eyes are staring up at someone or something that isn't here, and she's struggling against some unseen attacker.

He shakes her awake--

QUENTIN

Nancy, wake up! Nancy--

Her attention snaps to Quentin: she's back awake.

Quentin is focused on her left arm, which is bleeding from the nasty cuts Freddy gave her.

NANCY

He's here--

QUENTIN

You're bleeding bad.

Quentin grabs a box of gauze from the shelf nearby and cracks it open right there, as a makeshift bandage.

Nancy moans in pain when he puts pressure on her arm. But she's distracted by something in her other hand...

A PIECE OF FREDDY'S SWEATER. Torn from his sleeve. Part of the red/green stripe.

Nancy stares at it in shock and concern: What the hell?

The gauze of Quentin's bandage soaks up blood way too fast.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)
Ahh, okay, we uh-- need to get you
to a hospital.

He starts to pick her up and--

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Quentin carries Nancy in.

QUENTIN
I need some help here!

Two NURSES take her from Quentin and rush her to an open station. Nancy looks pale and queasy from blood loss. Lots of overlapping voices:

NURSE 1	NANCY
I got ya just hang in there	Quentin don't leave me--
you'll be okay--	

QUENTIN (CONT'D)	NURSE 2
Her arm is badly cut look	What's her blood type? Do you
just let me stay with her--	know? Where are your parents?

The question throws Quentin a beat.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)
Our parents? This is their fault!

The Nurse reacts to his hostility and holds up her hands:
Easy, now, stay calm.

INT. E.R. STATION FIVE - MINUTES LATER

Nancy is on a rolling bed, her wound has been cleaned but it's still pretty bad.

Nurse 1 finishes cleaning the wound as Nurse 2 enters with sutures and needle on a tray with a syringe.

Nurse 1 exits so Nurse 2 can get in and start to work.

NURSE 2
Are you allergic to any medicine?

NANCY
No, where is Quentin.

NURSE 2
I'm gonna give you something for
the pain. With any luck it will put
you right out.

NANCY
No no no, don't, I refuse.

The Nurse is shocked.

NURSE 2
Hon, this is liable to be very
painful without it. Take it from me
you want this.

NANCY
No NO get it AWAY--

Nancy's mother Gwen arrives, pulling the curtain aside.

GWEN
Oh my god baby what happened?

NURSE 2
Your daughter is refusing
painkillers.

GWEN
What in the world is going on?
Nancy who did this to you?

NANCY
Look at it. You know who.

Gwen sees the slices. She frowns, shaking her head.

GWEN
No...

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Quentin sits alone in this badly decorated area.

He can feel himself nodding off.

Across the way, a NURSE exits a medical supply room with a
bottle of pills.

INT. SUPPLY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Quentin enters and shuts the door behind him.

He quickly scans the labels, rummaging around a few shelves until he finds what he is after:

A series of BOTTLES with pills just like the ones he was taking earlier. The label: "ADERALL / 150mg caplets."

Quentin grabs a bottle and pops it open right there, dryswallowing two pills.

He heads back out the door--

INT. E.R. STATION FIVE - MOMENTS LATER

The Nurse tugs on her thread and Nancy makes an agonizing sound that says: I am beyond my threshold for pain.

The RESIDENT (30s, harried) enters.

RESIDENT

(to Nurse)

Why is she still up for God's sake?

Gwen is still right there.

GWEN

Please, can you help her.

The Resident grabs the syringe from the tray--

NANCY

No mom please please--

The Resident turns around with the needle but now--

NANCY'S POV

It's not the Resident anymore, it's FREDDY.

NANCY SCREAMS and thrashes--

THE RESIDENT gets kicked, dropping the syringe--

Gwen is in tears now, brought on by panic.

The Resident recovers and looks to Gwen.

RESIDENT

A word?

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY OUTSIDE E.R. - MOMENTS LATER

The Resident holds a clipboard of paperwork, and a pen.

RESIDENT

She's a danger to herself. But we
can't go against her demands unless
a parent gives us authorization--

SERIES OF SHOTS

1) Close on a Nurse as she prepares a large dose of sedative
into a hypodermic.

