

SÉANCE

by

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SÉANCE

FADE IN:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY/CHELSEA HALL - NIGHT

The streets are quiet... at least quiet for New York. A few yellow cabs dot the black pavement. A stray dog searches for scraps outside one of those old apartment buildings transformed into a student dorm.

The sign, "Chelsea Residence Hall" hangs over the entrance.

INT. CHELSEA HALL/DORM ROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark... slivers of moonlight through the window blinds cast a striped glow over the suite... cluttered desks, a messy kitchen area, dirty clothes strewn about the floor. A fan hums a steady rhythm, blowing pages of a notebook with its breeze.

THREE SHAPES sleep in separate twin beds.

We glide past the shapes, into the...

BATHROOM

A girls' bathroom... bras and panties hang over the shower rod, makeup fills the mirror shelves above the stained sink.

ANGLE ON THE RUSTY SINK FAUCET...

...the old-fashioned four-prong handle begins to turn on its own... slowly... inch by SQUEAKY inch. The water starts as a drip, but the stream grows stronger, until the water is pounding against the sink... splashing out over the floor.

INT. CHELSEA HALL/DORM ROOM - NIGHT

LAUREN, (20), southern small town pretty, sleeps in her bed. O.S. THUMPS send her eyes blinking open. She raises up... squints around the room... to MELINA, (20), Manhattan gorgeous, tossing in her sleep... ALISON, (19), wild red hair covering her face, as she's curled up with a stuffed turtle.

The O.S. WATER RUNNING turns her head toward the bathroom... then SEVERAL THUMPS, like things are falling to the floor. Lauren stares at the dark doorway a beat, then climbs out of bed... moves to the bathroom and flips on the light.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

The water is blasting, filling up the sink. Bottles of soap and shampoo lay spilled in a circle on the floor. Lauren cranks the water off... stares at the mess a beat.

Then she notices the tub, hidden by the extended shower curtain. The curtain billows just a bit... as if a hand is pressing against the other side... stroking the curtain in long, slow swipes.

Lauren stares nervously at the shower curtain.

LAUREN

Hello?

No answer. Lauren glances back out to her roommates... considers waking them for support, but decides against it... reaches for the curtain... grabs it, and pulls it back.

And there's a LITTLE GIRL STANDING IN THE TUB, staring back at her. Her head is flopped over to the side, resting on her shoulder... like her neck's made of rubber. She's in pigtails and a torn, Sixties-style nightgown. Her head begins to jerkily straighten... is upright again... and then the little girl SCREAMS and lunges at Lauren... tears down Lauren's skin with her decayed, black nails.

Lauren falls back to the wet floor, SCREAMING, as she tries to break free of the little girl's grasp. But the little girl holds fast, gripping Lauren's throat, strangling her.

BLACK OOZE slips from the little girl's purple lips. Lauren opens her mouth to scream again, but there's no air left to force her cry... just a silent GASP, as her eyes roll back white in her head.

CUT TO:

LAUREN...

...shooting up in her bed... waking from the nightmare. She's sweating... out of breath. She grabs her throat... looks across the room, to Melina and Alison both asleep in their beds.

Lauren relaxes... grabs the fan from the floor beside her... aims the breeze at her face. As she does, she pulls the plug out of the wall outlet.

The fan slowly dies... silences... and she hears another noise now... WATER RUNNING.

Lauren looks to the bathroom doorway... shit.

She tightens her grip on the fan, and climbs out of bed... flinches when her foot hits the floor. She flexes her ankle... runs her finger down the LONG, JAGGED SCAR ON HER CALF, then eases toward the bathroom.

She moves to the doorway and peers inside, but it's too dark to see anything. She reaches a long arm into the darkness... flips on the switch.

The bathroom erupts in light. And there's the sink water running full blast... splashing all over the place. The bottles of soap and shampoo are spilled about, forming a small circle on the linoleum floor... and the shower curtain is extended, hiding whatever's behind it.

Just like in her dream.

Lauren stares at the curtain a long beat, then re-grips the fan like a weapon, before leaning nervously into the bathroom and cranking the water off.

And her eyes haven't drifted from that curtain... not for an instant... not until the HAND GRABS HER SHOULDER.

Lauren SCREAMS OUT... spins, ready to swing the fan... right at MELINA'S SLEEPY FACE.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
(hint of southern accent)
God! What are you doing?

MELINA
I have to pee.

LAUREN
So do I now.

MELINA
Well, can I go first?
(off the fan)
I'm faster because I don't use
small appliances.

LAUREN
She was in here again. She did all
this... turned on the water.

MELINA
Who, Little Chelsea?

Lauren motions to the shower curtain.

LAUREN
I think she's behind there.

Melina rolls her eyes, steps over the mess, and reaches for the shower curtain.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
Wait!

But Melina jerks the shower curtain open. Lauren jumps back, ready for the little girl's attack. But the tub's empty.

MELINA
No such thing.

Melina shoos Lauren out of the bathroom. Lauren stares at the empty tub, as she backs out... until Melina closes the door, blocking her view.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - LATER

Lauren sits propped up in her bed, staring at the bathroom door. Melina's across the room in her own bed.

MELINA
It's a rat, Lauren. I don't know how things are in Memphis, but this place is full of them.

LAUREN
Rats don't turn on the water three times a week.

MELINA
The plumbing in this building is like a hundred years old. If every screwed up faucet is a ghost, we're outnumbered.

ALISON
Could you guys be like a little louder please? I'm trying to not sleep at all.

MELINA
Lauren thinks Little Chelsea was in the bathroom again.

ALISON

Who cares. Having our own ghost is cool... like a puppy without having to feed it.

LAUREN

You haven't seen her.

MELINA

Neither have you.

LAUREN

Yes I have.

MELINA

Your little nightmares don't count.

ALISON

Melina's right. I dream about Jude Law like twice a week. Doesn't mean I've actually slept with him.

Lauren just keeps staring at the door, her eyes glowing in the dim light.

EXT. CHELSEA HALL - DAY

Lauren walks down the sidewalk... carrying a paper bag. She veers inside the Chelsea Hall entrance, squeezing past SEVERAL EXITING STUDENTS, all dragging luggage.

INT. CHELSEA HALL/ENTRY - DAY

Lauren enters through the first set of doors. She reaches large glass doors leading to the lobby. She pulls on the handle... locked. She PRESSES A BUTTON, then HOLDS UP HER ID CARD toward the SECURITY CAMERA ABOVE. The doors BUZZ and she enters.

INT. CHELSEA HALL/LOBBY - DAY

Lauren taps the elevator button... waits... glances over to another elevator, with an "Out Of Order" sign taped across it. She turns to SYD, (40's), the sloppy Security Guard, slouched behind the entrance desk, reading a magazine.

LAUREN

Did they just decide not to ever fix this one?

SYD
(without looking up)
Gotta ask maintenance. I'm
security.

The elevator doors open, and a HALF-DOZEN STUDENTS pour out, dragging backpacks and luggage. Lauren ducks out of their way... waits for the elevator to clear, then slides inside.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Lauren hits the "9" button... watches the closing doors squeeze Syd's image away. The elevator GRINDS INTO JERKY MOTION.

The FLOOR NUMBER LIGHTS above the door climb along with the elevator... 7... 8... 9.

Lauren takes a step toward the doors, anticipating them opening. But they don't open. She stands nose to metal, waiting... waiting... tapping the "OPEN DOOR" button... nothing. Finally, she POUNDS THE DOOR.

LAUREN
Come on!

And the elevator immediately GOES DARK... except for the GLOWING "9" above her, which casts just enough light to see the SHAPE GLIDE BEHIND LAUREN.

TIGHT ON LAUREN'S FACE...

...sensing something's in here with her... wanting to turn around, but unable to muster up the nerve.

Lauren closes her eyes... BEATS ON THE DOOR AGAIN...

...and the doors part. Lauren explodes out onto the...

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

...and right into a GIRL, carrying an overstuffed duffle bag into the lift. Lauren SCREAMS.

GIRL
Jesus, Lauren, are you okay?

Lauren gathers herself... throws a glance back into the brightly lit, VERY EMPTY, elevator.

LAUREN

Yeah. Freakin' elevator trapped me.

(off the duffle bag)

You're leaving already?

GIRL

My flight's in a couple hours.
When do you head home?

LAUREN

I'm doing the Chelsea Thanksgiving.

GIRL

That's right. I'm sorry.

LAUREN

That's only because you don't know my family. And this'll be fun. Melina didn't have the money to fly back, and Alison and Diego couldn't handle being apart for a full week, so they're hanging out here too.

GIRL

Ninth floor should be interesting.

LAUREN

Who knows what'll be left when you get back.

The girl gives Lauren a hug, then steps into the elevator.

GIRL

Call me if you get bored.

Lauren watches the elevator doors close, then hears a door open behind her. She turns to see GRANT, (20), good-looking kid, start into his room. He glances back at Lauren. She nods to him, but Grant disappears inside without acknowledging it.

INT. CHELSEA HALL/GIRLS' ROOM - DAY

Lauren enters. Melina's still in bed, their DORM ROOM PHONE resting beside her. Alison sits at her desk.

MELINA

I called you to get me a sesame.

LAUREN
I must've already been in the dead zone. Why is there no signal on this block?

ALISON
One of my professors said it was the power lines or transformers around. We should do some kind of protest. I have to walk like three blocks away to use mine.

Lauren tosses the brown bag to Melina.

LAUREN
Well you're just lucky I'm so thoughtful.

Melina pulls a bagel from the bag... squeals with excitement.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
It's like an evacuation drill out there. This place is going to be so empty.

ALISON
I can't wait. It's all ours.

MELINA
That means you and Diego will have plenty of other rooms to corrupt.

ALISON
And my goal is to corrupt them all by the end of the week.

A SQUAWK spins Lauren... to a PARROT perched on the dresser.

LAUREN
Why is there a parrot in our room?

ALISON
Diego's taking care of it for his roommate.

LAUREN
Okay. And it's standing on my bra because...

ALISON
He let it out of its cage for a while.

Lauren waits for more... doesn't get it.

LAUREN
I'm going to jump in the shower.

Lauren heads into the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lauren starts getting undressed... pulls the shower curtain back to turn on the water...

...AND A FIGURE OUT REACHES FOR HER.

Lauren SCREAMS... until she realizes it's DIEGO, (20), Alison's Puerto Rican boyfriend, squeezed into a nightgown, with his long black hair pulled into two pigtails.

DIEGO
Come to me!

LAUREN
Diego, you asshole!

Lauren heaves a tube of toothpaste at Diego, bouncing it off his head. She spins... sees the laughing Melina and Alison, standing in the doorway behind her.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
That was not funny!

Melina and Alison keep laughing. Melina holds her thumb and finger an inch apart... it was a little funny.

Lauren attacks them... snatches the bagel away from Melina, and shoves it into her own mouth.

MELINA
NO!

Melina grabs for the bagel. The three girls wrestle their way out of the bathroom.

DIEGO
Hey, wait for me!

Diego charges out to join in the scrum.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The girls fall to the floor. Lauren takes another giant bite of the bagel, then throws the remains back at Melina.

LAUREN
You guys suck so much.

The parrot's prancing and squawking at the commotion. Diego dives into the mix... rubs up against the girls.

DIEGO
For my Thanksgiving present this year, girls...

MELINA
God, you are gross.

ALISON
You really are. But you look hot in that nightie.

And Alison crawls on top of him... they kiss.

LAUREN
What's the deal with that Grant guy? Isn't he going home?

DIEGO
No clue. Dude never talks. You want me to tell him you're interested in a little holiday hump?

LAUREN
Oh my God, you really are disgusting. Just go. And take your bird.

Diego lifts the parrot onto his arm and starts out.

DIEGO
I'm rolling in a while, if anybody wants to come over.

Diego puts his fingers to his lips, takes an imaginary drag.

ALISON
Wait for later. We'll have a pre-Thanksgiving party.

Diego waves over his shoulder as he walks out. Alison gives Lauren and Melina a wicked smile.

ALISON (CONT'D)

We're going to need some bourbon.

Alison holds out her hand. Lauren and Melina grimace... reluctantly extend a hand to Alison's... all three hands bob up and down four times... then Alison flashes out TWO FINGERS, Lauren flashes TWO, and Melina shoots out ONE.

MELINA

Shit.

Lauren and Alison grin.

ALISON

And do that hair thing. He likes that.

INT. CHELSEA HALL/LOBBY - DAY

Syd is kicked back in his chair, feet up on the desk, as he flips through an old, worn copy of HUSTLER.

The elevator DINGS, and out steps Melina, in a t-shirt that barely covers her ass. She SHAKES OUT HER HAIR.

Syd sees her, shoots upright in his chair, tossing the magazine back into a drawer, and locking the drawer with one of his tiny keys.

MELINA

Hey, Syd. Our shower's messed up again. Can I use the common?

SYD

I guess, yeah.

MELINA

Thanks.

Melina gives Syd a little pucker, then sways down the hall. Syd's eyes follow her every step... he leans... watches Melina disappear into a room and close the door.

Syd shoots up out of the chair like it's been set on fire. He throws open a drawer, jerks out a SMALL MIRROR, then lumbers down the hallway.

He reaches the door, presses his ear against it... O.S. SHOWER RUNNING.

Syd ducks into the MAINTENANCE CLOSET next door... closes the door behind him.

INT. MAINTENANCE CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Syd locks the door, and pushes a shelf down a few inches, revealing a SMALL HOLE IN THE WALL.

Syd positions the mirror over the hole... adjusts the angle... until a SHAPE fills the reflection. Syd gawks at the image... bites his fat lip.

INT. CHELSEA HALL/LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Lauren and Alison barrel out of the stairwell... race to Syd's desk.

ALISON

The perv is so predictable, it's almost not fair.

Lauren pulls out a PIECE OF WIRE, slides it into the drawer lock, and starts manipulating the lock.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Such a wonderful skill.

LAUREN

My father thought teaching me to play soccer would be a waste of time. Wanted to stick with the important stuff.

