

MORTGAGE, DEMONS, AND DEATH: THE ANTHOLOGY

Written by

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## **INTRO**

A JAUNTY, OLD-TIMEY TUNE plays as pictures of demons from ancient depictions up to the 1980s where DICK (50s), impeccably dressed real estate agent and dead ringer for Alec Baldwin, and PAT (40s), hair-trigger neurotic, in alternating demon and human appearance are at the height of their success as realtors.

### **TITLE CARD:**

"Mortgage, Demons, and Death: The Anthology"

A corny commercial plays on an old TV with a fuzzy picture.

Dick stands in front of a mansion and points at the camera.

DICK

Whatever you're looking for-

Pat poses on the porch of a double-wide.

PAT

What you desire-

Dick stands on a houseboat.

DICK

Even if you don't realize it yet-  
we'll help you find it.

Dick and Pat stand in front of a new stick frame house.

PAT

Or build it.

They wink and fire off a finger pistol at the camera.

DICK

We're a sure-fire bet.

PAT (CONT'D)

We're a sure-fire bet.

## **EXT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

A streetlamp casts an eerie yellow glow on a dark office front and a janitorial van where--

JANITOR (20s), a gum-chewing modern-day Tony Monero collects cleaning gear from the rear. A few trade school and college brochures stick out of his pocket.

His phone sits on the bumper, on speaker.

JANITOR'S BOSS (V.O.)  
 These are long-time customers.  
 Don't mess this up. Take your time  
 and do it right. Got it?

JANITOR  
 Yeah, yeah. I got it.

JANITOR'S BOSS (V.O.)  
 And don't go snooping around.  
 Customers notice that kind of  
 stuff.

A breeze. SQUEAKING.

A sign swings: HEAVENS FALLS REALTY.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

A plainly furnished, decidedly old-school office.

Shadows play tricks and form demons--

The lights flip on.

Janitor surveys the normal office: two desks face one  
 another, old CRT monitors not even hooked up.

He fits on headphones. It's go time.

**INT. SMALL CHURCH - WORSHIP ROOM - NIGHT**

Empty and dark. A simple arrangement of two lines of pews,  
 main aisle, and altar. A large ornate cross dominates the  
 room from the altar.

CORA (10), rebel on a mission, pokes her head through the  
 main doors.

She sneaks to the holy water font to fill a water bottle. A  
 giraffe toy tied to her backpack hangs.

The large ornate cross pulls her attention.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - BREAKROOM - NIGHT**

Janitor checks the urn on the dirtiest coffee maker he's ever  
 seen. A black goo sits in the bottom of the urn.

JANITOR  
 Gross ass people.

PSSSHHH. Janitor tests the water temp with a finger and waits, not hot yet. The goo in the urn shifts toward his hand. He doesn't see it, because he's looking at--

A neighborhood plat map on a corkboard above a sink. Red pins mark one-third of the properties, blue pins the rest.

The map title: HEAVENS FALLS - NEW "9TH LEVEL" DEVELOPMENT.

**EXT. SMALL CHURCH - FRONT LAWN - NIGHT**

Cora carries, mostly drags, the ornate cross where it creates scars in lush green lawn.

**INT. SMALL CHURCH - WORSHIP ROOM - NIGHT**

FATHER RATLIFF (30s), could be a tatted-up retired drummer for a punk band or hottest priest ever, closes up a bathrobe as he enters from a side door.

FATHER RATLIFF

Hello?

A feeling. His gaze swings to the cross. Makes for a window.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Janitor vacuums, jamming to music, toward a padlocked door.

He passes framed pictures on the wall of Pat and Dick with PRIOR CUSTOMERS in front of various houses, through the 1850s to current, capturing a happy home-buying experience--

The pictures show Pat and Dick as demons, next to now dead Prior Customers: throats slit, missing heads, piles of body parts, head-to-toe burnt bodies.

Janitor looks behind. Nothing. The pictures, normal.

He turns and notices the now unlocked padlock door. Strange.

**EXT. SMALL CHURCH - CEMETERY GATE - NIGHT**

Duct tape screams into the night as it comes off the roll.

Cora attaches the cross to her bicycle.

FATHER RATLIFF (O.S.)

Cora!

Cora turns and whips out a cross on her necklace.

Father Ratliff holds his hands up.

FATHER RATLIFF (CONT'D)  
Is this a new social media  
challenge?

CORA  
It's time, Father Ratliff. They  
have to go. They got them.

FATHER RATLIFF  
Who got who?

CORA  
The realtors. They got the  
Lieberman's. Just like they got my  
mom. This ends tonight.

Father Ratliff looks like they've had this talk before.

FATHER RATLIFF  
You're the only ten-year-old I've  
ever known that has a restraining  
order against them...multiple  
restraining orders. And I've only  
been assigned to Heavens Falls for  
six months!

CORA  
Mrs. Lieberman didn't get a new job  
and move away, Father, they're  
dead, just like all the others!

FATHER RATLIFF  
Rationally, Cora, we would have  
noticed if people were constantly  
disappearing. Think about it.

CORA  
This is a matter of people's souls,  
Father!

FATHER RATLIFF  
Nope. Nope. That's not it at all.  
This is a matter of spending the  
rest of your childhood in juvie.  
Think about your dad. There's no  
denying he's a broken man. You two  
need to heal to become a family  
again.

(MORE)

FATHER RATLIFF (CONT'D)

All of this demon stuff is a manufactured distraction because the work you both need to do is scary. I know, I've been there, too.

Cora listens as her anger rises.

CORA

No one helped me with my mom. No one listened. Not even you. Where were you, Father? Where were you? Where was anyone?

FATHER RATLIFF

Cora, listen, I heard about your mother and I'm sorry-

Cora's face firms and she pushes off on the heavier bike. He walks, then runs to keep up.

FATHER RATLIFF (CONT'D)

Cora, get off the bike.  
Cora...Cora!

CORA

Screw you! I can do it alone!

He gets a flat on his flip-flop.

FATHER RATLIFF

Come on! Damn it.

He glances at the cemetery as if someone could've heard him. Nah. Trudges back toward the church.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT**

CHA-CHINK. The door unlocks and unlatches.

Hallway light spills on--

Shelves and shelves of cursed objects: evil dolls, torture devices, skulls. Notables: chained coffin, Victorian clawfoot bathtub, an iron cage with inward-pointing spikes beside a filing cabinet.

Janitor takes off his earphones, steps in to take a picture.

Something MOVES inside the room. He pauses.

Something BEHIND him! He whirls. Nothing.

He backs up and feels for a light switch, but can't find it.

JANITOR  
Is someone in here?

Something MOVES closer in the room.

Janitor takes a step back.

JANITOR (CONT'D)  
Screw this.

Something SCRAMBLES toward Janitor, CLAWING for traction.

JANITOR (CONT'D)  
Hell no! Oh, hell no!

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Janitor yanks the door shut and holds the handle.

He fumbles for the pocketed lock

BAM! Something hits the door.

JANITOR  
Bad dog! Bad rat! Bad whatever!

BAM! The door rattles hard, threatening to come off. BAM!

Janitor locks it- BAM!

The door rattles in the door casing. Then... silence.

Janitor catches his breath.

JANITOR (CONT'D)  
Sweet Jesus.

He realizes he doesn't have his phone. Checks his pockets.

Ethereal light appears beneath Janitor. He peeks down.

An incoming call on his phone.

**EXT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER**

A dark, dank back alley. Dumpster. Eerie street lamp glow.

Janitor vapes, phone to his ear.

JANITOR

Nah, man. What's the level up?  
Office Manager? Then what? This  
ain't no career.

Janitor pulls the brochures from his pocket.

JANITOR (CONT'D)

I'll figure it out. Get this- I  
almost got my head bit off by some  
dog they got locked up in a  
room...I know right? They should  
say shit about that. You won't  
believe what I found in here- oh,  
wait...My headphones...I dropped  
them in that room.

He turns to the door, shoves the brochures into a pocket.

JANITOR (CONT'D)

Because those things ain't cheap.  
That's why. And I'll get fired! I  
can't keep going backwards in life,  
man. Even if it's just those damn  
headphones.

The door shuts behind him.

The quiet suffocates.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Janitor pulls on the padlock, uselessly.

JANITOR

Screw this job.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Janitor's hand opens a desk drawer. A key with a hand-written  
label: STORAGE ROOM.

JANITOR

Yes!

He snatches it.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

Janitor sneaks down the hall, wielding a duster like a  
weapon. A CREAK in the floor. Damn! He waits...silence.

The key slides into the lock, pin by pin.

He holds the lock as he turns the key. Muted CLICK.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT**

Light cascades across the room as the door opens.

Janitor stands in the doorway, silhouetted, ready to sneak in or bolt the other way.

The light reveals--

The headphones on the floor.

He sneaks in, scanning.

Janitor glances over his shoulder. Nothing in the doorway.

The door creeps shut. He doesn't notice until--

The headphones disappear into the darkness.

He turns!

The door SLAMS shut!

**EXT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - ALLEY - NIGHT**

Cora pulls up to the dumpster and checks the coast. Clear.

She pulls out a penknife to cut free the duct taped cross.

Cora leans the cross against the building by the door.

She turns the door handle, slow, expecting it to be locked. But it opens to her surprise.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

ZZCCHHPPT. Cora duct tapes the cross to the back of the front door. Stands back to admire her work.

A RUSTLE. She sneaks toward the hallway, taking off her pack and reaching in--

Headlights sweep across the front windows.

Cora dives behind the far side of the desks.

She pulls out the holy water bottle.

CORA

I can do this by myself, mom. Don't worry. This is for you.

**EXT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

A slick Porsche pulls in beside the van. The engine cuts.

Dick and Pat exit, both looking at the van.

Dick checks his gold-tone, stainless steel Casio watch. The "ElectroLuminescence" lights his face.

His eyes shift over to meet Pat's, her head shakes.

PAT

We are behind schedule, Dick, he has to go now!

She motions to the van.

DICK

Calm down, Pat. I'll take care of it.

Pat slams the door.

PAT

Will you? Why Heaven's Falls, Dick, huh? This place is dry of good, gooey sin.

Dick rubs his temples on the way to the Realtor's Office.

PAT (CONT'D)

If we don't meet quota you know what'll happen!

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Dick flips on the lights as he enters. Fluorescent bulbs stutter to light.

Pat stops at the door as if caught by something.

DICK

I told you what I have lined up and it's a sure-fire bet.

PAT

Don't- don't sure-fire bet me! I can't go back to the pits, oh Hell!

**EXT. HELL - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

TORTURED SOULS, gray-skinned and anorexic without the strength or will to stand, squirm around one another.

Pat and Dick stack Tortured Souls like flour sacks at the base of a giant mountain of squirming souls.

Pat looks around - a literal endless sea of souls.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT (END FLASHBACK)**

Cora listens, eyes wide, clutching the bottle.

Dick enters from the breakroom, headed for the back door.

DICK

He must be out back tossing the garbage.

Pat shakes her head, furiously, as she hangs onto the door frame. Dick pauses.

DICK (CONT'D)

Hey. Hey!

PAT

What, Dick?

DICK

How long have we been doing this?

Pat shrugs.

DICK (CONT'D)

For two hundred years this method we created and every other demon wants to emulate has worked. We are the ruler that everyone else measures success by, and will continue to be.

Pat's head hangs. She nods.

Cora unscrews the bottle top.

DICK (CONT'D)

We'll close the deal tonight, meet quota, and keep ferrying souls like the-

PAT  
Rockstars. Like the rockstars we  
are!

Dick wasn't going to say that, but OK. Sits at his desk.

DICK  
Rockstars. Sure.

Cora shrinks as Dick sits. Pulls off the bottle top.

