

KILLING MRS. TINGLE

Written by

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Rewrite

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INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

A large bedroom mirror. The kind that hangs over a dresser. Ribbons of merit, snapshots, and newspaper clippings adorn its edges. A headline from a clipping is glimpsed. "GRANDSBORO HONOR ROLL ANNOUNCED..."

All of these momentos and keepsakes perfectly frame the face of...

LEIGH ANN WARREN

A young girl, seventeen. A smart face. Determined and intense. She stares at herself. Her eyes deep and piercing. She is alone.

LEIGH ANN

(reciting--rehearsing)

Distinguished graduates, as valedictorian of the graduating class of '98, let me be the first to say congratulations. We did it! The torch is officially being passed to us. With certainty and promise we will face the future, we will bring answers to problems, and make the world a better place...

HONK! A car sounds from outside breaking Leigh Ann from her train of thought. She switches gears instantly, looking about the room. She rounds up books and papers, shoving them in a book bag as she moves out the door and into...

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING - SAME

A small and modest home displaying a definite low income personality. A TV is BLARING as Leigh Ann enters, spotting immediately, her mother, sprawled on the couch. Meet LESLIE WARREN. An older, tougher version of Leigh Ann. She's dressed in a waitress get up. A name tag is pinned to her chest.

She breathes heavy in her sleep. A smoker no doubt. Leigh Ann bends down, removing the dirty ashtray that is at her side. She nudges her mother.

LEIGH ANN

C'mon, Mom, time to wake up. You've got the early shift.

Another HONK from outside. Leigh Ann wrestles her mother. She awakens with a fit of COUGHING.

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2.

LESLIE
(half asleep)
..hey, baby...time to go to bed...

LEIGH ANN
No, it's time to wake up.

LESLIE
Shit...

Leigh Ann sits her up, grabs a pack of cigarettes from the coffee table and places them in her mother's hand.

LEIGH ANN
Gotta run. Love you.

And Leigh Ann tears out the front door. From a window, she can be seen hopping into a little car as it rips out of the driveway and down the street out of sight.

EXT. GRANDSBORO HIGH SCHOOL - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

A small town school. Old and charming. It is alive with students coming and going. A sign in front reads GRANDSBORO HIGH SCHOOL. HOME OF THE FIGHTING BULLDOGS. Below that, a banner has been draped. "CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF '98."

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - MORNING - SAME

The lot is busy with students and their cars. The little car pulls into the crowded lot.

INT. CAR - MORNING - SAME

Leigh Ann rides shotgun to her best friend, JO LYNN PRESCOTT. A sexy girl bursting with energy. She HONKS her horn at the car in front of her as music BLARES from the stereo.

JO LYNN
(complaining)
Fucking wake-up, will ya? That Marybeth Carter has no business driving a Mercedes.

LEIGH ANN
I need your senior prophecy for the last issue. Deadline's tomorrow.

JO LYNN
I don't know what to say. I hate that senior crap.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEIGH ANN

Just think of where you'll be in 20 years.

JO LYNN

You're the writer. Do it for me.

LEIGH ANN

Okay. How about--Jo Lynn Prescott, fledging film star, recently divorced from gay husband, last seen popping percodan at Betty Fords.

JO LYNN

Love it. What does your say?

LEIGH ANN

I haven't done mine yet.

JO LYNN

Let me. Leigh Ann Warren, over achieving journalist slash scholar last seen winning the Pulitzer Prize on her searing yet personal account of being a 38 year old virgin.

LEIGH ANN

Easy.

JO LYNN

Simple reminder.
(to car in front of her)
Get a Taurus--Jesus!

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - A MINUTE LATER

The car's parked. Jo Lynn and Leigh Ann crawl out as a young boy appears...

BRIAN BARRY

A tall and lanky kid. A decent guy. Sweet, but not on anyone's cool list. He waves a newspaper at Leigh Ann.

JO LYNN

Fan club's here.

BRIAN

Look! We made front page. THE FUTURE IS OURS by Leigh Ann Warren.

LEIGH ANN

Photography by Brian Barry. Well done.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN

Hey, we're a team.

LEIGH ANN

Did you hear from Stanford?

Leigh Ann moves around the side of the car. Brian follows her. He's a little puppy doggyish. He has a crush.

BRIAN

I spoke to admissions and they seemed to think that if I can get a letter of recommendation then I might make the program.

LEIGH ANN

That shouldn't be too hard.

BRIAN

Hey, Leigh Ann...I was thinking...

Jo Lynn fusses with her things, pretending not to listen.

LEIGH ANN

Yeah?

BRIAN

It's the last week of school...soon you'll be heading off to Harvard.

LEIGH ANN

Hope so.

BRIAN

Whaddya say we get together before you go? You and me. Just the two of us.

LEIGH ANN

Sure. We can study for the Physics final. Call me.

Brian's face registers disappointment. That's not quite what he had in mind. But he's not brave enough to correct her.

BRIAN

Uh...yeah...sure.

Leigh Ann joins Jo Lynn and they move across the parking lot, leaving Brian staring blankly.

JO LYNN

I don't think that was the date he had in mind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LEIGH ANN

What date? You mean me and Brian?

JO LYNN

You and anybody at this point. We're down to the wire.

They pass the Mercedes. The trunk is open and a young girl is struggling with a huge object. This is MARYBETH CARTER. An annoying twit of a girl.

LEIGH ANN

I smell a history project.

JO LYNN

Did you finish yours?

LEIGH ANN

I was up all night.

They approach Marybeth.

JO LYNN

Hiya, Marybeth. Whatcha got there?

Marybeth flashes a sickly sweet smile.

MARYBETH

It's the Bastille. As in the storming of the Bastille. As in the French Revolution.

Marybeth holds it up proudly. Before her is a model composed of cardboard, toothpicks, Pringles cans, and various other clever items. It very much resembles the Bastille. Leigh Ann inspects it. A very detailed and ingenious creation.

JO LYNN

It's cute.

MARYBETH

Cute? I think we can do better than cute. Don't cha think, Leigh Ann?

Marybeth smiles slyly at Leigh Ann. Leigh Ann smiles back.

LEIGH ANN

It's very nice. Well done.

(CONTINUED)

JO LYNN
You're right, Marybeth. It's exquisite.
Flawless, immaculate...I could just go
on...

And she does, taking Leigh Ann with her.

LEIGH ANN
(genuinely)
She's good.

JO LYNN
Senior prophecy. Marybeth Carter,
psychotic bitch, currently on death row
after taking a chainsaw to her son for
bringing home a "B" on his report card.

BLARING rock music takes their attention as they turn to see
a sporty car racing into the parking lot. The car SLAMS on
its brakes, coming to a clean stop. Jo Lynn's eyes widen
as...

LUKE CHURNER

steps out of his car. A wild and restless sort. Devilishly
handsome with a don't-give-a-shit smirk that sums up his
whole life.

JO LYNN (cont'd)
OOOOHHH. God, look at him. He's such
a...

LEIGH ANN
Canker.

JO LYNN
With a wrought iron ass. Here he comes.
Dare me.

LEIGH ANN
What?

JO LYNN
Just dare me. Say it.

LEIGH ANN
I dare you.

Luke walks by. Jo Lynn jumps in front of him, stopping him.

JO LYNN
Hi, Luke. How ya doin'?

(CONTINUED)

LUKE

I'm good, Jo. How ya doin'?

JO LYNN

Not too good, Luke.

LUKE

What's wrong?

JO LYNN

Well, it's the last week of school, soon high school will be over, we'll all be moving on and I'm just a little remorseful. Depressed, saddened, you know, full of regret that you and I have never really gotten to know each other. And I think it's particularly a shame since I've been in love with you since the third grade and...

Jo Lynn reaches over, grabs Luke and plants a huge kiss on him. Long, passionate, and wet. Leigh Ann is stunned. So is the cool and cocky Luke. Jo Lynn breaks away.

JO LYNN

But I feel better now, thanks.

And with that Jo Lynn zooms off. A shocked Leigh Ann chases after her.

LEIGH ANN

I can't believe you just did that!

JO LYNN

Me either...OH MY GOD!

LEIGH ANN

You gotta chill on the hair products. The fumes are going straight up the nose.

JO LYNN

It's just this little voice inside of me said -- DO IT!

LEIGH ANN

That's why it's a little voice. You're not supposed to listen.

JO LYNN

No, Leigh Ann--you gotta listen.

CONTINUED: 31

Leigh Ann feigns disapproval. If truth be told, she admires her friend's less than discreet nature. Leigh Ann steals a glance back at Luke.

He's bending over, picking up a rock. Leigh Ann can't help herself--she checks out his wrought-iron ass...not bad.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - MINUTES LATER

The hallway is congested with bodies. Students--moving, pushing, fighting their way down the hall.

Suddenly, the hallway opens up, dividing down the center, biblically parting. Eyes look away, students detour...all trying to avoid...

MRS. TINGLE

who moves through the crowd. She carries herself sternly, marching forward, undaunted. She is a woman clearly aware of the effect her presence has.

CLOSE ON HER FACE. Hard and cold like stone. Mid to late 40's. Hard to guess--she seems ageless. Her looks are refined and not unattractive. It's the apparent lack of humanity that makes her unappealing. And the missing heart.

She moves down the hallway when a graying man with a pot belly, dressed in sweats appears. This is COACH TWITCHELL. He smiles at Mrs. Tingle as he passes by her.

COACH TWITCHELL

Good morning, Mrs. Tingle.

She nods. It's the best she can do. She continues on.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR/OFFICE

A door marked OFFICE stands open. Faculty members can be seen within. An older man, PRINCIPAL POTTER, 50's, stands in the hallway talking to a faculty member. He is a serious no-nonsense type of guy. He's in control. He talks to a faculty member. MRS. JOHNSON, 30's. Polite face.

MR. POTTER

I'm afraid there's no money to upgrade your computers.

MRS. JOHNSON

We need to up the RAM, Mr. Potter. The students can't access the internet.

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MR. POTTER

The answer is no. Try me again next year.

MRS. JOHNSON

That's what you said last year.

Mr. Potter's eyes venture down the hallway to see Mrs. Tingle coming. He wraps up his discussion quickly.

MR. POTTER

Forget it, Mrs. Johnson.

Mr. Potter starts off but he's not quite fast enough.

MRS. TINGLE

Mr. Potter? May I have a moment?

Mr. Potter stops, takes a breath, turns to Tingle. He manages a smile.

MR. POTTER

Good morning, Mrs. Tingle. How are you?

Mrs. Tingle turns to Mrs. Johnson.

MRS. TINGLE

If you'll excuse us, Mrs. Johnson.

Mrs. Johnson obeys, quickly disappearing.

MR. POTTER

Yes, Mrs. Tingle?

MRS. TINGLE

Summer school starts in three weeks. Have you approved my research materials?

MR. POTTER

I wanted to talk to you about that, Mrs. Tingle. It appears to be a matter of budget. It's the last quarter and funds are scarce. I was thinking...

MRS. TINGLE

No, no, no, Mr. Potter, don't do that. We so prefer that whistling wind effect you have on us--now, I requested these materials over two months ago.

MR. POTTER

We don't have the money.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. TINGLE

Listen, Mr. Potter, you know how much I enjoy this morning banter but we both know its outcome so thank you in advance, and, by the way, ...happy birthday.

MR. POTTER

It's not my birthday, Mrs. Tingle.

MRS. TINGLE

Not your natal birthday, the AA one, you've been sober how long now?

Mr. Potter SIGHS, preparing himself for what's to come.

MR. POTTER

Four years.

MRS. TINGLE

I knew it was this week. Me and dates. The curse of being a history teacher. Well, congratulations. It's quite an accomplishment. The school board was right to give you a second chance. Just think--not one sip of alcohol in over four years. It's almost...unbelievable.

The corners of her lips rise into the slightest smile. It's chilling. Mr. Potter holds steady, despite the fact she's nailed him.

MR. POTTER

Thank you, Mrs. Tingle, but my sobriety is a private matter.

MRS. TINGLE

Of course, it'll be our little secret. Are you okay, Mr. Potter?

She refers to his now pale face.

MR. POTTER

Fine. Just a little tired.

MRS. TINGLE

Really? Late night?

Her eyes slice through him as she turns and leaves.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - MINUTES LATER

Leigh Ann marches down the corridor, undaunted, determined. She eyes the counselor's office.

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A piece of paper has been posted on the glass of the office door. Several STUDENTS stand at the door, checking it out.

Leigh Ann starts for it when Marybeth Carter appears. She watches as Marybeth pushes aside a girl to get a better look at the posting. Leigh Ann watches, a look of fear quietly emerging across her face. Leigh Ann steps forward when...

MR.GOLD

(off camera)

You're number 2.

Leigh Ann spins around to find MR. GOLD, 40, a pleasant man. Youthful with flavor. He sports a concerned face.

LEIGH ANN

But...I...

Leigh Ann is speechless. Instantly crushed.

MR.GOLD

By one point. 99.6 to 98.6.

LEIGH ANN

Marybeth Carter.

Leigh Ann turns to see Marybeth react to the posting. She turns to those around her, smiling as she smugly walks away.

MR.GOLD

I'm sorry, Leigh Ann, I know how much you were counting on being valedictorian.

Leigh Ann's breath goes short. She is beyond devastation.

LEIGH ANN

I was counting on the scholarship that comes with being valedictorian.

MR.GOLD

There's financial aid...

LEIGH ANN

I was declined. My dad still uses me as a deduction.

Leigh Ann's mind starts reeling. She moves out of the hall into a small cul de sac of lockers. Mr. Gold follows.

MR.GOLD

Perhaps if you talked to him.

LEIGH ANN

No, his new wife just had a baby...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MR.GOLD

But you have a chance of going to
Harvard. You have to talk to him...

LEIGH ANN

(cutting him off--adamantly)
We don't talk!

That subject is clearly off limits. Mr. Gold respects this.
He takes a beat. His heart goes out to her.

MR.GOLD

Then that leaves you with only one
option.

Leigh Ann holds back her tears.

LEIGH ANN

What?

MR.GOLD

You have one week to take down Marybeth.
Bump her ass to #2 and you become
valedictorian. You win the scholarship.

Leigh Ann is beyond lost.

LEIGH ANN

It's impossible.

MR.GOLD

It's one point, Leigh Ann. It's
completely possible. I've checked.
You're ahead of Marybeth in every subject
but...

LEIGH ANN

History...I know. That's why it's
impossible. Mrs. Tingle. She hates me.

MR.GOLD

Mrs. Tingle hates everyone.

LEIGH ANN

(unraveling)

But you don't understand. She's got a
thing against me. I can't explain it.
But it's this thing, this feeling, this
energy of hate, whenever I walk in the
room--it's like she's lying in wait.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LEIGH ANN (cont'd)

And even if I wanted...the history exam is just part of it and our projects count as half our grade and now Marybeth Carter has built the goddamned Bastille!

Leigh Ann collapses against a locker. It's hopeless. Mr. Gold smiles at her warmly.

MR. GOLD

Leigh Ann, as counselor, you've been my pride for four years. And I'm not gonna let you give up. You can do it. I know you can.

Leigh Ann stares at him, wanting desperately to believe him.

INT. MRS. TINGLE'S CLASSROOM - LATER

Jo Lynn stands before the class. She wears a period costume as she waves a tin-foiled medieval sword about her. She performs for the class, diving heart and soul into her part.

JO LYNN

"I couldn't help myself. I loved Arthur but I couldn't resist the flesh of Lancelot. He filled me so. And when Arthur discovered us together, he went mad and tried to kill me. He chased me to the rock where he beat me repeatedly until I was forced to fight back. I saw the sword in the stone and reached for it, knowing the legend that no man was able to extract it but out it came. With the utmost ease. Arthur was as surprised as I and, in exchange for my life, I gave Excalibur to him and I shall always be the woman behind the sword."

Jo Lynn waves it proudly in the air as she bows to the class, her eyes peeking to the back of the room where Mrs. Tingle sits, completely underwhelmed.