CLICK... the drawer slides open. Alison reaches in... digs under the stacks of Hustlers, and pulls out a FULL BOTTLE OF WILD TURKEY. She closes the drawer, and they take off back down the hall.

INT. MAINTENANCE CLOSET - DAY

Syd's got that mirror angled just right. Images of ASS dance across it. And Syd's starting to breathe heavy... the mirror fogs up. Syd can't stand it... lowers the mirror to take a clean look through the hole.

CUT TO:

SYD'S POV...

...through the peep hole... on the smooth, fleshy, butt, filling the hole. And then the ass begins to turn... the frontal shot's coming.

BACK TO SCENE

And Syd's nodding now... can't wait for this. Suddenly, he GRUNTS IN HORROR... stumbles back away from the hole... drops the mirror... it shatters across the floor.

CUT TO:

THE STAIRWELL...

...Lauren and Alison running up the stairs... and there's Melina waiting for them, still wearing her t-shirt.

MELINA
How'd we do?

Alison smiles, holds up the bottle of rum.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Syd hurries out of the maintenance closet, bounces down to his desk, and buries his face in some paperwork.

An O.S. DOOR OPENING... footsteps... coming closer. Syd can't fight the urge, glances up...

...to Diego standing at the elevator, soaking wet and wearing nothing but a towel. He gives Syd a nod.

DIEGO
Dude, how's it goin'?

Syd manages a nod, as Diego steps into the elevator.

EXT. CHELSEA HALL - NIGHT

Dark and stormy. Rain pours down. Thunder RUMBLES.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

The party's going full blast... MUSIC BLARING, Alison throwing back shots, Melina standing at the end of the hall, singing over the music and holding her arms out...

...because here come Lauren and Diego racing bikes down the hall... around the corner... full speed, swinging at each other, as they pedal furiously... Ben Hur on bikes... in a college dorm hallway.

Melina closes her eyes and SCREAMS, as Lauren and Diego blast by her. Lauren throws up her arms in victory, and forgets to slow down... CRASHES INTO THE FAR DOOR.

Lauren and her bike lay there in a heap... until the door opens, and there's Grant, chiseled frame in nothing but boxers, and glaring down at Lauren with very tired eyes.

LAUREN

Hey.

GRANT

Can't you go be stupid someplace else?

And before Lauren has a chance to respond, Grant has the door closed in her face.

ALISON

Lauren's boyfriend's mad at her.

LAUREN

You're hilarious, Alison.

DIEGO

Forget that guy, he's a dick.
That's like the first thing I've
ever heard him say to anybody.

Lauren nods... drags herself up, and pushes her bike back down the hall, past Melina.

MELINA

But he's cute.

Lauren ignores Melina... walks into their room.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - LATER

Melina, Alison and Diego relax around the room, passing a joint. Lauren stands at the door, glancing out. She grabs a slice of pizza from a box, and slips out of the room.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lauren stands at Grant's door, knocking. It opens, and there's Grant again... not looking any happier.

LAUREN

Listen, I just wanted to say I was sorry. We were... I was acting a little crazy. The whole dorm to ourselves thing.

(holds out the pizza)

Brought you this to apologize for waking you up before.

Grant stares at the slice a beat, then takes it.

GRANT

What do I get for this time?

Not the response Lauren was expecting.

LAUREN

Wow, you really fall asleep fast. Should I go grab you another slice?

GRANT

That's okay.

An uncomfortable, silent beat, then...

GRANT (CONT'D)

Goodnight.

LAUREN

Yeah, goodnight.

Grant closes the door. Lauren turns... starts the long walk back down the hall. As she moves, the HALL LIGHTS FLICKER... the hallway goes dark, then lights up again.

Lauren glances around... keeps moving... until the LIGHTS DIM AGAIN. And then the DING of the OUT OF ORDER ELEVATOR ARRIVING.

The doors open... the elevator interior lights burn brightly... and it's empty.

Lauren stands frozen, staring into the vacant box.

The doors close... then ANOTHER RING, and they open again... close... DING... open... empty.

And Lauren's scared now, just staring into the elevator.

As the doors close again, the elevator lights flicker and dim... and what could be the FAINT IMAGE OF A GIRL APPEARS, her head tilted over, staring back at Lauren for that instant before the doors seal shut.

GRANT (O.S.)

It's her.

Lauren turns... sees Grant standing in his doorway.

GRANT (CONT'D)

She fell down the elevator shaft
back in '65.

LAUREN

Who, the little girl? You've seen
her too?

GRANT

You see all sorts of shit when
you're the only one awake.

INT. GRANT'S ROOM - NIGHT

Like the electronics department of Circuit City. Video equipment, audio components, computer systems.

Lauren stands over Grant, as he sits at his desk, working on his laptop. He scrolls through pages of ARCHIVE NEWSPAPER ARTICLES.

GRANT

I don't sleep much. Chronic
insomnia.

Lauren pulls down one of the HALF DOZEN PRESCRIPTION BOTTLES from the shelf above Grant's desk.

LAUREN

Is that what these are for?

GRANT

No, those are to keep me from
jumping off the roof.

Lauren starts to laugh, but Grant isn't smiling. He grabs
the bottle back, placing it carefully among the others.

GRANT (CONT'D)

The rest are to keep me from
getting too high or too low, help
me sleep or help me wake up... even
one there that makes me smile when
it's raining. My parents figure
with enough meds, even their kid
can be happy.

LAUREN

Do they work?

Grant fakes a big, cheesy smile, which fades as quickly as it
came. He keeps scrolling down the pages.

GRANT

So why didn't you go home for
break?

Lauren hesitates coming up with a line. Then...

LAUREN

Melina's parents couldn't swing the
airfare to get her home, and I
didn't really have anything going
on at home, so...

GRANT

Where's home?

A beat, then...

LAUREN

Memphis.

GRANT

Cool. You ever go check out
Graceland?

LAUREN

(shakes her head)
What about you? Why are you still
here?

GRANT
My parents just got divorced. Less
complicated to just stay here.

Grant extends his hand over his shoulder toward Lauren.

GRANT (CONT'D)
I'm Grant.

LAUREN
(shaking his hand)
Yeah, I kn... I mean I'm Lauren.

GRANT
Nice to meet you, Lauren.

Grant taps a couple more buttons on the keypad, and the laptop screen fills with an OLD NEWSPAPER ARTICLE AND GRAINY PHOTOGRAPH OF A LITTLE GIRL... what could be the little girl from Lauren's shower.

LAUREN
That looks like her.

GRANT
Her name was Cara Furia. Moved
here from Italy with her mother and
sister back in the Sixties. They
lived in apartment 9A.

LAUREN
That's my room.

GRANT
Guess she misses home.

LAUREN
So my room really is haunted...
with a real ghost?
(off Grant's nod)
Well it's been like forty years,
she needs to get over it. Why
couldn't she have lived in your
place?

GRANT
Mine's a single, so I had James
Spence... the lonely building
maintenance guy. Guess he had
nothing better to come back to.

Grant prints out a copy of the article... hands it to Lauren.

LAUREN
How did you find all this?

GRANT
I hacked into some sites... did a bunch of searches with the building and who lived here before the university took it over. Al Pacino and Jerry Garcia had places up on eleven.

LAUREN
I should've gotten a room up there. Then my ghost could at least sing some Dead tunes to me.

Grant goes to the video equipment... flips on a tiny video player.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
So you're like a techno geek hermit in here all by yourself, huh?

GRANT
I've found that people just get in the way.

LAUREN
That's probably exactly what...
(reading the article)
...James Spence used to say.

Grant motions to a video monitor. The screen glows in a Night-vision green.

GRANT
I hooked this together after she showed up the first couple times.

ONSCREEN

Grant's room, cast in the green aura... it's empty and still... until a BLURRED SHAPE glides across the frame.

LAUREN
Was that her?

GRANT
You get a better look here in a second.

The video continues... a SHADOW starts into frame... just as the screen FLASHES TO STATIC.

Grant taps the monitor... hits a few buttons... no change.

LAUREN
What happened?

Grant taps the monitor... checks the controls.

GRANT
I'm not sure.

LAUREN
Have you shown this to anyone else?

GRANT
Last thing I need is a bunch of
wasted, Ghostbuster-wannabes
banging on my door all night.

Lauren starts for the door.

LAUREN
I'm going to go get my friends
while you fix it.

GRANT
No.

LAUREN
They think I'm crazy.

Grant flips the monitor off.

GRANT
That's their problem.

LAUREN
No, it's my problem.

GRANT
Sorry. Like I said, I don't want
to turn my room into some kind of
freak show.

Lauren's pissed, but just shrugs and turns for the door.

LAUREN
Thanks for helping me out.

Grant watches Lauren leave, then takes a bite of the pizza
and looks back to the blank screen.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - NIGHT

Melina's dancing to blaring music. Diego and Alison are curled up on Alison's bed together. And they're all staring at Lauren, as she stands at the door.

DIEGO

So the dude's got video of this
Casper chick, but he won't let
anybody else see it?

LAUREN

That's what he says.

MELINA

The guy's screwing with you.

LAUREN

No, I think he's just like socially
retarded or something.

Lauren smacks the stereo off.

DIEGO

Doesn't matter. We don't need the
freak to see her.

ALISON

I'm not breaking into his room to
see some phony ghost movie.

LAUREN

It was real.

DIEGO

I'm not talking about watching Geek-
boy's tape. Last semester I did my
Religious Sciences' mid-term on
different cultures' beliefs about
the death and spirits and crap.
There are all kinds of ways to talk
to the dead.

(grins)

And I say we do a little face to
face.

MELINA

A seance?

LAUREN

(off Diego's nod)
You're an idiot.

DIEGO

Hey, you're the one crying ghost.

ALISON

Let's do it. It'll be cool.

MELINA

Actually, it'll be a waste of time.
But what else do we have to do.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - LATER

The room is dark... lit only by a few FLICKERING CANDLES. Lauren, Melina, Alison and Diego sit in a circle on the floor, surrounding a SIMMERING FONDUE POT.

Diego's got an OPEN TEXT BOOK on one side, and his term paper on the other. He drops some incense into the pot, along with a finger of weed. A thin line of smoke floats up to the ceiling. Diego waves the smoke toward his face.

ALISON

Should I go get my Ouija board or something?

DIEGO

This isn't one of your ten year-old pajama party gigs. This is the real deal. Where's that article?

Lauren hands Diego the article. He glances over it... tosses some laundry powder and salt into the pot... sparks fly. The girls exchange glances. Diego scans the book, then holds out his hands... the girls just look at him.

DIEGO (CONT'D)

You've gotta hold hands with someone or else the spirit can take over your body.

The girls give him one of those "are you serious" looks.

DIEGO (CONT'D)

Swear to God.

The girls don't believe any of that, but they all hold hands anyway. Diego closes his eyes... the girls follow his lead.

DIEGO (CONT'D)

We summon the spirit of Cara Furia.
Come to us, Cara. Speak to us.

Melina SNORTS a laugh. Lauren and Alison struggle to stifle theirs. Diego's eyes fly open... glare at the girls.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
Do you want to find out what's up
with this little bitch or what?

The girls nod... sorry. Diego closes his eyes again... starts repeating the CHANTS.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
We summon the spirit of Cara Furia.
Speak to us, Cara.

Nothing.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
Cara Furia.

Still not a sound.

LAUREN
Try Jerry Garcia.

Diego ignores Lauren... tosses more mixture into the pot.

ALISON
You said she's been in Grant's room
too. What about the guy that used
to live there?

DIEGO
Shhh. If she's really around here,
she'll show up. Cara Furia... Cara
Furia.

But nothing's happening, so...

LAUREN
His name was James Spence.

And before Diego can yell at Lauren, the POT TREMBLES ON ITS OWN.

Everyone's eyes pop open... stare nervously at the pot.

DIEGO
Okay. James Spence. Cara Furia.
Show yourselves.

THE CANDLES ALL FLICKER AT THE SAME INSTANT.

ALISON
Maybe we don't want to do this
anymore.

DIEGO
Shut up. Cara... James... come to
us.

O.S. NOISES FROM THE BATHROOM. The girls all squeeze in a
little tighter toward Diego.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
Cara Furia.

Suddenly, the sound of the SHOWER WATER RUNNING... the
bathroom sink faucet splashing... the BATHROOM DOOR SLAMS
SHUT... and then the kitchenette faucet explodes on.

LAUREN
Oh, my God.

Everyone's frozen... staring at the faucet... at the
bathroom. Finally, Melina stands up... turns off the
kitchenette faucet.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
More rats?

Melina doesn't answer. They all gaze at the door, wondering
what's behind it. Finally, Lauren stands, pulling Alison
with her toward the bathroom. Alison clamps onto Diego,
dragging him along, and Diego grabs Melina... they ease to
the door together.

ALISON
This is stupid. I say we call
Security Syd. Get his overpaid ass
up here.

They reach the door... stare at it a beat, listening to the
water pouring inside. Lauren grabs the door handle.

ALISON (CONT'D)
Wait.

But Lauren isn't waiting. She pushes open the door. A thick
foggy mist pours out over them... clouds their vision.

Lauren reaches into the bathroom... flips on the light.

The room is filled with a hot, wet mist. The shower is
raining hot water down over the tub...

the sink is almost overflowing in steaming water... the soap and shampoo bottles are tossed about again, forming a small circle on the floor.

And then all the water stops... the room falls back into silence... the mist sinks to the bathroom floor...

...and the word "NO" is written on the fogged bathroom mirror.

They all see it.

LAUREN
I think she's mad.

DIEGO
We didn't do anything wrong.

ALISON
Maybe she wants us to leave.

MELINA
I'm cool with that.

The bathroom lightbulb suddenly EXPLODES... the CANDLES ALL BLOW OUT... complete darkness takes over the room.

MELINA (CONT'D)
Guys?

Melina reaches beside them to a lamp... hits the switch... nothing.

ALISON
Diego, why don't you tell little
Cara we're sorry.

But Diego's too scared to say anything right now. Lauren looks over to the thin sliver of hallway light framing the door.

LAUREN
Hang on.

She starts slowly across the dark room, her outstretched hand guiding her.

