STIR OF ECHOES

screenplay by
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based on the novel
"A Stir of Echoes" by
Richard Matheson

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Sometimes within the brain's old
ghostly house,
I hear, far off, at some forgotten
door,
A music and an eerie faint carouse
And stir of echoes down the
creaking floor.

"Chambers of Imagery"
Archibald MacLeish

Gentle WATER sounds. In the black, a child HUMS, his voice floating on the same little melody over and over again.

FADE IN:

1 (OMITTED) 1

2 INT BATHROOM NIGHT 2

Close on a little boy's eyes. JAKE, a five year old, sits in his bath, humming the haunting melody. The door to the bathroom is open; in the background his father sits on the edge of a bed, plucking at an acoustic guitar -- rather well. *

Jake answers someone's question, but we're close in on him and can't see who he's talking to.

JAKE
Okay. Jackson came over to play. Superheroes. Batman. No, he was Blue Power Ranger.

TOM (o.s.)
Jake? You all right in there?

JAKE
YES!
(back to the tub)
My favorite? Umm... my glow-in-the-dark sword. Yeah, that one, 'cause it has magic.
(lowers his voice)
Can I ask *you* a-

Tom Witzky, thirties, with the lean, muscled body of somebody who works for a living, puts down the guitar and comes into the room carrying Jake's pajamas.

TOM
Okay, Buddy, time to hit the sack.

He puts down the pajamas and lifts Jake out of the tub, wrapping him in a big white towel. He steals a hug while he's at it. Loves his kid.

JAKE
Can I wear bugs?

TOM
Uhh... I think those are all the way downstairs. Cowboy pajamas are cool for tonight, aren't they?

2 CONTINUED: 2

JAKE
Please, bugs, please?

TOM
Okay, bugs.

He turns and leaves. Jake watches him go, waits until he's sure he's really gone, then turns back and looks to the tub. He lowers his voice to a conspiratorial whisper.

JAKE
Can I ask *you* a question?

He checks the door, to make sure Tom isn't coming back yet. *

JAKE (cont'd)
Does it hurt when you're dead? *

Pulling back, we see he is all alone in the bathroom. Jake must * have a Special Friend. *

3 INT STAIRCASE NIGHT 3

MAGGIE WITZKY, Tom's age, former club flea with a couple tattoos * she doesn't regret yet, embraces another woman in the living * room as Tom comes down the stairs. He takes a pair of Jake's * pajamas (bugs on 'em) out of a basket of clean laundry at the * foot of the stairs. *

Lisa, the other woman, looks at Tom over Maggie's shoulder and * shakes her head. *

LISA
Animal.

TOM
What'd I do now?

LISA
(to Maggie)
Can I tell him?

MAGGIE
If you want to die.

LISA
Congratulations, Tom. Your beer-addled sperm still work.

MAGGIE
Lisa!

3 CONTINUED: 3

LISA
You impregnated my sister again.

MAGGIE
Bitch!

LISA
I thought you wanted me to!

MAGGIE
Why, because I said don't?

LISA
Well, you were so afraid to tell him, the kid could have been born before he noticed.

Tom is shell-shocked. She shrugs. *

TOM
You're not pregnant.

LISA
I think "Congratulations" is the more compassionate response.

TOM
And you told her before me?

MAGGIE
She's a witch! She took one look at me and guessed.
(Tom is just staring at her)
Say something.

TOM *
Bummer. *

MAGGIE *
Something else. *

He fumbles, can't come up with anything. This was not planned. *
Angry, Maggie turns and goes into the kitchen, leaving Tom alone *
with Lisa.

LISA
So if she's six weeks pregnant, that means the baby's due in April, May, June. June, that's Gemini, that's cool, Albert Einstein's a Gemini, so's that Scottish gal from Garbage.

3 CONTINUED: (2) 3

TOM
(containing himself, gives her the pajamas)
Will you go upstairs and help Jake with these?

LISA
But if she's late, you're into Cancer, which is not so cool, Cancer is Mr. Bill Gates and-

TOM
Lisa, you start with that Dionne Warwick stuff and I'll throw you right out a window. Go upstairs, please.

He turns and heads into the kitchen. Lisa shrugs, as if he has just proven her point.

LISA
Pure unenlightened animal.

4 INT KITCHEN NIGHT 4

Tom comes into the doorway of the kitchen, where Maggie is putting things away. He forces a cheery tone.

TOM
Hey, this is great!

She gives him a dirty look. Nice try.

TOM (cont'd)
No, I mean it. It's about time we had another kid. I was gonna bring it up myself, you know, one of these days.

MAGGIE
Really?

TOM
(God, no)
Absolutely. And this time you should take some time off.

MAGGIE
Oh please, we can't afford that.

TOM
(sincere)
Yeah we can, I'll just hit the overtime again.

4 CONTINUED: 4

MAGGIE
I don't want you to have to work those hours, you come home and you're like in a trance, you're completely useless to me. *

TOM
It's fine, I don't mind, I'll just tell Teddy to get somebody else for the thing. *

MAGGIE
(remembering)
Oh God, I forgot all about that, oh shit, Tom, no wonder you're pissed off.

TOM
I'm not pissed off, it's fine. I'm a grown man, I shouldn't be screwing around with some shitty band anyway. I gotta go change. Congratulations. I love you. I'm a, I'm a, I'm a very happy guy.

He pauses at the door.

TOM (cont'd)
I'm not gonna be a line man forever, okay? I promise you that.

MAGGIE
What do you mean? *

TOM
I clip wire all day, a monkey could do it.

MAGGIE
They'll move you to the office pretty soon, at least by the end of the year. * *

TOM *
Yeah, I know, what I mean is -- back when we got together, I said a lot of stuff about where I was gonna go and what I was gonna do, and... I wasn't giving you some line. I meant it.

She pulls him close and kisses him.

4 CONTINUED: (2) 4

MAGGIE
I didn't marry you because I thought you'd be famous. I just liked the way your ass looked in jeans.

TOM
I didn't want to be famous, I just didn't want to be so... *

MAGGIE
What?

He turns and heads out of the room.

TOM
Ordinary.

5 INT JAKE'S ROOM NIGHT 5

Jake is in bed, asleep. Tom slides a blanket up under his chin and turns on a baby monitor (the transmitter end) on the dresser next to his bed. Its "on" light glows red. Tom turns on a blue nightlight near the window and leaves the room.

Then Jake opens his eyes.

6 EXT STREET NIGHT 6

A huge old Polish church towers over their Chicago neighborhood. It's not the suburbs, but it's not quite downtown either. There's a bar on the corner (Bernie's Tap), and barely room for a raised voice between the houses. The house next to the church is our house. Wood frame, two stories with an attic.

The hot engine of a Trans-Am fires up across the street. The DRIVER honks the horn and a SEVENTEEN YEAR OLD KID runs out of another house and jumps into the passenger side as the car pulls away, fast. A NEIGHBORHOOD GUY rants at them, shaking his fist.

Tom, Maggie, and Lisa come out of the house and head down the steps. Tom carries a baby monitor (the receiver end). He holds it to his ear. Jake's breathing is clearly audible on the speaker.

MAGGIE
(to Lisa)
God, I hope it's a girl. I'm sick of all these balls around the house.
(to Tom)
Except for yours, Babe.

6 CONTINUED: 6

Tom forces a smile. They approach a party at a house across the street. PEOPLE have spilled out of the house and onto the large stone front porch.

LISA
What are the odds of a reasonably educated single man being at this thing? And I'm not talking about a GED.

7 OUTSIDE THE PARTY HOUSE, 7

we stop at a telephone pole, noticing a few hand flyers stapled there -- lost dogs, car wash at the church this Saturday, somebody looking for a missing girl. That last one's been there a while. *

MAGGIE
Does it matter if he's on the boner pill?

LISA
Well now, that could be a good thing, if he has a heart attack and *dies* right after... * * * * *

FIFTEEN OR TWENTY PEOPLE are on the front porch, more are visible through the windows of the house, jammed into the crowded living room. It's loud, smoky, there's music and a ton of booze -- empty beer bottles, five gallon jugs of wine, big liter bottles of vodka and gin. *

Tom joins the men on the porch. BOBBY, a heavy guy in his late twenties holding a sleeping three-year-old on his shoulder, talks with FRANK McCARTHY, fortyish, big Irish drinker, and HARRY DAMON, also older than the rest, stiff posture and short haircut. Frank draws Tom a beer from a keg.

FRANK
Tom-Tom-Tommy, how are ya?

TOM
You would not *believe* the day I'm having. Harry. *

HARRY
Hello, Tom. Takin' care of the place for me? * *

TOM
Actually, we're drilling holes in all your floors. Hope you don't mind.

7 CONTINUED: 7

Harry smiles, ha ha, very funny, sir. Tom sits on the porch rail. His own house is visible in the background, right across the narrow street.

FRANK
(as Tom drinks)
That's it, take the medicine deep into your body. Good, good.

HARRY
So how you likin' the neighborhood?

TOM
Well, I grew up just over Bridgeport, back of the yards, this ain't like a foreign country.

FRANK
God damn right it isn't! This is the best neighborhood in the city, 'cause we look out for each other, and that's sayin' a lot as we approach the Year of our Lord two thousand. *
*

HARRY
What are you, running for Mayor?

LENNY
(the local crank)
Hey, did any of you guys see those Dominican crank dealers hanging around the park again?

Tom tunes out. Finishes his beer. That was quick. He holds his plastic cup under the tap, draws another from the keg.

FRANK
(to Bobby)
What is Lenny doing here? Did you tell him you were having a party?!

BOBBY
Vanessa made me.

LENNY
Yeah, laugh it up, laugh it up.

FRANK
I mean, I could see if he just heard the noise and wandered in --

7 CONTINUED: (2) 7

LENNY
When you all wake up dead with your throats cut some night --

FRANK
-- but to actually invite him into your home!

LENNY
-- don't come crying to me!

While they all laugh, Lisa, near the door to the house, evaluates this selection of available males.

LISA
Not attracted to... not drunk enough for... *Frightened* by...

8 EXT PARTY HOUSE LATER 8

The party wanes. Some have left, the ones that remain are bombed. In the narrow passageway between the party house and the one next door, a DRUNK COUPLE make out ferociously.

On the porch, Frank stares long and hard at someone's cleavage. SHEILA, a nervous woman, catches him. He gives her a "What?" gesture. Must be married to each other.

The baby monitor sits on the porch, next to Tom, Jake's breathing audible on it. Tom turns, looks across the street. A dozen yards away, he can see Jake's bedroom window, the blue nightlight glowing brightly.

Tom hears a SHRIEK of women's voices from inside the house. He turns and looks through the window. Inside, he sees Maggie blushing, receiving hugs and congratulations from the two or three women around her.

He hits the keg again.

9 INT BOBBY & VANESSA'S LIVING ROOM LATER 9

The party's down to the hard-core half dozen, who are all in the house now, passing a joint around. Tom sits on the couch, feet on the coffee table next to the baby monitor. His mood has not improved. Maggie is next to him, Frank and Sheila are jammed in there too. Bobby and VANESSA, his wife, sit on the floor opposite. Lisa is in a chair at the end.

VANESSA
I don't believe any of that.
(MORE)

9 CONTINUED: 9

VANESSA (cont'd)
People who say they were hypnotized weren't really, they were just, you know, playing along.

LISA
Oh really? Then how could they have needles stuck into their throats without bleeding? Without even making a sound?

FRANK
*Bull*shit.

VANESSA
You never saw that happen.

FRANK
Bull*shit*!

SHEILA
Can you learn another word?

LISA
Uh, good morning, I had a two inch needle stuck right into the thick of my arm, by my instructor, while I was under hypnosis.

VANESSA
You're making it up!

BOBBY
That's disgusting.

MAGGIE
I saw her arm the next day. It left a mark.

TOM
You know what I don't understand? How a person who's been in college for most of her adult life can believe in all that superstitious crap.

Embarrassed, Maggie squeezes Tom's arm, trying to get him to lighten up.

LISA
It isn't superstition, I'm practically a licensed hypnotherapist.

TOM
"Practically licensed?" Isn't that like saying "I don't have a license?"
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (2) 9

TOM (cont'd)
(to Maggie, who's squeezing his arm so hard her fingers are white)
Ow! *

LISA
This may come as a surprise to you, but just because *you* kick around the same six blocks for your whole life doesn't mean there isn't a larger world out there -- *

Maggie talks over her, to get them to stop.

MAGGIE
(to Vanessa)
I don't know if you're into music or not, but Tom and I are gonna go see Jeb Nichols at Junior Small's next-

LISA
Doorways you've never even opened. Things you don't have the faintest understanding of.

FRANK
Prove it. Hypnotize somebody.

TOM
Yeah. Do me.

LISA
No.

TOM
Why not?

LISA
For one, because you're hostile.

TOM
I'm not hostile. Do I seem hostile to anybody?

MAGGIE
(to Vanessa, standing)
Thanks a lot for inviting us over, it was a great party, if you want-

TOM
(pulling her back down)
No, no, this is just getting good. Come on, Lisa. Hypnotize me.

LISA
You're drunk.

TOM
I'm not drunk.

LISA
You're not supposed to mesmerize someone if they've been drinking.

TOM
"Mesmerize," I can't stand this anymore. Please. I'm begging you. Educate the savages.

LISA
It won't work with that kind of uncooperative attitude.

TOM
I swear I will follow every instruction, to the letter. And it still won't work. Come on.

He finishes a beer and sits forward, challenging.

TOM (cont'd)
What's the worst that can happen?

The room is tense. Lisa stares at him for a long moment.

LISA
Somebody turn off the lights.

A hand switches off a light.

Another hand turns off the stereo.

Another bulb goes black.

Lisa sits on the coffee table in the semi-darkened room, facing Tom. The others watch, fascinated.

LISA
Close your eyes.

TOM
Certainly, Lisa.

As Tom does, our eyes close too, big heavy lashes dropping over everything and plunging us into blackness.

9 CONTINUED: (4) 9

LISA (o.s.)
Just listen for a moment.

10 MENTAL IMAGE - IN THE BLACK 10

we can still hear the sounds of the living room. Tom breathes. Ice CLINKS in a glass as someone drinks. A car HUMS by outside.

LISA (O.S.)
Look at the backs of your eyelids. Do you see anything there?

TOM (o.s.)
Uh...

Out of the pitch black, we can detect tiny images.

TOM (o.s.)
Some colors... something floating... up.

LISA (o.s.)
Focus on it.

A small squiggly line comes into focus, drifting up through the black, then bouncing suddenly downward.

LISA (o.s.)
Now... I want you to pretend you're in a theatre.

11 INT THEATRE NIGHT 11

We're sitting in a theatre, a bare stage at the front.

LISA (o.s.)
A movie theatre.

12 INT MOVIE THEATRE NIGHT 12

Okay, we're sitting in a *movie* theatre, one of those multiplex shoeboxes. It's crowded with people, waiting for the movie to start.

LISA (o.s.)
You're the only one there.

The people disappear. The theatre is empty.

LISA (o.s.)
You look around. It's a huge, empty theatre, one of those great old movie palaces.

12 CONTINUED: 12

We whiz back twenty rows, as the shoebox turns into a movie palace with statues, chandeliers, carved frescoes on the walls.

LISA (o.s.)
The walls of the theatre are painted black.

Black paint oozes down over the rococo walls.

LISA (o.s.)
The seats are covered in black.

Black fabric crawls over the seats.

LISA (o.s.)
There is no light in the theatre.

The lights fade out.

LISA (o.s.)
In the whole pitch-black theatre, there's only one thing you can see. The white screen. You drift toward it, in your chair.

Up ahead of us, the screen is a dazzling white. We move slowly toward it, floating over the seats.

LISA (o.s.)
There are letters up on the screen. Tall, thick, black letters, but they're out of focus. You drift closer to them, trying to read them.

Blurry black letters appear on the screen. We drift closer.

LISA (o.s.)
You're very comfortable. You sit there, looking at the screen, drifting closer in your chair, staring at those letters. You're relaxing. Your legs are relaxed. Your hands are limp and heavy. The letters come into focus, you're close enough now, you can read them. The letters spell --

The moment she speaks the word, five giant black letters come into focus on the white screen, filling our entire field of vision.

LISA (o.s.)
SLEEP.

12 CONTINUED: (2) 12

We stare at that word, then everything goes black for a long moment. Suddenly --

13 INT FLASHBACK HOUSE DAY 13

An image pops up out of the black, just for a split-second, barely long enough for us to make out what it is. It's a point-of-view shot, we're falling down, toward unpainted wooden floorboards. We hit hard, and as we spit out blood *one of our own teeth* skitters out across the floor and into our field of vision.

Just as suddenly as it appeared the image disappears and --

14 INT BOBBY & VANESSA'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 14

Tom's eyes snap open. He's horrified. *SIX FACES* stare right at him from up close. Tom looks around, disoriented. He's still in Bobby and Vanessa's living room.

TOM
What the hell was that?

All six faces burst out laughing simultaneously. Somebody turns the lights back on, somebody else hits the music.

TOM (cont'd)
What?

People start talking, all at once. Lisa seems very pleased with herself. Maggie comes and sits on the arm of the chair next to Tom, puts her hand on his face.