MRS. TINGLE

Thank you, Jo Lynn, for that nauseating distortion of Arthurian legend.

JO LYNN

I know I took some liberties, Mrs. Tingle, but I thought you'd appreciate, you know--the strong woman angle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. TINGLE

I don't object to the dramatic license taken, or even your lack of ability as an actress, Jo Lynn. What I find baffling is why you would choose a legend, a work of fiction, as the subject of your history project.

JO LYNN

Now, I thought you might try to bust me on that. There is an overwhelming argument that King Arthur was indeed a historical figure. The debate dates back to the Renaissance.

MRS. TINGLE

Yes, but that debate belongs in English Literature two doors down. We deal with facts here. Now take your seat.

Jo Lynn, miffed, takes her seat. Mrs. Tingle's eyes roam the class for a new victim.

MRS. TINGLE (cont'd)

Mr. Barry.

All eyes go to Brian as he stands, maneuvering a wooden object to the front of the room. He's a little shaky.

BRIAN

Uh...for my project, I've constructed a medieval crossbow.

Brian holds up the handmade contraption. Smaller than a real one, but authentic looking nevertheless. With trembling hands, he attempts to demonstrate it.

BRIAN (cont'd)

Uh...This was a very popular weapon during the early 15th century. By placing a bolt in the chamber...

Brian places a thin arrow-like bolt in the crossbow's chamber.

BRIAN (cont'd)

The bowing of the wood creates a pressure enabling it to shoot...

Brian's hands fumble. THE BOLT GOES OFF. It shoots across the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BOLT POV as it rips through the air heading straight for Marybeth Carter's beady little eyes...

CLOSE ON MARYBETH...her eyes bulge as the bolt comes at her like lightning...she throws a book up to her face intercepting it...the bolt impales the book...close call.

TOTAL SILENCE. And then...

LUKE

Cool.

All eyes are on Tingle as she moves to Brian who is frozen rock stiff...terrified. She circles him, unfaltering.

BRIAN

I..uh...uh...

MRS. TINGLE

Don't tease us, Mr. Barry, when you shoot--make it count.

Marybeth squints, huh?

BRIAN

(quivering)

It wasn't...I didn't think...

MRS. TINGLE

No, Mr. Barry, that would require a brain. What you did was bring a weapon to school. What you did is break the law.

Mrs. Tingle yanks the crossbow from Brian's hands, confiscating it. Her face furious.

BRIAN

I'm sorry...

MRS. TINGLE

Sit down before I have you arrested.

Brian dives for his desk. Mrs. Tingle puts the crossbow away, then turns to the class, unshaken.

MRS. TINGLE (cont'd)

Mr. Churner, dare I even ask?

It's Luke's turn at bat. He stands--cocky and confident. He walks to the front of the room, pulls a rock from his jacket and plops it down on Tingle's desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LUKE
Plymouth Rock.

A few snickers as Luke, cool and casual, returns to his seat. Mrs. Tingle picks up the rock and slowly moves his way, eyeballing him.

MRS. TINGLE
Your work, Mr. Churner, is very
reminiscent of a young man who sat in
that chair some 20 years ago. He, too,
had the words "no future" printed on his
forehead.

This woman knows exactly what buttons to push. Luke sees red.

MRS. TINGLE
Give your father my best.

She returns the rock, plopping it down on Luke's desk. Every eye in the room is on him. Is he just going to take it? Luke lowers his head, burned. Mrs. Tingle moves on...

MRS. TINGLE
Miss Warren. Dazzle us, will you?

Leigh Ann takes a deep breath and moves tentatively to the front of the class. She holds a WAR AND PEACE size journal. It appears old and authentic.

LEIGH ANN
I've created a 17th century journal. One
year in the life of an accused Salem
witch.

Mrs. Tingle takes the thick journal from her, thumbing through it. Leigh Ann talks fast, selling it.

LEIGH ANN
It contains 365 entries all written with
quill and ink and bound by melted wax for
authenticity. It chronicles a young
girl's false imprisonment and unfair
trial.

Mrs. Tingle has come to the end of the journal where the writing has become noticeably red and smeared.

MRS. TINGLE
And when in the 17th century did they
write with red ink?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LEIGH ANN

When she tried to escape they took away
her quill and ink. She was forced to
write in blood...

Leigh Ann holds up her hand revealing a Band-Aid on her
finger.

LEIGH ANN

(continued)

..until she was finally burned at the
stake.

MRS. TINGLE

Always the victim, aren't we, Miss
Warren?

Leigh Ann holds steady.

LEIGH ANN

There are certain similarities between
today and 17th century Salem. That's the
irony of it all.

MRS. TINGLE

I'm well aware of what irony is, Miss
Warren. You, however, should consult your
dictionary.

LEIGH ANN

Of course, I wasn't suggesting...

MRS. TINGLE

I pray your Salem witch escapes such
literary infractions.

Mrs. Tingle slams the journal shut dismissing her.

MRS. TINGLE

Miss Carter.

Marybeth jumps up--a bundle of joy. She passes by Leigh Ann,
smiling smugly.

Leigh Ann takes her seat...trembling.

INT. SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - AFTERNOON - LATER

The late afternoon sun shines through windows that line the
upper walls of the gym. A physical ed. class can be heard in
progress on the field nearby.

(CONTINUED)

Leigh Ann and Jo Lynn sit center court--papers spread out around them--working. They are alone in the big, empty gym.

LEIGH ANN

It's come to this. Extra credit.

JO LYNN

You need it. You have one week to bump bitch Marybeth down the ladder.

LEIGH ANN

It's hopeless. History cost me big time.

JO LYNN

(imitating Tingle)

"I pray your Salem witch escapes such literary infractions."

Leigh Ann cracks up. Jo Lynn's impersonation of Tingle is on-the-nose brilliant.

LEIGH ANN

Senior prophecy. Jo Lynn Prescott wins the Oscar for Best Actress.

JO LYNN

And I'd like to thank Mrs. Tingle and her years of verbal abuse for making it all possible.

LEIGH ANN

And I'd like to thank Mrs. Tingle for ruining any hope of a life outside a low income tax bracket.

JO LYNN

Don't worry. You'll get to Harvard.

VOICE

Fuck Harvard!

They both turn to find Luke standing at the exit door. Jo Lynn's eyes widen. Luke slides across the floor towards them.

LUKE

Check out Yale. Harvard's over.

LEIGH ANN

You would know.

JO LYNN

What are you up to?

(CONTINUED)

LUKE

I'm in English reviewing for the final.
What are you doing?

JO LYNN

Seating arrangements for graduation. You
are going to graduate, aren't you?

Luke pulls a beer from his book bag and pops the top.

LUKE

The celebration's already begun.

He takes a gulp, sitting next to Leigh Ann who appears
repulsed by him.

LEIGH ANN

Get serious.

JO LYNN

Be cool. That's a no-no.

LEIGH ANN

Will you put that away before you get us
expelled? I have a future I'd like to
protect.

Luke cozies into her.

LUKE

"Relax, don't do it. When you wanna go
to it..."

LEIGH ANN

(motioning)

This is my space. That is your space.

LUKE

Hey, Leigh Ann, wanna beer? I have more.

LEIGH ANN

I choose a future. Will you get outta
here with that?

JO LYNN

I'll have one.

LEIGH ANN

Jo Lynn!

JO LYNN

Okay, a sip.

(CONTINUED)

He hands her the beer but she doesn't take it. She forces Luke to feed it to her. He jumps on this flirtation.

LUKE

Now why is it we never dated?

JO LYNN

We did. Sophomore year when I was still an A cup with braces, it was kindof a disaster...but things have changed.

He smiles, turning to Leigh Ann.

LUKE

And why have we never dated?

LEIGH ANN

(ignoring the question)
Could you kill the alcohol? This is serious. You guys are going to ruin my chance of graduating.

LUKE

On the contrary, I think I can help.

From his bag, he pulls a document. He waves it at Leigh Ann. Jo Lynn grabs it, giggling.

JO LYNN

What's this?

LUKE

Oh...just Tingle's final exam.

Leigh Ann is shocked. She takes it from Jo Lynn.

LEIGH ANN

Where did you get this?

He winks at Leigh Ann.

LUKE

You're not the only brain around here.

LEIGH ANN

You could get in serious trouble.

LUKE

I made a copy of the original. She'll never even know.

Leigh Ann can't help but stare at it.

(CONTINUED)

LUKE (cont'd)

Tempting, isn't it? Sorta brings up all those moral questions?

LEIGH ANN

You're a loser, Luke Churner.

She hands the exam back to him. As he reaches for it, a most familiar VOICE is heard behind them...

MRS. TINGLE

(off camera)

I think the race is still on for that title, Miss Warren.

Three heads spin in unison as all eyes go to the figure standing near the bleachers. It is none other than--Mrs. Tingle.

They're all three shocked out of their minds. Luke jumps to hide the beer, leaving Leigh Ann with the exam in her hand. She slides it behind her back.

LUKE

We...were..uh...

LEIGH ANN

Doing the seating arrangements for graduation. Extra credit.

Mrs. Tingle saunters over.

MRS. TINGLE

You'll need it.

Leigh Ann freezes...her life passing before her eyes. Jo Lynn attempts to intervene.

JO LYNN

Actually, we were just finishing up.

Suddenly, Mrs. Tingle reaches behind Leigh Ann's back and yanks the exam from her grasp.

MRS. TINGLE

Well, well...final exams aren't until next week, Leigh Ann.

Leigh Ann could die. She could just lie down and die.

LEIGH ANN

This isn't what it looks like.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. TINGLE

Save it for Mr. Potter, dear.

LEIGH ANN

Wait! Please! You've got it all wrong.

Mrs. Tingle turns. CLOSE on her face as she smiles, sending a therapy inducing chill down Leigh Ann's back.

MRS. TINGLE

The smartest girl in school--caught cheating. The irony of it all.

And with that she disappears through the exit door. Gone.

JO LYNN

Where'd she go?

LEIGH ANN

To turn us in. Where do you think? Oh God...

Leigh Ann, not knowing what to do, takes off after Tingle.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

A young woman sits behind a desk in the office engrossed in a romance novel. This is MISS BURKE. A bit timid but with spunk. Mrs. Tingle enters. Miss Burke's face turns to dread.

MISS BURKE

Good afternoon, Mrs. Tingle. What can I do for...

MRS. TINGLE

I'm here to see Mr. Potter.

MISS BURKE

I'm sorry, but he's not in.

Mrs. Tingle barrels past Miss Burke's desk to Mr. Potter's office. It is dark and empty.

MRS. TINGLE

Bending the elbow, no doubt?

MISS BURKE

Is there something I can help you with?

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Leigh Ann stands just outside the doorway listening.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCENE INTERCUTS

MRS. TINGLE

Yes, you can leave word. Tell Mr. Potter that his dereliction of duty does not go unnoticed and it is urgent that I speak with him first thing in the morning. Understand?

MISS BURKE

Certainly, Mrs. Tingle.

In the hallway, Leigh Ann ducks behind a corner. Mrs. Tingle emerges from the office and heads in the other direction.

Back in the office, Miss Burke returns to her novel.

MISS BURKE

(under her breath)

Skank...

EXT. STUDENT PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Luke and Jo Lynn are sitting on Luke's car. Leigh Ann approaches. She's in shock.

LEIGH ANN

Basically, we're screwed.

LUKE

How so?

LEIGH ANN

Hello? Don't you get it? We'll be expelled. We won't graduate you moronic wet brain. I'm ruined.

Leigh Ann is ready to eat this guy up. Luke sneers at her but his eyes register hurt. Jo Lynn tries to smooth things.

JO LYNN

If Tingle turned us in, how come we're not in trouble now?

LEIGH ANN

Principal Potter left for the day. She's going to do it in the morning.

JO LYNN

Then that gives us time.

LEIGH ANN

To what?

(CONTINUED)

JO LYNN

Counteract. Solution mode. Everybody think.

LEIGH ANN

It's her word against ours. We're dead-- in the water--cement around the ankles.

JO LYNN

Luke and I could go to Tingle and tell her you weren't involved.

LUKE

Yeah. I'll tell the bitch the truth.

LEIGH ANN

She won't believe it. Hello? Are you home?

JO LYNN

She'll have to. We'll just give her the facts. She's into facts. It's worth a shot.

A shaky Leigh Ann considers her options. But there are none.

EXT. TINGLE'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

The night has just appeared as stars begin to twinkle in the sky. All is clear and peaceful.

Mrs. Tingle lives in an a old yet traditional house. Two story wood. Freshly painted. A manicured lawn and garden surround the home. As maintained as Mrs. Tingle herself. It sits on the end of the block a good distance from any other houses. Very private. Protected.

The plotting threesome are staked out behind a huge shrub near the front door of the house. They look suspicious and slightly eerie as the fading sun encases them in silhouette.

JO LYNN

Yes.

LEIGH ANN

No.

JO LYNN

She'll be more reasonable one on one.

LUKE

What are you going to say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JO LYNN

Trust me. I'm an actress. Let me do my thing.

Leigh Ann's worried. Really worried. But she goes along.

LEIGH ANN

Break a leg.

Jo Lynn takes off for the front porch. Luke takes a swig from the beer he's been holding. Leigh Ann is disgusted by him.

LUKE

This is fucked. Tingle's not stupid.

LEIGH ANN

What do you suggest? Kerosene the place?

EXT. FRONT PORCH

On the front porch, Jo Lynn rings the doorbell. Her calm and cool demeanor is not exactly convincing. A dog BARKS from inside.

MRS. TINGLE

(from inside)

Sit.

There is movement from behind the door. Abruptly it swings open and from the darkness, Mrs. Tingle appears. She wears a housecoat. Simple and soft. Without her armor, Tingle appears human.

Jo Lynn is taken back by Tingle's appearance. She stumbles a beat. She notices the little miniature dachshund that sits alert, and perfectly poised, next to its master.

JO LYNN

Mrs. Tingle, I'm sorry to bother you at home like this but it's urgent that I speak with you.

Mrs. Tingle stands there looking at her. No movement. No expression. Nothing. Jo Lynn continues.

JO LYNN

There's been a terrible misunderstanding and I'd like the chance to explain. You see...

Jo Lynn stops and checks Tingle's reaction. Still nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JO LYNN

(continuing)

Leigh Ann wasn't cheating. I was. In fact she was trying to talk me out of it. Things haven't been going very well for me lately. My mom's been very sick. Perhaps you heard. She got this blood clot in her leg and we had to rush her to the hospital. They have her in intensive care because the clot travelled up her leg to her kidney and the doctors say it's headed for her heart--maybe even her brain. They've been watering down her blood but...well I've fallen behind on my grades and was getting scared about graduating so I stole the exam. For my Mom. I thought if she could just live to see me graduate. Then maybe, just maybe...oh Mrs. Tingle, I'm sorry.

Not bad. Very subtle. Nice performance. But does Tingle buy it?

MRS. TINGLE

The sacrificing thespian. You poor dear. I pray you're a good waitress.

The door SLAMS shut.

EXT. SHRUBS - TWO SECONDS LATER

So much for plan A. Is there a plan B?

LUKE

I told you.

JO LYNN

I cried real tears. I don't get it.

LUKE

She's not human. We know that.

Leigh Ann is starting to lose it. She makes a last ditch effort to take charge. She attacks Luke.

LEIGH ANN

Look, dicklick, I hold you personally responsible for all of this and if you're not here to help--peel out.

JO LYNN

I'm sorry, Leigh Ann. I can try again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE

No, I'll go.

LEIGH ANN

No. I'll go, Luke. Why don't you just have another beer?

Leigh Ann, with new found determination, marches off to the front porch.

EXT. FRONT PORCH

Leigh Ann rings the bell. The door instantly flies open. Mrs. Tingle looms in the doorway. They stare at each other. A moment.

LEIGH ANN

Good evening, Mrs. Tingle.

MRS. TINGLE

Is it?

