

THE 'BURBS

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THE 'BURBS

FADE IN:

1 ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT 1

of a quiet, tree-lined, cul-de-sac in any suburb, U.S.A. Seven modest, middle-income dwellings are spaced evenly along the street, with a woodsy marsh just beyond a wooden guardrail at the dead end. It is early, the wee hours, and all is still but for the CHIRP of the CRICKETS and the light PATTERN of a LAWN SPRINKLER watering the yard of a meticulously landscaped split-level undercover of darkness.

2 ANGLE ON IMITATION TUDOR HOME - NIGHT 2

located between the split-level and a compact two story Colonial. The oldest house on the street, the Tudor is singular in its dark, neo-Gothic design and also stands out from the others because of its disarray. The lawn is overgrown with wild, uncontrolled shrubbery, shutters hang loose, paint cracked and peeling. These people aren't gunning for a House Beautiful award. PUSH IN for a CLOSER look, careful not to disturb anything, and suddenly the nocturnal peace is shattered by a THUNDERING NOISE!! Churning up from the bowls of the Tudor, vaguely machine-like in nature, it sounds like maybe... a big garbage disposal unit being dragged across a stone floor with heavy chains.

As the NOISE continues to rock the neighborhood, we PULL BACK and see a light go on in the Colonial next door.

3 COLONIAL - NIGHT 3

The front door opens and a disturbed man in a ratty bathrobe comes out onto the porch. This is RAY PETERSON, our hero, late thirties, pleasant middle-class looks. A good neighbor. Right now, though, he's a bit annoyed, wondering why this jerk next door woke him up with this alien racket. He walks down the three porch steps into the yard. A window slides open across the street and he looks over.

4 RAY'S POV 4

The orange dot of a cigarette ember hovers in the window of the split-level across the street, the one with the flagpole in the yard.

5 RAY 5

Now that he's not the only one on the street that's been disturbed, he decides to take affirmative action.

So he goes in for a closer look, walking across his driveway to the property line.

6 RAY'S POV - TUDOR HOUSE - NIGHT 6

It's downright eerie in the moonlight, the twisted branches of a neglected elm throwing shadows on the house as the mysterious NOISE CONTINUES.

7 RAY 7

stands tentatively at the edge of his neighbor's lawn. Is he bold enough to walk across the grass and ring the doorbell? Or would that be breaking the unspoken suburban code -- "Live and let live"? He looks across the street for guidance. The cigarette ember glows motionless. The ball's in Ray's court. He purses his lips, stuffs his hands into the pockets of his robe, and steps onto the lawn.

Immediately, the NOISE STOPS.

8 TIGHT ON RAY 8

He freezes, like a soldier who's just heard the click of a landmine arming itself under his foot.

9 NEXT DOOR - SPRINKLER 9

stops also, milliseconds after the sudden ominous silence.

10 RAY 10

He gulps. Has he been spotted? Perhaps this wasn't too such a good idea after all. Besides, the noise has stopped, right? And this house is awfully creepy-looking in the dark. Gingerly, he removes his foot from the grass and backs up a couple of steps into the sanctuary of his own driveway.

11 ACROSS STREET - NIGHT 11

The cigarette disappears and the window slams shut.

12 RAY - NIGHT 12

heaves a sigh. Looks up and down the block once more, scratches his head. The other houses on the block doze on, undisturbed.

13 LONG SHOT OF RAY 13

standing alone in his robe, in the driveway, staring perplexed at his next door neighbors.

DISSOLVE TO:

14 EXT. STREET - DAWN 14

We're TIGHT ON a spinning bicycle wheel as the CREDITS BEGIN. PULL BACK to see the rest of the bike and its rider, a twelve-year-old NEWSPAPER BOY, starting off on his route in the bluish pre-sunrise light. He plucks a rolled-up paper out of his basket, back-hands it beautifully onto the front porch of a ranch-house, and hangs a left in front of a street sign reading "MAYFIELD PLACE."

15 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE - DAY (MORNING) 15

This is Ray's street. The first thing we see this morning is WALTER, the grouchy old man with the beautiful lawn. He's wearing an undershirt, baggy pants belted at the sternum... and the world's worst toupee. A real Sy Sperling "one-size-fits-all" piece of shit. He tugs at his crotch and spits. As he bends over to inspect his pet-unias, a yappy white poodle zips out of his house, dashes across the street to the house with the Cadillac in the driveway, and arches her spine. Walter doesn't notice, though, standing at the edge of his property, staring at the grubby front yard of the Tudor right next door.

16 PAPER BOY 16

pedals up the street and hooks a morning edition at the poodle as she kicks grass over her package. He delivers to the house next door, a bungalow with a front porch scraped clean of old paint, then a ranch at the end of the block where a strange youngster named BARKELOW rides his bike in concentric circles, then turns to do Ray's side.

17 RAY - DAY 17

steps out of the house in time to get a paper lined into his shin, watches the kid skip the Tudor place. Walter growls something at the kid and then yells at his dog.

(CONTINUED)

17

CONTINUED:

17

WALTER

Queenie!

The poodle runs back across the street.

RAY

(neighborly)

'Morning, Walter!

Walter says nothing, takes his dog and goes in his house. Ray shrugs, goes inside, opens the curtains and sits in the window to read.

18

EXT. BUNGALOW - MINUTES LATER

18

TIGHT ON a tarpaulin, several unopened paint cans and some brushes. WIDE to reveal RICKY BUTLER, a slightly ruffled, spaced-out seventeen-year-old "setting up" to paint the porch. Actually, he's leaning past a huge stereo speaker in the window to put on side two of the "Physical Graffiti" album. And also ravaging a family-size box of Dunkin Doughnuts. Backhanding some jelly off his face, he looks over to...

19

FLAGPOLE HOUSE

19

next door where MARK A. RUMSFIELD swaggers out of the front door, slamming it behind him.

LOW ANGLE SHOT, looking right up into his nostrils as he surveys his yard this fine morning. He's a militarist, all right. Close-cropped hair, square jaw, rippling pecs underneath the Army issue T-shirt, tattoo on right bicep reading "Death Before Dishonor."

*

His wife, BONNIE, a voluptuous knock-out fifteen years his junior, follows him out and hands him a tri-folded American flag. He marches to the pole, hoists the flag, salutes and snaps a rigid about-face.

RICKY

'Morning, Lieutenant. Mrs.
Rumsfield.

Rumsfield nods to the freak.

BONNIE

Hi, Ricky!

Ricky notices Rumsfield's foot hovering dangerously close to the doggie-doo-doo.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

RICKY

Hey, Mr. Rumsfield, watch out
for --

Too late. Bull's eye.

RUMSFIELD

God-damiiiiitt!!

RICKY

Tried to catch you. Sorry, man.

He hides a smile. CREDITS END.

20 INT. RAY'S HOUSE

20

Ray watches from his window as Rumsfield storms across the street to Walter's house, stopping briefly to scrape his defiled boot on the curb.

21 EXT. WALTER'S HOUSE - DAY

21

Rumsfield stands in the lawn, absolutely livid.

RUMSFIELD

Walter! Walter!

No reply from the house.

RUMSFIELD

I know you're in there, old man!
You and that runt dog!

Now Bonnie is at his side, tugging his elbow.

BONNIE

Mark, honey, the neighbors --

RUMSFIELD

(shaking her off)

Listen up, Walter! That piece of scum barking rat of yours has just taken its last dump on my lawn! Understand? I find one more -- just one! and I'm gonna catch that thing and staple its ass shut! You hear me?!

The DOG appears in the front window and YAPS at him from behind the glass.

(CONTINUED)

21

CONTINUED:

21

RUMSFIELD

By God, I'm gonna do it right
now --

He advances on the window. Bonnie grabs him around the waist and tries to pull him away.

CUT TO:

22

INT. PETERSON LIVING ROOM - RAY - DAY

22

watching all this with great interest. His wife, CAROL, a handsome, wry-looking woman, scuffs into the living room in fuzzy slippers, belting her robe.

Across the street, Rumsfield hauls up his garage door with one massive arm.

CAROL

(eyes half-closed)

What are you doing up?

RAY

(eyes glued to the street action)

Walter's dog took a dump on Rumsfield's lawn again.

Carol leans over next to her husband and peers out. As the garage door bangs shut, Rumsfield curses, removing the poodle's greeting with a snow shovel and a stick. Ricky watches, delighted. Carol straightens up, pats Ray on the shoulder absently.

CAROL

Good, honey.

And scuffs into the kitchen.

CUT TO:

23

INT. PETERSON BREAKFAST NOOK - DAY

23

A sunny little eating area that looks over the yard. Carol sits at the table with paper while DAVE, their eleven-year-old, inhales his breakfast. Ray stands at the kitchen window with coffee, peering out at the Tudor house.

*
*

RAY

What's their name? Klopek?

(CONTINUED)

CAROL

Mm-hm.

RAY

What is that, Slavic?

CAROL

I don't know.

RAY

I remember when we used to have mostly American neighbors.

(beat)

How long have they been in there now, a month? You think they're ever gonna cut the lawn?

Carol looks up and taps her cheek pensively.

CAROL

Let's see... I think it has been a month. Oh, Ray, that's terrible, we haven't even gone next door to introduce ourselves. We have to do that right away, it's just rude.

RAY

Well... Honey, if it's been a month already, it doesn't make much sense to go over there now. What am I gonna say, 'Hi, how are ya, I would have come over sooner but I'm a rude person?'

He snorts, shakes his head.

RAY

I don't need to apologize to this guy. He's the one letting his lawn go to hell and... and keeping me up all night with that weird noise coming out of his basement...

He stares at the house with narrow eyes, thinking hard.

RAY

(aloud; to himself)

... What the hell are they doing in there?

Carol studies her husband tiredly. Ray catches her look. notes half a smile beginning. Then she looks down at her paper.

(CONTINUED)

RAY
(defensively)

What?

She shakes her head, stifling something. He sits down at the table, lowering his head almost to his breakfast dish so he can look up into her eyes.

RAY
Carol, what? You started to smile.
What are you smiling at?

He grabs her wrist. She straightens up.

CAROL
Ray, we should have gone up to the lake. This is no kind of vacation for you. You're going to sit around the house doing nothing for a week and it's gonna make you crazy.

Ray retaliates in a flash; they've had this discussion before.

RAY
Carol, it's not gonna make me crazy --

CAROL
It is too! Look at you, you've spent all morning looking out the windows! You were up at the crack of dawn watching a dog poop, for God's sakes.

Dave catches this last line and finds it uproarious. Ray silences him with a look. *

RAY
(to Carol)
I'm still on work time! My body clock hasn't adjusted yet, that's all. Honey, I've been looking forward to this for weeks. Come on, we've been in the house three years, we've been working our tails off to get it right and I've never had time to enjoy it. I want to relax around my house, for once. Do some yardwork, maybe fix that old brick barbeque in the back, lay around and listen to the ballgame and drink beer...

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (3)

23

Carol sighs.

CAROL

I just hope you're not turning into an old man who skulks around peeking at the neighbors with his robe open.

RAY

Oh, come on, honey. I'm the least nosey person I know. All I want to do is relax. You'll see. By the end of the week, I'll be a new man. And I'll keep my robe closed.

He winks at her. Now we look past Carol out into the back yard where VINCE the dog is BARKING at something in the bushes.

24 EXT. BACK YARD - DAY

24

VINCE BARKS at a section of shaking bush on the south property line. We hear the CRUNCH of TWIGS snapped underfoot and then, slowly... a rifle barrel slides out of the hedge.

VOICE (O.S.)

(from bush)

Ssh! Quiet, Vince!

The rifleman exposes himself. This is ART WEINGARTNER, Ray's other next door neighbor. He's a soft, wacky-looking middle-ager, with a paunch and a slight overbite. Leaves stick in his thinning hair as he sights the rifle on...

25 BIG FAT CROW

25

squatting on the Klopeks' fence. Art takes a deep breath and squeezes the trigger. POP! The CROW SQUAWKS and takes off as the PELLET SNAPS into the FENCE six inches below him. Art curses and breaks from the bush, PUMPING the RIFLE furiously to try and get another SHOT off before it's out of range.

26 INT. BREAKFAST NOOK - DAY

26

Carol freezes when she sees Art.

CAROL

(gravely)

Ray, Art's got a gun.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

Ray bolts for the door instantly.

CUT TO:

27 EXT. YARD

27

Art's swinging the rifle in a long arc, tracking the crow. Ray steps out on the back porch.

RAY

Art!

The arc stops in Ray's direction and the GUN POPS again. Ray dives to the ground as the PELLET PLUNKS THROUGH the porch LIGHT, busted GLASS raining down on him.

ART

Shit!

He watches the CROW swoop off into the sanctuary of a tree, chiding him with a series of SQUAWKS. Then he looks over at Ray.

ART

Was that your porch light?

CUT TO:

28 INT. BREAKFAST NOOK - DAY

28

We're TIGHT ON Art's air rifle leaned against the wall. GO WIDE to see Art has joined the Petersons for breakfast, wolfing down an English muffin as he talks.

ART

Well, you know how Suzette is about her bird feeder. Goddamn crows start showing up out of nowhere and raid the thing, she's on my back to do something about it.

CAROL

I don't remember seeing crows around here before.

ART

(nods)

Big bastards, too. So, I figured I'd break out the elephant gun and pick a couple off while she's up visiting her mother.

(CONTINUED)

He slurps his coffee. This guy eats like a machine.

RAY

How come you didn't go with
Suzette to visit her mother?

ART

(snorts)

You kiddin'? Me in the same house
with those two for a week? I'd
rather eat glass. Yeah, it's
gonna be a big week for the
bachelor kid.

He injects a piece of bacon into his face.

ART

How come you're not at work, Ray?

RAY

I took a week off.

ART

Yeah? Great! You going
somewhere?

Ray looks at Carol. Carol looks at Ray.

RAY

No. I thought I'd just hang
around the house and relax.

As if on cue, the strange noise from the Klopek house
CHURNS up again. Art pushes his plate away and brushes
crumbs off his shirt.

ART

(nodding toward
noise)

Good luck, with these maniacs we
got next door.

CAROL

Have you met the Klopeks yet,
Art?

Art shakes his head.

ART

Nah. Nobody on the block has.
But I heard something from the
real estate broad who showed 'em
the place.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ART (CONT'D)

(leans forward)

Their last house burned to the ground.

Art widens his eyes and wags his brow.

RAY

You're kidding.

ART

(shaking head)

A hideous, raging inferno.

RAY

(to Carol)

Neighbors from hell.

ART

I can't believe you said that, that's exactly what I was thinking.

Carol laughs into her coffee. Ray winks at her. Art goes to the window, strikes a dramatic pose as he gazes next door.

ART

Some people are just... magnets for tragedy. Evil follows them around like a lurking shadow. I expect their grass will die soon.

RAY

Then a plague of frogs?

ART

Maybe.

(beat)

Sure glad I don't live next door to them.

Art detects an exchange between Ray and Carol.

ART

Listen, no kidding. These Klopeks are major league strange. I've been watching that place since they moved in. Nobody goes in, nobody comes out. No deliveries. No visitors. Weird noises... Nobody even seems to know how many of 'em there are.

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED: (3)

28

DAVE

There's three of 'em. They only
come out at night. Ricky Butler
says they're nocturnal feeders.

*

All heads turn to Dave. Ray shakes his head.

*

RAY

Ricky Butler...

DAVE

(to Art)

Last week I was up on the roof
looking at the full moon with my
telescope, and I saw 'em in their
back yard.

*

No one says anything for a beat. Carol smiles.

CAROL

What were they doing, honey?

DAVE

Well... they were digging.

*

Art's eyes go wide as saucers. Carol puts her hand over
her mouth and starts laughing.

RAY

Great. They'll fit right in.
We got Rumsfield the army freak
across the street, that psycho
Barkelow kid that never gets off
his bike and now a family of
moles right next door.

ART

Sounds pretty sick to me. Digging,
huh? Like a bunch of ghouls.

Ray pushes away from the table and stands.

RAY

This conversation is over.

(to Dave)

Leave the Klopeks alone, dig?
Their business is not your
business.

*

(to Art)

And don't fill his head with any
of your half-cocked theories,
either.

He pecks Carol on the cheek.

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED: (4)

28

ART

Where're you going?

RAY

To start my vacation.