PAT  
Mm. Bon Jovi. He's a rockstar. I'd  
eat him up.

DICK  
That sounds like a waste of a soul.  
Like I always say...

Pat mouths Dick's saying.

DICK (CONT'D)  
You can't ferry a soul if they  
haven't committed the sin. Are you  
going to come in?

Pat slings the door closed behind her.

Dick squints at her. She pauses.

PAT  
What? For Hell's sake, I'm not  
really going to eat Bon Jovi. I  
know it's against the rules, too.  
But I can dream about it.

Pat sits at the desk across from Dick and searches a drawer.

PAT (CONT'D)  
Per my quarterly performance  
report, I am less and less of a  
'loose cannon,' Dick.

She looks up. Dick, in thought, eyes something. She looks--

The cross glints with holiness.

She throws up in her mouth a little.

PAT (CONT'D)  
Ew!

DICK  
I'm willing to bet Lenny did that.

PAT

Lenny? He thinks he's so funny and great just because he made the Realtor of the Month. Oh, look at me, I'm Lenny, I'm-

Cora jumps up with a war cry. The realtors' heads snap toward her--

Holy water makes an arc as it comes out of the bottle, Cora swiping it horizontal like a sword cut.

The water crashes into the realtors' eyes. They scream and stumble out of their chairs.

CORA

Melt you scumbags!

She smiles, victorious.

Pat stumbles towards the door.

The cross gleams.

CORA (CONT'D)

You're trapped!

Pat leans against the cross, wiping her eyes out.

Cora looks confused, why isn't she burning. Fear rises.

Cora's hand yanks upward, but not on its own.

Dick stands over Cora, perfectly fine but squinting, holding her up by her wrist.

Cora steels and glares.

Dick's forehead bursts out two horns, eyes turn demonic.

Cora gasps!

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT**

The evil things, dolls and preserved animals in jars seem to be keeping an eye on something.

CHA-CHINK. A hefty old padlock swings on the iron cage.

Cora glares at the realtors from within the cage, clutching her pack.

CORA

People will come looking for me.

Pat and Dick look at one another and laugh.

PAT

No, they won't...you look familiar.

Dick whispers into Pat's ear. Her eyebrows raise.

DICK

Trust us, no one will come looking  
for you.

PAT

Oh, definitely not!

Pat cackles.

Cora sneers.

CORA

I promise you... I'm going to end  
you. Both of you!

The Realtors snort-snicker as they move to a private huddle.

DICK

The Janitor is still missing.

PAT

We don't have time for this! We  
need the final soul. If it wasn't  
for that meddling-

DICK

Three hours to midnight.

Dick looks up from his watch.

DICK (CONT'D)

We have to split up.

PAT

That's a terrible idea. Don't you  
watch horror movies? You never,  
ever, split up.

DICK

We're the bad guys.

PAT

No, we're not.

Dick looks at her, incredulous.

DICK

Right. Here's the plan: I'll manage the last soul. You watch the girl and when that Janitor shows up you lock him in the coffin.

He glances at Cora.

DICK (CONT'D)

We always get our sinner, don't we?

PAT

Sinner for dinner. Uh-huh. What're you going to use on the soul tonight?

Dick picks up Cora's pack and eyes the giraffe.

DICK

I have a few ideas.

Dick's hand yanks the giraffe toy off the pack.

CORA

Hey! That's mine!

DICK

And when we're all done, she'll be easy pickin'.

Pat and Dick share a wicked smile, then look to Cora, who eyes them warily.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - STORAGE ROOM - LATER**

Cora sits with her head on her knees, alone. Quiet.

A SHUFFLE. Cora looks around for the source.

Pat enters with folders and files them in the filing cabinet.

CORA

You're both sucky realtors.

PAT

Oh? Oh yeah?

CORA

Yeah. My mother out-sold both of you, by double!

The folders crumple in Pat's hands.

CORA (CONT'D)  
That's why you killed her.

Pat giggles.

PAT  
We didn't kill her. That's not how  
this works you nasty little child.

CORA  
Yes, you did!

PAT  
I'll prove it to you!

Cora cranks up her middle finger.

PAT (CONT'D)  
OK, OK! Nasty. Little. Human.

Pat sorts through the folders.

PAT (CONT'D)  
Here we are! The Milton's.

Pat's wicked smile reappears.

**EXT. MILTON HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

A quaint ranch-style house. Terrible yard, burnt to a crisp.

SUPER: The Milton's

Dick stands on the porch next to a lifelong married couple:  
BUCK (60s), collector of cargo shorts with the shortest  
inseams possible a la 1980s, and CHARLOTTE MILTON (60s),  
mother of three children- two grown, and then there's Buck.

Dick shakes Buck's hand.

DICK  
It will make a fine house for you  
sir, a blank slate if you will. You  
can pretend you are the Lord God  
Almighty and make your own world  
here. A special place for just you  
and your lovely wife.

The three survey the property, burnt trees, and grass.

BUCK  
It'll work just fine with a little  
perseverance.

Buck turns and looks at Charlotte.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
Won't it, Charlotte, dear?

CHARLOTTE  
I hope so. We are more accustomed  
to something, um, with higher curb  
appeal, but since Buck lost his job  
we... well, God never puts anything  
you can't handle in front of you.

Dick chortles. Buck and Charlotte look at him sideways.

DICK  
Allergies.

The homebuyers nod together.

BUCK  
Please excuse Charlotte. This last  
year was rough.

Charlotte looks away, annoyed.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
I have plans for the yard don't I  
dear?

Charlotte sighs.

CHARLOTTE  
I hoped you were going to slow  
down.

DICK  
Mr. Milton, there are two kinds of  
people in this world, people that  
have plans, and people that are  
plans.

Buck appears irked, finished with the conversation.

BUCK  
We'll take it from here.

Dick laughs like a rattle.

The Milton's look at Dick sideways.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
You might wanna get those allergies  
looked at, bud.

Buck steps over to Charlotte and wraps his arm around her as they look at the house.

Dick goes to leave.

DICK  
Enjoy the house...and the yard.

BUCK  
We intend to.

Buck and Charlotte soften, smiling at one another.

Dick regally returns to his gleaming ride.

DICK  
I'll be seeing you around, Buck!

Dick gets into his car, pulls into the street.

Cora rides by on her bicycle and swerves out of the way of Dick's car.

CORA  
Watch it, asshole!

Dick's eyes flash red as he watches Cora ride off, waving her middle finger behind her.

**EXT. MILTON HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY**

The garage door opens. Buck stands in khakis, a prototypical retired weekend warrior, ready to tackle some projects.

He walks around the yard, measuring and taking notes.

**EXT. MILTON HOUSE - FRONT YARD - LATER**

Buck drives a pickup truck into the driveway, the bed filled with lush trees and plants.

He gets out, pulls a brand new shovel from the bed, struts out into the front yard, tamps his feet in a circle, then with great ceremony, plunges the shovel into the dirt.

He digs. Then stops. Bends down and sticks his hand into the hole, returning with a black goo-covered snake skeleton.

BUCK  
Lord almighty.

He wipes the black goo onto his pants as he walks to the curb-drain and tosses the skeleton into it.

He finishes the hole, plunks in a healthy, leaf-dense tree.

Buck begins to dig another hole. He finds another snake skeleton and tosses it into the drain, too.

Charlotte brings him a drink.

CHARLOTTE  
What did you toss into the sewer?

BUCK  
Just a root.

CHARLOTTE  
A root? From what?

BUCK  
Honestly, I don't know.

Charlotte scans the new landscaping efforts.

CHARLOTTE  
The trees look nice. What's next?

Buck points at large rocks in the center of the yard.

BUCK  
How about a nice water feature?

CHARLOTTE  
That pile of rock?

BUCK  
That exact pile of rock.

CHARLOTTE  
Oh, Lord. There goes our savings.

Charlotte walks off.

BUCK  
Exactly, Dear.

**INT. MILTON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Charlotte unpacks boxes.

Buck looks out the window, concerned.

BUCK  
You have to be shitting me.

CHARLOTTE  
Language.

Buck ignores her and plods to the front door.

**EXT. MILTON HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

Buck approaches the trees he planted prior, the leaves withered and falling.

BUCK  
What in the hell?

Cora appears on her bike again. She laughs at Buck.

CORA  
Nice bushes.

Cora glances behind her, then pedals in a burst of speed.

Buck looks on, perturbed.

His attention is drawn towards the other end of the street.

Dick's car glides down the street. The window rolls down.

DICK  
Looking real good, Buck!

Buck stands, incredulous as the window rolls up and Dick drives away.

BUCK  
Are you blind?

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)  
Buck, your pants!

Buck looks down, he's standing there in his underwear.

BUCK  
Jesus H. Balls.

Buck retreats into the house.

**EXT. MILTON HOUSE - DAY**

Buck pulls onto the driveway towing a RENTAL TRAILER that says IRRIGATION RENTALS on the side.

With a dolly, he unloads a trench digger.

Charlotte pulls into the driveway. Her window rolls down.

CHARLOTTE

Buck, please hire someone to do this! You can barely operate a lawnmower.

Buck ignores her, puts on safety glasses, and pushes start on the machine. It roars to life.

Charlotte pulls into the garage.

Buck digs a trench, making an imprecise line towards the rocks in the center of the yard.

He reaches the rocks and digs around them.

Buck steps up to a stone, pries his fingers underneath, and strains to lift the stone.

RATTLE.

BUCK

Son of a bitch!

Buck springs backward and trips. He scoots backward, hand wrapped tight around his wrist.

Standing woozily, Buck runs towards the house.

BUCK (CONT'D)

Charlotte, goddammit, call nine-one-one.

Charlotte nonchalantly opens the door.

CHARLOTTE

Did you smash your hand with a shovel?

He displays two nearly identical bloody puncture wounds.

BUCK

God damn snake bit me! A god damn rattlesnake!

Buck gets woozy and collapses on the steps.

**INT. HOSPITAL E.R. - DAY**

Buck gets a shot, his hand is swollen.

Charlotte sits beside him.

A slick, hotshot, E.R. DOCTOR inspects his work.

E.R. DOCTOR

About how long would you guess he  
had his fangs in you?

BUCK

I'll remember to keep track of time  
the next time a god damn  
rattlesnake bites my fucking hand.

CHARLOTTE

Don't be a smart-bottom Buck,  
please. This is a severe situation.

The painkiller hits Buck, hard.

BUCK

Hell woman, a rattlesnake just  
tried to kill me. I realize the  
severity level if you don't god  
damn mind.

Buck passes out.

**INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY**

Buck stomps down an aisle. LARRY, a gruff-looking woman  
wearing a hardware store hat and vest approaches Buck.

LARRY

Find what you are looking for?

BUCK

Snake poison.

LARRY

Got yourself a snake problem do ya?

Buck raises his hand, grotesque and blackened like a charred  
hot dog. He opens an RX bottle and pops a pill.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
 Good God almighty. Aisle four. I'll  
 show you.

Buck follows Larry to the pest control aisle.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
 This brand is my favorite. It'll  
 kill ya either a herd of buffalo or  
 a den of snakes waist-deep. Just  
 don't get it on ya. Comes with a  
 rubber snake, supposed to have the  
 same effect as a scarecrow I  
 figure. Anyways, I'd toss it, or  
 give it to my kid if I had one.

Larry gets a faraway look, like maybe she's been around too  
 many chemicals.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
 Anyways. You don't want to hear  
 about that, do ya sir? I gotta see  
 about a shipment that needs  
 unloading. Register is thataway.

With a look of bafflement, Buck watches Larry wander away.

**EXT. MILTON HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY**

Buck steps out of the garage wearing rubber boots, a canvas  
 chore jacket, and golf gloves. The glove over the snakebite  
 wound has no fingers to allow his swollen fingers through.

