

DARKNESS EXPEDITION

Written By

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Inspired by

Jessie Murphy

Dedicated To

Mr.M.Joesph

Based On

When a woman's Ex-boyfriend comes back from the dead with demonic allies to destroy the world, she must confront her dark past to stop the apocalypse.

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FADE IN:

INT. MURPHY FAMILY HOME - JESSIE'S BEDROOM - DAY - RAINING

Rain patters against the window as JESSIE MURPHY, 17, a pretty dark-haired girl, sits cross-legged on her bed, idly strumming her guitar.

The SOUND OF SHOUTING FROM THE LIVING ROOM makes her head whip up, annoyance flickering across her face. She sighs, putting aside her instrument reluctantly.

CUT TO:

INT. MURPHY FAMILY HOME - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jessie hurries in to find her father ERICK, 30s, squared off against her brother RYAN, 18, who is clearly drunk and belligerent.

ERICK

(yelling)

Ryan, why are you doing this to yourself?!

RYAN

(slurring, defiant)

'Cause ever since Selina broke up with me, I haven't been the same!

JESSIE

(trying to calm the situation)

But Ryan, this isn't the way. You need to get help.

RYAN

(erupting in a drunken rage)

I don't need fuckin' help! I need my damn pills!

Ryan SHOVES past Jessie, making for the front door. She tries to grab his arm but he THROWS HER TO THE FLOOR with startling force. Erick moves to intervene but Ryan is already out the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - RYAN'S CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Ryan's car TEARS down the rain-slick street, FISHTAILING wildly as he blows through a stop sign. Up ahead, the HEADLIGHTS OF AN ONCOMING TRUCK BLAZE THROUGH THE DOWNPOUR.

Ryan has only a split-second to REGISTER THE TRUCK before his car SMASHES HEAD-ON into a roadside tree with HORRIFIC FORCE. The crumpled vehicle bounces back into the street, settling in a shower of glass and debris.

In the stillness after, only the PATTERN OF RAIN on twisted metal can be heard.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. MURPHY FAMILY HOME - JESSIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Four hours later, Jessie numbly flicks on the TV, searching for a distraction from her grief. But the NEWS REPORT stops her cold:

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

...a tragic incident tonight, as a young man lost his life crashing his Honda into a tree on Greenway Boulevard. Police suspect alcohol was a factor...

Jessie GASPS, the remote falling from her hands as she collapses to the floor, SOBBING. Erick rushes in and pulls his devastated daughter into a tight embrace.

FADE OUT

MONTHS LATER

EXT. AUBURN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - MORNING

Erick's car idles at the curb as Jessie stares anxiously out the window at the impressive campus buildings looming ahead.

JESSIE

(hesitant)

Dad, are you sure about this? A fresh start...?

ERICK

(reassuring smile)

You need this, kiddo. Just focus on your studies and putting the past behind you, okay?

He gives her hand an encouraging squeeze as she unbuckles her seatbelt with a deep, steadying breath.

ERICK (CONT'D)

Good luck, Jess. I'm proud of you.

Jessie returns his smile gratefully before shouldering her bag and heading onto the busy campus.

CUT TO:

INT. AUBURN UNIVERSITY - HALLWAY - LATER

The hallway bustles with students as Jessie consults a campus map, looking frazzled trying to find her first class.

Further ahead, a TALL, HANDSOME STUDENT WITH A STYLISH FADE HAIRCUT catches her eye. Impulsively, she approaches him.

JESSIE

Hi, good morning. Do you know where Mr. Wilson's class is, by any chance?

BRADLEY

(charming smile)

Actually, I'm heading there myself. I'm Bradley.

JESSIE

(relieved)

Jessica, but you can call me Jessie.

They shake hands, an undeniable spark of chemistry between them as they head off down the hallway together.

DISSOLVE TO:

Bradley exits a building, checking his phone when A SPORTY RED MUSTANG rolls up and HONKS. His buddy CALVIN leans across from the driver's seat.

CALVIN

Let's go, man! We're gonna be late for Mitch's party!

BRADLEY

(shaking his head wryly)

Can't tonight, I've got homework to crush.

As Calvin peels out, Bradley glances back to where Jessie is emerging from the same building. Their eyes meet and they exchange friendly waves before heading their separate ways.

DISSOLVE TO:

CALVIN
(taking a corner a bit too fast)
Yo Bradley, who was that fine girl you
were chatting up earlier?

BRADLEY
(nonchalant shrug)
Just the new student, Jessica. She seems
pretty cool.

CALVIN
(wiggling his eyebrows)
Well you know what they say about
Southern girls, my man...

Bradley just chuckles, shaking his head at his buddy's antics.

CUT TO:

INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Bradley is texting on his phone as he walks through the grocery
store aisles, grabbing items for breakfast.

BRADLEY
(texting)
Mom, I'm getting breakfast groceries for
tomorrow.

His phone rings with a Skype video call from Jessie.

JESSIE (V.O.)
Hey Bradley, what are you up to?

Bradley answers the call, holding the phone up as he continues
shopping.

BRADLEY
(into phone)
Nothing, I'm just buying groceries for
tomorrow. You?

JESSIE (V.O.)
I'm doing Mr. Wilson's homework.

BRADLEY
(into phone)
I know that class is tricky. But I may
have the answer to your question.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

There's this app called PhotoMath that
can solve algebraic equations. You
should download it, it might help.

JESSIE (V.O.)

Thank you, Bradley, you're a lifesaver.

BRADLEY

(into phone)

Um, Jessie, I gotta go. I'll see you
tomorrow at school.

JESSIE (V.O.)

Okay, good night.

Bradley ends the call and continues shopping.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AUBURN COLLEGE - HALLWAY - MORNING

Jessie is walking briskly down the hall, heading to class. She
passes Jacob, Ryan's best friend.

JACOB

Hey Jessie, is that you?

Jessie stops, turning to face him.

JESSIE

Yeah, how have you been?

JACOB

Good, I'm surprised you moved here to
this school. Your eyes are beautiful.
I'd like to take you out on a date
sometime.

JESSIE

(taken aback)

Sorry, you're not my type. I'll talk to
you later because I'm going to be late
for class.

Jessie turns to leave, but Jacob grabs her wrist, stopping her.

JACOB

I insist. I'm not taking no for an
answer.

JESSIE
(firm)
Let me go.

From a distance, Bradley sees the confrontation. He rushes over.

BRADLEY
(standing up for Jessie)
Hey! Let her go.

JACOB
(taunting)
What are you gonna do, tough guy?

Bradley punches Jacob in the face. Three security guards rush in to break up the fight. Jacob's girlfriend, Selena, walks by and witnesses the scene.

JESSIE
(to Selena)
What are you doing here? And why the hell did your boyfriend compliment my eyes?

SELENA
Because you reminded him of your brother.

JESSIE
Why are you telling me this like you care?

SELENA
(regretful)
Because I regret cheating on him, and I take full responsibility for his suicide.

Jessie is stunned into silence for a moment.

JESSIE
I want to know why you cheated on him, because he loved you to death.

SELENA
(resigned)
Because of my personality, I felt like the relationship wasn't going to last long.

JESSIE
(disgusted)
Really? That's all you have to say? I'm out of here.

Jessie storms off down the hallway, leaving Selena behind.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PARK - THE BENCH - AFTERNOON

Jessie and Bradley are sitting on a park bench, having an intimate conversation.

JESSIE
Thanks for meeting me.

BRADLEY
Yeah, I want to apologize for--

JESSIE
--trust me, it's not your fault. But
thanks for standing up for me.

BRADLEY
I did what any other man could've done.

They gaze into each other's eyes, leaning in closer. Just as they're about to kiss, Bradley's phone rings, interrupting the moment.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)
(disappointed)
Sorry, I gotta take this.

JESSIE
It's fine.

Bradley answers the call.

BRADLEY
(into phone)
Calvin, I'll call you back later. I'm
busy right now.
(hangs up)
Alright, bye.

JESSIE
Hey, do you want to go ice skating with
me?

BRADLEY
(smiling)
Yeah, I'm down.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ICE SKATING ARENA - LATER

Bradley and Jessie are gliding across the ice rink, holding hands for support.

BRADLEY

Hey, this is therapeutic.

JESSIE

Yeah, I'm getting the hang of it.

(beat)

But tell me a little bit about you.

BRADLEY

Well, as a hobby, I like exploring and studying forensic psychology. What about you?

JESSIE

I like to write music and sing.

BRADLEY

Oh, like studying people's faces and their meaning, even if you don't talk to them?

JESSIE

(impressed)

Okay, I see you know a few things.

BRADLEY

Your great-grandma was a forensic psychologist, right?

JESSIE

(nodding)

So what made you come to a new college?

BRADLEY

Well, I had a brother who was struggling with addiction, and he passed away.

JESSIE

I'm sorry for your--

BRADLEY

--you're good. Do you mind if I ask how it started?

JESSIE

He was dating this girl since high school, but she cheated on him with the dude you fought at school today.

BRADLEY

(understanding)

Oh, that's why he knows you. But if he had a girlfriend, then why was he messing with you?

JESSIE

Maybe he thought I was more attractive than his girl.

(changing the subject)

Tell me about you.

BRADLEY

(somber)

I know what it's like to feel in a pitch of darkness. In my experience, I had an altercation with my mom, and I did something really bad. I created an evil spirit.

JESSIE

(concerned)

Oh my god! Are you okay?

BRADLEY

Yeah, but he's locked up somewhere safe, away from me.

JESSIE

What's his or her name?

BRADLEY

Brandon. He's known as one of the most dangerous criminals in Tennessee.

Jessie takes Bradley's hands in hers with compassion.

JESSIE

I feel like we're on the same page of a book. But I think it's time to let go of the past because it no longer serves you.

BRADLEY

The same goes for you too.

Jessie gently touches Bradley's face, prompting him to gaze into her eyes. The tension builds as their faces draw closer, and they share their first kiss.

MUSIC CUE: ["ADORE YOU" BY JUICE WRLD]

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. JESSIE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jessie and Bradley lie entangled in bed, caught up in a passionate embrace, kissing deeply. Their movements are sensual as they make love for the first time.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. JESSIE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

The harsh blare of an alarm jolts them awake. Jessie angrily swats it off the nightstand, sending it crashing to the floor.

JESSIE
(shaking Bradley)
Bradley, wake up.

Bradley stirs, yawning as he slowly rouses from sleep.

BRADLEY
(groggy)
Yeah?

JESSIE
Do you realize what time it is?

Bradley's eyes widen as realization dawns.

BRADLEY
Oh my god, my mom is gonna kill me.

He leaps out of bed and hastily gets dressed while Jessie watches with amusement.

FADE TO:

EXT. BRADLEY'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

Bradley's mother, MADISON (34), waits impatiently, arms crossed as Bradley rushes up the front walk.

MADISON
(upset)
Where were you all night?

BRADLEY
(defensive)
Mom, I'm old enough to not be arguing about things without an explanation.

MADISON

As long as you live under my roof, you owe me answers.

BRADLEY

(arguing)

Okay, fine! I was at my girlfriend's house, okay? You happy?

Madison takes a deep, calming breath.

MADISON

Okay, you're right, honey. You're old enough. But what's the one thing I always tell you? You are responsible for what you say and what you do.

BRADLEY

(resolute)

I wanted to tell you that I'm going out of town because of my past trauma with Brandon.

MADISON

(surprised)

If that's what you want to do, then that's your decision.

Bradley nods and goes inside to pack his things. Moments later, he emerges with a suitcase as Jessie waits for him in her idling car.

BRADLEY

(to Madison)

Mom, I promise I'll be okay.

MADISON

(hugging him)

Okay, stay safe out there.

BRADLEY

Bye, Mom.

MADISON

Bye, honey.

Bradley loads his suitcase into Jessie's trunk, then gets into the passenger seat. They drive off, leaving Madison watching from the porch as they depart.

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPERIMPOSE TITLE: 10 YEARS LATER

INT. TENNESSEE - NEW HOME - DAY

The cozy family home is filled with the aroma of a home-cooked breakfast.

JESSIE (O.S.)
(calling out)
Honey, breakfast is ready!

Jessie stands at the kitchen counter, placing food onto plates as BRADLEY and their teenage son BRYCE (15) enter.

BRYCE
(taking a seat)
Mom, this breakfast is delicious.

BRADLEY
(leaning in to kiss Jessie)
Good morning, babe.

BRYCE
Dad, do you know by any chance where I
left my phone?

BRADLEY
I think you left it in the garage.

BRYCE
Okay, thank you.

Bryce heads off toward the garage.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW HOME - GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Bryce rummages through boxes, searching for his missing phone. Underneath some clutter, he spots a red envelope on the floor and picks it up curiously.

BRYCE (O.S.)
(reading the note)
"What the hell is this? I know your
father very well, and he has a past that
he never told you about before. And I
know his secret. If you want to come and
find me, here's the address."

INT. NEW HOME - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Bryce returns to the living room, note in hand.

BRADLEY
Did you find it?

BRYCE
About that... I found something else.

He pulls out the red envelope. Bradley's expression darkens as he snatches the note away.

BRADLEY
(upset)
You were not supposed to read that. Why were you going through my stuff?

BRYCE
(defensive)
Dad, it was just on the floor.

BRADLEY
(raising his voice)
I don't care if it was on the floor!
You're grounded, no Fortnite for a week.
Go to your room and study now!

Jessie places a calming hand on Bradley's arm.

JESSIE
Bradley, inhale...exhale.
(beat)
Tell me, why do you still have that? And we already talked about this. You don't respect yourself.

BRADLEY
(regretful)
I know, I'm irresponsible.

JESSIE
I'm sorry, but I can't be with someone who doesn't have self-love. I think we need a break.

BRADLEY
You're kicking me out, but--

JESSIE
(loudly)
--Nothing! Pack your things and get out!

Bradley is stunned into silence for a moment before nodding defeatedly.

BRADLEY
Okay, if that's how you feel. Then as
you wish.

He goes to pack a bag as Jessie watches stoically.

FADE TO:

INT. MENTAL ASYLUM - LATER

Bryce cautiously enters the dimly lit asylum corridor, approaching
Cell 54. The interior is pitch black.

BRYCE
Hello? You asked me to come.

BRANDON (O.C.)
Hello, Bryce. You may be wondering why I
asked you to come see me.

Bryce squints, trying to make out the figure in the shadows.

BRYCE
Who are you?

BRANDON
I am your father's worst nightmare.

BRYCE
(firmly)
Stop being such a coward because I want
to know who I am looking at.

With a flick of a switch, the cell is bathed in light, revealing
BRANDON'S face - a mirror image of Bradley's. The walls are covered
in disturbing drawings of Bradley's family.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
(stunned)
Oh my god! It can't be...You look just
like my father.