Art hops up to follow him.

ART

Hang on, I'll help you.

They exit. Dave looks at his mother. *

DAVE *

I'm not the one that woke up in
the middle of the night.

CAROL

(like a shot)

Eat your breakfast.

CUT TO:

29

EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE - DAY

29

Walter observes as a Chem-Lawn truck sprinkles his turf.
Over at Ricky's house, Ricky and Dave stand in front of
the porch, arms folded, minds working. *

DAVE *

I thought your parents wanted it
white.

RICKY

Yeah, but white's so...
pedestrian. I'd like to do
something really cool... you know,
sort of a 'welcome home' surprise.
Maybe blue.

He steps back, holds up a thumb like an artiste.

RICKY

Yeah... blue could be the play.

30

RUMSFIELDS

30

Bonnie, in a mind-blowing bikini, is on her hands and
knees planting bulbs at the base of the house. Rumsfield
has his lawnmower up-ended and wipes down the detached
mower blades with gasoline, staring across the street.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

RUMSFIELD

Boy, that really burns my ass.

Bonnie looks up.

31 RUMSFIELD'S POV - WALTER

31

standing on the edge of his lawn, staring with concern at the Klopeks' wild overgrowth creeping dangerously close. The Chem-Lawn truck pulls away.

32 RUMSFIELD'S POV

32

RUMSFIELD (O.S.)

That old fart's got the best lawn on the block. It's cherry. And you know why? Because he trains his dog to crap in my yard.

Now Walter digs at a clump of crabgrass on his property line.

RUMSFIELD (O.S.)

Yeah, that's right, Walter. Those Huns next door are loaded with crabgrass and it's contagious as hell....

33 BACK TO SCENE - DAY

33

Bonnie into her gardening again.

RUMSFIELD

He's got a tough summer ahead if the foreigners leave that jungle growth alone like that. Whaddaya say, honey, heart attack by mid-July?

As Rumsfield turns to face his wife, he notices...

34 RICKY BUTLER

34

staring mesmerized at Bonnie's shapely ass. The lid from a primer can drops from his hand and clatters on the driveway. Then, Ricky catches her husband glaring at him... and a broad, shit-eating grin spreads across his face.

35 RUMSFIELD

35

to Bonnie, out of the corner of his mouth, as he twirls the sharpened mower blade in his hand:

RUMSFIELD

That kid next door's a meatball.

36 ANOTHER ANGLE - RUMSFIELD

36

turns at the sound of Ray's GARAGE DOOR ROLLING noisily up. Ray and Art, in shorts and ratty golf shirts, see Rumsfield and wave.

RUMSFIELD

There's Peterson. He came out in his robe last night when the foreigners were making all that racket. He didn't do anything about it, though.

He smirks and waves back, drops to his knees and plunges the blade back onto the mower.

37 RAY'S GARAGE

37

Ray pokes around under his workbench as Art leans against the car chewing bubblegum.

ART

Whatcha gonna do first?

RAY

(shrugs)

I don't know.

He produces a shiny red toolbox, sets it on the bench.

RAY

Did you see my new tools?

He opens the box. Art whistles.

ART

Those are beauties. Where'd you get 'em?

RAY

Carol's father gave 'em to me for Christmas.

ART

You gonna build something?

(CONTINUED)

RAY

Maybe.

He picks up a tool, studies it.

RAY

What's this?

ART

(squinting)

It's a plane.

RAY

No, it's not. Plane's a flat thing with a razor in it. This must be a... a clamp or something.

Art shrugs, turns to look out at the street. Ray looks at his tools.

RAY

Betcha Ozzie Nelson'd know how to use these things.

He closes the toolbox, checks his watch.

RAY

What time does the ball game go on?

He joins Art at the edge of the driveway. They watch the Barkelow kid ride his SQUEAKY BIKE in the cul-de-sac for a beat.

ART

I got an idea. Let's knock the Barkelow kid off his bike and grease that goddamned wheel once and for all.

RAY

Ah, he's not bothering anybody, Art.

He turns away.

ART

No, come on, we'll use your tools.

Ray folds his arms, thinking hard.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (2)

37

RAY

Maybe I'm hungry. You wanna drive
somewhere, get a beef sandwich?

Then he shakes himself out of it.

RAY

No. Don't do this. We're gonna
think of something.

Now Art grabs Ray's shoulder.

ART

Hey, Ray.

Ray turns and Art nods over toward the...

38 KLOPEK HOUSE - DAY

38

as the front door opens.

All work on the block stops and all heads turn to stare as HANS, the boy, steps onto the porch. He's a gaunt, pale lad, of a rather indiscriminate adolescent age, with stringy hair, a caved-in chest. He looks around a bit self-consciously as Walter to his right, Ray and Art to his left, Ricky Butler, Dave, and the Rumsfields across the street all stare wordlessly at him. Keeping his eyes moving from one comatose neighbor to the next, Hans shuffles to the edge of the porch and squats down to pick up the mail packet. *

39 ART AND RAY

39

transfixed, watching the kid's every move. Art nudges Ray.

ART

Let's go say hello.

RAY

Huh?

ART

Come on, now's our chance. Let's
see what he sounds like.

Ray looks at Art tentatively.

- 40 RUMSFIELDS 40
 watching Hans from their vantage point.
- RUMSFIELD
 Hey, honey, one of the Huns came
 out of the cave.
- BONNIE
 We shouldn't stare like this.
- 41 WALTER 41
 reaches down and scoops up the poodle as she's about to
 charge into Klopeks' yard.
- 42 RICKY BUTLER 42
 snaps his gum, a keen eye on the action. Dave's eyes are *
 on Art and Ray.
- 43 HANS 43
 straightens and backs up slowly for the door.
- 44 RAY AND ART 44
 Art shakes Ray by the elbow.
- ART
 Come on! We're gonna lose him!
- RAY
 (pulls his arm free)
 You say 'hi' to him.
- ART
 He's your neighbor!
- 45 HANS 45
 slips back into the house and closes the door, a weasel
 retreating to his den.
- 46 EXT. PETERSON GARAGE 46
 ART
 Blew it. Chicken.

(CONTINUED)

46

CONTINUED:

46

RAY

What do you mean, 'chicken'? He
went back in the house.

ART

(chicken impression)
Buck! Buck! Buck! B-Gawwk!

Ray gives Art a shove.

47

RUMSFIELDS

47

watch Art and Ray quibble, taking turns pulling each
other toward the Klopek house.

RUMSFIELD

(disgusted)

Look. They're daring each other
to ring the doorbell!

He shakes his head and turns back to his lawnmower.

48

ART AND RAY

48

Now Ray's grabbing Art and pulling him toward the house.

RAY

Come on, you called me a chicken.
I'm not afraid, you come with me,
hard guy. Come on.

Art hesitates, looks across the street. Ricky Butler
jumps up and down in his driveway, yelling...

RICKY

Go for it! Go for it!

... and pointing at the house.

ART

(to Ray)

Okay. All right.

They start for the house. Ricky Butler breaks into enthu-
siastic applause. The Barkelow kid even glances over.
The Rumsfields stop to watch, Walter glares from his front
picture window and Dave nods to himself.

*

We study their faces, INTERCUTTING, as if they were the
townspeople and Art and Ray were Gary Cooper meeting evil
Roy Slade at the O.K. Corral. Tense MUSIC BUILDS. They
reach the front walk.

49 ART AND RAY'S POV - HOUSE 49

Dead vines, dirty windows, leaves blowing across the brown grass... A loose shutter with a CREAKING HINGE BANGS on an upper window. It's creepy.

50 ART AND RAY 50

Look at each other. Step onto the porch.

RAY

I don't think the bell works.

He reaches for the door knocker, a big brass affair in desperate need of a good polishing.

ART

Did you notice they have bars over their basement window?

RAY

(grabs knocker)

They have what?

Art repeats the word "bars" but it's obscured when Ray knocks the knocker, because the vibrations loosen a big old shutter that drops with a sharp BANG!, breaking open a nest of suddenly pissed-off WASPS. BZZZZZZ!!

RAY

Bees!

ART

Wasps!

51 WIDE ANGLE 51

to see Art and Ray dash from the porch, screaming and waving their arms like lunatics, as a mass of wasps attack them. They run around in circles, jump over bushes, gradually twisting toward the street.

RAY/ART

Bees! Wasps! Aaaaagh! Help!

52 ANGLE ON RUMSFIELD 52

Immediately, the soldier in him surfaces. He screams at his wife:

RUMSFIELD

Turn on the hose!!

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: 52

She dashes off to do that while he runs to grab the nozzle end. With Art and Ray still screaming, Rumsfield grabs the hose and breaks for the street.

RUMSFIELD

This way, men! Run to me! Run to the water!

53 ANGLE ON COIL OF HOSE 53

uncoiling as Rumsfield runs for the street.

54 RUMSFIELD 54

still running. We see Art and Ray start for him. The WATER HISSES on full force.

55 HOSE COIL 55

It's out of coils. It goes taut.

56 RUMSFIELD 56

still running at high speed, he suddenly comes up short of slack. His feet fly up over his head, his body pauses in mid-air for a millisecond, then he slams down on his ass.

57 RICKY BUTLER 57

running from his garage with a can of Raid, sees this and collapses in hysterics.

58 BARKELOW KID 58

stops riding his bike in circles to watch the madness.

59 BARKELOW KID'S POV 59

Three grown men run around the yard screaming, waving their arms, rolling in the grass, spraying each other with the hose.

60 DAVE 60 *

sits down on the porch and watches, shaking his head. *

61 CONTINUED:

61

RUMSFIELD

In Southeast Asia, we'd call this
type of thing... bad karma.

We go WIDE. Sad men. Defeated men. Staring wetly at
the house, the victor in round one.

62 MEN'S POV - HOUSE - DAY

62

Smug in its impenetrable formidable-ness. A curtain moves
in a second story window. Maybe it was because of the
wind. Maybe not.

CUT TO:

A62 INT. KLOPEK HOUSE - DAY

A62

We're inside a dark room on the second floor looking
THROUGH a dirty window TO Art and Ray in Rumsfield's
yard. A hand pushes the curtain back into place.

63 EXT. RAY'S PATIO - EVENING

63

Carol steps out of the house onto the patio carrying a
platter of meat. She immediately spots something O.S. and
bursts into loud, spontaneous laughter.

64 REVERSE POV - RAY

64

At the barbeque in apron and chef's hat. Greasy bee-sting
ointment smeared over two lumpy red bulges on his fore-
head. He glares at his wife's cruel taunting.

65 CAROL

65

gets a hold on herself, starts to arrange the table. But
she can't resist zinging him.

CAROL

(affecting great
sincerity)

I'm so proud of you, honey. At
least you made the effort to break
the ice with the new neighbors.
None of the other neighbors did.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

65

CONTINUED:

65

CAROL (CONT'D)

(straining not to
laugh)

Now they can't accuse us of being
rude or stand-offish. Now you've
taken the initiative.

Her voice starts trembling, she's losing it.

CAROL

Even if they didn't actually come
to the door, honey, at least --

RAY

(barks)

Enough!

She bolts into the house, EXPLODES O.S. Ray sneers,
turns to look at Dave, standing mutely beside him. *

DAVE

I didn't say anything. *

Ray looks back at the fire.

DAVE

I thought you were gonna fix the
old barbeque today. *

RAY

(like a shot)

Go in the house.

Dave turns and leaves, moping. *

DAVE

God... *

He lets the screen door close with a healthy whap! *

66

RAY

66

self-consciously presses one of the lumps, winces. Then
he sees --

67

CROW

67

squatting on the Klopek's' fence. It SQUAWKS at him.

68

RAY

68

scowls at it, pissed.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

He sneaks a piece of charcoal out of the bag and heaves it at the crow. It takes off. Nodding to himself, he defiantly squirts a stream of lighter fluid at the fire. It flares up and he jumps back, losing his hat.

CUT TO:

69 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE - NIGHT

69

The moon is up and the wind is blowing as Ray comes out to the front door to take Vince for a walk. Vince chooses Walter's yard for his first stop, making Ray very nervous.

RAY

No, Vince. Not here. Anywhere but here, boy...

He tugs at the leash but the dog won't budge. Then a voice:

VOICE (O.S.)

Hey, you with the dog!!

Ray jumps a foot, looks over and sees Art beckoning with a beer can from Ricky's house.

70 RICKY'S FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

70

Ray and Art stand in the yard, leaning on the porch rail. Ricky sits in a patio chair, chugging beer, then cranes his neck up at the night sky.

RICKY

Hm. Green sky...

Ray and Art flick a glance upward.

RICKY

Green sky at morning...
Neighbor take warning...

RAY

(to Ricky)
Green sky at night?

RICKY

(after a beat)
Neighbor take flight.

Ray snorts. Art turns and stares intently across the street at the Klopeks. Ricky notices.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

RICKY

(to Ray)

Ever see The Sentinel, Mr. Peterson? About the old man whose apartment was the gateway to hell?

Ray shakes his head. Ricky follows Art's stare across the street.

RICKY

It makes sense, you know. Their last house burning down and all? Like maybe somebody left the gate open.

71 RICKY

71

looks to Art for a reaction. A breeze kicks up, blowing through the trees, then -- BANG! -- we hear a DOOR SLAM SHUT over at the Klopeks. Art's eyes narrow keenly, like a dog on a scent.

ART

(not surprised)

They're moving around again.

72 RAY AND RICKY

72

look at each other. Art stares into the night sky. EERIE MUSIC begins as he starts a morbid reminiscence.

ART

(gravely)

It was a summer night like this when they found him.

RICK

What, Mr. Weingartner?

ART

Oh, it was before your time. Way back... Hinckley Hills was much smaller then, everybody knew everybody, never had to lock your door... I musta been... sixteen, seventeen. Anyway, uh... there was a soda fountain in the drug store where the library is now. Guy that ran it, the soda jerk, was a rotund guy with glasses named 'Skip.' Had a bungalow over on Elm. Wife, couple of kids.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ART (CONT'D)

Nice enough guy, pleasant... not real sharp, but... whaddaya want, he was a soda jerk. Guy's forty years old wearing a paper hat making cherry cokes, safe bet he's not gonna be running for governor, right? So there was this heat wave. A real scorcher. I think the record still stands from that summer, it was in the hundreds for days. And the people over on Elm started to notice this... nasty, rotten stench in the air and... it was coming from Skip's house. Well, nobody did anything for a while. What do you do, ring the guy's bell and say, 'Hi, your house stinks'? So they tried to ignore it. But it got worse and worse, finally one of the neighbors called the cops, they go to his house, he tells them he's got a sump pump problem, he'll clear it up, they say fine, they leave. Next thing you know, there's smoke coming out the windows. Fire department shows up, breaks into the house... There's Skip, lying dead in the kitchen with the gas on. They go in the basement... wife and kids clubbed to death weeks before. The bodies are decomposing in the heat. After he did it, he just threw a sheet over 'em, kept going to work as usual. Cops showed up; he figured he was caught. Offed himself. Torched the house. Made one too many lemon phosphates one day and just --
(snaps his fingers)
-- snapped.

(CONTINUED)

RAY

I remember hearing about that when I was a kid.

Art nods morbidly.

ART

These towns are full of stories like that. There's a new one every day. Sometimes... right under your nose.

Ricky wrinkles his brow, thinking hard.

RICKY

Now that you mention it... I've noticed kind of a... funky odor around that house since they moved in.

Someone swallows hard. In the distance, a DOG HOWLS at the moon. Vince's ears prick up and he starts GROWLING.

RAY

(clears his throat)

I gotta go.

ART

'S' matter, Ray? Scared?

RAY

Yeah. Art. Right. That's why I'm leaving. I'm gonna go home and pull the covers over my head.

He unties the dog.

RICKY

I'm sorry, Mr. Peterson. I'll stop talking about the Klopeks if it bugs you.

RAY

Relax, will you? I'm a grown man. You can tell ghost stories about the Klopeks all night. Personally, it's just not something I'm going to go home and lose sleep over.

HARD CUT TO:

73 INT. RAY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

73

He's wide awake. It's late. Carol sleeps soundly next to him, but his eyes are like saucers. We PAN OVER TO the window, curtain blowing in with a calm night breeze. It's dead quiet in the street... or is it? We begin to pick up a NOISE... almost like footsteps, but daintier... like tiny little elves in tap shoes trotting back and forth in Ray's driveway. TIC-TIC-TIC-TIC... TIC-TIC-TIC-TIC...