Buck pops a few more pain pills.

The fake snake plops at the base of a rock.

Dick uses a spade to push the fake snake into the hole,  
 grinning.

BUCK  
 Bite that, you son of a bitch.

He gets down on all fours, squirts a stream of snake killer  
 under the rock, and steps back to watch.

The front door opens.

CHARLOTTE  
 Buck.

Buck stares at the pile of rock.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Buck?

Buck looks up.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Did you forget?

Of course he forgot. In fact, he could care less about anything beside this goddamn rubber snake.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Dinner with Father Ratliff tonight at five. You're on grill duty.

BUCK

What time is it?

CHARLOTTE

Four.

BUCK

Four?

Charlotte gives him 'the look' and disappears inside.

Buck shakes his head and stares out into the street.

Cora sits on her bike next to the curb, staring him down.

BUCK (CONT'D)

How long have you been there?

CORA

You're going to die here. You should leave now.

BUCK

That some kind of threat?

Cora lingers her stare as she rides away.

BUCK (CONT'D)

Better ride off, demon spawn.

Buck watches her ride off, WTF? Returns to the rocks.

**EXT. MILTON HOUSE - LATER**

Charlotte opens the front door.

CHARLOTTE  
Stale biscuits, Buck. I thought you  
had already showered.

BUCK  
Coming in now.

CHARLOTTE  
It's five o'clock.

Buck pops another pill as he watches the rock.

BUCK  
Tell him I'm stuck in the yard.

CHARLOTTE  
I'll do no such thing, Buck. You'll  
tell him yourself.

BUCK  
Is he coming here?

CHARLOTTE  
How much clearer do I have to be  
about where we are having dinner?

BUCK  
Clearer, I guess.

CHARLOTTE  
You are really trying me. Have you  
at least started the grill?

BUCK  
What on earth for? The snakes don't  
live in the grill.

Charlotte retreats inside with a slam of the door.

Buck shrugs.

**EXT. MILTON HOUSE - FRONT YARD - LATER**

Buck fiddles with the trench digger, annoyed with the  
presence of a compact car with a CLERGY sticker, a hip one,  
on the bumper in the driveway.

Father Ratliff appears from the house with a plate of food.

FATHER RATLIFF  
For Christ's sake, put some  
Neosporin on that thing before your  
fingers fall off.

Buck grumbles under his breath.

Buck glances at his hand. Blackened fingers morph into SNAKE HEADS. He blinks and they're back to normal. He shrieks.

BUCK  
Jesus Christ!

FATHER RATLIFF  
What's wrong?

BUCK  
Nothin'.

Buck pops another pill.

FATHER RATLIFF  
Hm. Your poor Charlotte was  
certainly not exaggerating.

Father Ratliff scans the yard.

Dick's car eases into the driveway behind the van.

BUCK  
Oh, hell.

Father Ratliff and Dick lock eyes in a stare-down. Father Ratliff pulls out a key fob, a tricked-out crucifix, with a few dangling keys.

Dick backs down the driveway without breaking eye contact.

FATHER RATLIFF  
That was odd.

Father Ratliff looks down at the now spoiled food on his plate, quizzical.

BUCK  
I can't get rid of that realtor or  
these god damn snakes. My apologies  
for my language. I must be  
dehydrated.

FATHER RATLIFF  
You have clearly spent far too much  
time in the sun.

Buck laughs in near hysteria.

Father Ratliff looks concerned at his food, Buck, and the yard.

FATHER RATLIFF (CONT'D)  
 Let's get you back inside, Buck.  
 Come on.

Buck's laugh peters off and looks exhausted.

**INT. MILTON HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER**

Father Ratliff eases Buck into bed and Buck closes his eyes.

Father Ratliff removes his cross necklace and drapes it across Buck's chest.

He turns the light out and closes the bedroom door.

**INT. MILTON HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Buck tosses, turns. He finds Father Ratliff's cross, shrieks!

He gets out of bed, holding the cross, and contemplates.

He stuffs the cross under a magazine on a bedside table.

**EXT. MILTON HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY**

Buck approaches the rock with his shovel.

BUCK  
 Dead yet, you poisonous son of a  
 bitch?

Buck cautiously pries up the dock, retreats, and waits.

Buck becomes impatient and reaches into the exposed hole under the rock. Pulls.

It's the rubber snake. He yanks to free it.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
 What the sweet Jesus?

Buck works at it, it won't budge. He gets the shovel slams it through the rubber snake. Tosses the head.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
 Stubborn rubber mother fucker.

Buck digs around the snake's body, pulls on the body. It won't budge again. He digs a few more feet - it's as if the snake has grown!

Dick drives up and rolls the window down.

DICK  
No church this morning, Buck?

Buck looks up.

BUCK  
You neither, I see.

DICK  
Oh, that stuff's not for me, Buck.  
I saw you had a visit from the  
clergy. Everything OK, I hope?

BUCK  
Does it look OK around here?

DICK  
Depends on one's perspective, I  
hazard.

Dick drives away, wagging his fingers.

Buck gets back to digging.

Charlotte steps out of her parked car. Buck didn't notice her arrive.

CHARLOTTE  
What in God's name have you done to  
the yard?

Buck looks around. Wonders the same thing, in shock.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
You are very sunburned. Have you  
been out here all day?

Buck presses a finger against a sunburned arm.

BUCK  
Just an hour while you were at  
church.

Charlotte makes the sign of the Holy Cross.

CHARLOTTE  
Please, Buck, get it together for  
heaven's sake. I have been gone for  
seven hours.

Buck shrugs and returns to tugging at the rubber snake.

BUCK  
You son of a bitch.

Dick's voice rings out to Buck from nowhere.

DICK (V.O.)  
Idle hands, Buck!

Dick looks around, disturbed. Where...?

**INT. MILTON HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Buck enters the kitchen through the garage door.

Charlotte pulls a suitcase behind her and points at a table.

CHARLOTTE  
There's dinner if you can focus on anything besides your damn yard.

BUCK  
My damn yard?

Buck notices the suitcase.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
Where are you going?

CHARLOTTE  
To my mothers. She needs me. You don't need me at all.

BUCK  
Charlotte, I am sorry. I'll make it up to you. How about dinner out tomorrow. We'll celebrate our first week in the new house. Anywhere you want to.

CHARLOTTE  
First week? Oh, Buck, honey, you have lost your mind.

BUCK  
What?

Buck looks around stupidly.

CHARLOTTE  
We've been here an entire month and all we have to show for it is a yard that looks like a construction site run by blind drug addicts.

Buck slumps into a seat and reaches out to grab Charlotte's hand as she walks toward the door, then out.

BUCK  
Charlotte?

**INT. MILTON HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER**

Buck watches as Charlotte's car headlights sweep across the yard, illuminating stalagmite-like piles of dirt.

Buck pops a pill and lies down on his bed.

**INT. MILTON HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT (DREAM SEQUENCE)**

Charlotte walks into the bedroom, dressed to tease.

CHARLOTTE  
You've been ignoring me, Buck. You know I hate to be ignored don't you, Buck?

Buck sits up. She hasn't dressed like this in a long time.

BUCK  
I suggest you don't wear that to church.

Charlotte grins and starts to dance a little.

CHARLOTTE  
Let's not talk about church. Just watch.

Buck watches as she dances, his hands go into his shorts.

BUCK  
Yeah, no church.

Buck grabs his cock inside his shorts.

RATTLE. Charlotte opens her mouth--

A snake tongue flicks out.

Buck shrieks and looks at his lap, his hand wrapped around a rattlesnake.

He yanks.

The snakehead pops off in his hand!

**INT. MILTON HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT (END DREAM SEQUENCE)**

Buck leaps out of bed, screaming.

Buck gets his phone and calls Charlotte.

BUCK

Charlotte, please come home.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

I'm sorry, Buck. I just can't take all this anymore.

BUCK

All what? Just put your suitcase back in the car and come home.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

Oh, Buck. You need to go see Father Ratliff. Please. And sell that damn house before it kills you.

BUCK

Please, Charlotte. I do need you. I'll call Father Ratliff in the morning. I promise. I can't make it one night without you, can't you see that?

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

Oh good Jesus Lord. One night? Buck, I haven't stepped foot inside that house in three months.

Buck sits stunned.

BUCK

What? I-

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

Call Father Ratliff.

She hangs up the phone.

**INT. MILTON HOUSE - CLOSET - NIGHT**

He walks to Charlotte's closet. It's bare. He looks inside her dresser. It's empty. He shrugs.

**INT. MILTON HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Buck tosses the pills into the toilet and flushes.

BUCK  
Idle hands.

**INT./EXT. MILTON HOUSE - DAY**

Buck, in a house robe, opens the garage door and steps onto the driveway. He's lost weight and has grayed heavily.

Buck sits down and fiddles with a snake tail. Dawn comes. The yard looks like Normandy Beach, WWII.

Buck sobs and fishes his phone out of a pocket, makes a call.

DICK (V.O.)  
(voicemail)  
Heavens Falls Realty where we will  
meet your living desires. Leave a  
message and we'll be back with  
you...soon.

BUCK  
Dick, this is Buck Milton. At your  
earliest god damn convenience can  
you come by. I need to talk to you  
about selling this damn snake pit.

Buck hangs up to find Cora on her bike, concerned.

She looks at the yard, not daring to step foot on it.

CORA  
Mister, it's not too late. Please.  
Listen to me-

Buck looks stymied.

Dick pulls into the driveway. Buck does not appear surprised at Dick's immediate arrival.

Cora backs off and rides away.

Dick gets out with a glance to Cora, then surveys the yard.

BUCK  
If you tell me it's looking good  
I'll knock your head off with this  
shovel.

Dick laughs, then offers an empathetic ear.

DICK  
No. It certainly does not.

Buck laughs with exhaustion.

DICK (CONT'D)  
Idle hands without a plan.

BUCK  
But I had a plan.

DICK  
I don't believe you did. Remember,  
some people make plans, some people  
are plans. I'm afraid, Mr. Milton,  
you were someone's plan.

BUCK  
I don't understand.

DICK  
Well, that's just fine, Buck. Now  
back to this grave business at  
hand.

BUCK  
It's not a grave, I just had to get  
that mother fucking rubber snake  
out of the yard...

DICK  
Figure of speech, Mr. Milton,  
that's all.

Buck surveys the damage.

BUCK  
Can you put the house back on the  
market?

Dick pats Buck on the back.

DICK  
Certainly Buck. Hate to see you go  
though.

BUCK  
They say Jesus was a carpenter,  
what I'd give if he was a  
landscaper.

Dick's head snaps back and he laughs.

Buck's phone rings.

DICK  
I think you should take the call.

BUCK  
(into phone)  
Yes...This is Buck...The rental  
trailer?

Buck cheats a glance at the rental trailer.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
Twelve-thousand dollars in late  
fees?

Buck laughs and cries.

Dick watches, cautiously amused.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
Can you send someone out to get it?  
Not today. Tomorrow will be fine...  
Go ahead and charge my card. Yep.  
Plus the pick-up fee. I no longer  
give a fuck, Larry.

Buck ends the call.

DICK  
Think about it for a couple days,  
Buck. I'll be around.

BUCK  
Yah. I know you will be.

**INT. MILTON HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Buck has lost more weight and is gaunt with unruly hair.

He holds a phone and watches a frozen dinner spin in the microwave.

BUCK  
(into the phone)  
Charlotte, don't hang up. I'm  
sorry. Something got into my head,  
wrapped around me so tight I can't  
shake it off from my bones, my  
skin... That's all I had to say.  
I'm going to sell this place. Don't  
ever come back here. Not ever. Bye,  
my dear.