BRANDON
(smirking)
Indeed. I know you have questions. All
you have to do is ask.

BRYCE
What's your name? And how did you end up
in here?

BRANDON

My name is Brandon. Your father and his
slut girlfriend put me in here.

BRYCE

How do you have my father's face? And
why has he never mentioned you?

BRANDON

Because he kept it a secret from you.
Why? Because after what he went through
with Carolina--

BRYCE

(confused)
Who's Carolina?

BRANDON

His ex-girlfriend from high school. As I
was saying, he feared that society would
look at him as a monster, ruining his
reputation as a person.

BRYCE

So that explains everything.

A POLICE OFFICER appears at the cell door.

POLICE OFFICER

Alright, Brandon, your time is up.

BRANDON

(to Bryce)
It was nice talking with you, Bryce.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. NEW HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

JESSIE

is washing dishes when her phone rings.
It's Bradley calling from the Burger
Flakes Hotel.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

(into phone)
Bradley, are you okay?

INT. BURGER FLAKES HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Bradley is alone in his hotel room, looking paranoid. He hears a
KNOCK at the door and freezes.

BRADLEY (O.S.)
(calls out)
Hello!

He cautiously approaches the door, peering through the peephole. Seeing no one, he turns away, about to go back inside when--

The door BURSTS open, and BRANDON enters, SWINGING a glass bottle, CRACKING Bradley over the head. Bradley crumples to the floor, unconscious.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. DARK WAREHOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Bradley slowly comes to, groggy and disoriented. He's tied to a chair in a dimly lit basement. His head is pounding from the blow.

BRADLEY (O.S.)
(yelling)
Help! Help! Help!

The basement door CREAKS open, and Brandon emerges from the shadows, a sinister grin on his face.

BRANDON
Hey, Bradley.

BRADLEY
(shocked)
How the hell did you escape?

BRANDON
(nonchalant)
It doesn't matter anymore. What's important is that I'm here now, back in your life. I will finish what I started.

Bradley struggles against his restraints.

BRADLEY
I swear, if you lay a hand on my family,
I will fucking kill you.

Brandon pulls out a syringe filled with a clear liquid and injects it into Bradley's neck.

BRANDON
Just be quiet.

Bradley's eyes go wide as the drug takes effect, leaving him groggy and compliant. Brandon digs into Bradley's pockets and retrieves his phone, dialing Jessie.

INT. NEW HOME - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jessie jumps when her phone rings, Bradley's number flashing on the display.

JESSIE
(into phone)
Bradley, are you okay?

BRANDON (V.O.)
This is not Bradley.

JESSIE
(alarmed)
What did you do to him?

BRANDON (V.O.)
Nothing yet. Have you figured out any
clues in order to save him?

JESSIE
(confused)
What do you mean clues?

BRANDON (V.O.)
I mean the one your son found in the
garage.

JESSIE
(realizing)
What do you want with my son?

BRANDON (V.O.)
Come alone. No cops, or else he dies.

The line goes dead. Jessie stares at the phone in stunned silence.

BACK TO:

INT. DARK WAREHOUSE - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Brandon ends the call and turns his attention back to the drugged, semi-conscious Bradley.

BRANDON
(talking to himself)
Well, Bradley, what am I going to do
with you?

MINUTES LATER

EXT. DARK WAREHOUSE - FRONT ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

Jessie's car pulls up outside the abandoned warehouse. She unbuckles her seatbelt, her hand resting on the taser at her hip.

JESSIE
We're here.

BRYCE
I'm coming too.

JESSIE
No, it's too dangerous. Stay in the car.

BRYCE
But Mom--

JESSIE
(firm)
No buts.

She gets out and closes the car door behind her.

INT. DARK WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jessie shines her flashlight, sweeping the beam across the dim interior as she searches for the basement access.

JESSIE (O.S.)
(paranoid)
Hello?

Her voice echoes eerily. Finally, she locates a door leading to the basement stairwell and cautiously descends.

CUT TO:

JESSIE (CONT'D)
I was wondering where you were.

BRYCE
I went to go visit that dad fear the most.

JESSIE
Tell me you didn't do it. Why did you visit him. Are you crazy.

BRYCE
Mom there things dad is keeping from us
and I'm his son and you are his wife.
Jessie calls Bradley on SKYPE.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. DARK WAREHOUSE - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

BRADLEY (O.S.)
Jessie!

JESSIE
Bradley! Oh my god, are you okay?

She rushes over and starts untying the ropes binding him to the chair.

BRADLEY
Yeah, yeah, hurry up and untie me!

Jessie works frantically at the knots until Bradley is freed.

JESSIE
Hurry, let's get out of here.

BRADLEY
(hesitant)
Wait, he said there was a bomb. If it's
not in here, then where is it?

Realization dawns on Jessie's face, her eyes going wide with horror.

JESSIE
Oh my god... Bryce!

FADE OUT:

EXT. DARK WAREHOUSE - FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Bryce sits anxiously in Jessie's idling car, waiting for his mother's return. Suddenly, the back window EXPLODES inward as Brandon SLAMS a fist through the glass, grabbing Bryce.

BRANDON
Say bye-bye, Bryce.

With a sadistic grin, Brandon ACTIVATES a small detonator in his hand. The car ERUPTS in a massive FIREBALL, the EXPLOSION rocking the ground.

JESSIE (O.S.)
(screaming in anguish)
NO! NO! NO!

Brandon throws his head back, laughing maniacally as Jessie and Bradley emerge from the warehouse, stunned by the horrific scene.

Taking advantage of their shock, Brandon hops on a parked motorcycle and PEELS OUT, speeding away down the road.

BRADLEY
(shouting)
Quick, Jessie! Let's get that motorcycle
over there!

They leap onto the other bike and ROAR off in pursuit of Brandon, weaving recklessly through traffic on the highway. After an hour-long, high-speed chase, the road leads them to the Everglades.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK - CONTINUOUS

Brandon's motorcycle finally runs out of gas, forcing him to abandon it and flee on foot into the swampy wetlands.

BRADLEY
(pulling over)
Okay, we're here. Where it all started.

Jessie angrily dismounts the bike, pulling out her taser as she gives chase.

JESSIE
(yelling)
No place left to run!

Brandon turns to face her, a twisted smile on his face.

BRANDON
I'm right here. Kill me if you want. Oh,
that's right, you're not a cold-blooded
killer, are you?

With a primal scream of rage, Jessie FIRES the taser, the electrified barbs striking Brandon in the chest. He convulses violently, dropping to his knees.

JESSIE
(through gritted teeth)
JUST. STOP. TALKING!

Brandon coughs up blood, the taser's voltage overloading his body.

BRANDON
(gurgling)
Even if I die...I still won. And there's
nothing...you could do...about it.

His eyes roll back in his head as he slumps over, finally dead.
Jessie stands over his lifeless body, chest heaving.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. THE GRAVEYARD - DAY

Bradley stands solemnly before Brandon's freshly dug grave, finally
finding some semblance of closure.

BRADLEY (V.O.)
(to himself)
I can't believe you're really gone. I
can finally let you go.

The CLICK of approaching footsteps breaks his reverie. Bradley
turns to see CAROLINA, his ex-girlfriend from high school,
approaching.

CAROLINA
Yeah, same for me.

BRADLEY
(surprised)
Carolina, what are you--

CAROLINA
(interrupting)
I heard what happened. It's been--

BRADLEY
(nodding)
--it's been a minute. I know.

An uneasy silence stretches between them.

CAROLINA
You might be asking what the reason is
for my return.

BRADLEY
(cautious)
What is it?

CAROLINA
Because our story with Brandon has to be
told. And you know why? It's because I
know your secret.

Bradley tenses, a flicker of fear crossing his features.

CAROLINA (CONT'D)

What would your wife think when she finds out?

BRADLEY

(pleading)

Please, Carolina, don't make my relationship with my family get split apart.

CAROLINA

(ominous)

Trust me, you can keep the secret in the dark. Someday, it will reveal itself in the light.

Bradley averts his gaze, exhaling a frustrated sigh.

BRADLEY

(dismissive)

Whatever, Carolina.

He turns and walks away, leaving Carolina staring contemplatively at Brandon's grave.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. BRANDON'S MURDER TRIAL - LATER

The courtroom is silent as JUDGE MARK bangs his gavel, calling the proceedings to order.

JUDGE MARK

Okay, everyone, please take a seat.

(to Bradley)

Bradley, are you ready to testify, sir?

BRADLEY

(nodding)

Yes, your Honor.

Bradley takes the witness stand as the PROSECUTOR begins questioning him.

PROSECUTOR

What is your relationship with Brandon, sir?

BRADLEY

He is my long-lost twin.

PROSECUTOR
Why was Brandon trying to kill you?

BRADLEY
(hesitant)
Because of...my past trauma with him.

PROSECUTOR
You'll need to elaborate more for us to understand.

The courtroom doors open, and CAROLINA strides in confidently.

CAROLINA
If he doesn't tell you, I know I will.

JUDGE MARK
(to Bradley)
Okay, Bradley, switch places with this young lady.

Bradley steps down as Carolina takes the witness stand.

CAROLINA
I will answer the questions.

PROSECUTOR
What is your relationship with Bradley?

CAROLINA
He's my ex-boyfriend, sir.

PROSECUTOR
Elaborate on why Brandon was trying to kill Bradley.

CAROLINA
Because he had an admiration towards me. His jealousy towards Bradley became hatred.

PROSECUTOR
Okay. Anything else you would like to add?

CAROLINA
(nodding)
The truth.

PROSECUTOR
Proceed.

CAROLINA
(taking a breath)
The main reason Brandon was trying to
kill my ex-boyfriend is because Bradley
is responsible for Ryan Murphy's death.

Gasps ripple through the courtroom as Carolina produces an audio
tape.

CAROLINA (CONT'D)
I brought the evidence in an audio tape.

JUDGE MARK
May you play the tape for everyone to
hear?

CAROLINA
Yes, your Honor.

She presses play on the recorder. BRANDON'S distorted voice fills
the courtroom.

BRANDON (V.O.)
(through tape)
Hello, Jessie. If you're listening to
this, that means something went wrong.
Your boyfriend is responsible for your
brother's death.

The tape ends, leaving a deafening silence. Jessie, seated in the
gallery, shoots Bradley a look of pure venom.

JESSIE
(shouting)
Bradley, how could you do this to me?!

BRADLEY
(in tears)
Please, Jessie, I can explain.

JESSIE
(enraged)
There's nothing you can fucking explain!
Arrest him!

Two bailiffs apprehend Bradley, slapping handcuffs on his wrists as
he pleads with Jessie.

BRADLEY
(begging)
Jessie, please, it was an accident. You
gotta believe me.

JESSIE
(yelling)
I hope you rot in prison!

Bradley is forcibly dragged from the courtroom as Jessie breaks down in Carolina's arms, the truth about her boyfriend's dark secret finally exposed.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. NEW HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jessie lies motionless in bed, staring blankly at the ceiling as the weight of Bradley's betrayal crushes down on her. Tears stream silently down her cheeks.

Suddenly, she sits up, resolve hardening her features. Jessie slides out of bed and makes her way to the bathroom, turning the shower on full blast.

INT. NEW HOME - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Steam fogs the mirrors as Jessie steps under the scalding spray, letting the water mask the sound of her anguished sobs. Her cries turn to screams as she vents her pain and rage.

After an indeterminate time, Jessie shuts off the water and exits the shower, wrapping a towel around herself. She catches a glimpse of her puffy, red-rimmed eyes in the mirror and looks away in disgust.

Seeking solace, Jessie retrieves a bottle of liquor from a cabinet and starts drinking straight from the bottle, desperate to numb her heartache.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE: A MONTH LATER

INT. JESSIE'S PARENTS' HOUSE - OLD BEDROOM - DAY

Jessie lies curled up in the fetal position on her childhood bed, the TV playing a rerun of SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS that she doesn't seem to be watching.

A soft KNOCK at the door causes her to stir slightly. It's her father, ERICK.

ERICK
(gently)
Sweetie, you haven't been outdoors in a long time.

JESSIE
(flatly)
Dad, I don't feel like doing anything.

ERICK
You've been saying that all month. Come on, your friends from school want to take you to the carnival.

He sits down beside her on the bed, putting a comforting hand on her shoulder.

ERICK (CONT'D)
Hey, look at me. Don't let that bastard ruin your future because, reality check, you're not going to find something positive from it.

He pulls her into a tender embrace, and Jessie allows herself to relax into his arms, finding solace in her father's unconditional love.

JESSIE
(sniffling)
You're right, Dad. Ryan wouldn't have wanted this for me. Thank you so much for being realistic with me.

Erick smiles proudly as Jessie finally musters the will to get up and rejoin her friends, the first spark of life returning to her eyes.

EXT. THE AMUSEMENT PARK - NIGHT

Jessie and her best friend CLAIRE (20), a pretty girl with light brown hair, are strolling amongst the bright carnival games and rides, attempting to recapture some of their youthful spirit.

From across the way, a HANDSOME GUY catches Jessie's eye and starts walking towards them.

HANDSOME GUY
Hey, excuse me. I saw you from a distance, and I think you're gorgeous.

JESSIE
(flustered)
Thank you.

HANDSOME GUY

What's your name? I'm Tristan, by the way.

JESSIE

I'm Jessica, but you can call me Jessie.
Nice to meet you.

TRISTAN

(charming)
Where are you from?

JESSIE

I'm from Alabama. You?

TRISTAN

Detroit.

An awkward pause stretches between them until Tristan flashes her a warm smile.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

I like your smile.

JESSIE

(returning his grin)
Maybe we should get to know each other.
You seem like a good vibe.

TRISTAN

Do you want to exchange numbers or something?

JESSIE

Yeah, I guess I'll see you later.

Tristan rejoins his friends as Jessie and Claire continue wandering the carnival.

CLAIRE

Ooh, Jessie, who was that attractive guy you were talking to?

JESSIE

(smiling coyly)
His name is Tristan, and I think he's kind of cute.

CLAIRE

Is he into you?

JESSIE

(nodding)
Yes, I like his personality.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
He's different. I feel like life is
giving me a second chance to find love.

Jessie's phone starts ringing with an UNKNOWN CALLER.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Hey, I'm gonna go to the bathroom to
take this call.

CUT TO:

INT. THE AMUSEMENT PARK - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jessie ducks into the bathroom, answering her ringing phone cautiously.

JESSIE
(into phone)
Hello?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
(voice distorted)
Hey Jess, miss me?

Jessie tenses, her grip tightening on the phone.

JESSIE
(into phone)
You're in prison. Bradley, if this is
you, just accept that you lost.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
I never said I was Bradley.

JESSIE
(growing angry)
So it's not you, so who the hell is
this?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
I would like to remain a private caller.
What did it feel like killing Brandon?