As she nears the door, the FAINT IMAGE OF A MAN APPEARS ACROSS THE ROOM... unmoving... watching Lauren with PIERCING BLUE EYES. His face is hollow and drawn... his head is shaved and BURN SCARS circle his scalp like a gruesome crown. His pale skin is pulled tightly over thick veins, and his torn, stained t-shirt clings to his wiry frame. This is JAMES SPENCE.

But Lauren's eyes are locked on that door, so she doesn't see SPENCE.

Lauren's hand reaches the door handle... she pulls it open. The hall light pours into the room... spreading as the door swings open... devouring the darkness.

Spence starts toward Lauren. The light hits him and he fades into nothing.

Lauren turns to the others, still huddled together across the room. Their eyes dance around... scan the room for their ghost. But they're all alone.

DIEGO

What the hell's going on?

LAUREN

This was your idea. You tell us.

And then a few strands of Lauren's hair lift into the air... as if some unseen hand is gently stroking them. Lauren spins to the touch... no one's there. She shivers... runs her hand down her neck.

MELINA

What's wrong?

LAUREN

Just creeped-out.

Suddenly, all the lights in the room flash back on. Lauren closes the door... looks back to the others.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

So I'm not crazy anymore, right?

MELINA

There's an explanation for what happened.

LAUREN

What is it?

ALISON

Yeah, what?

Melina glances around... shrugs.

MELINA

I don't know.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The ceiling lights hang every ten feet, sending glowing circles of light down over the empty hallway floor.

MELINA (V.O.)

But I don't believe in ghosts.

Just then, the first ceiling light goes dark. The SHIMMERING IMAGE OF SPENCE passes underneath... fades in the light... until the next bulb fizzles dead, and Spence appears again... striding down the hallway... appearing and disappearing as he moves toward Grant's door.

INT. GRANT'S ROOM - NIGHT

Pitch dark. The only light glows from the LCD displays on Grant's electronics.

Grant tosses in bed... until the video monitor flashes on... that same NIGHT-VISION GLOW... THIS TIME WITH CARA'S GREEN FACE AND EMPTY, BLACK EYES FILLING THE SCREEN... frozen... staring out of the monitor.

Grant's eyes flutter open... he sees Cara's face... his eyes shoot around the darkness... to a FLEETING GLIMPSE OF SPENCE... moving across the room, watching Grant.

Grant flips on the light with a start. The room's empty... except for Cara's frozen face. Grant stares back at Cara.

GRANT

What the hell?

He gets up and reaches toward the monitor... just as it TURNS BACK TO STATIC AGAIN... Cara's gone.

Grant glances around the tiny room... inside an empty closet... he's definitely all alone.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Syd's at his desk, half-dozing. The thundering herd of footsteps wakes him. He turns, as Lauren, Melina, Alison and Diego race out of the stairwell and down the hall to him.

DIEGO

Did the power flash down here?

SYD

What?

ALISON

The lights. Did they go off a few minutes ago?

SYD

Nope.

LAUREN

(to Melina)

Told you.

MELINA

Power surge could've just hit our floor.

SYD

Yeah, I hear kids bitchin' at maintenance every day about fuses blowin'. It's an old building.

MELINA

Same thing with plumbing?

SYD

Rusty pipes is even worse.

LAUREN

When do power surges and rusty pipes write on a mirror?

MELINA

Somebody could've written that weeks ago. Those things never go away. What is "No" even supposed to mean?

Lauren turns back to the "Out Of Order" elevator... still taped off.

LAUREN

Was someone working on that earlier?

Syd JANGLES THE KEYS ON HIS BELT, then motions to the LOCKED GLASS DOORS separating the lobby from the exterior doors.

SYD

I locked them doors at six o'clock, just like the University told me.

(MORE)

SYD(CONT'D)

Nobody's been in or outta here since.

LAUREN

It came up to our floor.

SYD

That elevator there hadn't moved in three months.

LAUREN

I saw it tonight. It came up... the doors kept opening.

Syd pulls a crow bar from under his desk and walks to the elevator. He drives the bar between the elevator doors and pries them open.

SYD

If those doors open upstairs, Sweetheart, you don't wanna climb in.

The kids peer into the empty shaft. The top of the elevator car is sitting in the basement floor, three levels below.

LAUREN

I know what I saw.

Lauren stares down at it a beat, then looks to the others for help... just shrugs.

ALISON

We all had a lot to drink. Maybe we just thought...

LAUREN

I'm not crazy.

Lauren spins and walks off.

MELINA

Lauren!

Lauren doesn't stop... continues into the stairwell.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Lauren races up the stairs, two at a time. She climbs about three flights, then slows to a steady walk.

As she moves, a DISTANT SOUND... WHISTLING.

Lauren stops... strains to hear, then looks up... to where the whistling is floating down from... getting louder... along with FOOTSTEPS MOVING DOWN THE STAIRS.

Lauren leans over the rail... squints up the endless levels above her. No one's there... just the WHISTLING AND FOOTSTEPS ECHOING OVER HER.

Lauren backs away from the rail. The WHISTLING continues... and it's not just random noise, it's a song... *"Itsy Bitsy Spider"*.

Lauren backs down a level of stairs. Her LEG GIVES AWAY, and she grimaces... reaches down to her SCARRED LEG.

Lauren eases into a corner... her eyes roll up to the stairs just above her head... the FOOTSTEPS JUST ABOVE HER HEAD... getting LOUDER... CLOSER.

Lauren ducks through the FOURTH FLOOR DOORWAY.

INT. FOURTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dim and quiet... the whistling is gone, replaced by Lauren's nervous breaths. She presses her back against the wall, just beside the SMALL SQUARE WINDOW IN THE DOOR. She stares straight ahead, trying to build the nerve to turn and look through that window... back into the stairwell.

Finally, Lauren turns... peers through the window into the BRIGHTLY LIT STAIRWELL.

The stairwell's empty.

And then PIANO PLAYING turns her head down the hall... to an open doorway.

She limps toward the music... just as the stairwell light fades to darkness in the window, AND THERE'S SPENCE'S FACE FILLING THE GLASS BEHIND HER... staring back to where Lauren was just standing.

Lauren eases down the hall... the piano grows louder... she reaches the door and looks inside.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grant's playing the piano... and it's the same song Lauren just heard in the stairwell... *"Itsy Bitsy Spider"*.

Lauren watches him from the doorway.

LAUREN
Do you whistle too?

Grant jumps just a little... turns to Lauren.

GRANT
Couldn't sleep... again. Didn't
think anybody would be down here.

Lauren throws a glance down the hall toward the stairwell,
then back to Grant... no way it could have been him. She
walks to the piano.

LAUREN
So nobody else has been past here?

GRANT
The floor's empty, remember?

LAUREN
Yeah. Maybe I am losing it.

GRANT
What?

LAUREN
Nothing. Just turning into my
mother.

Lauren sits down on the bench beside Grant.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
Do you know anything besides
nursery rhymes?

GRANT
(shakes his head)
Learned it for a recital once when
I was a kid. Not sure why it
jumped into my head tonight.

LAUREN
Recital... wow. Electronics whiz,
ghost-hunter, junior-pharmacist and
pianist. What can't you do?

GRANT
Everything else.

Lauren smiles... not the open answer she was expecting.

LAUREN
So did you get your little horror
film working again?

Grant shakes his head.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
Wouldn't tell me if you did though,
would you?

GRANT
Probably not.

Lauren chuckles at his honesty. She taps a few keys... forms
the most basic version of "*Chopsticks*".

GRANT (CONT'D)
So you're a musician too... along
with your bicycle skills.

LAUREN
You steal enough bikes when you're
a kid, you'll learn how to ride
them eventually.

GRANT
Does that go for playing pianos
too?

LAUREN
Maggie Calhoun taught me this in
the fourth grade. Only song I
know.

Grant joins in on the low end of the keys.

GRANT
Why didn't she teach you another
one?

LAUREN
I stole her bike.

Grant laughs... that's the first time he's done that since he
can remember. They continue playing together... their
fingers moving faster.

INT. FOURTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Empty. The music floats down the hall... is soon joined by
an O.S. WHISTLING.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Lauren and Grant walk up the stairs.

GRANT

My parents couldn't wait to get me out of the house so they could split up. Then they had no reason to make each other miserable anymore. I think they signed the divorce papers as my plane took off from L.A.

LAUREN

Sounds like maybe they should be popping all those pills instead of you.

GRANT

I only get the children's dose. You should see their medicine cabinet.

LAUREN

Unfortunately, the only thing that can keep my parents apart is the Douglas County Sheriff's Department.

(off Grant's look)

My father's got some honesty issues. Until I was twelve, I thought every kid had a meth lab in their kitchen. And my mom's even more fun... a diagnosed schizophrenic.

GRANT

Pretty impressive resume.

LAUREN

That girl you always heard about, from the wrong side of the tracks... I'm what she looks like.

GRANT

And here you are doing just fine on this side.

LAUREN

Which is the real reason I didn't go back for break.

(MORE)

LAUREN(CONT'D)

Memphis is a long way to go just to sleep in a crowded trailer.

(shakes her head)

I worked too hard to get away from that place.

GRANT

So you lied to me before.

LAUREN

Sorry. Just another family trait handed down for generations.

They continue climbing.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lauren and Grant step out of the stairwell door, just beside Grant's room. They stop... shift uneasily.

LAUREN

So are you going to try to sleep or what?

GRANT

I guess. Thanks for the duet.

LAUREN

Anytime. You don't have a bike, do you?

Grant smiles, shakes his head. Lauren feigns disappointment, turns... stares down the long hallway toward her room. She's nervous, and it shows.

GRANT

Some cultures welcome ghosts into their homes. It's a sign of good fortune.

LAUREN

I don't feel fortunate.

(beat)

Did any of those articles you found ever say how she fell?

GRANT

Her mother was gone, and her sister thought she was asleep. She just wandered out... accidents happen I guess.

LAUREN

Yeah... I guess. Do you think she's mad? When Diego tried to bring her back, she seemed kinda pissed.

GRANT

Bring her back?

LAUREN

Oh, yeah. You missed out on our little séance party tonight.

GRANT

I thought séances were for spirits that aren't already here.

Lauren considers that a moment... shrugs.

LAUREN

We didn't really think it through that well.

Lauren starts walking toward her room. Grant stands at his door, watching her.

As Lauren moves further away, her steps quicken, until she's running past the elevators... charges into her room.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lauren races inside and locks the door behind her. She turns... finds Melina huddled on her bed, the covers pulled tightly around her neck. She has the volume of a sitcom turned up full blast on the tv.

Every light in the room is on.

MELINA

What happened to you?

LAUREN

I was walking up and ran into Grant.

MELINA

Your very first date.
Congratulations.

LAUREN

Shut up. He seems pretty cool.

Lauren turns the tv down... glances around at the lights.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
What's with all the lights?

MELINA
Alison bailed on me to go screw her
mind off your little ghost.

LAUREN
And what, you're scared? I thought
you didn't believe in any of that.

MELINA
I don't... didn't.

Melina climbs out of bed... pulls Lauren to the bathroom.

The bottles of soap and shampoo are tossed into the circle on
the floor again.

LAUREN
I was here for the show, remember?

MELINA
Yeah. And I picked them up. It
happened again.

LAUREN
Rats are keeping busy.

Melina walks into the bathroom... goes to the mirror and
blows HOT BREATH over it. The middle of the mirror fogs
over, revealing the word, "KILLER" printed across.

MELINA
And their vocabulary's expanding.

LAUREN
What does that mean?

MELINA
I'm open for a positive
interpretation.

Melina watches Lauren eye the mirror. She's scared now.

LAUREN
Did Diego come in here?

MELINA
I don't know.

LAUREN
I bet he did. He's messing with
us... trying to scare us.

MELINA
Little prick's pretty good.

Lauren nods, then turns and sprints across the room. Melina SCREAMS... races after her. They dive into their beds, laughing that nervous, scared laugh, as they pull the covers up around them.

LAUREN
Go ask him.

MELINA
Yeah right. You go.

LAUREN
I don't need to go. I know it was
him.

MELINA
Fine. Me too.

They look back toward the bathroom for a beat, then...

LAUREN AND MELINA
DIEGO!

Both girls leap from their beds... rush to the door. Lauren grabs the handle and pulls... the door doesn't move. Lauren tugs on it again... nothing. Melina joins in, straining to get the door open... but it isn't opening.

MELINA
He's out there.

LAUREN
Let go of the door, Diego!

MELINA
Alison! Make him cut this out!

The girls pound against the door... tug at the door knob.

LAUREN
This isn't funny!

CUT TO:

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR...

...and CARA JUST STANDING IN THE DARK HALL... not touching the door... just staring at it with her tilted head... listening to the girls' CRIES.

LAUREN (O.S.)

DIEGO!

INT. TWENTIETH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Alison and Diego stumble out of the stairwell door, kissing and groping. They're both still a little drunk and stoned. Finally, Alison pushes him away.

ALISON

I'm too tired from the climb.

DIEGO

You said you didn't want to stay in my room.

ALISON

I said I didn't like the parrot staring at me. But I didn't mean we had to climb all the way up here.

DIEGO

Better view of the city. And there's an empty room up here getting remodeled... with a broken lock.

Diego pulls Alison down the hallway. They reach a door, and Diego pushes it open

Alison leaps onto Diego, wrapping her legs around him. They kiss, as they move into the room.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Empty and dark. The shimmering lights of New York illuminate the room... a ladder, paint cans stacked on the floor. Rain hits the windows and runs down the glass in long, wet streaks.

Diego flips the light switch... nothing.

DIEGO

Great.

ALISON

That's okay. You know I get a
little crazier in the dark.

Diego smiles... just what he wanted to hear. He kicks the door closed. Alison slides to the floor, pulling Diego down with her. They begin to undress each other... kissing and pawing as they strip down to their underwear.

Diego rolls on top of Alison.

ALISON (CONT'D)

You brought one right?

DIEGO

What?

ALISON

You've gotta play by the rules.

DIEGO

Baby, you can trust me.

Alison's hand slides down Diego's body. And by the look on his face, her hand has happily reached its destination... and that's when Diego GRIMACES IN PAIN.