Buck hangs up and sits down to dinner. Pokes at the meal,  
weighing a decision.

He reaches for his phone.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
Dick, sell this damn thing.

**INT. MILTON HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Buck makes the bed.

He uncovers Father Ratliff's cross, turning it in his hand.

He drops it into the trash can on his way out of the room.

**EXT. MILTON HOUSE - NIGHT**

Buck drags a piece of plywood and the shovel out of the garage.

BUCK (V.O.)  
Larry? This is Buck Milton. When you come out tomorrow to pick up that ditch digger, you'll find a couple of big rocks next to a hole covered with a piece of wood. Do me a favor and cover all that up with dirt. Don't poke around. Thank you kindly.

Buck drops the plywood by the rocks and notices Cora on her bike, by the curb.

He widens the hole in front of the rocks, making sure the plywood can fit into the hole.

He throws the shovel into the garage and hits the clicker, watching the garage door come down, slowly.

Buck returns to the hole and stops- a pit full of snakes! But, he somehow expected it, and lowers himself in.

His hand reaches out of the hole and pulls the plywood over.

**EXT. MILTON HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY**

Dick pulls up to the house and opens up his trunk.

Carrying a FOR SALE sign with his and Pat's picture, he walks over to the unfinished water feature and tamps his foot on the fresh dirt fill.

DICK  
Looking good, Buck. Everything is looking really good.

A faint RATTLE sound from below.

Dick grins.

Something catches his eye and his grin turns into a scowl.

Planted in the dirt is a "FOR SALE BY VIVIAN WILKES" sign with an "UNDER CONTRACT" placard swinging below.

DICK (CONT'D)

What is this Virginia Slims horse-shit?

Dick snaps his For Sale sign in half and storms across the yard, stepping across the pile of dirt.

Another faint RATTLE.

DICK (CONT'D)

Shut up.

Dick slams the car door.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT (END FLASHBACK)**

Cora glares at her feet.

PAT

You see? We don't kill anyone.

Pat smiles and closes the folder.

CORA

He wouldn't listen to me.

PAT

Mr. Milton was obsessive, a high probability sinner with a high probability to sin. Zoom!

Pat taps her temple.

PAT (CONT'D)

Smart.

She cackles, but thinks she hears something outside.

CORA

That's the cops, I told you! You better run, demon!

Pat almost falls for it but cracks the door and sees nothing.

PAT  
Shush, brat.

CORA  
And you must be the sidekick.

PAT  
I am not the sidekick. We're a team!

Cora shrugs.

CORA  
Who's out there and who's in here,  
watching this caged, puny human,  
hm?

Pat snaps her head to the door, fuming.

**INT./EXT. UBER - NIGHT (MOVING)**

Dick relaxes with his arms behind his head, eyes shut. HARP music, a melodic mix of classical and black metal, blares out of the speakers. Marijuana paraphernalia hangs from the rear-view mirror.

MILLER (O.S.)  
I Uber to pay the bills. But this,  
man, this is my passion right here.

MILLER, the Uber driver, bobs his head to the music and glances in the rear-view at Dick.

MILLER (CONT'D)  
It's good, right?

Dick shakes a thumbs up, not opening his eyes. Miller sees the agreement in the rearview and smiles.

MILLER (CONT'D)  
I do it all myself, man. The  
playing, the mixing, the  
production. I'm streaming, too,  
trying to climb the charts ya know.  
Miller and the Bangin' Harp, that's  
the name if you wanna give it a  
listen and a like?

Miller glances in the rearview but the seat is empty.

MILLER (CONT'D)  
Huh?

He turns to look over his shoulder--

Dick, in demon form, sits in the passenger seat, snarling.

DICK

Miller.

Miller screams and yanks the wheel, tires screeching.

**INT. WILKES HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

A BONG HIT. BUBBLES.

THAYER, early-30s, sets down the bong and lets the hit settle. Fits on a headset and reaches for a game controller, but pauses.

THAYER

Cora?

He looks around the living room. Empty. Gets up and peers in the kitchen. Empty.

**INT. WILKES HOUSE - STAIRS - NIGHT**

Thayer climbs the stairs, albeit wobbly, to Cora's room.

He stops at a motionless DOG, a small mixed breed that looks long past dead, on a step and waits.

Dog's chest finally rises. Thayer, satisfied, steps over Dog and up the stairs.

**INT. WILKES HOUSE - CORA'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Thayer knocks on Cora's door and opens it to find an empty room and open window.

THAYER

Cora, sweetheart?

He takes off his headphones and drops onto the messy bed- ow!

He pulls out a framed photo of himself, Cora, VIVIAN (early 30s). His thumb passes over Vivian, lovingly.

THAYER (CONT'D)

I'm trying, baby. I'm not cut out for this, not like you.

Thayer makes up the bed, places the picture on a nightstand.

Thayer leaves and pulls headphones on.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT**

Pat yanks open a filing drawer. Tons of files. Cuts her eyes to Cora.

PAT

Do you see all these meaty souls?  
We did this together. Dick and Pat.  
In fact, we invented the entire  
method. We're freaking famous!

Cora does not look impressed.

CORA

Famous losers.

Pat remembers a fond memory.

PAT

We call it 'Home Sweet Hell.' And  
it works. Imagine! All of these  
humans lining up to buy one of  
these dwellings, and we get our  
pick! Which one of these stupid  
creatures is most likely to-

Pat grins at Cora.

PAT (CONT'D)

Sin. As Dick would say-

Her face morphs into Dick's face.

PAT (CONT'D)

We've done for Hell what Henry Ford  
did for the automobile industry -  
an assembly line of souls  
committing the highest quality  
sins. Quality over quantity, my  
dear.

Pat's face morphs back and she picks up a black-eyed doll.

PAT (CONT'D)

Then, we just match up the right  
employee to our pick and WHAM-O! We  
squeeze that creamy sin right out  
of you!

Pat cackles, orgasmic, squeezes the doll.

PAT (CONT'D)

Mm, yes!

Cora looks grossed out, mutters to herself.

CORA

Kill me now.

The doll's eyes flick up at Pat, who realizes she has crumpled the doll.

Pat places the doll back on the shelf.

PAT

Oops.

(to Cora)

Who's the loser now, huh?

CORA

Still you.

Pat sneers. Rifles through folders.

PAT

I have a surprise for you, oh yes I do. Here it is, perfect! You might find this one familiar.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

Another ranch house with a dismal flower garden.

SUPER: The DeFranco's

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY**

ABIGAIL DEFRANCO (40s), a woman who shops for clothes in the back of Country Gardens magazine, kneels beside a defunct vegetable garden.

She looks like she's lost someone. She spots a pool shed.

ABIGAIL

Quinn?

Abigail admires the backyard pool on her way to the shed.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Quinn, are you in there?

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - POOL SHED - DAY**

The shed door cracks. Light invades as the WHIRR sound of the pool pump escapes.

Abigail investigates the pool supplies.

Two female hands slide in and hover above Abigail's shoulders and clasp down.

Abigail screams, turns, and shields herself.

QUINN (40s), a woman who takes styling tips from Guy Fieri, stands with her hands on her hips.

Abigail whaps Quinn with her hat.

ABIGAIL  
Oh, God! Quinn!

QUINN  
(seductive)  
You know...

Quinn moves close and transfers her hands to Abigail's hips.

ABIGAIL  
What are you doing?

QUINN  
The realtor said to take our time.

Abigail puts her hands on Quinn's shoulders.

ABIGAIL  
To discuss the house.

QUINN  
Abigail, babe, we can do that, too.

Quinn nuzzles and kisses Abigail's neck.

Abigail winces but doesn't stop Quinn. Her face smooths and her eyes close. But, then--

ABIGAIL  
Quinn! We can't!

Quinn barrages aggressive gropes and kisses on Abigail.

Abigail's hat falls off. She bumps into the shelves.

CLANK! CLANK! CLANK! Various yard maintenance tools fall.

Abigail and Quinn separate.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
I'm sure the realtor heard that.

QUINN  
I'm sure. Just go, I got this.

Quinn pulls Abigail's crushed hat from beneath a shovel.

Abigail takes the hat, inspecting the damage. She frowns.

ABIGAIL  
This is the hat we bought outside  
Half Moon Bay.

QUINN  
I remember.

They share a small smile. A fond memory.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
Abby...

Quinn stands with shovel in hand.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
What do you think about the house?

Abigail fiddles with the crushed hat.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
I'm trying to fix things.

ABIGAIL  
I know. I am, too.

Quinn flashes guilt, that turns to anger.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
Well, it's got a garden and a pool.  
We always wanted a pool.

Quinn cracks a smile.

QUINN  
It's not our forever home. And,  
you're excited about getting back  
into the school counselor gig,  
right? Right?

Abigail nods.

ABIGAIL  
It's wonderful.

QUINN  
That's my girl.

Abigail cracks a smile.

They hug. Abigail doesn't see the doubt in Quinn's face.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY**

Abigail assesses a barren flower garden.

Quinn talks with Pat, who's on the phone as the middle person in a back and forth negotiation.

Abigail notices a rose seedling.

ABIGAIL  
Look at you.

Abigail caresses the delicate petals. Black goo sticks to her finger from underneath a petal.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
(to the seedling)  
You stay put. I'll take care of  
you.

Abigail, heading to the front door, studies the goo on her finger.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
(to Quinn)  
I'll be right back. I left my hat.

Quinn gives a thumbs up, then points at Pat and eye rolls.

Abigail chuckles and enters the house.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

DING! The oven timer.

Abigail enters as Cora opens the oven door to a pizza.

ABIGAIL  
Oh! Hello there.

Cora, in a swimsuit and towel, jumps and lets go of the oven door. It SLAMS shut. She acts unbothered, casual.

CORA

I thought you were gone. Forget something?

Abigail turns off the oven.

Cora follows her movements with suspicious eyes.

ABIGAIL

Can't have the house burning down before we buy it, you know.

Abigail steps back and references the oven.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

I thought I smelled pepperoni and cheese earlier. I was expecting apple pie or cookies, like most realtors do. But pizza, now that's my weakness.

Cora sighs, convinced this is leading nowhere good.

CORA

Look, I just hang out here sometimes. I don't break anything or snort things or whatever.

Abigail spots her hat on the counter and plucks it up.

ABIGAIL

Ah-ha, found it.

Cora, on the crumpled hat:

CORA

There's a garbage can in the pantry. I'm gonna go.

ABIGAIL

Stay. I never saw you. You can use the pool whenever you like- if it's ok with your parents and you don't mind two old geese running around.

On "parents" Cora hides signs of an emotional wound.

Abigail pokes a finger through the hole in her hat.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Nothing a little patching won't fix. I'm Abigail.

CORA  
Thanks, I guess. I'm Cora.

ABIGAIL  
Beautiful name. Good to not meet  
you, Cora.

Abigail puts a finger to her lips and exits.

Cora relaxes.

ABIGAIL (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
And we'll have tons of pepperoni  
pizza!

Cora stiffens.

The front door opens and closes. THUD!

Cora removes the pizza and sets it out to cool. She hears  
raised VOICES from the front yard.

CORA  
I knew you were gonna rat me out!

She trudges into the living room.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Cora peeks out a window and sees Pat sitting on the hood of  
her car watching Abigail and Quinn celebrate with high fives  
and awkward dancing.

Abigail and Quinn try to coax Pat to join in the fun. She  
declines. They coax her again. She gives in and joins them to  
become the most awkward dancer of the three.

Cora's lips purse - maybe she was wrong about Abigail.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY**

A patio set, surrounded by tiki-torches and lounge pool  
chairs now adorn the backyard. Fertilizer bags and refuse  
from the garden lies in a pile.