GWEN (V.O.)

What are you saying, just tell me
what to do to make my girl better.

2) The Resident hands Gwen his clipboard and pen.

RESIDENT

We just need to sedate her, and
everything will be okay.

3) Nancy, now restrained in a private room, struggling weakly
against her bonds.

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

Just sign here.

4) Gwen hovers over the signature line with the pen.

5) The Nurse tests the needle and sets it on a tray.

6) Tight on Gwen's hand as she signs the release form.

INT. RECOVERY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The Nurse steps in with the syringe ready to go--

NURSE 2

All set now--

And her fake smile vanishes.

REVEAL that Nancy's bed is EMPTY.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Quentin holds Nancy close as they hurry for his Mustang.
She's got a proper bandage on her arm.

She looks dazed and weak but still awake.

NANCY
I'm so tired...

QUENTIN
Hang on just a little longer.

He sets her in his car and runs to the driver's side.

INT. MUSTANG - CONTINUOUS

Nancy gets in and grabs the NIGHTMARE MAP she printed out earlier. Quentin slides into his seat and starts the car.

QUENTIN
Let's go.

NANCY
Just give me a minute.

QUENTIN
What?

NANCY
I think I can figure this out.
(beat)
God, I wish my brain wasn't so
foggy...

She looks at the symbols on the map, turning it over.

Quentin hands her a prescription bottle.

QUENTIN
Here.

Nancy frowns, taking it.

NANCY
What's this?

QUENTIN
A little boost.

She hands it back to him.

NANCY
How do we know it won't make things
worse when we crash? No, no pills.

She goes back to the map.

Quentin puts the bottle back in his pocket.

NANCY (CONT'D)
Hang on. Look at this.

INSERT: MAP. And a small sketch at one side of pipes and metal. The boiler room.

NANCY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
This is the boiler room, right? He has it under this landmark here.

Above it, a rough sketch of a small building near a retaining pond. Just like in Quentin's nightmare.

QUENTIN
That's the old chemical plant, I saw it in my dream.

NANCY
So, this would be Route Nine...

NANCY'S FINGER traces a line to another part of the map, where a row of HOUSES are sketched.

Tapping one.

NANCY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Look, that looks like Kris's house, and this is mine.

QUENTIN (O.S.)
How can you tell?

Sliding down a few inches to that TREE OF CROWS seen earlier, when she was examining the map in the pharmacy parking lot.

NANCY (O.S.)
The tree in Mrs. Lloyd's front yard. It's always filled with birds. I used to have nightmares about it.

A straight line runs from beside the tree all the way up to the top of the map where it dead-ends at the PRESCHOOL.

Nancy makes eye contact with Quentin.

NANCY (CONT'D)
If this is right, then the school is on Elm Street. On the other end.

QUENTIN
Nancy Elm Street doesn't even--

But he stops himself and grabs a road map from the center compartment.

Tracing a line north:

QUENTIN (CONT'D)
Elm Street turns into Treeline two miles out, it doesn't-- Wait. It goes back to Elm Street on the old side of town. You think...

NANCY
Drive. Just go.

Quentin yanks the shift into gear.

EXT. TREE-LINED ROAD - NIGHT

The Mustang speeds by, alone in the night. No other traffic.

INT. MUSTANG - CONTINUOUS

Quentin drives, white knuckles on the wheel.

Nancy hugs herself in the passenger seat, absently rubbing the bandage around her wounded arm. After a quiet beat.

NANCY
Hey. Talk to me.

QUENTIN
About what?

NANCY
Anything to keep me awake.

QUENTIN
Okay. Let's see. What music are you listening to? What do you like?

NANCY
If you looked at my iPod it would look eerily familiar. I don't think I told you, but I listen to your podcast every week.

QUENTIN
Oh? So you're the one.

Nancy smiles.

NANCY

You got me hooked onto some great stuff. It's what I listen to when I paint.

QUENTIN

Really?

NANCY

It's true. I've been working on a new piece inspired by your latest playlist. I've got that track by Justice on loop.