Jessie's face contorts with a mix of rage and residual trauma.

JESSIE
(yelling into phone)
Whoever this is, go to hell!

She angrily ends the call and takes a moment to collect herself before exiting the bathroom.

FADE OUT

EXT. JESSIE'S NEW HOME - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Tristan pulls Jessie into a warm embrace on her front porch.

TRISTAN

Hey.

JESSIE

Hey Tristan. Thanks for coming over. I need to talk to someone about my past trauma. It's about--

TRISTAN

(nodding)

--I know, it's about Brandon. I heard it on the news.

JESSIE

(pained)

The pain he caused me, I can't let it go.

Tristan takes Jessie's hands in his, his touch comforting.

TRISTAN

Hey, word of advice. The grass is greener on the other side.

JESSIE

(sighing)

You're right. So what about you? What made you come to Tennessee?

TRISTAN

(solemn)

Well, I've always been alone ever since my parents passed away.

JESSIE

(sympathetic)

What happened? Never mind--

TRISTAN

(shaking his head)

It's okay, trust me.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

They were going on an expedition,
studying the ancient demonic creature
the Leviathan, on a boat. And they never
returned, without a trace.

Jessie squeezes his hand reassuringly.

JESSIE

It's like you said, it's not the end of
the world. Use that pain to motivate
yourself to do good things.

They gaze into each other's eyes for a lingering moment before
coming together in a tender kiss, finding solace in one another's
shared pain.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. THE PENITENTIARY - JAIL CELL - NEXT DAY

Bradley sits hunched on his cot, furiously scribbling in a small
red journal. The sound of approaching FOOTSTEPS breaks his
concentration.

OFFICER

Bradley, you have a visitor.

Bradley looks up, surprised to see Jessie's father ERICK standing
on the other side of the bars, eyes burning with barely contained
fury.

BRADLEY

(coolly)

Well, well, look who came to see me.

ERICK

I want to look you in the eyes and
ask...why did you kill my son?

Bradley sets his journal aside, leaning back with an unsettling
calm.

BRADLEY

Well, it all started back in high
school...

INT. GEORGE WASHINGTON SENIOR HIGH - (FLASHBACK) - DAY

A TEENAGE BRADLEY walks down the busy high school hallway, heading
towards his locker. Suddenly, the menacing figure of RYAN shoves
him from behind.

RYAN
Hey newbie, you lost?

BRADLEY
(defiant)
No, I'm not. Fuck you.

Ryan's face twists with rage as he SLAMS his fist into Bradley's stomach. As Bradley doubles over, Ryan snatches his bookbag and sends its contents spilling across the floor.

Another STUDENT, SELENA, rushes over to help Bradley amid the taunting crowd.

SELENA
Hey, are you okay? Let me help you.
Don't listen to those assholes.
(offering her hand)
What's your name?

BRADLEY
(grimacing)
I'm Bradley.

SELENA
I'm Selena. Nice to meet you.
(glancing at Ryan)
You know them?

BRADLEY
The one who hit me, that was your boyfriend?

SELENA
(nodding sadly)
Yeah...I think I'm going to break up with him.

BRADLEY
(pensive)
I think I have a plan.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MENTAL ASYLUM - JAIL CELL - (FLASHBACK) - CONTINUOUS

Bradley stands outside the barred door of a shadowy cell, peering in at the dark, imposing figure of BRANDON sitting in the corner.

BRADLEY
I need your help.

Brandon lets out an unsettling CHUCKLE that seems to echo through the chamber.

BRANDON
(amused)
You came all the way here to ask for help?

BRADLEY
(firm)
I'm being serious.

BRANDON
What's in it for me to help you?

Bradley pauses, steadying himself with a deep breath.

BRADLEY
We both know somewhere, deep down, we are the same.

Brandon leans forward, intrigued, as the shadows play across his face.

BRANDON
Now I like this little attitude of yours.
(sneering)
I want you to kill him. And I'll be purposefully framed.

Bradley's expression is unreadable as he considers the proposition.

BRADLEY
(nodding slowly)
Alright...what do I do?

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. THE WOODS - ROADWAY - (FLASHBACK) - CONTINUOUS

A red truck barrels down the deserted roadway, BRADLEY white-knuckling the steering wheel. Up ahead, RYAN is walking alone.

BRADLEY
(muttering)
I got you where I want you.

Bradley LAYS ON THE HORN, the truck's airhorns blaring. Ryan spins around, eyes widening in terror as the truck bears down on him.

RYAN
No!

Bradley shows no mercy, PLOWING INTO RYAN at full speed. The sickening CRUNCH of metal on flesh echoes through the night as Ryan's body is violently CRUSHED against a tree trunk.

The truck grinds to a halt. Bradley emerges, a twisted smile spreading across his face as he surveys the gruesome scene.

BRADLEY
(savoring the moment)
I finally killed you.

BACK TO:

INT. THE PENITENTIARY - JAIL CELL - PRESENT DAY

Bradley throws his head back, LAUGHING MANIACALLY at the haunting memory.

BRADLEY
(to Erick)
Yeah, that's what you call a motive.

Erick stares at him in stunned revulsion, shaking his head slowly.

ERICK
You're mentally sick.

In a burst of rage, Erick SLAMS his fists against the cell bars separating them.

ERICK (CONT'D)
(yelling)
You are fucking lucky that this cell is
in my way! I want to kill you so bad
right now!

A GUARD rushes over to intervene.

OFFICER
Alright Bradley, time is up.

Erick shoots Bradley one last hateful glare before turning and storming away. Bradley watches him leave, an unsettling smirk playing on his lips.

BRADLEY
(calling after him)
Trust me, fool. I will get my revenge.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ERICK'S CAR - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Erick gets into his car, visibly shaken. He takes a moment to collect himself before calling Jessie and leaving her a voicemail.

ERICK (INTO PHONE)
Hey sweetie, I need to talk to you about
something important. Whenever you can,
please call me back.

Ten agonizing minutes later, Erick pulls into his driveway in front of the house.

Erick's jaw drops in horror at the sight of his house, now a charred, smoldering ruin. His phone RINGS, shattering the eerie silence.

ERICK (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)
Hello?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
(voice distorted)
You like what I've done with the place?

ERICK
(demanding)
Who is this?!

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
You shouldn't be stupid enough to cross
me. I hope you learn your lesson.

The line goes dead as Erick stares at the burnt-out husk of his home, realization creeping in about the depths of evil he's up against.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TRISTAN'S CHILDHOOD HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jessie and Tristan step into the dilapidated living room of his childhood home, thick dust coating the old furniture. Rats SKITTER across the floor as they make their way inside.

Jessie spots a picture frame on a side table and picks it up, wiping away the grime to reveal the photo.

JESSIE
(studying the image)
This is your mom. She's pretty.

Tristan nods, tears welling up in his eyes as he fights back the emotion.

TRISTAN
(hoarse)
Yeah, she is.

JESSIE
(gently)
Is there a picture of your dad?

Tristan retrieves another framed photo, handing it to her.

TRISTAN
Yeah, right here.

JESSIE
(smiling sadly)
I can tell y'all were close.

CUT TO:

INT. TRISTAN'S CHILDHOOD HOME - PARENTS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jessie wanders into the musty bedroom, scanning the remnants of Tristan's parents' lives. A DRIED RED ROSE catches her eye on the nightstand, jolting her back to a haunting memory of Bradley.

Tristan enters, seeing the pained look on her face.

TRISTAN
(knowingly)
I know it reminds you of him.

JESSIE
(distant)
Sometimes I feel like I'm in a prison of
my past. Some things have made a huge
mark in my life.

Sensing her discomfort, Tristan quietly backs out of the room, leaving Jessie alone with her swirling thoughts and memories.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(calling out)
Tristan? Tristan?

She hurries out of the bedroom, realizing with a start that she is now alone, stranded in the abandoned house.

CUT TO:

EXT. JESSIE'S PARENTS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - LATER

An Uber pulls up to the charred ruins of Jessie's family home. Jessie rushes out, scanning the debris until she spots her father Erick.

JESSIE
(embracing him)
Dad!

JESSIE (CONT'D)
What happened?

ERICK
(grim)
It was Bradley.

JESSIE
(shaking her head)
No, it's not him. Wait, you've been getting phone calls too?

ERICK
Yeah. Who is this person calling us?

JESSIE
(pensive)
I think I have an idea. Let's go for a drive.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK - WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Erick's car pulls up to the abandoned warehouse deep in the Everglades swamplands.

ERICK
Wait, what is this place?

JESSIE
This is the place I shot Brandon. It might have some clues.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK - WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Thick shadows engulf the warehouse interior as Jessie and Erick enter cautiously.

JESSIE

Is there a light switch?

Erick feels along the wall until his fingers find the switch, bathing the space in harsh fluorescent light.

ERICK

There, I got it. Whoa.

Their eyes are immediately drawn to a large corkboard covered in photos, maps, and diagrams - a TARGET CHART detailing a list of victims.

JESSIE

(rummaging through files)

Wait, what is this?

She uncovers a tape recorder marked "BRANDON" and hands it to Erick.

ERICK

I think it's a tape recorder. Play it.

Jessie presses play, and BRANDON'S gravelly voice crackles through the speakers.

BRANDON (V.O.)

(on tape)

Hello, Tristan. If you're watching this, then I must be dead. I want you to finish what I started. Let my killing spree live on in my name.

Jessie and Erick exchange a horrified look.

ERICK

(sympathetic)

Jessie, I know how you feel.

JESSIE

(shaking her head)

Oh my god, it can't be true...

ERICK

I know it must be hard to trust anyone ever again.

A FIGURE emerges from the shadows, raising a gun towards them.

JESSIE

(determined)

Let's go get that motherfucker.

TRISTAN
So you finally figured it out.

JESSIE
(glaring)
Yeah, we figured it out.

ERICK
So what's your motive? Bradley had one.

TRISTAN
(cocking the gun)
Well, after you killed Brandon in cold blood, I knew what I had to do to avenge his death.

JESSIE
(scornful)
What about your family? That was all a lie too?

TRISTAN
(dismissive)
You could say that. All I had to do was get you to trust me, just like he did.
(beat)
Full disclosure? I never loved you. But anyway, any last words?

ERICK
(resigned)
Stop talking and get it over with.

Suddenly, another FIGURE emerges from the darkness behind Tristan. Three GUNSHOTS ring out, the bullets SLAMMING into Tristan's back. He crumples to the ground, unmoving.

MYSTERY MAN
(lowering his gun)
Are you guys okay?

JESSIE
(wary)
Who are you? And why did you help us?

JAMES
My name is James. I'm one of Bradley's friends.

JESSIE
(confused)
Bradley never mentioned you.

JAMES

Well, that's because we haven't talked
in so long.

JESSIE

What's your story with him?

JAMES

I knew him from a mental hospital.

ERICK

(skeptical)

And why should we believe anything that
comes out of your mouth?

JESSIE

Dad, please.

Erick holds up his hands in resignation. James walks over to
examine the target chart.

JAMES

I see you're trying to catch this
psychopath.

JESSIE

(nodding slowly)

Something doesn't feel right.

ERICK

Why do you say that?

JESSIE

The caller said "I have my spies." That
means he wasn't working alone.

ERICK

(to James)

Do you know of any place that was
personal to Bradley or Brandon?

JAMES

(considering)

Maybe...there is one place I know.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. BRANDON'S MEMORIAL INVITATION PARTY - NIGHT

A gathering of hooded figures stands in a clearing, engaged in an
eerie ritual. At the head of the group is AURORA, a wild-haired
woman draped in occult robes.

AURORA
(raising her arms)
Welcome, my children! Today we will be
honoring and remembering the one true
master in the demonic tribe - Brandon!

Across the way, Jessie, James, and Erick peer out from their idling car, lights off to avoid detection.

JESSIE
(whispering)
What are they doing?

ERICK
It looks like they're doing some kind of
witchcraft.

Suddenly, a group of MYSTERIOUS NINJAS descends upon the gathering, weapons drawn. Aurora's coven SCATTERS in panic as the ninjas launch their attack.

JAMES
(urgently)
Hey, get down!

Amid the chaos, the LEADER OF THE NINJAS, wearing a hockey mask, approaches the terrified Aurora.

AURORA
(cowering)
Who are you? What do you want?

The Hockey Masked Woman responds by PULLING A GUN and firing a single shot, dropping Aurora where she stands.

JESSIE
Let's get out of here.

DISSOLVE TO:

Jessie paces nervously as Erick tries to calm her pre-show jitters.

ERICK
Sweetie, this is your first time
performing.

JESSIE
(anxious)
I know Dad, it's making me anxious.

The sound of the ANNOUNCER'S voice booms over the loudspeakers.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Tonight we have a special guest
performing "Pray." The one and
only...Jessie Murph!

MUSIC: "PRAY" BY JESSIE MURPH LIVE PERFORMANCE

NOTE: THIS SONG COVERS THE ENTIRE SCENE.

As Jessie's soaring vocals fill the venue, we INTERCUT between her powerful stage presence and footage of the past events - the ritual, the ninja attack, etc. - culminating in a BLACKOUT as the song reaches its climax.

INT. FREDDY HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL - BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

The house lights come up to thunderous applause as Jessie, drained, returns backstage to her dressing room.

JESSIE
(breathless)
Um Dad, I'm gonna head to the restroom
real quick.

ERICK
Okay.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FREDDY HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL - RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jessie splashes some water on her face, trying to gather herself after her high-energy performance. Her phone RINGS, startling her. She answers cautiously.

JESSIE
(into phone)
Hello?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
(digitally distorted)
What do you want, asshole?

JESSIE
(demanding)
Who is this, really?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
The answer to that question is at the
front door of the restroom, inside.

Confused, Jessie exits the restroom to find an ENVELOPE taped to the door. She opens it to reveal a PHOTOGRAPH of Bradley and his ex-girlfriend Carolina.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Now you know. Meet me by Brandon's house
at the bridge near the lake.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE BRIDGE - MIDNIGHT

Jessie arrives at the desolate bridge, looking around apprehensively.

JESSIE
(calling out)
I'm here! I'm here! No more hiding
behind the mask!

The Hockey Masked Woman emerges from the shadows, slowly REMOVING HER MASK to reveal her identity.

CAROLINA
(LAUGHING evilly)
Surprise, Jessie.

JESSIE
(stunned)
It can't be...But I--

CAROLINA
Yeah, you must be mind-blown.

JESSIE
But how? And why?

CAROLINA
(sneering)
Do you know how it feels to be in pain
and anger about losing a loved one that
you really cared about?

JESSIE
(nodding slowly)
Yes, I know. But the difference between
you and me is that I can control my
anger.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
What is your motive? You clearly put
Bradley in his place, in prison.