MAGGIE
Are you okay?

VANESSA
You were faking it. You had to be faking it.

FRANK
That was the weirdest thing I've ever seen in my life.

Maggie wipes his face with her hand. *

MAGGIE
You've still got tears on your cheeks. *

TOM *
What'd you do to me?

14 CONTINUED: 14

LISA
Oh, nothing much. Just had you stretched out as stiff as a board between those two chairs --

She points to two dining room chairs that are sitting back to back four or five feet apart.

LISA (cont'd)
(lighting a lighter)
-- and ran this back and forth under your legs.

TOM
(to Maggie)
That happened?

MAGGIE
You said it didn't hurt. And she kept it moving.

TOM
Hey, thanks a lot, it was very nice of you not to burn my flesh.

FRANK
Joey Luca woulda burned it. *

They laugh again.

TOM
Who?

FRANK
The kid who beat you up all the time when you were twelve. You told us all about him. You were cryin' and everything. It was hysterical.

TOM
Joey Luca? Jesus, I haven't thought about him in... *

FRANK
(looks at his watch)
Almost time.

TOM
What?

FRANK
(innocently)
Huh?

14 CONTINUED: (2) 14

TOM
Almost time for what?

FRANK
(to the others, covering badly)
What's he talking about?

On the mantle over the fireplace, a clock CHIMES eleven -- *

-- and Tom BARKS like a dog. Twice, convincingly. *

There is a moment of silence, then everyone explodes in laughter. * *

LISA *
Why'd you do that, Tom?

TOM
I have no idea.

Even more laughter, now everybody's slapping him on the back. He smiles, his sense of humor returning. He looks at Lisa and shakes his head.

TOM
Anything else you left in my brain, you dead woman?

CUT TO:

15 INT TOM & MAGGIE'S HOUSE NIGHT 15

A clock on a bedside table reads 1:11. Maggie is asleep in bed, Tom is lying on his back, still awake. He stares up at the ceiling. He rolls over on his side.

Can't sleep. He closes his eyes.

16-16C A BARRAGE OF IMAGES 16-16C

races across the back of his eyelids:

16 -- Lisa's face, close to his, as she begins to hypnotize him.

16A -- A flame, leaping out from a cigarette lighter.

16B -- Six faces, pressed in close to his.

16C -- Himself, floating in an armchair above an empty movie theatre.

17 INT TOM & MAGGIE'S BEDROOM NIGHT 17

Tom opens his eyes. He squints at the clock. Now it's 2:26. He rolls over, punching his pillow. He closes his eyes again.

A hand drops over Tom's shoulder. It's Maggie, who has been partially roused by Tom's tossing and turning.

He settles, puts an arm around her and pulls her closer to him. Her hand strokes his chest. Then it slides beneath the sheets, moving.

Still not fully awake, she begins to kiss his neck.

He rolls over to face her.

She's still half unconscious as they start to make out, sleep-sex.

NEXT TO THE BED,

Maggie's pajama pants drop onto the floor.

IN BED,

things have moved right along. Maggie rolls over on top of Tom, puts her legs around his. She reaches down for him and they start to make love.

He puts his hands on her hips, she puts hers on his chest. She brings her mouth down to his, they kiss. They move. Tom closes his eyes.

Immediately, images come to him, first person point-of-view.

18 EXT FLASHBACK HOUSE DAY 18

His own house, seen on a winter day. A FIGURE IN AN OVERCOAT stands on the front porch, waving to us to come inside.

18A INT FLASHBACK HOUSE DAY 18A

A face, close to ours but blue-tinted, blurry and distorted. * Also above him, also moving. The right half of the image is * spiderwebbed and blurry, but the left is not. *

19 IN BED, 19

Tom opens his eyes. What was that? He turns his head to the side. He sees his hand. He grips the bedding as they make love.

20 INT FLASHBACK HOUSE DAY 20

Another hand matches that image. This hand is slender, in a similar position, but clawing at wooden floorboards instead of bedding. A fingernail SNAPS off one of the fingers. Again, the * right half of the image is spiderwebbed and blurry. *

21 IN BED, 21

Tom opens his eyes, upset.

MAGGIE
What's the matter?

TOM
Don't stop.

He starts them moving again, tries to lose himself in the sex. He and Maggie build toward the Moment. He closes his eyes again. More images come, and these are very upsetting:

22 INT FLASHBACK HOUSE DAY 22

Rough hands attack us, covering our eyes and face.

Wooden floorboards race up toward us as we fall. We hit, hard, and our blood sprays out onto the wood.

A tooth, one of our own, snaps right out of our mouth and tumbles into our field of vision. It's the image we saw when Tom was under.

23 IN BED, 23

Tom SHOUTS and sits up, pulling away from Maggie, swinging his legs over the side of the bed.

TOM
Oh my *God...*

MAGGIE
What?!

TOM
I'm seeing things.

MAGGIE
What happened?

She puts her arms around him from behind. He resists.

TOM
I can't... I can't right now.

23 CONTINUED: 23

MAGGIE
Then you were faking it *extremely* well.

She tries to get things going again, but he pulls away, gets up, puts on his pants.

TOM
Don't, it's too weird.

MAGGIE
Weird?

He picks up a glass of water from the bedside table and drinks, thirstily. *

MAGGIE (cont'd)
Baby, that wasn't weird. I can show you weird...

TOM
It was like I was being attacked.

MAGGIE
(offended)
Thanks a lot.

He puts his hands to the side of his head. It hurts. A lot. *

TOM *
I'll be right back. *

24 INT BATHROOM NIGHT 24

Tom shakes some aspirin into his palm; swallows three. He runs water in the sink, splashes some on his face. He straightens, looks in the mirror as he wipes his dripping face with a towel. When he pulls the towel away --

-- he notices a thin stream of blood running down his chin. He leans close to the mirror, bares his teeth. The blood seems to be coming from around one of his front teeth.

He licks the blood away, reaches up and touches his tooth. It moves. He jerks his hand away. *That* ain't right. But you know how it is, once you know the tooth wiggles, you gotta try it a few more times.

He squeezes it between his thumb and forefinger, to see how much it moves.

The tooth pulls right out of his gum.

24 CONTINUED: 24

Tom GASPS and opens his hand, the tooth CLATTERS into the porcelain sink, Tom looks up at the mirror, horrified --

-- and the blood is gone from his face. He looks down at the sink, confused. There's no tooth there.

He opens his mouth again. All his teeth are fine. Huh?

25 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 25

Tom strides into the living room, deeply disturbed. He paces back and forth, muttering, holding his head in his hands.

26 INT KITCHEN NIGHT 26

Tom rips the refrigerator open and searches the top shelf. He grabs a carton of orange juice and drinks from it, juice running down his chin. He finishes it all.

Still unsatisfied, he flips on the faucet, bends over and drinks right out of the spigot. Can't get enough.

27 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 27

Tom drops onto the sofa. He sits forward, picks up the remote off the coffee table, points it at the TV and turns it on. When he sits back --

-- *there's a woman sitting next to him.*

She's eighteen or nineteen years old, so pale her skin's almost luminous. She's attractive but odd, she wears a billowy black dress with a diamond pattern, bangles up and down each wrist. Her eyes are vivid blue but red-rimmed. Steam rises softly from her hair and skin; when she opens her mouth to speak, her breath comes out of her mouth in clouds of vapor.

But try as she might to form words, the sounds aren't coherent. They're muffled, distorted, ugly.

Tom SHOUTS and bolts to his feet, leaping away from the couch. When he turns back, she's gone.

28 ON THE STAIRS, 28

Tom staggers back upstairs, shaken. He stops, staring up. Jake, his five year old, is standing at the top of the stairs, * perfectly straight, staring down at his father calmly.

TOM

Jake?

28 CONTINUED: 28

The little boy doesn't answer, just stares at him. Tom climbs the last few stairs and bends down to his son. The vertical bars of the bannister cast shadows across his face.

TOM (cont'd)
Daddy's okay, I just, I don't feel well right now...

Jake reaches out with one hand and rests his fingertips on Tom's forehead. His face lights up in a wide smile.

JAKE *
Don't be afraid of it, Daddy. *

Jake turns, walks down the hall, and goes back into his room.

Leaving that for Tom to interpret.

CUT TO:

29 INT LIVING ROOM DAY 29

The next morning. An old monster movie is on the television. Jake, in his pajamas, is watching it on the couch.

30 IN THE KITCHEN, 30

Tom is wearing jeans and a phone company uniform shirt, pulling pages of work orders out of an old fax machine on the counter as they scroll in. Maggie's at the table.

MAGGIE
Well, what? A hallucination? *

TOM
Yeah, a bunch of 'em. I can't describe it. These images just kept coming... it was like a, what do they call that? A waking dream.

MAGGIE
If it never happened before, it had to * be the hypnosis. Your brain was * agitated or something. *

TOM *
(shakes his head) *
I had this headache like you wouldn't * believe, and I was thirsty as hell. *
(of the fax, which is lengthy) *
Look at this, I got seven calls before * lunch. *

30 CONTINUED: 30

From the TV, a woman SCREAMS. *

MAGGIE *
Jake, I *know* you're not watching that *
monster tape again! *

31 IN THE LIVING ROOM, 31

Jake picks up the remote and quickly changes the channel to a kids' morning show.

32 IN THE KITCHEN, 32

Maggie lowers her voice again, back to Tom.

MAGGIE
Who was the woman?

TOM
I don't know. Somebody I met once, maybe, and I was remembering her. She didn't look familiar, though. *

MAGGIE
Did you fuck her? *

TOM
You've got to be kidding.

MAGGIE
No, I mean, was she someone you used to go out with?

TOM
You're jealous of my hallucination? You are pregnant.

MAGGIE
You should call Lisa.

TOM
Oh please, she's the one who fucked up my brain in the first place. *

MAGGIE
Well, then she has to unfuck it.

TOM *
(the fax is still coming in) *
Oh, *fuck.* *

MAGGIE *
Don't swear so much. *

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: 32

From the living room, there is another SCREAM. Jake has changed it back to the monster movie.

CUT TO:

33 INT LISA'S APARTMENT DAY 33

Lisa, Maggie's sister, is still in bed in her smallish apartment. She's on the phone.

LISA
Hang on, lemme get my bearings here, I haven't had any caffeine in approximately seven hours... If you're asking if I gave you a post-hyp-

34 EXT PHONE POLE DAY 34

A maze of phone circuits HUM and CLICK as calls are routed through them. A red clip is stuck into the middle of the circuits. Following the clip's wire back, we see Tom in a bucket arm raised up next to a phone pole in the riverfront industrial district. He's talking into a test handset unit that he holds to his ear.

TOM
Post-hypnotic suggestion, I know what it's called. What else did you leave behind when you were kickin' your clumsy-ass feet around inside my brain? *

LISA
Nothing. *

TOM
Tell me the truth.

LISA
Tom, please, this is insulting. I *have* done this before. It was completely routine, I put you in a receptive frame, I made a few simple suggestions, and I-

TOM
A receptive frame, what is that? *

LISA
Just what it sounds like.

TOM
How did you do it?

LISA
I used a metaphor. The subconscious responds better to images than words. It's very corny, actually. "Open the door" usually works. That's what I said to you.

TOM
What door?

LISA
You know, a door, like a mental block. Everybody's got 'em. You open the door, you release repressed memories, latent abilities, whatever you got back there. In your case, it was probably Mannix reruns. *

TOM
Did you happen to close the door when you left?

LISA
What's the matter?

TOM
Nothin', it's over. I gotta get back * to work. *

LISA
Did you-

But he's hung up.

LISA (cont'd)
(phony brightness)
Okay, then. Well, all right, I'll speak to you later, then. You too. Bye bye.

She hangs up. Immediately, her phone starts to ring again. She rolls over, pulling the pillow on top of her head. Her machine picks up.

LISA (cont'd)
(on machine)
Hi, leave me a message and hope for the best.

35 CONTINUED: 35

MAGGIE (o.s.)
(after the beep)
Lisa, it's me, call me when -- *

CUT TO:

36 INT KITCHEN DAY 36

Jake sits at the kitchen table in his pajamas, eating a bowl of cereal. Maggie, in work clothes, is walking back and forth behind him, talking on the phone, finishing her makeup, drinking coffee, and doing the dishes. Her voice continues from Lisa's machine.

MAGGIE
-- you wake up, is there any way you'd consider baby-sitting for us again on Friday night?

Over at the table, Jake turns and looks at the empty chair next to him. His Special Friend must be there. *

JAKE *
I did. I told him. *

MAGGIE
(into phone)
Maureen just backed out and Tom and I really want to go to the game and --

JAKE
(to his Special Friend)
What's her name? Okay.

MAGGIE
(into phone)
-- I'd ask Grandma to do it but then I * gotta hear about it for a month. I * called everybody else who- *

JAKE
Call Vanessa.

MAGGIE
Huh?

JAKE
Call Vanessa and ask her about Debbie.

MAGGIE
(into phone)
Anyway, call me, bye.
(hangs up and looks at Jake)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: 36

MAGGIE (cont'd)
Debbie? That's the girl who baby-sits for them? *

JAKE
Yep.

MAGGIE
Ooh, great idea, pray she's free.

She snaps up the phone. As she dials:

MAGGIE (cont'd)
How do you know about Debbie?

JAKE
Samantha told me.

MAGGIE
(doesn't hear that)
Hi, Vanessa! Hey, are you guys going out Friday?

A DOORBELL rings.

CUT TO:

37 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 37

Tom answers the front door. A GIRL stands on the porch, late teens, moody-looking, crucifix around her neck, wearing more black than you'd hope your baby-sitter would.

DEBBIE
Hi, I'm Debbie Kozak. *

TOM
Tom Witzky.

She steps inside. Maggie comes into the room.

MAGGIE
Hi, Debbie.

DEBBIE
Hi.

MAGGIE
Thanks for coming, I'm Maggie. Jake's asleep already and he hardly ever wakes up, a band could play in his room and he wouldn't hear it, so you shouldn't have any trouble with him at all. His room is right up at the top of the...

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: 37

As she goes on, Tom stands rooted where he is, staring at Debbie. A strange BUZZING sound grows in his ears. He watches, * frozen, as Maggie shows Debbie the TV, how the remotes work, etc. Debbie glances over at him and smiles. The buzzing fades. *

MAGGIE (cont'd)
...no later than midnight, if that's okay with you.

DEBBIE
Perfect!

MAGGIE
Great. Let me just grab my coat and we're out of here.

She runs upstairs. Tom is still standing where he was. Debbie sits on the sofa.

TOM
Why don't you, uh... why don't you make yourself comfortable. Take off your coat.

She does. She looks up at Tom. He's making her nervous. *

TOM (cont'd)
'Scuse me. *

He goes upstairs. *

38 INT BATHROOM NIGHT 38*

In the bathroom, Tom drinks a glass of water quickly. He * happens to glance into the mirror. For a moment, it appears the * bones under the skin of his face are visible, and *moving* under * the flesh. He blinks, looks again. Must have been seeing * things. He shakes three or four aspirin into his palm. In the * mirror, he sees Maggie staring at him from the doorway. *

TOM
Where did you find Debbie?

MAGGIE
Vanessa gave me her number. Everybody uses her, it's cool.
(noticing the aspirin)
Another headache?

TOM
Too much caffeine. *

He pops the pills in his mouth and swallows them dry. *

39 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 39

Tom and Maggie step back into the living room and head for the front door. The moment Tom lays eyes on Debbie, the BUZZING sound returns, louder this time. It drowns out Maggie's voice as she gives Debbie last minute instructions and says goodbye.

Tom reaches the open doorway and glances back inside. Debbie is looking at him as he swings the door shut.

40 EXT FRONT PORCH NIGHT 40

The buzzing stops the moment the door is shut. Tom and Maggie go down the steps. Tom looks back over his shoulder, at the house, in time to see Debbie's face, peering out between the blinds at them. *

CUT TO:

41 EXT BUSY STREET NIGHT 41

Tom and Maggie walk down a crowded sidewalk with Frank and Sheila, from next door. (They pass a telephone pole, more flyers posted.) Tom is terribly distracted, looking back over his shoulder, still plagued with a headache.

FRANK
(to Tom)
Don't get me wrong, it's great what the Damon kid is doin' and everything...

They round a corner. Just ahead, a high school football field is surrounded by bright lights, mobbed with STUDENTS and PARENTS. *

FRANK
(raising his voice over the crowd)
...and yeah, the kid has an arm, but high school football is power, it's running the ball, always been that way, it was when I played. What'd you play in high school?

TOM
Piano, mostly.

Frank just looks at him -- what are you, kidding?

Tom looks at the cars on the street. The brake lights glow bright red, and as he looks at the red lights the BUZZING sound comes back. He shakes it off.

41 CONTINUED: 41

FRANK
Anyway, *Adam*, and I admit I'm biased, but my kid is having one hell of a season and it's like nobody noticed. If they'd just give him the carries he could break a thousand yards. And on an eight game schedule!

He pulls out a pint bottle of schnapps and has a bump, offers one to Tom, who declines. A SEXY TEENAGE GIRL walks past. Frank notices. Thoroughly.