Quentin smiles, too. He taps his car stereo button and the crunchy synth riff of a song queues up.

Nancy perks up.

NANCY (CONT'D)

That's the one!

QUENTIN

I made it my ringtone.

He turns down the volume and steals a glance at Nancy.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

I wanted to ask you something, earlier.

NANCY

Ask me.

QUENTIN

When this is all over, and we've finally slept soundly for, like, a week straight, I was wondering, if you'd--

NANCY

(immediately)

Yes.

Quentin laughs.

QUENTIN

Well, that was fast.

NANCY

Wait, did you just ask me out?

Quentin's smile vanishes.

QUENTIN
Uhh, yes?

NANCY
Oh. Okay. Then yes; yeah.

QUENTIN
Wait, what did you think I asked
you?

Nancy, suddenly bashful:

NANCY
I thought you asked if I wanted to
have sex with you.

QUENTIN
Oh.
(beat)
Oh! So, I have another question for
you now, oddly enough...

Nancy grins.

NANCY
How odd, yes.

The Mustang's headlights illuminate a HITCHER on the side of
the road. As Quentin passes by, it's clearly FREDDY, holding
out his gloved hand.

Quentin snaps out of his flirtation and checks the road
behind him.

NANCY (CONT'D)
What?

QUENTIN
I saw him on the side of the road.

NANCY
How long have you been up?

QUENTIN
Too long.

Quentin checks the road: Still no sign of other drivers. No
sign of Freddy either.

He peers in the rearview mirror--

FREDDY is in the back seat.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)
Nancy lookout he's--

Before Nancy can turn, Freddy YANKS on her seatbelt to trap her flat against the car seat and then STABS through the seat and up through her chest.

The blades punch out through her blouse, blood spraying onto the windshield--

Nancy's eyes roll up--

QUENTIN (CONT'D)
NO!

Freddy un-skewers Nancy and leans up into Quentin's face:

FREDDY
(in Nancy's voice)
Wake up Quentin wake up!

Quentin looks over at him--

And sees NANCY still alive and uncut, her arms raising to cover her face--

Looking back out the windshield--

QUENTIN'S POV

The airbag EXPLODES at us as the hood crumples against a big oak tree--

EXT. SIDE OF ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

The aftermath of the crash. Quentin's Mustang is totaled.

Beat. Smoke billows from the mauled engine block.

INT. MUSTANG - CONTINUOUS

Quentin coughs and pushes against his airbag. It deflates.

He winces and holds his ribs, then looks at Nancy--

She's out cold in her seat. Her scalp bleeds from a head wound. Her airbag didn't keep her from hitting the window.

QUENTIN
Nancy...
(coughs)
Nancy!

He gently shakes her.

She slowly comes to. Groaning.

Quentin breathes a sigh of relief and gets out.

A beat later he opens Nancy's door and pulls her free.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)
C'mon, easy now, easy...

EXT. ROADSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Nancy and Quentin hold onto each other as they stumble back onto the road.

Nancy's head is swimming. She's lost and unfocused.

NANCY
My head...

QUENTIN
You may have a concussion. Hold tight. I'm calling nine-one-one.

He dials and puts the phone up to his ear.

Nancy grabs it from him and disconnects the call.

With a teardrop of blood leaking down her face from her forehead, she looks in desperate need of a hospital.

NANCY
We can't go back to the hospital.
Not yet.

QUENTIN
Then what now!

Nancy turns and looks out the way they were driving.

NANCY'S POV

That distant roar leads to another reality SHIFT--

QUICK POP IN NIGHTMARE LANDSCAPE

The winds how. On the road, a long streak of blood runs like a line parallel to the shoulder.

BACK TO SCENE

Shifted back to reality. No blood on the street.

NANCY
We're close.

And she starts walking. Nothing will stop her.

After a few steps, Quentin catches up to her and walks alongside.

He pulls up his crucifix necklace and kisses it in silent prayer.

EXT. LOW-INCOME NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

The couple arrive at a cul-de-sac. They stop in the middle of the dead end, their attention focused at the last house at very end of the road:

THE PRESCHOOL.