Abigail, working up a sweat, rakes new soil into a work-in-  
progress garden.

She lifts her now-patched hat and looks from the garden to  
the empty bags of fertilizer.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

The house is in a mid-unpacking state. Dirty plates, charcuterie remnants, and wine glasses litter the area.

Abigail takes off her gardening gloves and trades them for her purse on the counter.

ABIGAIL

Quinn, I'll be back. I need two more bags.

(to self)

Maybe four, just in case.

(out loud)

Text me if you need anything.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS**

Abigail hops into a vintage turquoise truck.

**INT. OLD TRUCK - CONTINUOUS**

Abigail starts the truck up and notices a shadow standing at the front window. She glances at the truck's interior clock and it reads: 9:44 AM

ABIGAIL

About time.

She reverses the truck. The shadow is gone.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY**

Quinn sleeps stretched out, hogging the covers.

DONG! Quinn stirs and groans but doesn't fully wake.

DONG! She pulls a pillow on top of her head.

QUINN

Abigail, come on! Too early!

Quinn settles back in for some luxurious sleep.

DONG! The sound is even paced but grows deeper, heavier.

Quinn throws the pillow off and unravels herself. Zombie charges out of the room.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
Always doing shit at the crack ass  
of dawn, I swear.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Quinn stops in the hallway and steadies herself. DONG!  
She finds the bathroom door cracked and the light on.

QUINN  
Abigail?

DONG!

QUINN  
Abby?

She opens the door. A YOUNG WOMAN in 1950s swing style clothing sits on the floor with her head and arms draped on the ledge of a clawfoot tub, same from the Storage Room.

Quinn looks around: "Is this a prank?" Clears her throat.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
Hey, lady. This isn't your house  
and we didn't have a costume party  
last night. I'm going to need you  
to pick yourself up and leave.  
However, I like your dress.

The Young Woman doesn't move.

Quinn reaches for the Young Woman's shoulder.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
Now, look, damn it--

The Young Woman's head lifts straight up. Too far up, as if her head and neck joints are no longer connect.

Quinn draws back, unsure of what she's seeing.

SCHMACK! The head slams face-first into the ledge of the tub with meaty impact. Blood mists and drips on the white tub.

Quinn jumps back.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
Whoa! What the fuck!

The head lifts and spins in place 180-degrees. Neck skin twists like a wrung rag. An unrecognizable, pulverized, caved-in face looks at Quinn!

Quinn stiffens, gripped in fear, and unable to scream.

The head turns back around and slams itself into the tub ledge in rapid succession. SCHMACK! SCHMACK! SCHMACK!

The head barrels down the tub ledge to one side, SQUEAKING and smearing blood - then, slams into the wall. Blood showers. The limp body flails and follows the head. Quinn stumbles back against a wall.

SCHMACK! The head reverses on the tub ledge and hits the opposite wall. The body follows.

Quinn's eyes roll back and she faints.

OVERBLACK: A THUD and GRUNT from Quinn.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY**

Startled, Quinn wakes up in a heap on the floor beside the bed and pulls her top half onto the bed. She pinches herself.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Quinn walks by the bathroom, its door cracked and lights off, towards the kitchen. She reverses course and presses the bathroom door open. Nothing amiss. Flips the light on to make sure. Sighs relief.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Quinn rubs her back as she opens an empty coffee container.

QUINN

Abigail, please tell me you picked  
up coffee yesterday.

(beat)

Abby!

Quinn is met with silence as she checks the cabinets. SPLASH!  
Someone dives into the pool.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY**

Quinn stands at the backdoor trying to get a look.

MARLETTA, 30s, olive-skinned, swims nude in the pool. She oozes the classy sex appeal of a 1970s Italian TV commercial actress.

Quinn yanks open the door and strides out.

QUINN

Hey. Hey!

Marletta surfaces, facing away from Quinn who now stands over her, and sweeps the water off her face and hair.

QUINN (CONT'D)

I said, hey. What are you doing?

Marletta turns around and smiles with quiet, amused surprise.

MARLETTA

(Italian accent)

Buongiorno, Bellissima.

Quinn gulps at her beauty. The command in her voice falters.

QUINN

This house has been bought. I-- We,  
bought it just recently.

Marletta looks around at the furnishings. Clucks her tongue.

MARLETTA

I am so sorry. I did not realize.  
Forgive me?

Marletta makes her way to the pool steps. Quinn shadows.

QUINN

Yeah, sure. I mean it's no big  
deal.

MARLETTA

Grazie. I am so embarrassed.

Marletta steps out of the pool. She squeezes the water out of her hair. Quinn stares.

QUINN

Towel. You need a towel.

Quinn clambers around for a towel, finds one, but finds herself alone.

She pinches herself and waits to wake up. Nope, awake.

**INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY**

Abigail carries a tray of seedlings and looks for assistance. She finally spots Larry in the midst of restocking shelves.

ABIGAIL

Hi there. I was in here earlier but couldn't find anyone.

Larry shrugs and continues to stock.

LARRY

Hard to miss us. I mean just look at these vests. What can I do you for?

ABIGAIL

I'm looking for a sunlight calculator. Do you know what I mean?

LARRY

Lady.

Larry references her vest.

ABIGAIL

Right. The vest.

LARRY

That's right. If we don't know the answer, then it probably ain't worth knowing!

Larry cracks herself up.

Abigail doesn't find it funny but laughs to be nice.

LARRY (CONT'D)

We don't have those things, unfortunately, dear, but feel free to look around. Gonna be a long day here in the Gulag.

Larry shoves an item on the shelf to emphasize.

ABIGAIL

It was a long shot really. But, I do need four more bags of in-ground garden fertilizer if someone can help me load those in my truck? It's the turquoise truck.

Larry turns to Abigail in mid-reach for her vest again-

Abigail smiles as she pinches her own shirt.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
Thanks in advance.

Larry's mouth falls agape and she cracks up.

LARRY  
You're good, you got me there.

Larry shakes a finger at Abigail and chuckles, walking off.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
We'll get that for ya. Hang tight  
and feel free to stock that shelf  
if you want. Free country, am I  
right?

Abigail looks thankful to see Larry leave.

THUD! THUD! Products on the next aisle hit the ground.

**NEXT AISLE**

Cora picks up duct tape, slipping one in her pocket.

Abigail peeks around the aisle.

ABIGAIL  
Hello, again.

Cora, unsure if caught, crosses her arms at Abigail and angles the pocket holding the stolen goods away from Abigail.

CORA  
Oh, it's you. What do you want?

ABIGAIL  
I didn't mean to interrupt. Are you  
here alone?

LARRY (O.S.)  
Hey!

Cora stiffens and shifts her eyes to the other end of the aisle where Larry stands, hands on hips.

Abigail brushes past Cora and pickpockets the duct tape.

Cora feels it leave and her eyes widen.

ABIGAIL

Yes, I'm ready to check out. These things as well.

Abigail holds her items out to Larry.

Larry eyes the items. Something is going on, maybe?

Larry takes the items, eyes Abigail and Cora, and walks off.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Thank you so much. Right behind you.

CORA

You're a sex trafficker, aren't you?

Cora watches what Abigail watches.

ABIGAIL

Excuse me?

Abigail snaps her gaze to Cora, who continues to watch Larry as she dumps the items on the checkout counter, haphazardly.

CORA

I read about it. This is how those things work. Get people to like you and trust you, and bam, I'm in the back of a gross white van with fifteen girls, maybe boys, and a bucket for a toilet. I know your game.

ABIGAIL

I guess the jig is up.

Cora snaps her gaze to Abigail. "What"?

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

About getting you to like and trust me at least.

Cora hmphs.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Can I tell you a secret?

Cora looks at Abigail as if she's unsure.

Abigail glances at Larry who gets caught watching Abigail and Cora as she shoves Abigail's items into bags.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
Everything is hard. Doing the right thing, the wrong thing. It's all hard. Just make sure you get what you really want in the end.

The words hit Cora, but she tries to cover it up.

CORA  
Whatever that means. I gotta go.

Cora starts for the exit.

ABIGAIL  
Cora.

Cora stops at the door and turns in that sour teenage way.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
I hope you'll stop by to help me do some planting and pick up your duct tape. You still have some pizza in the freezer and if you don't eat it soon, I might.

Cora's features soften. She catches herself again.

CORA  
Yeah, maybe, trafficker.

Cora rolls out of the door.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Quinn sits at the kitchen table and steeps a tea bag in a coffee mug. A few used tea bags on a stained napkin and a few empty mini-bar whiskey bottles sit on the table.

Like the tea bag, Quinn steeps, but with anger.

The front door opens. Abigail huffs and puffs.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)  
Oh, my word!

Quinn shoves the bottles anywhere she can on her person.

Abigail enters the kitchen and gets a glass of water.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
Well, hello there, sleepyhead! Have you eaten anything?

QUINN

There's no coffee and we're almost out of tea. Did you go to the store?

Abigail sips water and prepares for the onslaught.

ABIGAIL

I forgot. I'm sorry.

QUINN

But you remembered the cow shit. Priorities, right?

ABIGAIL

The store is down the road. Get dressed and we'll go down together. We'll spend the day on the town.

Quinn loses her teabag tab in the mug.

QUINN

Fuck!

Quinn fishes for the tab and winces. Abigail pulls out her garden gloves and heads to the back door.

ABIGAIL

If you want to go, just let me know.

Abigail pauses at the back door and spins around.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Oh, I forgot to tell you, we might have a visitor in the pool now and then.

Quinn hides a flash of guilt.

QUINN

That right?

ABIGAIL

Yeah. She's young, just hitting that teenage stride, and I think she could use some help.

Quinn's face relaxes, but something occurs to her. She whirls around. The chair legs scrape the floor.

QUINN

What world do you live in?

ABIGAIL

What's wrong?

QUINN

That's not your kid. If you wanted a kid we should have had kids a long time ago, like I wanted. But you didn't, and now here you go trying to adopt other people's kids!

Abigail stares at the ground, hurt. Quinn realizes she just opened an old wound -- for them both.

Abigail hits her limit and slams the glass on the counter.

ABIGAIL

At least I'm trying to do something. What about you? You spend all your time going from one dream to the next when things get too hard or you feel even the slightest bit of failure. Meanwhile, I'm the one that's always there supporting whatever it is, plus trying to keep our heads above water!

QUINN

Psychobabble bullshit.

Abigail screams in frustration, SLAMS the door behind her.

Quinn turns back around and fumes over her mug.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY**

Abigail kneels at the front garden with a garden trowel, and Cora stands behind her with crossed arms.

CORA

Fine.

Cora drags herself over to Abigail and kneels beside her.

ABIGAIL

See this seedling?

CORA

Yeah, it's on the way out. Look at it.

ABIGAIL

No. No, it's not. It just needs some care and it'll be beautiful again.

Cora looks at Abigail's third eye, then away, blank.

CORA

My mom died. About a year ago.

Abigail pauses.

ABIGAIL

I'm so sorry to hear that.

CORA

Something happened, and I think I know what. I just don't know who would believe me. I don't know if I believe me.

ABIGAIL

Does this have something to do with you living in the houses for sale?

CORA

I like my space.

ABIGAIL

From who?

Cora shrugs, not wanting to talk about it.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

I'm always here to listen, never judge.

Abigail hands her a flower to plant. Cora does.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

This seedling, no matter what, reaches to the heavens. Isn't that interesting? Despite everything it's been through. It never stops reaching. If it ever stopped, well, I don't suppose it would have lasted until you and I came along. You'll be amazed how fast it blossoms with a little care.

Cora listens as she plants.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Never stop reaching.

Abigail smiles as she watches Cora plant a flower.