Behind them, Sheila and Maggie walk together. Sheila snaps at Frank as he ogles the teenager.

SHEILA
Why don't you just *lick* them when they walk by?

Frank waves her off and shrugs to Tom.

FRANK
What can I do? Nature commands me to spread my seed. I hear and obey.

TOM
Just don't be surprised when she digs out one of your .38s and buries a slug in your ass.

FRANK
You think I should hide 'em better? *

BEHIND THEM, *

Sheila and Maggie talk.

SHEILA
Frank says the average guy carries around a hard-on two and a half hours out of every day. Three and a half for him.

MAGGIE
Really. I wish you... see, now I have to picture that.

SHEILA
It's a report from your future, honey, and the news is not good. They change. Ten years of marriage, a kid or two, they're different human be-

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE
Sheila, God, you're, you're, you're such a *downer*, man.

A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN walks past and Frank gives her the big crank-around.

SHEILA
He'll stick it in a bowl of soup if it's still warm.

42 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 42

Back in their living room, Debbie sets the baby monitor on an end table and sits down with a magazine. She turns the monitor up. Jake's breathing is clearly audible. She reads.

43 EXT STREET NIGHT 43

As they near the stadium, they pass a police car, a couple COPS busting UNDERAGE DRINKERS. The red lights on top of the car are flashing. Tom stares at the red, puts a hand to his temple.

Maggie catches up.

MAGGIE
You okay?

44 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 44

It's very quiet in the house. From the monitor, Jake's breathing is still normal.

Debbie reads.

45 EXT STADIUM NIGHT 45*

There is a huge throng pressing to get into the stadium's entrance tunnel. Some TEENAGERS on the sidewalk are sneaking beer into the game by tossing cans up to their FRIENDS in the top row of the bleachers, who catch them. Or don't. One or two hit the sidewalk and burst, spraying everywhere. *

The two couples join the mass of people. Frank takes another bump and passes Tom the bottle. This time, Tom takes a swig. *

46 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 46*

Debbie turns a page.

Suddenly, on the monitor -- Jake's breathing stops.

Debbie doesn't notice.

47 EXT STADIUM NIGHT 47*

The two couples are in the middle of the crowd now, pressing into the tunnel. It's loud in there, packed with people, many of them loaded. Above and to the sides, they can hear SCREAMING fans, POUNDING feet. It's deafening.

And on top of it all, Frank is still screaming in Tom's ear.

FRANK
He hits a thousand yards and we're talkin' major scholarships, the kid could write his own ticket. That kinda thing's good for everybody, helps the whole neighborhood. He's goin' a hell of a lot farther than I ever did. Look at the quality of the tail he's already gettin'. He passed me in that department when he was about fourteen!

Tom, sweaty and anxious, looks up ahead to see what the delay is. At the base of the stairs that lead up into the stadium, two SECURITY GUARDS with handheld metal detectors are checking every fan for weapons.

48 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 48*

The monitor is still silent. Debbie turns and looks at it. That's odd. She reaches out and turns the volume up. Still nothing.

She picks it up, brings it closer to her ear. Suddenly, JAKE'S VOICE comes out of the monitor, blaring.

JAKE
You scared me.

Debbie almost drops the monitor. She sets it down again. Jake's voice continues. His Special Friend is back!

JAKE (cont'd)
Yes.
(pause)
Yes.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: 48

JAKE (cont'd)
(pause)
She's downstairs, I think. *

Debbie stands up. What the hell is going on up there? She goes to the base of the stairs, nervous.

She starts up.

49 EXT STADIUM TUNNEL NIGHT 49

In the tunnel, which is jammed up like a Who concert, the fans waiting to get into the game hear the kickoff, and the ensuing ROAR of the crowd that's already in.

They press forward, trying to force their way in. There are SHOUTS at the Security Guards. Tom and Maggie sweep forward in the crush.

Tom's face is a mask of worry. Maggie notices. She SHOUTS over the noise.

MAGGIE
ARE YOU OKAY?

TOM
Something's wrong.

50 INT UPSTAIRS HALL NIGHT 50

Debbie creeps down the hall toward Jake's room. She can hear him WHISPERING to someone as she draws closer.

50 CONTINUED: 50

DEBBIE
Jake?

Still no answer. She reaches his door and pushes it open.

51 IN JAKE'S ROOM, 51

the light from the hallway spills across the carpet. Jake is sitting in the middle of his bed, cross-legged. He turns and looks at her. *

JAKE
Samantha says it's always dark where she is.

DEBBIE
(tremulous)
Who did you say?

JAKE
Samantha.

DEBBIE
You... talked to Samantha?

JAKE
Yeah.

DEBBIE
When?

JAKE
All the time.

DEBBIE
Where?

JAKE
Here.

Debbie's reaction is way out of hand. She bolts across the room and grabs the little boy by the arms. *

DEBBIE
How can you say that?! That's cruel! It isn't true!

JAKE
I don't tell lies.

DEBBIE
Samantha was here?! She was here, in your house?!

51 CONTINUED: 51

JAKE
You're hurting my arms.

DEBBIE
(shaking him)
WAS SHE HERE!?!

JAKE
Let go of me!

52 EXT STADIUM TUNNEL NIGHT 52*

The ROAR of the crowd above and around is maddening now. Tom is * at the front, being checked by the Security Guards, who wave him * in. But he freezes, doesn't want to go. *

SECURITY GUARD *
Go ahead. Go on. *

But Tom just stands there, shaking his head, can't move. Behind * him, angry fans shout at him to get the hell out of the way. *

MAGGIE *
WHAT'S WRONG?! *

As Tom turns to her, his eye is drawn by a flash of light behind * her. A red neon sign on the wall of the tunnel flashes the name * of the school's team. As Tom stares at the light, the BUZZING * sound overwhelms him. *

TOM
SHE'S TAKING HIM AWAY!

MAGGIE
WHAT?!

Tom turns and fights his way back into the crowd, like a salmon * swimming upstream. But it's dense going, and it's pissing * everybody off. He BANGS through bodies, some of them shove * back, an empty beer can bounces off his head. *

53 INT STAIRCASE NIGHT 53*

Debbie races down the staircase, carrying Jake in her arms, a blanket hastily wrapped around him.

JAKE
Put me down! PUT ME DOWN!

54 EXT STADIUM NIGHT 54*

Tom bursts out of the crowded tunnel and onto the busy sidewalk, * threading his way between PEOPLE and cars. *

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: 54

He races into the street, forcing a car to lock 'em up at the last second, narrowly missing him. He takes off down the street. Maggie follows, not far behind. *

55 INT HOUSE NIGHT 55

Debbie unlocks the front door, slings it open, and bolts outside, carrying Jake. *

56 (OMITTED) 56*

57 EXT OUR BLOCK NIGHT 57*

Tom races down his block. He reaches the sidewalk just in front * of his house and stops in his tracks, staring at the house, wild-eyed. The front door is hanging open, lights are on inside. He races in. We stay outside, hearing his anguished, enraged voice BELLOWING for his son.

A moment later, Maggie comes running up, out of breath. She reaches the front of the house just as Tom is coming out again.

MAGGIE
What the hell is-

TOM
She took him!

MAGGIE
What?!

TOM
SHE TOOK HIM, HE'S NOT THERE, SHE TOOK HIM SOMEPLACE!

MAGGIE
Oh, my God!

He runs to the corner, desperate, and looks up and down the street in both directions. There are a lot of people out, she could be anywhere.

He turns, looks up and down the side street. Nothing in the first direction, but when he looks the other way, he hears a faint BUZZING sound in the distance. He doesn't hesitate, just takes off toward it.

58 EXT ANOTHER STREET NIGHT 58

Tom runs through a tunnel under elevated train tracks. Above him, a train is SCREECHING to a stop. He looks ahead. He's standing in front of a train station. The BUZZING is louder as he stares at it.

Maggie comes through the tunnel, catching up to him.

58 CONTINUED: 58

TOM
She's got him in there.

They race inside.

59 INT TRAIN STATION NIGHT 59

Tom and Maggie enter through a waiting area. They hurry across the floor, looking left and right, worried out of their minds. * Near a newsstand, TWO COPS notice them and follow. What's up? *

Tom sees a red light mounted on a wall near one of the tunnels. * The light is flashing on and off -- "BOARDING."

As Tom stares at the light, the buzzing returns, but faintly now. It's not in his head, it's actually coming from the light. Tom walks toward it. When he's finally standing right under the light, he turns around. Directly behind him --

-- he sees *Jake*, held over Debbie's shoulder as she stands at one of the ticket windows. Jake is exhausted, distraught, eyes staring blankly up at the buzzing light, the red flashing off his face.

Debbie is at the front of her line, talking animatedly to the TICKET SELLER. Tom doesn't want to startle her. He takes one step closer to her. Jake's eyes drop from the light, he notices his father, picks up his head and smiles.

Maggie sees Jake at the same time. She and Tom rush over to their son. Debbie notices.

DEBBIE
(to the Ticket Seller)
That's him!

She turns and tries to run, still carrying Jake, but Tom and Maggie descend on her.

TOM
Where do you think you're going?!

59 CONTINUED: 59

MAGGIE
Give him back to me!

DEBBIE
FIRST YOU TELL ME WHERE SHE IS! *TELL ME WHERE SHE IS!*

Tom tries to wrench Jake away from her but Debbie whirls, violently. Jake starts to cry. The Ticket Seller (YVONNE), a woman in her mid-forties, comes running out from behind the row of cages, SHOUTING.

YVONNE
Take your hands off her!

DEBBIE
POLICE! HELP, POLICE!

The cops who spotted them upstairs come racing down the steps and run over. When they reach the ticket windows, everyone is shouting at everyone else, still locked in struggle.

COP 1
Hey, hey, HEY, HEY, *HEY!* Everybody shut up a minute!

MAGGIE
That's our son! That woman kidnapped our son!

COP 1
(to Debbie)
Is that your child?

Jake is still crying, reaching his arms out to his parents.

DEBBIE
Ask them about Samantha!

COP 1
I'm asking about that boy, who sure as hell doesn't look like he belongs to you.

YVONNE
I can explain this.

COP 1
I'm not talking to you, I'm talking to her. Is that boy your child?

DEBBIE
No.

(CONTINUED)

COP 1
Then give him to the lady.

DEBBIE
No!

The First Cop steps toward her.

COP 1
RIGHT NOW.

Reluctantly, Debbie holds Jake out. He practically leaps into Maggie's arms.

COP 2
(to Maggie)
What's going on here?

MAGGIE
I don't know! She was baby-sitting for us, we'd never used her before, but people said...

COP 1
(to Debbie)
Do you know that what you've done is a felony? Do you know you could go to jail for this?

TOM
Where were you taking him?

DEBBIE
I wasn't taking him anywhere!

TOM
Then why did you bring him to a train station?

MAGGIE
I want to file charges.

Terrified, Debbie falls against Yvonne, who puts an arm around her.

YVONNE
She came because *I* was here! I'm her mother. I work here.

TOM
Her mother?

59 CONTINUED: (3) 59

DEBBIE
When are you going to ask *them* some questions?! When are you going to ask them about Samantha?!

COP 1
Who?

Debbie rips her purse off her shoulder and fumbles inside for something.

YVONNE
Samantha's my oldest daughter. She ran away about six months ago.

DEBBIE
She didn't run away! She was kidnapped or something! The little boy said he saw her!

YVONNE
We haven't heard anything from her, we filed reports, there's an open investigation, but no-

DEBBIE
Jake said he talked to her! He said he saw her all the time, in his house! He said Samantha was in their house!

She has her wallet open now, to a photograph. She lunges forward, toward Jake, who's trying to hide in his mother's arms. She gets right in Jake's face.

DEBBIE (cont'd)
Is that her?! Is that the Samantha you know?! Look at the picture, LOOK AT THE PICTURE!

MAGGIE
Don't you go near him, you crazy little bitch!

Tom catches a glance of the picture. He grabs Debbie by the wrist, hard, and pulls it right up in front of his eyes.

It's a shot of Debbie, standing on the shores of Lake Michigan in summertime, one arm around her older sister. Samantha is pretty, about seventeen years old.

She's the woman Tom saw in his living room.

59 CONTINUED: (4) 59

DEBBIE
Let go of me!

She rips her arm free. Tom just stands there, stunned.

MAGGIE
This is ridiculous. Do you actually think we-

COP 1
Just take a look at the picture, please.

Debbie hands the picture to Maggie.

MAGGIE
I've never seen her before in my life.

COP 1
(to Tom)
What about you?

Tom takes the picture and looks at it again. He notices Samantha's arm this time. She's wearing a lot of bracelets, different colors, all up and down her arms, just like when he saw her sitting on his couch.

TOM
I'm... sorry. No.

He hands it back.

DEBBIE
They're lying! They're *lying!*

COP 1
(to Maggie)
Do you want to file charges?

MAGGIE *
Yes. *

TOM
(quickly)
No.

MAGGIE
What?

TOM
Let's just forget about it. *

CUT TO:

60 EXT TRAIN STATION NIGHT 60

Maggie and Tom, who is carrying Jake, come out of the train station. As soon as they're outside:

MAGGIE
What the fuck were you thinking? Are you nuts? What about the next people she baby-sits for? How could you- *

TOM
It was her.

JAKE
Did Mommy just say the "f" word?

MAGGIE
Who?

TOM
The girl in the picture. Samantha. She's the woman I saw on our couch the other night.

JAKE
I think you just said the "f" word. *

TOM
Why did you call Debbie to baby-sit for us? Why her?

MAGGIE
(thinks back)
I couldn't find anybody else. I was on the phone and Jake said-

She stops, staring at Jake, who is shaking his finger at her.

JAKE
I definitely heard the "f" word.

CUT TO:

61 INT JAKE'S ROOM NIGHT 61

Jake sits on the floor of his room in his pajamas, playing intently with model cars. He's HUMMING a soft tune to himself, the same one he hummed during his bath in the opening.

Maggie and Tom stand in the doorway, staring at him for a long time. Maggie finally speaks up, her tone soft, gently probing.

61 CONTINUED: 61

MAGGIE
Jake, do you remember the other day when we were talking in the kitchen?

Jake doesn't look up, just keeps playing and HUMMING.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
I was looking for a baby-sitter, remember?
(Jake plays)
And you said "Samantha" told you about Debbie. Do you remember that?

He keeps playing, HUMMING. Tom and Maggie exchange a look.

TOM
Mommy's asking you a question, Buddy. *

Nothing.

MAGGIE
Is Samantha someone who talks to you sometimes? *
(no answer)
Can you remember any of the things that she-

JAKE
(looks up sharply)
Don't ask the boy any more questions.

They freeze, staring at him. His tone sounded odd, as if his voice was overlaid with a second pitch. And did he just refer to himself in the third person?

JAKE (cont'd)
Talk to *me.*

He goes back to playing, and to that haunting little tune. Maggie covers her mouth, horrified. Jake remains calm, still humming his favorite tune. * *

Tom comes over and bends down in front of his son. *

TOM *
What did you say, Jake? *

JAKE *
Huh? *

TOM *
What did you say just now? *

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: (2) 61

JAKE
(looks at him, puzzled)
Nothing.

Tom sits down next to him, lowers his voice to a whisper.

TOM
Make that voice again.

MAGGIE
Tom.

TOM
Come on, Jake, make the voice again.

MAGGIE
Don't do that.

TOM
It's all right! I know you can do it, Jake, come on, just make the voice, please, please, for me?

Maggie steps in and picks up Jake.

MAGGIE
Okay, Sweetie, let's go see if Beetleborg's on yet.

TOM
Hey! I'm talkin' to him!

62 IN THE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY, 62

Maggie is headed downstairs, Jake on one hip. Tom follows, arms extended.

TOM
What's the matter with you?

MAGGIE
What do you think?

TOM
I'm just trying to have a conversation with my kid!

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Maggie comes in with Jake and heads for the couch. Tom is right behind them.

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE
Yeah, perfectly normal everyday conversation for a five year old.

They drop onto the couch. Tom is there in a flash, right next to Jake.

TOM
Don't be scared of it.

MAGGIE
Why the hell not?

TOM
I don't know, that's what *he* told me.
(to Jake)
See, I was sitting right here when I saw her, and I picked up the remote like this, see, and when I sat back she was there.

MAGGIE
You're different. You look different, you feel different...

TOM
She's got longish hair, like this, right? She's maybe eighteen or something like that? Is that what you saw?

MAGGIE
You should see yourself right now, I mean, if you could see what you're doing...

TOM
Maggie, PLEASE, okay?
(back to Jake)
Or maybe you only hear her? Is that it, you hear her but you don't see her?

Jake looks back and forth to his parents. He doesn't like their tones. Tom digs the jar of aspirin out of his pocket and eats a few.

MAGGIE
Tom, stop it, you're freaking him out.

CONTINUED: (2)

TOM
(still to Jake)
I been trying to think how I can make her come back, you know, maybe if I hang out down here a little bit, I don't know, maybe if *you* ask her-

MAGGIE
Hey, I am talking to you.

TOM
Don't hold out on me, Buddy.

MAGGIE
This is incredible, it's like I'm not even standing here.

TOM
Come on, what's the problem, HEY!

He CLAPS his hands twice, loudly, in front of Jake, who winces.