The house has been converted into a school-ish building with the sign out front.

Overgrown grass and a roof caked with leaves hint that it hasn't been occupied in years.

"CLOSED" reads the sign attached to the Preschool sign.

Another dull roar and SHIFT--

QUICK POP IN NIGHTMARE REALM

Nearby, the creepy SCHOOLGIRLS jump rope:

 CREEPY GIRLS
One, two, Freddy's co--

BACK TO SCENE

--snapping to reality. The shift causes Nancy to stumble.

NANCY
Getting worse.

Approaching the front porch now. Quentin peers in through the front window.

 QUENTIN
Nobody's home.

 NANCY
Good.

Nancy throws a brick through the window, startling Quentin.

With her jacket she pushes out the last of the glass still clinging to the pane, and ducks inside.

Quentin looks out at the street, then follows, one hand absently moving to the crucifix around his neck.

INT. PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Little desks and little chairs, facing a teacher's desk. An old chalkboard on the back wall. Homemade arts-and-crafts decorations from an old holiday smother the bulletin boards.

Nancy doesn't linger.

INT. PRESCHOOL HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Nancy follows the hall to the other end. Quentin wants to be watching every door at once.

QUENTIN

I can't tell what's real anymore.

She pauses at an interior door marked "STORAGE." Opens it.

A set of stairs plunge down into darkness.

Nancy fumbles for a light switch, flips it on.

She descends, into--

INT. BASEMENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is where all the seasonal decorations, nap-mats, and board games are stowed. They're all caked with dust.

A small mildewed mattress and pillow lie in one corner.

A row of old black filing cabinets line one wall, buffered by old moving boxes with the labels torn off.

A few household and gardening tools tucked here and there.

Against one wall: A metalsmith's work table, with a vise and hammer and soldering torch. (Note: This is the same basement room from Kris's dream, when she fell out of the tunnel.)

Nancy ducks under a cobweb and looks around.

Quentin goes to a large gas lamp on the work table and lights it. The room is now cast in a sickly amber glow.

NANCY

This is it.

(beat)

I'll start on the cabinets.

QUENTIN

I'll check the boxes.

MOMENTS LATER

Nancy yanks at a cabinet drawer, rifles through files.

Quentin tosses a box aside.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

What if we don't find anything?

NANCY

Just keep looking.

QUENTIN

Because all I'm finding is crap.

Nancy shuts a drawer and opens another.

NANCY

He led us here for a reason.

Quentin lets out a breath of pent-up frustration.

In the shadows, off to the side and slightly behind him, an old toy chest opens.

On Quentin, shaking his head.

QUENTIN

I just wish--

(beat)

Nancy?

QUENTIN'S POV

Nancy is gone. The room is empty.

NANCY'S POV

Quentin frowns at us.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

Where'd you go?

On Nancy, not getting it at first.

NANCY

What do you mean, I'm right here--

Quentin is suddenly and violently YANKED off his feet--

One arm bashing into an old chalkboard hung on the wall--

And then Quentin is dragged invisibly toward the darkest corner, his hands clawing for hold of something to stop him as he disappears from view behind a shelf of boardgames.

QUENTIN

Nancy!

Nancy springs to action in pursuit--

Rounding the corner--

Quentin has been dragged to the toy chest in the corner, holding his arms up protectively.

Just as Nancy gets to him, he props himself up on his elbows, looking around as if he just woke up.

NANCY

Quentin!

QUENTIN

I'm back... I'm back.

They both catch their breath a beat. Quentin's gaze lands on
THE TOY CHEST.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

Help me with this.

MOMENTS LATER

The chest lid opens up...

On Quentin and Nancy, one holding a flashlight as they lift the lid, the other tightly gripping a baseball bat, ready to swing if anything jumps out.

INSIDE THE CHEST, old clothes. A short stack of cigar boxes.

The light lands on the telltale FEDORA.

Nancy lifts it out of the chest.

Underneath: An old sweater, this one a different set of colors but easily part of the same wardrobe.

NANCY
It's his stuff...

Quentin takes out a cigar box and opens it.