DIEGO (CONT'D)

Jesus!

ALISON

I don't trust anybody.

Diego GROANS... rolls off of Alison.

DIEGO

But I swear I'll...

ALISON

Better hurry. Before the mood
dies.

And that's all it takes to send Diego sprinting out of the room in his boxers. Alison GIGGLES... she loves the control.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - NIGHT

A very pissed Melina leans against the door, kicking it over and over with her foot, and tugging at the handle.

MELINA

The idiot must've jammed it with something.

Lauren walks over, carrying a screwdriver. She crouches down by the door knob... reaches to remove the handle...

...just as the door CLICKS... drifts open with a long, steady CREAK.

Lauren and Melina watch the door swing open on its own. They exchange a glance, then stare out into the empty, brightly lit hall.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lauren and Melina lean out... glance both ways... no sign of anyone. Melina jiggles the door handle... works perfectly.

MELINA

How'd he do it?

Lauren shakes her head. Melina squints down the hall.

MELINA (CONT'D)

You aren't funny, dickhead!

(to Lauren)

They're probably down there somewhere laughing at us.

Lauren eases back inside, closing the door.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lauren locks the door.

MELINA

Diego's such an asshole.

LAUREN

I'm not sure it was Diego.

MELINA

I am.

LAUREN

The mirror and the lights... the door. She's never done this before.

MELINA
Who, your little dead girl?

LAUREN
I think it was the seance.
(beat)
I think we did something wrong.

CUT TO:

ALISON...

...still lying on the floor of the dark room, half-conscious from the partying.

And then we see someone else... SPENCE... standing in the corner of the room, leering at Alison.

CUT TO:

DIEGO...

...racing into his room... tearing open a drawer and digging through the mess. He pulls out a condom... starts out, then turns back and grabs another one... just in case... sprays a few shots of cologne over himself.

CUT TO:

SPENCE...

...watching Alison. He starts toward her... past the window... fades in the city lights... appears again in the darkness beside Alison... standing over her, his eyes floating up and down her perfect body.

And Alison's eyes are closed... she doesn't see him slowly descend over her... nearer... closer... breathing in her scent.

Spence gently lays one of his hands over Alison's eyes.

Alison smiles.

ALISON
That was fast.

Spence runs his finger down Alison's skin... between her breasts... down her stomach.

Alison flinches.

ALISON (CONT'D)
Your hands are so cold.

Our POV drifts away... Alison's MOANS follow us toward the door.

ALISON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Easy, baby.

We push through the doorway... into the...

TWENTIETH FLOOR HALLWAY...

...and CARA SITTING ON THE FLOOR... her tilted head staring into the room.

ALISON (O.S.)
Diego. Stop!

And then Cara's mouth flies open, and she releases a PIERCING SCREAM... ALISON'S HORRIFIC SCREAM.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Diego hurries out of his room... starts for the stairs, until DING... the elevator doors slide open. Diego stares at it a beat, glances down the hall to the stairwell... it's a long climb, and Diego wants to get there fast.

He steps into the elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Diego taps the 20 button over and over.

DIEGO
Come on.

Finally, the doors close, and the elevator jerks into motion.

Diego eyes the buttons, lighting up with each floor they pass... 11... 12... 13...

...and then the elevator RINGS... stops on 15. The doors open, revealing an empty hall.

Diego leans out... glances up and down the hallway. No one's there. He slides back inside and presses the 20 button again.

The doors close... the elevator grinds into motion, climbing upward... 16... 17...

...until the elevator SHUDDERS AND STOPS.

Diego stands frozen, waiting... but nothing happens.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
No, no, no, no.

Diego starts tapping the 20 button again.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
Come on. Please, God, not now.

The elevator lights flicker... darkness takes over for a brief moment, then grows bright again.

And Diego's starting to panic now... his tapping has turned to pounding.

The lights dim again, and this time we see CARA IN THE SHADOWS... standing just behind Diego... not moving... just looking at him, as her crooked neck begins to straighten.

The lights flash back on... Cara disappears.

Diego gets a little shiver... glances around the empty elevator.

Suddenly the NUMBER BUTTONS BEGIN TO FLASH... wild, chaotic... until there's a rhythm to the flashes... 1,9,6,5, over and over again, 1,9,6,5... so fast the flashes almost blur into one another.

Diego's nervous eyes hold on the dancing buttons, until he slams his hand against the panel. The buttons go dark... except for 20.

The elevator jerks back into motion... the bell rings, and Diego's squeezing out the doors before they even open.

INT. TWENTIETH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Diego sprints down the hall.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Diego rushes inside.

DIEGO
I'm sorry, baby, I couldn't get...

Diego slides to a stop... scans the room... empty. Just their clothes tossed on the floor.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
Alison?

Diego flips the light switch... still nothing. He leans out into the hall.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
Baby, I'm back!

Diego waits for an answer... doesn't get one.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
Alison! Don't do this to me!

Diego sees the closet door... grins... gotcha. He walks over to the closet... jerks the door open and a STACK OF EMPTY BOXES TUMBLE OUT ONTO HIM. But there's no Alison.

Diego scoops up his pants... steps back into them... his fun's over. He picks up the other clothes, and walks out.

INT. TWENTIETH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Diego steps out of the room... moves to the elevator, bangs the down arrow.

Suddenly, the hall lights flicker and fade. The hallway goes dark, except for the VERY DIM EMERGENCY LIGHTS in the corners. Diego glances around.

DIEGO
Perfect.

Diego starts down the long corridor, toward the stairwell door at the far end. As he walks, he notices something at the end of the hall... a FIGURE.

A smile spreads across his face... he opens his mouth to speak... then realizes the figure isn't Alison.

It's JAMES SPENCE... walking slowly toward Diego. His white t-shirt almost glows in the darkness. His blue lips are drawn together, WHISTLING THAT SAME SONG... HIS SONG.

Diego's smile fades... he slows... watches Spence continue down the long hallway... closer and closer... until they're only a few steps away from each other.

Diego gives Spence a nervous nod.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
How's it going?

And Spence just keeps WHISTLING... walks past Diego, almost shoulder to shoulder, giving Diego a WINK as he moves by.

Diego picks up his pace, getting some separation between them, as he stares straight ahead, anxious for the stairwell door.

ANGLE ON DIEGO'S FACE...

...more than a little scared... not daring to glance back at Spence.

DIEGO KEEPS WALKING...

...and with each step he takes toward that door, we're waiting for Spence to leap from the shadows behind him... and so is Diego.

Diego closes in on the door... thirty feet... twenty-five feet... his breathing is getting faster... twenty feet... fifteen... and Diego can't wait anymore... trots the final stretch... shoves the door open.

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Diego charges inside, just as the lights blast back on. Diego catches his breath... pulls the door back open to take a quick peek at Spence in the light.

INT. TWENTIETH FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Diego slips his head through the crack... squints down the brightly lit hall... SPENCE IS GONE.

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Diego ducks back into the stairwell... takes off down the steps, three at a time.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - NIGHT

Lauren and Melina are squeezed into Melina's bed together. They SCREAM OUT when Diego blasts through the door, out of breath.

LAUREN

You dick!

DIEGO

What?

MELINA

Did you write that on our mirror?

DIEGO

Huh?

LAUREN

Don't screw around. We're not in the mood for anymore of this shit tonight. What about messing with our door?

DIEGO

I don't know what you're talking about. I didn't write anything or do anything with any doors. Swear to God.

(glances around)

Where's Alison?

MELINA

She left with you.

DIEGO

Yeah, well... we sorta got separated up on twenty.

LAUREN

You left her?

DIEGO

I had to make a supply run. She made me. When I got back, she was gone.

MELINA
She's probably just passed out up
there somewhere.

DIEGO
That's fine, except for the guy I
saw in the hall.

LAUREN
What guy?

DIEGO
Never seen him before. He was an
old dude, like forty or something.
And he looked all messed up too.
Just wandering around up there...
whistling.

Lauren's face falls.

LAUREN
Whistling?

DIEGO
(nods)
And I think the freak winked at me.

Melina sees Lauren's anxious look.

MELINA
What's wrong?

LAUREN
I was on the stairs before... I
heard somebody whistling.

DIEGO
Was it my guy? Greasy hair...
slimy looking?

LAUREN
It was coming from a couple flights
above me. I didn't see who it was.

MELINA
It's probably a maintenance guy
doing his thing while everybody's
gone.

DIEGO
I don't care who he was. You
didn't see this dude.
(MORE)

DIEGO(CONT'D)

Alison doesn't need to be by herself with him around.

INT. GRANT'S ROOM - NIGHT

Grant sits at his computer, scanning through the archive pages... staring at the old photo of Cara.

A KNOCK breaks his stare. He goes to the door... opens it. And there's Lauren, with Melina and Diego behind her.

LAUREN

I figured you weren't sleeping.

Grant shakes his head.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

We think Alison's passed out up on Twenty somewhere.

GRANT

Doubt it's the first time.

DIEGO

Hey, man, watch it.

LAUREN

Probably not. But Diego saw a guy up there. So we're going to go up and find her... thought you might want to come along.

DIEGO

I told her you wouldn't give a shit, dude.

GRANT

You're right... dude. But I'll come anyway.

LAUREN

Thanks.

Grant and Diego exchange a little stare as they head down the hall together.

INT. TWENTIETH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

The group walks down the brightly lit hall.

LAUREN
Why'd you guys have to come all the way up here?

DIEGO
Little change of pace. Work the penthouse view.

The others just roll their eyes.

CUT TO:

POV FROM THE OTHER END OF THE HALL...

...watching the kids turn into the room. As they do, we hear a SOFT, O.S. WHISTLING.

INT. ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The kids step inside. Grant reaches for the light switch.

DIEGO
Lights don't work.

Grant hits the switch anyway. The lights TURN ON, illuminating the room... and the furniture is strewn about... the ladder rests on the floor... paint cans are scattered around the room. There are childlike paintings on the walls... of a stick-figure man holding a flower out to a little girl.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
Damn.

LAUREN
Did you guys do this?

DIEGO
Huh? No way. It must've already been trashed... just too dark to see. I'm telling you the lights didn't work before.

Diego flips the switch, sending the room into darkness, and REVEALING SPENCE STANDING RIGHT BEHIND MELINA.

Melina doesn't see Spence REACHING OUT HIS HAND.

Diego flips the lights back on... Spence is gone.

MELINA

Maybe this is the wrong room.

DIEGO

No, it's the only open one on the floor. I checked them all. And Alison was laying right there by the window when I bolted. Wasn't gone more than three or four minutes tops.

Melina brushes her hand across her neck... like she just felt a bug crawling on her skin.

LAUREN

Alison!

The kids check around the room... under the bed, in the closet, past the spilled boxes. Lauren checks the window... locked.

GRANT

Where was this guy you saw?

DIEGO

In the hall.

Grant and Lauren lean out into the hallway... glance around... it's empty.

DIEGO (CONT'D)

The lights went out again, and the hall was like pitch dark. I see him coming down from the other end. He walked right by me.

Melina brushes the invisible bug away again.

MELINA

Did you ask him if he'd seen Alison?

DIEGO

Didn't really think about it. And I'm not sure I'd want the freak to know there was a girl up here by herself.

As Lauren stands at the center of the room, a RED DROP falls past her face... splatters on the floor at her feet.

She looks up... sees the word, "KILLER" painted in childlike handwriting across the ceiling.

The others see it.

MELINA
That looks familiar.

LAUREN
(to Diego)
If you and Alison are trying to
play games with...

DIEGO
Hey, I didn't do that.

MELINA
What about Alison?

DIEGO
I don't know. Not really her
style.

LAUREN
If you're messing around, Alison,
cut it out!

The kids wait for a response... don't get one... until a
FIGURE appears in the doorway.

The kids YELL OUT... leap back... away from... SYD.

SYD
Not supposed to be nobody in the
building except on Nine.

LAUREN
We're looking for our friend.

SYD
Your friend shouldn't be up here
neither.

MELINA
We know. She just kind of got lost.

And then Syd sees the mess in the room... the dripping
ceiling.

SYD
Who's the artist?

LAUREN
We don't know. We came up to look
for her and found this.

Syd eyes the ceiling.

DIEGO

There was another guy up here earlier.

SYD

Nobody else in this building. University told me only five... you four and your missing friend. I might not be college geniuses like you, but I know that's five.

DIEGO

I don't give a shit what they told you, man, I saw him right out there.

Syd shoots Diego a glare... watch it.

LAUREN

We thought maybe it was a maintenance guy.

SYD

Nothing scheduled till after Thanksgiving. And they don't get in unless I let 'em in.

DIEGO

Well the guy I saw... he's in.

SYD

And you better hope I find him. Otherwise you get to pay for the cleanup.

Syd waves them out.

SYD (CONT'D)

Go on. I'll call the station and let them know about this supposed fella. And stay in your rooms in case we need to talk to you again.

MELINA

What about Alison?

SYD

She's probably already down there, laughin' at the rest of you.

Lauren and the others reluctantly walk out. Syd turns back to "KILLER" on the ceiling. He almost feels like a real cop.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

The kids make their way down the stairs.

DIEGO

Why don't I feel any better knowing
Security Syd's on the case?

MELINA

I hate to say it, but he's probably
right. Alison will be in her bed
doing that stupid laugh of hers
when we get down there. And your
friend up on Twenty was just some
poor homeless guy looking for a
warm place on a cold night.

And then a DISTANT WHISTLING. Lauren hears it.

LAUREN

Listen.

They all stop... look upward to the sound. Grant looks to
Lauren... she nods.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Same song.

DIEGO

That's my boy.

The kids take off, racing up the stairs. They reach the next
landing... stop... listen... the WHISTLING is still above
them.

They continue their climb... hit the next landing... strain
to hear... nothing. Grant reaches for the stairwell door,
then stops... because ANOTHER SOUND FLOATS DOWN OVER THEM...
A LIGHT THUMPING... GROWING LOUDER... until a SOCCER BALL
APPEARS, bouncing down the stairs... off the wall and
rebounding toward the kids.