MAGGIE
KNOCK IT OFF!!

Everybody stops what they're doing. Jake is the one who breaks a long pause.

JAKE
(to Tom)
I don't want to talk about it because it scares Mommy.

Maggie forces a smile and wedges herself onto the couch -- between them. She kisses him on the forehead, and Jake seems reassured. She gently slides the remote control out of Tom's hand and turns on the TV. The sound of a KIDS' SHOW plays in the background.

Tom, who realizes he's gone too far, lowers his voice, touches her hand.

TOM
I've never felt like this before. It's like a dam burst in my brain and there's all these things just pouring through me and I can't slow it down. I don't know why, I don't get it any more than you do, but -- maybe this is my thing, you know?

MAGGIE
We have to talk to somebody about it.

CONTINUED: (3)

TOM
No! Nobody! Swear to me, don't tell a soul, please. They're gonna think I'm nuts.

He dumps another couple aspirin in his hand, pops them in his mouth.

MAGGIE
You want to burn a hole in your stomach?

TOM
(puts an arm around her and pulls her close)
I'm fine. It's over anyway. Don't worry. It's over.

He puts one hand on her belly, slides her shirt up and touches her belly.

But he yanks his hand away fast, as from a hot stove.

TOM (cont'd)
Woah. Congratulations.

MAGGIE
What?

TOM
It *is* a girl.

She looks at him. It's not over.

CUT TO:

64 INT BEDROOM NIGHT 64*

Maggie lies in bed, Jake asleep beside her. Tom's side is empty. *

65 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 65

Tom sits on the couch in the living room, alone in the dark, hoping for something to happen.

He leans forward, picks up the remote for the TV, and turns it on. When he sits back --

-- he's still alone in the room. It's the same movement he made when Samantha first appeared, but tonight she doesn't.

He turns off the TV, puts the remote back on the coffee table. He repeats -- leans forward, picks it up, and turns the TV back on. When he sits back, still nothing. He turns off the TV.

He repeats.

CUT TO:

66 EXT BLOCK PARTY DAY 66

It's a street party, and it's jammed. Police barricades are at both ends of the block. Half barrels of beer sit in big plastic garbage cans, ice dumped over them. Most of the couple dozen cars parked in the driveways have their radios on, loud, the windows hanging open. One side of the street likes rap, the other side's into heavy metal.

Outside Bernie's Tap, the bar on the corner, a DOZEN DRUNK GUYS are running pass patterns out the front door, cutting left at the mailbox, and catching a football thrown from inside the bar, out an open window. Well, they don't actually *catch* the ball...

AT ONE OF THE KEGS,

a HOMELESS Guy is drinking right out of one of the beer taps while nobody is watching. Lenny, the local crank, is outraged.

LENNY
HEY, GET THE HELL AWAY FROM THERE!

He chases the Homeless Guy off, trying to kick him in the ass but spilling his own beer in the process.

66 CONTINUED: 66

LENNY (cont'd)
(to no one in particular)
You see what I'm talkin' about?! You see what I mean?!

ON A FRONT YARD,

Jake plays with a couple NEIGHBORHOOD KIDS.

NEARBY,

Maggie and Lisa walk through the party. Maggie looks terrible, dark circles under her eyes, stress showing everywhere.

LISA
You know, you're never going to get out of this marriage if you keep having children with him. Tom's looking especially together today. Sort of the unkempt Huey Newton look. But he did grunt a very pleasant greeting at me when I came in. Nope, nothing wrong with that guy.

She notices Maggie has buried her face in her hands, even begun to cry.

LISA (cont'd)
Oh, no. Oh, damn it, I'm sorry. What's the matter?

Maggie waves her off -- "it's not you."

LISA (cont'd)
What is it?

66 CONTINUED: (2) 66

IN FRONT OF BERNIE'S TAP,

somebody actually manages to catch one of the passes coming from out of the bar and is immediately tackled by three drunks. On the pavement. Ouch.

IN THE CROWD,

Harry Damon, Tom's landlord, is talking to the Neighborhood Guy.

HARRY
... but if you live on the base, room and board are covered, and you've got service pay on top of that. So by the time I retire I've got more than enough for a couple downpayments, some improvements. The day I take off the uniform I'm already a landlord. Five years later, I got three houses in this neighborhood.

He notices Tom staring at them. Tom looks like hell. Unshaven, two day old clothes. Harry looks him up and down.

HARRY (cont'd)
How ya doin'?

TOM
(no time for small talk)
What do you know about that girl Samantha Kozak? *

He pops a couple aspirin in his mouth, chews them. They stare at him.

HARRY
Samantha Kozak? That's familiar... why do I know that name? *

TOM
Blondish hair, sixteen or seventeen, she lives around here.

HARRY
Oh. Oh, yeah, I remember her, I think.

Harry turns to his son KURT DAMON, a great-looking seventeen year old who's leaning against the front of his Trans-Am, talking to a couple other guys.

66 CONTINUED: (3) 66

HARRY (cont'd)
Hey, Kurt, c'mere a second!
(to Tom)
Like he ever tells me anything.

The music coming from the car is too loud, Kurt can't hear.

HARRY (cont'd)
KURT! DO YOU REMEMBER THE -- COME OVER HERE! *

He gestures. Kurt comes over.

HARRY (cont'd)
Do you know that Kozak girl? *

KURT
What, Debbie?

HARRY
No, the other one. Samantha.

Lenny, the crank, joins the conversation.

LENNY
You mean the retard? She ran away.

HARRY
That's right, yeah, I remember her. What about her?

TOM
I've been thinking about her. A lot.

They look at him -- this guy needs some sleep. Or maybe lithium.

MAGGIE AND LISA

are still talking. Lisa has been told everything. Maggie is drying her tears. * *

MAGGIE
He hasn't been out of the house for almost a week, hasn't gone to work, he sleeps like twelve hours a night. He used up all his sick days, they're gonna start to dock him if he doesn't show up Monday, and I can't get him more than six feet away from the couch.

LISA
Why?

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (4) 66

MAGGIE
That's where she "appeared to him."

LISA
I'm not really shocked there's another woman, but the fact that she's dead gives one pause.
(Maggie looks at her)
Well? We are talking about a ghost here, aren't we?

HARRY DAMON

asks Tom a question.

HARRY
So, uh... why exactly are you thinking about her, Tom?

TOM
Her sister baby-sat for me.

He leaves it at that. There's an uncomfortable silence.

HARRY
Oh.

LENNY
She took off back in March, I think, with some black guy.

TOM
Did she ever live in our house?

Frank joins them. He's with his son ADAM, an athletic kid with big deep eyes.

FRANK
Who?

HARRY
(to Tom)
No. I just bought that one. You're the first tenants.

MAGGIE AND LISA

have lowered their voices. *

66 CONTINUED: (5) 66

MAGGIE
Jake won't even talk about it any more. *
Not to me anyway. He says Samantha's *
waiting.

LISA
For what?

MAGGIE
Like *I* know. Tom and Jake, it's like
they have this private club or *
something. They sit in the living room *
and whisper, and when I come in, they
both shut up right away.

WITH TOM

Frank has taken over the conversation. He has a big arm around his son's neck.

FRANK
Two hundred and eleven yards rushing
the other night. That makes eight
ninety-four with two games to play, kid
needs a hundred and six, that's only
fifty-three a game. He could walk
through the rest of the season and hit
a thousand.

ADAM
(pulling free)
Dad...

Behind them, the guys playing football out of Bernie's Tap have now organized a full-fledged game of tackle in the street, over the objections of their wives and girlfriends.

TOM
(to Harry)
Well, if you hear anything about her,
lemme know, okay?

FRANK
About *who?*

HARRY
Tom's asking about that Kozak girl from *
over by Baldwin, you know, the one that
ran away?

LENNY
The retard.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (6) 66

FRANK
Jesus, Lenny, don't use that word.

LENNY
What, retard?

FRANK
God damn it, Lenny! Why don't you shut your fuckin' mouth once in a while, huh?!

HARRY
Hey, take it easy, come on.

Lenny backs off, hands up. Frank is embarrassed, realizes he went a bit too far.

HARRY (cont'd)
We're all friends here. It's a party, remember?

FRANK
Guy gets on my nerves, that's all.
(to Tom)
She wasn't a retard, she was just kinda slow.

TOM
(turns to Adam)
You know anything about her?

But before Adam can answer, a CHORUS OF SHOUTS comes from nearby.

VOICES
HEADS UP!

The football WHIZZES through the group and SMACKS into Adam's chest. A second later, the Players tumble right through the middle of them -- sweaty, middle-aged bodies fly in every direction. Everybody SHOUTS and lunges backward, protecting their beers. The conversation is broken up.

But the football players are upset, and a fight breaks out. The crowd gets out of the way, half to watch the fight with glee, the other half to shake their heads.

And watch the fight.

LISA AND MAGGIE

ignore the fight, intent on their conversation.

66 CONTINUED: (7) 66

LISA
You know what you need to do? You gotta find some young priest with smoldering good looks who can sort of guide you through this.

Maggie laughs, in spite of herself, feeling a bit better.

LISA (cont'd)
I'm kidding, but I'm not. I give Tom a lot of shit, but the truth is I think you guys are the best couple I've ever seen in my life, and it would kill me to see something rip you apart. This is on you now, Maggie. Your family can fall apart or it can stay together, depends on what you do. Get help. Find out what's going on. You won't be the first woman who's ever had to hold an insane family together.

66 CONTINUED: (8) 66

MAGGIE
Tom's not crazy. *

LISA
Oh yes, he is. But at least he's getting interesting.

OVER AT KURT'S CAR,

while the fight goes on in the background, Adam wanders away from the group and sits down on the hood of Kurt Damon's car. He's rattled. Kurt notices him and comes over.

KURT
You okay?

ADAM
Fine.

KURT
Sure?

ADAM
Positive.

KURT
Wasted?

ADAM
Usually.

NEARBY,

Sheila, Frank's wife, watches the fight and shakes her head.

SHEILA
Somebody's always gotta ruin it. It can't ever just be nice.

CUT TO:

66A-67 (OMITTED) 66A-67

68 INT LIVING ROOM DAY 68*

The living room coffee table is covered with books, food, cans of Jolt Cola, an alarm clock. Blankets and pillows are piled on the sofa. Tom, asleep on the couch, has set up camp here.

Sunlight streams through the window, right into his face. He pries his eyes open, exhausted. He squints, looks at the clock. It's 10:26.

TOM
Oh, man...

He sits up, painfully. A beam of sunlight cuts him right across the eyes.

A MINUTE LATER,

Tom pulls his jeans on. He sits on a chair, puts on a shoe. But the other one's gone. He feels under the table. Not there.

He flips some clothes around on the floor. Not there.

He looks under the couch. There it is. He grabs it.

69 INT BATHROOM DAY 69

A note is taped to the bathroom mirror -- "ABOUT TIME YOU GOT UP! WENT TO PARK WITH JAKE. M."

Tom takes it down and reads it.

70 INT LIVING ROOM DAY 70

Tom comes back downstairs. Frank, his neighbor from next door, is standing in his living room. Frank is staring at the floor. He's wearing a red shirt.

TOM
Frank? What are you doing here?

Frank looks up at him. His face is sad.

FRANK
They're going to kill you, Tommy. You and Maggie both.

Frank turns and walks to the front door. He opens it, walks outside, and sits on the top step of the porch, looking out at the street. Tom follows him.

71 EXT FRONT PORCH DAY 71

It's a beautiful day. Tom comes out and looks down at Frank, who's just sitting there, staring. *

TOM
Why did you say that, Frank?

FRANK
(in his own world)
This is a *decent* neighborhood.

TOM
Are you okay?
(no answer)
Where's Sheila?

Still no answer. Frank is seriously strange. Tom is concerned. *

TOM (cont'd)
I'm gonna go see if Sheila's home.

He heads down the steps.

On the street, TWO KIDS ride their bikes straight at each other, full tilt, SCREAMING. At the last second, one of the kids swerves, the other taunts him with cries of "Chicken!"

Tom walks down the street, toward Frank's house. The MAILMAN waves to him. Tom waves back. *

Tom walks up the steps to Frank's front door and knocks. A VOICE calls from inside.

ADAM (o.s.)
Come in!

72 INT FRANK'S HOUSE DAY 72

Tom opens the door and comes in. Adam, Frank's son, is standing in the middle of the living room floor, a big smile on his face and one arm behind his back.

ADAM
Hi!

TOM
Hi.

ADAM
Want to see what I've got?

72 CONTINUED: 72

TOM
Sure.

Adam pulls his arm around from behind his back. He's holding a .38 with a carved white handle.

TOM (cont'd)
Is that one of your dad's? *

ADAM
Not today. Come here.

Tom walks toward him.

ADAM (cont'd)
Closer.

Tom walks closer. He's right in front of Adam.

ADAM (cont'd)
I bet you never saw this before.

He points the gun barrel at Tom --

-- then swings it around and points it at his own heart.

TOM
No, you shouldn't do that. *

Outside, a dog BARKS. Adam pulls the trigger. Tom SCREAMS as Adam collapses to the floor, blood pouring from his chest. His body convulses --

73 INT LIVING ROOM DAY 73

-- and Tom's eyes pop open. He's back on the couch, still in the living room, the coffee table piled high with his stuff. *

Sunlight streams through the window, right into his face. He squints, looks at the clock. It's 10:26. What a weird dream. *

TOM
Oh, man...

He sits up, painfully. A beam of sunlight cuts him right across the eyes.

A MINUTE LATER,

Tom pulls on a pair of jeans. He sits down, puts on a shoe. But the other one's gone. He feels under the table. Not there.

73 CONTINUED: 73

He kicks around a bunch of clothes on the floor. Not there either. Tom blinks, unsettled. This is kinda familiar. He turns and looks at the couch.

TOM
Please don't be under there.

He bends down and looks under the couch. There's his shoe.

TOM (cont'd)
Shit.

74 INT BATHROOM DAY 74

A note is taped to the bathroom mirror -- "ABOUT TIME YOU GOT UP! WENT TO PARK WITH JAKE. M." Tom winces as he takes it down and reads it. Again.

75 INT LIVING ROOM DAY 75

Tom comes back downstairs. Frank's not there this time, thank God. Tom goes to the front door and opens it.

TOM
Uh... Frank?

But Frank's not on the porch either. Tom steps outside.

76 EXT FRONT PORCH DAY 76

It's a beautiful day. A SHOUT draws Tom's attention. Those same two kids ride their bikes at each other, full tilt. Tom walks down the steps of the porch, staring at them as they SCREAM. At the last second, one of the kids turns away. The other taunts him with cries of "Chicken!" *

Tom stands frozen on the sidewalk. The Mailman waves to him, headed down the block. Too stunned, Tom doesn't wave back.

He turns, panicked, and looks at Frank's house. He starts to walk toward it, slowly at first, then picking up speed. He glances across the street. A DOG strains at the end of its leash. Tom's eyes widen. * * *

The dog BARKS -- *

-- and a GUNSHOT rings out from inside. *

TOM
Oh, God...

76 CONTINUED: 76

He races the rest of the way, bounds up the steps to the house, rips open the screen door. But the front door is locked. He POUNDS on it.

TOM (cont'd)
ADAM?! ADAM, OPEN THE DOOR!!

He POUNDS harder, but there's no answer. He goes to the window beside the door and peers through it. He sees Adam lying on the floor in the middle of the living room.

TOM
Oh, God, no!

He picks up a porch chair and heaves it through the window, which is crowded with religious paraphernalia.

77 INT FRANK'S HOUSE DAY 77

Glass SHATTERS and sprays all over the floor. Tom knocks the rest out of the frame with his elbow and climbs into the house.

He races over to Adam's body. There is a pool of blood around his chest and his body is convulsing. In his right hand, he clutches a .38 with a carved white handle.

TOM
Oh, God, no, Jesus, no, please...

He grabs a blanket off a chair nearby, presses it to Adam's chest, trying to stop the bleeding.

TOM (cont'd)
Am I awake or asleep?!

CUT TO:

78 EXT OUR BLOCK DAY 78

Tom and Maggie sit on their front steps, shell shocked, red light flashing off their faces. An ambulance and two police cars are parked in front of Frank's house. A car comes barreling around the corner and SQUEALS to a halt in front of the house.

Frank and Sheila leap out of the car and race toward the house. They're intercepted by a COP who tries to restrain them for a second, but they blow past him and hurry up the stairs, just as TWO PARAMEDICS wheel a stretcher out of the house, headed for the ambulance. *

78 CONTINUED: 78

The sheet isn't over Adam's head, at least, but that's about the only good sign, they're working on him frantically. Tom and Maggie look away as they hear the cries of Adam's parents.

Maggie looks over her shoulder. Jake is standing in the open doorway of the house, staring at the police cars with fascination.

MAGGIE
I'm gonna take Jake out for a while.

CUT TO:

79 EXT STREET DAY 79

Maggie and Jake walk down the street, alongside a tall brick wall overgrown with ivy. They're playing follow-the-leader, with Jake in the lead. Jake hops on one foot, Maggie hops on one foot. Jake walks backwards, Maggie walks backwards. Jake stops and looks up at the top of the wall.