A shadow stands in the front window. It walks off.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Quinn sleeps on the couch in a living room full of boxes. A poor attempt was made to unpack, but ended quickly.

Exterior CHATTER, two female voices. Abigail LAUGHS.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

Tough as you are, afraid of worms?

Quinn stirs and stumbles to the front window.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - DAY**

Quinn shuffles from the living room to the kitchen, muttering.

QUINN

Unbelievable.

She opens a cabinet, listens for anyone near, then searches for a hidden mini-bottle of whiskey.

Quinn closes the door and jumps! Marletta, in a dark green silk robe, leans on the counter beside her. Sunlight from the kitchen window showers her.

QUINN (CONT'D)

What are you doing in here?

MARLETTA

I heard some yelling and I've come to check on you.

QUINN

On me? Yeah well, that's none of your business. You should leave before Abigail comes in and more yelling starts.

Marletta strokes Quinn's cheek.

Quinn startles yet doesn't pull away.

MARLETTA

You're a lover. Fire. It's a small flame now, but I can see it.

Quinn loses herself in Marletta's eyes. She whispers:

QUINN  
What are you talking about?

Marletta moves in, body to body.

MARLETTA  
I can see the roar it once was, and  
can still be.

Marletta turns into Quinn and guides her hands over her body.

QUINN  
Oh, my God.

Quinn remembers-- Abigail is outside! Marletta moans and slips one of Quinn's hands inside the robe. For Quinn, a moment of fear dissipates into pleasure and the excitement of being caught.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER**

Quinn, clothes ruffled and hair unkempt, stares off into space.

The front door CLOSES and Abigail appears in the kitchen doorway. She's gentle, wounds still open.

ABIGAIL  
Hey. I'm going to take a shower and  
clean up. What do you want to do  
for dinner?

Quinn doesn't react. Abigail waits. And waits.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
I was going to see if you wanted to  
join Cora and me for dinner.

Nothing. Abigail peels off to the hallway.

Loathing pulsates on Quinn's face.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Abigail sleeps alone in the bed.

She stirs and looks over at Quinn's empty side. She rolls over to go back to sleep.

Abigail can't, and flings the covers off.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Abigail walks down the hallway, past the closed bathroom door, and disappears.

Abigail's FOOTSTEPS fade in and out as she searches the house.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)  
Quinn?... Quinn?

Abigail's FOOTSTEPS fade up. She stops at the bathroom.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
Quinn?

Abigail opens the door. A figure, Marletta, sits on the toilet lid in darkness.

Abigail gasps, and stumbles backward into the hallway but catches herself. She looks up and realizes: Quinn.

Quinn sits on the toilet lid, holding a whiskey bottle.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
You almost gave me a heart attack.  
Are you OK?

QUINN  
You were right. I failed at  
everything in my life. And I know  
why.

ABIGAIL  
No, I didn't mean that.

QUINN  
But I could have been a great  
mother.

Quinn looks to Abigail with dark, sunk eyes, and flat hair as she drains the rest of the whiskey.

ABIGAIL  
Oh, Quinn, I'm so sorry.

Abigail reaches for the light switch, but-- Quinn grabs her wrist and yanks her into the bathroom!

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Abigail screams and flips into the bathtub. DONG! She leans up in a daze.

ABIGAIL  
Quinn... what...

Quinn stands over her, grabs hold of her neck, and squeezes.

QUINN  
You're the one that's held me back.

Abigail chokes and holds onto Quinn's arms. Slaps at her.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
You caused me to fail. Everything I  
ever wanted I never got because  
you're just a selfish bitch, Abby.  
A selfish bitch.

ABIGAIL  
Q--Quinn... Love. Ple--

Abigail's vision blurs.

Quinn's hands release and hover around Abigail's neck.  
Abigail wheezes in a large gulp of air and holds herself up  
via Quinn's arms.

Quinn's face softens as it looks into Abigail's.

MARLETTA (O.S.)  
The grand manipulator. Playing you  
like a violin. Do it!

Abigail looks at Marletta's silhouette in the hallway. Her  
eyes gain focus. She sees a face of gore! Attempts to scream.

Quinn snatches Abigail's hair, slams her face into the  
bathtub edge.

Abigail gurgles blood, scratching, breaking Quinn's skin.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Marletta stands in the bathroom doorway and watches.

Quinn slams Abigail's face into the tub. Again. Again. With  
all her might, again! Abigail's arms drop limp and hang over  
the side of the tub.

Quinn pulls on the plastic shower curtain and tears it off.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT**

Marletta's bare feet stand on the edge of the swimming pool. A pile of 1950s swing-style clothes lay in a pile beside her. She dives.

Quinn sweats and digs a hole in the garden. Abigail's body, wrapped in a shower curtain, lays off to the side.

QUINN

How deep does this need to be?

Marletta watches from the pool.

MARLETTA

Very deep.

QUINN

You're sure cadaver dogs won't find her?

MARLETTA

I am no liar, my sweet.

**INT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - BACKYARD - LATER**

Quinn leans on the shovel, exhausted, and looks for Marletta. The pool is empty. Calm. No sign of Marletta.

QUINN

(whisper-yell)

Marletta? Where are you?

Quinn reaches for Abigail's feet, the only part exposed.

A THUD behind Quinn catches her attention.

Marletta, gory face, stands in the hole, reaching for her. A manhole cover-size hole opens up -- the fires of hell splashing light on Marletta's face.

Quinn gasps, fear-stricken, and tries to climb out.

Marletta grabs Quinn by the shoulders and pulls her backward.

Quinn screams!

Marletta grabs, feverishly, to stuff Quinn into the hole.

Quinn strains to reach for Abigail's feet.

QUINN (CONT'D)

Help me!

MARLETTA

Welcome to your forever home!

Marletta gives a final pull and they embrace, kissing. Black goo seeps from their lip-locked faces.

The surrounding dirt collapses inward as if the hole never existed.

**EXT. DEFRANCO HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY**

Cora looks at a HEAVEN'S REALTY FOR SALE sign in the front yard as if she's been run over.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - STORAGE ROOM (END FLASHBACK)**

Cora grips the cage, the spikes threatening to pierce her skin. Her chest heaves with angry breath.

CORA

You're lying.

A grin slides across Pat's face as she closes the folder.

PAT

Am I? You know the truth, I can see it, but you were too late, weren't you? Fail!

Cora holds back tears with anger.

Pat laughs.

PAT (CONT'D)

Loser. You have no one.

Pat yawns. Gets up and points at Cora.

PAT (CONT'D)

Don't go anywhere.

Pat cackles as she goes to leave.

CORA

I have my dad!

Pat doesn't miss a beat out the door, cackling harder.

The door closes. Cora sinks into herself.

A SHUFFLE.

Cora looks up to see the coffin crack open. Her eyes widen.

Janitor puts a finger to his lips.

CORA (CONT'D)  
Who're you? Are you one of them?

He shakes his head, climbing out of the coffin.

JANITOR  
I'm just the janitor and I've been  
hiding from them all night.

Janitor studies the cage lock and pulls out the Storage Room key still in the lock, takes the key out, and tries it on the cage's padlock. No luck.

CORA  
Wait.

Cora pulls out her penknife and starts to work it.

JANITOR  
Do you know how to do that?

CORA  
Internet and practice.

JANITOR  
Oh. I'll keep a listen. What's your  
name?

Janitor sneaks to the door and listens.

CORA  
Cora. Cora Wilkes.

Janitor notices a file on top of the filing cabinet and takes a look. The tab reads: WILKES.

JANITOR  
Hey. Is this your house?

He shows her a picture from the file.

Cora gasps.

The penknife slips and clatters to the ground.

FOOTSTEPS.

Janitor tosses the file onto the cabinet but it falls on the floor.

JANITOR (CONT'D)

Shh!

Janitor jumps back in the coffin.

Cora's fingers reach out for the knife.

The door handle turns and Pat enters, guzzling a cup of coffee.

PAT

Ah! Sweet, sweet nectar.

She smiles at Cora then notices the folder on the floor, the picture of the Wilkes's house sticking out.

PAT (CONT'D)

Well well well. A special request?

Pat picks up the folder and turns to Cora, her face inches from the cage. Cora looks at her, eyes locked.

PAT (CONT'D)

We haven't closed this deal yet.  
But since this is so near and dear  
to your heart-

Pat opens the folder.

**INT. WILKES HOUSE - NIGHT**

Thayer shoves his finger in a jar of only a few weed flakes.

DING-DONG! A visitor.

Thayer opens the door to Miller holding out a fast-food bag.

MILLER

Eyyy!

Miller seems off.

Cora's toy giraffe sits on the door sill, unseen by Thayer.

THAYER

Hey, Miller. You ok?

MILLER

Yeah, man, just on the downslope.  
Why so blue, panda bear? Need a  
harp solo?

Thayer grabs the bag and takes a look inside.

THAYER

Nah, man. Thanks though.

MILLER

That's a special blend. Be careful,  
OK? If you can't handle it, uh,  
I'll replace it. Just throw it  
away. Throw it away, man.

THAYER

Uh, OK. Thanks. You sure you're OK?

Miller forces a smile.

**EXT. WILKES'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

A similar house to the others. The Dog lies in the front  
yard, fur blowing in the night breeze.

Miller trudges through the grass and stops at the Dog, not  
sure if it's dead. He leans in.

The Dog finally breathes.

Miller veers around the Dog toward his car.

A car door SLAMS and TAKES OFF as the Dog sleeps in front of  
the Wilke's house.

SUPER: The Wilkes's

**INT. UBER (PARKED) - NIGHT**

Miller drops into the driver seat, wiping sweaty hands on his  
pants.

Dick leans up between the seats, expectant.

Miller freezes. Nods, nervously.

**INT. WILKES HOUSE - NIGHT**

Cora's toy giraffe watches him from the table.

Thayer holds up the bag of weed, thick with black goo.

THAYER

Wowza.

Thayer takes a hit from the bong and blows it through the sploof. He coughs uncontrollably.

THAYER (CONT'D)

Oh shit. That's efficiency. That's strong. Mhm.

Black ooze leaks from his nose and he wipes it away and grabs a beer from a mini-fridge.

THAYER (CONT'D)

Hey, little buddy. Where have you been?

Thayer sips the beer and feels the weed take him.

THAYER (CONT'D)

Oh, what's that? Are you a little thirsty too, pal?

Thayer pours some beer onto the little giraffe and giggles.

THAYER (CONT'D)

There you go.

The beer drips off the giraffe.

THAYER (CONT'D)

You're a funny lil' guy. Trying to drink all my beer. Get your own! You lush.

The giraffe's skin absorbs the beer. The plastic on its back bubbles. The process accelerates. Bubbles enlarge.

THAYER (CONT'D)

You OK, lil' fella? Here, this will calm you down.

Thayer takes a hit and exhales at the toy, enveloping it.

The body of the giraffe distorts and expands at an ever-increasing rate, bursting out of the smoke into a large anthropomorphic giraffe: GREGORY.

Thayer screams, gets up to run, and falls flat on his face.

Gregory looms over him.

GREGORY  
Hi there, Thayer!

Thayer screams and does a stop, drop and roll for distance.

THAYER  
What the fuck?!

GREGORY  
It's me. Your buddy, Gregory. I'm  
you. You're me.

Thayer doesn't get it.

THAYER  
Oh, great. Am I dying?

GREGORY  
Oh no, my friend. We're using a  
psychotropic substance to explore  
your subconscious. Come on!

The front door shoots open into a spacey portal.

Thayer, skeptical and cautious, approaches the door.

GREGORY (CONT'D)  
Come remember the fun, Thayer.

Thayer sees a mirror of himself in the portal.