They separate... watch the ball bounce past... continue down
the stairs... each THUMP growing fainter.

The kids exchange glances... that's weird. Then they charge
up after the source... reach the top landing... nowhere else
to go.

INT. TWENTIETH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

The kids lean out of the stairwell door... glance up and down the hall... empty.

DIEGO
He must've bolted on Nineteen.

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

The group steps back inside... just as the THUMPS RETURN, and the SOCCER BALL comes BOUNCING BACK UP THE STEPS... lands in Diego's arms.

Everyone just stares at it, then leans over the rail to see who's below them. There's no one.

DIEGO
Nice trick, asshole!

CUT TO:

POV FROM JUST A FEW STEPS AWAY...

...staring back at the nervous kids... watching them peer down the steps.

MELINA
What's going on?

LAUREN
I don't know.

INT. CHELSEA HALL/LOBBY - NIGHT

Syd steps off the elevator... moves down the hallway, pulling on each door handle... all secure. Then he hears something...

...WATER RUNNING. He leans against the bathroom door... an O.S. SHOWER SPRAY. Syd grins.

SYD
Found you, girlie.

Syd glances up and down the hall, then slips into the maintenance closet.

INT. MAINTENANCE CLOSET - NIGHT

Syd eases to the wall... slides the shelf over, revealing the hole in the wall. The light from the bathroom flows through the hole.

Syd picks up one of the mirror pieces... tilts it to get just that right view.

ANGLE ON THE MIRROR'S REFLECTION...

...the empty shower.

SYD LEANS AND READJUSTS THE MIRROR...

...sure that Alison is just an angle away.

But there's no one. Syd drops the mirror and crouches down to get a better view. He presses his eye against the hole.

CUT TO:

SYD'S POV...

...through the hole... into the brightly lit, very empty shower stall.

And then the bathroom goes dark, and THERE'S SPENCE'S BLOODSHOT, BLUE EYE STARING BACK THROUGH THE HOLE.

Syd CRIES OUT... falls back to the floor. His hand lands on one of the mirror shards, and the glass pierces into his hand.

Syd scrambles out of the closet.

INT. CHELSEA HALL/LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Syd races down the hall to his desk. The jagged piece of mirror still protrudes from his bloody hand.

He falls into his ROLLING CHAIR and grabs the phone... dials.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
NYPD. Twenty-third.

SYD
Yeah, this is Leary over at the campus. I'm calling about...

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
What precinct are you with?

SYD
What? No, I'm security over at the
university and...

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
Hold.

SYD
No, wait!

But just like that, the woman is gone... off to take care of
more important callers.

Syd throws a nervous glance down the hall toward the bathroom
door, still shut.

And then some V.O. WHISPERS FROM THE PHONE... soft at first,
but growing louder. And it's just garbled sounds, except for
the word, "Syd".

SYD (CONT'D)
Say again?

More incoherent WHISPERS... growing clearer...

WHISPERS (V.O.)
Syd.

SYD
What? Who is this?

WHISPERS (V.O.)
Time to die.

And just like that, Syd's rolling chair is flung backwards
across the floor. It rolls into the wall, SLAMMING SYD'S
HEAD against the concrete.

Syd crumbles to the floor, dazed and very confused. He
watches the chair roll back and forth in front of him... as
if it was toying with him.

Syd tries to shake the cobwebs away... clear the vision.

But the chair keeps moving... back and forth... until it
stops... just sits there a moment, then flies at Syd,
SMASHING INTO SYD'S FACE. His nose CRUNCHES with the impact.

Syd's head flies back into the wall again, cracking the concrete block. Syd slides down to the floor, his head leaving a trail of blood along the wall.

Syd tries to blink some clarity back into his aching head. He starts crawling toward the doors, his hand feeling for the keys on his belt.

He reaches the door... raises the key with a trembling hand... and is suddenly flung back across the room.

He raises up... focuses on the LONG PHONE CORD... extending over the floor by itself... stretching out toward Syd.

SYD
Please...

The phone cord pulls tight... POPS OUT OF THE WALL.

SYD (CONT'D)
Wait... wait.

But the cord isn't waiting. In a flash, it's wrapped around Syd's throat... tearing into his skin... strangling him.

As Syd desperately fights to break free, the lobby lights flash off for an instant...

...AND WE SEE SPENCE STANDING OVER SYD, GRINNING, AS HE SNAPS THE CORD TAUT AROUND SYD'S NECK.

The lights begin to flicker on and off like a strobe... wild, chaotic flashes... Spence appearing then disappearing with every blink of wattage.

EXT. CHELSEA HALL - NIGHT

From the middle of the street, the lobby lights flash off and on... off and on... off and on.

Our POV rises up the side of the building... to the NINTH FLOOR... to LAUREN'S WINDOW.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - NIGHT

Lauren, Grant, Melina and Diego enter... no sign of Alison.

LAUREN
Alison?

No answer.

DIEGO

So much for the "curled up in her bed laughing" theory.

LAUREN

I'm going back out to find her.

MELINA

Let's give Syd a chance to do his thing. He's probably already reporting us for that room.

DIEGO

Screw him, we didn't do it.

Diego pulls a joint from his pocket... lights up.

GRANT

You think that's smart... with Syd already watching us?

Diego takes a big, satisfying drag.

DIEGO

Takes the edge off. You should try some, dude... you could use it.

GRANT

I'm just saying, you might want to be careful. It was you and Alison up in that room, and you were the last one with her. If he can't find anything, he'll want to talk to you first. Probably not best if you're stoned when he shows up.

DIEGO

What, is that some kind of Jedi, Hobbit, geek warning?

LAUREN

Shut up, Diego.

DIEGO

Maybe we should go check out your room... see what you're filming now. Maybe that's where Alison is.

LAUREN

I said shut up.

Not a chance.

DIEGO
Or do you just video little girls?

Grant throws Lauren a hard stare... thanks. He turns and walks out.

LAUREN
(to Diego)
What's your problem?

DIEGO
Me?

MELINA
You really are an asshole.

Lauren hurries out after Grant.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Grant's walking down the hall to his room. Lauren steps out behind him.

LAUREN
I'm sorry.

Grant just keeps walking.

GRANT
Don't worry about it. He was right before... I really don't give a shit.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - NIGHT

Lauren walks back in... waves Diego out.

DIEGO
Fine. Kick me out.

Diego shrugs her off... starts for the door.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
I knew I should've gone home for break. And when Alison shows up, tell her she missed out. I'm not in the mood anymore.

Diego walks out. Lauren slams the door shut behind him.

MELINA

Prick.

LAUREN

None of this makes sense.

MELINA

Isn't the first time we've lost
Alison for a night.

LAUREN

No, I mean for forty years Little
Cara's been doing her thing... just
wandering around and messing in
bathrooms.

Melina GROANS... here we go again.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Why does she suddenly start writing
on mirrors. And you know that was
her again up in that room.

MELINA

I don't know anything. Maybe it's
our homeless whistler... or Alison.

LAUREN

How does the whistler write the
exact same thing that was on our
mirror? And there's no way Alison
pulls this off. Her range of
scares ends at "Boo". And what
about that ball?

MELINA

Which of course brings us back to
your creepy little girlfriend.
(off Lauren's nod)
What are you trying to say, Lauren?

LAUREN

That we ask her again.

MELINA

No way. I'm not wasting my time.

Melina shakes her head... not a chance.

CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - LATER

TIGHT ON ALISON'S OUIJA BOARD...

...resting on Lauren's bed, with Lauren and Melina sitting on opposite sides of the board, their eyes closed, and hands resting on the planchette.

LAUREN
Cara, why are you here?

MELINA
This is so stupid.

LAUREN
Give it a chance.

MELINA
I have. After my mom died, my sister and I used to do this every night... we never talked to anybody but each other. If there really were ghosts or spirits or whatever, my mom would have...

And then Melina catches herself... shakes the memory away.

LAUREN
Let's just try, okay?

MELINA
Well you're pushing down on it too hard. You just want to barely touch it.

Lauren readjusts her fingers.

LAUREN
Cara, why are you here?

MELINA
That's like ten times. Why don't you try something else.

The girls' eyes fly open.

LAUREN
Maybe it's because you won't turn off the lights.

MELINA

Those are my rules. And I've never
heard of a ghost afraid of the
light.

Lauren closes her eyes again. Melina follows her lead.

LAUREN

Please, Cara. Tell us why you're
here. What do you want?

ANGLE ON THE BED...

...sinking just a bit, like an invisible weight has just been
placed on the mattress.

One of Melina's eyes pops open... rolls down to the empty
bed... dances around the room.

MELINA

Did you just get cold?

And then the PLANCHETTE JERKS... enough to catch both girls'
attention.

LAUREN

Don't mess around.

MELINA

I'm not. I don't think.

LAUREN

Cara? Are you here? Tell us about
that night... about what happened
to you.

The planchette starts to move across the board.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

(to Melina)

Are you doing that?

Melina gives a quick, frightened shake of her head.

The planchette keeps moving... the girls' eyes follow it
anxiously... watch it stop on the letter "D"... it holds a
moment, then inches over, settling on the "I".

Lauren and Melina watch as the pointer slides back across the
board... comes to rest on the letter "E".

LAUREN (CONT'D)

D-I-E.

Lauren and Melina hold a look, both knowing what that spells.

MELINA

I don't want to play anymore.

Melina jerks her hands off the planchette. Lauren pulls away. They stare down at the board... watch as the PLANCHETTE BEGINS TREMBLING... it presses hard against the cardboard, digging the tip into the surface.

Suddenly the planchette starts sliding on its own, cutting into the board as it moves from letter to letter... D-I-E, D-I-E, over and over, leaving a scarred trail in the board.

Then the planchette flies off the bed, hits the floor and slides under the door into the hall.

MELINA (CONT'D)

I'm done.

Melina jumps up... heads for the door.

LAUREN

Where are you going?

MELINA

She wants the room, she can have it. I'm going to sleep with Diego and the parrot.

LAUREN

Wait.

But Melina throws the door open... runs out into the hall, closing the door behind her.

Lauren stares at the board... the deep cuts connecting the letters... D-I-E.

She looks back to the door... to the crack below it where the planchette slid out. Lauren climbs off the bed... walks to the door and swings it open.

And there is CARA STANDING JUST OUTSIDE IN THE DARK HALL, her head resting sideways on her shoulder, and holding the planchette in her tiny hand.

Lauren SCREAMS... stumbles back, tripping to the floor.

Cara steps into the room... the lights fade to black, and she's almost glowing, as she moves toward Lauren.

Lauren scrambles backward across the floor.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

MELINA!

The door SLAMS SHUT behind Cara. She keeps coming... methodically closing in on Lauren.

Lauren jumps to her feet... backs away.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Stop. Please.

But there's no stopping Cara's attack now. Her head jerkily rises straight on her shoulders as she nears Lauren.

And Lauren has nowhere else to go but the...

BATHROOM

Lauren backs inside... past the sink... the commode... with Cara following... closing in for the kill.

Lauren stumbles against the tub... falls back into the shower curtain. She grabs it to catch herself, but her weight SNAPS THE ROD. Lauren falls into the tub, pulling the curtain down around her.

Cara steps toward her, then stops... right in the middle of the circle of bottles. She just stares at Lauren.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

(voice trembling)

Please.

Cara opens her hand... the planchette slips from her fingers... sails down to the floor. Its point STABS INTO THE LINOLEUM.

Then Cara turns and walks out... disappears around the corner.

Lauren doesn't move... can't move. She stares at the planchette, sticking up from the floor... RIGHT IN THE CENTER OF THE CIRCLE OF BOTTLES.

And then Lauren moves... fast. She grabs a pair of scissors from the shelf and falls to her knees... starts tearing at the linoleum inside the circle.

She cuts it away, ripping up the strips of flooring, until the circle is nothing but wood.

Lauren taps on the wood... finds a hollow sound and pries at the board with the scissors.

The rusty nails finally give, and the boards pop up. Lauren digs her hand inside... pulls out a SMALL METAL BOX.

She opens the box... it's filled with coins, marbles, hand-drawn pictures, old photos, a diary. This is a little girl's treasure chest.

Lauren looks at the old photos... of Cara and her SISTER smiling together. Lauren flips through the diary... her eyes straining through the darkness to absorb the words.

As she reads the diary, we hear O.S. WHISPERS from outside the bathroom. Lauren looks up from the diary... her room is suddenly dark.

Lauren stands... carries the diary and metal box out of the bathroom.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The lights are still off... the room is dark... but it's clear that things are different. The girls' beds are gone, replaced by a floral couch and chair. Their bookshelves are now a china chest and a mantle lined with family photos.

Lauren looks around, confused... sees a SLEEPING GIRL on the couch.

MORE WHISPERS from the back room. Lauren eases toward the doorway.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A crucifix hangs over the double bed. Rosary beads rest on the nightstand.

Lauren enters... sees Spence standing over the bed... over the little girl curled up under the covers... CARA... awake and frightened.

And Spence's scars are gone... his head is covered in greasy black hair. He's wearing a blue maintenance jumpsuit.

Spence runs a DAISY over Cara's hair, as he TWISTS A KNIFE IN HIS OTHER HAND.

SPENCE
(whispering)
There's nothin' to be scared of. I
just wanna talk again is all.

Cara just stares back at Spence.

SPENCE (CONT'D)
And you gotta be real quiet. Or
else I'll make your sister hurt
bad.

Spence takes Cara's arm... leads the little girl out of the bed.

Lauren stands in the shadows, confused... scared. Spence and Cara move past Lauren without noticing her.

And Lauren's shaking her head... wants to yell. But her eyes jump back to Spence's knife... to Cara... to Cara's sister on the couch.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Spence walks out of the room, guiding Cara down the hall toward Grant's room. Except the name "Spence" is printed beside the door.

Lauren hurries out the door... walks after them... sees them reaching the room.

LAUREN
Leave her alone!

Spence doesn't even flinch... it's like he didn't hear Lauren... can't hear her.

And then the hallway suddenly darkens... just for a moment. But in that instant, Lauren sees Spence standing at the open elevator shaft, holding CARA'S LIMP BODY in his arms.