JAKE
Well, hello there.

Maggie stops and looks up at the top of the wall.

MAGGIE
Well, hell-

She stops. She's staring up at a statue, a mournful angel, slightly disturbing. She turns. There are a dozen more statues stretching the length of the wall. A cemetery lies beyond.

With a strange GROAN, a mournful kind of music rises up nearby. *

JAKE *
Music! Listen! It's beautiful! *

He takes off running, toward a break in the wall.

MAGGIE
Jake!

She runs after him.

80 EXT CEMETERY DAY 80

Jake races onto the broad lawns of the cemetery, where a police funeral is in progress. He wanders closer. The music is * recognizable now, it's coming from a BAGPIPER playing near a * graveside ceremony. *

80 CONTINUED: 80

A DOZEN UNIFORMED COPS are lined up between Jake and the casket, standing at attention, saluting the fallen officer.

Maggie catches up to Jake, lowering her voice.

MAGGIE
I don't think we should be here, sweetie.

But Jake is fascinated, and he continues to wander closer to the grave.

When he's just about there, the FOURTH COP FROM THE LEFT, who is facing away from him with the rest of the saluting officers, turns slowly away and looks back, over his shoulder.

Right at Jake.

They make eye contact.

Maggie finally gets hold of Jake's hand and pulls him away, headed toward the entrance again. The Cop watches them go. Jake looks back over his shoulder at the Cop.

The funeral service ends, the crowd starts to break up. The Cop raises a hand and waves to Jake.

81 ACROSS THE CEMETERY, 81

Jake is wandering in an older part of the cemetery, overgrown foliage and some falling-down tombstones. He's fascinated. Maggie's a bit unnerved.

MAGGIE
Come on, honey, let's go get some lunch. You told me you were so hungry, remember?

JAKE
(looking around, wide-eyed)
I love this place! How come you never brought me here before?! *
*

Maggie notices the Cop, who is following them, staring. *

She smiles, tight-lipped. The Cop smiles back, doesn't go away. *

She moves Jake a short distance in the other direction, away from the Cop. But the Cop follows. Maggie turns to him, unnerved.

MAGGIE
Everything okay?

81 CONTINUED: 81

COP
Fine, fine.

He's staring at Jake.

MAGGIE
We're not supposed to be in here or something?

COP
Huh? Oh, no, it's fine. It's fine.

MAGGIE
Oh. See ya later.

She sweeps Jake up onto one hip and starts to walk away.

COP
Boy's got the eyes on him, doesn't he?

Maggie turns and looks at him. The Cop just smiles. He holds his fingers up to his own eyes, stretches them open wide.

COP (cont'd)
X-ray.

Maggie is taken aback. The Cop takes a step closer, cocks his head, really looks at her.

COP (cont'd)
Not you, though. *

Maggie is completely freaked out. The Cop keeps looking at her, thinking.

COP (cont'd)
His father?

Maggie nods. The Cop leans in and lowers his voice.

COP (cont'd)
They're not the only ones.

She's too rattled to speak. The Cop pulls out a note pad, scribbles something on a page, tears it out.

COP (cont'd)
Tell Daddy to come see me tonight.
Learn a few things.

Her hand shaking, Maggie accepts the paper. The Cop reaches out and tousles Jake's hair.

81 CONTINUED: (2) 81

COP (cont'd)
Bye, Jake.

The Cop turns and walks away.

JAKE
Bye, Neil!

The Cop looks back over his shoulder and smiles. Maggie looks at her son as if she's never seen him before.

CUT TO:

82 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 82

Tom is on the couch, fiddling with his guitar. Jake is in a chair, watching his monster video on TV. Tom is picking at a melody, trying to figure it out. It's a close-but-slightly-off version of the tune Jake has been humming.

Jake looks at him. He gets up and walks over to face Tom. He reaches out and slides Tom's fingers down two frets, then plucks a string. That's the first note. Then he slides his fingers back up three frets and plucks the string again. That's the second.

Now Tom plays it. The melody is vaguely familiar. Jake smiles.

JAKE
There you go, Daddy.

Tom looks at his son, wide-eyed.

TOM
(whispers)
Why do I know that song?

Before Jake can answer, Maggie breezes into the room.

MAGGIE
I'll be home right after the movie.

TOM
I know that song.

MAGGIE
I said I won't be late.

Tom dives over to his CD collection (which is massive) and starts flipping through discs.

Maggie shakes her head and turns to go. She stops at a hook near the front door where Tom's tool belt is hanging.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED: 82

Her back to Tom, she slips his lineman's knife out of its sheath and drops it into her purse.

CUT TO:

83 EXT DINGY STREET NIGHT 83

Maggie walks down a street in a dodgy neighborhood at night, checking addresses against the slip of paper the Cop gave her. She passes strange bookshops, fortune tellers, places with names like "The Third Eye."

She stops, looking into the window of The Third Eye. She turns, notices a KOREAN WOMAN standing in the doorway behind her, eating a bowl of noodles.

MAGGIE
Excuse me, I... I'm looking for-

The Korean Woman points down. Maggie looks at her -- huh? The Korean Woman gestures to a nearby alley, then points down again.

Maggie heads for the alley.

84 EXT ALLEY NIGHT 84

Maggie walks down the alley toward a doorway at the far end. She knocks. No answer, but the door is slightly ajar. She pushes it open.

85 OMITTED 85

86 ON THE STAIRS, 86

Maggie descends. There is a door at the bottom of the stairs, and from behind it she hears VOICES.

At the door, she knocks. The voices immediately go silent. The door is jerked open by HERMAN, seventyish, wears a bottle of oxygen on his belt with a narrow tube that runs up to his nose.

MAGGIE
I'm here to see Neil. *

Herman closes the door before Maggie can get so much as a glimpse into the room. The voices argue a bit, then the door opens again and Neil, the cop Maggie met in the cemetery, steps out. He comes into the corridor, quickly pulling the door most of the way shut behind him.

86 CONTINUED: 86

NEIL
What are you doing? I said the boy's father, I said tell *him* to come.

MAGGIE
He'd never do it, if he knew I was talking to you about this he'd kill me, he's so paranoid he-

NEIL
So are they. They don't trust anybody who's not like them. I can't let you in.

Maggie glances past him. She can see four or five figures moving in the room, but only barely. A HEAVY-SET WOMAN is on a chair in a corner, sobbing, angry, being comforted by a HOMEY around twenty years old.

MAGGIE
Who are they?

NEIL
You gotta get out of here.

He starts to close the door, but she stops it.

MAGGIE
My husband is going out of his mind. I don't know why, but I think you do. You can tell me what you know, but you can not tell me to go away, because I'm not moving.

He looks at her, impressed. And strangely sympathetic. He comes outside, pulling the door partway closed behind him. He lights a small cigar.

NEIL
How long has he had it?

MAGGIE
Just a few days.

NEIL
What happened? Car wreck?

MAGGIE
No.

NEIL
Child die?

86 CONTINUED: (2) 86

MAGGIE *
No. *

NEIL
Did he kill somebody?

MAGGIE
No, no -- he was hypnotized. Is that what started it?

NEIL
First time I heard that one.

MAGGIE
What is it?

NEIL *
(shrugs) *
What it is. *

MAGGIE *
Does it go away?

NEIL
It comes, it goes. Some people have it for five seconds, some their whole life.

MAGGIE
I think he's losing control.

NEIL
No shit he is. The man's switch got flipped. He's a receiver now, everything's comin' in, he can't stop it, he can't slow it down, and he can't figure it out. It's like he's in a tunnel with a flashlight, but the light only goes on once in a while. He gets a glimpse of something, not enough to know what it is, just enough to know it's there. It's like he's double-jointed.
(taps his head)
Up here.

MAGGIE
Jake too?

NEIL
Your son? *Much* better flashlight.

86 CONTINUED: (3) 86

MAN'S VOICE
Neil, close that motherfucking door right now!

NEIL *
Does he know what it wants yet?

86 CONTINUED: (4) 86

MAGGIE
What who wants?

NEIL
He saw a ghost, didn't he?

MAGGIE
How did you know?

NEIL
Moth to a light bulb. What did it ask him to do? *

MAGGIE
She didn't ask anything.

NEIL
Maybe he wasn't listening. She asked for something, and now she's waiting, getting more and more pissed off that he's not doing it. If he don't do her thing, she'll never go away. * *

MAGGIE
What kind of thing?

NEIL
Depends what kind of person she was.

MAGGIE
Would she... want him to hurt someone?

NEIL
That's been asked.

MAGGIE
Kill someone?

NEIL
That's been asked. *

MAGGIE
(horrified)
One of us?

Instead of answering, Neil just tosses the remains of his cigar in a puddle, where it goes out with a wet HISS. * *

MAGGIE
How do I find out what it is?

86 CONTINUED: (4) 86

NEIL
You wait. She'll figure a way to tell him, when she gets mad enough. What does your kid do when he wants attention and you won't give it to him? *

MAGGIE
He throws a fit.

NEIL
So will she.

CUT TO:

87 INT TOM & MAGGIE'S BEDROOM NIGHT 87

On the television, a woman SCREAMS as she is devoured by a monster. It's an old monster movie, the one Jake likes to watch. He's lying on his parents' bed in his pajamas. *

88 INT BATHROOM NIGHT 88

Steaming hot water spills out of a tap, filling the bathtub. Maggie, in her bathrobe, sits on the edge of the tub, head in her hands, exhausted.

She turns and feels the water. Plenty hot.

89 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 89

Tom is on the floor of the living room, headphones on, opened CD cases sprayed on the floor all around him, searching obsessively for the song he played on the guitar before.

90 INT TOM & MAGGIE'S BEDROOM NIGHT 90

Maggie comes into the bedroom and sees the monster movie on the television.

MAGGIE
Absolutely not.

She goes to the VCR and hits eject.

JAKE
Oh, please, please, please, five minutes, just, just, just-

90 CONTINUED: 90

MAGGIE
No, zero minutes, you know this gives you nightmares if you watch it before bed.

The tape pops out. A Nickelodeon show comes on, very tame by comparison.

JAKE
No fair!

Maggie puts the tape on top of a tall cabinet.

MAGGIE
I know, I'm horrible. I'm gonna take a bath. You okay for ten minutes?

JAKE
What*ever.*

He slumps back against the pillows and watches the kiddie show. She kisses him on the forehead.

91 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 91

Tom rips out one CD and puts another one in. The music starts.

TOM
Come on, come on, I know this, I *know* this...

92 INT BATHROOM NIGHT 92

The water keeps running, still steaming. Maggie's at the medicine cabinet, peering into the mirror, assessing the state of her skin. The cabinet's slightly ajar. She closes it --

-- revealing Samantha, who's standing in the bathroom.

We jump about a foot, but Maggie does not. She can't see her. She turns to the tub, shuts off the water. The faucet drips. Samantha, unseen by Maggie, is standing *in* the tub, knee deep in water. Maggie drops her robe, puts one foot into the bathtub, then yanks it out again.

MAGGIE
Yah!
(dips a hand in the water)
Freezing!

She pulls her robe on again.

93 INT STAIRCASE NIGHT 93

Maggie's bare feet pad down the staircase.

94 INT BEDROOM NIGHT 94

Jake is still watching TV. The Nickelodeon show continues, happy, bouncy music playing over people dousing each other with paint.

A woman with her back to the camera turns and looks directly into the lens. It's Samantha.

Jake's face darkens. *

JAKE *
I don't want to play right now. *

95 IN THE LIVING ROOM, 95*

Maggie calls out.

MAGGIE
Tom? I think the pilot on the water heater blew out again. Can you go down and light it for me?
(no answer)
Tom?

Still no answer. She peers around the corner, into the living room. She sees Tom, headphones still on, flip a CD box over his shoulder as he continues his search.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
Or not.

She heads off to do it herself.

96 UP IN THE BEDROOM, 96

Jake's Nickelodeon show switches over to another channel abruptly.

JAKE
Hey.

This channel is showing an old black and white movie. It looks familiar. There's no cheesy looking monsters, like Jake is always trying to watch, this one is deeply weird. There's a strange-looking little man with a misshapen face on screen.

Jake snatches up the remote and changes the channel. Safely back to Nickelodeon. Phew. *

97 DOWN IN THE KITCHEN, 97

Maggie opens a drawer and pulls out a screwdriver. She picks up a fire starter.

In the middle of the kitchen floor, she tosses aside a carpet flap that covers the floor. She shoves the screwdriver into a crack in the floor and pries up a trap door, two feet square.

Through the hole, she can see a ladder resting up against the wall below. She feels for the rungs with her feet and starts to climb down.

98 (OMITTED) 98

99 IN THE BEDROOM, 99

the Nickelodeon show switches back to the black and white film. The strange-looking little man has joined a number of other strange-looking people. Yuck, we recognize the movie -- it's *"Freaks."*

JAKE
I said *no!*

He picks up the remote and switches back to Nickelodeon again.

100 INT BASEMENT DAY 100

Maggie reaches the bottom of the ladder in a darkened space. Very little light shines down from the trap door. She feels forward, both arms out in front of her, searching for something.

Her fingers close around a chain that hangs from a light bulb in the ceiling and she pulls it. Light floods the basement.

Samantha's standing right beside her. *

Still, Maggie can't see her.

Samantha just stares at Maggie, curious, as Maggie looks around. This is only a partial basement, a ten by ten foot space about eight feet deep. The rest of the area under the house is just crawl space, barely enough to wriggle through. There are many pipes and low-hanging joists down here, Maggie has to carefully pick her way to avoid hitting her head.

She sees the water heater on the far side of the room and walks over to it.

Samantha is standing next to that, too. Staring at Maggie. Maggie bends down, to find the hole for the pilot light.

100 CONTINUED: 100

Samantha reaches down and touches Maggie's hair. Maggie scratches her head.

101 IN THE LIVING ROOM, 101

the music is BLARING into Tom's ears. His eyes are closed.

102 UP IN THE BEDROOM, 102

Jake is in a war with the television, desperately changing the channel as the horror movie comes on, but as soon as he does it changes itself right back. We no longer see what's going on in the movie, but it sounds like it's getting to an awful part.

103 IN THE BASEMENT, 103

Maggie strikes a match and holds it out near the pilot light hole.

Samantha, next to her, looks up. At the light bulb. Suddenly, she's standing next to it.

Maggie peers into the tiny hole. A blue flame burns inside. She sits back, puzzled.

A hand closes around the light bulb. The monofilament abruptly goes dim. The basement is plunged into darkness.

MAGGIE
Shit.

104 UP IN THE BEDROOM, 104

the remote no longer does anything. Jake hurls it aside and runs over to the TV. He hits the power switch. It does nothing. From the TV, the sounds of the movie are horrific. SCREAMING. The WHINE of a tool. Something wet.

Jake reaches down and pulls the plug from the wall. But the sounds go on. He stares at the screen, transfixed, plug in hand, the sickly blue light bathing his face.

The ghastly creatures on screen chant -- "We accept her! We accept her! One of us! One of us!"

105 DOWN IN THE BASEMENT, 105

Maggie takes a few steps forward across the darkened basement and SMACKS her head into a low-hanging joist. She GROANS in pain and crumples to the floor, holding her head in her hands.

106 IN THE LIVING ROOM, 106

the music stops.

Tom's eyes pop open. He feels for the cord and wiggles it, maybe there's a short in it. But there's no short. The cord is no longer connected to anything. He pulls it toward him, and he's holding the jack in his hand.

He sits up and looks around.

107 INT FLASHBACK HOUSE DAY 107*

He's sitting in an empty room. And it's daytime. *

It's not just that there's no one else there, there's no furniture in the room either. No lights. No carpet. The floor is unfinished, the walls unpainted. But it's the same room. As if the house had flashed back in time to its own construction.

TOM
Holy-

He stops, noticing his breath has come out of his mouth in a cloud of steam. There's a woman standing in the doorway. *

TOM (cont'd)
Maggie?

You wish. It's Samantha.

She turns and looks at him. Steam rises lightly from her as she breathes. Tom is shaking, barely finds his voice.

TOM (cont'd)
What do you want?

She speaks, but her voice is muffled, strangely distorted.

108 IN THE BASEMENT, 108

Maggie drags herself to her feet and staggers over toward the ladder, wiping blood from her forehead.

109 INT FLASHBACK LIVING ROOM DAY 109*

Tom takes a few trembling steps across the room, closer to Samantha, drawn to her. She walks forward a step or two. She speaks again, louder, but the voice is still unintelligible, bizarre. She's trying desperately to communicate something to him, but he can't make it out.

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED: 109

TOM
I can't understand you.

She reaches out a hand. Tom raises his in response. She comes closer.

Tom is frozen in the middle of the room. Their hands draw closer still. Their fingertips touch.

Tom GASPS, as if something very heavy were suddenly put down on his chest. His mouth drops open, his chest twitches. He can't breathe.

110 IN THE KITCHEN, 110

Maggie crawls out of the trap door that leads to the basement.

111 IN THE FLASHBACK LIVING ROOM 111

Tom hears MAGGIE'S VOICE call out to him.

MAGGIE (o.s.)
Tom?

He can't answer. With every twitch of his chest clouds of steam burst from *his* mouth, all the air going out, none coming in.