CAROLINA

Well, for starters, I paid Tristan to come to Tennessee, to be my spy in an unrealistic relationship with you.

JESSIE

(outraged)

You did what--?!

CAROLINA

It was my best intention to be close to you and get reports on what was going on in your life.

(mocking)

What's wrong, having trust issues right now?

JESSIE

You're not the first person to tell me that.

CAROLINA

Well, the thing is, me and Brandon, we dated once. And he showed me that I can become someone else.

(beat)

Also, I could tell you why Bradley killed your brother.

Jessie tenses at this revelation.

JESSIE

Wait...you know?

CAROLINA

Me and Brandon, we never kept secrets from each other.

JESSIE

Tell me the truth.

CAROLINA

(nodding)

Well, he killed him because your brother and his friends were bullying him every day at school.

JESSIE

(shaking her head)

What? It doesn't make sense.

CAROLINA

I know that he went to visit Brandon in prison and begged him to help kill your brother.

Jessie is stunned into silence, processing this horrific new information.

JESSIE

(quietly)

I didn't know that...

Carolina pulls out a GUN, leveling it at Jessie's head.

CAROLINA

I think our little talk is over.

JESSIE

(pleading)

Wait--

CAROLINA

(spitting)

What? Begging for mercy?

In a split-second decision, Jessie TURNS AND LEAPS off the bridge into the waters below. Carolina OPENS FIRE, the bullets kicking up spray around Jessie as she plunges into the depths.

CAROLINA (CONT'D)

(yelling in frustration)

No, no, no!

Erick's car SCREECHES onto the scene, SLAMMING INTO CAROLINA and sending her crumpling to the ground. Erick leaps out, frantic.

ERICK

(shouting)

Jessie! Jessie!

James rushes over as Jessie EMERGES FROM THE WATER, soaking wet but alive.

JESSIE

Dad!

ERICK

(relieved)

Oh my god, you're soaked!

JESSIE

Yeah, I know. Is she...?

James checks Carolina's pulse, shaking his head grimly.

JAMES
Yeah, she's gone.

ERICK
(embracing Jessie)
Alright sweetie, let's get you home.

FADE OUT

INT. THE PENITENTIARY - JAIL CELL - MOMENTS LATER

Bradley sits slumped in the shadowy confines of his cell when an otherworldly WHISPER seems to emanate from the darkness.

BRADLEY
(looking around warily)
Who are you?

A cloaked DARK FIGURE materializes before him, its face obscured by the cowl.

DARK FIGURE
(rasping)
I'm a friend of a friend.

The figure produces a small box and extends it toward Bradley.

DARK FIGURE (CONT'D)
Brandon told me to give you this.

As quickly as it appeared, the Dark Figure VANISHES, leaving Bradley alone with the mysterious package. He opens it cautiously, peering inside.

BRADLEY
(his eyes widening)
What is this?

Within the box is a archaic-looking INJECTOR, filled with a swirling PURPLE LIQUID that seems to glow with an unholy luminescence.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)
(contemplating)
One way to find out.

He lifts the injector, PLUNGING the wicked needle into his own arm and depressing the plunger. The foul concoction courses through his veins as Bradley THROWS HIS HEAD BACK, CACKLING MANIACALLY. His eyes burn an EERIE EMERALD GREEN.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)
(drunk on power)
I WILL RULE THIS WORLD!

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPERIMPOSE TITLE: 10 YEARS LATER

INT. MIAMI KENDALL - JESSIE'S NEW HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

The aroma of fresh breakfast hangs in the air as Jessie busies herself over the stove. Her teenage daughter AMY (14) sits at the kitchen counter, absorbed in her phone.

JESSIE
(calling out)
Honey, the food's ready!

Jessie's husband DANIEL (41), ruggedly handsome, enters and gives her an appreciative peck on the cheek.

DANIEL
Oh my god, it looks delicious. Thank you, babe.

JESSIE
(apologetic)
Sorry, I can't eat with you guys. I have to run to the pharmacy.

DANIEL
(nodding)
Okay, babe.

They share a tender kiss before Jessie heads for the door.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Don't worry, I'll take Amy to school.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RIVERDALE CHARTER SCHOOL - LATER

Daniel's car idles outside the prestigious charter school as Amy gathers her things.

DANIEL
Okay Amy, have a good day at school, alright?

AMY
(pecking his cheek)
Bye Dad.

FADE TO:

Amy takes her seat in the middle of the bustling classroom as her teacher, MR. GIBSON, calls for the students' attention.

MR. GIBSON
Okay class, partner up into groups of
four for the math challenge.

Amy shrinks in her seat as the other kids quickly pair off, leaving her alone once again.

MR. GIBSON (CONT'D)
Amy, go join a group.
(scanning the room)
Anyone want Amy in their group?

After an awkward silence, a BOY named TROY finally raises his hand.

TROY
She can be in my group.

MR. GIBSON
(relieved)
Thank you, Troy. I greatly appreciate
it.

Amy tentatively joins Troy and his friends at their cluster of desks.

TROY
(smiling)
Hey, what's your name?

AMY
(shy)
I'm Amy. What's yours?

TROY
Troy. This is Chris, Jimmy, and
Jeremiah.

AMY
(waving)
Hi.

CHRIS
Where are you from?

AMY
Tennessee.

JIMMY
(intrigued)
I heard something happened over there.
(realizing)
Wait, is your mom Jessie Murph?

Chris playfully elbows Jimmy to shut him up.

CHRIS
(rolling his eyes)
Ignore him.

TROY
(shushing them)
Y'all stop playing, we're gonna get in trouble.

MR. GIBSON
Okay class, let's start the competition.
(calling out)
First question: What is the formula for the area of a triangle?

Chris quickly raises his hand.

CHRIS
Base times height.

MR. GIBSON
(nodding)
That's correct. First point for Table 4.
(next question)
Now, what is the formula for the area of a square?

Chris's hand shoots up again, but Jimmy interjects mockingly before he can answer.

JIMMY
The answer is Chris's big-ass forehead!

Chris SNAPS, whirling on Jimmy and SOCKING HIM WITH A VICIOUS RIGHT HOOK. Pandemonium erupts in the classroom.

MR. GIBSON
(shouting)
Okay, break it up! Both of you, to the principal's office right now!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RIVER DALE CHARTER SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Norman, a stern-faced man in his 50s, glares at Chris and Jimmy seated before his desk.

MR. NORMAN

So one of you tell me exactly what happened.

CHRIS

It was all his fault.

MR. NORMAN

Jimmy, is that true?

JIMMY

Looks down guiltily Yeah, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have done that.

MR. NORMAN

Turns to Chris Do you accept his apology?

CHRIS

Shrugs Yes.

Mr. Norman shakes his head disapprovingly.

Chris and Jimmy are suspended for 2 weeks.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GAS STATION - AFTERNOON

Amy, a high school freshman, browses the snack aisle, picking up chips and a soda.

AMY

Approaching the counter Okay, how much is that in total?

EMPLOYEE

Five dollars and thirty cents.

Amy pays. As she exits, she nearly bumps into Troy, a classmate, outside.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GAS STATION - CONTINUOUS

TROY

Gives her a friendly smile Hey Amy. My condolences for the fight between Chris and Jimmy. They really didn't get along, to be honest.

AMY

Returning the smile Don't worry about it. You're a good friend, Troy.

TROY

So I'll see you at school tomorrow?

AMY

Okay, bye.

They go their separate ways.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JESSIE'S NEW HOME - LIVING ROOM - LATER

AMY

Calling out as she enters Mom, dad, I'm home!

Jessie, Amy's mother in her 40s, emerges from the kitchen, drying a plate.

JESSIE

Hey honey. How was school?

AMY

Drops her backpack It was a crazy day.

JESSIE

Why you say that?

AMY

Two kids got into a nasty fight.

JESSIE

Concern crosses her face briefly before she brushes it off Don't worry, it happens at every school.

A knock sounds at the front door.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

Puts down the plate I'll get that.

She opens the door to reveal Troy.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

Hi. Who are you?

TROY

I'm Troy. Amy's friend from school.

JESSIE

Oh, okay, one second. Jessie Calls out Amy. AMY Comes over.

AMY

Yeah?

JESSIE

Someone's here to see you.

AMY

Surprised but pleased to see Troy Hey Troy. What's up?

TROY

I wanted to know if you want to come to Chris's birthday party?

AMY

Looks to her mom Mom, what do you think?

JESSIE

Smiles warmly Yeah sure. Have fun, you two.

Amy grabs her jacket and leaves with Troy.

FADE OUT

INT. CHRIS'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

The backyard is festively decorated with colorful streamers and balloons. Guests mingle around tables laden with pizza, mac and cheese, steak and other food.

Amy and Troy arrive, drawing Chris's attention.

CHRIS

Raises his cup to them Yo, Troy and Amy. I'm glad you made it. Make yourself comfortable.

As they move to join the party, Jimmy and his crew of FRIENDS burst through the gate.

JIMMY

Grinning widely Yo Chris, it's been a minute!

CHRIS

His smile falters What the hell are you doing here?

JIMMY

Holds up his hands in a placating gesture I came to have fun. Just relax and vibe, man.

The other GUESTS eye Jimmy's crew warily as the tension rises. But the party continues with people dancing and splashing in the pool.

CUT TO

EXT. CHRIS'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - POOL AREA - NIGHT

The party is in full swing, music thumping as guests dance and splash in the pool.

JIMMY

Raises his voice to be heard over the noise Hey everyone! Anyone that beats me in an arm-wrestle gets eight hundred dollars cash!

The crowd murmurs with interest as Jimmy slams a wad of cash onto a table.

CHRIS

Steps forward confidently I'll take you on for that challenge.

TROY

Grabs Chris's arm, concerned Chris, you don't have to do this, man.

CHRIS

Shrugs off Troy's hand It's my party. Flexes his bicep I got this, trust me.

Chris and Jimmy face off, gripping hands over the table. Their muscles strain as the arm-wrestle begins.

JIMMY

Through gritted teeth Ready to lose, pretty boy?

CHRIS

Not at my own party, loser.

Jimmy starts to gain the upper hand, forcing Chris's arm down inch by inch. Suddenly, a GUNSHOT rings out, shattering the night.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Leaps to his feet, face drained of color
Everyone get out! Leave now!

Screams and pandemonium as the guests scramble to flee. Chris rushes out of the backyard.

EXT. CHRIS'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

Chris skids to a halt, horrified to find TWO BODIES lying motionless on his front lawn, blood pooling beneath them.

JIMMY

Runs up behind Chris What the hell!

One of the dead men is recognizable as one of Jimmy's FRIENDS.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. JESSIE'S NEW HOME - LIVING ROOM - MIDNIGHT

The front door bursts open as Amy rushes in, eyes wide with panic.

AMY

Mom! I'm home!

Jessie hurries in from the kitchen, startled by Amy's frantic state.

JESSIE

Hey honey. Why so urgent?

AMY

Grabs her mom's hand Come outside with
your flashlight. I need to show you
something!

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - CONTINUOUS

Amy leads Jessie down the dark, quiet street, shining the flashlight ahead of them until it illuminates...

WORDS SCRAWLED IN RED: "JESSIE, I'VE RETURNED."

Jessie GASPS, clutching Amy protectively.

JESSIE
Oh my god. It can't be...

FADE TO BLACK

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - MIDNIGHT

A dank, shadowy space lit only by bare bulbs. A GOON leads a beautiful but dangerous-looking woman named SELENA towards a figure seated in the shadows.

GOON
Master, someone's here to see you.

The shadowy FIGURE turns, revealing the cruel, scarred face of JESTER (formerly known as Bradley).

SELENA
(Smirking)
Well, well...if it isn't Bradley. Or should I call you Jester now?

JESTER
Leans back in his chair It's been a long time, Selena. I was beginning to wonder if you'd forgotten about me.

SELENA
Circles him slowly I haven't heard from you in years. Where have you been hiding?

JESTER
Waiting for the right time to strike again. This wasn't something to be rushed.

SELENA
Stops behind his chair And why have you revealed yourself to me now?

JESTER
A cruel smile spreads Because I need an partner to help me finish what Brandon started years ago. To make this entire city fall to its knees.

Selena matches his smile.

SELENA
Then you've come to the right place. We're going to paint this town red.

They shake hands, sealing their malicious pact.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. JESSIE'S NEW HOME - BEDROOM - MORNING

Sunlight filters through the curtains as Jessie sits up in bed, stretching. A KNOCK at the front door makes her tense.

JESSIE

Mutters under her breath Oh my
god...James.

INT. JESSIE'S NEW HOME - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jessie opens the door to reveal JAMES, an old friend with a weary but determined expression.

JAMES

Yeah, it's been a long time.

JESSIE

Ushers him in quickly I got your text. I
knew I had to come back for answers.

They settle on the couch, keeping their voices low.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

Someone new is messing with us. She
shows him the chilling words scrawled on
the street They know about our past.

JAMES

Runs a hand over his face What should we
do?

JESSIE

We can't call the cops. You know they're
useless in these situations. Tears well
up in her eyes I thought getting away
from Tennessee would make things better.
But it's all happening again.

JAMES

Places a comforting hand on her arm Your
husband can't know about this, you know
that.

JESSIE
Nods, composing herself I know.
James...wait, I think I have an idea.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RIVER DALE CHARTER SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - LATER

Students shuffle test papers as MR. GIBSON, the teacher, passes out a math exam. Chris raises his hand.

CHRIS

MR. GIBSON?

MR. GIBSON
Looking up from his desk Yes, Chris.
What's your question?

CHRIS
Can I use the bathroom?

MR. GIBSON
Sure, but make it quick.

Chris gets up and exits the classroom.

FADE OUT

INT. RIVER DALE CHARTER SCHOOL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Chris moves furtively down the empty hallway until he reaches a row of lockers. He pulls something from his backpack - A HANDGUN. Glancing around furtively, he OPENS JIMMY'S LOCKER and stashes the gun inside.

Chris then heads for the FIRE ALARM and pulls it. ALARMS BLARE as he rushes back to class just as students start filing out.

EXT. RIVER DALE CHARTER SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

TEACHERS hurry the STUDENTS away from the building in an orderly evacuation as FIRE TRUCKS arrive with lights flashing.

INT. RIVER DALE CHARTER SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - SAME

Mr. Gibson's phone RINGS urgently. He answers as Chris slides back into his seat, trying to appear nonchalant.

MR. GIBSON
(into phone)
Hello?

INTERCUT WITH:

MR. NORMAN
(grim-faced)
Yes, can you send Jimmy to my office
please? And thank you.

MR. GIBSON
(to class)
Jimmy, the principal needs to see you at
his office.

Jimmy looks surprised but gets up and heads out.