74 RAY

74

He hears it, too. What the hell is it? Imagination? Vince, asleep at the foot of the bed, suddenly pops his head up, ears erect. It's not imagination if the dog hears it, too. TIC-TIC-TIC-TIC... VINCE muffles half a BARK, hops off the bed and trots over to the window, his nails on the hardwood floor going "TIC-TIC-TIC-TIC..." Ray sits up. It's an animal out there. VINCE is at the window and GROWLING. Ray swings his legs out of bed and is halfway across the room when -- ROWROWROW!!! -- terrible, horrible ANIMAL SHRIEKING pierces the night! Ray, startled out of his jock, vaults straight into the air and lands in a crouch on the bed as Vince goes nuts BARKING and trying to jump through the window. Carol's upright and trembling, clutching the sheet to her chin.

CAROL

What? What?

RAY

(panicked)

Animals!

ROWROWROWR!! HISS! SHRIEEEEEEK!

CAROL

What?

RAY

Wild animals in the street!

Vince claws at the screen, baring his teeth. Carol snaps out of her sleep mode and rolls her eyes at her husband, still crouched on the bed. She crosses to the window and pulls Vince away, scolding him.

CAROL

Get down! Go over there and shut up!

Vince obeys. The PANDEMONIUM in the street STOPS.

CAROL

For heaven's sake, Ray, it's a catfight.

CUT TO:

75 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE - STREET LEVEL SHOT - NIGHT 75

LOOKING UP AT Ray's window. We hear Carol's voice as the window slides open.

CAROL (O.S.)

Look at you! Art tells you a ghost story and you're a nervous wreck! What are you, thirty-seven going on twelve?

76 ANOTHER ANGLE 76

And the window's closed. But now we hear HEAVY BREATHING and notice something on the bottom of the FRAME, right at ground level. It's hard to tell what it is in the dark but... now it starts moving and it looks kind of like... a carcass being dragged across the cement. As the BREATHING CONTINUES, we PAN LEFT TOWARD the Klopeks.

Over on the side of the house facing Walter's place, the gate slowly swings open. CREE-E-E-EAK... and the thing that's doing the breathing and the carcass-dragging makes its way for the opening.

DISSOLVE TO:

77 EXT. RUMSFIELD'S LAWN - GROUND LEVEL - NEXT MORNING 77

in Rumsfield's yard LOOKING UP AT his picture window. The bottom third of the FRAME, however, is blocked by a blurry, dark mass with FLIES BUZZING all over it. We see Rumsfield come to the window and look straight AT us. He spots the mass, his eyes widen and we see him mouth the words, "Jesus Christ!" We PUSH UP as he throws open the front door and jumps onto the porch.

RUMSFIELD

Walterrrrrrrrr!!

78 ANOTHER ANGLE 78

SLAM! We STAY WITH Rumsfield as he crosses to Walter's yard, ranting and raving the whole way.

RUMSFIELD

I warned you, didn't I? Didn't I warn you? Well, goddammit, now it's --

He stops. We GO WIDE to see Walter just standing there with his hands in his pockets, staring at his lawn. Ricky Butler stands with him, mutely.

79

WALTER'S LAWN

79

It's all torn to shit. Looks like the Rams just scrimmaged on it. The old man's devastated.

RUMSFIELD

Jesus...

RICKY

(to Walter)

Maybe you better sit down.

Walter mumbles something unintelligible. Rumsfield gets down on his haunches to survey the carnage, hefting a lump of sod in his hand. He looks up at Ricky.

RUMSFIELD

What the hell happened?

Walter stumbles over to the property line, a bit dazed. His eyes lock on the flagstone path leading to the fenced-off portion of the Klopeks' back yard.

RICKY

(to Rumsfield)

Must have been a coyote, or...
some animal that wandered in from
the woods.

Rumsfield hooks a thumb toward his own yard.

RUMSFIELD

Whatever it was paid me a visit,
too.

RICKY

Yeah, I saw.

RUMSFIELD

At first I thought it was the
poodle again --

Ricky shakes his head.

RICKY

No poodle I ever knew could pinch
anything like that.

Rumsfield nods grimly.

80

WALTER

80

is now on his haunches, staring at the Klopeks' flagstones. He stands and brushes off his hands.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

WALTER

Goddamn son of a bitch!

Then he marches into the house.

RICKY

Walter's pissed.

RUMSFIELD

Yeah.

He looks at the wrecked lawn, shaking his head. Ricky turns to peruse the Klopeks' property, around where Walter was squatting.

DISSOLVE TO:

81 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE - DAY (LATER) 81

Paper boy comes pedaling up the street, whistling. Then he hits his coaster brakes and sucks in his whistle as he sees:

82 PAPER BOY'S POV 82

Ricky, Rumsfield, Art in his shorty pajamas and Ray, with coffee, standing on Ricky's lawn having an anxious discussion.

83 GUYS 83

Ray has the upper voice at this point.

RAY

... It could've been a cat fight.
It could've been a raccoon.

ART

Raccoon? Jesus, Ray, you heard that squealing last night, that was no cute, furry raccoon. We had something running around our front yards last night that stalked and killed a live animal! Look at the size of that turd! That's a predator!!

RICKY

Maybe a chemical leak in the swamp caused a mutation in the food chain. Maybe it was an eight-foot radioactive possum!

(CONTINUED)

Ray starts laughing. Art smirks.

ART

Ricky, you've burned too many brain cells, okay?

RAY

But that's how you sound, Art!

The Paper Boy approaches apprehensively. The men spot him.

ART

Hey, kid!

PAPER BOY

Look, I know I'm a little late, but --

ART

No, no, no, whaddaya know about the people in 903?

This whole exchange goes rapid fire and overlaps from here.

RAY

Art, will you relax about the Klopeks? It's got nothing to do with them.

ART

Magnets for tragedy, that's the first thing I said --

RAY

(to Rumsfield)

God, some people move in that're a little different and we all lose it.

RUMSFIELD

I gotta admit, the bees caught me off guard. You don't normally see insects organize an attack like that.

ART

Crows, bees, wild animals! This shit never happened before they moved in! I'm tellin' you, they're evil!!

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED: (2)

83

RICKY

Did you know the crow is a symbol for death? Oh yeah. Gosh, Mr. Peterson, didn't you ever listen to the White album?

PAPER BOY

All I know is their street number ends in a three, which is always bad luck for paper boys.

ART

See? See? The evidence is overwhelming! I say --

84 ANOTHER ANGLE

84

SLAM! The discussion is halted by the sudden appearance of a new Klopek, standing on the front porch staring at the cluster of frenzied neighbors. He's a short, squat, dark, European-type fellow in baggy pants and a greasy sleeveless undershirt. Call him UNCLE REUBEN.

RUMSFIELD

Who's he?

ART

I don't know, I never saw this one before.

Reuben wades into the bushes and pulls out a coil of dirty garden hose. As he does so, our attention turns to...

85 WALTER'S HOUSE

85

as the old man stomps down his front steps and picks his way across his mangled yard to confront Reuben.

86 GUYS

86

watch with amazement.

RICKY

Uh-oh. He's going in the yard.

The Paper Boy, a relative newcomer to the pack, shakes his head slowly.

87 GUYS' POV - WALTER AND REUBEN 87

Walter, hands on hips, berates Reuben, occasionally pointing to either lawn and the flagstone path. We can't exactly make out what he's saying, but we catch a few expletives. Reuben stands there without reacting for a bit, then hits the spray nozzle on the hose and turns it on the flagstones, wetting Walter's legs in the process. Walter jumps back, shakes a fist and storms into his house. Reuben twists off the hose and drops it. TIGHT ON Reuben as he turns toward the group across the street.

88 REUBEN'S POV - GUYS 88

They stare at him for a long, uncomfortable beat. Then, slowly and in mechanical unison, they raise their hands and wave in a quasi-neighborly, zombie greeting.

89 REUBEN 89

unsure of what to make of this, waves back, and goes into his house.

90 GUYS 90

watch him go. A beat.

PAPER BOY

Neither rain nor sleet nor dark
of night will keep me from my
appointed deliveries...

Everyone looks at him.

PAPER BOY

(gravely)
... but that sucker makes it a
whole different ball game.

ON his look, we...

CUT TO:

91 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE - NIGHT 91

It's real dark. We hear a PERSISTENT SQUEAK and spot the Barkelow kid's bicycle headlamp going around and around.

92 RICKY'S PORCH - NIGHT

92

Ricky and a teenage girl (GAIL) are dragging folding chairs out onto the porch.

TEENAGE GIRL (GAIL)

What about your parents?

RICKY

They're not going to be home til
12:30.

They set up their chairs so as to have a perfect view of the neighboring houses.

RICKY

I swear to God, this is better than anything on television.

GAIL

Why can't we go to a movie?

RICKY

A movie! That's not real. It's the same as television. Trust me, this is real. This is my neighborhood.

93 ART'S DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

93

Art's garage DOOR RATTLES up and Art skulks out in old sneakers,

94 RICKY'S PORCH - NIGHT

94

RICKY

Here he comes. Get ready. This is the best show in town. God, I love this street.

95 RAY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

95

RAY

It's silly. All this spying. These guys really think the Klopeks are up to something crazy. I mean, what do they think they'll find? It's silly.

CAROL

Very silly, dear.

RAY

These guys think they're gonna sneak in there maybe, and find Dracula or Frankenstein's laboratory or maybe a torture chamber or something?

(CONTINUED)

ED:

95

RAY (CONT'D)

Like the the Marquis de Sade, with a rack and thumb-screws and... and coffins with nails in 'em that poke your eyes out! Isn't that silly?

CAROL

(placating)

It's ve very silly.

RICKY'S PORCH - NIGHT

96

Reaches back and turns off the porchlight.

RICKY

The houselights dim...

Looks his luminous watch and points across the

RICKY

... And... curtain.

Art's garage DOOR RATTLES up and Art skulks out old sneakers, cutting through the hedge into yard.

RICKY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

97

Continues his speech, courting his wife's approval.

RAY

I can't believe these guys have nothing better to do than spy on the neighbors! Like the Klopeks brought evil into the neighborhood! Well, I'm a grown man. I'm not sinking to their xenophobic level. I'm not about to get involved in a bunch of childish games...

RICKY'S YARD - NIGHT

98

Reaches out of a bush and heaves a handful of PEBBLES at front window.

RICKY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

99

Reacts as the CLATTER on the GLASS.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

RAY
I'll be right back.

He puts down his drink and bolts for the door.

100 EXT. RAY'S YARD - RICKY'S POV - NIGHT

100

As Art and Ray confer in low tones, Ricky explains to Gail.

RICKY (O.S.)
Y'see, the guy on the right,
Peterson... He's the skeptic.
He's basically grounded in reality
and doesn't want to believe his
next door neighbors are up to
something strange, because if he
did he'd have to deal with it.
Weingartner, on the other hand,
wants to believe the worst. The
weirder the better. He's actually
the more spiritual of the two.
And I think he'll bring Peterson
around, eventually.

Ray and Art start to cross the street to Rumsfield's,
glancing over their shoulders at the Klopek house.

GAIL (TEENAGE GIRL) (O.S.)
Where are they going now?

RICKY (O.S.)
Rusmfield, next door. The Marine.
This oughta be good. Sshhh...

101 EXT. RUMSFIELD'S YARD - NIGHT

101

Rumsfield charges outside, slams the front door. BANG!
Art and Ray wince. He joins them out front, tossing
Art a large rifle scope. Art puts it up to his eye
and smiles.

RAY
What's this?

RUMSFIELD
Infra-red scope. Snipers use it
for night vision.

RAY
(taken aback)
What are we gonna do with that?

(CONTINUED)

ART

I'm gonna get close to those barred-up windows and take a peek in that basement.

Ray looks across the street.

RAY

I don't know if I'm up for this, guys. Carol spots me crawling on their lawn at night, I'm a dead man.

RUMSFIELD

What are you, whipped or something?

RAY

No! I just think this is taking it a little too far. Jesus, infra-red scopes... What's next, tapping into the phone lines?

RUMSFIELD

That could be arranged.

RAY

Oh, for -- why don't we burn a cross in their yard while we're at it?

Art shushes him and holds up a hand, looking across the street.

RAY

Come on, guys, nothing that's happened so far merits this --

Rumsfield shushes him, holds up a hand. He cocks his head at an angle, listening.

We begin to realize that for the last couple of moments, there's been a LOW, barely detectable HUM, vaguely electronic in nature, permeating the still of the neighborhood. It MOUNTS a bit in VOLUME and suddenly becomes quite noticeable. They all look at each other.

RUMSFIELD

You guys hear something?

Ray nods, cocking his head aside. Art sticks his pinky in his ear.

ART

Yeah, I thought it was just me.

(CONTINUED)

101

CONTINUED: (2)

101

Rumsfield starts to look around at the tree tops.

RAY

It's like a low-pitched kind of buzz. What the hell is it?

The BUZZING gets LOUDER.

RUMSFIELD

It's getting louder.

RAY

You think it's a power transformer or something?

Ray cranes his neck, scanning the trees with Rumsfield. Art's focused across the street.

RUMSFIELD

Goddamn power company. *

RAY

Where the hell is it coming from?

ART

(cryptically)

I know where it's coming from.

They look at Art and follow his stare across the street. We PAN OVER TO the Klopek house. It's definitely the source of the HUM and it's beginning to reach an ALARMING PITCH.

RAY (O.S.)

Now what?

102

WIDER ANGLE - NIGHT

102

It gets LOUDER and HIGHER until they have to clamp their hands over their ears and then -- ZAP!!! A big, blue electrical charge goes off from the Klopeks', lighting up the basement windows white hot for an instant, like all the juice in the county was tapped and blown with one big shock. The noise knocks the three guys out of their socks and the brilliant flash temporarily blinds them. Then all the neighborhood lights flicker and dim to half-intensity and some smoke curls out of the Klopeks' basement window.

103

EXT. RICKY'S PORCH - NIGHT

103

Both chairs now empty. One is turned over on its back.

104 EXT. RUMSFIELD'S YARD - NIGHT

104

ART
(rubbing his eyes)
Brown out.

RAY
Good Christ. What in God's name --

An aroma accompanies the dissipating smoke. Rumsfield takes a few sniffs.

RUMSFIELD
Smells like they're cooking a
goddamn cat over there.

RAY
(pushes up his
sleeves)
Okay. I'm going over there and
I'm gonna find out --

ART
Duck!

Art squats and yanks Ray down to the ground.

Before he can protest, Art clamps a hand over Ray's mouth. Rumsfield drops to his knees and points across the street. We LOOK. The Klopeks' garage door is opening.

RUMSFIELD
(harsh whisper)
Quick! Behind the garbage cans!

They crawl, commando style, up behind Rumsfield's garbage cans, the big aluminum kind, set on the curb for morning pick-up. Excellent cover.

105 ACROSS STREET

105

The garage door is up all the way. It's pitch black inside. We hear a CAR ENGINE START. Then, slowly, a big black Pontiac slides out head first, cruises to the end of the driveway, and stops.

106 REACTION - GUYS

106

Peering out from behind the cans, they pull their heads back and look at each other. Art mouths the words, "No headlights?" then they peek over the cans again.

107 BACK TO SCENE 107

With the ENGINE IDLING, the front door opens and Hans Klopek, the gaunt, beady-eyed teenage son, gets out. He looks left, looks right, looks left again. Then he plucks the lid off of one of their curbed garbage cans. He opens the back door of the car, reaches in and pulls out a big green garbage bag, stuffed with something very bulky and very heavy. It plops on the driveway. He drags it over, hefts it up and dumps it into the can.

108 REACTION - GUYS 108

We can see the whites of their eyes quite clearly. Art gulps.

109 BACK TO SCENE 109

Hans stuffs the bag down in the can, then goes back to the rear of the car again. He reaches in and pulls out what appears to be a large hoe, but with one end flattened out like a potato masher.

He carries it over to the can, sticks in the end and starts to mash the garbage bag down. Really getting into it, he pounds the shit out of that garbage bag, making mush of whatever was inside of it.

110 REACTION - GUYS 110

Art's blanching. Rumsfield and Ray are glued to the macabre scene.