111A IN THE REGULAR LIVING ROOM, 111A

Maggie appears in the doorway to the room. She can see him, standing there, hand outstretched into the air in the fully-furnished and well-lit nighttime living room, touching nothing. *

111B IN THE FLASHBACK LIVING ROOM, 111B

But from Tom's point of view, he's touching fingertips with Samantha in a daylit, empty, bone-cold room. He's frozen, * breathless, and now his cheeks start to turn pale, unnaturally white. Another few seconds of this and he'll pass out.

MAGGIE
Tom!? TOM?!

Tom can't look at her, can't move. His lips turn blue.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
BREATHE!

She grabs hold of him. As soon as Maggie makes contact, Tom collapses, falling to the floor of what seems to him to still be an empty living room. He sees Samantha break away from him with a SHRIEK of irritation.

(CONTINUED)

111B CONTINUED: 111B

She moves, not quite walking, but a herky-jerky kind of lateral movement away from him, fast, like someone on a dozen espressos, an angry thing that has to slow itself down to a crawl just to talk to us.

On the far side of the room, she flops over onto the floor, like a reflection appearing suddenly on the surface of a pond. Into the floor, she disappears. As soon as she's gone, the reality of the room explodes back upon Tom.

111C IN THE REGULAR LIVING ROOM, 111C

Maggie grabs his face and turns it toward her. He takes a big lungful of air.

MAGGIE
She was here?!
(he nods, sucking air)
Where's Jake?!

112 UPSTAIRS, 112

Tom and Maggie come flying up the stairs. They can hear Jake CRYING in their bedroom.

113 IN THE BEDROOM, 113

the television screen is blank, its plug lying next to the socket where Jake yanked it out. Jake is curled into a ball in the corner, sobbing. Maggie races to him and sweeps him up into her arms.

MAGGIE
Are you okay?! Sweetie, what happened, what happened?! Jake?!

Tom stands in the doorway, chest heaving, staring at them -- his son crying uncontrollably; his wife, shaking like a leaf, blood seeping from a fresh gash on her forehead.

114 EXT STREET NIGHT 114

A hand slaps a fresh "HAVE YOU SEEN THIS PERSON?" poster onto a telephone pole and pounds a few staples into it. The picture is new and clean this time, definitely a picture of Samantha. Debbie, her sister, moves on down the street, a stack of posters in her hand. She will not give up.

CUT TO:

115 INT LISA'S APARTMENT NIGHT 115

Lisa's apartment door opens and Tom bursts inside, right past Lisa. He looks horrible.

TOM
I want you to hypnotize me again. I want it out, I want it gone, I want all this shit to stop, right-

He stops, noticing a LATIN WOMAN sitting on the couch. The room is smoky.

TOM (cont'd)
(uncomfortable)
Oh, sorry.

LISA
Well, come right in, Tom. I'd like you to meet Clarita.

TOM
Hi. Look, I, uh, could you, could she...

Lisa sees his urgency and says something apologetic to the woman in Spanish. The Woman raises an eyebrow, picks up her coat, and heads for the door, cursing in Spanish.

TOM (cont'd)
Yeah, thanks a lot, for, uh, I mean, uh, gracias.

The door SLAMS.

MINUTES LATER,

Lisa drops onto the couch, flustered.

LISA
Just slow down, you gotta be a little patient with me here, 'cause, um... well, Tom, Tom, I've got a confession to make. See we, we, I just smoked this great big fatty a few minutes before you walked in, so this is blowing my mind just a little bit extra right now.

115 CONTINUED: 115

TOM
Whatever you cut loose in my head, you gotta lock it up again, forever, I want you to put it in a box and throw away the God damn key, understand?! You opened the door. Now shut it.

MOMENTS LATER,

they sit face to face.

LISA
Close your eyes.

He does.

IN THE BLACK,

LISA (o.s.)
Just like last time -- I want you to concentrate. Listen to the room around you.

Tom listens. The factory CHURNS softly outside the windows. A few CARS in the street below. His BREATHING.

LISA (cont'd)
Now focus. Concentrate. Look at the backs of your eyelids. Do you see anything there?

IN LISA'S APARTMENT,

TOM
Would you just get to it, please?

LISA
All right, all right. I want you to pretend you're in a movie theatre.

116 INT MOVIE THEATRE NIGHT 116

We're sitting alone in the darkened, empty movie theatre.

LISA (o.s.)
It's very dark. In the whole pitch-black theatre, there's only one thing you can see. The white screen. You drift toward it, in your chair.

Up ahead of us, the screen is a dazzling white. We move slowly toward it, floating over the seats.

116 CONTINUED: 116

LISA (o.s.)
There are letters up on the screen. Tall, thick, black letters, but they're out of focus. You drift closer to them.

We do drift closer to the blurry letters, but our attention is diverted by something. Three rows from the screen, there is a figure in one of the seats, its back to us.

117 INT LISA'S APARTMENT NIGHT 117

Tom's eyes are still closed. His face furrows in concern.

TOM
Someone's here.

LISA
No, it's empty.

TOM
There's someone else in here.

LISA
No, you're alone in the theatre.

118 INT MOVIE THEATRE NIGHT 118

But there *is* someone in the theatre with us, and we continue to drift forward toward them.

LISA (o.s.)
Your feet and ankles are relaxed.

Actually, we're rather nervous, drifting closer and closer to that figure sitting in the third row, its back to us.

LISA (o.s.)
Your legs are relaxed.

119 INT LISA'S APARTMENT NIGHT 119

Tom's eyes are still closed. His chest is twitching.

TOM
... hard to breathe ...

120 INT MOVIE THEATRE NIGHT 120

The figure in the seat is only a row or two ahead of us now. It's a woman. We keep drifting closer.

120 CONTINUED: 120

LISA (o.s.)
Your hands are limp and heavy. Your arms are relaxed. Your face.

Our hand reaches out, touches the shoulder of the woman. She turns. It's Samantha. Her face is shrouded in plastic. Her mouth presses against the plastic, it forms a horrible round O, contorted in a silent scream.

121 INT LISA'S APARTMENT NIGHT 121

Tom's eyes flicker madly under the lids. Lisa's worried.

LISA
I want you to look at the screen.

TOM
-no air-

122 INT MOVIE THEATRE NIGHT 122

Now Tom's not just an observer in the movie theatre, he's *in* the movie theatre, sitting right next to Samantha. She's pawing at him, it's all he can do to fight her hands off.

In their struggle, his fingers close around the plastic that shrouds her face. He sweeps it off her head. She's missing one of her front teeth.

LISA (o.s.)
The screen, Tom, look at the screen! You can read the letters now!

Samantha's face is bloodied and bruised, as the plastic comes off she lets out a ghastly, inhuman SHRIEK that fills the theatre.

LISA (o.s.)
Look at the screen, Tom, you're close enough now, you can read the letters, you're right up next to them!

Tom, still holding off Samantha's grasping hands, turns and looks up at the movie screen.

LISA (o.s.)
The letters come into focus, they spell --

Tom's eyes widen as he stares at the screen. Three huge letters pop into focus and fill our field of vision.

The letters say:

122 CONTINUED: 122

DIG

123 INT LISA'S APARTMENT NIGHT 123

Tom's eyes pop open and he staggers backwards, gasping for air, knocking the chair out from under himself. He falls back against Lisa's desk, scared out of his mind.

LISA
What?! What happened?! Are you okay?!

TOM
Wow, oh, man, oh, wow...

He shoves Lisa out of the way, finds the refrigerator on the other side of the room. He rips it open, searches for something to drink. Lisa follows him.

LISA
I think you need to sit down, something very next level was going on there, you should have seen your face.
(he opens a beer)
Uh... want a beer?
(he drinks half the can)
Feel better?
(he nods)
What happened?

TOM
I see now.

CUT TO:

124 EXT TOM & MAGGIE'S HOUSE DAY 124

Maggie's car parks in front of their house, behind Tom's phone company truck. She gets out, dressed in work clothes, and pulls two bags of groceries from the trunk.

125 INT TOM & MAGGIE'S HOUSE DAY 125

Maggie comes in the front door and struggles to take the keys out of the lock while still holding the groceries.

MAGGIE
Tom? Can you give me a hand with this?

No answer. She kicks the door shut behind her. From somewhere in back, there is a faint CRUNCHING sound.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
Hello?

No answer. She heads into the kitchen with the bags.

126 INT KITCHEN DAY 126*

In the kitchen, a letter rolls into the tray of an old fax machine on the counter. Maggie stops in the doorway, staring at the floor. Muddy footprints lead into and out of the kitchen, through the door to the back. Thick chunks of wet mud are everywhere. *

MAGGIE
Wow, look what I'm not cleaning up.

She sets the groceries down on the counter and pulls out a gallon of milk. She opens the refrigerator. She does a double take. The entire top shelf is jammed with cardboard cartons of orange juice.

From outside, the CRUNCHING sound comes again. She follows the muddy footprints out the kitchen door. The fax machine BEEPS. *

127 EXT BACK YARD DAY 127

The back yard is smallish, but it's a nice little patch of grass. Used to be, anyway, because now there are three large holes in it, dug at seemingly random locations. Piles of dirt and rock are heaved up next to the holes.

Tom stands in one of the holes, his back to Maggie, hoisting a large pick axe high over his head. CRUNCH. He brings the pick down, into the hole.

Maggie is aghast. She walks slowly across the yard, past a pile of shovels and buckets and other tools, past Jake, who is sitting in his sandbox, calmly digging with a plastic shovel. Just like Dad.

She draws closer to Tom.

MAGGIE
Tom?

Tom raises the pick high and brings it down hard. CRUNCH. The hole he's in at the moment isn't more than two or three feet deep. But, hey, it's early.

Maggie draws closer. In between swings --

MAGGIE (cont'd)
Tom.

Tom whirls, the pick raised to defend himself. His shirt's off, his chest and face are streaked with mud and sweat.

127 CONTINUED: 127

Maggie jumps back.

TOM
You scared me.

And with that, he turns back to the job. Swing. CRUNCH.

MAGGIE
I scared *you?*

Swing. CRUNCH.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
Tom.

Swing. CRUNCH.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
What are you doing?

TOM
(doesn't turn around)
I'm supposed to dig.

Swing. CRUNCH.

Maggie walks around him, so she's facing him. He keeps working.

MAGGIE
What do you mean?

Tom shrugs. Swings the pick.

TOM
I'm supposed to dig.

MAGGIE
Who says?

He just looks at her from under his sweaty brows. You know who.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
I see. And... what is Jake doing? *

TOM *
Helping. *

Tom manages to break apart the rock he was working on with the pick. He tosses the axe, which bounces crazily across the grass at Maggie's feet. She jumps out of the way. He hoists himself out of the hole and picks up the garden hose. He sprays water into the hole.

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED: (2) 127

MAGGIE *
Why are you doing this? *

TOM
Water softens up the dirt.

He tosses the hose aside and grabs a shovel. He jumps back in the hole and starts to dig.

MAGGIE
No, I mean... Could you stop for a minute?
(he keeps digging)
Would you please stop for a minute?

TOM
What don't you get? I'm *supposed* to *dig.*

MAGGIE *
Why are you digging?

He looks up, supremely irritated, and leans on the shovel. *

TOM
(isn't it obvious?)
I'm searching.

MAGGIE
What are you searching for?

TOM
The question isn't "what." We both know very well "what," even if we don't want to say it out loud. The question, Maggie, which, as you can plainly see, I am very busy trying to answer -- the question is "Where?"
(off her look to Jake) *
He's fine. It's not over there. *

MAGGIE
I think we should call the police.

TOM
And tell them what, exactly? Run it by me once. Practice, see how it sounds out loud.
(looks at his watch)
Anything else?

128 IN THE ALLEY BEHIND THE YARD, 128

someone is watching Tom and Maggie through a narrow gap in the fence. They look at the holes in the yard, at Tom with the shovel, they can hear snatches of what is being said.

129 IN THE YARD, 129

MAGGIE
Why don't you come in the house with me? Take a break. I want to talk to you, you're not yourself right now.

TOM
This is just fucking typical, isn't it?

He climbs out of the hole and walks toward her.

TOM (cont'd)
What do you want me to do, Maggie, you want me to go inside, sit down in front of the TV, drink eight or nine beers till I fall asleep in the chair? Like that? Maybe repeat the whole thing tomorrow and the day after and the day after and the day after and the day after and the day after and the day after and the day after and the day after and the day after and the day after and the day after and the day after and the day after-

MAGGIE
STOP!

TOM
-until I grab my chest and die?! Maybe I was already dead! This is the most important thing that's ever happened to me, the most important thing I've ever done in my life, Maggie, my whole stupid life, and you want me to just STOP?!

By the end of his tirade, TWO NEIGHBORS are staring over the back fence. He's only a few feet from Maggie now, the veins in his neck standing out. She holds her ground. *

129 CONTINUED: 129

MAGGIE
(quietly)
I've known you since I'm nineteen years old, you never talked to me like that before. Not one time. And if you ever do it again, I swear to God, you're out of here. *

She turns, to go back in the house, then turns back, furious. *

MAGGIE (cont'd) *
And you know what else? When you talk about how ordinary you are and you say "my stupid life," you know what you're really saying? You're saying *our* stupid life, which I don't think IS particularly stupid, so how the FUCK do you think that makes me feel?! *

She turns and stalks across the yard and into the house. Tom stands there for a moment, then hurls the shovel across the yard. * *

TOM
InterRUPtions!

He picks up his tee shirt, snakes angrily into it, and marches across the yard toward the house.

130 IN THE ALLEY, 130

the Someone who was watching them hurries away down the alley as Tom goes into the house.

131 INT KITCHEN DAY 131

Maggie sits at the kitchen table, reading the letter that came in on the fax. Tom comes into the room behind her, pauses in the doorway, composing himself. She keeps reading. He sighs, heavily. She doesn't turn around.

He goes to the refrigerator and takes out a carton of orange juice. He takes two glasses from a cupboard and sits down at the table opposite her. He fills both glasses and puts one in front of her. She looks up at him as he drains his. He pauses, staring at her. Then at her glass.

TOM
You gonna drink that?

She doesn't answer. He takes her glass, drinks some.

131 CONTINUED: 131

TOM (cont'd)
I'm sorry.

No answer.

TOM (cont'd)
Okay, I'm not sorry.

131 CONTINUED: (2) 131

She ignores him. He looks at the letter in her hands.

TOM (cont'd)
Who's that from?

MAGGIE
My brother Steve. My grandma's going back in the hospital again. *

TOM
(immediately)
No, sh-

He stops himself. She looks at him.

MAGGIE
What?

He shakes his head.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
What?

TOM
Nothing.

They stare at each other. Tom's face is pale. Maggie is concerned.

The phone RINGS. Maggie stares at Tom. The phone RINGS again. She lowers her voice, pleading.

MAGGIE
What is it?

Tom can't look at her. The phone RINGS again. Tom gets up, opens the door that leads to the back yard, and goes outside.

132 EXT BACK YARD DAY 132

Tom takes a few steps out of the house, putting his hands to his head in pain. Whatever it is, he knows. In the house, the phone rings a fourth time. Maggie's voice drifts through the open doorway as she answers it.

MAGGIE (o.s.)
Hello?

Tom closes his eyes.

MAGGIE (o.s.)
Steve, I was just going to-

132 CONTINUED: 132

She stops. There is a long silence. Tom turns and walks back toward the house, slowly. There is dead silence inside. As he nears the doorway, he hears the sound of the telephone being placed back in its cradle.

Maggie reaches the doorway at the same time Tom does. She looks up at him, her eyes filled with tears. He puts his arms around her and holds her for a long moment.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
You knew.
(no answer)
You knew, didn't you?

TOM
When's the funeral?

MAGGIE
Sunday. We should leave as soon as we can.

TOM
We?

She stiffens.

TOM (cont'd)
Oh, you, uh... you want me to go with you?

She looks at him, deeply hurt. Then enraged. She pushes him away from her, hard. He stumbles back into the yard.

TOM (cont'd)
Hey, I just thought, maybe, you know... your family might want...

MAGGIE
Do I WANT you to come with me?!

Jake looks up from the sandbox.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
To my GRANDMOTHER'S FUNERAL?! She practically RAISED me, of COURSE I want you to come, why the hell WOULDN'T you come?!

TOM
(looking longingly at the holes in the yard)
I'm just... kind of in the middle of something here.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: (2) 132

She looks at him, absolutely incredulous --

-- and then storms back into the house, SLAMMING the door so hard two of the glass panes spiderweb right over Tom's reflection.

CUT TO:

133 EXT STREET DAY 133*

Jake, twisted around in his car seat, looks out the back window of Maggie's car. He raises one hand, waving.

Tom stands on the sidewalk, still in his mud-stained jeans and * tee shirt. He waves back.

The car pulls away, fast, and ROARS off down the block. Jake * and Maggie are gone. Tom turns and heads back into the house.

134 (OMITTED) 134

135 EXT BACK YARD DAY 135

There are now five large holes in the back yard, and Tom is running out of places to dig. Nevertheless, he drags the hose across the yard to an untouched patch of grass in the far corner.

He stops short. Hose won't reach.