Leigh Ann notices Mrs. Tingle's dachshund, sitting at attention beside her. Leigh Ann shifts nervously.

LEIGH ANN

May I come in?

MRS. TINGLE

Go home, Leigh Ann.

Mrs. Tingle begins to slam the door but Leigh Ann is too fast for her. She throws her foot in the doorway stopping the door cold.

LEIGH ANN

(insisting)

Please.

Mrs. Tingle hesitates for a brief moment, then allows her entrance.

Luke and Jo Lynn watch from the shrubs as Leigh Ann enters and pushes the door closed. But not completely, it remains slightly ajar.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Leigh Ann follows Mrs. Tingle into the living room. Leigh Ann looks around. The room has a surprising warmth to it. Embroidered pillows, books, a collection of water globes. Little things leap out at Leigh Ann as she looks about.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A cozy couch sits center with a quilt and Mrs. Tingle's grade book on it. A few history projects are scattered about. She's been grading. And relaxing.

Mrs. Tingle turns to Leigh Ann, not inviting her in much past the foyer.

MRS. TINGLE
Make it quick, Miss Warren.

Despite Leigh Ann's steely nerve, being alone with Tingle in her private world is eerie.

LEIGH ANN
(continuing)
Uh..It's really quite simple. I've never cheated on anything in my life.

MRS. TINGLE
I caught you with the exam in your hand.

LEIGH ANN
But it wasn't mine.

MRS. TINGLE
No, it wasn't. That's the point.

LEIGH ANN
I work really hard for my grades, Mrs. Tingle. I'm not a cheater. Ask anyone.

MRS. TINGLE
I will. Mr. Potter, first thing in the morning.

EXT. FRONT PORCH

Luke has worked his way quietly up the porch steps. Jo Lynn follows on his heels.

At the front door, Luke puts his ear to the crack in the door and listens. He can only make out MUMBLING. He pushes on the door opening it further.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Leigh Ann continues to plead her case. Mrs. Tingle moves further into the room, near the couch. A hint of amusement crosses her face.

LEIGH ANN
You realize what will happen to me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. TINGLE

How scandalous. Grandsboro High's Finest Caught Cheating! Now there's a front page story worthy of that school rag you write for.

LEIGH ANN

I'll be expelled. I won't graduate.

MRS. TINGLE

Your point?

INT. FOYER

Luke stands in the foyer, his back pressed against the wall. His face red with anger as he listens to Tingle's mockery.

Jo Lynn inches through the front door. Luke holds his finger to his lips SSSHHING her.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The two continue. Leigh Ann struggles to get through to this woman.

LEIGH ANN

I didn't steal...

MRS. TINGLE

(cutting her off)

It was in your hand.

LEIGH ANN

But I...

MRS. TINGLE

(cutting her off)

Save it, Miss Warren. The facts are self evident.

LEIGH ANN

But I'm innocent.

MRS. TINGLE

Even the innocent sometimes burn at the stake. Ironical, isn't it?

This last remark hits Leigh Ann like a slap in the face. She starts to crack.

MRS. TINGLE

Life's greatest lesson. Consider it part of your education. Now get out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Luke appears in the living room entry.

LUKE
Not so fast.

Both Tingle and Leigh Ann turn to him with surprise. Even Mrs. Tingle's little dog perks up.

MRS. TINGLE
Mr. Churner. To what do we owe the pleasure?

LEIGH ANN
(to Luke--deadly)
GO-AWAY.

But he doesn't. Instead he plows into the room, facing Mrs. Tingle.

LUKE
(to Tingle)
Here's the deal. I stole the exam. It was my doing and mine alone. She was not a part of it in any way whatsoever.

Mrs. Tingle crosses her arms.

MRS. TINGLE
The role of savior doesn't suit mediocrity, Mr. Churner. I suggest you run along.

LUKE
Fuck you, lady.

That did it.

LEIGH ANN
Luke!

MRS. TINGLE
Get out of my house now--both of you.

Leigh Ann instantly tries to do some damage control.

LEIGH ANN
He didn't mean that, Mrs. Tingle.
Apologize Luke. Now.

Jo Lynn appears behind Luke.

JO LYNN
It's the truth! She wasn't cheating.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 2.

LEIGH ANN
(throwing her hands up)
This isn't happening.

A visible hysteria begins to sweep the room. Everyone is standing, staring at each other awkwardly. Including the dog. Mrs. Tingle even appears pensive, uncertain...

MRS. TINGLE
I want the three of you out of my house
immediately before I call your parents.

Mrs. Tingle makes a defensive move for a telephone on a nearby table.

LEIGH ANN
That's not necessary. We'll go.

Luke looks to Leigh Ann, she's beaten and lost. He wants to help her.

JO LYNN
(begging)
Please Mrs. Tingle, don't do this to her.
She'll lose everything.

MRS. TINGLE
Leave now or the first call will be to
the police.

Tingle picks up the telephone receiver.

LUKE
(slow and serious)
Put the phone down.

Tingle turns to Luke and finds herself staring down the shaft of one made-to-order medieval crossbow.

MRS. TINGLE
You can't be serious.

LEIGH ANN
Luke!

JO LYNN
Luke!

Mrs. Tingle sets the telephone receiver back in its cradle as Luke holds aim with Brian Barry's history project.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MRS. TINGLE

What do you think you're doing? Put that down.

LUKE

(wavering)

You're not calling the shots anymore, Tingle.

Luke thrusts the crossbow forward holding it with both hands.

MRS. TINGLE

(calmly)

Young man, you are in serious trouble. Put that down now.

LEIGH ANN

Listen to her, Luke!

JO LYNN

Oh God!

LUKE

It's time for Tingle to learn a lesson.

Despite Luke's tough words, beads of sweat have popped out all over his forehead as he nervously holds aim directly in Mrs. Tingle's face.

LEIGH ANN

Don't be stupid Luke. Put it down.

LUKE

Not until she agrees to a few things.

MRS. TINGLE

(so cool)

And what would those few things be, Mr. Churner?

Luke smirks. He has her right where he wants her.

LEIGH ANN

Please, Luke. Don't.

He steals a sideways glance at Leigh Ann. And what a mistake. In one blurry second, Tingle whips the crossbow from Luke's grip and sends it flying across the room before bringing her hand back in one fluid motion across Luke's face, smacking him senseless.

Luke stands before her, flushed and stunned. The others stand accordingly, mouths on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LUKE
(total disbelief)
What the...

MRS. TINGLE
(with an evil grin)
You lose, Mr. Churner. Now get out of my house.

Total silence. Embarrassment and shame ride Luke's face as it starts to register that he's just been slapped by his History teacher.

Tingle reaches once again for the phone, but it's Luke who surprises her this time, grabbing the receiver from her and throwing it to the floor. Tingle turns on him, backhanding him across the face catching his other cheek, leaving it a bright rosy red. Suddenly...

JO LYNN
Leave him alone!

Jo Lynn now holds the crossbow. She fumbles with it, trying to hold it steady. She moves forward, not seeing Mrs. Tingle's dog that sits on the floor in front of her. She steps on its foot. She stumbles--the crossbow disengages...going off...sending a bolt soaring right at...

MRS. TINGLE'S HEAD

It makes contact...throwing her backwards. Mrs. Tingle SLAMS into a lamp, side table, falling back...landing on the floor behind the couch--out of sight.

Silence. And then:

JO LYNN
Uh-oh.

A beat.

LUKE
I don't fucking believe it...

JO LYNN
Did I do that?

No one moves...feet frozen to the floor.

LUKE
Yo, Jo. You got her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

LEIGH ANN

Oh my God.

The room begins to swirl.

JO LYNN

It just went off.

LUKE

Shit!

JO LYNN

Let's get out of here.

Jo Lynn goes for the door--manic.

LEIGH ANN

Wait...we can't just leave.

JO LYNN

Yes, we can.

Leigh Ann moves towards the couch, then stops. She looks to Jo Lynn.

LEIGH ANN

See if she's dead.

JO LYNN

No way. You do it.

LEIGH ANN

You shot her.

LUKE

I'll do it.

Luke moves cautiously toward the couch. Leigh Ann follows closely behind. They move around the side of the couch, looking at Mrs. Tingle's body sprawled..still. The bolt is sticking up, embedded in the baseboard of the wall behind her.

LEIGH ANN

Is she dead?

LUKE

I don't know. She's not moving.

LEIGH ANN

No, no, no--you're wrong. She's breathing. She has to be. Make her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

Luke kneels down next to Tingle, inspecting her. There's blood on her forehead.

LUKE
It grazed her. There's some blood but
she should be...

Suddenly, Tingle comes flying up with her hands
outstretched...they find Luke's neck. She throws Luke
backwards in a death grip.

LUKE
(choking)
GET..HER..OFF..ME...

Luke tries to pry her hands off him...as Plymouth rock falls
from his coat pocket, hitting the floor...Leigh Ann sees
it...grabs it...little voice: DO IT!...her hand goes up and
comes smashing down on Tingle's head...

DIRECT CONTACT.

Tingle's body hits the floor with a THUD!

LEIGH ANN
Oh god.

LUKE
You got her.

LEIGH ANN
Is she dead?

Luke nudges Mrs. Tingle. She stirs slightly.

LUKE
No.

LEIGH ANN
So what now?

LUKE
I don't know. I'm kinda stunned.

LEIGH ANN
Oh god, oh god, oh god...

JO LYNN
How are we going to explain this?

LEIGH ANN
Let me think for a second.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

Leigh Ann paces the floor contemplating the situation.

LEIGH ANN

(to Luke)

How bad is she?

LUKE

She's got a gash. She'll live. The woman's an ox.

LEIGH ANN

(simply)

So when she comes to we'll sit down and...talk about it.

LUKE

Yeah, right.

JO LYNN

(not thinking)

She'll press charges, maybe we should finish her.

LEIGH ANN

Stop it! We're not gonna kill anyone. We're not killers. We just have to think this through...

They stare at each other...scared. A moment and then...

LUKE

Should we just leave her there?

EXT. STAIRCASE

Through the spokes of an old wooden railing, Mrs. Tingle is seen being carried up the stairs by her assailants. Heavy breathing as they struggle with her weight.

LUKE

Easy...that's it.

LEIGH ANN

Go slower.

JO LYNN

Watch her...

BUMP! Tingle's head smashes against the wall.

LUKE

Sorry.

INT. BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

A large, old bed is centered in the room. It has a wooden frame with four posts. Lots of cushy pillows and crisp linens.

Mrs. Tingle is on the bed--out cold. Leigh Ann is dressing her head wound with a bandage. Jo Lynn removes house slippers from Tingle's feet.

JO LYNN

How's her head?

LEIGH ANN

Minimal. Here, take these.

Leigh Ann hands Jo Lynn the bloody rags used to dress Tingle's head wound. Jo Lynn disappears into the adjoining bathroom.

Luke enters the room carrying a bed sheet and a kitchen knife.

LUKE

I found these.

He rips the sheet into strips. Leigh Ann takes his lead, grabs the knife and begins to position Tingle's body for roping.

They tie her two feet together and then her arms to each post of the headboard. Luke eyes Leigh Ann, they're cooperating with each other--a first. They pass the knife back and forth between them. They work fast and steady.

LUKE (cont'd)

What's the plan?

LEIGH ANN

When she comes to we'll talk to her. Try to reason with her.

LUKE

Yeah. Right.

LEIGH ANN

You got a better idea?

LUKE

Torch the place. Call it a day.

Leigh Ann turns to him.

(CONTINUED)

LEIGH ANN

That better have been an attempt at humor
because that is not an option. Got it?
This is already way out of control.

LUKE

So, what? We just camp out here all
night?

LEIGH ANN

She's out. I don't think she'll wake til
morning. I gotta check in at home. My
mom likes to leave cigarettes burning.

LUKE

I can stay. I'll watch her.

This is Luke's way of taking the blame. He's really sorry
once you look past his demeanor.

LEIGH ANN

If she comes to, don't let her up. Not
until we figure this out.

Leigh Ann walks around the bed and tests the straps making
sure they're secure.

LUKE

She looks like that movie--you know with
the demon girl who upchucks all over
everybody...

JO LYNN

THE EXORCIST.

LUKE

Yeah.

LEIGH ANN

(warning Luke)

Don't screw this up.

JO LYNN

I can stay too. I'll call my mom and
tell her I'm staying with you.

LEIGH ANN

If she calls, I'll cover. Luke, what
about your parents?

LUKE

I'm good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 2

He deflects the whole question entirely. Leigh Ann heads for the door.

LEIGH ANN
I'll be back as soon as I can. We'll
think of something.

EXT. LEIGH ANN'S HOUSE - LATER

The TV can be heard from outside as Leigh Ann moves up the walk.

INT. LEIGH ANN'S HOUSE

Leigh Ann enters, clearly exhausted. She moves to the television and CLICKS it off. Then turns to...

HER MOTHER

who is sprawled across the couch, asleep. Still in her waitress uniform. Name tag prominent. Leigh Ann rustles her.

LEIGH ANN
Mom...Mom, go to bed.

Her mother comes to for a second, her eyes barely open.

MS. WARREN
Okay, sweetie...

And then she rolls over, snuggling into the tattered couch. Leigh Ann pulls a quilt over her mom, tucking her in. She watches as her mother falls back into a deep slumber. Leigh Ann is very disturbed at her mother's sight.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - LATER

The bedroom is dark except for the bathroom light that shines through a crack underneath the door.

Jo Lynn sits crossways in an armchair, her feet dangling over the side. She watches Mrs. Tingle as she lies unconscious, arms outstretched, in the bed.

Jo Lynn looks down to Luke who lies curled on the floor in front of her. She watches him sleep...mesmerized. She leans down, her hand reaching out to touch him. An innocent moment as her fingers dreamily trace his face.

Luke twitches, rolling over, away from her. Jo Lynn moves out of her chair and onto the floor next to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She watches him intently, leaning down, coming face to face with him. She leans, boldly putting her lips against his when...

A RUSTLING from the bed takes her attention. Jo Lynn crawls to the edge of the bed. She looks up but all she can see is one bed post. The strap is being tugged.

Jo Lynn rolls over on her stomach and brings herself to her knees. She crawls around to the foot of the bed and very quietly brings herself eye level to the bed's surface.

Staring directly at her, as if waiting for her, is Mrs. Tingle. Her face caught in a ray of light, her eyes wide open in a twisted, demonic glaze. Jo Lynn SWALLOWS.

MRS. TINGLE

(whispering)

Untie me.

Jo Lynn doesn't move. Mrs. Tingle WINCES as pain overcomes her face.

MRS. TINGLE

Please...I need a doctor. I'm in pain.

Jo Lynn inches forward slowly, coming around the side of the bed.

JO LYNN

(whispering)

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to shoot you.

MRS. TINGLE

I know...It's alright. Just untie me now. Please. It hurts.

Jo Lynn looks to Luke who continues to snooze on the floor.

JO LYNN

I'm not supposed to do that.

MRS. TINGLE

Help me, dear. I know it was an accident. But I'm wounded. I need a doctor now. We can straighten out the rest later.

Tingle's suffering plays on Jo Lynn. She's considering. Tingle talks faster.

MRS. TINGLE

Just call an ambulance. Hurry. I hit my head hard. My vision is blurred.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MRS. TINGLE (cont'd)

I think the damage is greater than you think.

Jo Lynn checks out her wound, lifting the bandage. Mrs. Tingle buckles in pain. She glances towards Luke. He hasn't budged.

MRS. TINGLE

There's no time, Jo Lynn.

Jo Lynn shakes her head.

MRS. TINGLE

Then untie me.

If she's faking you couldn't tell. Jo Lynn moves to the headboard. She tugs at the strap, loosening it from the bedpost. One of Tingle's arms goes free, it falls lifeless to the bed, still. Jo Lynn moves around the bed and frees her other arm. Big mistake.

Tingle's body snaps forward like a rabid dog, throwing Jo Lynn down against the mattress. She SCREAMS for her life as Tingle moves on top of Jo Lynn. Tingle's hands find the girl's neck pounding her into the bed.