A happy mirror Thayer wears a business suit and sits at an  
executive desk in his office.

Reality-Thayer smiles and enters the portal.

**INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LARGE OFFICE - DAY (DREAM SEQUENCE)**

Thayer becomes the version of himself he saw in the portal.  
CARNIVALESQUE MUSIC plays.

He dances to himself, grabs a pen, and starts marking several  
different papers on his desk.

Gregory stands behind him, bounces at the knees, and  
alternates fist pumps.

A YOUNG FEMALE SECRETARY, whose attractiveness would sear off  
anyone's eyebrows, bobs into the room smiling and serves  
Thayer a coffee.

He takes it, graciously, instantly attracted.

**INT. WILKES HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (END DREAM SEQUENCE)**

The room is empty. No Thayer, no Gregory.

The bong peters out.

A phone vibrates repeatedly on the coffee table.

**INT. CHURCH - WORSHIP ROOM - NIGHT**

Father Ratliff sits on a pew in his robe, phone to his ear, waiting for an answer that doesn't come.

**INT. OFFICE BUILDING - SMALL OFFICE - DAY (DREAM SEQUENCE)**

An OLDER BUSINESSMAN (50s), resembling a modern overweight monopoly man, floats into the room, defying the laws of physics.

From behind his back, he pulls a large whiteboard with an increasing line graph. Atop the board it says SALES. He points at Thayer and then at the graph while smiling.

Thayer points at himself: "Who me?"

Older Businessman nods. Thayer points at Older Businessman then waves at him: "Quit joshin' me."

A picture on Thayer's desk of Vivian and Cora comes to life and they look at Thayer, smile, and clap.

Young Female Secretary claps. Thayer notices and blushes, covering the side of his face from the family photo.

Older Businessman and Gregory clap. Thayer stands up, clapping along, satisfied with himself.

Thayer's black tar nosebleed returns and flows heavily.

Gregory, still clapping, approaches Thayer and slaps him.

**INT. WILKES HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (END DREAM SEQUENCE)**

Thayer wakes up on the couch, startled, looking for Gregory.

THAYER  
Holy Mother of God.

He eyes the bong in wonderment.

THAYER (CONT'D)  
Miller, you're a genius!

Thayer swats his ankle. The toy giraffe lays on the ground.

THAYER (CONT'D)  
What the fuck?!

He inspects his ankle, a little bite mark-sized chunk missing, but the culprit is nowhere to be found.

THAYER (CONT'D)  
Ow.

He eyes the bong. OK, one more hit. Why not?

**INT. CHURCH - WORSHIP ROOM - NIGHT**

Father Ratliff sits on the same pew, dressed, and yanking his sneaker laces tight.

His phone dials, laying on the pew, beside the crucifix key fob.

FATHER RATLIFF  
Come on, answer!

He swipes up the keys and phone and hurries down the aisle to the main doors, but something pulls his attention.

He turns to face the altar. The outline of the missing cross pulsates.

**FLASHBACK MONTAGE:**

**EXT. MILTON HOUSE - DAY**

Father Ratliff looks down at the spoiled food.

**INT. FATHER RATLIFF'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY**

Father Ratliff drives his compact car by the DeFranco's and notices a shadow in the window watching him.

**EXT. TOWN/REALTOR'S OFFICE - DAY**

Father Ratliff walks down the street with a bag of groceries toward his parked car and passes the Heavens Falls Realty office. He feels sick and uses the wall to hold himself up.

He notices through the office's front window, Dick and Pat staring at him. He forces a smile and pushes off.

**END FLASHBACK MONTAGE**

Father Ratliff looks like he's been hit by a bus.

FATHER RATLIFF  
This can't be true, Lord. It can't  
be.

He notices someone sitting in a pew, shrouded in darkness.

FATHER RATLIFF (CONT'D)  
Hello?

No answer.

He walks toward the person and thinks he recognizes them in the dark.

FATHER RATLIFF (CONT'D)  
Buck...?

RATTLE.

Father Ratliff halts at the opposite end of the pew.

BUCK  
You should have listened to that  
little girl, Father. We all should  
have. Sometimes they see things we  
don't. So caught up in our own  
lives.

Father Ratliff edges a step closer.

FATHER RATLIFF  
Buck, let me help you.

Buck slams his fist on the pew, echoing in the room.

BUCK  
Jesus H Balls we should have  
listened!

Buck shoots up and turns to face Father Ratliff. The moonlight catches his face: half-human, half-snake.

FATHER RATLIFF  
My God.

Father falters backward, across the aisle and bumping into the other pew, as Buck approaches.

Buck passes him and heads to the main door, his tongue flickering. RATTLES.

Buck pauses, turning to Father Ratliff who watches him in horror from the opposite end of the main aisle.

BUCK

You can't help me, Father. I've held on this long 'cause, well, you know me- stubborn as two mules fighting over a turnip. It's time to go now though. Already got my ticket punched.

FATHER RATLIFF

Mr. Milton. Buck. We can figure this out.

BUCK

Go help that pesky brat, whatever her name is. But you better come packin'.

Buck swings open the main doors to reveal Hell! SCREAMS and GROANS, fire and brimstone.

Father Ratliff falls to his knees, clutching the key fob.

FATHER RATLIFF

Buck!

Buck walks through and the doors SLAM SHUT behind him.

Father Ratliff gathers himself and approaches the doors cautiously.

He opens them and expects Hell to still be there.

Peaceful church parking lot. His compact car and a van with a tarp over it.

He whews and jogs out.

#### **EXT. CHURCH - PARKING LOT - NIGHT**

Father Ratliff jogs toward the car and slows as a thought crosses his mind and his attention draws to the covered van.

**INT. WILKES HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Thayer limps to the kitchen and hunts for bandages and finds them in a cabinet. A wave hits him and he holds onto the counter.

THAYER

Oh, man.

He steadies.

He looks up into the cabinet at the medical supplies and-- that fucking toy giraffe neighs at him!

THAYER (CONT'D)

You little shit!

The giraffe jumps down onto the counter as Thayer tries to snatch it. It hides behind a jar on the counter.

Thayer slides the jar away, revealing two giraffes.

THAYER (CONT'D)

How cute.

Thayer lunges but they disappear behind the toaster oven.

THAYER (CONT'D)

I see you!

He reaches for the toaster, pauses--

Another giraffe toy comes out from behind a cookie jar. Another two from a fruit basket.

Thayer backs away.

THAYER (CONT'D)

Come on guys, we're friends, aren't we?

Giraffes appear out of every nook and cranny.

Thayer screams as they jump him, engulfing him in a herd of tiny neighing giraffe toys.

**INT. BLACK VOID (DREAM SEQUENCE)**

Thayer falls as a black wall hugs his side. A black space, without any real beginning or end.

The wall starts to angle as he slides along it. The wall angles even more into a rounded corner and shoots Thayer into a somersault.

He rolls as the wall has now become an incline leading to the floor.

Thayer quickly goes from the somersault into a standing position, now wearing a suit. He feels the suit, surprised.

The non-existent floor drops out!

THAYER

Ahhh!

**INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LARGE OFFICE - DAY**

Thayer lands standing up behind a large desk in a large office as Gregory, Older Businessman, and Young Female Secretary dances to ELECTRONIC DANCE MUSIC.

Gregory lifts Thayer up on his shoulders and walks out with the entourage.

**INT. OFFICE BUILDING - OFFICE FLOOR - DAY**

Thayer, atop Gregory's shoulders, enters a room filled with OFFICE WORKERS, plain and boring as they come.

The Office Workers notice Thayer, stand up, smile, and join in the dancing.

Gregory's neck infinitely extends down one of the aisles with Thayer holding on like a bull-rider doing freehand.

GREGORY

Yeehaw, Thayer, yeehaw.

Gregory's head snakes around the room. Everyone else watches and chants, clapping.

OFFICE WORKERS

Thayer. Thayer. Thayer...

Gregory curves around a corner and speeds across the room as Thayer holds on for dear life.

The music and chanting rising.

THAYER

Stop, Gregory! Stop!

GREGORY  
Yeehaw, Thayer! Yeehaw!

Gregory heads straight for the wall, full speed. Thayer screams. The music and chanting peak. The wall approaches--

**INT. BLACK VOID**

Silence. Thayer looks around, alone, and concerned. A spotlight sparks on and illuminates the shape of a woman. She giggles.

Thayer creeps forward. Young Female Secretary looks cute, almost embarrassed.

Thayer, relieved, walks closer.

YOUNG FEMALE SECRETARY  
Remember the fun, Thayer?

He's now only a foot away from her. She whispers.

YOUNG FEMALE SECRETARY (CONT'D)  
Remember?

Thayer grabs her in a big embrace, she reciprocates. They smash their faces together like a 1930s make-out scene.

The light fades to black--

SMASH CUT-TO:

**INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LARGE OFFICE - DAY**

Young Female Secretary pushes Thayer off of her, disgusted. Thayer looks confused.

The office door bursts open. The Older Businessman looks shocked, then angered.

Black ooze trickles out of Thayer's orifices. Older Businessman rushes past Thayer towards the desk and sits down. The room morphs into--

**INT. OFFICE BUILDING - BUSINESSMAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

Thayer sits across a desk from Older Businessman, who shakes his head in disappointment and anger.

Young Female Secretary's shadow outside the glass door, sobs.

Thayer gets up, head bowed, and walks to the door. Young Female Secretary's shadow turns into Gregory. The door opens.

GREGORY

Remember the fun, Thayer, remember?

Thayer, guilt-ridden and exposed, looks up at Gregory.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

You know, the fun you had?

**FLASHBACK MONTAGE:**

**INT. OFFICE BUILDING - BREAKROOM - DAY**

Young Female Secretary and Thayer share a smile at work.

**INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LARGE OFFICE - DAY**

Thayer makes unwanted sexual advances towards a repulsed Young Female Secretary.

**INT. OFFICE BUILDING - BUSINESSMAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

Older Businessman sits across from Thayer, disappointed.

OLDER BUSINESSMAN

You go, or we let you go.

**INT. UPSCALE MILTON HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Vivian waits for bad news as Thayer musters it out.

THAYER

I got laid off.

Vivian sobs. Cora looks confused and scared.

**EXT. UPSCALE MILTON HOUSE - DAY**

A "FOR SALE" sign plants in the yard of the Wilkes' prior upscale home.

**EXT. UPSCALE MILTON HOUSE - STREET - DAY**

Cora cries as CORA'S FRIENDS wave and the Wilkes family drives off.

**END FLASHBACK MONTAGE****INT. WILKES HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY (END DREAM SEQUENCE)**

Silence. Thayer sits, distraught, in the driver's seat of a smoke-filled luxury car's cabin.

Black ooze streams from orifices.

**INT. WILKES HOUSE - THAYER'S CAR - DAY**

Thayer's bong sits in the passenger seat with the packet of goo-covered weed.

He exhales, blowing smoke at the windshield where Gregory looks back, perched on the car's hood.

GREGORY

Remember? Remember what you did,  
Thayer? You took the fun away from  
everyone else. Time to fix it.

Gregory plasters the family photo on the windshield.

Thayer can't look at it and goes for the bong instead.

THAYER

I made a mistake, Gregory. It cost  
us everything, didn't it?

Thayer takes a bong hit. Smoke fills the car's cabin.

GREGORY

There you go. Deep breaths, big  
guy. Deep breaths.

THAYER

I don't know why I couldn't hit  
pause. Stop everything, and talk to  
Vivian, so we could fix this. Fix  
it for us, for Cora. But now Vivian  
is gone and Cora...

Another bong hit and the smoke becomes denser.

Gregory mimics Thayer's bong hit, nodding "good job."