AT THE SPIGOT,

he unscrews the hose and carries it across the yard.

135A AT ANOTHER SPIGOT, 135A

this one in the far corner, he reconnects the hose and turns on the water. Nothing comes out.

TOM
Come on!

Tom curses and trudges back toward the house.

136 INT KITCHEN DAY 136

Tom gets a screwdriver from a tool drawer in the kitchen. He tosses aside the carpet flap that covers the floor. He pries up the trap door that leads to the basement and climbs down the ladder.

137 (OMITTED) 137

138 INT BASEMENT DAY 138

Tom screws a fresh lightbulb into the fixture in the basement. * He goes to the far side of the room, where a mess of water pipes * all converge. He picks through them, finds the valves that lead outside, turns one off and another one on. WATER surges through the pipes, headed out to the far spigot.

He turns to climb back up the ladder.

And stops.

He looks down at the cement floor, thinking.

A FEW MINUTES LATER,

the pick axe falls, cracking the cement floor. Tom has brought all his tools into the basement and is now working in the middle of the basement floor. The bare bulb throws his exaggerated shadow on the brick and stone walls.

139 EXT OUR BLOCK DAY 139

It's quiet in the neighborhood. The CRUNCHING sound of Tom's pick axe falling echoes over the block. A couple PASSERS-BY * notice. *

140 INT BASEMENT DAY 140

Tom works. He's covered in sweat and exhausted, but still has only managed to break apart a two or three foot section of the thick cement slab.

He steps back and looks around, at the vast amount of work he has still ahead of him. He tosses the pick on the floor and stares down at it, hands on hips.

He's discontent.

CUT TO:

141 INT YARD SUPPLY WAREHOUSE DAY 141

Tom walks down an aisle along one wall in a huge yard supply warehouse. Tools are mounted on the wall for sale -- shovels, picks, post hole diggers. Got all that. Tom keeps walking.

The tools get bigger. Huge shovels. Tractor blades. Hand pile drivers. Almost, but not quite. Tom keeps walking.

At the end of the row, underneath a sign that says "FOR RENTAL ONLY" is an industrial-size jackhammer, the kind road crews use to bust through whatever's in their way.

(CONTINUED)

141 CONTINUED: 141

Tom's face lights up.

AT THE CHECKOUT COUNTER, *

Tom wheels up a shopping cart that SQUEAKS under the weight of * the jackhammer and a compressor that powers it. The CLERK looks * at him over the top of his glasses. *

TOM *
I'm supposed to dig. *

142 EXT STREET DAY 142

The jackhammer RATTLES in the bed of Tom's pickup truck. He * pulls into his driveway, comes around, and drops the gate. *

Using all his strength, he wrestles the jackhammer out of the back of the truck and hauls it into the house. *

143 IN THE STREET, 143

Lenny, the neighborhood crank, is washing his car. He hears a CRASH from over at Tom's place and turns. He sees Tom at his pickup, lugging the huge air compressor out of it. *

Tom fights his way into the house with the compressor.

Sheila, carrying flowers and looking like she hasn't slept for days, comes out of her house and heads for her car. She stops and stares too.

143A INT KITCHEN DAY 143A*

The compressor sits on the kitchen floor, plugged into a wall * jack. A hand reaches up from through the trap door and feels * around for the compressor's power switch. It finds it and flips * it. *

The compressor RATTLES to noisy life. We follow its air hose * through the trap door -- *

144 INT BASEMENT DAY 144*

-- into the basement, and across the floor to the jackhammer, * which Tom picks up. He lowers a pair of goggles over his eyes, * shoves earplugs into his ears. He swings his weight up, onto * the jackhammer, and squeezes the handles.

The jackhammer ROARS, deafening. Tom's whole body quivers; it's * like riding a bull. The cement slab floor begins to split * apart. Tom WHOOPS with joy, barely heard over the din that echoes in his basement.

145 EXT STREET DUSK 145

As the sun goes down, the sound of the ROARING jackhammer is plainly audible on the block. The familiar Neighborhood Guy stops and SHOUTS something at Tom's house.

145A DOWN A DRIVEWAY, 145A

Harry Damon, Tom's landlord, is working in his driveway, cutting through some wood with a circular saw. He shuts it off, immediately hears the JACKHAMMER sound from across the street. He shakes his head in irritation.

CUT TO:

146 INT UNCLE STEVE'S HOUSE NIGHT 146

A group of PEOPLE IN DARK CLOTHES mill around a living room, muttering in the soft tones of those at a wake. There's a lot of big Irish guys drinking beer, guts stuffed into sweat-stained white shirts. Maggie excuses herself from the group and steps into another room.

147 INT STEVE'S KITCHEN NIGHT 147*

The door is ajar, people visible through it as Maggie dials a number on a kitchen telephone. The phone rings on the other end. And rings. And rings. Just as she's about to hang up, Tom answers. *

TOM (o.s.)
(sounds angry)
Hello?

MAGGIE
It's me.

TOM (o.s.)
(changes his tone)
Oh, hi. How ya doin'?

MAGGIE
I'm okay.

TOM (o.s.)
How's your family?

MAGGIE
You know. Drunk. Fighting with each other.

(CONTINUED)

TOM (o.s.)
Listen, Maggie, I'm sorry. I should be there with you. I was an asshole. *

MAGGIE
Yeah, well, what can I say? You *are* an asshole. How do you feel? *

TOM (o.s.)
Fine. A lot better. Much, much better. Everything's fine here. Real good.

MAGGIE
No, uh... no more digging? *

TOM (o.s.)
No. Uh uh. Back to normal.

MAGGIE
Look, I'm sorry too. I wish I hadn't just stormed out of there, I shouldn't have left you alone.

TOM (o.s.)
I deserved it.

MAGGIE
Are you okay? You sound funny. What are you doing?

TOM (o.s.)
Just... moving a chair. There.

MAGGIE
Why don't you come up here with us? This time of night you could make it in an hour.

TOM (o.s.)
Well, I can't, really.

MAGGIE
Why not?

TOM (o.s.)
I'm, uh, not supposed to use the truck for personal trips.

MAGGIE
(trying to keep her cool)
Alright. I'll come down there and get you. I'll leave right now.

147 CONTINUED: (2) 147

Behind her, Jake comes into the doorway. He looks terrible. She doesn't hear him.

TOM (o.s.)
No, no, no, no, no, what do you want to do that for? Don't come down here.

JAKE
Feathers everywhere.

Maggie turns back to Jake -- and GASPS. Urine is drizzling out of his pants, down over his shoes.

MAGGIE
Oh, my God, I gotta go. I'll be there in an hour, I'll just pull up and honk. *

TOM (o.s.)
Maggie, wait, no, Mag-

She hangs up the phone and races over to her son.

MAGGIE
Honey, what happened? Why didn't you tell me you had to go pee?

JAKE
Help Daddy.

CUT TO:

148 INT TOM & MAGGIE'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 148

Tom SLAMS down the phone. He's standing in the living room, which looks perfectly normal. But as he turns and walks away, through the dining room, we see the extent of his search.

148A IN THE DINING ROOM, 148A

the table has been shoved out of the way, and the floorboards have been pried up all over the room, sticking up into the air like the rib cage of some prehistoric beast.

148B IN THE KITCHEN, 148B

it is now so mud-spattered it looks like the inside of a cave. One corner is filled with a pile of broken-up chunks of cement. Tom strides across the room in two steps and drops through the open trap door.

149 INT BASEMENT NIGHT 149

Tom sails down into the basement and lands nimbly on the floor. Doesn't even use the ladder anymore.

All but the very edges of the slab is gone now, broken apart by the jackhammer. Tom has dug into the dirt under the slab to a depth of about four feet. He leaps down into it and goes back to work. Frantically.

CUT TO:

150 INT STEVE'S HOUSE NIGHT 150

In the front hall of Uncle Steve's house, Maggie is putting on her coat. Jake sits on the steps, his coat next to him.

JAKE
I don't want to go home. I want to stay at Uncle Steve's.

MAGGIE
Why?

JAKE
I'm not supposed to be at home. Because of the feathers.

MAGGIE
What does that *mean,* Jake?

Lisa stands in the doorway to the other room.

LISA
It's okay, I can watch him.

Maggie, in a hurry, agrees. She bends over and kisses Jake on the forehead.

MAGGIE
Be good.

JAKE
Wait!

She stops. He gets up and grabs her purse off a table by the door, gives it to her.

MAGGIE
Thanks. *

JAKE *
You're welcome. *

151 EXT UNCLE STEVE'S HOUSE NIGHT 151*

Maggie comes out the front door of Uncle Steve's house. Jake * stands in the doorway, watching her go. She looks back over her * shoulder as she leaves. *

CUT TO: *

152 INT BASEMENT NIGHT 152

In the basement, Tom is back to using the pick, crazy with frustration. He's working in a corner now, close to two stone walls, and can't get much room for his backswings. As he brings the pick back wildly over his head, he knocks it into the stone, chipping a small hole in it.

He keeps working, his swings growing wilder. His backswing hits the wall again, and a stone or two falls loose. As he brings the pick down into the floor, the vibrations knock more and more dirt and stone loose from the wall behind him.

One especially strong backswing CRACKS into the stone wall and a large portion of it falls away, all at once. Tom hears it and turns, to look at it.

Through the new hole in the wall, he can see something shiny sticking out. He steps over and tugs at it.

It's a piece of clear blue plastic sheeting, about two inches square. Tom's hand starts to shake as he holds it.

153 INT FLASHBACK HOUSE DAY 153

An image flashes through his mind again, one he's seen before. A FIGURE IN AN OVERCOAT, standing on the front porch of Tom's own house in winter, waving to us to come up.

154 IN THE BASEMENT, 154

Tom drops the pick and lunges at the wall. He starts tearing at the brick and stone with his bare hands, pulling chunks free and hurling them in all directions.

More blue plastic.

Tom flips open a toolbox and pulls out a utility knife. He * slides out the razor blade.

AT THE WALL,

Tom slits the blue plastic from top to bottom. He gets a good grip on either side with both hands and hauls it apart.

(CONTINUED)

154 CONTINUED: 154

Immediately, he recoils and falls to his knees, sickened by the stench that washes over him. As he clears our view, we see what he has unearthed.

It's the half-decomposed corpse of Samantha Kozak, interred upright in the wall. She's missing one of her front teeth, and one arm is bent unnaturally around behind her head, its skeletal fingers extending behind the left ear. A pair of twisted eyeglasses hang from her face, the right lens broken. There are a bunch of multi-colored bracelets on her wrist, and her rotting dress matches the one she's always worn. *

Tom walks back to the corpse, swallowing. He stands there, chest heaving.

His eyes go up to her hand. He thinks.

He reaches up for her hand, then pulls his own back.

Can't do it.

But he's gotta. He opens his hand, reaching out for hers. He slides his hand underneath --

-- and closes his living fingers around her skeletal ones.

His face turns a horrible shade of pale, his lips go ice blue, and STEAM comes out of his mouth, the way it did hers when he first saw her in his living room. His eyes actually change color, turning a vivid brown. *

155 EXT FLASHBACK HOUSE DAY 155

Those vivid brown eyes dissolve into another face, behind eyeglasses. Pulling back, we recognize the face as Samantha's. But she's alive now, walking down the street, Tom's block, on a wintry day. *

We see what she sees. Steam from her breath rises up in front of us, as if coming from our own mouth. We're looking at the front porch of Tom's house as we walk past it. The house is being remodeled, it's surrounded by scaffolding, its windows covered with plastic Duvateen.

The Figure in the Overcoat waves to us.

FIGURE
Hi!

SAMANTHA
(off screen, we're in her point of view)
Hi.

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED: 155

FIGURE
C'mere a sec!

SAMANTHA
What?

FIGURE
I want to show you something!

We look back, over our shoulder, then back at the Figure. You mean *me?* This close now, we see the Figure is Kurt Damon.

SAMANTHA
You want to show *me* something?

Her manner of speech is childish, like a grade-schooler's.

KURT
(charming)
Well, of course! I don't see anybody else around!

We start up the steps of the porch. Kurt smiles, beguilingly, and holds a hand out to us.

SAMANTHA
What is it?

KURT
It's a surprise.

He tugs. She resists.

SAMANTHA
What kind of surprise?

KURT
It's really great, come on, you won't believe it. *

We let him pull us through the door. *

156 INT FLASHBACK HOUSE DAY 156

Kurt leads us into the living room. There's no furniture. The floor is unfinished, the walls unpainted. The windows are covered with tinted plastic, casting an eerie blue light through the place.

Adam McCarthy is in the living room too, drinking from a bottle of schnapps. He's drunk, slurring. He sees us.

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED: 155

FIGURE
C'mere a sec!

SAMANTHA
What?

FIGURE
I want to show you something!

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SAMANTHA
What is it?

KURT
It's a surprise.

He tugs. She resists.

SAMANTHA
What kind of surprise?

KURT
Well, if I told you, it wouldn't be much of a surprise, would it?

We let him pull us through the door.

156 INT FLASHBACK HOUSE DAY 156

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Adam McCarthy is in the living room too, drinking from a bottle of schnapps. He's drunk, slurring. He sees us.

156 CONTINUED: 156

ADAM
Happy St. Patrick's Day.

SAMANTHA
What's the surprise?

ADAM
Uh... don't you have it?

He giggles.

KURT
Oh yeah, the surprise.

ADAM
The surprise.

They laugh and look at each other. Kurt drinks, then forces the bottle back at Adam.

ADAM (cont'd)
I'm too wasted.

KURT
Drink, motherfucker, drink motherfucker, drink motherfucker DRINK!

He wrestles with Adam, forcing him to drink. Half of it runs down Adam's chin.

SAMANTHA
I don't think there is a surprise.

e turn and start for the door. Kurt hurries around, intercepts s.

KURT
Yeah there is, yeah there is.

e puts his arm around us, leads us back into the room.

KURT (cont'd)
The surprise is... we decided we want to be your friends.

SAMANTHA
You do?

ADAM
Oh, yeah, so bad.

e laughs.

SAMANTHA
Why do you want to be my friend?

KURT
Are you kidding? Look at yourself!

Kurt turns Samantha toward an old mirror that hangs over the fireplace. She's good-looking, if she knew it. We turn away, * embarrassed.

KURT (cont'd)
Ah ah ah, look!

He makes us look in the mirror again. He starts to help her off * with her winter parka, but she hesitates. *

KURT (cont'd) *
It's okay. *

Reluctantly, she lets him remove it. *

KURT (cont'd)
Mama, you are *hot.*

He turns her toward him, looks at her, closely.

KURT (cont'd)
(soft)
Come on, let's be friends.

SAMANTHA
Well... you can kiss me if you want to.

Kurt leans in close, kisses us. After a moment, we force our head away, looking down. Kurt's hand is on Samantha's breast. We push him back.

SAMANTHA (cont'd)
Not like that!

But Kurt pulls us closer, roughly. We struggle.

KURT
Come on, Samantha, I'll be your friend, I swear I will. Just be nice to me. Be a good girl. You're a good girl, aren't you?

SAMANTHA
I have to go home.

We struggle some more. He gets his powerful hands on our shoulders and starts to push us down.

156 CONTINUED: (3) 156

KURT
Come on, baby, how 'bout a little helmet wash?

We tear away, get up and run for the door. From behind, something hits us very hard. The floorboards race up at us, all of a sudden. We land on them, hard, bounce off, our own blood spraying out on the unfinished wood. *

Our glasses are driven into our face, and the right lens spiderwebs. We spit out a tooth, which skitters into our field of vision. We see Adam McCarthy, vomiting in the corner. * *

Abruptly, we're rolled over and are staring at the ceiling, the right half of everything we see broken and spiderwebbed. Kurt Damon is on top of us, his face too close. Her hands rise up, try to push him off, but he's stronger. * *

Samantha starts to SCREAM. Hands close over our face. She bites, and the hands are pulled away. She SCREAMS again.

KURT (cont'd)
SHUT UP! SHUT UP!

Her hand claws the floorboards. One of her fingernails SNAPS off.

Kurt holds her down, begins to try to undress her. She writhes and SCREAMS. She gets one hand into Kurt's hair and pulls as hard as she can. He SHOUTS in pain.

In the corner, Adam McCarthy has his hands over his ears.

ADAM
MAKE HER STOP! MAKE HER STOP SCREAMIN', MAN, MAKE HER STOP!

But she keeps screaming. Adam staggers to a boom box that's sitting on the fireplace mantle and flicks a switch. A SONG comes on, loud. It's a haunting tune, we recognize it.

It's the song Jake has been humming. *

Kurt continues his fumbling, drunken attempts at rape, tearing her hand out of his hair.

KURT
SHUT HER UP! USE YOUR JACKET OR SOMETHING!

Adam lunges to the wall and tears down a sheet of the blue plastic Duvateen. He races over to us with the sheet --

156 CONTINUED: (4) 156

-- and everything turns blue. Now our sights and sounds are muffled and distorted through the blue plastic. We see the image that has haunted Tom, the face of Kurt Damon, a blue demon as he grapples on top of us.

157 IN TOM'S BASEMENT, 157

Tom falls back against the wall, his hand still locked in Samantha's. His color is cadaverous. He's suffocating.