Jo Lynn breaks free, sliding off the bed and onto the floor. Tingle charges after her, jumping up to find once again, she's face to face with the crossbow. Luke holds it, unflinching. He aims it right at her face. Calm and steady.

LUKE

Right through the eye, Mrs. Tingle.

Tingle stills.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - FEW MINUTES LATER

Mrs. Tingle is back in bed, her arms secured once again to the headboard. A scarf has been placed around her head, gagging her mouth.

Luke pulls the covers up around her body, tucking her in.

LUKE

So much for talking this out.

Jo Lynn stands at the foot of the bed.

JO LYNN

Nice performance, Mrs. Tingle. Very subtle work. The blurry vision detail. Nice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Luke motions Jo Lynn to the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY/UPSTAIRS LANDING - NIGHT - SAME

Luke ushers Jo Lynn into the hallway.

LUKE

Look, why don't you go home? Get some rest.

JO LYNN

I'd rather stay with you.

LUKE

I got it covered. This was all my fault to begin with. Let me handle it.

JO LYNN

I don't blame you. That's Leigh Ann's job. I wanna be here.

Jo Lynn moves to him. She leans in and kisses him. Their lips meet. A soft and sensual kiss. One that lasts. Finally, Luke breaks away.

LUKE

This is kinda the wrong time for this, don't you think?

JO LYNN

With all that's happened? No. I think a little tension relief is in order.

They kiss again.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - SAME

Tingle lies in bed. Through the open door, she hears and partly sees what's going on. She watches, filing the knowledge away.

EXT. TINGLE'S HOUSE - MORNING

The early morning sun rises around the house. Leigh Ann makes her way around the house to the back door. She moves through the shrubs undetected. She stops briefly for a moment and plucks a rose from Mrs. Tingle's garden.

INT. TINGLE'S KITCHEN - MORNING - SAME

Luke sits on the floor in front of an open refrigerator door. Mrs. Tingle's dog sits in his lap. He's bonding. Feeding the dog from the frig.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE

Okay, whaddya want next?

Leigh Ann and Jo Lynn stand next to the wall phone.

LEIGH ANN

You ready?

Jo Lynn does an acting prep. She stretches, exhales, shakes it out.

JO LYNN

(prepping)

Don't do it. Be it. Yeah, go.

Leigh Ann dials a number and hands the phone to Jo Lynn.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

Miss Burke sits at her desk stirring her morning coffee when the phone rings.

MISS BURKE

Good morning! Grandsboro High School.
May I help you?

JO LYNN

(v.o.)

Shirley Tingle here.

A look of dread comes over Miss Burke's face.

MISS BURKE

Yes, Mrs. Tingle. How can I help you?

INT. TINGLE'S KITCHEN

Jo Lynn continues impersonating Tingle as Leigh Ann and Luke look on.

JO LYNN

I won't be coming in today. I have a
touch of the flu...

(cough, cough)

...and I've taken to bed.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

MR. POTTER sits at his desk popping aspirin. Miss Burke motions to him through the doorway, her arms flailing. He jumps up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. POTTER

What is it?

MISS BURKE

(covering the mouthpiece)

It's Tingle.

(to Tingle)

I hope you're feeling better real soon.

INT. TINGLE'S KITCHEN

Jo Lynn has completely sunk into her role. Even her physicality has become precise Tingle mannerisms and movements.

JO LYNN

It might be a few days. I'll keep you posted.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

Miss Burke and Mr. Potter are standing next to each other, Mr. Potter straining his ear to the phone.

MISS BURKE

(simply delighted)

You take as much time as you need. The important thing is your health. And call us if we can be of any help.

INT. TINGLE'S KITCHEN

Jo Lynn hangs the phone up and turns to the others.

JO LYNN

Done.

Luke lifts his hand.

LUKE

Meryl-fucking-Streep.

Jo Lynn slaps him a high five.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

Mr. Potter and Miss Burke rejoice. The news has left their spirits soaring.

MR. POTTER

That woman hasn't been sick in over...actually, I don't think she's ever been sick.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MISS BURKE
Do you think it's serious?

MR. POTTER
Oh, I hope so.

He looks at Miss Burke with a sly grin.

INT. MRS. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - MORNING - MOMENTS LATER

Mrs. Tingle sits in bed, wide awake. Her mouth still gagged.

The three enter the room. Leigh Ann carries a tray of food. Toast and jam. A rose sits in a small vase. Leigh Ann attempts to be cheery.

LEIGH ANN
Good morning, Mrs. Tingle. I hear you had quite an evening. Here, let's get that off.

Leigh Ann removes the scarf from around Tingle's mouth.

JO LYNN
Thought you might like some breakfast.

Mrs. Tingle doesn't respond. She just sits there.

LEIGH ANN
So. How are you this morning, Mrs. Tingle?

Leigh Ann checks Mrs. Tingle's wound. Tingle pulls away. She's fine. Leigh Ann sits next to Tingle.

LEIGH ANN (cont'd)
Okay, we need to talk. We need to discuss what happened and get our story straight.

Mrs. Tingle stares at her. Leigh Ann spreads some jam on a piece of toast. Mrs. Tingle notices Leigh Ann's shaking hand. The girl is afraid.

LEIGH ANN (CONT'D)
We took care of everything. You're out sick today due to a touch of the flu. Now, I want you to take this time to rest up, let your head heal, and think about what you've done. You've been mean and vindictive and you now have a chance to adjust your behavior so I hope you take this opportunity and make the most of it.
-(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEIGH ANN (cont'd)

Now, Luke, Jo Lynn, and I are fully aware that our behavior was out of line and we are truly sorry and have learned from our mistake. That should be enough for you. You've done your job. We would greatly appreciate it if we could just put this whole incident behind us and get on with our lives. Do we have an understanding?

Leigh Ann holds the toast up.

MRS. TINGLE

Oh, Leigh Ann, you present yourself with such self-assured tenacity but your desperate rationale is completely and utterly disappointing. You can do better.

JO LYNN

Mrs. Tingle, we're trying. Work with us.

Mrs. Tingle's eyes don't leave Leigh Ann's.

LEIGH ANN

Okay then. Time for Plan B.

Leigh Ann is bluffing. There is no Plan B. Leigh Ann reapplies Mrs. Tingle's scarf, silencing her.

LUKE

What's Plan B?

LEIGH ANN

Jo, you watch Tingle. I'm gonna go to school, take care of a few things and I'll be back with Plan B. Now, remember, don't use the phone. If it rings don't answer it. You can remove the gag to feed her, but then you put it right back on, got it?

LUKE

Don't let her go and fuck with your head.

JO LYNN

Don't worry--the sow is mine.

LEIGH ANN

(to Jo Lynn)

I'll be back right after school.

JO LYNN

Hey, Luke, you gonna hang with me today?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: [

Jo Lynn gives him an encouraging look. Luke eyes Leigh Ann.

LUKE
I'm gonna hit school. Tell you what,
I'll relieve you at lunch.

Jo Lynn nods, disappointed.

LUKE (cont'd)
C'mon, Leigh Ann, I'll give you a ride.

Leigh Ann's first instinct is to say no but she eases up for a moment and nods.

EXT. GRANDSBORO HIGH SCHOOL - LITTLE LATER

Students move across campus, coming and going.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - MINUTES LATER

Business as usual as students fill the hallway. The bell RINGS and they begin crowding classroom doors filing into class.

INT. HISTORY CLASSROOM - MORNING - LATER

Confusion spreads through the room as students take their seats staring at Miss Burke standing at the black board.

Luke has taken a seat behind Leigh Ann.

MISS BURKE
Okay class. I'll be filling in for a
coupla days while Mrs. Tingle is out
sick.

A few "I don't believe it", and "thank gods" are uttered throughout the room. Marybeth Carter's hand goes up. Her face looks deeply troubled.

MISS BURKE
Yes, Marybeth?

MARYBETH CARTER
Will Mrs. Tingle be okay?

MISS BURKE
Yes, just a bug going around.

Luke leans forward and whispers in Leigh Ann's ear.

LUKE
So what's this Plan B?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEIGH ANN

Ssshhh!

MISS BURKE

Does anybody know what we should be doing today?

Marybeth's hand goes up. Miss Burke turns to her.

MARYBETH CARTER

We were to begin review for the final.

The rest of the class moans, "Shut up, Marybeth!" etc.

MISS BURKE

Very good. Thank you, Marybeth, but first could you all get up and move your desks. There are too many lines in this room. I was thinking a nice semi-circle would be attractive.

Everyone gets up and starts to move their desks.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - LATE MORNING

Jo Lynn paces the floor. Playing the role of watchdog has become tedious and boring. She stops at the window and peeks out. Then, she turns back to Mrs. Tingle who just lies there, staring ahead at her. Jo Lynn has reached the edgy portion of the morning.

JO LYNN

(pacing)

I can't believe you don't have a TV. That's like not having toilet paper. I could be watching Sally Jesse or Jane Whitney or Oprah. I love my talk shows. Especially Sally. Where else can you see...

(announcing)

MAN HAS SEX CHANGE TO BECOME LESBIAN. Think about it. That's quality entertainment. Oh GOOOODDD help me, I'm bored.

Jo Lynn spots Mrs. Tingle's dog on the floor. She sits down next to him.

JO LYNN (cont'd)

You gotta name? Hmmm? What's your name?

She plays with him, petting him for a moment. But that soon bores her too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly, her whole body goes still, a deep, raspy breath emits from her lips. Her eyes glaze over as her face takes on a demonic stare. She moves to the edge of the bed resembling a demon-possessed child.

JO LYNN (cont'd)
(demon voice)
"What a lovely day for an exorcism."

Jo Lynn throws her head back as demon voices spew from her mouth.

JO LYNN (cont'd)
"The sow is mine."

Jo Lynn convulses as a fit of devil LAUGHTER overcomes her. Tingle has turned to her, unamused. The little daschund is baffled.

JO LYNN (cont'd)
(more EXORCIST mimicry)
"Dimi, why you do this to me, Dimi?
Repeat it: Fuck me! Dimi...why, Dimi?
Fuck me! Fuck me!"

And with the last "fuck me", Jo Lynn collapses on the floor. Tingle is completely unimpressed with Jo Lynn's homage to THE EXORCIST. A moment and then Jo Lynn sits up. Back to being bored.

JO LYNN (cont'd)
You really should get a TV.

EXT. SCHOOL COURTYARD - LUNCH

Students sit outside at tables, eating lunch. Luke sits alone at a table, eating. Leigh Ann comes marching up and plops down beside him.

LEIGH ANN
I've been looking for you.

LUKE
(surprised)
Yeah?

LEIGH ANN
I've got a Plan B.

She pulls a book out of her book bag. The cover reads CRIMINAL LAW AT A GLANCE.

(CONTINUED)

LEIGH ANN (cont'd)

I've done some research and I think the best thing possible is for us to just come clean.

LUKE

What?

LEIGH ANN

Tell the truth and suffer the consequences. Basically, it's her word against ours. They can't technically prove premeditation and murder is not really a crime--not anymore. Nobody certainly serves time for it. And nobody died. See, we'll pull out all the stops. We'll blame Tingle for what we did.

LUKE

The victim defense.

LEIGH ANN

Exactly. We'll make her out to be such a monster, the police will take pity on us.

LUKE

I was hoping we could figure a way outta this without fucking up your future.

LEIGH ANN

Well your care and concern is a day late, Mr. Crossbow.

LUKE

Why do you hate me so much?

LEIGH ANN

Hate's a strong word. Try dislike.

LUKE

You don't even know me.

LEIGH ANN

Sure I do, Luke. You're that guy. There's one of you in every school. Extremely smart but with a low GPA. Just can't seem to apply yourself. Probably the result of an unhappy homelife. You seek out validation in the form of conquests. I've heard the stories, Luke. You're on the prowl. Looking for a hump.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LEIGH ANN (cont'd)

Hoping to get lucky with every girl who
falls for your pathetic little James Dean
placebo smile. And the sad thing is,
Luke. It works. But not with me.

Leigh Ann gets up. Gathers her things. Luke stops her.

LUKE

Thanks for the unsolicited analysis.
Lemme know if you ever want me to return
the favor.

He takes off, leaving Leigh Ann staring.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Jo Lynn comes from the bathroom carrying a glass of water and
some Tylenol. She removes Tingle's gag.

JO LYNN

Now, no biting.

She very cautiously places two Tylenol in Tingle's mouth,
then brings the water to her lips.

JO LYNN

I'm really sorry about all this. I am.
Really.

Mrs. Tingle swallows.

MRS. TINGLE

How comforting.

JO LYNN

But you kind of brought this on yourself.
We both know Leigh Ann's not a cheater.

MRS. TINGLE

Such a loyal friend. Tell me, don't you
ever tire from playing second banana to
little Miss Perfection?

Jo Lynn notices the little miniature dachshund at her feet.
She picks it up and cuddles it.

JO LYNN

Hey, I'm nobody's banana. I have "star
quality".

MRS. TINGLE

Then how come Leigh Ann snagged the
leading man?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JO LYNN

You mean, Luke? Leigh Ann can't stand Luke. She thinks he's a loser.

MRS. TINGLE

As an actress, Miss Prescott, you must learn to read between the lines.

JO LYNN

She knows I'm into Luke. She wouldn't play me. I'm her best friend.

MRS. TINGLE

Yes, the bit part--we all know.

JO LYNN

You are so wrong about her.

MRS. TINGLE

Betrayal hurts, Miss Prescott. I'd prepare that little heart of yours if I were you.

CLOSE ON Jo Lynn. Her face disturbed by Tingle's words. Suddenly, the door opens and Leigh Ann appears. Jo Lynn jumps, startled by this. She sees Luke enter behind her. Jo Lynn turns back to Tingle who merely smiles.

JO LYNN

I didn't hear you come in.

LEIGH ANN

What's her gag doing off?

JO LYNN

I made an executive decision.

MRS. TINGLE

Hello, Leigh Ann. Mr. Churner. How was school?

LEIGH ANN

You're on the wrong side of glib, Mrs. Tingle.

MRS. TINGLE

Should I be afraid, Leigh Ann? Quivering in fear? Tell me the appropriate reaction--I'll work on it.

(CONTINUED)

LEIGH ANN

Here's the deal, Mrs. Tingle. We're going to tell the truth and we're trusting you to do the same.

MRS. TINGLE

The explicit truth. Be assured.

LEIGH ANN

That's all I'm asking for.

JO LYNN

Wait a second. That's the plan? That was this morning's plan.

LEIGH ANN

It's the only way. We'll come clean. Get a lawyer. This woman's wrath is legendary. Someone will take our side.

MRS. TINGLE

I'm sure you'll play the role of victim beautifully, Leigh Ann.

JO LYNN

I don't like this.

LUKE

It's the right thing to do, Jo Lynn.

JO LYNN

Since when do you care about doing the right thing?

DING! DONG! From downstairs, the doorbell rings.

LUKE

What the fuck?

Luke peaks through the blinds.

LEIGH ANN

Who is it?

LUKE

I can't see. Shit!

LEIGH ANN

Quick--gag her.

Luke and Leigh Ann tear out the door. Jo Lynn grabs the scarf and shoves it in Mrs. Tingle's mouth.

INT. STAIRCASE - SAME

Leigh Ann and Luke come racing down the stairs.

LEIGH ANN
Is the door locked?

LUKE
Yeah.

The doorbell RINGS again.

EXT. FRONT PORCH

Coach Twitchell stands at the front door. He removes his baseball cap combing over his thinning hair. He holds a bouquet of flowers.

INT. FOYER

Leigh Ann checks the lock. Luke peeks through a curtain.

LUKE
It's Coach Twitchell.

LEIGH ANN
What is he doing here?

EXT. FRONT PORCH

Coach Twitchell RINGS the door again, puzzled. He then kneels down to a potted plant next to the door. He lifts it up and retrieves a key from underneath.

INT. FOYER

LEIGH ANN
What do we do?