THAYER (CONT'D)

Man, I bring everyone down. I wish  
I had another chance. But there are  
no second chances, are there, Greg?

Thayer looks at the windshield, but can't see Gregory through the smoke. Thayer swats at the smoke.

Suddenly, Gregory's face appears through the smoke inches from the windshield, grinning with its giraffe teeth dripping in black goo and menacing, black glassy eyes.

GREGORY  
No second chances.

**INT. WILKES HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY**

Bong BUBBLES.

Thayer's silhouette leans right, then left, within the dense smoke of the cabin.

THUD. Thayer's hair mashes against the driver-side window.

Motionless. The bong BUBBLES dissipate.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT**

Cora covers her ears, crying.

Pat glances at a wall clock, delighting in Cora's pain. She closes the folder.

PAT  
Dick should have wrapped it all up  
about right now. Just like that.  
How ya like dem oranges? Hah!

Pat paces along the cage.

PAT (CONT'D)  
Your dad cheated at work, on his  
lovely Vivian. He cheated at  
everything! Cheater, cheater,  
cheater!

Pat laughs and laughs. Cora sinks.

PAT (CONT'D)  
Now your mother-

Cora screams.

CORA  
Stop it! Please! Stop!

Pat rolls her eyes and finishes off her coffee.

PAT

So dramatic. You should be proud.  
She was a tough nut to crack. Mhm.  
We had to sacrifice. Oh did we have  
to sacrifice.

Pat walks around the room, tinkering with the evil items.

CORA

Stop it...stop it.

Pat nears the coffin. Cora watches, nervously.

PAT

Maybe she was a good realtor.  
Troublesome enough that we had to  
give up a large number of sales  
just to get her so focused on work  
that she neglected everything. It  
was the only way to make her sin,  
you see.

Pat's hand runs over the length of the coffin.

PAT (CONT'D)

Karoshi. Death by overwork.

**INT. WILKES HOUSE - THAYER'S CAR - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

Stacks of folders lay haphazardly strewn about the car,  
intermingled with coffee cups and energy shots.

Vivian, red eyes, flips through a listing in a folder and  
bobs for apples.

She resists falling asleep with every ounce of being.

Vivian bobs a final time. THUD. Her head hits the steering  
wheel. The horn BLARES.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT (END FLASHBACK)**

Pat reminisces.

PAT

Our fellow demons in Japan taught  
us this trick. Good demons, those  
demons. I mean some of their rules  
are different, but it worked like a  
charm for your mother - she hit  
every single box on the list: the  
Five Sins of Neglect.

FOOTSTEPS. Pat pauses and eyes the door.

Dick struts in and looks around.

DICK  
How're we getting along in here?

PAT  
Tell me he's dead!

Dick looks disappointed. Pat's head hangs.

PAT (CONT'D)  
It's over. It's all over.

A smile creeps up on Dick's face. Pat catches it.

PAT (CONT'D)  
Oh, you vicious demon you!

Pat runs and jumps into his arms, legs wrapped around him. He stumbles around as they hug, knocking over items in the room.

The coffin knocks over, Cora gasps, but it stays closed.

DICK  
All right, all right.

Dick and Pat separate.

PAT  
Would you like to celebrate?

DICK  
Would I?

They paw at each other.

PAT  
I brewed a fresh pot.

DICK  
Besides slam-dunking these human souls, it's the only thing I really enjoy anymore.

Pat saunters out of the room, Dick right after her.

PAT  
Coffee here we come!

The door closes and Cora breaks down.

Janitor climbs out of the coffin and approaches Cora, wringing his hands.

JANITOR

You lost your mom and your dad to them?

Cora nods through the tears.

JANITOR (CONT'D)

And that gardener lady. Man. I don't think we have a chance, Cora. They've won.

CORA

We were easy prey, weren't we? The Wilkes family. They took us down, one by one, because we were broken.

Cora's fists clench.

CORA (CONT'D)

And they knew it. They knew it! They took advantage of it! We didn't stand a chance because we didn't stand together. Maybe we couldn't stand together? And did I made it worse. Maybe it's all my fault.

JANITOR

I see. Broken families are easy prey. It makes sense.

CORA

Aren't you supposed to reassure me things are going to be ok now?

JANITOR

Sorry. You're right. Things are going to be OK. You're going to get out of here and go far, far away.

CORA

My parents weren't bad people, you know.

Janitor gives a comforting nod.

Cora steels and whips out her penknife to work on the lock.

JANITOR

What are you doing?

CORA  
Never stop reaching.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Dick, feet on the desk, and Pat sip piping hot coffee, triumphant.

DICK  
I admit I was a little worried. We lost a lot of souls to Vivian Wilkes, and then to have to allow her to take more? Risky. But we did bring it home, don't we?

Dick holds out his coffee mug.

Pat clinks her mug against his.

PAT  
To another year!

DICK  
Another year.

They chuckle together. Dick checks his watch.

DICK (CONT'D)  
Fifteen minutes to spare. Have we ever been so close?

Pat thinks.

PAT  
Oh! Remember when we had that child possessed and that meddling church brought in that priest? Stupid exorcist.

They look exhausted remembering it, then laugh hysterically.

DICK  
The priest ran out of time. Ah, it was wonderful.

PAT  
The look on his face when the girl got loose!

Pat mimics a face of fear. They laugh.

Light beams in from the front window.

They rise, shielding their eyes.

DICK  
What is that?

PAT  
It isn't morning yet.

DICK  
Of course not, it's-

He looks down at his watch.

DICK (CONT'D)  
Twelve till.

**EXT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

A tricked-out church van aims at the Realtor's Office front windows, its headlights beaming through.

A sign on the side of the van reads: HEAVENS FALLS CHURCH OF CHRIST.

The rear doors of the van open to reveal a custom trunk speaker box. A control panel lifts from the trunk floor.

Father Ratliff turns up one of the digital meters.

His head bobs with the music as he unrolls a purple priest's stole, and whips it around his neck.

He pulls out his key fob and mashes one of the many buttons on the back with his thumb.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Religious music blares from the outside. THUMPS, heavy bass penetrates the walls.

The realtors, eyes shielded, move to the window to look out.

**INT. CHURCH VAN - NIGHT**

Father Ratliff hops into the driver seat. Pauses to breathe and grip the steering wheel.

He looks to the passenger seat, but we don't see the passenger yet.

FATHER RATLIFF

Ready?

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

An engine ROARS and the lights get closer, fast.

The realtors realize it's a vehicle and dive out of the way.

CRASH! Dust and debris go everywhere.

The van smashes through the front window as the realtors scramble behind their desks.

Father Ratliff slides out of the van like a mother f'er.

FATHER RATLIFF

(to unknown passenger)

Stay there. I got this.

The realtors peer over the desks.

FATHER RATLIFF (CONT'D)

I know what you are.

They stand up, realizing it's just a priest.

PAT

I thought we got rid of the priest!

DICK

That's a new one. Father Ratliff.

Father Ratliff whips out his crucifix key fob.

FATHER RATLIFF

I command you to tell me where Cora Wilkes is- now!

DICK

Dead.

Dick twirls his empty mug around his finger.

FATHER RATLIFF

No. You're lying.

DICK

You lost early in the game, priest.

Dick looks at his watch.

DICK (CONT'D)  
And in five minutes. We win again.

PAT  
Then we're coming for you!

Father Ratliff doesn't understand.

FATHER RATLIFF  
Where is Cora Wilkes?!

Cora and Janitor burst into the room.

CORA  
Father Ratliff!

PAT  
You nasty child, get back in your cage!

Cora flashes her penknife.

CORA  
Come any closer, Pat.

The van's passenger door opens and through the dust steps Thayer, not looking too well, but alive.

PAT  
No! This can't be!

CORA  
Dad...?

Dick sighs. A beat. He looks at Janitor.

DICK  
Your application is accepted.

Janitor grabs Cora around the chest and her knife-wielding hand, angles the knife to her throat.

Thayer goes to move toward Janitor but Dick steps in to block him.

CORA  
What're you doing?

JANITOR  
You should've just given up. But, I guess it's OK because I still got the job. I'll be the first Rakshasa in the region!

Pat looks at Dick with a screwed-up face.

DICK  
That's for the Indian Hindus.

Pat's mouth forms an "oh."

Dick smashes his mug in his hand and throws a sharp piece at Thayer's feet.

DICK (CONT'D)  
Kill yourself, Thayer, and she  
lives.

He glances at his watch.

DICK (CONT'D)  
You have ten seconds.

Father Ratliff gets an idea, studying the position of the realtors and Janitor in the room. He notices the ornate cross on the ground, it has fallen off the door.

Thayer picks up the mug piece.

CORA  
Dad, don't.

THAYER  
I've made a lot of mistakes, Cora.  
I'm not a good husband, dad.  
Anything.

CORA  
That doesn't mean you give up.

DICK  
Sure it does. If you want your  
daughter to live.

Pat snickers.

Father Ratliff's thumb feels for the right button.

FATHER RATLIFF  
Thayer...don't.

CORA  
Don't give up! I need you! We can  
do this together!

THAYER  
At least I was able to save you.

Thayer lifts the mug piece towards his neck.

Dick and Pat's eyes widen with glee.

Father Ratliff's thumb hits a button.

Everyone pauses to watch the grill of the van lift-- a disco ball and laser projectors appear.

Father Ratliff clicks again and the van's fog lamps project a picture of Jesus on the pavement.

Dick, Pat, and Janitor shield their eyes and back away. Their skin bubbles and melts.

Cora takes the opportunity to elbow Janitor in the face and drops him. The lock and storage room key falls out of his pocket.

Father Ratliff lifts the ornate cross. Thayer drops the mug piece and goes to help him.

The demons, cowering now together, shield themselves as their skin melts to reveal-- their true demon forms.

FATHER RATLIFF

It's over! Go back to hell!

PAT

I don't want to go back to the pits!

JANITOR

What's the pits?

DICK

If we're going we might as well kill them anyways.

Pat and Dick nod, Janitor unsure what's going on, but nods.

The three demons raise up, large and terrifying. A force seems to keep them from advancing on Thayer and Father Ratliff. But, they gain ground.

Cora swipes up the lock and key and joins her fellow humans to hold the cross, too.

The demons' advance stops and they falter.

DICK (CONT'D)

No!

PAT  
Why is this happening?

Dick looks at the watch on his demon wrist. Worry, strange for him, crosses his face.

Thayer, Cora, and Father Ratliff back the demons toward the hallway.

**INT. REALTOR'S OFFICE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

The humans continue to back them toward the storage room.

CORA  
I told you, I would end you!

Pat sneers, in pain.

The demons bump into the storage room door. It swings open--  
Hell.

Dick glances and sighs.

JANITOR  
What the hell is that?

PAT  
Oh, no! I don't want to go!

DICK  
We'll be back. If not for you, then  
your descendants. Don't you worry.

FATHER RATLIFF  
Back to hell, you demons!

The humans give a final push and the demons fall into Hell, screaming and flailing towards pyramids of souls amongst a sea of souls.

Cora slams the door shut and locks it.

The three humans look at one another.

FATHER RATLIFF (CONT'D)  
Did this just really happen?

CORA  
I told you.

THAYER  
You told all of us.

Thayer grabs Father Ratliff's shoulder in thanks.

Father Ratliff nods his thanks.

CORA

But you came.

Cora smiles at Father Ratliff and Thayer.

Father Ratliff hoists the cross.

FATHER RATLIFF

I'll get this in the van.

CORA

Thanks, Father.

Father Ratliff groans, carrying the cross out.

FATHER RATLIFF

Oh yes, any time.

Cora and Thayer embrace and leave, an arm around each other.

Silence in the hallway.

The door and lock RATTLE as if something pushes against it.

A giraffe's NEIGH.