111 EXT. RICKY'S PORCH 111

Ricky and Gail look at each other, fascinated.

112 ACROSS STREET 112

Hans puts the lid back on the can, tosses the hoe into the car, gets in and backs it into the garage. The DOOR RATTLES down and closes. Overhead, some THUNDER CRACKS.

113 GUYS 113

stay frozen behind the cans, trying hard to make sense out of what they've seen as the first few drops of rain pelt them. Finally, Art breaks the thoughtful silence.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED:

113

ART

(trance-like)

'They were a quiet family. Kept pretty much to themselves. Why would anyone suspect them of foul play?'

The rain intensifies.

RAY

I don't believe I saw that.

(to Rumsfield)

Who drives their garbage down to the curb and then beats the shit out of it with a stick?

114 GUYS' POV

114

The Klopek house, looking nightmarish in the rain. Next to it, Walter's house is quiet and dark.

115 GUYS

115

Art stands.

ART

I say we take a look in those cans.

Now the RAIN is really coming down. Ray looks up.

RAY

(shouting over the downpour)

Well... Call me cautious, but don't you think we might arouse their suspicion sifting through their trash at ten o'clock at night in a rainstorm?

They think about this for a beat.

RUMSFIELD

He's right! That garbage isn't going anywhere? Let's wait 'til first light!

116 EXT. RICKY'S PORCH

116

He and Gail stand, open the door.

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED: 116

RICKY
Rain delay. Shit. Just when
it's getting good.

117 GUYS 117

They split up. Art and Ray splash across the street,
ducking out of the rain onto Ray's porch, where they
pause.

ART
What was that you were saying the
other day about half-cocked
theories?

Ray says nothing, looks through the rain at the Klopek's
garbage cans. Art reaches out and claps a damp hand on
Ray's shoulder.

ART
Sleep tight.

Art winks, delighted. Then he jumps off the porch and
trots into the rain.

118 RAY 118

stands pensive for a beat, then snaps out of it and
opens the front door, shaking his head. He's not going
to give this another thought, right?

CUT TO:

119 EXT. RAY'S HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT 119

The raging THUNDERSTORM douses the street. Rain comes
down in buckets, lots of lightning and THUNDER. We MOVE
IN ON Ray's bedroom window. As we get closer, some
lightning illuminates it long enough for us to see a
figure standing there, looking out.

CUT TO:

120 INT. RAY'S ROOM - NIGHT 120

Ray stands at the window as the RAIN DRUMS on the GLASS.
He's just watching the storm, deep in thought. Or so we
think.

121 RAY'S POV

121

As the STORM rages on, we stare into the blackness of the Klopeks' yard. Another lightning bolt flashes, illuminating the yard for an instant, giving us a brief glimpse of what it actually is that Ray's staring at: in the middle of the Klopeks' lawn are three shadowy figures in rubber ponchos. Standing there in the rain. In the middle of the yard.

And they're digging...

DISSOLVE TO:

122 EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK - TIGHT ON PNEUMATIC SCOOP

122

on the back of the truck, as it WHINES obnoxiously, SCRAPING the latest load into the hull.

PULL BACK to show two GARBAGE COLLECTORS, hauling the Barkelows' cans across the pavement toward the bin. These guys are professional noise makers. They gotta wake up early for work and they want everybody in the neighborhood to know it. They slam the cans against the truck, scrape them along the cement, skim the lids down the street, etc. They finish at the Barkelows', hop on the truck and one of them sticks his fingers in his mouth and whistles:

GARBAGE MAN

Yo!

The TRUCK CHUGS into a U-turn at the cul-de-sac and pulls up in front of Art's house.

CUT TO:

123 INT. ART'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

123

Art's asleep on the couch in his robe with the TV ON. Outside, the garbage TRUCK makes enough noise to wake up the dead. We hear the WHINE of the SCOOP again. Art rolls over and opens his eyes. It takes him a second to shake off the sleep, then he sits bolt upright.

ART

Garbage men!!

CUT TO:

124 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE

124

Art comes tearing across his yard, his robe whipping in the wind.

ART

Hold it!

125 ANGLE ON GARBAGE MAN

125

about to empty the first Klopek can into the truck. He hesitates and looks back to see what all the yelling is about. Art bolts INTO FRAME, takes the can out of the Garbage Man's hands and dumps it out into the street.

GARBAGE MAN

Hey!

Art wades through the trash in his slippers, spreading it out furiously with his hands. Not finding anything in that can, he lunges at a second one. The other Garbage man, a black guy in a leather hat, has hold of one of the handles. Art tries to wrench the can away from him.

2ND GARBAGE MAN

Hey, man!

Art rips it from his grip and dumps it over. Then he kicks over a third and starts rifling through that, too. The Garbage Men sidle up to one another and exchange furtive glances as Art tosses trash around like a madman.

CUT TO:

126 INT. PETERSON'S BREAKFAST NOOK

126

Carol grips the phone protectively, angling away from Ray, who's reaching for it. She barks orders at him.

CAROL

Sit down! Raymond! Sit!

RAY

Carol, gimme the phone.

He lunges again, she twists away and starts punching numbers furiously.

CAROL

I'm calling the Devaneys to have them open the cottage. You need to get out of here and rest.

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED:

126

RAY

You call going to the lake resting?
 Drive three hours on a crowded
 expressway so we can sit in that
 sour cabin with the rat poison and
 the horrible bathroom, while that
 man next door with the enormous
 head gets drunk and beats his wife?
 God, I hate that place! There were
 teeth marks in the soap last time!

*
*

127 ANOTHER ANGLE

127

Now Dave comes trotting into the kitchen with big news.

*

DAVE

Hey, Dad! Art's throwing garbage
 all over the street! I think he's
 having a stroke!

*

128 EXT. STREET

128

Ricky leans a ladder against his garage, watching over
 his shoulder as Art climbs into the back of the truck
 and the two Garbage Men yell at him.

GARBAGE MAN

Get out of the truck, man! Are
 you nuts?

ART

It's gotta be in here!

Now Rumsfield comes charging out of his house, clad
 only in a bath towel, his hair wet and his face half-
 lathered. He pads up to the truck and cranes his neck
 into the hull. Art looks up and shakes his head.

RUMSFIELD

(to Garbage Men)

Did you guys pick up a hefty bag
 out of this yard that was very
 bulky and probably kind of moist?

The two Garbage Men look at each other.

2ND GARBAGE MAN

(to partner)

I don't like these fucking cul-
 de-sacs, man. There's only one
 way out and the people who live
 in 'em are always weird.

(CONTINUED)

128 CONTINUED:

128

RUMSFIELD
 (challenges him)
 Hey, let me tell you something,
 Einstein...

129 EXT. RAY'S HOUSE

129

Ray comes out the door, Carol at his heels, pointing a finger.

CAROL
 Ray, I'm warning you, if you go
 through the neighbors' garbage
 I will ask you for a divorce!

Carol stops at the edge of the porch as Ray advances on the rapidly heating discussion at the garbage truck.

CAROL
 Okay! No sex for a week! Do you
 hear me?

130 GARBAGE TRUCK

130

As Ricky and Ray join the discussion, these lines collide and overlap:

RUMSFIELD
 My taxes pay your salary, pal,
 so --

GARBAGE MAN
 Look, I don't wanna hear your shit,
 okay? The question is, who's
 gonna pick this up?

RICKY
 (to 2nd Garbage Man)
 You think this is weird, you guys
 shoulda been here last night.

ART
 Ray! They must've switched trash
 on us in the middle of the night!
 There's nothing here.

2ND GARBAGE MAN
 (to partner)
 Let's take a break, man. I need
 a cold drink and a Twinkie after
 this.

131 EXT. RUMSFIELD'S YARD

131

Bonnie spots Queenie, Walter's poodle, sniffing around the yard. She hurries down the steps and scoops her up.

BONNIE

Naughty little puppy. Uncle Markie gets very mad when you come in his yard.

Now she looks more closely at it.

BONNIE

You're so dirty! And you're shaking! I wonder if Walter knows you're outside.

She heads across the street to Walter's house.

132 GARBAGE TRUCK

132

While Bonnie knocks on Walter's door, we notice all the guys at the truck staring at Ray.

RAY

... And they were digging.

ART

Jesus!

(turns to Klopek house)

They're ghouls! I told you!

Everybody shakes their head and mumbles.

ART

Don't you see? The kid spotted us when he was dumping the corpse in the trash last night, so he took it out when we were asleep and... and...

They all look at the house.

RICKY

... Buried it in the yard.

A beat of morbid silence.

GARBAGE MAN

(to partner)

Let's get outa here.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED:

132

2ND GARBAGE MAN

Wait a second.
 (to Art)
 Buried who in the yard?

Bonnie walks over, smiling, Queenie under one arm.

BONNIE

Does anyone know if Walter keeps
 a spare key lying around anywhere?
 He seems to have gone away without
 feeding his poor little doggie.

Dunh-dunh-duuuuuuuuuuuuuunnnnnnnnnnh!

CUT TO:

133 EXT. WALTER'S BACK YARD - LATER

133

Rumsfield, on Ricky's ladder, presses his forehead
 against a 2nd story bedroom window and peers inside.
 Ricky foots the ladder while Bonnie, Art and Ray observe.

RAY

Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe I was
 just seeing things.

ART

No way. It fits too perfectly.
 The old man. A loner. Keeps to
 himself. Who the hell would
 notice if he just... dropped from
 sight one day?

(looks to Klopek)

We're wasting our time checking
 his house.

RICKY

(calls up to
 Rumsfield)

Maybe you better break a window!

RAY

Don't break a window!

SMASH!

RAY

(to Ricky)

Why did you tell him to do that?

RICKY

Because I figured he would.

(CONTINUED)

Art has wandered into the center of Walter's back yard. He stands with feet apart, arms folded, watching the Klopek house with the steely determination of MacArthur re-invading the Philippines.

RUMSFIELD (O.S.)

I'm going in!

He's forced the window up and we see his ass and legs slide in.

BONNIE

You know, he might have fallen and hit his head on the bathtub. Channel 26 had a four part series on the elderly last week and they said things like that happen all the time.

RICKY

Well, if it's a head wound, forget it. Those things bleed like hell, it's over in a matter of minutes.

Bonnie gasps and puts her hand to her mouth.

RAY

Look, I think we're overreacting. He could've left town for a couple of days and... and spaced out on the dog. He's an old man, he forgets things.

RICKY

Personally, I like Mr. Weingartner's theory that the Klopeks offed him. He said stuff like that happens in the 'burbs all the time.

Ray sighs, shakes his head.

RAY

Ricky, Art sleeps with a steak knife on his nightstand, you know?

We hear a RATTLING at the back door and everyone jumps. The door opens and Rumsfield comes out.

RUMSFIELD

Well, he's not in the house. No signs of struggle, no trace of a stiff.

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

134

Ray frowns, shrugs. Art joins them, staring at Rumsfield expectantly.

RUMSFIELD

But I did find this.

He swings a hand out from behind his back and tosses Ray something small and hairy. Ray catches it, grimaces as he examines it. Ricky peers over his shoulder.

RICKY

Walter's rug...

Bonnie gasps.

RUMSFIELD

It was lying on the floor in his bedroom.

Ray turns it over, looks at the adhesive side.

RAY

It's got his initials on it.

RUMSFIELD

These old guys never leave the house without their hair. And they certainly don't leave it on the floor where it could get stepped on or the dog could get at it. No, I think old Walter left in a big hurry... in an unscheduled departure...

Now we hear Art shriek at the absolute peak of his vocal capacity:

ART (O.S.)

You can't hide forever, Klopek!!!
You hear me?!

Bonnie jumps out of her socks. Ricky, Ray and Rumsfield look at each other and bolt for the yard.

135 ART

135

his face beet red, shakes his fist.

ART

You think we don't know what's going on in there?! Huh? Think again!!

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED:

135

He starts to run for the fence. Rumsfield knocks him down with a flying tackle. He struggles.

ART

Listen to me!

RAY

Shut up! Will you shut up!

Art tries to restrain himself.

ART

You guys are blind! You're blind!

RICKY

Want me to call the cops?

RAY

No!

RUMSFIELD

I bet they'd laugh in our face.

Now Art's eyes flick up to the house and he shrieks:

ART

Look! He mooned me! Goddammit!

The guys snap their heads to the Klopek house.

136 REVERSE ANGLE

136

One of the dormer windows is open and the curtains billow out.

ART (O.S.)

He hung his ass out the goddamn window! Cocky little --

137 BACK TO SCENE

137

ART

You think I'm dumb, huh? You think I'm gutless?

RAY

(to Rumsfield)

Get him outta here!

Rumsfield drags Art away from the fence.

(CONTINUED)

ART

They're not gonna get away with this! I'm gonna find a way to nail 'em...

RUMSFIELD

Yeah. Sure. I know.

ART

Goddamn right. Nobody plays me for a sap.

Suddenly, he bolts into the street directly in front of the Klopeks' and points a finger.

ART

(yells at house)

You think I'm a chickenshit?
WELL, COME AND GET ME!! I
DOUBLE-DARE YA!

They drag him around the corner. Ricky turns to Ray.

RICKY

I don't mean to be disrespectful or anything, but... Art's not the most balanced guy in town, is he?

As they share a look, we --

CUT TO:

138 WALTER'S FRONT PORCH - MINUTES LATER

138

Ray, Queenie on a hunk of clothesline at his feet, composes a note, mumbling to himself as he writes.

RAY

'Walter -- sorry about the window. I have your dog. Will explain details later. Ray Peterson.'

He goes to put the pen back in his pocket, gets a handful of hair.

RAY

Ah, shit.

He stands there with the toupee in his hand and, awkwardly, pushes it through the mail slot in the front door. As he does so, we notice QUEENIE GROWLING gutturally at the Klopek house and backing up to cower behind Ray's legs.

139 REVERSE - KLOPEK HOUSE 139

Uncle Reuben is perched in an upper window, staring malevolently at Ray.

140 RAY 140

suddenly very clumsy, slides the note in the door jamb, clears his throat, then tries to smile and wave.

RAY

Hi, Mr. Klopek! Listen, I --

But Uncle Reuben disappears into the house and the curtains close. Ray reacts.

CUT TO:

141 INT. RAY'S HOUSE - NIGHT 141

Dave crouches at the basement door, his ear pressed against a water glass held flush to the panel. Nearby, Queenie vies with Vince for dog food. *

DAVE *

They said they were going to play canasta. And then they locked themselves in.

Carol finishes loading the dishwasher, walks over to the basement door and rattles the knob. Then sighs and shakes her head.

CAROL

(calls through door)

Ray! Ray?

No answer. She bangs a couple of times. Still nothing. Then:

CAROL

(to Dave)

Go get me a butter knife. *

CUT TO:

142 INT. RAY'S BASEMENT - NIGHT 142

TIGHT ON an old, black book with gold embossed letters reading "The Theory and Practice of Demonology." After a beat, we notice the book start to tremble slightly and as we PULL BACK, it falls flat on a card table, revealing Ray, bug-eyed and pale.

(CONTINUED)

142 CONTINUED:

142

Art notes his friend's reaction from the other side of the card table and nods grimly.

ART

They're satanists, Ray. Sure as I'm standing here.

He jumps up, runs around the table to Ray and begins to leaf furiously through the book.

ART

There's thousands of these cults all over the world! See? Black mass! Mutilations! The incubus and the succubus!

He grips Ray's shoulder.

ART

Walter was a human sacrifice!

RAY

(winces)

Oh my God...

143 INSERT - BOOK

143

Various disturbing illustrations of goat-headed demons, pagan gods, bizarre ritual ceremonies, etc.

144 BACK TO SCENE

144

Ray clucks his tongue, rubbing his forehead.

RAY

Resale value of this house is gonna be bupkis when it gets out the Mansons live next door.

Art doesn't hear him, he's already plotting.

ART

Now look, here's what we're gonna do. Tomorrow we go down to the religious supply store and get some holy water. My cousin Jerry's a priest, he can get us a discount. Then --

RAY

Art, be serious.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED:

144

RAY (CONT'D)

If you think I'm gonna start hanging garlic on the house and... and sprinkling sheep's blood on the lawn, you're out of your mind.

Suddenly Art springs on Ray and clamps a hand shut over his mouth.

ART

Don't be a fool! It's the non-believers that are the most vulnerable! The walls have ears!