158 IN THE FLASHBACK HOUSE, 158

back in Samantha's point of view, we struggle, we thrash, it seems to go on forever. Slowly, the sounds become fainter and fainter and fainter...

... and everything stops. We hear the muffled voices of Kurt and Adam SCREAMING at each other.

The sheet of plastic is ripped off. We stare up at them as Kurt and Adam stand above us, chests heaving, revolted looks on their faces, looking at us like we're a dog they just killed with their car.

ADAM
Oh, my God.

KURT
What the fuck did you do that for?

ADAM
Is she dead?

KURT
No shit she's dead.

ADAM
Oh, my God.

KURT
Look at her tongue, man.

ADAM
I'm not here.

KURT *
I never saw nobody dead before.

We start to fall back, and down, as if sinking into the floor. Kurt and Adam grow taller, further away. Their voices fade.

ADAM
I wish I wasn't here.

(CONTINUED)

158 CONTINUED: 158

KURT
It's fuckin' gross.

ADAM
This isn't happening.

KURT
Fuckin' plastic over her face. Good thinkin', Adam.

ADAM
What do we do now?

Kurt and Adam are very far away, blobs of light at the end of a black tunnel that's closing in around us. Just before everything goes completely black --

159 INT BASEMENT NIGHT 159

Tom's fingers twitch open and his hand pulls free of Samantha's. He opens his eyes and gulps air. The color returns to his face as he pulls his hand away from hers.

But as he does so, he stops, staring intently at something in her fingers. We don't see what it is.

Tom draws himself to his feet and climbs the ladder that leads upstairs.

ADDITIONAL ALTERNATE SHOT: *

As he goes, we pause, looking between two rungs near the top of the ladder. In the darkened crawl space under the rest of the house, a pair of eyes stare at us. *

160 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 160*

In the living room, Tom picks up the phone and dials 911. It rings twice, then picks up. He's immediately put on hold.

He thinks, hesitates, then hangs up the phone.

161 EXT TOM'S HOUSE NIGHT 161

Outside, it has begun to rain. Tom comes out of the house and * heads up the block, toward Frank's house. *

162 EXT FRANK'S HOUSE NIGHT 162*

Tom climbs the steps to Frank's house. Bouquets of flowers have been left here and there on the steps, along with a few candles and handwritten signs -- "Hang in there, Adam," "We Love You," that sort of thing.

162 CONTINUED: 162

Tom knocks on the front door. A moment later, Frank opens it. He looks devastated, shell-shocked, his eyes sunken from crying. He's wearing a red shirt we've seen before.

TOM
How's he doin'?

Frank shrugs. Can't talk much.

FRANK
He might make it. Might not. Sheila's over there now, I'm headed back.

TOM
Frank, I'm sorry. I'm sorry because... I think I know why Adam shot himself. And I have to call the police about it. But I don't want you to hear it from them, I don't want Sheila to read it in the paper. You have the right to know before anybody else.

FRANK
What are you talking about?

TOM
Come with me.

He nods toward his own house. Frank stares at him, frightened, but what could possibly be worse than what's already happened?

FRANK
This better be important.

He turns and heads into the house. A few moments later he reappears, carrying his jacket.

Tom leads him down the sidewalk. The Damon house is visible across the street. One by one, the lights flick on in its windows.

Tom doesn't see. *

CUT TO: *

OMITTED (163-166) *

166A EXT AN INTERSECTION NIGHT 166A*

A red light, seen through a rain-spattered windshield. Maggie drums her fingers on the steering wheel, waiting for it to change. *

Her purse sits patiently on the passenger seat beside her. *

CUT TO: *

167 OMITTED 167*

168 INT TOM'S BASEMENT NIGHT 168*

Tom and Frank stand on opposite sides of Samantha's grave, staring. Frank is horrified. *

FRANK
How did you find this?

TOM
Does it matter?

FRANK
You don't know it was Adam and Kurt.

TOM
It was.

FRANK
But there's nothing to... you're talking like a nut, that's what people will say. This is just a body, it doesn't prove anything.

TOM
No, it doesn't.

He reaches out and pries open the fingers of Samantha's lifeless hand. She's clutching a tuft of hair. *

TOM (cont'd)
But this probably will.

Frank stares for a long moment, struck dumb. Finally, he turns his back. His shoulders heave as he cries, silently. A long moment goes by. Tom takes a step toward him, to comfort him. *

TOM
Frank-

FRANK
What...

168 CONTINUED: 168

TOM
Frank, we have to-

FRANK
What were we supposed to do?

Tom stops.

FRANK (cont'd)
It was an accident. The kids come to us, she's already dead, the damage is done, there's nothin' gonna bring her back. But those boys, they've got everything ahead of them.

Frank lets his jacket drop to the floor, revealing his right hand. He's holding a gun.

He turns and looks at Tom.

FRANK (cont'd)
What were we supposed to do? Send our own sons to jail for the rest of their lives? Over *her?*

Frank still has the gun hanging at his side. He rubs it back and forth against the side of his leg, tears streaming down his cheeks.

Tom's eyes are glued to the gun.

TOM
Who you planning to shoot with that?

FRANK
Who do you think?

TOM
I think you haven't decided yet.

He's right, and Frank knows it.

FRANK
Get out of here.

TOM
Come on upstairs, Frank, we can talk ab- *

168 CONTINUED: (2) 168

FRANK
I've been living with this for six fucking months, do you think anything you say is gonna make one bit of difference to me?! Get the fuck out of here!

TOM
I'm not going until you- *

Frank aims the gun just to the left of Tom's head and pulls the trigger. The bullet CRACKS off the ladder.

FRANK
GET OUT! GET OUT!

Tom starts up the ladder. Frank looks down at the gun. He turns it to face himself. He looks into its barrel.

OMITTED (169-173)

174 INT KITCHEN NIGHT 174

Tom crawls out the trap door and hurries out of the kitchen. A GUNSHOT rings out from the cellar. Tom winces and starts to turn back.

A SECOND GUNSHOT sends him headed out the front door again.

175 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 175

Tom races across the living room, scoops his truck keys off the desk, opens the front door --

-- and finds himself face to face with Harry Damon and his son Kurt. They're standing on his front step, doused by the driving rain.

HARRY
Hi.

Tom freezes. Thinks. Can't even speak. *

Kurt, faced half away from him, doesn't make eye contact. *

HARRY (cont'd) *
Really pouring.

175 CONTINUED: 175

TOM
Looks like it.

HARRY
You got a minute?

TOM
Uh... no, not right now. I was just headed-

HARRY
It's important.

They look at each other for a long moment. Tom looks down, to where Harry's hands are thrust into the pockets of his jacket. He looks back up. Harry's face is a blank, it's impossible to read.

Tom swallows. His mouth goes dry.

TOM
Don't really have time to talk, Harry.

HARRY
Jesus, this rain!

He steps forward abruptly -- ostensibly to get out of the rain, but it also forces Tom to take an instinctive step back, into the house.

Harry shakes the rain off, coming further into the house as he does so. Kurt steps in quickly behind him.

HARRY (cont'd)
Kurt, I *know* you weren't raised in a barn, close that door.

Kurt does so. Harry steps into the living room. Tom turns, eyes still on him. He is now directly between Harry, who walks to the middle of the living room, and Kurt, who remains next to the door, eyes still averted.

Harry pulls his hands from his pockets. The right side of his jacket sags from the weight of -- well, my guess is a handgun. Tom studies them. Both Harry and Kurt seem a little unsteady, swaying on their feet.

TOM
You guys been drinkin'?

HARRY
Little bit.

175 CONTINUED: (2) 175

TOM
Hey, I'm really sorry, I just don't have time to talk right now. If you want, I can-

HARRY
Tom, we have ourselves a very serious problem here.

TOM
What do you mean?

Harry gestures to the dining room, in which the floorboards have all been torn up.

HARRY
What the hell do you think you're doing to my house?
(no answer)
I heard all that pounding and I figured I'd better check it out, but I never in a million years thought you'd be *wrecking* the place! What's the matter with you?

Tom flinches at a movement behind him. It's Kurt, who has walked over toward the fireplace and is standing next to it. Tom glances at the fireplace poker, which is upright in a holder next to Kurt. Kurt's not looking at it -- but it's within easy reach.

TOM
Oh, yeah, I know, don't worry, I'm gonna take care of that. I was trying to fix the water main for you, it was leaking like a son of a bitch and I couldn't get at it from under the house.

Tom looks at Harry's pocket. It sags. *

HARRY
That right? Damn. Lotta water damage?

TOM
Some.

Tom's eyes flip around frantically, to see if he has a weapon near. In his hands are his truck keys. Next to him is a floor lamp. Nearby is a table. On it are: a large candle, his wallet, and a stack of mail. No help there.

175 CONTINUED: (3) 175

HARRY
Can I take a look around?

TOM
(gestures)
Help yourself.

He looks back over his shoulder, at the front door, which is now unguarded.

HARRY
Why don't you come show me where it is?

TOM
No, you guys go ahead. You'll see it easy enough.

HARRY
I'm almost afraid to look.

Abruptly, Harry pulls his left hand out of his pocket. In it, he holds --

-- a half pint of whiskey. He unscrews the top and takes a very big gulp.

HARRY (cont'd)
Water main doesn't run under the house, Tom.

TOM
(a nervous laugh)
Well, I know that *now.*

Tom surreptitiously wedges his car keys between his fingers. Harry screws the cap back on the bottle and tosses it across the room to Kurt.

HARRY
Drink it.

KURT
Had enough.

HARRY
Drink more.

Obediently, Kurt finishes the bottle.

HARRY (cont'd)
Shit, Tom.

Kurt picks up the poker and hides it behind his leg.

175 CONTINUED: (4) 175

HARRY (cont'd)
You seemed like such a sensible guy.

Harry starts to pull his right hand from his pocket.

Tom reaches out, grabs hold of the floor lamp, and hurls it down on the floor at Harry's feet. The bulb shatters with a blue electrical flash, spraying glass shards. Harry winces as he draws a 9 mm. from his jacket pocket, and in that split-second, Tom bolts for the door.

But Kurt moves faster, whipping the poker across the room, hard. It hits Tom in the back of the knees as he nears the doorway and Tom falls.

Kurt races over and kicks him in the head. Tom rolls over onto his back, stunned. Kurt starts to drag him across the living room floor.

HARRY (cont'd)
On the rug.

Kurt drags Tom further, into the middle of an area rug. Tom rolls over, making eye contact with Kurt, who is panicking.

HARRY (cont'd)
Don't look at him. Roll him over.

Kurt does. Tom, regaining his strength, starts to struggle, but Kurt puts his knee in the middle of Tom's back and pulls his head back.

Harry puts the gun to Tom's head, but hesitates. He looks around.

There is a sweatshirt tied around Kurt's waist. Harry rips it off him, wraps it around the gun and his hand to muffle the shot, raises the gun to the back of Tom's head --

-- and a spray of headlights splashes across the far wall of the room.

Nobody moves.

Outside, they hear a car idling in the street. A horn HONKS. *

Kurt looks at his father, panicked.

Harry looks down at Tom.

Tom prays.

176 EXT STREET NIGHT 176

Maggie waits in the front seat of the car. Nobody comes * outside. Impatient, she sighs, pulls the keys from the ignition * and gets out of the car. The rain has stopped, but everything is wet, big fat drops PLINKING and PLUNKING from the trees and into puddles.

She takes one step toward the house. The light in the living room window abruptly clicks off.

She stops.

She takes another step. The porch light clicks out. She stops, alarmed. She looks back at the car.

IN THE FRONT SEAT,

she rips open the door and grabs her purse off the passenger seat. She digs inside and finds Tom's lineman's knife, the one she put in there earlier. (Good thing she brought that purse.)

ON THE SIDEWALK,

she starts toward the house again, knife in her left hand, keys in her right. It's *real* dark.

She starts up the stairs. She reaches the top. The last light that was on inside clicks off. Now the house is totally black inside.

She goes to the door. She unlocks the deadbolt.

Inside, she hears a SCURRYING sound.

She switches the knife to her right hand, keeping it concealed. *

She opens the door.

177 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 177

The room is pitch black, so Maggie leaves the door hanging open. Some light spills in from the street.

MAGGIE

Tom?

No answer. She steps inside and fumbles for a light switch.

She flicks it. Nothing happens.

177 CONTINUED: 177

MAGGIE (cont'd)
Are you here?

She crosses the room to another light and CLICKS its switch. As the light floods the room:

Harry, who was hiding behind the front door, BANGS it shut. Kurt Damon is still kneeling on Tom's back, holding one hand roughly over his mouth, trying to keep him quiet.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
Wh-

Harry raises the gun in his hand and points it at Maggie.

She lunges toward Tom. Harry fires. Maggie hits the ground, and the bullet WHIZZES past her, SHATTERING the mirror over the fireplace.

Tom takes advantage of the moment to flip Kurt off his back. His right hand flashes, his clenched keys gouge Kurt's face.

Harry turns the gun on Tom, but suddenly SCREAMS in agony.

Maggie has plunged the knife through Harry's foot and into the floorboards. Harry thrashes, in shock, waving the gun around, his foot pinned to the floor by the knife.

Kurt SHOUTS and raises the poker high, to swing it down on her --

-- Tom throws himself on top of Maggie, to protect her --

-- and the poker starts to fall.

BANG! BANG!

Two shots ring out from the doorway to the dining room. Kurt takes both in the chest and is thrown back on the floor, the poker CLATTERING next to him.

Harry turns toward the source of the shots. Frank stands in the doorway to the dining room, his .38 in hand. Harry raises his gun, but Frank fires two more shots. Both hit Harry, who falls back onto the floor, foot still pinned, knee sticking up at a grotesque angle.

As he hits the floor, his gun goes off. The bullet RIPS through the ceiling.

178 INT JAKE'S ROOM NIGHT 178*

On the second floor, in Jake's bedroom (which Jake is *not* in) * the bullet CRACKS up through the floorboards, tears through his * mattress, and bursts through the little boy's pillow. *

The pillow explodes in a cloud of feathers. There are feathers * everywhere. *

179 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 179*

Frank opens his hand and the gun CLATTERS to the hardwood floor. * In his red shirt, Frank is exactly the image Tom saw of him in * his dream.

FRANK
They were gonna kill you, Tommy. You and Maggie both.

He turns and walks out the front door. *

Tom looks at Maggie. They're both in shock, can hardly speak. But they're okay. They turn and look out the open front door. Frank is sitting on the top step, facing the street, like in Tom's dream. *

180 EXT FRONT PORCH NIGHT 180*

Tom and Maggie come out of the house. Frank, sitting on the top * porch step, makes no attempt to flee. From all around the block, VOICES rise up, people heard the shots. Frank shakes his head.

FRANK
Cold-blooded murder. I can't let something like that happen. Not here.

Faces gather across the street, staring at Tom's house, * wondering what the hell. A SIREN wails in the distance.

FRANK (cont'd) *
This is a *decent* neighborhood. *

Sensing something, Tom turns and looks back, over his shoulder. * For a moment, the figure of Samantha is visible in the window of * his house, but when he looks closer, she's gone. *

Turning sharply to the right, we see she's standing on the * street right next to us. She's wearing the same heavy parka she * wore on the cold day when she first went into that house. *

180 CONTINUED: 180

She turns and walks away, down the street, the arriving Neighbors passing in front of, behind, and all around her, as if they didn't even know she existed.

She walks toward the grand old church at the end of the block, her breath rising above her in little curls of steam.

DISSOLVE TO:

181 EXT CEMETERY DAY 181

A dozen MOURNERS are gathered around a freshly dug grave at a cemetery in town. It's a wooded place, slightly rolling hillsides, the kind of place you'd choose for yourself. A PRIEST reads from a Bible.

Drawing closer, we recognize two of the Mourners -- Debbie, the baby-sitter, stands at the edge of the grave, one arm around her mother, Yvonne, the woman from the train station. They're not so much grief-stricken as relieved, at last putting things to rest.

A newly engraved headstone sits on the grass near their feet. The letters are clear, the marker is permanent, finally -- "Samantha Kozak, 1982-1999." *

DISSOLVE TO:

182 EXT RESIDENTIAL STREET DAY 182

A U-Haul trailer rolls down the street in a different residential neighborhood.

Tom and Maggie are in the front of the car pulling the trailer. They're quiet, tired eyes on the road. Tom glances over at her. She looks at him. Hey, we're alive.

Tom glances up at the rear view mirror. He adjusts it, so he can see Jake in the back seat. Jake is staring out the window. Seems fine.

IN BACK,

Jake is strapped into a car seat. He stares through the window, his brow furrowed. We look out, at what he sees.

Outside, brick house after brick house rolls by, one of those distinctive Chicago neighborhoods with an endless row of identical houses.

Jake watches them go by, intent. Sounds rise up from the houses -- a WHISPERED conversation in this one, LAUGHTER from the next, an ARGUMENT from the one after that, a MUFFLED SHOUT further on.

(CONTINUED)

182 CONTINUED: 182

The sounds grow louder the longer he stares. As the reflections * of the houses blur past on his window, a faint strange smile * crosses Jake's face. *

Samantha may be gone *

but the boy can still hear. *

FADE OUT. *