Inside: Old PHOTOS of Fred Krueger, caretaker. Smiling for the camera. One or two snapshots that seem to be family photos-- perhaps with Krueger as the photographer.

Quentin lifts something else out of the cigar box. A wallet.

QUENTIN
(reading license)
Fred Krueger.
(to Nancy)
This is it. This is what he wanted
us to find.

NANCY
He was real. He was here, and now
we can prove it.

Quentin frowns.

QUENTIN
Nancy, you realize if we take this
to anyone, it's suddenly a missing
persons case. The police will know
Krueger didn't just skip town. And
sooner or later it will lead back
to our parents.

Nancy takes a breath.

NANCY
If it means Freddy finally has
peace... Really, I just wanna be
able to sleep again. Don't you?

Quentin nods: Okay.

The two of them start collecting the stuff from the chest.
Anything they can carry.

Nancy starts toward the door with an armload of Freddy's
belongings, her pile topped with the fedora.

QUENTIN
First thing we do is find a phone,
then we-- Nancy?

Quentin nearly runs into Nancy who hasn't gone three steps.
She stands rigid, staring at something on the wall.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

He follows her gaze to

THE CHALKBOARD Quentin knocked earlier. It hangs tilted, one corner on the floor.

Behind it, the edges of something wooden.

Nancy puts down Freddy's stuff and steps to the board. Pulls it away...

REVEALING a custom-made door, about three-feet square, set into the wall, a foot from the floor.

Quentin and Nancy trade looks. Quentin turns the knob. And opens the door.

Leaning down to look in...

NANCY
It's a tunnel.

A slight draft snakes past them from the dark recesses of the tunnel. It's impossible to tell how far it goes.

Nancy grabs a flashlight, clicks it on, and ventures in.

QUENTIN
Nancy, wait--

He goes in after her.

INT. NARROW TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Crawling. The silhouette of Nancy haloed in the sterile flashlight glow ahead, as she emerges into a room...

INT. CAVE-LIKE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A small underground space with a low table and children's chairs. And another old gas lamp.

Quentin gets the lamp working and the amber glow illuminates...

A WALL OF CRAYON DRAWINGS, each depicting a hideous monster. Some show it attacking a stick-figure child.

Nancy is drawn to one sketch in particular...

QUICK POP: FLASHBACK

The same beat as the previous flashback where Freddy sat across from Little Nancy, coloring with her. He smiles, that pathetic, creepy smile of a pedophile.

FREDDY

*I'm drawing what we'll do tomorrow,
you and me.*

BACK TO SCENE

The shock of the memory hits Nancy hard. She's standing in Freddy's "secret cave."

Nancy sees a BOX at her feet, set against the wall. An instant camera resting atop it.

She opens the box and pulls out a short stack of POLAROIDs.

It's all she can do not to throw up when she sees them.

Quentin notices.

QUENTIN

You okay?

Nancy, pale as a ghost, faces Quentin.

NANCY

We were wrong.

QUENTIN

What?

NANCY

He's not after us because we lied,
he's after us because we told.

She drops the Polaroids on the table and Quentin gets a look at one or two of them. He recoils in disgust.

QUENTIN

Oh GOD. Jesus...

Nancy slides down against the wall until she's hugging her knees, feeling small and helpless.

NANCY

He wanted us to come here so we
could remember it all. What he did
to us.

QUENTIN

Fuck!

(pacing)

What are we gonna do! He's never
gonna stop!

Quentin is at the end of his rope.

Nancy is mentally elsewhere. She sniffs and digs her hand in her jeans pocket for a tissue--

And pulls out the SCRAP OF SWEATER she tore from Freddy's sleeve. She focuses on it, stretching it out in her fingers.

NANCY

There is one way.

Quentin stops pacing. Meets her gaze.

Beat.

INT. BASEMENT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Nancy lies down on the old mattress in this room.

Quentin follows her down, sitting close by.

QUENTIN

This is crazy.

NANCY

There's no other way.

QUENTIN

I know. It's still crazy.

NANCY

Just-- wake me in five minutes. Or
if you see me struggling. Okay?