The world brightens again... Spence is still leading Cara into his room. As he does, the little girl turns... gazes back at Lauren with tears slipping from her eyes. They hold the gaze a beat... until Cara disappears into the darkness with Spence... the door closes.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
NO!

And Lauren sprints down the hall... races to the door and throws it open.

INT. GRANT'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lauren blasts into the dark room.

LAUREN
CARA!

Lauren flips on the lights, just as Grant leaps from the bed in shocked panic.

Lauren scrambles around the room, searching for Spence and Cara. Grant grabs her, but Lauren shoves him away.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
Where are they?

GRANT
What?

LAUREN
He brought her in here!

GRANT
Who? There's nobody else here,
Lauren!

And then Lauren realizes they're all alone. And that's when she starts to cry.

GRANT (CONT'D)
What happened?

Lauren just falls against Grant... buries her face into his chest and cries. Grant stands stiff, arms to his sides, not sure how to react.

LAUREN
It wasn't an accident. He killed
her. Then he threw her down the
shaft.

Melina and Diego charge through the door... see Lauren and Grant.

DIEGO
What the hell, dude?

GRANT
She just ran in screaming.

Melina moves to Lauren... strokes her face.

MELINA
Lauren, are you okay?

Lauren looks at Melina... shakes her head.

LAUREN
I saw him take her. It was
Spence... James Spence.

MELINA
You saw him take who?

LAUREN
Cara... the little girl. I watched
him take her from her bed, and I
didn't do anything to help her.

Lauren hands the metal box to Melina. Melina looks inside.

MELINA
What is all this?

LAUREN
It was in our bathroom, under the
floor. That's why she keeps coming
back. She wanted someone to find
it.

GRANT
Why?

LAUREN
For the truth.

Lauren grabs the diary... starts reading.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
(reading)
"Mr. Spence found me again. Did
those bad things to me and told me
not to tell anyone. I wanted to
cry but I didn't. Mommy and Rosa
would be proud of me for not
crying. I wish I could tell them."

Lauren looks up to the others.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
She wants her sister to know that
what happened wasn't her fault.
She wants her to know the truth.

MELINA
That this James Spence guy killed
her?

LAUREN
Yes.

As Melina, Lauren and Diego look through the box, Grant goes to his computer... starts pulling up files... more archive newspaper articles and photos.

GRANT
Is this the guy you saw take her?

Everyone turns to the computer... and the GRAINY IMAGE OF JAMES SPENCE.

LAUREN
(nodding)
Oh, God. Yes.

Diego nods... taps the screen.

DIEGO
That's the cat I saw upstairs too.
The whistler.

GRANT
No. Can't be the same guy.

DIEGO
Man, there's no doubt. That's him.
Who is he?

GRANT
James Spence.

Grant scrolls down the article.

GRANT (CONT'D)
He died in 1967.

DIEGO
What?

GRANT
In the electric chair. For the
murders of...
(reading)
...seventeen people over six years.

Now Lauren's scared, Melina's nervous, and Diego's just really confused.

DIEGO

Man, if that dude's dead, who'd I
see up on Twenty?

Grant doesn't answer... doesn't want to say it.

MELINA

Are we talking about what I think
we are here?

LAUREN

The séance.

DIEGO

What?

LAUREN

That's what we did wrong... why she
wrote no.

GRANT

Who?

LAUREN

On the mirror. It was like you
said, Cara was already here. We
didn't have to bring her back.

GRANT

But James Spence wasn't here.

DIEGO

Are you saying we brought some
psycho serial killer's ghost into
this place?

GRANT

You said this was the guy you saw.

Diego stares at Spence's image a beat, then spins and grabs
Grant's phone.

MELINA

What are you doing?

DIEGO

I'm calling the cops.

MELINA

And tell them what... a ghost
story? They'll arrest you.

DIEGO
That's with me.

Diego holds the receiver to his ear, tapping the buttons over and over.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
What's up with your phone? I don't
have a dial tone.

Grant takes the phone, listens... taps.

GRANT
I used it earlier.

Diego pulls his CELL PHONE from his pocket... dials.

LAUREN
This whole place is a dead zone,
remember?

DIEGO
How about using another term.

Diego goes to the window and pushes it open... holds the phone outside in the pouring rain.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
GOD!

Diego turns and points to the computer.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
Can you get to the cops online?

And just like that, the computer screen goes blank.

Nervous glances, as Grant tries to power it back on... nothing.

LAUREN
What's going on?

And then the RING TONE OF DIEGO'S CELL PHONE... just as GRANT'S CELL PHONE RINGS... and the ROOM PHONE RINGS.

The kids stare at the phones... Diego grabs his cell... Grant answers his... Lauren and Melina lift the room receiver.

From all three, we hear the GARBLED WHISPERS.

The kids exchange frightened glances... Dead Zone?

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

Lauren, Grant, Melina and Diego tearing down the stairs.
They charge through a door.

INT. CHELSEA HALL/LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

They barrel out of the stairwell, and sprint down to the lobby.

DIEGO
HELP!

MELINA
SYD!

They reach the lobby... Syd's empty desk... the broken phone on the floor... the bloodstain on the wall.

DIEGO
Oh, man. This is not good.

Diego runs to the INTERIOR GLASS DOORS that separate the lobby from the entrance area. He jerks on them... locked.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
COME ON!

But the doors don't open.

MELINA
Syd told us he locked all the doors.

Grant goes to Syd's desk... digs through the drawers... shakes his head.

GRANT
He must have the keys on him.

DIEGO
(off the bloodstained wall)
I don't like the odds of waiting for the son of a bitch to show up.

Diego lifts a CHAIR and flings it at the glass doors. The chair bounces harmlessly off the glass.

MELINA
Diego, stop!

Diego grabs it again... smashes it into the glass door. The chair rebounds off.

GRANT
All the dorms use bulletproof glass now. You can't break it.

Diego throws the chair across the room.

The kids look around for something... anything. Lauren's eyes settle on the FIRE ALARM.

She grabs the alarm... snaps it down... SILENCE. She lifts it and pulls again... still nothing.

MELINA
Why isn't anything working?

A beat, then...

GRANT
Spence was the maintenance guy here. He's back in control of his building.

Diego races from door to door along the hall, shaking each handle.

DIEGO
He can have it.

The doors are all locked.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
If we could just get to a window.

LAUREN
I'm not leaving Alison.

DIEGO
We're not leaving her. We're going to get some people to find her.

Lauren considers Diego's rationale a beat, then joins in with the others, shaking door handles... looking for an unlocked room.

Lauren grabs a paperclip from Syd's desk... unravels it. She hurries to one of the doors and starts picking at the lock.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
Can you do that?

LAUREN
I don't know. These locks are weird.

Diego stands beside Lauren, watching her.

DIEGO
Should I...

But before Diego can finish, HIS FACE IS SMASHED AGAINST THE WALL.

He turns around, stunned. Blood oozes from his nose.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
What the fuck?

The others just stare at Diego... no idea. Suddenly Diego is lifted into the air, and it's like he's thrown by some invisible force... flies into the glass doors... and they still don't break.

The others watch in shock... no idea what's happening.

And Diego's SCREAMING and flailing his arms in the air around him. As he stands back up, HIS ARM DRAGS ACROSS THE LIGHT SWITCH, FLIPPING OFF THE LIGHTS.

AND THERE'S SPENCE STANDING RIGHT IN FRONT OF DIEGO.

EVERYONE SCREAMS... stares at Spence in shock.

MELINA
Oh, my God.

Spence's head snaps to Melina's voice. His cold, blue eyes trace her body.

GRANT
GO!

The kids take off down the hall... dart around the corner. They sprint along the corridor, grabbing door handles, shaking them, looking for a place to hide.

Finally, one of the doors opens... they charge inside the room.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grant closes the door... locks it. The group huddles against the door... holding their breath... trying not to make a sound... just listening.

Distant WHISTLING... along with the RATTLING OF DOOR HANDLES... growing louder... closer... Spence is looking for them.

The kids take a step back away from the door... glance around the room for another place to run... nothing but four walls... a half-dozen computers sitting on desks.

The O.S. WHISTLING is just outside.

AND THEN THEIR DOOR HANDLE SHAKES... the door vibrates, like Spence is pulling... trying to open the door.

But the door holds... the shaking stops... the WHISTLING DRIFTS AWAY.

MELINA
(whispering)
What's happening?

GRANT
Be quiet.

A CHORUS OF BEEPS behind the kids. They turn to the row of COMPUTER MONITORS, all suddenly turning on... their screens begin to glow... with SPENCE'S FACE... staring out of the monitors at the kids.

The monitors start trembling... vibrating on the desks... shaking their way toward the kids.

One of the monitors tips off the front of the desk... smashes to the floor.

Another monitor rattles its way to the edge... Spence's smiling face tumbles over... hits the floor in a burst of sparks.

And that's all the kids need to see. They jerk the door open and charge out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The kids race down the hall... crash through the stairwell door.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

The group bounds screaming up the stairs.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

They charge out of the stairwell, down the hall and into the girls' room.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They scramble inside, locking the door behind them. Diego's holding his nose... blood seeps between his fingers.

DIEGO
Jesus Christ!

LAUREN
That was him.

GRANT
James Spence.

MELINA
But he wasn't there... and then he was.

DIEGO
That's how ghosts work.

GRANT
It's the light. We couldn't see him when they were on. It has to be dark to see him.

Everyone freezes... glances around the very bright room. Lauren reaches up and turns off the light, sending the room into darkness... EMPTY DARKNESS.

MELINA
So what do we do now?

DIEGO
We get the hell outta here.

LAUREN
How? The exit's locked, we're nine stories up, and we can't get to any windows on the lower floors.

Grant opens the window... sticks his head out into the stormy night.

No fire escapes, ledges, nothing... just a long drop to the wet pavement below.

GRANT
There's nothing but a long fall out here.

DIEGO
Well if that asshole shows up again, I'm taking my chances with the sidewalk.

LAUREN
I'm not leaving Alison in here with that. We can't.

GRANT
How are we supposed to find her?

LAUREN
I don't know, but we're not leaving her.

The kids pace around... eyes darting... panic setting in.

GRANT
Okay, what's the plan?

DIEGO
What?

LAUREN
(to Diego)
You're the seance expert. How do we get rid of him?

Everyone waits for Diego's answer, but he's scared out of his mind... can barely think at all.

DIEGO
We just need to get outta here.

MELINA
He'd follow us.

DIEGO
No, he can't. I don't think a spirit can leave the place he was resurrected.

Diego grabs his term paper from the floor... flips through the pages.

LAUREN
You don't *think*?

MELINA
Can you put some kind of spell on him? Kill him before he kills us?

DIEGO
A spell? I'm not Harry fucking Potter. Jesus. I just wrote a paper. And I got a C minus on it.

LAUREN
What else is in there?

DIEGO
I don't know. Shit.
(scans over the pages)
You can't re-kill a released spirit. Not unless you repeat the way it died the first time.

LAUREN
Electric chair's going to be hard to find.

A silent beat, then...

GRANT
So we just wait for him to kill us.

And then Melina SCREAMS... the others jump with a start... follow her eyes across the room, to CARA, kneeling on the floor.

Diego grabs a lamp to throw at the little girl. Lauren stops him.

LAUREN
No.

Cara just stares back at them, then holds her hand out over Diego's TEXT BOOK. The pages begin to flip... one after another until finally they fall still.

Everyone's frozen... afraid to move. And then Lauren takes a step toward Cara.

MELINA
Lauren?

Lauren keeps moving... crouches down and lifts the text book... her eyes glide over the page, absorbing the words.

A beat, then Lauren looks back to Cara... the little girl's head still bent over to one side.

LAUREN
We can send him back?

Cara stands... turns and walks into the bathroom. The kids ease to the doorway, as Lauren continues reading the book.

They look inside the dark room. Cara's gone.

DIEGO
That was freaky.

LAUREN
This says there's a way to force a spirit back to where it came from.

MELINA
That works for me. How?

LAUREN
(reading)
It's called *Juntar*. It means you merge the spirit with a host.

GRANT
A host. You mean a body? A living body?
(off Lauren's nod)
Then what?

Before Lauren can answer, Diego SNAPS his fingers.

DIEGO
You destroy it. I remember now.

MELINA
Doesn't sound like such a great deal for the host.

LAUREN
Psychics in Asia use the sick... dying.

MELINA
They sacrifice them?

DIEGO
(to Grant)
Any volunteers?

GRANT
Yeah.

The kids look at Grant like he's crazy. Grant almost smiles.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - LATER

TIGHT ON THE PARROT...

...standing in his cage at the center of the girls' floor.

Lauren, Grant, Melina and Diego sit in a circle around the bird. And the place is set up for another séance... the candles, the boiling fondue pot... AND GRANT GRIPPING A HAMMER.

DIEGO
My roommate's gonna be so pissed.

MELINA
I don't know about this. I'm a
Vegan.

LAUREN
We're not going to eat it, Melina,
we're just gonna bash his little
head in once he's possessed.

Melina nods... okay then. Diego reads over the textbook one last time, then looks nervously to Grant.

DIEGO
You have to do it fast, dude. I
mean as soon as we see he's in
there. If you don't, he's alive
again... just like the rest of us.

LAUREN
He could leave the building...
start killing all over again?

DIEGO
That's what the book says. He gets
a new life, jumping from host to
host.

Everyone turns to Grant and his hammer.

GRANT

Don't worry, I've got it.

Diego holds out his hands. Everyone locks grips.

DIEGO

And don't let go. No matter what.
We have to pull him into the only
living host that isn't joined.

The kids nod... ready. Diego sprinkles some powders into the steaming pot, then over the bird. He reads over his text book, then starts CHANTING.

DIEGO (CONT'D)

The spirit to the living. Blood
feeds the soul. We summon the
spirit of James Spence.

The kids are frightened out of their minds... not wanting Spence to show, but knowing he has to. Diego sprinkles more powders.

DIEGO (CONT'D)

The spirit to the living. Blood
feeds the soul. We summon the
spirit of James Spence.

MELINA

What if he doesn't want to come?

SPARKS FLY FROM THE POT.