O.S. the basement door opens, FOOTSTEPS hit the stairs and Carol's VOICE ECHOES in the basement.

CAROL

Ray?

Art screams, Ray rips his hand off of his face and, trying to retain some semblance of calm, answers.

RAY

Right here, honey.

Carol turns into the basement from the stairs just as Ray yanks the demonology book off the card table and plops it into his lap. Ray meets her furtive glance with a shit-eating grin.

RAY

Wanna play some canasta?

ON her reaction, we --

CUT TO:

145 OMITTED
&
146

145
&
146

147 INT. RAY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

147

Ray lies rigidly in bed, gnashing his teeth, trying to watch television while Carol reads the devil worship book next to him. She clucks her tongue and shakes her head.

CAROL

Satanists, huh? Ritual killers.

(CONTINUED)

147 CONTINUED:

147

Ray nods rigidly, chewing a thumbnail. Carol snorts, turns a page.

CAROL

Nice, very nice. So the Klopeks are offering up Walter as some kind of human sacrifice to Beelzebub, is that the idea?

Ray doesn't respond, trying hard to concentrate on the television.

CAROL

Ray, do me a favor. Instead of, say, counting sheep tonight, why don't you close your eyes and repeat the phrase, 'I won't lose my grip on reality. I won't lose my grip on reality.' Can you do that for me?

No response.

CAROL

I'm living with a zombie.

148 INSERT - TV

148

He's watching Poltergeist.

149 BACK TO SCENE

149

Carol claps the book shut and swings out of bed.

RAY

(like a shot)

Where are you going?

CAROL

Bathroom. Relax.

She ducks into the master bath and closes the door. Ray, eyes wide, clutches the sheet to his chin and watches the tube.

150 INTERCUT TO RAY AND TV

150

151 TV

151

A huge, revolting skull pops out of the closet and snaps at Craig T. Nelson.

- 152 RAY 152
grimaces and changes the channel.
- 153 TV 153
Mia Farrow gets raped by the devil in Rosemary's Baby.
- 154 RAY 154
changes the channel.
- 155 TV 155
Linda Blair pukes up green shit and casts aspersions at
Father Damien's mother.
- 156 TIGHT ON RAY 156
freaking out.
- 157 CAROL 157
comes out of the bathroom, looks at the bed.
Ray is a lumpy, quaking mass under the blankets. HOLD
ON Carol's reaction and...

CUT TO:

- 158 DREAM SEQUENCE 158
thru thru
168 168
- 169 EXT. RICKY'S YARD - NEXT MORNING 169
Dave watches Ricky stir a can of paint in the driveway. *
- DAVE *
- My dad's grounded.
- RICKY
- He is?
- DAVE *
- Yeah. My mom won't let him play
with Art today. He's up in his
room.
- They look over at Ray's house.

CUT TO:

170

INT. RAY'S BEDROOM - DAY

170

Ray sits on the edge of his bed in his bathrobe, watching Bugs Bunny. He's unshaven and he's got big bags under his eyes. Restless as a kid in detention, he goes to the window and watches, dejectedly, as Ricky and Dave shoot hoops in Ricky's driveway. Then he hears something in his own front yard and looks down to see...

*

171

ART AND RUMSFIELD

171

on his lawn, waving their arms at him. He opens the window.

ART

Ray!

RAY

I can't come out.

Rumsfield smirks.

ART

We got a plan!

RAY

What?

ART

I said we --

But he's cut off as Carol comes out, fuming. She points to Ray.

CAROL

Close that window, young man!

Ray frowns, ducks back inside.

CAROL

(to Art and
Rumsfield)

I'm sorry, boys, my husband's not feeling well today. He has to stay in his room.

She yells across to Dave:

*

CAROL

Dave! Will you come and help your mother with the shopping, please?

*

172 INT. RAY'S ROOM

172

Ray watches forlornly as Art and Rumsfield cross to Ricky's porch.

173 EXT. RICKY'S PORCH

173

Rumsfield sits on a lawn chair nursing a beer. Ricky watches, amused, as Art paces the porch.

ART

We've got to force their hand.
There's no other choice.

RUMSFIELD

But how?

ART

Let's think back to Skip.

RICKY

The killer soda jerk?

ART

Exactly.

Ricky nudges his friends. They're loving this.

ART

What made him crack and end the
whole thing?

He pauses. Rumsfield shrugs. And coughs.

ART

He thought the cops were on to
him. And all they did was ring
his bell and ask him a stupid
question about his house.

RUMSFIELD

Are you saying we should call the
cops?

ART

No, no, no...

ZOOM IN TO a CLOSEUP of Art, hatching his scheme.

ART

I got a better idea.

CUT TO:

174 EXT. RAY'S BACK YARD - DAY 174

Vince the dog digs furiously at the base of the fence. Ray dozes in a lounge chair, four cans of Budweiser and a carton of cigarettes on a table beside him. He's snoring.

175 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE 175

Art and Rumsfield stand nervously on Klopek's front porch. Art reaches up, presses the bell -- DING-DONG! -- and the two of them tear ass like bats out of hell, Rumsfield bolting across the street to his house, Art vaulting the bushes into Ray's yard.

From Ricky's porch, we hear EXPLOSIONS of HYSTERICAL LAUGHTER.

176 EXT. RAY'S BACK YARD - DAY 176

Art breaks through the bushes and rolls into the yard, perspiring and breathing heavily.

ART

Psssst! Ray!

Ray shifts on the chair, still dozing. Art jumps onto the patio and shakes him.

ART

Hey, Ray!

Ray wakes up screaming, falls out of his chair.

RAY

(waking, panicked)

Huh? What?

ART

Take it easy, take it easy.
Listen to me!

Ray looks at Art. Twigs and pieces of grass stick to his sweaty face. His eyes bulge.

ART

I think we flushed 'em out.

RAY

What?

ART

We flushed 'em out.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

176 CONTINUED:

176

ART (CONT'D)

Rumsfield and I just slipped a note under their door, then rang the bell and ran.

RAY

(incredulous)

You what?

177 VINCE

177

Now we see Vince pull a bone out from the hole he's been burrowing under the fence. He proudly trots to the patio, dropping the bone at Art's feet.

ART

All it said was, 'I know what you've done.' That's all. I didn't sign it.

Ray jumps out of his chair.

RAY

You asshole! God, I can't believe it!

ART

What? What? You gotta goose these people to get 'em out in the open. Good dog, Vince.

178 RAY

178

While Ray yells, Art tosses the bone back into the yard and Vince darts off to fetch it.

RAY

They're gonna think I did it! Yes, they are! That old guy, the short one with the hose, he saw me leave the note at Walter's yesterday! I'm the first guy they'll suspect!

ART

So what? We got 'em now, it's just a matter of -- what was that I just threw?

179 VINCE

179

Now the dog's on the patio again, dropping the bone at Ray's feet. Ray picks it up.

RAY

It's a bone.

ART

Lemme see it.

Art snatches it out of Ray's hand and examines it.

ART

This is a femur, my friend.

RAY

A what?

ART

A femur! A thigh bone! A human thigh bone!

180 RAY

180

looks at the dog. Vince sits patiently, staring at the bone, waiting for someone to throw it again.

RAY

Are you sure?

ART

(thrusts it at him)

Look at it! This thing didn't come off a chicken! Where'd he get it?

Ray stutters and then -- his eyes lock on the fence and he blanches.

RAY

The fence... he... pulled it out from under the fence...

Art looks once at the fence and his jaw drops.

ART

Jesus Christ! Ray! There's no doubt anymore! This is real! They killed him! They cut him up! And then they buried him in the yard!

He holds the bone in front of his face.

(CONTINUED)

- 180 CONTINUED: 180
- ART
This is Walter!
- Involuntarily, Ray screams.
- RAY
Aaaaagh!
- 181 MEN 181
- PSYCHO PANIC MUSIC SHRIEKS. CAMERA ZOOMS IN AND OUT REPEATEDLY ON the bone and the screaming men in a disorienting acid-fright nightmare effect. Then...
- Suddenly, Art springs on Ray and clamps a hand over his mouth! Art's eyes are wide and trained next door, where we hear a SCREEN DOOR SLAM. We start a SLOW, SUSPENSEFUL PAN OVER TO...
- 182 FENCE 182
- All we can make out through the slats are shadows, but we can hear FOOTSTEPS on the grass within the yard... and they're coming closer...
- 183 PATIO 183
- Art and Ray stand frozen, petrified, as the FOOTSTEPS CLOSE IN on the fence.
- 184 FENCE 184
- Now the shadow and the footsteps are nose-to-nose with the fence, a puff of smoke curling upward from just the other side. The WOOD CREAKS as a couple of slats bend inward, indicating the smoker is leaning on the fence, peeking through a crack.
- 185 ART AND RAY 185
- hold each other, paralyzed with fear.
- 186 FENCE 186
- CREAKS a little more. Then, up over the top, comes a crumpled piece of paper. It lands softly in the grass, and the smoking presence retreats. The SCREEN DOOR SLAMS again.

187 ART AND RAY

187

Art breaks from the patio, leaving Ray frozen stiff. In a crouch, he runs to the wad of paper and furiously opens it. His expression turns dark and he looks at Ray.

ART

My note...

Ray's eyes bulge and he breaks for the back door just as...

188 CAROL

188

opens the back door. WHAP! Ray falls back, toppling over a patio chair, sending beer cans and ashtrays flying. He's bleeding from both nostrils. Carol looks at him, sees Art standing sheepishly in the yard. She folds her arms.

CUT TO:

189 RAY'S FRONT PORCH - DAY (MINUTES LATER)

189

The Rumsfields have joined the Petersons and Art on the porch. Ray holds an ice pack to his face, his head tilted back.

CAROL

I think it's about time we all stopped acting like kindergarteners. Don't you, Ray?

She thumps him on the chest.

RAY

(rehearsed)
Yes, Carol.

CAROL

For God's sake, before someone breaks a leg or falls off a roof, let's go ring the doorbell, invite ourselves in for a neighborly chat, and get to know these people like we should have done a month ago.

BONNIE

Okay!

Art snaps his fingers.

(CONTINUED)

189 CONTINUED:

189

ART
 Hey, that's a great idea! You
 distract them while I --

CAROL
 (to Art)
 You're not invited.

Art shuts up.

CUT TO:

190 OMITTED
 thru
 194

190
 thru
 194

195 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE - MINUTES LATER

195

DRUM CADENCE UP as the welcome wagon marches up the Klopeks' front walk with Bonnie in the lead holding a tray of brownies. The men trail the women somewhat apprehensively. They reach the dusty porch and Ray grabs Carol's arm.

RAY
 I should have had more to drink.

CAROL
 Will you relax?

She rings the bell while Bonnie raps with the knocker.

CAROL
 Now remember, the girls lead.

BONNIE
 Yeah. We'll find out more about them in five minutes of friendly chat than you guys would in a month of snooping around.

196 DOOR

196

We hear MOVEMENT from within. FOOTSTEPS APPROACH. Carol looks at the group.

CAROL
 Try to look... normal.

MUFFLED VOICE (O.S.)
 Who is it?

(CONTINUED)

CAROL
 (bright, cheery)
 Yoo-hoo! It's Carol Peterson
 from next door!

The curtain in the door window moves, an eye peeks out. Rumsfield, in trying to affect normalcy, leans casually on a rusting wrought iron chair. The arm crumbles under his weight, however, and he drops, yelling. This startles Bonnie. She yells and drops the brownie tray. Rumsfield curses.

RUMSFIELD
 There go the goddamn brownies!!

He takes a mighty kick at the mess, sending the tray and chunks of fudge slamming into the wall of the house just as Hans opens the door.

RUMSFIELD
 (sees Hans)
 Oh... Uh, sorry.

Carol recovers immediately and offers Hans her hand.

CAROL
 Hi! Welcome to Mayfield Place!
 We're your new neighbors!

She sticks her head and front leg through the door, bracing it open as Bonnie charges in. Hans looks unsettled.

BONNIE
 We brought dessert. Is your
 mother home?

Ray follows the girls in, smiling politely. Rumsfield brings up the rear, handing Hans the bent tray piled with a dusty, crumbling brownie mass salvaged from the drop.

RUMSFIELD
 Here, kid. I'm not big on sweets.

CUT TO:

The place is done in sort of a "nouveau Vincent Price" motif, very dark, old-looking furniture, dusty velveteen wall-covering, weird etchings, etc. Carol and Bonnie immediately set about casing the joint professionally, combing every detail like a couple of Presidential advancemen.

(CONTINUED)

HANS

Uh... I don't --

CAROL

I just can't believe you've been here a whole month and we haven't even dropped in to introduce ourselves.

BONNIE

It's just rude, that's all. There's no other word for it, it's just rude. Forgive us.

Bonnie picks up a vase and reads the label on the bottom while Carol scratches a nail on an ancient silver service. Rumsfield backs Hans against the wall and smiles at him, nose to nose.

RUMSFIELD

Rumsfield's the name, son. I didn't catch yours.

HANS

Hans.

RUMSFIELD

Hans, huh? That's a fine Christian name. Hans Christian Andersen. Ha-ha-ha. You a Catholic?

HANS

Uh...

examines a circular blade from a table saw he found lying on a coffee table. It's rusty and stained.

RUMSFIELD

Hans, this is Ray Peterson from next door. You must have seen him before, he's the guy who first suggested you --

Ray kicks Rumsfield in the leg, cutting him off. Bonnie starts for the dining room.

BONNIE

Is this the dining room?

199

ANOTHER ANGLE

199

Hans goes to stop her, but she stops anyway, yelping in surprise as the little squat Klopek we saw with the garden nose appears in the archway to the dining room. He's in the same dirty sleeveless T-shirt and he's smoking. Bonnie puts a hand to her chest.

BONNIE

Oh! You startled me.

HANS

My Uncle Reuben.

BONNIE

How do you do?

He nods curtly, marches into the room and stands directly opposite Ray, staring up into his eyes. Ray tries to smile and nod, tugging at his collar. An awkward pause.

REUBEN

(to Ray)

You are the one who lives next door.

Ray opens his mouth to say something, but all that comes out is a squeak like a rusty hinge.

CAROL

Why don't we make some coffee, Bonnie?

BONNIE

Okay. Does everyone want cake?

HANS

(like a shot)

I'll do it.

He sweeps the cake out of Carol's hands and ducks out of the room. Everyone stands there for a second, then Rumsfield thumps Reuben on the back.

RUMSFIELD

Whaddaya say we all sit down and get to know each other, huh?
Yeah.

CUT TO:

200

EXT. RAY'S BACK YARD - DUSK

200

Dave hurries over to Art and Ricky, scudding to a stop on his knees, out of breath.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

200

CONTINUED:

200

Art is applying black shoe polish to his face for this night raid.

DAVE

They're in there, all right.
Doesn't look like they got thrown out, either.

*

He and Ricky look hard at Art.

*

ART

You guys wanna come with me?

Simultaneously, and without hesitation, Dave and Ricky shake their heads.

*

ART

Okay. Gimme the air rifle. Art Weingartner is nobody's fool.

201

KLOPEKS' SIDE OF FENCE - DUSK

201

Art flips over and drops six feet -- RRIP! -- leaving a portion of his pants dangling from the fence.

He lands roughly, torso-first, in a noisy, dried-up old rose bush with a lot of thorns. As he rolls in the dirt, cradling his shoulder and trying not to scream, we can hear Ricky and Dave laughing in the other yard.

*

RICKY (O.S.)

(laughing)

D'ja make it?

ART

(harsh whisper)

Very funny! Gimme the shovel!

He turns to survey the yard. It's dark, but we can see clumps of dug-up sod and turf scattered about.

ART

Shovel! Shovel! Come on!

A shovel comes up and over the fence and nails him squarely on the head. He drops to his ass. More laughter from Ricky and Dave.

*

CUT TO:

202

INT. KLOPEK HOUSE - DUSK (INTO NIGHT)

202

Everyone sits awkwardly in the living room.

(CONTINUED)

Reuben's seated directly across from Ray, their knees almost touching. He continues to stare, working a toothpick in his mouth. Carol and Bonnie watch him, then look at each other, trying not to laugh.

CAROL

(clears her throat)

So how do you like Hinckley Hills so far? We just love it.