QUENTIN

Hey.

Quentin gets close, hovers over Nancy, and kisses her.

She kisses him back.

When they finally part lips:

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

Here, take this.

Quentin pulls off his crucifix necklace and puts it on her.

Nancy tenderly holds the tiny silver cross in one hand.

She takes a breath, and closes her eyes.

Quentin sits down in one of the little chairs at the work table. Adjusts the gas lamp to brighten the room more.

He looks around and finds the baseball bat. Picks it up. Holds onto it.

Quentin looks at Nancy again, her eyes still closed.

Beat.

She opens her eyes and her gaze finds Quentin.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

You okay?

NANCY

Can you believe I'm having trouble
falling asleep?

A moment, and then the two share a quick nervous chuckle.

QUENTIN

Well I'm right here.

NANCY

Okay.

She closes her eyes again. Takes a breath.

Quentin steadies himself, using the bat as a kind of cane.

Beat. All is quiet save for the soft ticking of an old analog wall clock.

Quentin looks up at it, then does a double take.

TIGHT ON: THE CLOCK -- normal, yet... the second hand ticks backwards.

On Quentin, tensing. Looking around...

Yet nothing else seems dream-like. Everything is as it was.

Quentin is still ready for action. Slowly, he reaches over and nudges Nancy's sleeping form.

QUENTIN

(sotto)

Hey.

She doesn't respond.

Quentin looks back at the clock:

THE MINUTE HAND is now a blade like the kind on Freddy's glove, its edge red with blood.

The hands are all pointed at midnight, not moving.

QUENTIN looks around again.

A piece of junk falls off a shelf.

More pieces begin to slide laterally across their surfaces.

The door to the hallway falls open...

Quentin reacts as if he's caught off balance, then it becomes clear--

The whole world seems to be tipping sideways, toward the open door. Everything falls and slides toward it, including--

QUENTIN, who reaches for the table leg but it too slides--

He SHOUTS for help as he falls through the door--

It SLAMS shut after him and--

INT. BOILER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Quentin falls onto the floor of Freddy's kill-spot: The boiler room.

Freddy emerges and leaps down on Quentin--

Quentin rolls away and gets up to flee but Freddy SLAMS him against a steam pipe. Quentin tries to muscle his way from Freddy's grip, trying also to convince himself:

QUENTIN
This... isn't... happening!

Something is really OFF about this version of the boiler room, though. The world seems to be partially melting.

Other things seem to move as if alive. Pipes swell and ripple. Inanimate things seem to have faces or body parts. It's a nightmare by way of H.R. Geiger and Salvador Dali. By far the most visually disturbing one yet.

Freddy TRANSFORMS before our eyes, his face elongating, his mouth stretching to an enormous maw while his body grows in mass like some horrible Jekyll/Hyde creation.

Freddy ROARS like some mutated grizzly bear--

FREDDY
You're mine now!

INT. BASEMENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nancy breathes deeply, asleep on the mattress.

Nearby, Quentin slumbers in his chair.

He coughs up blood. More blood stains his shirt. He begins to hyperventilate.

Closing in on Nancy, tighter and tighter, until her eyes snap open and she sits up.

NANCY
Quentin?

She sits up. Looks around.

THE BASEMENT ROOM is partially empty. The shelf is gone.

The lights flicker.

INT. BOILER ROOM IN QUENTIN'S NIGHTMARE - THAT MOMENT

Monster-Freddy has Quentin slammed high against the wall, and he's going in for the final blow with his glove when--

NANCY (O.S.)
(distant)
Quentin?

Monster-Freddy turns his head, craning his neck to hear.

NANCY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(distant)
Hello?

Monster-Freddy smiles.

FREDDY
Guess who fell asleep.

He drops Quentin's bloody body on the floor and moves out of sight and--

INT. BASEMENT ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Nancy approaches the chair and table where Quentin was sitting moments ago. The lights flicker--

NANCY'S POV

The chair and table have vanished as well. In their place, a metal floor, and more exposed pipes overhead than before.

Another flicker and we're fully in--

INT. BOILER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nancy steels herself. Ready. She calls out:

NANCY
Hello?