CUT TO:

INT. RIVER DALE CHARTER SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy enters, seeming apprehensive.

JIMMY
Good morning, you needed to see me?

Mr. Norman levels him with a hard stare. On his desk sits the
HANDGUN in an evidence bag.

MR. NORMAN
Explain to me why you had this Glock 19
in your locker.

JIMMY
(Eyes go wide)
I swear that's not my gun!

MR. NORMAN
But we ran tests, and your fingerprints
were all over it.

He nods to a COP standing behind Jimmy. The cop quickly CUFFS the
protesting Jimmy.

JIMMY
(struggling)
No, please don't do this to me! No!

The cop drags the screaming Jimmy out as Mr. Norman watches stoically. Chris watches the scene unfold from the classroom window, a satisfied smile creeping across his face.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPERIMPOSE: 2 YEARS LATER

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - AFTERNOON

Troy pedals his bicycle down the quiet street, enjoying the sunny day. Rounding a corner, he suddenly brakes hard as JIMMY steps into his path.

JIMMY

A hard glint in his eyes Hey, you remember me, bro?

TROY

Studying him warily Who are you?

JIMMY

You don't remember, do you?

TROY

Recognition dawning Jimmy? How did you--

JIMMY

Cuts him off Yeah, I just got out like three days ago. His fists clench I'll never forget what you guys did to me.

TROY

Tries to keep his tone casual How's Chris?

JIMMY

A disturbing smile spreads You got a problem with me, punk? 'Cause I could kill you right now.

He pulls out a GUN, pointing it right at Troy's chest. Troy freezes, eyes wide with terror.

The sound of AN APPROACHING ENGINE makes them both turn. Chris roars up on his DIRT BIKE, skidding to a stop between them.

CHRIS

Glares at Jimmy over the handlebars You'll leave us alone, or else there's gonna be bloodshed. Your choice.

JIMMY
Sneers, keeping the gun raised Don't you
dare threaten me!

TROY
Desperately Chris, let's just go man.
It's not worth it.

Chris and Jimmy are locked in a tense standoff before Chris finally
revs his engine.

CHRIS
Next time, you won't be so lucky.

Chris executes a wheeling turn, roaring off with Troy running
behind him. Jimmy watches them go, a malicious glint in his eye.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TENNESSEE STATE PENITENTIARY - ENTRANCE - LATER

James strides up to the visitor's desk, his expression grim.

JAMES
Hi, good morning. I've come to see
Bradley.

OFFICER
(Looks up apologetically)
I'm afraid that's not possible, sir. He
escaped from here a few months back.

JAMES
(Stunned)
How's that possible? After all these
years...?

Shaking his head, James turns and exits the prison, pulling out his
phone.

INT. JESSIE'S NEW HOME - KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Jessie is wiping down the counter when her phone RINGS. She
answers, drying her hands.

JESSIE
(into phone)
Hello?

INTERCUT WITH JAMES:

JAMES
Hey Jessie, you're not gonna believe
this...

As James breaks the news, a look of dread crosses Jessie's face.

JAMES (CONT'D)
They told me they've been searching for
him all these years with no luck.
Listen, I've got to go handle something
personal. I'll catch up with you later.

He hangs up abruptly, leaving Jessie worried and confused.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The musty interior is lit only by dusty shafts of light from the
high windows. James moves purposefully down the aisle towards A
LARGE ORNATE MIRROR mounted on the far wall.

As he nears it, A SINISTER FACE appears in the mirror's surface -
the face of JOSHUA, an demonic entity.

JOSHUA
(a guttural, demonic voice)
Long time no see, James. You stopped
visiting me after what happened.

JAMES
(unflinching)
We both know you were a creation born of
a mistake. A dark magic I regret ever
dabbling in.

JOSHUA
You came here for something, didn't you?
I can smell your worry, your
desperation...

JAMES
(exhales slowly)
You're right. I need your help to stop a
new threat.

JOSHUA
(chuckles deeply)
And why would I help you, when you've
said I bring nothing but pain to your
life?

JAMES

Because I strongly suspect the one
pulling the strings this time...is an
old friend of yours.

Joshua's demonic visage contorts with a sinister grin.

JOSHUA

Ah yes, the one you seek. What if I told
you...I was the one who broke him out of
that pathetic human prison?

James stares at the mirror, realization and dread dawning.

JAMES

I'm done talking to you, monster.

He turns to leave, but suddenly SLAMS against an invisible barrier,
as if struck by a powerful force.

JOSHUA

(laughing cruelly)

I never said you could leave, James...

Joshua's ESSENCE streams out of the mirror, A DARK VAPOROUS CLOUD
that encircles James, forcing its way into his eyes, nose and
mouth. James CONVULSES, then goes still as...

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

(now speaking from James' body)

Now I have the power to make this entire
world miserable. Starting with your
loved ones...

James'/Joshua's eyes snap open, blazing with an unholy light as he
turns and strides out of the abandoned church.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. CHRIS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Chris, Troy and Amy lounge in the living room, remnants of pizza
boxes and soda cans scattered around them as they unwind after
school. The calm is suddenly shattered by the SOUND OF GUNFIRE
erupting outside.

CHRIS

Stay here, you two! You hear me?

Chris disappears down the hallway as more MUFFLED SHOUTS AND
GUNFIRE can be heard. He returns seconds later, his GUN in hand and
a grim look on his face.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

To his crew waiting nervously behind him
Lock and load, guys. Looks like the gang
war just hit our street.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - HEAVY RAIN - NIGHT

Sheets of cold rain blow horizontally as RIVAL GANGS take shelter
behind parked cars, BULLETS RICOCHETING back and forth in the dimly
lit street.

The ROAR of an approaching ENGINE cuts through the chaos as Chris
rockets around the corner on his DIRT BIKE, taking cover behind an
abandoned car.

JIMMY (O.S.)

(shouting over the gunfire)

You're gonna pay for what you did to me
all those years ago, punk!

Chris risks a look to see Jimmy approaching, PISTOL in hand.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Don't be a bitch! Put down your weapons
and fight me like a man!

They lock eyes for a tense moment. Then, as one, they DISCARD THEIR
GUNS and TEAR OFF THEIR SHIRTS, squaring off in the downpour.

The first PUNCH is thrown, and they're off, trading VICIOUS BLOWS
and GRAPPLING in the mud as the gang war rages around them. Chris
lands a BRUTAL UPPERCUT, snapping Jimmy's head back with a CRUNCH
of breaking bone.

CHRIS

(panting hard)

That all you got, punk?

But the punk ain't done yet. With a FERAL ROAR, Jimmy tackles
Chris, slamming his ELBOW into Chris's ribs. Chris SCREAMS in
agony, struggling for breath as Jimmy straddles him and retrieves
his GUN.

JIMMY

(cocks the gun, grinning
savagely)

Any last words?

CHRIS

(wheezes defiantly)

Go to hell, bitch.

A SLEEK BLACK CAR SCREECHES around the corner, HEADLIGHTS blazing through the downpour. As Jimmy turns towards the new threat, GUNFIRE ERUPTS from the car's open window, AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE ripping into Jimmy's body.

Jimmy's lifeless form crumples to the muddy ground as the car speeds off into the night, leaving Chris gasping in shock and pain.

INT. CHRIS'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Amy and Troy flinch at the barrage of distant GUNFIRE. Troy shakily pulls out his phone.

TROY
(into phone, frantic)
Chris, answer the damn phone!

AMY
(Heads for the front door)
I'm going out there.

TROY
(Grabs her arm)
You can't! It's too dangerous!

AMY
(Pulling away from him)
I don't care! He could be hurt!

TROY
(Relents, drawing his own gun)
Okay fine, but stay behind me.

CUT TO:

Troy and Amy creep cautiously down the street, Troy leading with his gun raised. DISTANT SIRENS can be heard growing louder.

Up ahead, they spot a crumpled figure in the road. Troy breaks into a run.

TROY (CONT'D)
(yelling over the pounding rain)
Chris! I'm coming!

Troy reaches Chris and tries to pull him up, but Chris CRIES OUT in agony, clutching his ribs.

CHRIS
(through gritted teeth)
I can't...the cops are coming. I have to turn myself in.

TROY

There's gotta be a way out of this, man!

BLUE LIGHTS strobe through the rain as POLICE CRUISERS skid to a halt. COPS pile out, guns raised.

COP

(shouting over the howling
storm)

Freeze! Get on the ground with your
hands behind your back!

Just as Chris resigns himself to surrender, a RUMBLING DIESEL ENGINE announces the arrival of a MENACING BLACK TRUCK. The rear doors burst open and A SQUAD OF MASKED GUNMEN leap out, AUTOMATIC WEAPONS BLAZING.

GUNMAN

Get in the truck, NOW! This is your one
chance!

Chris and Troy share a stunned look as BULLETS WHIZ past them. In a split-second decision, Troy hauls the injured Chris up and they stumble towards the beckoning truck, Amy right behind.

As the GUNMEN lay down SUPPRESSING FIRE, the trio scramble aboard. The truck PEELS OUT, TIRES screaming as it vanishes into the night, leaving the cops pinned down and cursing.

DISSOLVE TO:

MINUTES LATER

INT. JESSIE'S NEW HOME - KITCHEN - MIDNIGHT

Jessie paces anxiously as her husband DANIEL tries to calm her.

DANIEL

Clam down, Jessie. We'll find Amy, I
promise.

JESSIE

(distraught)

There's something I have to tell you.
Something that happened a long time
ago...

A KNOCK at the front door interrupts them. Jessie flinches, then moves to answer it, revealing JAMES standing on the doorstep.

JAMES

Jessie, I came as soon as I heard.

DANIEL
(Rises, eyeing James warily)
Jessie, who is this?

JESSIE
(Ushering James inside)
Honey, this is James, an old friend.
He's here to help us find Amy.

They settle tensely at the kitchen table as James leans forward.

JAMES
Jessie, I know who's behind all of this.

JESSIE
(Hopeful)
Who?

James's phone starts RINGING. He answers and puts it on speaker.

JAMES
(into phone)
Hello?

JESTER (V.O.)
(a cold, mocking tone)
So the whole crew is gathered! How cozy.

DANIEL
(Leaps to his feet)
You sick piece of shit! Where's my
daughter?!

JESTER (V.O.)
Well now, someone there will tell you
soon enough, won't they James?

James flinches as all eyes turn to him. Jessie stares at him,
confused and hurt.

JESSIE
What is he talking about?

JAMES
(placating)
Nothing, I'll explain everything later,
I promise.

JESTER (V.O.)
(laughing cruelly)
Having a few trust issues, are we Jess?
I do love watching families tear
themselves apart.

He hangs up abruptly, leaving them in tense silence. James suddenly GASPS, clutching his head.

JAMES
(straining)
No...not again...

He COLLAPSES, convulsing violently as the LIGHTS FLICKER AND DIE. The front door LOCKS ITSELF with a heavy THUNK.

DANIEL
(pulling Jessie close)
Jessie?! What's happening?

JESSIE
(frantically)
I'm here honey, I'm right here!

Jessie tries the front door but it's jammed solid. A CHILD'S WHISPER slithers from the dark hallway.

AMY'S VOICE (O.S.)
(**whispered* *)
Mommy...mommy...

JESSIE
Whirls, hope flaring Amy?!

But the FIGURE that emerges from the shadows is no child. A TOWERING SILHOUETTE WITH BURNING RED EYES seems to GLIDE TOWARDS THEM, LAUGHING CRUELLY.

JOSHUA
(a demonic, guttural voice)
Not quite, bitch! I am Joshua, the
EVILBORN!

Jessie SCREAMS, grabbing a HAMMER and SWINGING IT at the window behind her. The glass SHATTERS as she and Daniel TUMBLE outside into the night.

EXT. JESSIE'S NEW HOME - CONTINUOUS

Gasping for air, Jessie and Daniel stare back at the house, the LAUGHING still echoing from the depths. But the sinister presence seems to have vanished.

Jessie fumbles for her phone with shaking hands, calling someone.

JESSIE
(into phone, frantic)
Dad, come pick us up quickly!
(MORE)

JESSIE (CONT'D)
We need to get somewhere safe. I'll
explain everything...

FADE TO BLACK

INT. ERICK'S CAR - DRIVEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jessie's father ERICK idles outside their house as they climb into his car, still reeling from the ordeal.

ERICK
So you're telling me this psychopath is
back?

JESSIE
(nodding grimly)
Yes, and he's not working alone this
time.

ERICK
(frowning)
Elaborate.

JESSIE
I have this old friend, James. An evil
entity has been...attached to him for
years. And now it's working with Bradley
- the Jester - to torment us.

ERICK
(grave)
This maniac is just carrying on
Brandon's sick legacy, after all this
time...

Jessie's phone starts RINGING. She answers, putting it on speaker with dread.

JESTER (V.O.)
Well hello there, Jess! Enjoying our
little reunion?

JESSIE
(outraged)
You bastard! Where's my daughter?!

JESTER (V.O.)
(chuckling darkly)
Now now, is that any way to speak to an
old friend? I do so love that fire in
you.

ERICK
(seething)
I should've put a bullet in you when I
had the chance, you son of a bitch.

JESTER (V.O.)
And rob the world of such...entertaining
times ahead? You're next on my list, old
man.

Jessie and Erick share a look as THEIR PHONES SIMULTANEOUSLY BEEP -
the Jester has hacked their locations.

JESSIE
(grim, studying her phone)
Dad, take us here. It's time we settled
this once and for all.

Erick peels out, tires SQUEALING as Jessie loads a REVOLVER, her
face set in grim determination.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHEMICAL LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

Jessie and Erick found a lab. A painful noise was coming out of the
speakers. Erick ears starts to bleed.

JESSIE
Dad I will go find the device to turn
this off I promise. Stay right here.

INT. CHEMICAL LABORATORY - RADIO STATION - CONTINUOUS

Jessie found the radio switch. She turns off the noise.

JESTER
(his voice echos)
JESSIE.JESSIE.JESSIE.

Jessie looks at the floor and finds a trail of cards.

JESSIE
(load's up a gun)
Where are you motherfucker!

The trail leads to a basement. Jessie finds a lab.

CUT TO

INT. CHEMICAL LABORATORY - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

JESSIE
(high tone)
I'm here! Right here!

JESTER
Hey Jess.

JESSIE
Say good-bye bitch.

She shoots a hologram. The lights cuts off. Pitch black.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Where are you?

CUT TO:

INT. CHEMICAL LABORATORY - BASEMENT - THE LAB - CONTINUOUS

Amy is in a medical bed. Jester has a virus injection.

AMY
What the hell. You're fucking sick.

JESTER
Don't worry this is the last time your
going your little mommy.

Jester injects a chronic wasting disease to Amy's arm.

AMY
(starts shaking)
Argh! Argh! Argh!