Reuben says nothing. His eyes bore into Ray, assessing him from head to toe, perhaps estimating his coffin size. Rumsfield gets anxious, rises from his chair and stands over Reuben, giving him a cold, interrogating look as he lights a cigarette with his Zippo.

RUMSFIELD

Klopek, huh? Is that Slavic?

Reuben shifts to return Rumsfield's stare.

REUBEN

No.

Rumsfield smiles and nods, as if expecting that answer. Then he changes subjects.

RUMSFIELD

So, you comfortable here, Rube? It's a good house, huh? Good solid walls.

Rumsfield bangs his fist on the wall.

RUMSFIELD

Good solid floors.

He stomps on the floor three times. Ray shifts in his chair. A beat. Then THREE ANSWERING STOMPS from the basement shake the room. Ray freezes.

RUMSFIELD

Got somebody tied up in the basement? Ha-ha-ha...

entering from the kitchen with the coffee and cake, hears this last question and looks at Reuben. Reuben shakes his head slowly. Hans puts the tray down and starts to pour the coffee. Rumsfield presses on.

(CONTINUED)

RUMSFIELD

Just you and your uncle in the house, then, eh, Sonny?

HANS

No, actually --

Reuben cuts him off with a sudden -- ahem! -- then turns to Rumsfield.

REUBEN

We're a small family. Me, the boy and... my brother. The doctor.

Rumsfield raises his eyebrows.

BONNIE

A doctor! Oh, it's always nice to have a doctor in the neighborhood.

Ray coughs loudly.

RAY

Sure was damp this morning, huh?

CAROL

Let's have some cake.

She gets up to help Hans, hesitating as he picks up a carving knife. Rumsfield folds his arms and leans against a wall, in a staring contest with Reuben.

BONNIE

Gee, this is a nice, big old house. I don't believe I was ever inside it when the Knapps lived here.

REUBEN

How unfortunate for the Knapps.

Rumsfield inspects his nails.

RUMSFIELD

The only thing about these old places is that sometimes you have a drainage problem in the rainy season. You know, like the basement could flood. I wouldn't advise turning it into a... guest room or keeping any of the doctor's equipment down there.

(CONTINUED)

203 CONTINUED: (2)

203

REUBEN
 (quite deliberately)
 Don't worry. I won't.

Rumsfield takes a step toward Reuben.

RUMSFIELD
 Was that him banging on the
 ceiling a minute ago?

Reuben stands.

REUBEN
 Maybe.

RAY
 Yup, it sure was damp today.

Carol wedges herself between Rumsfield and Reuben with a piece of cake on a plate.

CAROL
 Here, Mark. You take the first
 piece.

And she jams a forkful into his trap.

CUT TO:

204 EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

204

Art, crouching near the base of the house where he's examining a freshly dug hole, freezes as he hears something. SCRATCHING NOISES from inside the basement windows... like a prisoner clawing at the glass. Trembling, he backs away from the house and stumbles over a trip-wire, strung with tin cans and various racket makers. He goes down noisily, tangled.

205 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

205

Everyone sits around drinking coffee. Hans pokes his head up, hearing the NOISE.

HANS
 Someone's in the yard.

REUBEN
 Turn on the alarm, boy.

(CONTINUED)

205 CONTINUED:

205

Hans gets up to do his uncle's bidding.

RUMSFIELD

Alarm? You got an alarm on this house? Isn't that a little paranoid?

REUBEN

Paranoid? On this block?

206 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

206

Hans hits a two-pronged electrical switch.

207 EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

207

Art stops in his tracks as, somewhere in the yard, a GENERATOR of some kind WHEEZES INTO LIFE.

208 INT. LIVING ROOM

208

Ray rubs his temple, staring at his coffee, as the neighbors converse.

REUBEN

... My brother's work keeps us on the move, you see. This is our third house in as many years.

CAROL

That must be very hard on you, Hans. All that moving around.

Hans shrugs. Ray sips his coffee and makes a face like he's got a mouthful of battery acid.

REUBEN

Indeed. Tomorrow we go to the State Capitol to see about another transfer. I doubt very much we'll last the summer here.

CAROL

Oh, and we've hardly even gotten to know you. What a shame.

She looks at Ray.

RAY

Yeah. What a shame.

(CONTINUED)

208 CONTINUED:

208

RUMSFIELD

Just what kind of doctor is this
brother of yours, Klopek?

Now a DOOR SLAMS off the entry hall and FOOTSTEPS APPROACH
the living room.

REUBEN

Why don't you ask him yourself?

209 ANOTHER ANGLE

209

All eyes turn to the hall as DR. KLOPEK, a dark, fortyish,
harmless looking chap, enters, perspiring and wiping his
hands on a rag. He smiles.

DR. KLOPEK

We have guests?

HANS

Oh boy, do we have guests.

Dr. Klopek steps into the room and offers Ray his hand.

DR. KLOPEK

Werner Klopek. How nice to meet
you.

RAY

Ray Peterson.

He looks at Carol. She grins smugly.

RAY

Nice to meet you.

210 DR. KLOPEK

210

goes around the room introducing himself. He stoops to
kiss Carol and Bonnie on the hand. They look quite
pleased with themselves and would probably, if they
could, thumb their noses at their husbands. The good
doctor pours himself some coffee and smiles again.

DR. KLOPEK

I really must apologize, it was
quite impolite of us not to have
introduced ourselves sooner, but
this particular move proved quite
taxing to our family.

(CONTINUED)

CAROL

Don't give it a second thought,
it's our fault, really.

DR. KLOPEK

Well... You're very kind. I was
just remarking to Hans today how
nice it would be to meet all of
our new neighbors. And here you
are.

Everyone laughs politely. Except Rumsfield.

RUMSFIELD

Well, we're not all present. We
don't know where the hell Walter
is. You know, the old man who
lives next door?

Ray spills his coffee in his lap and yelps. He hops up
and starts to blot it with a napkin. Rumsfield isn't
phased.

RUMSFIELD

Terrible thing, the plight of
the elderly. Why, we were
remarking just the other day --
(leans in close)
-- an old guy like that could
drop right off the face of the
earth and no one would even
notice.

Over his shoulder, to Ray:

RUMSFIELD

Right, Ray? We were saying that
just yesterday.

REUBEN

(quickly)
I'll bet you were.

RAY

Uh --

Now it's clear Reuben and Rumsfield are facing off.

RUMSFIELD

Okay, let's cut the polite crap.
What's that weird goddamn noise
that comes outta here all the time?

(CONTINUED)

210 CONTINUED: (2)

210

DR. KLOPEK

I beg your pardon?

BONNIE

Oh my gosh! Look at the time!

RUMSFIELD

Whatcha got in the basement, Herr
Klopek?

CAROL

Mark!

Ray bails out.

RAY

I gotta go to the bathroom.

He goes to a door off the hall and reaches for the knob.

REUBEN

(springs out
of chair)

Don't touch that!

But it's too late. He opens it.

RAY

Aaaaaaagh!

211 RAY

211

jumps back, knocking over an end table, as a Great Dane
the size of a race horse flies out of the basement, lopes
across the living room in two giant steps and turns toward
the back of the house.

EVERYBODY

Aaaaaaggh!

Hans runs after it as Bonnie grabs her heart.

RUMSFIELD

Good Christ! You keep a horse
in the basement?

CUT TO:

212 EXT. KITCHEN DOOR - NIGHT

212

A huge, canine shadow dances on the wall for an instant,
then -- RRIP! -- the dog flies right through the screen.

213

ART

213

craps as the huge, GROWLING BEAST vaults the porch rail. He drops everything, tears ass for the fence, leaps and -- SCREEEEEEEECH! A horrible, piercing ALARM goes off and floodlights snap on, bathing the entire yard in a painful white glare. Art scrambles to get over, the gaping jaws of the Great Dane inches away.

214

RAY'S SIDE OF FENCE - NIGHT

214

Dave and Ricky scatter as Art flies over, catching a heel between two slats. He dangles there, helplessly. *

215

EXT. KLOPEK BACK PORCH - NIGHT

215

Everybody but Ray stands at the rail watching as Hans tries to wrestle the dog away from the fence.

Part of one shoe protrudes from the gap in the wood fence and we can hear SHOUTS and struggling from the dangling intruder.

BONNIE

Is it a burglar?

CAROL

No. It's Art.

Reuben reaches into the kitchen and turns off the alarm. Now all we hear is ART'S SHOUTING and every DOG in the neighborhood.

DR. KLOPEK

(to Reuben)

Another neighbor?

Reuben nods.

REUBEN

(to Rumsfield)

What was that you were saying about paranoids?

He moves off into the yard. Rumsfield follows at his heels.

RUMSFIELD

He probably hit a golf ball over the fence. So what?

Carol turns awkwardly to Dr. Klopek, tries to smile.

(CONTINUED)

215 CONTINUED:

215

DR. KLOPEK

I'm sorry if the dog frightened you. His size tends to overwhelm people.

And now Ray's in the kitchen door, sweating and breathing heavily. Carol frowns at him.

CAROL

Dr. Klopek, I think we've intruded on you long enough for one night. It was lovely meeting you.

She glares at Ray.

RAY

Yeah. It's, uh... it's been real.

He holds out his hand. It's shaking.

DR. KLOPEK

(to Ray)

Are you all right?

RAY

Me? Never better. Let's do this again sometime.

He looks out in the yard as Art falls from the fence and drops on the other side.

RAY

... Real soon.

CUT TO:

216 INT. RAY'S HOUSE - NIGHT (LATER)

216

Art sits with his foot propped on an ottoman while Rumsfield administers an ice pack. Carol paces angrily, Bonnie sits quietly and Ray is pressed into a corner observing.

CAROL

God! I've never been so embarrassed in my life! I hope you eight balls are satisfied!

RUMSFIELD

Satisfied? Goddamn it, I had him!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RUMSFIELD (CONT'D)

He was gonna confess right there!
I had him in the palm of my hand!
(to Ray)
If you hadn't bailed out and
pissed your pants.

ART

They gotta know we're onto them
now.

CAROL

On to what, Art? Don't sit there
and tell me you still believe
those nice people chopped up
Walter and scattered his pieces
in their yard!

RUMSFIELD

Nice people! Jesus, Carol,
they're clearly psychos!

CAROL

Oh, and you guys aren't? Who's
been running around ringing
doorbells and peeking in windows
and skulking through the back
yards at night? It's a wonder
he didn't call the police.

RUMSFIELD

Small wonder when he's got a
goddamn skeleton in his bushes.

ART

Yeah, Carol, what about the bone?

CAROL

Art, they've got a hundred-pound
dog, for heaven's sake. Vince
drags bones into our yard every
day.

RUMSFIELD

How about the garbage? And the
bars over the basement windows?

ART

Yeah, and what about Walter?
Where the hell is he?

(CONTINUED)

CAROL

Oh, who cares where he is? My God, a week ago the three of you couldn't have cared less whether or not he was breathing, now he's all you talk about.

Art chews on this for a while. Rumsfield smacks his fist into his palm.

RUMSFIELD

I was close. I was very close. I don't trust that guy as far as I could throw his house.

Bonnie turns to Ray.

BONNIE

What do you think, Ray?

Everybody looks at him.

RUMSFIELD

Yeah. You've been awfully quiet. How about pitching in here?

Ray opens his eyes, purses his lips pensively. He waits a beat. Then:

RAY

I think they're clean. I think the girls are right.

CAROL

See? Even Mr. Nervous Breakdown admits defeat.

ART

Thanks a lot, Ray. Jesus, you're the one who started all this in the first place.

CAROL

(steamed)

Ray's the one who -- Art, you're --

RAY

(rising)

Carol? Would you and Bonnie excuse us for a second? I'd like to talk to the fellows alone.

(CONTINUED)

216 CONTINUED: (3)

216

Carol starts to protest, but Ray shoos the girls out of the den.

CAROL

Well, at least you've come to your senses.

217 ANOTHER ANGLE

217

He closes the den doors behind them and turns to Art and Rumsfield.

ART

What is this shit, Ray? You selling us out all of a sudden?

RUMSFIELD

Yeah, what are you, totally pussy-whipped? Why don't you take your balls out of your wife's purse and take a stand?

Ray reaches into his trousers...

RUMSFIELD

(blanches)

Figure of speech, Ray, it was only a --

... and pulls out a familiar hairy object. Art gasps.

ART

Walter's rug!

RUMSFIELD

(grimacing)

You been holding it in your pants all this time?

RAY

No. After you found it in his house yesterday, I slipped it back through the mail slot.

ART

Then how did you --

(gasps again)

-- you found it in Klopek's house!

Ray smiles maniacally, tossing the wig up and down in his hand as he lays it out.

(CONTINUED)

217

CONTINUED:

217

RAY

When the dog flew out of the basement I accidentally knocked some shit off a table. And while I was straightening it up, I found this pressed between some magazines. All of which, I might add, were addressed to Walter.

ART

So that means...

Rumsfield finishes the thought:

RUMSFIELD

They went back into his house for the hair.

Ray nods morbidly, goes to the bar, pours himself a belt and slugs it down.

RUMSFIELD

What do we do now, Ray?

RAY

You heard him say they were going to the capitol tomorrow. Well, as soon as that car leaves in the morning, I'm going over that fence and I'm not coming back 'til I find a stiff.

CLOSE ON Ray as he looks hard at his two comrades.

RAY

Nobody bumps off an old man and gets away with it in my neighborhood.

HOLD ON him for a beat, then...

CUT TO:

218

EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE - NEXT MORNING

218 *

The Barkelow kid does his laps and Ricky has progressed to actually spreading a few strokes of blue paint on the porch.

(CONTINUED)

218

CONTINUED:

218

Both of them stop to watch the Klopeks' Pontiac slide out of the garage and up the street, the Great Dane's head hanging out the rear window.

219

RUMSFIELD

219

shirtless, opens his bedroom window and watches the car turn the corner. As soon as it's out of sight, he ducks inside and slams the window shut. Ricky smiles.

RICKY

(to himself)

I can see I'm gonna get a lot of work done today.

220

EXT. RAY'S DRIVEWAY - LATER

220

Art's practicing chipping on Ray's lawn as Ray hustles Carol and Dave into the car. *

CAROL

Why do I get the feeling you're trying to get rid of me?

RAY

Honey, don't be silly. Art and I have a foursome lined up at Rob Roy, I'm gonna be gone all day, too. I just thought you might want to take a break after the hell I've put you through this week and see Evelyn, that's all.

He leans down to pat Dave on the head. *

RAY

You have fun with your cousins today, okay?

DAVE

I hate 'em, Dad. Rudy's a moron and Diane smells. *

RAY

(doesn't hear him)

Good boy. *

He pushes Dave into the car. Carol stops at the driver's door and gives Ray and Art a long, long look. Art obliges with a chip and a gleeful -- *

ART

'Fore!

(CONTINUED)

220 CONTINUED:

220

Carol nods slowly.

CAROL

All right. I'll be back around
dinner.

Art and Ray wave from the yard. As soon as the car's up
the street -- SLAM!

221 RUMSFIELD

221

is on his porch with fire in his eyes and both fists
clenched.

222 RICKY

222

pulls a phone with a long extension cord onto the porch
as Rumsfield crosses the street to confer with the guys.

RICKY

(into phone)

Steve. Got any plans today?
Come on over to my house. I
promise you, it's gonna be a
kick.

223 RAY'S BACK YARD

223

Ray and Art stand at the base of a telephone pole next
to the tool shed at the corner of Ray's property.
Rumsfield sits on the lawn loading batteries into a pair
of walkie-talkies. Art wears a yellow hard hat and a
tool belt and glances up at the top of the pole. In
addition to the phone lines up there, there's a wide
cylindrical power transformer.

RAY

Listen, there's a lot of juice
in that thing. You sure you know
what you're doing? You hit the
wrong wire up there, you're a
Post Toastie.

ART

(pained)

You want to knock out the alarm,
don't you?

RAY

Well... maybe we could sidestep
the fence and go in another way.

(CONTINUED)

223 CONTINUED:

223

ART

Ray, come on. God knows how many trip wires they might have. I can knock out the whole friggin' system with one snip of the wirecutters, right, Cap'n?

Rumsfield snaps a walkie-talkie closed and hits a button. RUUURR-RUUURR-RUUURR! A metallic SIREN SQUAWKS.