LUKE
Nothing. He'll go away.

The lock CLICKS open. Luke dives into the living room, grabbing Leigh Ann, taking her with him.

The front door swings open and Coach Twitchell steps in.

COACH TWITCHELL
Shirley? Where are you?

He moves straight to the staircase. He's been here before.

INT. BEDROOM

Mrs. Tingle hears the Coach downstairs. Jo Lynn moves to the door. She cracks it open to see Coach Twitchell coming up the stairs.

JO LYNN

OH FUCK!

Jo Lynn shuts the door. She starts to flip out. She tries hard to think her way out of this. Mrs. Tingle doesn't flinch. She merely watches the show.

INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING

Coach Twitchell gets to the door, opens it, when it comes SLAMMING back in the Coach's face

COACH TWITCHELL

Shirley...is that you?

Through the door, he hears Mrs. Tingle's voice.

MRS. TINGLE

(from inside the room)

Stop! Don't come any closer.

COACH TWITCHELL

I came to see how you were doing?

MRS. TINGLE

(from inside the room)

I'm not well.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - SAME

Jo Lynn is acting her ass off. She's doing a great impersonation of Tingle.

COACH TWITCHELL

I know. I came to keep you company.

JO LYNN

(as Tingle)

It's not a good idea.

COACH TWITCHELL

(baby voice)

But it's me, Spanky.

Jo Lynn turns to Mrs. Tingle. "Spanky?"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JO LYNN

Sorry, Spanky, but I'm contagious.

On the bed, the real Tingle pulls and twists her straps causing the headboard to BANG against the wall. This causes Tingle's dog to jump up and down excitedly. It starts to BARK.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Luke and Leigh Ann hang in the corner right off the foyer. Leigh Ann is pushed up against Luke tightly. They're closeness is awkward, but neither one dares to move.

INT. STAIRCASE

Coach Twitchell hears the headboard from inside the bedroom. And the barking dog.

COACH TWITCHELL

What was that?

Jo Lynn starts COUGHING uncontrollably.

JO LYNN

Please, Spanky..(cough-cough)..you must go..(cough-cough)..I need my rest.

INT. BEDROOM

Mrs. Tingle is rolling from side to side, twisting, pulling, yanking, ripping--suddenly the headboard SPLINTERS, almost separating from the bed's frame. Jo Lynn starts GAGGING and COUGHING LOUDER to cover the noise up.

The dog BARKS and BARKS. Jo Lynn is freaking out.

JO LYNN

Please. You're upsetting the dog.

INT. STAIRCASE

Coach Twitchell, resigned, starts back down the stairs. Jo Lynn is relieved.

COACH TWITCHELL

You call me the minute you're better. I miss my pom-poms.

JO LYNN

I miss my...tight-end.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Downstairs, Luke and Leigh Ann eye each other, both ready to puke.

The coach sets the flowers down on the foyer table and runs out the door SLAMMING it behind him. When the coast is clear, Luke and Leigh Ann emerge.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - SECONDS LATER

Through cracked blinds, Luke watches Coach Twitchell get in his car and drive away.

JO LYNN
(to Mrs. Tingle)
You're a sick pup.

LUKE
Unbelievable! Oscar is in your future.

Luke grabs her and spins her around. Leigh Ann enters with the bouquet of flowers in her hands.

LEIGH ANN
Great job, Jo Lynn.

JO LYNN
"Mr. Spielberg, I'm ready for my close-up."

Leigh Ann moves to the bed with a satisfied grin splattered across her face. She holds Twitchell's bouquet.

LEIGH ANN
I kept asking myself: What was Mrs. Tingle doing in the gym anyway? What reason could she possibly have had?

LUKE
Coach Twitchell's a married man--shame on you Mrs. Tingle.

Leigh Ann kneels in close to Tingle, studying her.

LEIGH ANN
What would happen if Mrs. Twitchell found out? Or better yet...your students? It would be all over school. What a scandal.

LUKE
I smell blackmail.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JO LYNN

Yeah, she finks on us, we fink on her.

LEIGH ANN

What do you say, Mrs. Tingle? Can we cut a deal?

Leigh Ann ungags her. Mrs. Tingle eyes her. When she speaks, her words are sugar sweet.

MRS. TINGLE

Of course, Leigh Ann, whatever you say.

Leigh Ann studies her a long moment. And then, re-fixes the gag.

LEIGH ANN

I didn't think so.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

The three have moved downstairs to talk this out.

LEIGH ANN

It's not strong enough. Adultery? Who cares? Next.

JO LYNN

But she'll be the laughing stock of the whole school if this gets out.

LEIGH ANN

But it's our word against hers. We'll look vengeful for tarnishing her reputation. And it's just not right.

JO LYNN

It's worth a shot. It beats going to the police and confessing. Let's just put a bullet in our heads. I'm sorry, Leigh Ann but you really need to lose this whole right and wrong concept.

LEIGH ANN

What do you think, Luke?

JO LYNN

Since when do you care what he thinks?

Luke eyes Leigh Ann.

LUKE

I don't know...it's your call.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jo Lynn eyes the two of them.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM

Tingle hears every word through an air duct behind the bed. She listens as the three revel in their plan. Tingle pulls on the headboard--its loosening from the frame.

EXT. TINGLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Stars shine bright over Mrs. Tingle's quiet house.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Luke is sitting on the bed next to Mrs. Tingle. They're alone. He's unwrapping some fast food take-out. A burger and fries.

LUKE

I didn't know if you liked mayo or mustard so I got it plain. But I have some packets here so...

Luke loosens the scarf from around her mouth.

LUKE

You want ketchup on your fries?

No answer. He spreads ketchup over the fries. He holds one up to her mouth. She takes it--chewing slowly. Luke eats one himself.

LUKE

Good, huh?

Ketchup has smeared across Tingle's face. Luke takes a napkin and wipes her mouth. He's surprisingly tender.

MRS. TINGLE

You're very good at this. I suspect you've had practice.

LUKE

(eating a fry)

Huh?

MRS. TINGLE

Tell me, do you clean up after your drunken father when he passes out each night?

There's no end to this woman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE

You go straight for the jugular
everytime, don't you?

MRS. TINGLE

Just remember that when this becomes a
police report--you have the least to
lose.

LUKE

Which is why you should be nicer to me.
I don't care what happens to you.

MRS. TINGLE

Of course, your concern begins and ends
with Leigh Ann.

LUKE

What are you talking about?

MRS. TINGLE

It's so obvious you want her.

Luke says nothing.

MRS. TINGLE (cont'd)

And she wants you.

LUKE

Nah, Leigh Ann is pretty repulsed by me.

MRS. TINGLE

C'mon, Luke, you've gotten one or two
cheerleaders drunk in your time. Surely
you know a thing or two about women.

He looks at her. Smiles. Holds up a fry.

LUKE

That's the first time you've ever called
me by my first name. It's usually Mr.
Churner.

She takes it, smiling back. Almost seductively.

MRS. TINGLE

(ignoring him)

All I'm saying is women are notorious for
expressing their feelings of love through
anger.

Luke thinks about this.

(CONTINUED)

LEIGH ANN

(O.S.)

Is she eating?

Luke turns to find Leigh Ann in the doorway.

LUKE

Yeah. Where's Jo Lynn?

LEIGH ANN

She had to make an appearance at home.
You're stuck with me.

Luke doesn't mind.

MRS. TINGLE

When am I released for good behavior?

LEIGH ANN

Soon, Mrs. Tingle. Soon.

MRS. TINGLE

I don't suppose you would do me a favor,
in the meantime?

Leigh Ann moves to the bed all ears.

MRS. TINGLE

Pre-final grades are due tomorrow.
They're needed to calculate averages for
that silly scholarship. My gradebook's
downstairs. Perhaps you could drop it by
Mr. Williams' office for me?

LEIGH ANN

Really, Mrs. Tingle, how lame. And how
do you suppose I came to possess your
grade book?

MRS. TINGLE

I'm sure you could think of something.
You're the smartest girl in
school..almost.

LEIGH ANN

I'm disappointed, Mrs. Tingle. This is
very desperate of you. You're not
getting scared, are you?

MRS. TINGLE

Scared? Oh no, dear. Things are just
starting to get fun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Their eyes lock for a long moment as Leigh Ann holds her stare.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Leigh Ann is sitting on the couch with Tingle's grade book. She flips through it stopping on a particular page...her eyes narrow as her finger scans it.

CLOSE ON THE PAGE.

Her finger shoots down the column of names until she comes to MARYBETH CARTER. Beside the name is an "A". She moves down the page coming to the W's. Finally, she sees LEIGH ANN WARREN. Beside the name...a "B".

LUKE

(o.s.)

What'd you get?

Leigh Ann looks up as Luke descends the staircase.

LEIGH ANN

A "B".

LUKE

We can fix that.

LEIGH ANN

I can't change my grade.

LUKE

Hello. You got your History teacher tied to a bed. Yes, you can. Look, Leigh Ann, I know you like to walk the straight and narrow but there may be a smarter way out of this. We have options.

LEIGH ANN

Options that are punishable in a court of law.

LUKE

We're already guilty. You're going down anyway. Don't throw it all away without a fight.

Leigh Ann looks back at the gradebook.

LEIGH ANN

It won't change anything. Marybeth will still get the scholarship.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE

Then we change her grade too.

Luke has taken a seat next to Leigh Ann on the couch.

LEIGH ANN

It's not right.

LUKE

What's right anymore?

He reaches for the grade book, his hands touching hers. She shifts at this closeness, pulling away. She looks back to the grade book. This is a huge decision. She makes it.

LEIGH ANN

I'll do it.

She finds a pencil and then very carefully adjusts the grades. Luke watches, his chin resting on her shoulder.

LUKE

So Marybeth gets a "B".

LEIGH ANN

To my "A+".

LUKE

Make it a minus. Keep it real.

LEIGH ANN

I'm gonna burn in hell.

LUKE

It'll be a party.

She adjusts it, turns back to Luke. Face to face, their eyes meet...lips dangerously close. He moves in for a kiss when Leigh Ann stands abruptly, breaking away...out of breath.

LEIGH ANN

No, no, no, no, no...

LUKE

What's wrong?

LEIGH ANN

I think we have enough trouble without letting a slightly masochistic situation cloud our judgement.

Luke realizes he's gotten to her. It's enough for him. He backs off.

(CONTINUED)

LEIGH ANN (cont'd)
So you have a plan?

Luke smiles.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM

Mrs. Tingle lies quietly, listening to the business below. She can hear their distant voices talking. Her gag hiding a smile.

EXT. GRANDSBORO HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

The school in full force swing.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - MORNING

Luke meets up with Leigh Ann at her locker.

LUKE
He's on his way. You ready?

LEIGH ANN
I don't know if I can go through with this. It's one thing ruining your own life but to deliberately ruin someone else's.

LUKE
I wish I could help with the moral shit, Leigh Ann. But my fate is sealed. It was sealed the moment I was born. Here he comes. Do what you want.

Leigh Ann looks up to see Brian coming down the crowded hallway. He carries his camera around his neck. She looks back to Luke. Their eyes meet. She turns back to Brian.

LEIGH ANN
(calling out)
Hey, Brian, wait up.

She moves to Brian, walking with him. Luke falls in line behind them.

BRIAN
Did you finish senior prophecy's?

LEIGH ANN
(handing them over)
Sure did. Here you go.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

Cool.

LEIGH ANN

Hey, about that offer you made yesterday?

BRIAN

What offer?

LEIGH ANN

About going out sometime?

BRIAN

Yeah?

LEIGH ANN

How about tonight?

Brian stops in his tracks.

BRIAN

Are you serious?

Leigh Ann freezes. She chickens out.

LEIGH ANN

Uh...well...you probably have to study...

BRIAN

I'd love to. When?

LEIGH ANN

Meet me here. After school.

Leigh Ann scurries off, leaving Brian dumbstruck.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Jo Lynn is searching through Mrs. Tingle's closet. Tingle's dog watches, from a chair. Mrs. Tingle, ungagged, watches from the bed.

JO LYNN

Tonight's the night. What would you like to wear? Hmmm.

She sifts through the closet.

JO LYNN

Not bad. A bit on the conservative side but you have good taste. I would do brighter colors to bring out your eyes.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JO LYNN (cont'd)

And you have a nice figure, you should show it off. Unless you're afraid too.

Jo Lynn finds a scarf and takes it, swirling it through the air. She performs.

JO LYNN

Very Elizabethan. I could do an awesome Juliet with this. "O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?"

MRS. TINGLE

You haven't the range.

JO LYNN

I ungagged you. You be nice.

MRS. TINGLE

How could you possibly play Juliet? You haven't the commitment. The skill.

JO LYNN

Easy, woman.

MRS. TINGLE

You've never had a broken heart.

JO LYNN

At least I have a heart which is more than...hey, what's up with Coach Twitchell? Is it just a physical thing or do you love him?

Mrs. Tingle remains silent. Jo Lynn bounces to the bed, kneeling next to Tingle.

JO LYNN

C'mon, Mrs. Tingle. This is girl talk. Dish. It's very revealing that you choose a man who's completely unavailable. Fear of intimacy. A classic case.

BEAT.

MRS. TINGLE

Coach Twitchell and I have an understanding.

JO LYNN

How romantic. But do you love him? Or are you just fuck buddies?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MRS. TINGLE
I'm fond of Coach Twitchell.

JO LYNN
Have you ever loved anyone, Mrs. Tingle?

Mrs. Tingle eyes her, decidedly.

MRS. TINGLE
Yes.

JO LYNN
Who? Who? Tell, tell.

MRS. TINGLE
His name was Richard.

JO LYNN
Richard. Very manly name.

MRS. TINGLE
I had always planned on leaving
Grandsboro. Like all children, I too
thirsted for more than this town offered.
But then I met Richard. An absolutely
strapping man. Blue eyes, wide
shoulders...

JO LYNN
I love wide shoulders. Especially when
they get that V thing going.

MRS. TINGLE
He was dangerous and reckless--everything
I longed for. After a brief romance we
married...he was my world. But it was
never meant to be. He never fully
returned my love. No matter what I said
or what I did. He tried for awhile...he
was kind that way. But the inevitable
happened. Richard fell in love. With a
friend a mine--a girl much prettier and
delicate than I...and she knew how much I
loved him. That's why I was so surprised
to find out she was sleeping with him
right under my nose. My best friend who
I trusted with all my heart...lying to
me. Betraying me..stealing the man I
loved, while I played the poor, pitiful
little sidekick.

Mrs. Tingle's eyes cut into Jo Lynn like a knife.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JO LYNN
You're lying.

MRS. TINGLE
Am I?

Jo Lynn begins to unravel, realizing once again, she's been taken in by this wicked woman.

JO LYNN
Leigh Ann would never do that to me.

MRS. TINGLE
All night long she was doing it to you.
The noise was unbearable.

Jo Lynn's face cracks. This can't be true.

JO LYNN
No..not Leigh Ann.

MRS. TINGLE
It's all very Arthurian. You're King
Arthur to Leigh Ann's Lancelot. And Luke
gets the plum role of Guinevere.

JO LYNN
King Arthur's legend, Mrs. Tingle, not
fact. You taught me that. Leigh Ann
would never...

MRS. TINGLE
You're not too quick, are you Miss
Prescott? You might just make it as an
actress afterall.

Jo Lynn is dumbstruck.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - AFTERNOON - LATER

Leigh Ann stands in front of Mr. William's office door. She looks to either side...then KNOCKS. No answer. She opens the door and peeks in.

INT. WILLIAMS' OFFICE - AFTERNOON - SAME

An empty room. Leigh Ann rushes in and pulls Mrs. Tingle's gradebook from her bag. She lays it on Mr. Williams' desk, then rushes out.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - LATER

A room full of computer terminals. Mrs. Johnson sits at a desk in the front. In the back, Leigh Ann and Luke sit at their stations.

LEIGH ANN

I can't go through with this. God's gonna get me.