JESTER
Bow down to me fellow minion.

AMY
(bows down) Hail! Lord Jester.

JESTER
Go out there and kill our intruders.

AMY
Yes my lord.

BACK TO:

INT. CHEMICAL LABORATORY - BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

JESSIE
Stop being such a coward. You don't have
the balls to face me.

Jessie finds the laboratory in the dark.

CUT TO

INT. CHEMICAL LABORATORY - BASEMENT - THE LAB - CONTINUOUS

Jester is sitting in-front of Jessie with his legs cross.

JESSIE
Where's my daughter.

JESTER
She no longer your love one.

JESTER (CONT'D)
Full discloser It's fun playing with
you.

JESSIE
You think this is a game. It's life or
death.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Well with that being said. Any last
words.

Jester starts laughing like a evil clown. Jessie shoots him.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(her point of view)
Oh my god dad!

FADE IN

INT. CHEMICAL LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER

JESSIE
Dad are you okay. Dad?

Erick has his back turned. Jessie get closer to him.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Dad your scarring me.

Jessie touches his shoulder. His Eyes are Green as a zombie.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
What the hell.

Jessie doesn't look behind her.

AMY
(effected with virus)
MOMMY! YOU LOVE ME!

Jessie starts running. She gets in her dad's car.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ERICK'S CAR - HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jessie is driving at full speed. The police is behind her.

NOTE: {"EMPTY"} BY JUICE WRLD

NOTE: THIS SONG COVERS THE ENTIRE SCENE

Jessie had no choice to run over the car to the ocean.

SEQUENCE ENDS

INT. CHEMICAL LABORATORY - RADIO STATION - CONTINUOUS

Jessie hurries into the dimly lit room, glancing around wildly. She spots a RADIO CONTROL PANEL and quickly turns off the BLARING STATIC NOISE.

JESTER (O.S.)
(his voice echoing unnaturally)
Jessie...Jessie...Jessie...

Jessie whirls, GUN RAISED, to see a trail of PLAYING CARDS scattered across the floor, leading towards a BASEMENT DOOR. She follows cautiously.

CUT TO:

INT. CHEMICAL LABORATORY - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

The dank basement is littered with DUSTY CHEMICAL VATS and TUBING. Jessie descends the last few stairs, GUN SWEEPING the shadows.

JESSIE
(calling out defiantly)
I'm here! Right here, you son of a
bitch!

JESTER (O.S.)
Well, well...hey there, Jess.

A HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGE OF JESTER FLICKERS TO LIFE in the gloom.
Without hesitating, Jessie FIRES, SHATTERING the hologram into
static.

Suddenly, ALL THE LIGHTS CUT OUT, plunging the basement into PITCH
BLACKNESS.

JESSIE
(voice edged with fear)
Where are you? Show yourself!

CUT TO:

INT. CHEMICAL LABORATORY - BASEMENT - THE LAB - CONTINUOUS

In a secluded CORNER LAB, a MEDICAL GURNEY holds the unconscious
form of AMY, Jessie's daughter. The real JESTER looms over her, an
ominous SYRINGE in his hand.

AMY
(coming to, terrified)
What the hell...? You're fucking sick!

JESTER
Don't worry, my dear, this is simply the
virus that will sever your last ties to
your mother forever.

He INJECTS the GLOWING GREEN SERUM into Amy's arm. She CONVULSES,
SCREAMING IN AGONY as her eyes turn feverish and dilated.

JESTER (CONT'D)
(soothingly)
That's it...bow down to your new lord
and master.

Amy's struggles cease. When she looks up at Jester, her eyes burn
with unholy DEVOTION.

AMY
(reverential whisper)
Hail Lord Jester...

JESTER
Good girl. Now go, and deal with
our...unwanted intruder.

As Amy shuffles off obediently, Jester settles back to wait, an
evil grin twisting his features.

BACK TO:

INT. CHEMICAL LABORATORY - BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Jessie edges slowly through the BLACKNESS, sweeping her gun wildly,
trying to pierce the smothering shadows.

JESSIE
(yelling in frustration)
Stop being a coward and face me, you son
of a bitch! Unless you don't have the
balls...

A LOW CHUCKLE comes from directly in front of her. She JUMPS, GUN
SNAPPING AROUND to find Jester lounging casually on a stool, LEGS
CROSSED NONCHALANTLY.

JESTER
My dear Jessie...I was merely waiting
for you to join me.

JESSIE
(furious, GUN LEVELED)
Where's my daughter, you sick freak?

JESTER
Your daughter? I'm afraid the little
lady has sworn herself to a new...higher
calling.

He TSKS in mock disappointment.

JESTER (CONT'D)
Full disclosure, Jess - playing with you
and your pathetic family has been such
fun. But all games must end.

JESSIE
(jaw clenched, voice shaking
with rage)
Any last words?

Jester just THROWS BACK HIS HEAD AND LAUGHS - a deep, bone-chilling
cackle. Without further words, Jessie SQUEEZES THE TRIGGER.

The GUNSHOT CRACKS LIKE THUNDER in the confined space...but when the smoke clears, Jessie's face falls in HORROR.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(anguished cry)
Oh my god...DAD!

FADE IN:

INT. CHEMICAL LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER

Jessie rushes over to the SLUMPED FORM of her father, ERICK. She gently turns him over, PLEADING WITH HIM.

JESSIE
Dad? Dad, are you okay? Please...

But Erick's face is a GHASTLY PALLOR, HIS EYES GLOWING A SICKLY GREEN. He's been infected by Jester's virus.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(recoiling in horror)
What the hell...?

AMY (O.S.)
(a guttural, inhuman snarl)
Mommy...you don't love me anymore.

Jessie SPINS, coming face-to-face with her daughter AMY - but her features are TWISTED AND MALEVOLENT, HER EYES BURNING LIKE HELLFIRE.

Jessie SCREAMS IN PRIMAL TERROR, SCRAMBLING AWAY as Amy LUNGES FOR HER. She flees for the exit as Amy's ANGUISHED HOWLS ECHO through the underground lair behind her.

EXT. CHEMICAL FACILITY - CONTINUOUS

Jessie BURSTS OUT A SIDE DOOR into the night, chest heaving. She sprints for her CAR, throwing herself inside and PEELING OUT with a frantic squeal of tires.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ERICK'S CAR - HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jessie races down the deserted highway, glancing panic-stricken in the rearview as POLICE CRUISERS appear, LIGHTS FLASHING and SIRENS WAILING in pursuit.

Gripping the wheel with white knuckles, Jessie hits the gas, her car ROCKETING TOWARDS A LOOMING CLIFF EDGE ahead.

She squeezes her eyes shut as the car EXPLODES OFF THE PRECIPICE IN SLOW MOTION...

NOTE: {"EMPTY"} BY JUICE WRLD

The car SOARS MAJESTICALLY, ARCING OUT OVER THE CHURNING OCEAN below as the lyrics to Juice WRLD's haunting hit "Empty" kick in.

SEQUENCE ENDS

The car and its precious cargo PLUMMET IN A BLAZE OF FIERY GLORY towards the black, welcoming depths. As it CRASHES THROUGH THE SURFACE in an ALMIGHTY EXPLOSION OF FOAM AND SPRAY...

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. MRI LABORATORY - THE NEXT MORNING

Jessie's eyes flutter open slowly, squinting against the harsh fluorescent lights. She blinks in confusion, taking in her sterile surroundings - AN MRI MACHINE looms over the bed she's strapped to.

JESSIE
(groggy)
Where...where am I?

A LOW, WHISPERING VOICE seems to slither from the shadows.

JOSHUA (V.O.)
(echoing unnaturally)
Jessie...Jessie...Jessie...

JESSIE
(panicked)
Oh my god! Somebody help me!

Jessie THRASHES wildly against her restraints as A DARK MIASMA begins to coalesce around her, TENDRILS OF SHADOW OOZING OVER HER BODY.

Her SCREAMS take on an UNEARTHLY, GUTTURAL TONE as she's SUBSUMED BY THE ENCROACHING DARKNESS. Then, as quickly as it began, her struggles cease.

Jessie's eyes SNAP OPEN, now TWIN PITS OF OBSIDIAN. Effortlessly SNAPPING HER BONDS, she slides off the bed, an UNNATURAL GAIT carrying her toward the exit like a marionette on strings.

CUT TO:

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

The dimly lit garage is THICK WITH SHADOWS as the possessed Jessie enters. A RUSTLING from the corner makes her whirl, alert.

CLAIRE (O.S.)
(calling out nervously)
Jessie? Is that you? What's wrong?

BLOOD-RED WRITING BEGINS TO OOZE ACROSS THE WALL, DRIPPING WORDS FORMING: THE LAST PIECE OF THE PUZZLE.

Claire SHRIEKS in visceral horror and revulsion as Jessie turns, HER FACE TWISTED INTO A DEMONIC SNEER. She glides forward with UNNATURAL SPEED.

JOSHUA
(Jessie's voice, demonic and
guttural)
Poor deluded fool. Your so-called
"Jessie" can no longer hear your pitiful
whimpers.

Jessie/JOSHUA LASHES OUT WITH ONE HAND, SLAMMING INTO CLAIRE AND SNAPPING HER NECK WITH GROTESQUE EASE. As Claire's lifeless body CRUMPLES, Joshua CACKLES WITH GLEE.

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPERIMPOSE TITLE: 6 MONTHS LATER

INT. TENNESSEE PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTION - JESSIE'S ROOM - MORNING

Jessie jolts upright in her narrow bed, GASPING. Her room is a spartan cell with padded walls and a single barred window.

She hugs her knees to her chest, ROCKING BACK AND FORTH as FLASHES of Claire's broken form HAUNT HER MIND'S EYE. A SOFT KNOCK preceded the door opening to admit a NURSE in pastel scrubs.

NURSE
(kindly)
Good morning, Jessie. I've got your
morning medication.

Jessie eyes the paper cup of PILLS warily before dry-swallowing them with a grimace.

JESSIE
(hoarse, desperate)
How...how much longer do I have to stay
here?

NURSE
(checking her chart)
I'm afraid only your doctor can answer
that, dear. Let's see...ah yes, Dr.
Steward?

JESSIE
(nodding dully)
Yeah, that's him.

NURSE
Okay, I'll make sure he stops by soon so
you two can discuss your treatment.

Jessie doesn't respond, just stares out the window unseeingly. The
nurse EXITS, leaving Jessie alone with her tortured thoughts.

A SHORT TIME LATER

The DOOR OPENS AGAIN, this time admitting DR. STEWARD, a graying
man in his 50s with a paternal manner. He consults his notes as he
takes a seat across from Jessie.

DR. STEWARD
Hello Jessie. How are you feeling today?

JESSIE
(toneless)
...When can I go home?

DR. STEWARD
(sighing deeply)
I'm afraid that's...complicated. Do you
remember what happened? The
circumstances that led to you being
admitted here?

JESSIE
(shaking her head slowly)
No...the last thing I remember is being
in some kind of laboratory. Chasing
a...a psychopath.

DR. STEWARD
(nodding grimly)
Yes, we're aware of those events.

DR. STEWARD (CONT'D)
But what about after that, Jessie? What
happened next?

Jessie squeezes her eyes shut, FLASHES OF HORROR flickering through
her mind.

JESSIE
(whispering hoarsely)
I think...I was possessed. By an evil
entity.

DR. STEWARD
(making a note)
An entity? It has a name?

JESSIE
(haunted)
Joshua. They call it Joshua.

DR. STEWARD
(studying her closely)
I see. Tell me Jessie, do you believe
these events, this "possession"...were
all in your head? Or did they actually
take place in the real world?

Jessie meets his gaze, her own eyes hollow with uncertainty.

JESSIE
Both. I truly can't be sure anymore.

DR. STEWARD
(standing with a reassuring
smile)
Well, that's precisely what we'll work
on figuring out, okay? For now, I'm
going to have the nurses keep a close
watch, just in case you experience any
other...episodes.

Jessie nods numbly as Dr. Steward makes his way to the door.

DR. STEWARD (CONT'D)
One last thing - would you like to use
the restroom before I go?

JESSIE
(dully)
Yes, please.

CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTION - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jessie stands at the cracked PORCELAIN SINK, splashing water over
her pallid features. She glances up, CATCHING HER REFLECTION IN THE
MIRROR - but her EYES SEEM TO SMOLDER WITH AN UNHOLY INNER LIGHT.

JOSHUA (V.O.)
(whispering from everywhere and
nowhere)
Hello again, Jessie...

Jessie GASPS, WHIRLING AROUND in the cramped bathroom stall. But she's alone.

JOSHUA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Don't worry, my dear. It was I who
killed your foolish friend Claire, not
you. You were just...an unwilling
accomplice.

Jessie SHAKES HER HEAD VIOLENTLY, hands clamped over her ears in denial.

JESSIE
(whimpering)
No...get out of my head, demon!

JOSHUA (V.O.)
(chuckling darkly)
Oh, I'm afraid our bond runs much deeper
than that. If you want my help escaping
this wretched place...you had best start
listening very carefully.

Against her will, Jessie's eyes are DRAWN TO THE TOILET, where a SHIV made of SHARPENED METAL GLISTENS underneath.

JOSHUA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
There's a ventilation shaft above the
stall, see? That knife should help
you...get a better view.

As if in a trance, Jessie retrieves the CRUDE WEAPON. Behind her, the BATHROOM DOOR RATTLES AS THE NURSE TRIES THE HANDLE.

NURSE (O.S.)
(calling out in concern)
Jessie? Are you alright in there?

JESSIE
(hoarsely, stalling)
Y-yes, I...I'm not feeling well.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Bad stomach cramps, but I'll be just
another minute!

She has already WEDGED THE SHIV into the WALL GRATE, PRYING IT LOOSE with desperate strength. It CLATTERS TO THE FLOOR just as SECURITY STARTS POUNDING ON THE DOOR.

GUARD (O.S.)
Ma'am, we're coming in! Step away from
the door!

INT. PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTION - AIR VENT - CONTINUOUS

Jessie maneuvers her way through the cramped and dusty air vent,
METAL GRATING CREAKING with her movements.

JESSIE
(whispering reluctantly)
I hate to do this...but I suppose I have
no choice but to trust you for now.

JOSHUA (V.O.)
(edges of satisfaction in his
sibilant tones)
A wise decision. Now listen carefully...

Jessie pauses, hanging on Joshua's disembodied instructions with
wary trepidation.

JOSHUA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Take your first left, then another left
immediately after. Your next turn will
be a right, then proceed to the end of
that run. There, you'll find a simple
tool to aid your escape.

Sweating with the exertion of hauling herself through the tight
spaces, Jessie follows the entity's directions until her questing
hands encounter A LONG SCREWDRIVER SHAFT.