The room is quiet. Then:

FREDDY (O.S.)
Little Nancy...

Nancy puts her hand to her neck, to clutch the crucifix Quentin gave her.

A gasp escapes her lips when she realizes: It's gone. She's in a nightmare, and her necklace didn't cross over. Freddy has the power here.

FREDDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Jesus can't save you here.

Nancy trembles but finds the courage to move deeper into the bowels of the boiler room.

FREDDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
One, two, guess who's coming for you...

Emerging into a wider area with a higher ceiling...

NANCY
Krueger! Where are you? Come and face me?

FREDDY (O.S.)
Aren't you the brave one now... Got some trick up your sleeve?

Nancy whirls around--

FREDDY stands at the end of one tunnel. He steps out of view--

FREDDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Are you bait?

Nancy takes a step after him, then pauses. The sound of his voice makes him seem closer. Looking over her shoulder--

Freddy is RIGHT THERE, pulling her to him.

His gloved hand grabs her by the chin, his blades making a 'V' on either side of her cheeks, pressing her against one wall.

He steps in, uncomfortably close.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
You caught me. Now what are we gonna do?

He leans in as if to kiss her. She struggles.

NANCY
Quentin, WAKE ME UP!

Freddy smiles.

FREDDY
Quentin is with his friends now.

He turns her head so she can see:

THE FAR WALL: Where the bodies of previous victims hang from chains, against steam pipes.

Dean, Kris, Jesse, Marcus... and finally Quentin.

Nancy shakes her head, wanting to disbelieve.

NANCY
(sotto)
It's not real...

Freddy runs a knife-blade down her neck, along her collar bone, her exposed neckline naked without the crucifix.

FREDDY
I guess he got tired. The drugs finally wore off.

NANCY
No...

FREDDY

Oh, did you expect your boyfriend
to wake you up?

Nancy, in tears, finally accepting that Freddy got to him...

NANCY

Nnnoooo--

FREDDY

I'm your boyfriend now, Nancy.

She PUSHES Freddy away and starts to run off...

DOWN A CORRIDOR of pipes--

Through the hissing of steam in the pipes, and the echoes of the softly rattling chains comes the sound of distorted MUSIC. Distant, haunting.

Nancy doesn't get a dozen steps before she trips on a pipe near the floor and falls--

Starting to get up and keep fleeing, she looks ahead and now sees the corridor is just a DEAD END with a tall mirror and an old wash sink.

IN THE MIRROR, her reflection is now Little Nancy, limping toward her teenage self.

Little Nancy pleads at Nancy, fearing for her life:

LITTLE NANCY

Help me!

Behind Little Nancy, Freddy appears at the end of the corridor and advances toward her. But when he steps into the light, it's clear this is Fred Krueger the man. How he looked back then; a sad man who preyed on children.

FRED KRUEGER

(to Little Nancy)

Shh-shh, don't tell anyone.

Nancy looks over her shoulder--

Nightmare-Freddy advances just like his mirror image, both Fredgies closing in on their Nancys.

In the mirror, Little Nancy reaches for her teenage self as if she wasn't just a reflection--

And Fred gets to her, pulling her out of sight just before she can touch the glass, her little hand yanked away--

Nancy is on her knees now. Hands in her face. Broken.

FREDDY (O.S.)
It was our little secret. But you
had to run to mommy.

NANCY
I'm sorry. I shouldn't have told.

FREDDY
Look what you did, Nancy...
Look at me.

She won't face him. She shakes her head.

The music continues to play.

Freddy picks her up. She's now face to face with Freddy. In tears, she quotes her mother ironically:

NANCY
Sometimes bad things happen to good
people...

Freddy's finger-blade slides along her neck and collar bone, down her exposed neckline where the crucifix should be. Finally he notices the music.

FREDDY
They're playing our song.

TIGHT ON NANCY, her eyes suddenly sparking with recognition. It's the song she loves, of Quentin's.

Freddy runs his gloved hand down to her stomach, teasingly, and then

NANCY'S HANDS grab Freddy's glove-hand, and in one swift motion, PLUNGE the blades right into his gut.