LAUREN

I don't think he has a choice.

The DOOR SWINGS OPEN... SLAMS SHUT... SWINGS OPEN AGAIN,
almost flying off its hinges.

AND SPENCE FILLS THE DOORWAY.

A cool breeze passes over the room... the candles flare...
Spence steps into the room, glaring at the group with those
steely blue eyes.

Melina sees him... flinches and squeezes her eyes shut.

MELINA

Oh, God.

The others see Spence. They tighten their grips on each other.

DIEGO

Now.

ALL

The spirit to the living. Blood
feeds the soul. The spirit to the
living. Blood feeds the soul.

The kids close their eyes to keep from looking at Spence, as they REPEAT THE CHANT over and over.

And Spence starts moving behind them, like a shark calmly circling its prey. But his eyes hold on THEIR HANDS CLASPED TOGETHER... he reaches toward their heads, but doesn't touch.

And whatever the kids are doing, it must be working because Spence keeps throwing nervous glances to the parrot... as if he's being drawn toward it.

Then Spence sets his stare on the ceiling light... it flashes on, and he disappears in the glow.

Melina starts to pull free, but Lauren holds her tight.

LAUREN

No!

The birdcage begins to tremble... the parrot starts flapping around, beating itself against the cage bars.

DIEGO

It's working.

Suddenly, the cage TIPS OVER INTO THE BOILING POT. The pot tumbles over, spraying the blistering hot liquid all over Diego's legs.

Diego CRIES OUT... falls back from the liquid, PULLING HIS HANDS FREE OF THE OTHERS.

LAUREN

DIEGO!

In a flash, Diego flies backward to the floor... careens against the wall. The room goes quiet, except for DIEGO'S LABORED BREATHING.

Lauren crawls to him... his eyes are closed... he COUGHS... BLACK SLUDGE OOOZES FROM HIS LIPS.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Diego?

Suddenly his hand CLAMPS DOWN AROUND LAUREN'S WRIST... his eyes spring open... THEY'RE THE SAME ICE COLD BLUE AS SPENCE'S.

Lauren SCREAMS... scrambles away from him. Diego sits up... opens his mouth to speak, but it's just GARBLED GURGLING... the ooze still seeping from his mouth. His lips move inhumanly fast... as if Diego's body isn't controlling them.

And then Diego smiles... more like leers. He leaps onto Grant, knocking him back to the floor. And Diego's like a wild animal attacking Grant... swinging and clawing... CRYING OUT IN THAT MONSTROUS GURGLING.

They roll on the floor... over the birdcage, shattering it. The parrot darts out.

Lauren and Melina try to pull Diego off, but he flings them away... wraps his hands around Grant's throat and starts strangling him.

Grant's hand finds the hammer... SWINGS IT INTO THE SIDE OF DIEGO'S HEAD. Diego tumbles over, dazed.

Grant spins the hammer... CLAWS FIRST... he raises it to drive another blow, but Lauren grabs his arm, stopping him.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
You'll kill him!

Grant pulls away to do just that, but that instant of hesitation gives Diego a chance to jump to his feet... smile Spence's slimy grin back at Grant.

Then Diego drives his fingernails deep into the side of his own face... tears down his flesh.

MELINA
STOP!

Diego rips down his neck in long bloody gashes.

LAUREN
LEAVE HIM ALONE!

Diego freezes... stares back at Lauren a beat, then SMASHES HIS HAND OUT THE WINDOW, SHATTERING THE GLASS. He grabs a shard and SLICES HIS WRIST.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
NO!

Diego's eyes roll back into his head, then reappear... brown and normal. He looks down at his blood-covered arm before collapsing unconscious to the floor.

The door SLAMS behind them... the lights go dark again. Spence is gone.

The parrot flies out of the broken window... escapes into the night.

Lauren and Melina rush to Diego... jam clothes around his gushing wrist. Melina points Grant to the closet.

MELINA
Get me a belt!

Grant races into the closet... finds a belt and throws it to Melina. Her trembling hands strap it around Diego's arm... cinch it tight... but it's too late. Diego's eyes are frozen open... he's very dead.

MELINA (CONT'D)
Oh, God.

Lauren stares down at the bloody mess that was Diego. She runs to the broken window... leans outside.

LAUREN
HELP! SOMEBODY!

EXT. CHELSEA HALL - NIGHT

The rain beats down. The THUNDER RUMBLES. And Lauren's CRIES are washed away with the storm.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - NIGHT

Lauren leans back inside... looks around... her eyes settle on her bed... the sheets. She jerks them off... shoves them into Grant's arms.

LAUREN
Tie these together.

GRANT
Are you serious?

LAUREN
Just tie them.

Lauren grabs a PAPERCLIP from her desk and starts for the door.

GRANT
Where are you going?

LAUREN
To get more sheets, rope, anything
we can use.

Lauren walks out.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lauren moves down the hallway, shaking each handle... looking for an open door.

She crouches down outside a door... starts working the paperclip in the lock.

CUT TO:

OUR POV FROM THE DOOR...

...looking past Lauren, to the elevator.

The ARROW LIGHTS UP... the elevator doors begin to glide open.

And Lauren is concentrating on this lock... doesn't see the elevator doors separating behind her.

The doors spread wide, revealing ALISON... standing in the elevator, still in just her underwear. She's staring at the floor... her hair hangs down over her face.

ALISON
Lauren.

Lauren spins... sees Alison.

LAUREN
Alison?

Alison doesn't answer... just stares at the floor. SMALL PUNCTURE WOUNDS ACROSS HER BODY begin to drip blood.

Lauren starts toward her.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
Oh, God, Alison, what happened?

Alison looks up to Lauren... her faces is cut and swollen.

ALISON

Help me.

And then with the doors still open, the elevator drops... fast. Alison vanishes down the shaft.

LAUREN

ALISON!

Lauren leans into the shaft... looks down, but it's too dark to see anything.

Grant runs out into the hall.

LAUREN

Get a flashlight!

Grant disappears... runs back out carrying a flashlight. Melina is with him.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I saw Alison! She was in the elevator.

Lauren aims the flashlight's beam down through the darkness.

And there is no elevator... just ALISON'S BODY LAYING AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SHAFT.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

NO!

MELINA

Oh, God.

LAUREN

ALISON!

Alison doesn't move.

MELINA

ALISON!

Lauren leaps up... takes off toward the stairwell door.

GRANT

Lauren, wait!

LAUREN

She isn't dead!

Grant and Melina race after her.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Lauren leads the charge down the stairs.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

The kids reach the bottom landing... hurry through the basement door.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Unchanged since the 30's. Dust and cobwebs everywhere... rusty, corroded pipes wind across the ceiling.

Lauren, Grant and Melina weave their way through the old furnaces and water tanks... their flashlight's beam guiding them deeper and deeper into the basement.

LAUREN

Where is it?

Melina points across the room.

MELINA

There!

The elevator doors.

They hurry to the elevator. Melina reaches for the button, but Lauren stops her.

LAUREN

No! You'd bring it down on top of her.

Grant grabs a rusty crowbar from the floor... jams it between the doors and starts pulling them apart.

Lauren and Melina grip the doors with their hands... strain to open them. Finally, they open... and there's Alison lying on the floor of the elevator shaft.

Lauren leaps into the shaft with Melina... get their first good look at Alison... her face is bloody and beaten... deep scratches zigzag over her skin.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Alison, can you hear me?

Alison MOANS... tries to raise a hand, then CRIES... drops it back to the floor... because there's a METAL WIRE PUNCTURED THROUGH HER FLESH AND TIED TO A PIPE IN THE WALL.

MELINA
What is that?

Lauren looks closer... sees SEVERAL OTHER WIRES SHOVED INTO HER SKIN... through her stomach... her legs... her face. And they're all tied to various pipes and rods in the shaft.

LAUREN
Oh, my God.

Lauren gently pulls on one of the wires. Alison SCREAMS in pain.

GRANT
What are you doing?

LAUREN
He tied her here.

And then the WHINE OF THE ELEVATOR CABLES SNAPPING INTO MOTION. Lauren looks up... to the BOTTOM OF THE ELEVATOR several stories above... and dropping toward them.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
We need a knife!

Grant searches the basement.

GRANT
There's nothing here!

Lauren starts pulling at the wires... Alison's CRYING AND SCREAMING... Melina's panicked out of her mind.

MELINA
You're hurting her!

Lauren throws another glance above them... the elevator's closing in fast.

LAUREN
I'm sorry, Alison.

Lauren jerks one of the wires. It tears through Alison's flesh. Alison fills the shaft with an AGONIZING SCREAM.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
(to Melina)
Help me!

Lauren and Melina pull Alison toward the elevator doors... toward Grant, stretching in for her.

But with every inch, the wires tear at Alison's body... shred her skin... stretch her flesh to inhuman lengths.

The elevator's falling fast now... only a few flights above them.

GRANT

Lauren!

Lauren isn't listening... she's struggling to free Alison... but there are too many wires running through her body.

Melina looks up to the elevator just over their heads. She scrambles out of the shaft.

MELINA

LAUREN!

Lauren keeps working to free Alison... doesn't want to leave her friend.

The elevator is right on top of her... just as Melina grabs Lauren and JERKS HER OUT OF THE SHAFT.

The elevator SLAMS TO THE FLOOR WITH A SICKENING CRUNCH.

LAUREN

N0000!

They all stare at the empty elevator. Lauren and Melina are trembling... crying.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

He tied her up in there, then
waited for us to watch him kill
her.

GRANT

You shouldn't have stopped me
before. This would be over right
now.

LAUREN

You mean I should have let you kill
Diego?

GRANT

Spence would have died.

LAUREN
Along with my friend.

GRANT
Yeah. And things really worked out better for him. Don't you get it? You can't save us all, Lauren. Spence is going to kill us off one by one, then walk out of this place in the last body standing.

Grant starts walking away.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Come on. The rest of us still have to try and get out of here.

LAUREN
You're just going to leave Alison in there?

GRANT
What do you think we should do?

LAUREN
I don't know. Not just turn our backs on our friends.

GRANT
She was your friend. And I don't think she'll notice.

Grant continues away on his own. Lauren and Melina gaze back at Diego. Melina takes Lauren's arm.

MELINA
We need to stay together.

Lauren and Melina follow after Grant.

INT. BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Grant leads the girls through the dark, winding basement.

They weave their way through the machinery equipment... past thick drain pipes... a world of rusty metal and shadows.

Grant floats the flashlight over the darkness.

GRANT
There's got to be a door down here.

ANGLE ON THE FLASHLIGHT'S BEAM...

...gliding across the cobwebbed walls... over SPENCE, tucked behind a stack of crates... he disappears in the beam, then reappears as the light drifts away.

The kids didn't see him.

Spence watches the kids creep across the room... starts moving after them.

Grant and the girls reach a brick wall... dead end.

GRANT (CONT'D)

Fuck.

CUT TO:

POV FROM THE BASEMENT FLOOR...

...crawling toward the kids... closing in on them.

THE KIDS...

...turning around... following the beam of light back through the maze.

Suddenly a HAND REACHES OUT FROM THE SHADOWY FLOOR AND GRABS MELINA'S ANKLE.

Melina SCREAMS... Lauren and Grant spinning... the light illuminating the hand... SYD'S HAND... as he drags himself along the floor.

Melina kicks free... scrambles to Lauren and Grant.

Syd gazes up into the light... his face is a mass of cuts and bruises. He reaches up to the light.

SYD

Please...

Lauren takes his hand... tries to pull him up, but Syd CRIES OUT IN PAIN. She crouches down beside him.

GRANT

Check for the keys.

Lauren eases Syd onto his back. Blood seeps through his shirt.

LAUREN
Oh, man.

Grant shoves past Lauren... starts digging through Syd's pockets... finds nothing but gum wrappers.

GRANT
SHIT!

LAUREN
We have to get him out of here.

And that's when Melina SCREAMS.

Lauren and Grant look up... see Spence gliding across the basement toward them.

GRANT
GO!

Grant takes off.

LAUREN
WE CAN'T LEAVE HIM!

GRANT
COME ON!

Grant charges away, carrying the flashlight with him. Lauren and Melina start to follow, but Lauren turns back... grabs Syd's arms and starts dragging him across the floor.

Spence doesn't change his pace... calmly strides toward her.

Melina races back to Lauren... starts pulling her toward the basement door.

MELINA
Come on, Lauren!

But Lauren isn't leaving Syd behind for Spence... she keeps tugging at his body... Spence closes in.

And then he throws a glance to the ceiling... the LIGHT BULBS ALL IGNITE... the basement brightens... and Spence vanishes.

MELINA (CONT'D)
Oh, God.

Syd's body is yanked away... thrown through the air... slams into the machinery and tumbles to the concrete floor.

LAUREN

NO!

Lauren and Melina are trapped... don't know which way to run... don't know where Spence is. The basement's as bright as midday, and they're completely blind.

The girls start swinging all around, slapping at the empty air.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

GET AWAY FROM US!

They back against a wall, violently flailing their arms at whatever might be close.

MELINA

PLEASE!

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

And Grant pressed against the wall, listening to the GIRLS' CRIES... wanting to go back to help them, but UNABLE TO MOVE. Finally, his fear sends him up the stairs.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Lauren and Melina are still jammed against the brick wall, their eyes searching for what they know they can't see.

And they're crying now... scared out of their minds... waving their arms in front of them... two little girls very lost and afraid.

The basement is silent, except for their breathing.

The girls each lower one of their hands... reach for their friend... their fingers touch... their hands clasp together...

...AND MELINA IS YANKED AWAY FROM LAUREN.

MELINA

LAUREN!

And Spence must be dragging Melina by her ankles, because she slides across the floor... weaves out of sight behind the machinery. All we can hear are her SCREAMS.

LAUREN

N000!

Lauren takes off after her... follows the screams... finds Melina struggling on the floor... kicking and fighting off the invisible Spence.

Melina's clothes are shredded... BLOODY SCRATCHES OPEN UP ALONG MELINA'S LEGS. She kicks free... crawls toward Lauren. Lauren grabs her hands, drags Melina away, but Spence isn't giving Melina up... she's pulled back by her feet.