LUKE

I don't think God pays much attention to what happens down here anymore.

LEIGH ANN

I'm getting scared, Luke. I'm getting really scared.

He leans over and takes her hand.

LUKE

It's all gonna work out.

Leigh Ann pulls her hand away.

LUKE (cont'd)

It wouldn't hurt you to admit you liked me.

LEIGH ANN

I would if I could but I can't because I don't. I tolerate you, Luke.

LUKE

Well, I like you. I always have.

LEIGH ANN

Don't even. Just do your work. Get some ambition and stop wasting your potential. You could easily be an A student.

LUKE

You know, some people are average, Leigh Ann. A "B" and "C" work fine for some of us. Not everybody has to be valedictorian.

He turns to his computer. Leigh Ann's face appears stung from his last words.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - AFTER SCHOOL

The hallway is emptying out. Brian is hanging around, waiting. Leigh Ann comes waltzing up.

LEIGH ANN
Hey, you. You ready?

BRIAN
Yeah. Your car or mine?

Brian has adopted Leigh Ann's freshness. He's trying to be smooth.

LEIGH ANN
Yours.

They take off down the hall. Luke follows behind.

EXT. RESIDENT STREET - MINUTES LATER

A car flies down a small town street.

INT. CAR - SAME

Brian drives while Leigh Ann rides shotgun.

LEIGH ANN
Did you ever get Stanford cleared up?

BRIAN
Not yet.

LEIGH ANN
I'm sure it'll all work out.

BRIAN
It better. The men in my family live to be really old. I'd hate to have to do it in this town.

LEIGH ANN
Amen.

Leigh Ann pulls a bottle of liquor out of her book bag.

BRIAN
What's that?

LEIGH ANN
Recreational material. Wanna swig?

Brian looks a little nervous.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

I don't drink and drive. Actually, I don't even drink. I just drive.

LEIGH ANN

C'mon. It's the last week of school. Don't you want at least one reckless memory?

Leigh Ann is clearly uncomfortable in her role as vixen.

BRIAN

Nah, you go ahead. Not while I'm driving.

LEIGH ANN

Then let's pull over.

Brian is frightened by Leigh Ann's boldness. And excited.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - MINUTES LATER

It's late afternoon. The sun is starting to set. Brian's car makes its way down a deserted dirt road and parks. Brian and Leigh Ann get out.

LEIGH ANN

I've never been parking here.

BRIAN

Me either.

LEIGH ANN

And why is that do you think?

BRIAN

I don't know, Leigh Ann. I don't really have a lot of answers right now. Just questions.

Leigh Ann takes a swig. Hands it to Brian.

LEIGH ANN

Yeah. Like what?

BRIAN

Like who are you and what did you do with Leigh Ann?

LEIGH ANN

Leigh Ann's taking a break. And she suggests you do the same. It's going to be a long, cold life.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEIGH ANN (cont'd)

And it's moments like this that are going to make it worthwhile. Grab it, Brian.

Brian makes a move. He leans in to kiss her. Leigh Ann slides the bottle between them. She smiles. Brian takes it.

Down the way, peering around a tree, is Luke. He watches...and waits.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT - LATER

Leigh Ann and Brian sit atop the car. The bottle is near empty. Leigh Ann fusses with Brian's camera. She places it around her neck. Brian takes a giant swig.

BRIAN

Well, it's almost gone.

LEIGH ANN

How ya feeling?

BRIAN

I don't know. I've never been drunk before. Am I?

LEIGH ANN

I don't know. Are you?

BRIAN

The men in my family have a high tolerance to alcohol.

LEIGH ANN

Lucky for you.

Leigh Ann is looking worried. This isn't going as planned.

BRIAN

It's getting a little cold. Wanna get in the car and warm up a little.

Leigh Ann gives up.

LEIGH ANN

This was a bad idea, Brian. I'm sorry I dragged you out here.

Brian takes the last swig out of the bottle.

BRIAN

All gone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Brian jumps off the hood and to the ground and his legs give way as he completely passes out cold. Leigh Ann leans down and shakes him.

LEIGH ANN

Brian? Brian? Hello? Okay, that was weird.

In seconds, Luke comes flying out of the bushes.

LUKE

I think Brian's gonna do well at all his frat boy parties.

Leigh Ann looks down at Brian. She's not liking what she's doing.

INT. TINGLE'S FOYER - NIGHT - LATER

Leigh Ann and Luke are maneuvering Brian up the stairs. Jo Lynn appears at the top with a tray of food.

JO LYNN

Well, you took your own sweet time.

LEIGH ANN

Technical difficulty.

JO LYNN

As long as you had fun.

Jo Lynn is being particularly bitchy.

LEIGH ANN

Hey, Jo, grab hold.

JO LYNN

Hands full. Sorry.

They get him to the top of the stairs. Jo Lynn passes by them with the tray. Leigh Ann eyes her.

LEIGH ANN

You okay?

JO LYNN

I'm okay. You okay?

LEIGH ANN

Yeah.

JO LYNN

Then we're all okay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jo Lynn moves down the stairs. Leigh Ann is suspicious. She lets the moment go. They carry Brian into Tingle's bedroom.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - SAME

They position Brian on the bed at Tingle's feet. He lies there, still. His chest moving slightly up and down. Leigh Ann looks to Mrs. Tingle. She takes the camera from around her neck and places it on the nightstand. Then, she removes Tingle's gag.

LEIGH ANN

You ready, Mrs. Tingle?

MRS. TINGLE

This is so wrong, Leigh Ann.

LEIGH ANN

I know but sometimes it's right to do the wrong thing. Take his clothes off, Luke.

LUKE

Why don't you do that? I'll take the pictures.

Leigh Ann turns back to Brian and starts to undress him. She removes his shoes.

LEIGH ANN

"How scandalous." Teachers sleeping with their students is a real hot button right now, Mrs. Tingle. I think this will pretty much finish you.

MRS. TINGLE

We'll both deny it. No one will believe you.

LUKE

But we'll have pictures.

MRS. TINGLE

Fraudulent pictures.

LEIGH ANN

It doesn't matter, Mrs. Tingle. The good thing about a scandal is it doesn't rely on facts. Quick history lesson--O.J. Simpson. Did he do it? Depends on who you ask. And Ted Kennedy and Chappaquidick?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE

And his nephew Willy?

LEIGH ANN

Yeah, he was found innocent of rape, Mrs. Tingle. But that's not what you remember. What about Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill? What do you remember about that scandal?

LUKE

Pubic hair.

LEIGH ANN

Don't you see, Mrs. Tingle. You scream the truth all you want but the damage will be done.

Jo Lynn appears in the doorway.

LEIGH ANN (cont'd)

Hey, Jo, give me a hand.

Jo Lynn reluctantly moves to the bed and helps pull down Brian's pants. Mrs. Tingle's little daschund sees Brian's dangling jeans and wants to play. He grabs hold with his teeth and begins pulling.

LEIGH ANN (cont'd)

Hey, stop it. Yes, you, stop it.

Leigh Ann swats at the dog. It WHIMPERS. Jo Lynn grabs him and picks him up, kissing him.

JO LYNN

It's okay. She didn't mean it.

Suddenly, Brian sits straight up. He opens his eyes and looks right at Mrs. Tingle.

BRIAN

The men in my family have high sperm count.

BAM! He passes out again, falling back on the bed. Leigh Ann looks to Luke.

LEIGH ANN

Hurry. He's coming around.

Mrs. Tingle spots the camera that sits on the edge of the nightstand. She looks back to Leigh Ann, her mind calculating.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. TINGLE

Don't do this, Leigh Ann. You're going to ruin that young boy's future.

A look of fear crosses Mrs. Tingle's face.

LEIGH ANN

The way you plan to ruin mine.

LUKE

Are you kidding? This is going to help him. He'll be legendary. Who'd thought? Brian Barry--a stud.

LEIGH ANN

The male species weather these situations beautifully, Mrs. Tingle. You on the other hand...

Mrs. Tingle pulls on her straps. It causes the headboard to bang against the wall. This stirs Brian. It even causes the nightstand to shake. The camera is jolted.

LEIGH ANN (cont'd)

Stop that.

Mrs. Tingle does it again. The dog starts BARKING. Leigh Ann and Luke are starting to sweat.

LUKE

He's waking up. Shit.

LEIGH ANN

What do we do?

Mrs. Tingle pulls on the straps again. Then, again. Her strength jolts the headboard. The nightstand shakes. The headboard rips partly from the bedframe.

LUKE

Jo Lynn, grab her arms.

Leigh Ann reaches for her, but Mrs. Tingle gets one last good pull and the headboard completely separates from the bedframe. It goes unnoticed. The nightstand vibrates. The camera goes over the side...Luke sees it...dives for it but misses. It crashes to the floor into several pieces.

LEIGH ANN

NOOO...

LUKE

Fuck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 31

Suddenly, Brian, rolls over and starts to stir again.

LEIGH ANN

Abort plan.

LUKE

Quick. Let's get him outta here.

JO LYNN

Where to?

LUKE

We'll take him back to his car. We can try again tomorrow.

Luke picks Brian up and throws him over his shoulder. Jo Lynn rounds up his clothes and they hurry out the door. Leigh Ann picks up the remnants of the camera. She follows the other two out. She stops at the door, turns back to Mrs. Tingle.

They stare at each other.

MRS. TINGLE

Your turn.

The slightest smile passes Mrs. Tingle's face. It chills Leigh Ann.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - SECONDS LATER

The three move fast and furious through the kitchen to the back door.

JO LYNN

What's the plan now?

LEIGH ANN

I don't know.

JO LYNN

Why don't you just have sex and think about it?

LEIGH ANN

What is wrong with you?

JO LYNN

Nothing, Leigh Ann. Nothing.

LUKE

We'll be back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jo Lynn and Luke move out the door. Leigh Ann shuts it behind them. The girl is coming undone.

INT. MRS. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Leigh Ann enters the room. Mrs. Tingle just watches her. A long silence.

LEIGH ANN

Why are you so angry? So bitter? Why do you want to destroy me?

MRS. TINGLE

I don't want to destroy you, Leigh Ann. I want to teach you.

LEIGH ANN

That's bullshit. You hide behind your degree but the reality is you're a spiteful, evil woman who is jealous of every student you teach. You never got out of this town, did you? You went to high school here, now you teach here, and you're gonna die here. And you resent anyone who has a future. Anyone who's going to get out and have a life.

MRS. TINGLE

No, Leigh Ann, I resent what you're going to do with that life. This world will not be a better place because of you. The selfish pursuits of your generation will only bring it closer to destruction. I hold your lack of responsibility in contempt.

LEIGH ANN

So is that it? You're disillusioned with the youth of America?

MRS. TINGLE

No, Leigh Ann, I'm bored.

Mrs. Tingle's stare is piercing. Leigh Ann shivers.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING - LATER

Leigh Ann sits on the couch. Her books in front of her. She's studying. She hears the back door open and Jo Lynn GIGGLING. A moment later, Luke and Jo Lynn appear.

LEIGH ANN

Is everything, okay?

(CONTINUED)

JO LYNN
Just great.

Jo Lynn carries a bottle. She sips from it.

LUKE
She found my stash. She's been acting weird.

LEIGH ANN
What about Brian?

LUKE
We got him back to the car. We'll try again tomorrow.

JO LYNN
He didn't wake up. Your future's intact.
Jo Lynn is tipsy.

LEIGH ANN
Are you drunk?

JO LYNN
Not yet. But soon.

LEIGH ANN
What is your problem? We have to be careful, Jo Lynn. We could get screwed here.

JO LYNN
But you already got screwed, Leigh Ann.

LEIGH ANN
What are you talking about?

JO LYNN
Drop the honor roll act, I know all about it.

LUKE
You know all about what?

LEIGH ANN
What did Tingle tell you?

JO LYNN
Aha. So, it's true.

LEIGH ANN
Is what true?

(CONTINUED)

JO LYNN

This passive-aggressive crap may work on everybody else. But I'm sick of it.

Jo Lynn tears off for the kitchen. Leigh Ann starts after her. Luke stops her.

LUKE

Hey, she's drunk. Let her go.

LEIGH ANN

This is hopeless. Look what's happening to us. We're starting to fall apart. This is exactly what she wants. We've broken the law, we're ruining an innocent guy's life, we're starting to hate each other...

LUKE

I don't hate you.

He moves to her. She pulls away.

LEIGH ANN

Don't.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - SECONDS LATER

Jo Lynn is in the kitchen. She is making another drink. She pulls ice from the frig when she notices Tingle's little daschund staring up at her.

JO LYNN

You want some food? Hmmm?

She pulls a piece of cheese out of the frig and hands it to the dog. Jo Lynn takes her drink and slides to the floor to be with the dog. The dog eats the cheese.

JO LYNN (cont'd)

Come here.

The dog doesn't budge.

JO LYNN (cont'd)

You never told me your name. Huh?
What's your name?

The dog ignores her, continuing to eat the cheese. Jo Lynn watches when suddenly, she gets a thought.

JO LYNN (cont'd)

Richard?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The dogs ears perk up and it turns to Jo Lynn.

JO LYNN (cont'd)

Aha. Whaddya know? Come here, Richard.

The dog runs into Jo Lynn's arms. She begins to cuddle Richard as she curls up on the floor, YAWNING.

JO LYNN (cont'd)

(half-singing)

"Keep shirring. Keep smilin'. Knowing
you can always count on me. For sure.
That's what friends are for..."

From the kitchen door, Leigh Ann watches. She turns and leaves.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT - SAME

Leigh Ann passes the living room. Luke is reading a book. Studying maybe? Leigh Ann moves up the stairs.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - SAME

Mrs. Tingle lies in bed as if waiting for Leigh Ann. She enters, moving to Mrs. Tingle.

LEIGH ANN

You win. Okay. I give up. This is all
just a game to you and I can't play
anymore.

MRS. TINGLE

A game would require an opponent.

LEIGH ANN

You've done a good job, Mrs. Tingle.
I've learned a lot from you.

MRS. TINGLE

Still the Salem witch. Completely
innocent. Wrongly accused. Forever
guilty.

LEIGH ANN

Ironic, isn't it?

MRS. TINGLE

You still don't know what that word
means. Metaphoric, yes. Symbolic,
maybe. But there's no irony involved.
Please look that word up.

(CONTINUED)

Leigh Ann stands firm.

LEIGH ANN

Say what you want. I'm not scared of you.

MRS. TINGLE

Who are you fooling? You're so scared I can smell it. Your fear is the most predictable thing about you. You've lived your whole life in fear. Terrified to make a mistake. Scared to death you won't get that "A". Or that scholarship--that ticket out. That you'll never escape your mother and her name tag. Or that father who won't return your calls. That's why you never let the boys touch your virginal body. You're afraid of getting that bad seed. Afraid of giving birth to a child you never wanted. A child you could only blame for your own wretched existence. Stuck in a small town with a small life. Destined to become what you despise the most. I know all about it, Leigh Ann. I wrote the book. I KNOW YOU.

This pierces Leigh Ann's very soul. She can barely breathe.

INT. STAIRCASE - SECONDS LATER

Leigh Ann glides down the staircase in a daze. Tingle's words still stamped across her face...

INT. LIVING ROOM

Luke is lying on the couch with his book. He looks up to find...

Leigh Ann, standing in front of him--her hair tousled and eyes fixed in a glazed animal stare. Her breath is deep and rhythmic. Luke's eyebrows rise.

LUKE

What's wrong with you?

Leigh Ann attacks him, diving on top of him, throwing him back against the couch. Her lips find his and she ravages his mouth, kissing him hard and heatedly. He responds instantly and they engage in a long and very wet kiss.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Leigh Ann's hands grope his body wildly, ripping at his shirt. She licks his face moving down to his neck. They tumble to the floor.

LUKE

(complete ecstasy)

God, I've wanted this. I used to dream about this. Exactly this.

Leigh Ann pulls away from him.

LEIGH ANN

(deadly warning)

Shut up.