Freddy stumbles back a step, looking down, the Fedora hiding his face. He starts to chuckle--

FREDDY (CONT'D)
You can't kill me. I'm your
nightmare.

NANCY (O.S.)
Not anymore.

ON NANCY, and now we notice she's wearing the crucifix necklace again. And the wall behind her is the basement room wall, not the boiler room.

NANCY (CONT'D)
You're in my world now.

FREDDY looks up in shock, the glove-hand still jammed into his gut, and in the amber light we see he's

Fred Krueger, the man. No longer burned and monstrous. No scars or marks. The way he looked in the flashbacks.

Blood seeps from his stab wound, down his sweater.

In shock, Freddy looks over at--

QUENTIN, bloodied, on the floor, his hand wrapped around

HIS CELL PHONE, lit up and playing the song like a ring tone or alarm.

BACK ON FREDDY, in shock.

FREDDY
 No. It can't be...

NANCY grabs the baseball bat and grips it with vengeful fury.

NANCY
 I remember everything!

She swings--

Freddy raises his arm to block but the bat CRACKS against bone, pushing him backward--

NANCY (CONT'D)
 You were nothing but a pathetic
 little man!

Swinging AGAIN--

Freddy HOWLING as the bat connects with his jaw--

NANCY (CONT'D)
 We couldn't stop you because we
 were little!

CRACK! Another hit topples him over the work table, the gas lamp toppling with him.

With a bloody gut, broken jaw and arm, Freddy can barely get to his knees. He looks pitiful. Pleading with a mouthful of blood, looking up at her--

FREDDY
 You were my little Nancy.

Nancy steps up for the final swing. Spitting her last words at him:

NANCY

All grown up now.

CRACK! And Freddy slams to the floor, his head SMASHING the gas lamp, instantly enveloping his head in fire.

His arms flail and he SCREAMS--

But he starts to get up again--

Nancy plants her foot on his chest--

Sending him back to the floor, the fire spreading on his body. He WAILS--

Nancy then finds the spare oil canister. She cracks off the spout and tosses it atop him.

The fire NOVAS and consumes Freddy's midsection.

Freddy's WAILING turns more and more inhuman, his whole head quickly engulfed--

The fire flickers on Nancy's face as she stands in defiance. Just like the same look her mother Gwen had the night the parents burned him to death (page 65). A silent admission that Mom did the right thing.

The fire spreads to the shelf and chest nearby. All the old books and games here catch like kindling.

Nancy goes to Quentin. Quentin's eyes shift-- he's still barely alive, somehow.

She picks him up as the fire spreads near them.

It's like the old preschool is spontaneously combusting.

EXT. PRESCHOOL BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Nancy walks out of the school carrying Quentin.

The fire has spread to the ground floor, licking out the windows behind her. For just a moment, it sounds like Freddy's DEATH-WAIL echoes into the night.

Nancy keeps marching, never looking back.

EXT. ELM STREET - NIGHT

Fire engines and emergency vehicles crowd this dead end.

An ambulance heads off, sirens clearing the way ahead of it.

INT. AMBULANCE - CONTINUOUS

PARAMEDICS manage Quentin in the stretcher.

Nancy sits wrapped in a blanket on the bench beside him. Her head wound and arm have been professionally bandaged.

She's holding Quentin's hand.

Quentin manages to open his eyes and look at Nancy.

His voice cracks. He's barely hanging on to life.

QUENTIN
Did you get him?

Nancy nods.

Quentin smiles.

PARAMEDIC
Don't try to speak, please. Just
lie still. Get some rest.

Quentin's smile is contagious. Nancy grins back at him.

NANCY
Yeah. Get some rest.

They know what value those words hold.

Quentin closes his eyes again.

Beat. Nancy lets out a long sigh. It's finally over.

From the cab of the ambulance, an unseen Paramedic whistles to himself... The tune "One, two, Freddy's coming for you..."

NANCY hears it, and looks forward to see--

THE BRIM OF A FEDORA hiding the driver's face in the mirror.

SMASH TO BLACK.