RUMSFIELD

(beaming)

Siren mode. Great, huh? I can monitor police channels and the power company with these babies. We're solid as a rock.

ART

(consults watch)

Let's get on with it. We're burning daylight.

He tucks the blueprints in his pants and bends over to adjust his lineman climbing spikes. Then he digs in and starts the ascent.

224 TELEPHONE POLE - MINUTES LATER - DAY

224

Art nears the top. Ray and Rumsfield observe from below.

RAY

How you doin' up there, Art?

Art is at the top now, high above the neighborhood, fastening himself to the pole with a length of gaffer's tape. He flashes Ray the high sign, takes the blueprints out of his pants and peruses them.

ART

Let's see...

He takes a closer look at a small trap door on a hinge in the middle of the transformer. Then he pulls a screwdriver out of his belt and starts to pry it open.

225 GROUND LEVEL

225

The guys watch him anxiously.

RAY

How much time you figure we got once we're inside?

(CONTINUED)

225 CONTINUED:

225

RUMSFIELD

(shrugs)

Most of the day, I guess. Unless they lied.

Rumsfield looks over at the house.

RUMSFIELD

If anything's in there, you'll have plenty of time to find it.

226 TRANSFORMER

226

Suddenly, we hear a LOUD BRAAAAP! A puff of smoke pops out of the transformer and they all scatter as Art drops, screaming, right through the roof of the tool shed like it was cardboard. White, powdery dust billows out from the shed on the thud of impact.

227 BACK TO SCENE

227

RAY

Jesus Christ!

The two of them scramble around to the door of the shed, gagging on the dust. Ray rips the door open and dashes in. He tosses out a couple of rakes and a tangled garden hose, then backs out, hauling Art by the armpits.

228 ART

228

is covered with the dust (it looks like quick-lime), and his head's nodding back and forth.

RAY

Holy -- Call an ambulance!

ART

No, no, I'm okay. I landed on the fertilizer.

RUMSFIELD

(to Ray)

Good thing you're not using cowshit this year.

RAY

Can you stand? Can you feel your legs?

(CONTINUED)

228 CONTINUED:

228

ART

Wow! What a jolt! Look, it
turned my fingernails black.

He probes a finger into his mouth.

ART

I think I lost a filling.

He starts to get to his feet shakily.

ART

(to Ray)

Can I stand under your hose?

Rumsfield trots off to get the hose while Art knocks
fertilizer off his body, looking up at the pole.

229 ANGLE ON RUMSFIELD

229

pulling the hose away from the house toward the guys.
Then he stops and looks at the fence. He drops the hose,
takes a few running steps and leaps onto the fence. He
hangs on it like a monkey, shaking and kicking his feet
as the FENCE CREAKS and sways under his weight. He looks
over his shoulder at the guys.

RUMSFIELD

Look at this! No alarm! You
musta hit the right wire!

230 GUYS

230

Ray claps Art on the shoulder.

RAY

Nice work.

Art smiles and nods. Rumsfield consults his watch.

RUMSFIELD

Give me five to go set up the
communications base.

RAY

You got it.

Rumsfield trots off. The game is afoot.

CUT TO:

231 EXT. UPPER WINDOW

231

Rumsfield slides open an upper window and peers out of his house. Down below, Ricky sits on a section of scaffolding in front of his garage with an army helmet on his head. A few streaks of blue paint dry on the house as he looks up and down the street through a "He-Man-Masters-Of-The-Universe" toy spyglass. Satisfied, he takes a swig from a plastic liter bottle of Coke, spots Rumsfield and shoots him a thumbs-up.

232 RUMSFIELD

232

shakes his head, sticks a leg out and climbs out onto a section of roof. The walkie-talkie hangs on his belt, binoculars dangle from his neck... and there's a semi-automatic rifle slung on his shoulder. Ricky spots the gun and gasps.

RICKY

You got a gun?!!

RUMSFIELD

(angry)

Shut up and paint your goddamn house!

RICKY

(blown away)

Whooaa!

233 RUMSFIELD

233

EQUIPMENT JANGLING, Rumsfield pulls himself onto the top-most portion of roof which offers a nice overview of the surrounding neighborhood. He takes a quick 360 degrees recon of the area and reports into the walkie-talkie.

RUMSFIELD

(into radio)

This is Eagle Eye calling Task Force One. You're clear.

CUT TO:

234 EXT. RAY'S YARD - ART AND RAY - DAY

234

standing at the fence in Ray's yard. Art replies.

ART

Roger, Eagle Eye. We're going over.

(CONTINUED)

234 CONTINUED: 234

Art tucks the radio into his belt, motions to Ray. Ray gives him a leg up and over he goes. We hear him THUD DOWN on the other side. Ray starts handing tools over the fence: a pick-axe, two shovels, some wire-cutters.

CUT TO:

235 RUMSFIELD 235

leans against the chimney, scanning the tree-tops with his binoculars. He puts them down, unslings his rifle and lays it on the roof within easy reach.

236 RICKY 236

in his driveway, stands next to a grubby seventeen-year-old (STEVE) in mirrored sunglasses and a black T-shirt. They slap five and Ricky yells up:

RICKY

Hey, Mr. Rumsfield! I'd like you to meet a friend of mine! Steve Kuntz!

237 RUMSFIELD 237

looks down at the leering burn-out in the driveway.

STEVE

(waves)

Hey, dude.

RICKY

Steve dropped by to watch the show.

Rumsfield grumbles something unintelligible.

RICKY

(to Steve)

This guy's a Marine, man. Like he hasn't been right since 'Nam.

Steve nods compassionately.

CUT TO:

238 EXT. KLOPEKS' YARD - ART AND RAY - DAY 238

working on a nice hole in Klopeks' yard, about two feet deep and four across.

(CONTINUED)

They're working up a nice sweat in the heat, really laboring hard.

ART

Goddamn...

(pants)

... I hope we find him. Boy, do I hope we find him.

Ray nods, mops his brow with a forearm.

ART

(musing as he digs)

Poor old fart. I wonder if they tortured him. You know, some of these cult freaks...

(pant, pant)

... gouge out eyes and cut off fingers and shit.

Ray grunts, concentrating on his digging.

ART

I read in that devil worship book that one group of maniacs took a guy and --

RAY

(interrupting)

Look, I'm gonna start over there. If we split up, we can cover more of the yard quicker.

ART

Okay. Yeah, that's a good idea. You start your own hole. Should I radio it in?

Ray climbs out.

RAY

No, I don't think we need executive clearance for this, Art.

Art nods, goes back to digging.

CUT TO:

smoking a cigarette on his perch. Below him, the window he crawled out of opens and Bonnie sticks her head out.

(CONTINUED)

239 CONTINUED:

239

BONNIE

Honey? I made you a sandwich.
How are the gutters coming?

Rumsfield rolls his eyes.

BONNIE

(doesn't see him)

Mark? Are you hungry? Where'd
you go?

He frowns and picks up the walkie-talkie.

RUMSFIELD

Task Force One, this is Eagle Eye.
You guys find anything yet? Over.

240 ART AND RAY

240

Art's waist deep in a hole now. Ray is two holes away.
The yard looks like a mortar testing range.

ART

(into radio)

Negative, Eagle Eye. Ray struck
something hard about fifteen
minutes ago, but we figure it
musta been a water pipe or
something. Are we still clear?

RUMSFIELD (V.O.)

Roger. Over.

241 REVERSE - FENCE

241

Ricky and Steve hang on the fence from Ray's side,
causally observing with a bag of potato chips.

242 ART

242

rests on his shovel.

ART

Ricky, you've been in this from
the start. How about grabbing a
shovel?

RICKY

I'd like to help, Mr. Weingartner,
but I gotta paint the porch.
Lemme know if you want to order
a pizza or anything, though.

(CONTINUED)

242 CONTINUED: 242

He and Steve split. Art turns to Ray.

ART

Kids today. Why the hell can't they find something worthwhile to do?

He picks up his shovel again.

243 RUMSFIELD 243

drops half a ham sandwich in his lap, opens a jar of sunblock and creams his nose.

244 RICKY AND STEVE 244

shoot hoops.

245 ART AND RAY 245

Ray, all muddy and sweaty, stops to catch his breath.

RAY

It's getting really hot back here.

Art swats at a fly.

ART

Yeah...

246 WIDE 246

to see the whole yard has been unearthed for the most part. Big, gaping holes and mounds of fresh mud everywhere.

ART

... I guess if there was something back here we would have found it. You want to try the house?

Ray looks over at the house for a beat, deciding.

RAY

We gotta look in the basement, don't we?

247

ART

247

wipes his face on his shirt and nods. Ray tosses his shovel out of his hole and climbs out.

RAY

Let's go.

They approach the house. Art gets to the back door and jiggles the handle.

ART

Got a credit card?

248

RAY

248

sighs, pulls his wallet out and flips it open. Art helps himself.

RAY

Not the American Express. The numbers haven't even faded yet.

Art takes another one, slides it into the jamb and starts working it. Ray watches intently as Art concentrates, pulling and pushing and turning the knob.

RAY

Where'd you learn how to do this?

ART

I don't know how to do this.

He wiggles it and bends it some more and... SNAP! The card breaks off in the door and Art is left holding a plastic sliver. Ray grits his teeth.

ART

Sorry. D'Arcy's is a shit store anyway.

*

249

EXT. KLOPEKS' BACK YARD - MOMENTS LATER

249

Art backs up to the house nonchalantly and, very calmly, swings a shovel and SHATTERS a first floor WINDOW. Ray covers his ears. Art stands up on a lawn chair and starts to knock the shards out of the pane, making a lot of NOISE.

Ray stands look-out while Art hauls himself up and into the house. He falls inside and BREAKS something else. Ray winces as we hear him STOMP AROUND to the rear door, unlock it and open it.

(CONTINUED)

249 CONTINUED:

249

ART
 (to Ray)
 Won't you come in?

CUT TO:

250 INT. KLOPEK HOUSE - DAY

250

It's dark and quiet as a tomb inside. Art and Ray stand at the kitchen entrance, covered in mud and sweat, their chests heaving. They stand motionless for a beat, just listening to the ominous silence.

ART
 No big deal, right? It's just
 our neighbor's house in... broad
 daylight.

Ray nods.

ART
 Shall we go into the basement?

Ray gulps. They move shoulder-to-shoulder across the kitchen.

251 BASEMENT DOOR

251

swings open with a real haunted-house CREAKING HINGE, REVEALING the uppermost basement steps leading down into the blackened maw. Art hits the light switch. Nothing happens. He works it back and forth a few times.

RAY
 (disgusted)
 Perfect. You bring a flashlight?

ART
 (shakes his head)
 Maybe we can borrow one of theirs.

CUT TO:

252 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE

252

Rumsfield's bummed. There's two cars in Ricky's driveway now and four guys on his porch, blasting tunes and smoking cigarettes. Steve leans over the railing, really wasted, and yells up at Rumsfield, pointing to his watch.

(CONTINUED)

252 CONTINUED:

252

STEVE

Hey, man! When's the big unveiling? I gotta go to work in a couple of hours!

RUMSFIELD

Why don't you shut up?

253 ANOTHER ANGLE

253

Now Bonnie sticks her head out of an upper window.

BONNIE

Mark? All of our power's out. The air conditioner, all the fans. I'm hot.

STEVE

I'll say.

Rumsfield stands up and points a finger.

RUMSFIELD

I'm gonna break your arm, kid. Ricky! Get these losers outa here!

CUT TO:

254 INT. KLOPEK'S BASEMENT

254

Pitch black. And now, down the stairs, creep Art and Ray, Art hunched over in front gripping a kerosene lantern that throws their eerie shadows on the wall.

RAY

(sniffs)

Stinks down here.

ART

Just like Skip's place.

They reach the landing and -- WHANG!! -- Art hits his head on a low pipe.

ART

What the hell --

255 ANOTHER ANGLE

255

Holding up the lantern, he follows the pipe up to a spot where it goes right through the ceiling.

(CONTINUED)

255 CONTINUED:

255

ART

That's not supposed to be here...

Now he follows the big pipe back to its point of origin, where his lantern illuminates a curious tangle of conduit and insulation stemming from a big, black, turn-of-the-century furnace.

256 ANOTHER ANGLE

256

Meanwhile, Ray rips a black curtain off the far wall and a dusty shaft of grey light comes in through one of the barred windows, giving us a better view of the dank, mostly empty subterranean room. Ray sneezes on the dust from the curtain.

ART

Look at this big old furnace, Ray. The thing's gotta be eighty years old. God, these big places must be hell to heat.

Art examines the thing with great interest. Ray seems strangely drawn to it also, crossing to it slowly, looking at all the dials and pressure gauges.

RAY

This house isn't that big. What the hell's he need a furnace like this for? This thing's been modified... Look, all this conduit is brand new... He put this pressure gauge in himself... Right there he punched a hole in the ceiling to run that pipe up there...

ART

Holy shit! The thermostat goes up to four hundred degrees!

Ray puts his hands on a couple of pressure valves.

RAY

This is no ordinary furnace, Art...

257 ANOTHER ANGLE

257

And he spins the handles, opening the valves. We hear AIR HISS into a tank and then -- RUMP! RUMP! RUMP! The whole place vibrates with the by-now familiar mysterious noise.

(CONTINUED)

257 CONTINUED: 257

The shock knocks both men off their feet, Art bounces off a wall and Ray stumbles back onto the floor... and knocks loose a hunk of linoleum.

CUT TO:

258 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE 258

Rumsfield and Ricky react as the NOISE goes OFF.

RICKY

The noise! The noise!

He vaults off the porch and runs into the yard to yell up at Rumsfield:

RICKY

May Day! May Day!

259 EXT. ROOF - RUMSFIELD 259

loses his footing and starts to slide down the shingles. The rifle starts to slide, too. Rumsfield lunges for it, misses, then grabs the gutter to keep from dropping. He hangs from the drain pipe as the RIFLE hits the lawn, MISFIRES, and BLASTS the driver's WINDOW out of his Cadillac. Ricky hits the dirt.

260 TIGHT ON STEVE 260

And the other kids.

STEVE

Awesome!!

261 RUMSFIELD 261

dangles helplessly from the drainpipe.

RUMSFIELD

Hey, kid!!

262 RICKY'S FRIENDS 262

break into a smattering of applause.

RUMSFIELD

Get that goddamned ladder over here, you mongoloids!

(CONTINUED)

263 BARKELOW KID

263

watches intently.

CUT TO:

264 INT. KLOPEK BASEMENT - DAY

264

Art has a steel door on the shell of the furnace open and stands there, awed at the intensity of the blue flame jets inside.

ART

It's a blast furnace! Holy --
he's got a crematorium down
there! Ray!

265 ANOTHER ANGLE

265

But Ray is busy pulling up loose floor tiles, moist with fresh adhesive. The ground beneath them is moist, also, and crumbles easily as Ray digs it up with his fingers. Art comes over as Ray sits back on his heels, his dirty hands trembling.

RAY

Here he is, Arthur.

Art kneels next to him, looking at the divot.

RAY

Walter's final resting place.
Look, all this tile's been torn
up and re-laid, the cement's
still soft. They must've burned
him up and...

ART

Dumped his bones right here.

Art grabs the back of a chair, pulls it back and tosses it into a corner.

ART

We've come this far, Raymond.
Let's dig the poor son of a
bitch up.

Art starts heaving loose furniture into odd corners as Ray rips up the linoleum.

CUT TO:

266 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE

266

Ricky's ladder is leaned against Rumsfield's house.
Rumsfield and Ricky's friends stand before the Cadillac.

RUMSFIELD

I can't believe it...

Ricky calls down from the roof, where he holds the walkie-talkie.

RICKY

They're okay! I guess it's just a furnace or something.

Rumsfield pokes his head through the busted window.

RUMSFIELD

Jesus.

RICKY

Let's go across the street and see what they found!

Rumsfield looks up the street.

RUMSFIELD

Not just yet.

RICKY

Huh?

Rumsfield motions up the street.

267 POLICE CRUISER

267

has turned the corner and is crawling toward them.
Rumsfield kicks his rifle under the car.

CUT TO:

268 KOPLEK'S BASEMENT

268

We see the shadows of the grave-robbers flickering eerily in the light of the kerosene lamp. They're working on a large hole, about knee deep, and making good progress.

269 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE

269

Rumsfield and the kids affect casual innocence as a COP leans against the Cadillac.