Luke shuts up. Leigh Ann rips the shirt from his body. Luke rolls her over taking the top position, his hands find her body while never taking his lips from hers.

Leigh Ann rolls him back over reclaiming her position. She reaches down and grabs hold of his belt buckle.

LEIGH ANN

Take 'em off.

Leigh Ann is an animal unleashed. She starts tearing her own clothes from her body. Luke follows suit.

Completely naked they come together like two animals. Sweet and tender, fierce and hot. All those things you dream about for your first time.

INT. TINGLE'S ROOM

In the darkness, Mrs. Tingle lies quietly listening to the RECKLESS BUSINESS below. Her eyes wide and fully awake.

She tugs on the headboard. Quietly, it slopes, sliding down a bit. Mrs. Tingle pulls on her straps. The wooden slat on the bedpost is giving way due to the angle. It's starting to give when...

CREAK! The bedroom door starts to open. Mrs. Tingle returns the headboard to it's upright state immediately. She looks down to see Richard entering the room.

The dog wags over to the bed and leaps up. It crawls up the bedspread, getting into Mrs. Tingle's face.

Richard leans over and licks Mrs. Tingle's face. Mrs. Tingle makes some small love sounds through her gag. The dog responds, licking and loving her some more. A long moment as Mrs. Tingle relishes it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MUCH LATER

A slow PAN across the living room floor. Thrown clothing, legs intertwined, flesh on flesh...two bodies lie exhausted.

LEIGH ANN

This has all gotten so complicated.

LUKE

Hey, we'll do Brian tomorrow and just hope for the best.

LEIGH ANN

And if it doesn't work.

LUKE

Then we make it look like an accident.

LEIGH ANN

You're not serious.

LUKE

She's got us, Leigh Ann. You come up with a more logical and thorough plan than that.

Total silence.

LEIGH ANN

What kind of accident?

LUKE

Something simple. We could snap her neck and then throw her down the stairs.

More silence.

LEIGH ANN

Accidents do happen.

A simple decision. Done. Decided. Luke pulls her tight and they kiss, sealing their fate.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - SAME

The dark room. Mrs. Tingle still works on the headboard. The wooden slat of the bedpost is about to give. She pulls one last time and it CRACKS. It loosens her arm just enough for her to reach up with her mouth and pull at the straps.

EXT. TINGLE'S HOUSE - MORNING

The morning sun shines high over Tingle's house.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Luke cooks over the stove. Jo Lynn is drinking coffee, pulling her book bag together. Neither talks. Leigh Ann enters. The room is completely awkward.

LEIGH ANN

Smells good.

LUKE

The Last Supper.

A long silence.

LEIGH ANN

I'll be right back after school with Brian. We'll try again. I'm gonna stop off and get my camera. It should work.

LUKE

And if it doesn't.

LEIGH ANN

Then there's Plan C.

JO LYNN

We're up to C now. I thought you only liked A's, Leigh Ann. It's been real.

Jo Lynn grabs her book bag and heads for the back door.

LEIGH ANN

Jo Lynn, we need you.

JO LYNN

I'm not into menage trois'. Sorry.

She takes off, exiting out the door. Leigh Ann turns back to Luke.

LEIGH ANN

So, you okay with Plan C? Not that we're going to be doing Plan C but if we had to, would you be okay with it?

LUKE

Yeah. You?

LEIGH ANN

Who would do it?

Leigh Ann is visibly trembling. It's all becoming too real.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE
We'll do it together.

LEIGH ANN
I'm scared, Luke.

Luke moves to her, spatula in hand.

LUKE
Just think of this as a test. Like the last and ultimate final exam. If we pass, we get an "A" for the rest of our lives.

He reaches out for her.

LEIGH ANN
Look, about last night...

Here it comes. Luke turns away, waving the spatula.

LUKE
Hey...I know. It was just a one time animal thing brought about by an intensely masochistic situation.

Leigh Ann has moved to the back door.

LEIGH ANN
AND...it was a lot of fun.

Luke spins around to find Leigh Ann grinning.

LUKE
Yeah...it was.

A quick wink and she's out the door. Luke smiles.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - MORNING

Mr. Potter and Miss Burke are opening a delivery of boxes. Mr. Potter rips into one of them and pulls out a graduation cap. Smiling, he puts it on his head.

MR. POTTER
Ah...graduation.

Mr. Williams enters. He holds Tingle's grade book.

MR. WILLIAMS
I thought you might need this back, Miss Burke.

(CONTINUED)

MISS BURKE
What's that, Mr. Williams?

MR. WILLIAMS
Mrs. Tingle's grade book. I'm through
with it.

She takes it from him.

MISS BURKE
What are you doing with it?

MR. WILLIAMS
Didn't you leave it on my desk?

MISS BURKE
I thought Mrs. Tingle had it.

MR. WILLIAMS
She must have dropped it off.

Mr. Potter looks up from the boxes.

MR. POTTER
Is she back?

MR. WILLIAMS
Not that I'm aware of, Miss Burke?

MISS BURKE
No, I haven't heard from her in two days.

MR. WILLIAMS
Perhaps we should check on her. Send her
some flowers.

MR. POTTER
I guess we could.

MR. WILLIAMS
We could at least call her.

Mr. Potter is just not interested.

MR. POTTER
We shouldn't disturb her. The woman
needs her rest.

Mr. Williams looks at them, troubled.

INT. TINGLE'S CLASSROOM - LATER

Class in progress. Leigh Ann sits opposite Jo Lynn trying to get her attention. Jo Lynn purposely ignores her.

Miss Burke moves in front of the class with fiery passion.

MISS BURKE

You see, Ann knew that Henry VIII was lying like a rug. He was dipping his wick all over town. And once she had given birth to Elizabeth, the future queen, he had no use for Ann and he chopped her head off.

A dramatic pause as the class is riveted to her every word. A far cry from the Tingle days. ONE GIRL is moved to tears.

GIRL

That's so sad.

A GRUNGEHEAD dude shakes his head.

GRUNGEHEAD

Men.

MISS BURKE

That's enough review for today. You'll be happy to know Mrs. Tingle sent me her gradebook. So, I have all your project grades.

Leigh Ann eyes the grade book on Miss Burke's desk. Just as planned.

MISS BURKE

(holding a piece of paper)

I'll post them on the board in back.

She moves to the back of the room as THE BELL RINGS. After class commotion begins.

Miss Burke posts the grades as eager students push and shove to have a look.

Suddenly, a shrill, glass shattering SCREAM erupts. All eyes go to Marybeth Carter whose face is on fire as she stares at the posted grades.

MARYBETH CARTER

A what? A "B". There must some mistake.

Marybeth rips the grade sheet off the bulletin board.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MISS BURKE

I took it right from the grade book.

MARYBETH CARTER

A "B"? Who does she think she is? Does this look like a "B" to you?

She moves to a nearby table where the Bastille sits neatly displayed.

MISS BURKE

Well...I...I...I.

MARYBETH CARTER

(furious)

Well I what? Huh?

MISS BURKE

I...don't know.

Marybeth has gone mad. She rips into the Bastille tearing it from its plywood base.

MARYBETH CARTER

(out of control)

I've never gotten a "B" in my life. I'm an "A" student. I'm the best student in this school.

She throws a piece of the Bastille across the room. Poor Miss Burke dodges it.

MARYBETH CARTER

(screaming)

This isn't a "B". This is an "A+". An "A fucking-plus".

MISS BURKE

Marybeth..you stop this..this instant...

But Marybeth Carter has snapped. She storms to the door as students flee all around her.

MARYBETH CARTER

A "B". I don't think so...

Marybeth disappears out the door. Leigh Ann looks up to see Jo Lynn staring at her. A very disturbing, disappointing stare. She takes off out the door. Leigh Ann grabs her books and runs after her.

INT. MR. WILLIAMS' OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Mr. Williams sits on the edge of his desk trying to console a BLUBBERING Marybeth Carter who sits opposite him.

MR. WILLIAMS

There! There! These things happen.

MARYBETH CARTER

Not to me, they don't.

MR. WILLIAMS

It's not the end of the world Marybeth. You have to learn to accept life. We have to play the hand we're dealt, dear. And apparently a "B" was in the deck.

MARYBETH CARTER

(sitting on her anger)

Then, apparently, Mr. Williams, we need to reshuffle. I've kissed that woman's ass for the last four years and this is the thanks I get?

MR. WILLIAMS

The woman's not well.

MARYBETH CARTER

Maybe her health interfered with her grading and she made a mistake. I could stop by her house after school.

MR. WILLIAMS

You'll do nothing of the kind. You let Mrs. Tingle rest, understand? I plan to call on her myself today. I'll mention the situation.

Marybeth becomes buttersweet.

MARYBETH CARTER

Do you promise?

MR. WILLIAMS

Of course. Now run along, I've got other students with real problems.

MARYBETH CARTER

(ignoring him)

Thank you, Mr. Williams.

Marybeth exits the room out of earshot as Mr. Williams picks up the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. WILLIAMS

(under his breath)

Don't mention it you pale-faced, pugged
nose twit.

He finds a number in his address book and dials. The line is
BUSY.

INT. STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Luke makes his way up the staircase holding Tingle's lunch
tray. He reaches the landing and moves to Tingle's bedroom
door. He props the tray against the wall and reaches for the
doorknob when he hears...

MRS. TINGLE

(o.c.)

Goodbye now.

He pushes the door open revealing...

AN EMPTY BED.

Luke freaks to find Mrs. Tingle standing up, out of the bed,
completely free. Luke drops the tray.

INT. HALLWAY - AFTERNOON - LITTLE LATER

It's the end of the day. The school is winding down. Leigh
Ann sees Brian at his locker. She goes to him.

LEIGH ANN

Hey, Brian...

BRIAN

Hey, Leigh Ann, how you doing? Did you
get home alright last night? I don't
remember too much.

LEIGH ANN

It was fun.

BRIAN

Was it?

LEIGH ANN

I was hoping we could do it again.
Tonight.

BRIAN

Ah man, no way. I heard from Stanford.
I got my recommendation. Don't know how.
But it came just in time.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN (cont'd)

I gotta go take some placement courses right away. My dad's waiting. We're driving up tonight.

Leigh Ann's face falls.

LEIGH ANN

That's great.

BRIAN

I'll call you, okay?

Brian takes off down the hall just as Miss Burke comes running up.

MISS BURKE

(off camera)

Leigh Ann! There you are!

Leigh Ann turns to see Miss Burke scurrying up.

LEIGH ANN

Yes, Miss Burke?

MISS BURKE

Mr. Potter would like to speak with you right away.

LEIGH ANN

Why?

MISS BURKE

It concerns your history grade. Apparently, Mrs. Tingle's grade book was stolen.

LEIGH ANN

What?

MISS BURKE

It turned up but the grades had been altered.. Yours was one of them.

LEIGH ANN

That's impossible.

MISS BURKE

No, I just spoke to Mrs. Tingle. Why don't you come with me and we'll straighten it out.

LEIGH ANN

You spoke to Mrs. Tingle?

(CONTINUED)

MISS BURKE
I just got off the phone with her.

LEIGH ANN
(pure terror)
She called you?

MISS BURKE
Yes, she's feeling better now. Said she
was finally up and about.

LEIGH ANN
Oh my God.

In a flash, Leigh Ann is gone...tearing..racing down the
hall.

EXT. SCHOOL CAMPUS - AFTERNOON - SECONDS LATER

Students come and go. Leigh Ann comes bolting out of the
building. She spots Jo Lynn. Races up to her. Frantic.

LEIGH ANN
Jo! Jo!

Jo Lynn sees her coming, turns away.

LEIGH ANN
We need to talk. Did you call here and
pretend to be Tingle?

JO LYNN
What?

LEIGH ANN
Answer me. Did you?

JO LYNN
Did I what?

LEIGH ANN
Did you call the school and speak to Miss
Burke about the grade book?

JO LYNN
I don't know what you're talking about.
I'm through with you and your quest to be
the best.

LEIGH ANN
Jo Lynn, please. We don't have time for
this. I don't know what Tingle told
you...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jo Lynn stops cold, turns to Leigh Ann.

JO LYNN

Look me in the eye and tell me you didn't sleep with Luke. Tell me what a good friend you are and out of respect for me and my feelings for him you ignored his advances.

Leigh Ann can't do it. All she can manage is...

LEIGH ANN

Tingle lied to you.

JO LYNN

So, you didn't?

LEIGH ANN

No, I did. But not when you think I did. It happened after Tingle told you we did. It happened last night.

Jo Lynn is disgusted.

JO LYNN

Under my nose. Well, that makes all the difference.

LEIGH ANN

I'm sorry...it just happened. This little voice inside of me said: DO IT!

JO LYNN

You pretend to be this little innocent girl who justs wants to escape her fate but the truth is you'll do anything to be number one. To be valedictorian. Leigh Ann, you're as bad as Tingle. You're worse. You're a Tingle in sheep's clothing.

LEIGH ANN

I think Tingle's gotten free. Jo Lynn, I need your help.

JO LYNN

Why don't you go manipulate Luke for awhile. I'm tired.

LEIGH ANN

Oh God! Luke!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Leigh Ann tears off across campus, running as fast as her legs will take her.

EXT. TINGLE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON - LATER

Leigh Ann sneaks through the bushes, shooting up the side of the house.

INT. KITCHEN - AFTERNOON - SAME

Leigh Ann opens the back door quietly...sliding through without a sound.

INT. FOYER - SAME

Leigh Ann checks out the living room...dining room...no one...all is still and deadly silent.

LEIGH ANN
(whispering)
Luke...Luke...

She climbs the staircase.

INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING

Tingle's bedroom door is ajar. She moves to it, pushing it slowly open.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM

Leigh Ann's eyes go straight to the bed. Mrs. Tingle lies still with a lampshade covering her head. Leigh Ann looks around for Luke but the room's empty.

LEIGH ANN
Luke?

She moves to Mrs. Tingle suspiciously and reaches for the lampshade.

LEIGH ANN
What's going on?

The lampshade falls away to reveal Luke--unconscious--bound and gagged. Leigh Ann gasps.

LEIGH ANN
Oh God...

She checks Luke out. Alive--just knocked out. She shakes him, pulling at his ropes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEIGH ANN

Luke. What happened? Where's Tingle?

Suddenly, she hears...

FOOTSTEPS downstairs--Tingle. Panic and terror spread across Leigh Ann's face.

LEIGH ANN

Come on Luke. Get up. Please.

She slaps his face roughly--but he's out cold.

A RUSTLING below. Leigh Ann leaps to her feet. A moment as she quickly considers her options. She moves to the bedroom door, her fear rising.

INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING

Leigh Ann tiptoes out of the bedroom and leans over the bannister, peeking down the staircase. Tingle could be anywhere--anywhere. She looks back through the bedroom door at Luke. She's on her own. It's time to face the music.

She makes her way down the steps--her back hugging the wall.

LEIGH ANN'S POV

She takes each step slowly, straining to hear any sounds. Nothing but her own rapid, terrified BREATHING. She turns toward the kitchen. A shadow bounces across Leigh Ann's back unseen by her.

INT. KITCHEN

Leigh Ann scopes out the kitchen. Empty.

Frantically, she heads straight to a kitchen drawer and withdraws a long sharp knife. She stops and listens. Water TRICKLES from the kitchen faucet--every moment magnified.

Leigh Ann moves back toward the foyer--the knife held firmly in front of her, guiding the way. She hates this, hates this.

INT. FOYER

She moves quick, weaving back and forth, knife out, half-crouched. She eyes the front door, wanting badly to bolt when she hears Mrs. Tingle's VOICE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. TINGLE

(O.S.)

That's right. 368 Oak Street. Please hurry.

Leigh Ann moves to the living room, her face glistening with sweat.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The afternoon sun finds its way around closed drapes creating pockets of shadows along the walls. In the cloudy haze of the room, Leigh Ann sees...

MRS. TINGLE

hanging up the phone. They face each other.

MRS. TINGLE

Good afternoon, Miss Warren.