JESSIE
(gritting her teeth in
determination)
I made it...the vent's sealed, but maybe
I can pry it open.

She WEDGES THE TOOL into the slot and STRAINS WITH ALL HER MIGHT.
The GRATE finally POPS FREE with an ECHOING CLANG, swinging open to
reveal AN EMPTY CORRIDOR beyond.

JOSHUA (V.O.)
(cool satisfaction)
Well done. You've made it to the east
wing - now be a good girl and offer your
benefactor some thanks before I guide
you further.

Jessie ROLLS HER EYES in disgust, MUTTERING through gritted teeth.

JESSIE

Thank you.

JOSHUA (V.O.)

(darkly amused chuckle)

My pleasure. Now...RUN!

Wasting no more time, Jessie DROPS from the vent opening and SPRINTS down the abandoned hallway, ALARM KLAXONS already beginning to WHOOP through the facility behind her.

EXT. PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTION - GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

Jessie EXPLODES out a SIDE DOOR into the night air, GASPING FOR BREATH as she glances around wildly. UP AHEAD, the GATE TO THE FACILITY GROUNDS stands open as A NONDESCRIPT PURPLE VAN ROARS THROUGH.

The VAN SKIDS TO A HALT right beside Jessie, the SIDE DOOR FLUNG OPEN to reveal the driver - GARRET MURPHY, Jessie's younger brother sporting an military-style BUZZ CUT.

GARRET

(urgently)

Get in, sis! Let's get you out of here!

Jessie doesn't hesitate, LEAPING ABOARD and SLAMMING THE DOOR behind her as the VAN PEELS OUT.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. GARRET'S VAN - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Jessie finally feels safe enough to CATCH HER BREATH, relief and confusion warring across her face as she studies her long-lost brother.

JESSIE

How...how is this even possible? I haven't seen you in nearly a decade!

GARRET

(grim smile over his shoulder)

I got discharged from the Marines a few weeks back after my last tour. As soon as I heard what was happening with you, I high-tailed it back home.

JESSIE

(haunted look)

Let's just say you missed out on a whole hell of a lot, little brother.

GARRET
(gentler now)
I know, about the boyfriend...about dad.
Everything you've been through sounds
horrific beyond words.

Jessie stares out the window, remaining silent and letting Garret continue.

GARRET (CONT'D)
You clearly need help, Jessie.
Professional help. I've got someone who
can assist - an old friend named Ms.
Moree. She deals with cases like yours
all the time, the...supernatural stuff.

JESSIE
(perking up with grim
determination)
That a girl. But what I need most is to
get my name cleared. Have all these
ridiculous charges stemming from my
"crimes" erased for good.

GARRET
(nodding firmly)
Then that's what we'll do, sis. No
matter what it takes.

He reaches over and SQUEEZES JESSIE'S HAND in reassuring solidarity.

SUPERIMPOSE TITLE: ONE MONTH LATER

FADE OUT

EXT. CEMETERY - MORNING

Jessie stands before A SOLITARY GRAVESTONE, expression sober and distant. She bends down, gently TRACING THE NAME WITH HER FINGERTIPS.

JESSIE
(murmuring remorsefully)
It feels like it was just yesterday. I
hope you can forgive me one day for what
I did...what that monster made me do.

FOOTFALLS ON THE GRAVEL PATH behind her make Jessie turn to see JAMES approaching, looking haggard but resolute.

JAMES
(gravely)
Jessie...I know it was my fault, in the end. All of this darkness stemmed from my own hubris.

JESSIE
(searching his face)
James...? What are you doing here after all this time?

JAMES
(extending his hands imploringly)
I came to see you. To beg your forgiveness for the negative impact I've had on your life. It's a burden I take full accountability for.

He pauses, seeing the unspoken question in Jessie's pained eyes.

JAMES (CONT'D)
I can see you want answers, Jessie. Don't be afraid - just ask me. I owe you that much, at the very least.

Jessie takes a steadying breath before meeting James's regretful gaze.

JESSIE
How did it happen? How did Joshua first become...attached to you? What is his origin?

JAMES
(nodding slowly, bracing himself)
It's a fair question. And one with a long, sordid history behind it - just like the sagas of Bradley, Brandon and the rest of us poor souls.

He settles onto a nearby bench, gesturing for Jessie to join him.

JAMES (CONT'D)
So you know, Joshua wasn't always a demonic entity. He was once a little boy, much like any other...

Jessie leans in, entranced, as James delves into the tale, his voice taking on a WAVERING, HAUNTED QUALITY.

JAMES (V.O.)
...Born into the world a quiet,
afflicted youth - what they called
"autistic" in those days. He was
different, you see. Disconnected. Which
made him all the more vulnerable when
the evil came calling...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. ANCIENT TEMPLE RUIN - NIGHT - (FLASHBACK SEQUENCE)

A FLICKERING TORCH REVEALS the crumbling walls of an ancient,
sandstone structure - **पिहद का मंदिर** (The Temple of the Martyr).

COUGHING ECHOES through the gloom as A BEARDED MAN (JOSHUA'S
FATHER) makes his way up a spiral staircase, CLUTCHING A RELIC OF
SOME KIND. His son JOSHUA, no older than 8, follows close behind.

JOSHUA'S FATHER
(hissing urgently)
Stay close, my son! We must show the
utmost care with these artifacts - they
are imbued with unholy energies!

But Joshua has already wandered ahead into A VAST CENTRAL CHAMBER.
The TORCHLIGHT FLICKERS ACROSS AN OBSIDIAN PEDESTAL...upon which
RESTS AN ANCIENT, TARNISHED URN.

Before his father can object, JOSHUA LIFTS THE URN, INSPECTING IT
WITH CHILDLIKE CURIOSITY. A THIN TRICKLE OF VISCOUS, INKY LIQUID
SEEPS FROM THE URN'S LIP, QUICKLY ENVELOPING THE YOUNG BOY.

JOSHUA'S FATHER (O.S) (CONT'D)
(bellowing in stark horror)
NOOOOOO!!!

But it's already too late. The OILY CLOUD POURS DOWN JOSHUA'S
THROAT, FORCING ITS WAY IN AS HE GAGS AND RETCHES.

Sure, I can help revise and polish this section. Here's my take on
it with some revisions and additions in bold:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - CONTINUOUS

The wind starts to howl, swirling leaves across the graveyard. A
poster lands on Jessie's face.

JAMES
What is that?

Jessie brushes it off and examines the poster, realizing Jester is still alive.

JESSIE

It's a poster. But how is this possible?

JAMES

Don't tell me we're going to confront him.

JESSIE

It's too big a risk to ignore. We have to try.

FADE TO:

EXT. JESTER'S MEMORIAL CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

They approach the church cautiously, the wind whipping their clothes.

JESSIE

Okay, we're here.

JAMES

tenses, then gives her a gun) You're going to need this.

Jessie takes the gun, her hand trembling slightly as she grips it tightly.

INT. JESTER'S MEMORIAL CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The church is dimly lit, with eerie party lights casting ominous shadows. A woman in a Jester costume stands at the pulpit, addressing a small group.

SCARLET

If there's one person to rule the world, it will be us. As long as we have each other, we can bring this world to its knees.

A tense silence falls over the room. Then, a phone rings, shattering the quiet. The minions exchange nervous glances.

SCARLET (CONT'D)

Who's there?

Jessie and James step forward, guns raised.

JESSIE
Where the hell is Jester!

CUT TO:

INT. MILLENNIUM TOWER - ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

JUSTINA
Something feels off, sweetie. Be cautious.

JAMES
Stay behind me, no matter what happens.

The elevator doors open with a DING, revealing a long hallway.

INT. MILLENNIUM TOWER - 16TH FLOOR - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jessie's ears prick up at the sound of distant rumbling coming from above.

JESSIE
Guys, I'm going to check the roof.

JUSTINA
Be careful, Jess.

Jessie nods grimly and heads for the stairwell.

EXT. MILLENNIUM TOWER - ROOF - CONTINUOUS

The wind whips violently as Jester loads evil spells into a massive cannon, aiming it at the city below.

JESSIE
Shut it down, Jester!

Jester turns, his eyes glinting with malice.

JESTER
Well, well. If it isn't the grieving daughter.

JESSIE
How did you survive? I shot you myself.

JESTER
Ah, but you merely grazed me. (sneers) I remember that night well - when you lost your daughter...and your father.

He throws back his head, laughter ringing out as the sky above turns a deep, ominous red.

JESSIE
(staring up)
What is happening?

JESTER
(laughing maniacally)
To accomplish what my brother couldn't!
TO RULE THE WORLD!!!

With a deafening BOOM, the cannon fires, launching flaming meteors into the crimson sky.

BACK TO:

INT. MILLENNIUM TOWER - 16TH FLOOR - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The building SHAKES as explosions rumble outside. Dust rains down.

JAMES
What the hell is going on out there?

A shadowy figure emerges from the stairwell behind them. Justina whirls, raising her gun.

JUSTINA
Who's there? James?

The lights flicker and die. When they reboot, Joshua stands before them, a twisted smile on his lips.

JUSTINA (frantically trying the rooftop door) It's locked! We need to get to the roof another way!

JUMP CUT TO:

JESTER
So, the whole gang is here.

He gestures grandly at the burning skyline.

JESTER (CONT'D)
You're too late. This world is mine!

JUSTINA
Where's James?

Jester points to the edge of the roof, where Joshua holds James by the throat over a dizzying drop.

JOSHUA
Last words, James?

A POLICE HELICOPTER THUNDERS INTO VIEW, dropping Garrett onto the roof in a tuck and roll.

GARRETT
Get the gun! Now!

Jessie sprints for the cannon as Joshua SHOVES James over the edge with a sadistic cackle. James SCREAMS, clinging to the ledge.

JESSIE
James, hang on!

She grabs his hand, trembling as she struggles to pull him up.

JAMES
(breathless)
I guess you and your brother...have something in common.

JESTER
And what's that?

JAMES
You're both failures.

GARRETT
Where's the antidote?!

JESTER
(pointing)
In that cannon!

Jessie loads the antidote and FIRES IT INTO THE SKY. As it disperses, the unnatural red glow fades from the clouds.

FADE TO:

EXT. MILLENNIUM TOWER - FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Police swarm the entrance, cuffing the surviving cultists. An OFFICER drags Jester towards a squad car.

OFFICER
You'll be in prison for life. I can promise you that.

The officer shoves Jester into the back of the car.

SUPERIMPOSE: 1 HOUR LATER

INT. POLICE CAR - DESERTED ROAD - NIGHT

The squad car bumps down a deserted forest road.

JESTER

Hey, I need to take a leak.

OFFICER

Shut it, scumbag.

A MASKED MAN steps into the road, directly in their path. The officer SLAMS THE BRAKES, sending Jester crashing into the partition.

JESTER

Watch out!

The car SMASHES into a tree with bone-jarring force. The officer slumps over the wheel, unconscious and bleeding.

JESTER (CONT'D)

(staring in horror)

What the hell...?

The Masked Man strides forward, UNLOCKING the car and wrenching open the back door. He cuffs Jester's hands.

THE HUSKER

Your father sent me.

A BLACK TRUCK rumbles up behind him, more MASKED GOONS climbing out.

MASKED GOON

Both of you, quickly! Get in!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE INVITATION TOWER - MIDNIGHT

The towering spire of the Invitation Tower dominates the skyline, its windows glinting coldly in the moonlight.

A BLACK TRUCK rumbles to a stop outside the main entrance. The MASKED GOONS hustle Jester and The Husker out and into the building.

The lavish penthouse suite is dimly lit, the only illumination coming from the glittering cityscape outside the wall of windows. A high-backed chair faces away from the door.

MASKED GOON

Master, your son is here.

The chair spins around slowly to reveal DELVIN, Jester's father. His face is heavily lined, his eyes glinting with malice.

DELVIN
Tell him to come in.

Jester steps forward, apprehensive.

JESTER
Father...is it really you?

DELVIN
It's been two decades, my son.

JESTER
Why come for me now?

Delvin lets out a harsh laugh that builds in intensity, becoming deeply unsettling.

DELVIN
Because you need my help more than
ever...to kill Jessie.

Jester joins his father's laughter, their sinister chuckles echoing off the walls.

JESTER
When do we start?

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. THE MORGUE - MIDNIGHT

A harsh BUZZING DRILL SOUND pierces the silence. Justina's eyes flutter open to find herself tied upside down, blood rushing to her head.

JUSTINA
(screaming)
Help! Somebody, please!

Delvin emerges from the shadows, a cruel sneer on his face.

DELVIN
Surprised to see me?

JUSTINA
(eyes widening in horror)
I thought you were dead...

DELVIN

Life has given me a second chance - the
chance to kill you, after what happened
at summer camp.

He unsheathes a wicked-looking SCYTHE and SLICES IT DOWNWARD in a
blur of motion. Justina's AGONIZED SCREAM is abruptly cut off.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. JAMES' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

James sits on the couch, munching on a peanut butter sandwich and
sipping orange juice. A KNOCK at the door makes him look up.

JAMES

It's been a while.

He opens the door to reveal Garrett and Jessie, their expressions
grim.

GARRETT

Can we come in?

JAMES

Sure, make yourselves comfortable.

As they enter, Garrett's eyes are drawn to something in the corner
of the room. He tenses.

JESSIE

FOLLOWING HIS GAZE

There's been no sign of her. I've tried
the cops, but...

JAMES

turning)

Why the looks? What's wro-

He freezes as he spots the FIGURE looming in the shadowy corner.

JAMES

(warily)

Who are you?

The strange man STEPS FORWARD into a shaft of daylight. His pale
features are twisted in an unsettling leer.

DALTON

I'm Delvin's obsession. The key to your
questions.

GARRETT
(quickly)
A lingering spirit, of sorts. Tied to
Delvin.

DALTON
Your mother is dead, Jessie. I can sense
it.

JESSIE
(horrified)
You're lying!

DALTON
(with dark satisfaction)
Her body is in the trash can outside.
See for yourselves.

A SHIMMERING RED DOOR appears in the middle of the room.

DALTON (CONT'D)
Go through this door. It may help
you...dig deeper.

Exchanging apprehensive looks, James, Jessie and Garrett step
through the glowing portal.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HALL OF LEGACY - MUSEUM - CONTINUOUS

They emerge into a dimly lit museum space filled with STATUES
depicting terrifying figures - Brandon, Jester, Carolina, Scarlet,
Tristan and more.

JESSIE
(whirling in awe)
Oh my god...it's all our history.

She drifts closer to the looming statue of Brandon. FLASHES of
memories OVERWHELM HER -

GARRETT
(concerned)
Jessie? Jessie!

Jessie GASPS, snapping back to the present. Her eyes land on an
ENVELOPE lying on the floor.