Lauren loses her grip. Melina's slung SCREAMING across the floor. She makes a desperate grab for an ELECTRICAL CONDUIT PIPE... clamps her hands around it. But Spence is too strong... the conduit bends... SNAPS IN AN EXPLOSION OF SPARKS.

More bloody tears down Melina's skin.

MELINA

LAUREN!

And then Lauren's eyes settle on the dangling conduit... the loose electrical wires still shooting off sparks.

Lauren grabs the pipe... jams the wires into the air above Melina's body...

...and suddenly the basement lights dim and SPENCE'S IMAGE APPEARS... contorting in horrible pain... the electric current pulsing through his body.

He flies back off of Melina... hits the ground, and Lauren leaps after him... jams the burning wires onto him... she's electrocuting Spence all over again.

Smoke pours from his scars... his body convulses... his skin begins to melt off his body. He can't get his trembling hands to the conduit to knock it away.

His mouth stretches inhumanly wide... he CRIES OUT a gruesome tortured scream.

Lauren lifts Melina to her feet, hurt, bloody and crying.

LAUREN

Hurry.

Lauren and Melina run out the basement door.

Spence convulses among the sparks... until his flailing arm KNOCKS THE CONDUIT AWAY... his body calms.

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Lauren and Melina enter the brightly lit stairwell. Melina starts SCREAMING... swinging at the air around her. Lauren grabs Melina... holds her.

LAUREN
He isn't here, Melina. Spence is gone.

Melina breaks down in Lauren's arms.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
Come on.

Lauren guides Melina up the stairs.

INT. CHELSEA HALL/LOBBY - NIGHT

Lauren and Melina exit the stairwell... move into the lobby. They go to the glass entry doors... pull on them... still locked.

LAUREN
We need to get to a phone. They should work now.

Lauren helps Melina down the hallway.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lauren and Melina make their way down the hall... turn into their room... and come FACE TO FACE WITH... GRANT.

The girls flinch, startled. And then Lauren slaps Grant.

LAUREN
You left us down there.

GRANT
I thought you were behind me.

LAUREN
Bullshit! You could've come back.

Lauren starts to smack Grant again. He grabs her arm in mid-swing.

GRANT
For what? I didn't tell you to
kill yourself for Syd.

LAUREN
I was trying to help someone.
Something you don't have a clue
about.

GRANT
I never claimed to be a hero.

LAUREN
Not a hero, asshole. Just human.

Lauren pushes past Grant.

GRANT
Where's Spence?

LAUREN
He's dead.

GRANT
He's been dead all night. Hasn't
meant shit so far.

LAUREN
Well now it does. He got the
electric chair all over again. So
you can go back to your little room
and pretend the rest of the world
doesn't exist.

Grant watches Lauren and Melina walk away from him.

GRANT
Not pretend. Just hope.

Lauren helps Melina to her bed. She glances back to Grant...
he's gone. Lauren lays a blanket over the shivering Melina.

LAUREN
I'm going to call the police now.
Get you to the hospital.

Lauren goes to the phone... picks up the receiver... taps the
buttons.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
Hello?
(more taps)
Hello?

MELINA

What's wrong? Why isn't the phone working?

LAUREN

I don't know.

Lauren looks out the open door... sees the HALL LIGHTS FLICKER... go dim... and there's Cara standing in the hallway, a FINGER TO HER LIPS... be quiet.

Suddenly, the door SLAMS CLOSED... Cara's gone.

Lauren hesitates a beat... her trembling hand hangs up the phone. She turns to the ceiling light... grabs a broom, and hammers the bulb, shattering it. The room dims.

MELINA

What are you doing?

LAUREN

Improving the view.

Lauren knocks the lamp off the table, breaking the bulb... the room gets darker. She hurries into the bathroom... swings the broom, smashing all the light bulbs... the room goes dark.

MELINA

You said he was gone.

Lauren doesn't answer, and that's enough for Melina. She starts to cry.

MELINA (CONT'D)

I can't do this anymore. Just wait for him to kill me.

(beat)

I'd rather take my chances climbing out the window.

LAUREN

You'd fall. You'd die.

MELINA

I know.

Lauren shakes her head.

LAUREN

My father used to stagger home drunk and beat the shit outta my brother, Charlie, and me.

(MORE)

LAUREN(CONT'D)

Like an alarm clock... midnight
hits and so did Daddy. We'd try to
hide, but he'd always find us.

(beat)

One time I got so scared that I
just took off... ran into the
highway. I'm not sure if I didn't
see the truck coming...

Lauren strokes her hand down the old, jagged scar on her leg.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

...or I just didn't care.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANT'S ROOM - NIGHT

Grant stands at his shelf, holding one of his prescription
bottles. He dumps the pills into his hand.

LAUREN (V.O.)

But I swore if I ever got away from
that place, I'd never let another
monster run me into the road.

Grant grabs another bottle and pours the contents in with the
others... pulls another bottle... opens... pours. He holds
the mound of capsules in his palm... stares at them.

CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - NIGHT

Lauren sits beside Melina on the bed. And then she sees
something... pushing out of the dark closet.

It's a tiny hand... CARA'S HAND... sticking out of the
darkness and hanging clothes. The little hand crooks its
finger... motioning for Lauren to follow.

Lauren watches the hand pull back into the shadows. She
stares at the closet a moment, then takes Melina's hand...
eases her out of the bed.

LAUREN

Come on.

MELINA

Where are we going?

Lauren guides Melina to the closet.

LAUREN
Someplace safe.

Lauren and Melina slide into the dark closet.

INT. CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Lauren and Melina crawl deeper into the shadows... and there's Cara sitting back in the corner, waiting for them... hiding as well.

Melina sees Cara... stifles a scream.

LAUREN
She's not going to hurt us.

But Melina's not okay... she can't move, except to shake her head. Cara keeps staring back at them with her broken neck... her crooked little head.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
This is where she used to hide.

Lauren eases Melina toward the back wall of the closet. Melina squeezes her eyes shut... her entire body's trembling, as she slides beside Cara.

The three girls sit pressed against the back wall of the closet. It's dark... black... what death must be like. They can't see anything... maybe not even Spence if he was crawling toward them right now.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
I need you to stay here for a minute okay?

MELINA
What? No. You can't leave me in here.

LAUREN
I'm not leaving. I'm just going out into the hall... to even things up a little.

MELINA
What are you talking about?

Lauren pulls her best friend close... nose to nose.

LAUREN

Don't you move from this place. No matter what you hear. You'll be okay here.

Melina manages a nod... clamps her eyes shut and curls her knees up tight against her chest. Lauren crawls out of the closet.

INT. GIRLS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lauren slips out of the closet... stares at the door... the hall lights framing the door... flickering... growing brighter... gaining strength.

We hear the V.O. DRUNKEN YELLING OF LAUREN'S FATHER, chasing after her from across those tracks.

MELINA (O.S.)

I'm scared.

LAUREN

There's nothing to be scared of, Charlie.

Lauren walks out with the broom.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lauren steps out into the hall... closes the door behind her. She glances both ways... to the ceiling bulbs burning brightly.

She swings the broom against the closest bulb... smashes it. She hurries down the hall, shattering the next bulb, and the next. The hallway's getting darker.

She works her way down the long corridor, crushing light after light. The shards of glass rain down over her... glow in the blackness behind.

Lauren has two bulbs left... breaks the first... stares at the last, hanging alone at the end of the hall.

She goes to it... stares ahead of her to the only light remaining... the only blind spot left. Then she swings... the bulb splinters... darkness overpowers the light... AND SPENCE ISN'T THERE.

Lauren's as surprised as we are. Then she turns...

...AND SPENCE IS STANDING RIGHT BEHIND HER. His face is monstrous... the charred flesh dripping around his eye sockets... his lips burned away to where he's all teeth... his body scorched.

LAUREN SCREAMS.

CUT TO:

MELINA...

...hearing the scream... her eyes fly open. Cara is gone.

CUT TO:

GRANT...

...sitting on his bed, staring at the pills still in his hand... spinning to Lauren's cry.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Spence reaches out a roasted hand at Lauren. She ducks it... stumbles back. He makes another move for her, but he's slower than he was... misses.

Lauren jumps up... takes off down the hall. Spence races after her.

Lauren sprints down the hall... darts around the corner.

INT. GRANT'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grant runs to his door... looks out the peep hole and sees Spence pursuing Lauren.

INT. NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Spence comes barreling around the corner after Lauren... and gaining fast.

Lauren sprints toward her room... nears the open elevator shaft, then HER SCARRED LEG GIVES AWAY... she slams to the ground... grabs her leg in pain.

And Spence knows he has his prey. He slows... walks toward Lauren... he's going to enjoy this.

And then Lauren stands up... her leg is fine.

LAUREN
I'm not running anymore.

Spence cocks his head, confused.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
The spirit to the living. Blood
feeds the soul. The spirit to the
living. Blood feeds the soul.

As Lauren chants, she backs toward the open shaft, pulling
Spence with her.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
The spirit to the living. Blood
feeds the soul.

Spence releases a monstrous SCREAM... he charges Lauren,
tackling her. They fall to the floor, and Spence wraps his
still steaming hands around Lauren's throat, burning her
skin.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
The spirit to the living.

Spence begins to lose some of his strength... he starts
fading into Lauren.

Lauren SCREAMS as Spence's steaming body merges with hers.
She COUGHS... her eyes begin to roll back into her head...
then turn blue...

...until Melina dives beside Lauren, grabbing her hand.

MELINA
LEAVE HER ALONE!

LAUREN
MELINA, NO!

But it's too late. Spence is back out. He grabs Melina by
the hair and slings her into the elevator shaft. She sails
down, but Lauren's still clenching her hand. Melina slams
into the side of the elevator shaft... only Lauren holding
her from the deadly fall.

Spence tightens his grip around Lauren's throat.

ANGLE ON MELINA'S HAND...

...slipping from Lauren's grasp.

MELINA

LAUREN!

Lauren holds onto Melina, but her strength is fading with each squeeze by Spence... she's going to drop her.

And then Grant appears from his room... runs toward them.

GRANT

The spirit to the living. Blood
feeds the soul. The spirit to the
living. Blood feeds the soul.

Spence looks up at Grant, his focus lost for a moment. And Grant just keeps coming at him.

GRANT (CONT'D)

The spirit to the living. Blood
feeds the soul. The spirit to the
living. Blood feeds...

Spence tries to concentrate on killing Lauren, but the call is too strong. He leaps up and charges Grant.

Grant picks up speed... they slam into each other. Spence disappears into Grant. Grant CRIES OUT IN PAIN... his eyes begin to roll back in his head. But he still takes off running... stumbling toward Lauren... and toward the elevator shaft.

Lauren watches Grant race toward the shaft.

LAUREN

GRANT, NO!

But Grant leaps over Lauren... flies into the black emptiness of the shaft.

As he falls, his EYES MORPH TO SPENCE'S COLD BLUE COLOR... he's going to sail to the bottom... until his hand CLAMPS AROUND MELINA'S ANKLE.

The extra weight tugs Lauren toward the edge. Grant starts clawing at Melina... climbing up her body. And Lauren's holding onto Melina with all her strength, but she's going to lose her.

As Grant digs his fingers into Melina's body, pulling himself upward, he sees CARA'S FACE... leaning over the edge of the shaft... staring down at him.

Grant's ice blue eyes go wide with fear... he loses his grip and falls.

His body fades in the blackness along with SPENCE'S CRY... and then the THUD of Grant's body hitting the distant floor.

Lauren pulls Melina up to the hallway. She looks down the shaft... the lights of the elevator shaft flicker back on... and there's Grant's twisted body at the bottom.

Lauren stares down at Grant a beat, then leans back against the wall with Melina. They hold each other.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHELSEA HALL - MORNING

The rain is gone... the sun has returned to the city. A SECURITY GUARD makes his way down the sidewalk... veers to the Chelsea Hall entrance. He slides in his key.

INT. CHELSEA HALL/LOBBY - MORNING

The security guard unlocks the next level of glass doors... steps inside.

SECURITY GUARD
Yo, Syd. Where're you at?

And then the guard sees the bloodstained wall... the shattered phone... Lauren and Melina huddled together on the floor.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)
What the hell?

LAUREN
We need to call the police.

EXT. CHELSEA HALL - DAY

Police cars, ambulances, a crowd... all filling the street and sidewalk. Melina is being wheeled into an ambulance. It's SIRENS BLARE and it pulls out.

Lauren stands with a COP... and he doesn't look happy.

COP
So far you've given me three dead bodies and one killer ghost. You really expect that story to fly?

LAUREN
I don't know.

The cop glares at her... at the BURN MARKS AROUND LAUREN'S THROAT. He snaps his notebook closed.

COP
I'm not finished with you. Not by a long shot.

The cop starts back into the dorm.

LAUREN
Can you do me a favor please?

The cop turns back to them... holds that glare.

EXT. BRONX BROWNSTONE - DAY

A police car sits in the street. Lauren stands at the front door of the brownstone. The door opens and a WOMAN, (50's), steps out.

WOMAN
May I help you?

LAUREN
Rosa Furia?

WOMAN
Yes.

Lauren hands the woman the METAL BOX.

LAUREN
I think this is for you.

The woman looks at it curiously, then opens it... sees the photos of she and Cara when they were young... the diary... the necklace. The woman loses her breath... has to sit down on the top step... begins to cry.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
Cara wanted you to have it.

Lauren watches as the woman goes through the contents with trembling hands.

EXT. CHELSEA HALL - DAY

A mob of BYSTANDERS crowd the sidewalk. Suddenly, PARAMEDICS charge out of the entrance, pushing a BODY ON A GURNEY.

PARAMEDIC
We've got a live one!

They hurry the gurney to the waiting ambulance, and we see it's SYD... an oxygen mask over his mouth. As they wheel him into the ambulance, his eyes SPRING OPEN... COLD, BLUE EYES.

The close the ambulance doors and take off, siren BLARING. As it fades, we hear something else... WHISTLING...

...*"Itsy Bitsy Spider..."*

FADE OUT.