Leigh Ann fights to sustain a cool remain. She's shaking down to her shoes.

LEIGH ANN

How long have you been on the loose, Mrs. Tingle?

MRS. TINGLE

Catch up, Miss Warren. We're way past that. Where's your friend, Brian?

Leigh Ann says nothing.

MRS. TINGLE (cont'd)

I guess you didn't know Stanford was my alma mater. I'm on the alumni association. I do hope Brian gets in the program.

LEIGH ANN

Very good, Mrs. Tingle, now why haven't you called the police?

MRS. TINGLE

I just did. They're on their way. It seems I caught one of my best students cheating and she and her lover stormed my house in anger and tried to attack me.

LEIGH ANN

I won't go along with that.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. TINGLE

I think you will.

Mrs. Tingle moves from the shadows. She holds the crossbow firmly in her hands--poised, ready to strike.

LEIGH ANN

You won't kill me.

MRS. TINGLE

Oh no, dear. What I have planned for you is a fate worse than death.

Mrs. Tingle sports a wicked, wicked smile.

MRS. TINGLE

Oh, Leigh Ann, you'll wear that name tag so well.

Leigh Ann shakes her head in disbelief.

LEIGH ANN

That's all you care about. You just want to see me fail.

MRS. TINGLE

It's your destiny, dear. Haven't you learned by now--history always repeats itself.

LEIGH ANN

No..I won't do it. I won't go along.

Mrs. Tingle pushes the crossbow forward.

MRS. TINGLE

Then it's plan B. Self-defense.

LEIGH ANN

You won't get away with it.

JO LYNN

(off camera)

Yes, she will.

Jo Lynn appears in the archway. Tingle and Leigh Ann both are surprised to see her.

LEIGH ANN

What...

(CONTINUED)

JO LYNN

I'll be Tingle's alibi. I'll tell how you orchestrated the whole thing.

LEIGH ANN

Jo Lynn...

JO LYNN

I'm not going down with you, Leigh Ann. You can ruin your life, but you're not ruining mine.

A tear rolls down Jo Lynn's cheek.

JO LYNN

I thought you were my friend.

Mrs. Tingle sprouts a smile of surprise. Proud of the demon she's created. She moves next to her new accomplice, beaming at Leigh Ann.

MRS. TINGLE

Your move.

Leigh Ann is at a loss when suddenly...

Jo Lynn pulls a fast one--pouncing on Tingle...ramming her hard in the side, pushing her onto the couch...she grabs the crossbow and quickly finds aim. Mrs. Tingle is truly shocked. Jo Lynn is on the tips of her toes, ecstatic.

JO LYNN

Don't tell me I can't act.

Jo Lynn can't believe she finally pulled one over on the witch. Leigh Ann is both relieved and very moved.

LEIGH ANN

Jo Lynn, I'm so sorry.

They share a quick smile. Tingle starts for them but Jo Lynn holds aim.

JO LYNN

Hold it, old lady.

MRS. TINGLE

You won't shoot me.

JO LYNN

NO?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MRS. TINGLE

NO.

Mrs. Tingle holds the bolt in her hand. Jo Lynn looks to the crossbow...sure enough, the chamber's empty. Mrs. Tingle attacks.

JO LYNN

RUN!!!

Jo Lynn heads for the kitchen. Leigh Ann takes off for the foyer. Tingle grabs the crossbow and readies it.

INT. FOYER

Leigh Ann dives for the front door--pulling on the knob.

MRS. TINGLE'S POV

as she flies around the corner...the front door is open. Tingle throws the crossbow up and SHOTS...

It lodges in Leigh Ann's chest. Her body jerks forward in convulsions...she falls forward into the foyer. Her body hitting the floor with a loud THUD. The door slowly closes shut revealing...

LEIGH ANN

standing behind the door. What?

Tingle's eyes do a double take before going to the floor as she sees clearly for the first time--Marybeth Carter's face staring up at her...eyes wide and lifeless.

Mrs. Tingle is frozen in horror. Her breath becomes short and quick. Leigh Ann..shocked..drops the knife.

Jo Lynn GASPS from the other room.

Mrs. Tingle, Jo Lynn, and Leigh Ann are all immobilized, unable to move. Several seconds pass--an eternity. Their eyes fixed on Marybeth Carter's still, lifeless body.

Finally, Leigh Ann shakes her head when the most sudden and most clear realization she's ever had comes to her. She turns to Mrs. Tingle triumphantly.

LEIGH ANN

Now, that's ironic!

Mrs. Tingle can't argue. She bows her head, refusing to respond, guilt ridden.

(CONTINUED)

JO LYNN
Oh God, what now?

MRS. TINGLE
Call the police. It's over.

Leigh Ann goes to the hall phone. She picks it up, eyeing Jo Lynn.

LEIGH ANN
What are you going to tell the police
now, Mrs. Tingle?

Leigh Ann checks Tingle's reaction.

MRS. TINGLE
(quietly)
It's time for the truth.

LEIGH ANN
Who's truth?

Leigh Ann puts the phone back down.

MRS. TINGLE
What are you suggesting, Miss Warren?

LEIGH ANN
I suggest Marybeth Carter was so upset
over her history grade she came to your
house and attacked you. In self-defense
you retaliated.

Mrs. Tingle considers a moment.

MRS. TINGLE
And you walk away?

LEIGH ANN
(eying Jo Lynn)
I don't care about me. But Jo Lynn and
Luke deserve to. They've been through
enough.

MRS. TINGLE
And if I say no?

LEIGH ANN
Spanky will be bringing flowers to State
Central.

MRS. TINGLE

And you'll be my witness to this self-defense?

LEIGH ANN

Absolutely. I happened to stop by to discuss this grade book mix-up and verify my "A" and I saw the whole thing. Nobody killed anybody, except you. It's so ironic.

Mrs. Tingle quietly nods her head, accepting Leigh Ann's terms.

MRS. TINGLE

Very well, Miss Warren.

Leigh Ann smiles big. She's finally made the grade. For once and all, she has stood up to this demon-woman and won.

LEIGH ANN

Jo, the police are on their way. We better clean this place up.

JO LYNN

You got it.

LEIGH ANN

I'll get Luke.

Jo Lynn tears off for the kitchen. Leigh Ann climbs the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING - SECONDS LATER

Leigh Ann reaches the top and heads for the bedroom.

INT. FOYER - SAME

CLOSE on a hand as it reaches for the long kitchen knife Leigh Ann dropped.

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - SAME

Leigh Ann sits next to Luke on the bed. A moment as she watches him sleep...peaceful...serene. She leans over and kisses him softly, tenderly on the lips. His eyes flutter open. He's in a daze.

LUKE

Tingle's on the loose.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEIGH ANN

It's okay..

LUKE

But..but...

He starts to realize he's tied to the headboard.

LEIGH ANN

Senior prophecy. They graduated and lived happily ever after.

LUKE

What are you talking about?

LEIGH ANN

It's over. We won.

ARRRGGH! They both turn to catch Mrs. Tingle barreling through the door at them, knife raised high. Pure monster now.

LUKE

Watch out!.

Leigh Ann moves quick--dodging the blade as it comes down towards her. She falls to the side of the bed missing the knife as it impales the mattress between Luke's legs--dangerously close...Luke swallows. Mrs. Tingle comes down on top of him.

Luke tugs at his straps trying to free himself. Tingle moves fast. She leaps to her feet grabbing Leigh Ann.

Luke stands up on the mattress, the headboard attached to his back.

Tingle's hands have found Leigh Ann's throat when Luke comes bashing into her, swiping Tingle like a topspeed forehand. But she doesn't budge. She merely turns with one hand and pops him in the head...sending him reeling backwards on his back.

Leigh Ann tries to break free but Tingle's ready for her. They struggle--inching backwards through the door.

Luke is flat on his back...wiggling..squirming, trying to break free from the Houdini-like confinement.

INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING

Mrs. Tingle has Leigh Ann's throat in a death grip.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Leigh Ann's face has gone pale as she CHOKES and CRIES. They continue to inch backwards toward the top of the stairs.

MRS. TINGLE
COME ON! Miss Harvard! Miss I-can-do-
anything! Let's see little Miss
Perfection get an "A+" in dying.

Leigh Ann is fading, her strength going fast. She beats at Mrs. Tingle's arms, trying to unpry her hands from her throat. Suddenly...

JO LYNN

appears behind Mrs. Tingle...pulling...clawing at Tingle's back...helping Leigh Ann as only a best friend can.

In a last ditch effort, Leigh Ann lifts her foot and brings it down hard on Mrs. Tingle's. A SCREAM to end all screams as Tingle CRIES out in agony. She loosens her grip around Leigh Ann's neck. It's just enough for Leigh Ann to wrench free, pushing Tingle off her as...

Jo Lynn ducks behind her, kneeling on the top step as Tingle loses her balance and stumbles back...knocking into her. Tingle's hands reach out for Leigh Ann...then the railing as she flips backwards over Jo Lynn.

Luke, having freed himself, comes bolting out of the bedroom just in time to see Tingle as she...

tumbles down the staircase out of control. Her body beating each step and gathering speed as it makes its way to the bottom. Her head hits first as...

Leigh Ann, Jo Lynn, and Luke stand at the top of the stairs unable to take their eyes off her. Her body lies at the bottom, still and distorted. An ultimate silence.

Then Richard, Mrs. Tingle's pet, steps out from the foyer. He moves to Mrs. Tingle's still body. The dog appears sad. He moves to her...he leans in and licks her face. Mrs. Tingle doesn't move.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - GRADUATION DAY

A stage has been placed center field decorated in the school colors of black and gold. Flower arrangements line the way to the podium in the center. White folded chairs have been placed between the stage and bleachers.

The bleachers have begun to fill with family and friends waiting for the graduation ceremony to start.

EXT. BEHIND THE BLEACHERS

The graduating class of 1998 are lining up preparing to take to the field. Dressed in black caps and gowns, they are running around laughing and cohorting...their excitement and energy at an all time high.

One girl...visibly drunk, grabs another.

GIRL #1
NIGHTLINE is here.

GIRL #2
Where?

They move on. The CAMERA FINDS Leigh Ann who stands patiently as her mother adjusts the tassel on her cap.

MS. WARREN
I can't believe your sorry ass father is gonna miss...

LEIGH ANN
Mom, don't.

MS. WARREN
Well it just makes me sick...

LEIGH ANN
MOM!

Ms. Warren stops in her tracks.

MS. WARREN
What is it, honey?

LEIGH ANN
I love you.

Ms. Warren is caught off guard. She stares at her daughter blankly for a moment and then does the only thing she can think of...she grabs hold of Leigh Ann and squeezes the life out of her.

MS. WARREN
(through tears)
I'm so proud of you. Don't you forget to smile, honey. That's what it's all about. A big smile.

EXT. BLEACHERS - FEW MINUTES LATER

The bleachers are packed. Ms. Warren sits in the stands, blowing her nose.

EXT. BEHIND BLEACHERS

Brian appears beside Leigh Ann who is readjusting her tassels.

BRIAN

The big party is tonight. And I was thinking maybe...we could ride together.

LEIGH ANN

I can't, Brian, I'm sorry.

Brian starts to shy away.

LEIGH ANN

But Brian...

He turns to her just as she grabs hold of him and plants one hellacious kiss on his lips. He stumbles back...stupefied.

LEIGH ANN

It was nice of you to ask.

Luke approaches, catching the kiss part.

LUKE

What was that?

Leigh Ann wraps her arms around Luke, smiling.

LEIGH ANN

It was just a one time animal thing brought about by an intensely masochistic situation.

They kiss as Jo Lynn appears behind them with a video camera.

JO LYNN

One for the cameras, please.

Just then, REPORTERS and CAMERAS whiz by, chasing a frantic Mr. Gold.

REPORTER #1

Did you actually see Mrs. Tingle fall down the stairs?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. GOLD

No, I arrived after...

REPORTER #2

And was that before or after she fired the crossbow?

MR. GOLD

I have no idea you should ask...

Leigh Ann throws her arms around Luke and Jo Lynn, hugging them both as they move to find their place in line.

EXT. CENTER FIELD - STAGE

On the stage, Mr. Potter stands at the podium. Behind him is a huge mural--"In Loving Memory"--Marybeth Carter's face, uglier than usual, in wide screen splendor.

MR. POTTER

And it is with extreme pleasure as I introduce our most deserved valedictorian and this year's recipient of the Award of Excellence Scholarship--Leigh Ann Warren.

APPLAUSE thunders the field as we follow Leigh Ann as she makes her way to the stage. At the podium she gives Mr. Potter a warm hug, thanking him. Then she turns to her class, her family, her friends--her town and takes a deep, long breath.

LEIGH ANN

Distinguished graduates, as valedictorian of the graduating class of '98, let me be the first to say congratulations. We did it! The torch is officially being passed to us. With certainty and promise we will face the future, we will bring answers to problems, and make the world a better place to live.

Leigh Ann pauses. She looks into the crowd. She sees her mother waving. And Mr. Williams, Miss Burke. She spots Coach Twitchell. Her eyes find Luke, then Jo Lynn. They're all watching her. Listening. She continues...

LEIGH ANN

You know...I don't have any answers. That's the only thing I'm certain of. And the only promise I can give you is, it's going to be hard. Difficult, tough--a real bitch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE on faces..students..parents..not knowing how to react.

LEIGH ANN

We're supposed to be the future, right?
I mean every year, somebody stands here
and tells the graduating seniors how
we're supposed to make the world a better
place to live but the truth is year after
year it's gotten progressively worse.
And I don't know what to tell ya...

The audience shifts nervously. Programs RUSTLE...that
uncomfortable COUGH.

LEIGH ANN (cont'd)

I had sex the other night for the first
time in my life. Wild, hot sex. Really
loved it. But when it was over--it was
over. It didn't fix anything.

CLOSE ON LUKE. He smiles. Understanding.

LEIGH ANN (cont'd)

Is that all life is? We wake up each
morning again and again looking for a
fix, hoping something will be different.
That something will happen that will
allow us to feel more than five minutes
of pleasure before bedtime.

On Leigh Ann's mother as she sits listening...numb.

LEIGH ANN (CONT'D)

No wonder people drink and do drugs.
They don't want to wind up old and gray
with nothing to show for their lives but
a bitter hatred for the world. And it's
not about the money. In a world where
everything has a price--it's so not about
the money. You know...you can be a
millionaire lawyer or you can pump gas.
It doesn't matter. There's high, there's
low, there's black, there's white, and
there's right and there's wrong. Then
there's that gray area. I think most of
our lives are shades of gray. It all
comes down to our choices. The personal
choices that we make each day. It only
takes a second to do something you'll
regret for the rest of your life. I know
that today. I live with that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ON Luke, then Jo Lynn. They listen to her every word. On stage, Leigh Ann stares at the crowd. Her eyes deep and endless. A long moment.

LEIGH ANN

And I'd like to thank the person who taught me this valuable lesson. We all have that one person, that one teacher we'll remember for always. For me, that person is Mrs. Tingle. We've all been taught by her. There's a little Tingle in all of us. She taught me that history does, in fact, repeat itself. But it doesn't have to. We don't have to be trapped by our choices. We can be changed by them. Mrs. Tingle, I'm forever grateful. And good luck Class of '98. You're gonna need it.

Leigh Ann steps away from the mic. She shakes hands with Mr. Potter, then steps off stage, as polite APPLAUSE circulates the field. Leigh Ann takes her seat, somewhere in the middle of her graduating class. Not in front, not in back, but somewhere in the middle.

CUT TO:

INT. TINGLE'S BEDROOM - DAY

The bed is freshly made, but empty. Richard hops up onto the bed, his tail wagging. He looks to the bathroom door as Mrs. Tingle emerges. Her arm and foot are in a cast. With the help of a crutch, she limps to the bed and slides in.

Richard jumps up and she takes him in her arms as he licks her face. She showers him with the love and kisses reserved just for him. The ones kept from the rest of the world.

BLACKOUT.