GARRETT (CONT'D)
I think Jessie found something.

JAMES

Well, what does it say?

Jessie opens the envelope with trembling hands, scanning the contents quickly.

JESSIE

(stunned)

It says...my mom and Delvin dated. They met at summer camp.

A heavy silence falls over the group as they digest this revelation.

JAMES

What should we do?

JESSIE

(lost)

I don't know...

FADE TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - AFTERNOON

Garrett stands solemnly before a simple gravestone, a small BOUQUET of flowers in his hands.

GARRETT

(whispering)

Not a day goes by that I don't think of you, Mom. I promise, I'll bring light back to this world.

He lays the flowers down reverently. FOOTSTEPS approach from behind - a YOUNG WOMAN has entered the graveyard.

MEGAN

I know what it's like...to miss a sister.

Garrett turns, his expression a mixture of surprise and curiosity.

GARRETT

You knew my sister?

MEGAN

(smiling)

I'm Megan. And you're Garrett, right? The famous hero.

GARRETT
(taken aback)
How did you...?

MEGAN
We all love Jessie Murphy. She's a top
10 country artist on the Billboard
charts.

GARRETT
(puzzled)
My sister...is a singer?

MEGAN
(laughing lightly)
She started posting covers online and it
just...blew up. Went viral.

Garrett stares at her, stunned by this new information about his
sibling.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
(gesturing)
But hey, come with me. I want to show
you something.

CUT TO:

EXT. SECRET JUNKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Megan leads Garrett through an overgrown junkyard, piles of twisted
metal and discarded refuse towering around them.

GARRETT
(awed)
Wow, what is this place?

MEGAN
(grinning)
It's cool, right? My own little hideout.

Garrett stops short, something catching his eye - a detailed
CHARCOAL SKETCH of Jessie, captured in an unguarded moment.

GARRETT
(picking it up)
You drew this?

MEGAN
(nodding)
Yeah, just a little hobby of mine.

GARRETT
(admiring the likeness)
You've got real talent.

Megan's face flushes with pleasure at the praise. She takes his hand, tugging him along.

MEGAN
Come on, I want to show you the best
view.

She guides him up a rickety wooden staircase to the top of an ancient FERRIS WHEEL.

They settle onto one of the swaying seats, the town stretched out below them in a panorama of twinkling lights.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
(conversationally)
So what do you like to do, besides the
whole...hero thing?

GARRETT
I actually write songs, believe it or
not. Just like my sister used to.

MEGAN (INTRIGUED)
No way, you're a singer too? Let's hear
it then!

Garrett hesitates, then breaks into MORGAN WALLEN'S "EVERYTHING I LOVE", his rich voice filling the evening air. Megan's eyes widen in delight as she listens, captivated.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
(breathless when he finishes)
Wow...you're really good! GARRETT
(sheepish)
I didn't know I had it in me either,
honestly. She gazes at him with a soft
smile, leaning in closer.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
You know, ever since I met you...I think
I've fallen in love with you.

GARRETT
(caught off guard)
You...you have?

MEGAN
Maybe your mom left more behind than you
realized - a kind, brave, talented son.

Their eyes meet, and an undeniable spark flares between them. Garrett cups her face in his hands and kisses her deeply.

DISSOLVE TO:

Jessie pushes open the front door, a pained look on her face as memories resurface.

JESSIE
This is the place...where I fell for
him. Before Jester.

She glances back at James and Garrett, her expression hardening with resolve.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
You guys check downstairs. I'll look
around up here.

INT. BRADLEY'S OLD HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Jessie rummages through drawers and boxes, clouds of dust swirling in the dim light. Her hands close around a battered VIDEO TAPE.

JESSIE
(calling out)
Guys! Get up here, I think I found
something!

Garrett and James pound up the creaky stairs, eyes narrowing as they spot the tape clutched in her hands.

GARRETT
What is that?

JAMES
(scrutinizing it)
Could be the answer we need. I saw a TV
downstairs, let's check it out.

Jessie flips the tape over - the words "THE EXPLANATION" are scrawled on a faded label.

CUT TO:

INT. BRADLEY'S OLD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The old TV CRACKLES TO LIFE, bathing the group in its flickering glow as they crowd around it.

JESSIE
(steadyng herself)
Are you guys ready?

JAMES
(nodding firmly)
We're with you to the end.

GARRETT
Play it.

The GRAINY FOOTAGE from decades ago BEGINS:

EXT. SUMMER CAMP - YEAR 1983 - (FLASHBACK) - DAY

A YOUNGER DELVIN, gangly and awkward, hikes with a GROUP OF TEENAGERS. A pack of GIRLS single him out, merciless in their teasing.

DELVIN
Hey, can you stop messing with me?

JUSTINA
(her younger self, mocking)
Look at him, he's gonna cry to mommy!

The GIRLS CACKLE cruelly as Delvin shrinks back, humiliated.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUMMER CAMP - SMALL BRIDGE - (FLASHBACK) - CONTINUOUS

Delvin leans over the railing, looking down at a swimming hole where COPPERHEAD SNAKES bask on the rocks below.

DELVIN
(mesmerized)
That's so cool...

He doesn't notice Justina creeping up behind him until she SHOVES HIM HARD, SENDING HIM TUMBLING OFF THE BRIDGE WITH A TERRIFIED CRY.

END OF FLASHBACK.

CUT TO:

The TAPE GOES STATIC as the footage ends.

JESSIE
(horrified)
Oh my god...this was all my mom's fault.

JAMES
(grim realization)
That's why she said he knew this would
happen.

GARRETT
(leaping to his feet)
Then we know where he is now.

JESSIE
(with steely determination)
There's only one way to find out.

Moments later, they BURST OUT the front door, scrambling for their
gear and weapons.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. MALCOM FOREST - MIDNIGHT

The forest is shrouded in inky darkness as Jessie, James and
Garrett's vehicles rumble to a stop on the deserted dirt road.

JAMES
(low)
There are two trails from here.

GARRETT
(nodding to Jessie)
James and I will take the left. I'm
sorry, Jess, but -

JESSIE
(cutting him off)
I know. I have to face him alone.
(pulling them both into a fierce hug)
Whatever happens, I love you both. Thank
you for standing by me.

The two men embrace her tightly before heading off down the left
trail, weapons ready.

EXT. MALCOM LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Delvin stands alone at the water's edge, a cigarette glowing in the
darkness. He tilts his head back, savoring the night sky.

JESSIE
(emerging from the trees, gun
raised)
It was you. You started this whole
nightmare.

Delvin turns slowly, his sickening grin just visible in the dim light.

DELVIN
(laughing harshly)
I was wondering when you'd put it all together.

JESSIE
(tears streaking her cheeks)
So tell me - you killed my brother because of my mother's cruelty?

DELVIN
I had to make you suffer first. Open your eyes to the truth.

JESSIE
(confused)
Why act so confident? Something's not right -

The woods erupt with MOVEMENT as MASKED FIGURES materialize from the shadows, weapons trained on Jessie.

DELVIN
You brought your friends...but so did I.

The Husker steps forward, the barrel of a rifle pressing against Jessie's temple.

THE HUSKER
Move and I'll blow your head off.

Jessie freezes as she notices the BOMB strapped to her chest, blinking ominously.

DELVIN
(sneering)
Try anything and that bomb detonates. Ending you instantly.

JESSIE
(frantic)
Who...who is this?

DELVIN
An old friend. (waving a dismissive hand) You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

He produces a DETONATOR, his finger hovering over the button.

DELVIN (CONT'D)
Now, prepare for your extinction.

As he squeezes the trigger, The Husker WHIRLS and FIRES, blasting the detonator from Delvin's hand!

DELVIN (CONT'D)
(howling in agony)
Argh! My hand! You'll pay for that!

THE HUSKER
(rounding on Delvin)
I've watched you hurt enough people.
Including my sister. We're a different
breed, you bastard.

With a deft move, The Husker RIPS OFF their mask, revealing the face of a beautiful young woman.

JESSIE
(stunned)
You...you look just like Carolina.

MEGAN
(tossing her hair defiantly)
I know. My name is Megan.

Delvin snarls in rage, raising his rifle - only for Megan to BLOW HIM BACKWARD with a THUNDEROUS HEADSHOT.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. MALCOM FOREST - INVITATION TOWER - HALL OF LEGACY - LATER

James and Garrett creep through the cavernous museum space, alert for any sign of movement.

JAMES
(whispering tightly)
Stay behind me, Garrett.

The lights FLICKER AND DIE, plunging them into impenetrable blackness. They freeze, muscles tense, weapons ready.

When the illumination SNAPS BACK ON, Joshua and Dalton loom before them, twisted grins on their deformed faces.

JOSHUA
Miss me?

DALTON
(licking his lips)
Yummy vessels...

Megan SHIMMERS INTO VIEW beside them, a glowing crystal in her hand.

MEGAN

You forgot one thing, motherfuckers!

She WHIRLS, opening a swirling PORTAL that CRACKLES WITH ENERGY.

GARRETT

(stunned)

Megan, how did you -?

MEGAN

(tossing him a grim look)

I'm taking responsibility. Something my sister never could.

Joshua and Dalton LUNGE TOWARDS THE PORTAL, only for James to TACKLE THEM, grappling furiously.

JAMES

(straining)

We're a team, remember?! Stick together!

Garrett and Megan rush to his aid, the four joining in a desperate group hug, STRAINING AGAINST THE VORTEX'S PULL.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MALCOM LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Garrett rushes forward, embracing Jessie in a fierce hug as the sky above turns a deep, ominous CRIMSON.

GARRETT

Jessie! You're alive!

A DEAFENING RUMBLE shakes the ground as MASSIVE FLAMING ASTEROIDS begin STREAKING through the red clouds, RAINING DOWN on the city in the distance.

JAMES

(staring in horror)

What's happening?!

JESSIE

Delvin wanted to distract us. This was never his plan - it was Jester's all along.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. JESTER'S MEMORIAL CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The doors BURST OPEN as Jester strides in, Scarlet's eyes lighting up with anticipation.

SCARLET

I knew you'd come back for me.

Jester crosses the room in powerful steps and UNTIES HER BINDINGS with a flick of his wrist.

JESTER

Let's move. We don't have much time.

FADE TO:

EXT. TENNESSEE - THE CITY - CONTINUOUS

Jester stands amid the devastation, a small, twisted smile on his lips as he CLOSES HIS EYES, savoring the sounds of DISTANT SCREAMS.

JESTER

(throwing his head back)

FEAR ME, ALL OF YOU!

JESSIE

shouting over the chaos Jester!

Jester turns, his grin widening as he spots Jessie.

JESTER

Oh Jessie, Jessie. When will you ever learn?

JESSIE

This insane plan of yours ends now.

JESTER

(laughing coldly)

Who said it was my plan? I was merely the assistant.

The ground CRACKS AND SPLITS OPEN with a DEAFENING ROAR as a TOWERING, 10-FOOT RED DEMON ERUPTS FROM THE DEPTHS.

CUT TO:

EXT. TENNESSEE - THE CITY - HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS

Megan grips the controls tightly as the helicopter BUCKS AND SHUDDERS in the turmoil.

MEGAN
yelling over the noise What the hell is
that thing?!

GARRETT
(eyes wide)
I think I've seen something like it...in a superhero TV show?

The demon REARS BACK, unleashing a TIDAL WAVE OF LAVA that CONSUMES
the streets below, MILLIONS PERISHING IN AN INSTANT.

Another HELICOPTER swoops in beside them - Scarlet leans out, hand
extended towards Jester still on the ground.

SCARLET
My love, hop in!

Jessie CHARGES Jester, SLAMMING HIM WITH A VICIOUS KICK. As the
helicopter lifts off, Jester LEAPS and CLINGS to the landing skid,
DANGLING from Jessie's foot!

JAMES
There! Jessie's on that chopper! Megan,
pull up next to them! JESSIE
(struggling) Let me go, you murderer!

JESTER
(howling)

NEVER!

Megan maneuvers the helicopter ALONGSIDE Scarlet's, mere feet
separating them in the turbulent air.

JAMES
Garrett, shoot him now!

But as Garrett takes aim, Scarlet KICKS JESSIE IN THE FACE with
bone-crunching force!

JESSIE
(blood spraying)
Aagh! Fuck!

In SLOW MOTION, Scarlet LAUNCHES HERSELF across the gap, her KICK
sending Garrett TUMBLING out of the open doorway, PLUMMETING
towards the lava below!

EXT. TENNESSEE - THE NATIONAL BRIDGE - HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS

JAMES
Jessie! Grab my hand, quick!

Jessie REACHES OUT with a desperate lunge, HAULING herself aboard just as the SHOCKWAVE from an asteroid strike BUCKS the chopper wildly.

Clinging to the landing skid, Jester meets Jessie's eyes with an intensity that stills her breath.

JESTER
(voice strained)
You were always right about one thing...we all have to take ownership of our mistakes.

His fingers begin to SLIP on the rain-slicked metal as AN IMMENSE LAVA FLOW surges towards them.

JESTER (RESOLUTE)
You deserve someone who knows how to love. Not just betray. shouting over the roar Use the crystal! It's the only way out of this, Jess!

In SLOW MOTION, Jester LETS GO, DROPPING AWAY into the chaos below as the lava CRESTS THE BRIDGE behind them.

JESSIE (ANGUISHED)
(Quickly, open the crystal!)

JAMES (WARY)
(Should we trust him? After everything?)

Jessie locks eyes with her brother, reaching out to GRIP HIS HAND tightly.

JESSIE
We have to try, James. It's our only hope.

Megan watches, her expression unreadable as the two share a SEARING KISS. Then Jessie ACTIVATES THE CRYSTAL, its swirling energies rapidly ENGULFING THEM.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. TENNESSEE - THE NEW WORLD - WEDDING DAY - CONTINUOUS

PASTOR MICK
(joyful)

I now pronounce you husband and wife!

James beams at Jessie, resplendent in her white gown beside him.

PASTOR MICK (CONT'D)
You may kiss the bride!

As CHEERS AND APPLAUSE erupt, the doors of the rustic church BURST OPEN. Megan storms down the aisle, a GUN RAISED HIGH.

MEGAN
(screaming in rage)
NO! Don't you dare marry her!

Stunned GASPS ripple through the crowd as Jessie stares at Megan, stricken.

JESSIE
Megan...what are you doing?

The lights FLICKER AND DIE, plunging the church into DARKNESS. An EERIE WHISTLING drifts out of the shadows.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(panicked)
James? James! Where are you?

A FAINT GLOW illuminates Jessie from above. She looks up, squinting against the harsh light - only to find herself FACE-TO-FACE WITH A GRINNING DEMONIC SKULL!

RYAN
in a bone-chilling demonic rasp YOUR
SOUL IS MINE!!!

THE END