(CONTINUED)

269 CONTINUED:

269

COP

Some old lady up the street said she heard some gunshots a short while ago. You gentlemen been outside most of the day?

RUMSFIELD

All day. I didn't hear any gunshots. Did you, Ricky?

RICKY

Gunshots? No, no, can't say I did. I think I heard some firecrackers, though.

KIDS

Yeah, that was probably it. Firecrackers.

270 EXT. KLOPEK HOUSE

270

Now, across the street, we hear a DOOR SLAM and Art flies out of the Klopek house, filthy as a pig and excited as hell.

ART

(running)

Hey, you guys, I --

He stops yelling as he spots the Cop, trips on a bush and goes down hard. Ricky waves him off and Art gets up and goes into Ray's garage.

The Cop takes this in and Rumsfield chuckles nervously.

RUMSFIELD

My neighbor... heh-heh.

271 GARAGE

271

We hear Art BANGING AROUND in there for a beat, then he appears with a heavy duty flashlight, a can of kerosene, and, staring at the Cop the whole time, trots back into the Klopek house.

272 ANOTHER ANGLE

272

Now, from the walkie-talkie that Ricky's forgotten is still dangling from his belt, we hear Ray's voice:

(CONTINUED)

272 CONTINUED:

272

RAY (V.O.)

Art, for chrissakes, will you hurry up so we can finish this before we get caught?

Rumsfield closes his eyes. Ricky gives the Cop a half-smile and picks up the radio:

RICKY

Okay, Timmie, quit goofing around with the radio! Mom wants you home right now!

Cop looks from Ricky to Rumsfield to the Klopek house to the stoned teens. He thinks for a long, uncomfortable beat, then shrugs.

COP

Well... you folks have a nice day.

Rumsfield and Ricky watch him get into his car and drive away. Then Rumsfield rips the walkie-talkie out of Ricky's hand and makes like he's going to hurl it against the house.

CUT TO:

273 INT. KLOPEK BASEMENT

273

Now they're waist deep, standing in about ten inches of gooey, wet mud.

ART

It's getting damp. Maybe we hit a water pipe or a sewer line.

Ray grunts.

ART

They wouldn't go down this far, would they?

RAY

Well, I doubt they'd bury him in a foot of standing water.

ART

Yeah. Let's start digging out and make it wider.

Art spits in his hands.

ART

I'm pissed, now. I'm gonna find that stiff if it kills me.

274 ANOTHER ANGLE

274

He starts swinging that axe like his life depended on it. And now we MOVE PAST them TO the furnace, where the intense gas fire is raging, and the needle on the temperature gauge is inching ever closer to the red zone.

CUT TO:

275 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE - DUSK

275

The sun is beginning to sink in the west, casting long shadows. Rumsfield, on the roof, checks his watch, frowns and picks up the walkie-talkie.

RUMSFIELD

Eagle Eye to Task Force One.
We're losing daylight here.
You guys find anything yet?

276 INT. KLOPEK BASEMENT - DUSK TO NIGHT

276

It's really dark in there now. Art's been collecting kerosene lamps and a torch or two to throw a little light on their work.

ART

(into walkie-talkie)
Negative, Eagle Eye. But we're
very very close. Over.

Ray leans back in the hole, panting heavily.

RAY

God, I'm burning up.

ART

Yeah, it's hot down here.

Ray nods, looks over at the furnace. It's still roaring.

RAY

No wonder, you left the goddamned
furnace on. Get down here and
dig, I'll turn it off.

Ray climbs out of the hole and goes over to the furnace.

277 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE - NIGHT

277

Night is falling. Ricky's friends light candles on the porch. Ricky stands at the foot of the driveway, looking up the darkened street.

(CONTINUED)

277 CONTINUED:

277

RICKY

(to Rumsfield)

No doubt about it. You took out the whole street. Maybe even the whole south end of town.

Rumsfield fumbles with the radio on the roof.

RUMSFIELD

Hey, pipe down! I'm trying to pick up the power company channels.

Steve leans out from the porch.

STEVE

Hey, Rick, we're gonna make a run to McD's. You want a quarter pounder or something?

RICKY

Don't leave yet, man! I got beers in the house!

278 ANOTHER ANGLE

278

He runs inside. Rumsfield fools with the radio. None of Ricky's friends pay any attention as the Klopeks' black Pontiac crawls up the street.

The FURNACE NOISE racks the block again. Immediately the Klopek car stops, pauses, and reverses back up the street.

279 KLOPEKS' BASEMENT - NIGHT

279

Art takes another mighty swing with his axe and -- CLANK! -- strikes something hard and metallic. He and Ray freeze.

ART

The crypt...

He swings several more times, each one landing with a CLANK.

ART

They got him in a steel box or something.

(looks up at Ray)

I'm gonna go get my blowtorch.

Art hauls himself out of the hole and dashes up the stairs. Ray slides down into the goo and starts to work loose dirt from around the metal piece. He leans toward it and sniffs.

280 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE 280

Art dashes over Ray's lawn for his house, yelling at Rumsfield:

ART
We found it!!

281 RUMSFIELD 281

smiles to himself.

RUMSFIELD
Okay, Klopek... play us for fools,
huh?

282 ART 282

disappears into his garage. Ricky and his friends are in the house. And now another car turns down the street... and pulls into Walter's driveway.

283 RUMSFIELD 283

sees it, frowns, and slides down toward the lip of the roof for a closer look.

284 RUMSFIELD'S POV - WALTER'S DRIVEWAY - NIGHT 284

A middle-aged man gets out of the driver's side and walks around the rear of the car to the trunk. Then a woman, presumably his wife, gets out of the passenger door. The man hauls an aluminum walker out of the trunk and brings it up to the back door of the car. Then he and the woman help Walter out of the back seat and onto his feet. He grips the walker, obviously weak.

285 RICKY 285

comes out of his house with a can of Budweiser hanging from the plastic grip.

RICKY
(to Rumsfield)
Hey, Mr. Rumsfield, you want a --

He stops as Rumsfield points a shaky finger across the street. Ricky stops.

RICKY
Oh, wow.

286 RUMSFIELD'S ROOF - NIGHT

286

Rumsfield, his hands trembling, stutters into his radio.

RUMSFIELD

Ray. Raymond. Uh... I think you
better listen up real good.

And now here comes Art trotting down the sidewalk hauling
a five foot tank of butane with a blowtorch attachment.

RUMSFIELD

(waving)

Art! Art!

RICKY

Mr. Weingartner! Hold it!

287 FRONT WALK

287

At the foot of Klopek's front walk, Art catches Ricky's
eye. Ricky points to Walter's driveway. Art looks at
Walter's driveway. Sees Walter. And his world falls
apart. Rumsfield craps a brick as he spots the Klopek's
car rolling up the street. Followed by a police cruiser.

RUMSFIELD

Coppers!!

Ricky spins to Art.

RICKY

Get Ray outta there, I'll try to
stall 'em!

And he tears ass into the street, waving his arms.

RICKY

Officer! Officer! Help! There's
some men in my house and... and
they're eating my parents' food!

Both cars stop. Walter watches from his driveway. And
the Barkelow Kid breaks from his laps to get a closer
look.

288 KLOPEK BASEMENT - NIGHT

288

Ray chips away at the dirt, paying no attention to the
MANIC SQUAWKS coming over the RADIO. Now we hear a
BREATHY, HISSING SOUND from somewhere in the basement.
Ray drops his trowel and wipes his shirt over his face.

289 ANOTHER ANGLE

289

RAY

Crypt my ass! It's a gas line!

He tries to claw his way out of the muck. Art charges the basement steps.

ART

Ray!

RAY

Get out! Gas leak!

Art does an about-face and charges back up the stairs. Ray, halfway out of the hole, knocks over a couple of torches, trying to extinguish them.

290 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE - NIGHT

290

TWO COPS, the Klopeks, Ricky and Rumsfield stand in front of the house, while Ricky's friends watch from the porch. Art comes blasting out the front door.

ART

It's gonna blow!!

291 KLOPEK PLACE

291

BLOOEY! The Klopek place is devoured in a hideous, concussion-packed FIREBALL. All the neighborhood WINDOWS BLOW OUT, splinters of wood and debris rain down as everyone crouches behind the police car.

292 NEIGHBORHOOD

292

The explosion is followed by an ominous silence, save for the sound of a couple of BOARDS DROPPING in the street and Ricky's friends commenting on the grand finale.

KIDS

Fuckin' A. That Ricky sure knows how to throw a party.

And various pieces of house settle to earth.

293 POLICE CAR

293

as five or six heads slowly poke up, looking at the carnage.

- 294 REVERSE - HOUSE 294
 What's left of it, anyway. About three walls and the entire second story are history.
- 295 RICKY AND RUMSFIELD 295
 look at each other. Art peels himself off the cement.
- ART
 (softly)
 Ray...
- 296 WRECKAGE 296
 Now, from behind a section of wall, staggers out a blackened, smoldering man.
- ART
 Ray!
- He jumps up.
- 297 RAY 297
 in a different zone entirely, stunned by the blast. He's clutching a doorknob.
- 298 COPS 298
 look at Reuben Klopek.
- COP
 Was that your house?
- Reuben nods, dazed.
- 299 RAY 299
 Art runs up to him and grabs him by the shoulders.
- ART
 Ray! Are you okay?
- Ray sees nothing, hears nothing, stumbling through the debris like a zombie. Art trots alongside, trying to get through to him.
- ART
 You found it, didn't you? Didn't you find it? Ray! Speak to me!

300

RUMSFIELD

300

turns to Reuben.

RUMSFIELD

I don't mind tellin' you, Klopek.
You got a lawsuit on your hands.

Reuben looks at him. HOLD a beat, and...

CUT TO:

301

EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE - NIGHT (MINUTES LATER)

301

Carol and Dave turn down the street. Carol gasps. *

CAROL

What on earth --

302

CAROL'S POV

302

Three firetrucks, half a dozen squad cars, helicopters with floodlights hovering overhead, an ambulance, fire hoses, the bomb squad, the gas company and about fifty curious onlookers all holding flashlights and torches trample the block.

CAROL (O.S.)

Oh God. Please don't let it be
our house. Please...

303

ANGLE ON ART

303

handcuffed and bent over the hood of a squad car, argues with two plainclothesmen, MULROONEY and BURR.

ART

I'm tellin' you, there's a body
in there, we were right on top
of it!

BURR

The old man, right?

ART

Yes! Uh, I mean -- no!

BURR

The old man had heart palpitations Monday night. The daughter and the son-in-law picked him up and took him to the hospital, where he remained until his release at five o'clock today.

(CONTINUED)

303 CONTINUED:

303

ART

What about the wig? What was that doing in their house? Huh?

BURR

They were picking up his mail for him while he was gone. The doctor said somehow the wig got mixed up with some magazines and letters.

Art cranes his neck around to look at the Klopeks as they talk to a uniformed cop with a notepad.

ART

Doctor... Ha!

BURR

He happens to be a very well-respected pathologist, Mr. Weingartner. You're damned lucky you didn't kill him in that blast.

304 KLOPEKS

304

As Burr wanders over to get part of the statement.

DR. KLOPEK

(totally calm)

... The furnace had certain modifications. My work samples don't keep very long and need to be kept in a sealed room with a constant temperature and moist heat. All the specifications were filed and authorized by the gas company.

BURR

Do you have any idea what these men were doing in your basement when the house blew up?

REUBEN

They've been harassing us ever since we moved in. There's a lot of weird people in this neighborhood.

305 RAY

305

sits up on a gurney with an ace bandage around his head and over one eye.

(CONTINUED)

305 CONTINUED:

305

Mulrooney stands over him reading a list of charges.

MULROONEY

... destruction of private property, destruction of public property, three counts of criminal trespassing, harassment, possession of a garden tool with intent to commit assault, assault, vandalism, reckless disregard for public safety, several counts of theft... and the old man claims he's got a ransom note that says you've kidnapped his dog.

Ray stares straight ahead, wordlessly.

MULROONEY

Can you hear me okay, Mr. Peterson?

RAY

I'm ruined...

Carol breaks through.

CAROL

Ray?

RAY

I'm ruined...

306 ART

306

is being led, handcuffed, to a squad car. Rumsfield follows, while Ricky and his friends watch from outside the police line. Art yells at the Klopeks:

ART

This proves nothing! You're not in the clear yet!

And now they pass Ray.

ART

Tell 'em, Ray! We got the goods on 'em, right? Don't we?

RAY

(quietly)
Get him outta here...

(CONTINUED)

ART

You'll see. They'll find the rest of the skeleton to go with the femur and they'll see we were right. It may not be Walter, but it's --

Ray leaps off the gurney, clutching Art's shirt.

RAY

Shut up! Shut up! Jesus Christ, don't you know when to quit? Look at me! I'm a shell of a man because of you!

Rumsfield tries to separate them.

RAY

Get off their case already! They didn't do anything to us! So they're different! So they keep to themselves! Can you blame them? They live next door to people who break into their house and blow it up while they're out for the day!

Ray pulls away from the paramedic and continues.

RAY

Remember what you were saying about people in the 'burbs going nuts, Art? Guys like Skip who mow their lawn for the eight hundredth time and then snap? That's us! It's not them! We're the crazy ones! We're the ones that see things that aren't there! We live in these houses that are all the same on these streets that are all the same! And we have the same jobs and the same cars and the same friends! And we get so conditioned to the same routine that as soon as someone different moves onto the block, we lose it! And we run around vaulting fences and peeking in windows and throwing garbage in the street and setting fires and acting suspicious and paranoid! We're the lunatics, Art! Not them. Us!

Ray's speech is ended. Everyone's quiet.

(CONTINUED)

306

CONTINUED: (2)

306

ART

I don't know what to say. You
want me to move?

Ray sighs. Falls back on the gurney. The paramedics
strap him in and start to roll him toward the ambulance.
Carol trots alongside.

CAROL

They're going to take you to the
hospital and check you out,
darling.

RAY

Good.

CAROL

We'll meet you there.

RAY

Good.

307

STREET

307

They load him in. Everybody on the street starts to
break it up. Reuben and Hans stand in the rubble of
their house. Rumsfield puts his arm around Bonnie,
looks down and sees Ricky at his side as the cops load
Art into a squad car. Ricky smiles broadly.

RICKY

God, I love this street.

308

INT. AMBULANCE

308

As the paramedics START the ENGINE, Ray just stares at
the ceiling, totally wiped out. A doctor squats nearby,
his back turned to him. The DRIVER turns around.

DRIVER

Where to, Doc? St. Matthew's? *

DOCTOR

Yes.

309

RAY'S POV - OUT AMBULANCE'S BACK WINDOW

309

As the ambulance pulls off, he watches Mayfield Place
fall away, perhaps relieved that he's finally escaping.
The Klopek house smolders, sending a greasy black cloud
up to hover over the street.

(CONTINUED)

309 CONTINUED:

309

The fire trucks, the squad cars, the neighbors, the madness all get smaller and smaller. He lays his head back down on the gurney. It's calm and quiet in the ambulance, the first peace he's known in a week.

DOCTOR

You just relax, Mr. Peterson...

310 RAY

310

Relax, yes. Relax. Ray sighs, starts to forget everything. It's all history now. He can start over. Then, suddenly, he frowns. "You just relax, Mr. Peterson?" Gee, that voice sounded familiar... He looks to his right.

311 CLOSEUP - DOCTOR

311

It's Werner Klopek. And he's loading a horse syringe with a clear liquid. He looks at Ray and smiles knowingly.

DR. KLOPEK

... I'm going to take good care of you.

Squirt!

Ray craps. Dr. Klopek dabs some alcohol on his arm. Panicked, Ray jerks his head up. Out the back window, his world gets farther and farther away.

RAY

Noooooooooooo!!!

312 EXT. MAYFIELD PLACE

312

The ambulance, with Ray trapped inside, pulls around the corner and disappears into the night.

313 ANGLE ON KLOPEK HOUSE DEBRIS

313

Hans pokes through the carnage and finds something of interest. He picks it up. It's a bone. He nudges Uncle Reuben.

Reuben snatches the bone out of his hand, hides it behind his back, and looks around to see if anybody's spotted him.

314 STREET

314

And at the end of the street, the Barkelow Kid gets back on his bike and starts doing his laps again.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END