

ODIOUS

Written by

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"Walls have ears. Doors have eyes. Trees have voices. Beasts tell lies. Beware the rain. Beware the snow. Beware the man you think you know." - Catherine Fisher

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

A man, no older than 29, sits in front of the camera. His big glasses somehow compliment his face, matching his tight nit uniform. This is JOSHUA.

JOSHUA
Do I just start?

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)
Wherever you like to begin.

Joshua coughs into his hand, adjusting himself.

JOSHUA
Okay, uh, my name is Joshua Hemming. I'm twenty nine years old. I was born and raised in Ely Ne-

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)
(cuts him off)
No, what got you here.

JOSHUA
Oh--, um, I'm a writer for the local news paper and self published a book. Novel, actually.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)
What's the novel about?

JOSHUA
The novel is set in western era, it's about a cowboy who has vampire qualities and saves a town from being taken over by other vampires.
(best)
Spoiler alert.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)
Do you know why you were brought here?

JOSHUA
My book was selected for this writers retreat, right? Hopefully to help treat and shape this self published work and mold it into a New York Times best seller.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)
So you want to reshape your previous work?

JOSHUA

Are we aloud to come up with something new?

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

A woman sits in front of the camera, short skirt with a tank top and hair pulled neatly back. She's no older than 35, sitting with her legs crossed emanating a level of confidence. This is CADENCE.

CADENCE

But I suppose that's what we're all here to do, right? Everyone is being brought here to give us time to craft our best seller?

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

What do you mean?

CADENCE

We'll, I'm looking at this as a competition. Five writers under one roof, the one with the best project wins right?

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

It's not as much of a competition as it is to help the authors write their magnum opus.

CADENCE

Right, but at the end of the three months only one of our projects is being picked up and pushed. Mass Marketed.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Two.

CADENCE

Two?

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Yes, two projects are being marketed.

Cadence nods.

CADENCE

Interesting.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

And what was your project?

CADENCE

A woman who is haunted by her ex-boyfriends. They tried to leave her but she couldn't accept that happening to she killed them. Once the FBI starts to get on her case, things get spicy.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

A woman in her early 40's, dark skin color wearing a more formal appearance than Cadence, sits with her back up straight and thin wire glasses that balance perfectly on the bridge of her nose. This is TRINITY.

TRINITY

But my biggest complaint is food.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Food?

TRINITY

Yes, since we will be locked away in this building for three months, are we going to be fed?

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

There will be a buffet area where you will be able to get food when you get hungry, so yes.

TRINITY

And it will change from time to time, right? Like, I won't go two nights in a row just to see the same thing?

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

No, food gets rotated on a daily basis. What you have one night will be different the next.

TRINITY

Okay good. And what types of drinks will be provided?

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Are you asking alcohol wise?

TRINITY

Yes.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

There will be alcohol, however,
only four drinks will be handed out
to each person within a three hour
window.

Trinity nods, taking her leg and adjusting it over the other.

TRINITY

Interesting.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

And what is your project about?

TRINITY

A father and daughter.

BEAT.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Anything more you can share with
us?

TRINITY

I don't give out my ideas. Not
until they're finished.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Gotcha.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

In the chair sits a young man, mid 20's, in sweat pants and a hoodie. He's hunched over as he looks into the camera, tattoo's barley seen from the cuff of his hoody. This is SHAUN.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

There are worse things to worry
about though.

SHAUN

Like?

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

The water going out, electrical,
things along that nature.

SHAUN

Not being able to leave though is kinda insane.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

You're not allowed to leave the area due to possible meet ups with outside sources or smuggling in contraband.

SHAUN

What contraband?

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Drugs or alcohol. Things of that sort.

Shaun sits back in his chair, his gaze intense.

SHAUN

So what are we supposed to do if part of our creative process is walking or running around?

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

The building is pretty huge, you're allowed to explore the entire place if need be. There will also be a gym located on the third floor.

Shaun nods.

SHAUN

Locked in for three months, crazy.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Don't waste the time given. It's a pretty good opportunity to write.

SHAUN

I haven't even conjured anything up yet for this.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

You don't know what you plan on writing?

SHAUN

Nope.

BEAT.

SHAUN (CONT'D)

Will there be food?

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

In the chair sits a young girl, her age in the early 20's. She appears fragile, very frail in her frame wearing baggy clothing. This is MYRA.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

And your name?

MYRA

Myra Lockhart.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

And where are you from?

MYRA

I'm from Ely Nevada. It's a small town, not many people come visit.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

And what's there to do in your town?

MYRA

Not much really, the adventurer type would find much joy. I found solitude within the writing of stories.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

You weren't a party person?

MYRA

No, I never got into it. The socializing part kind of drained me when I was younger so I just stayed away from it.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

You didn't partake in any adventures growing up as a kid?

MYRA

I would go on small adventures with friends, you know, what most young kids do in their teens.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

But as time went on you just stuck to being by yourself?

MYRA

Yeah, it was better that way.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Tell us a little about your project or if you have a new title you plan to work on for these three months, share what you have cooking.

MYRA

Of course. So the book that I submitted and got me here is a self published book about a father and son who travel the world together after the father finds out he has cancer.

Myra adjusts herself, clearing her throat.

MYRA (CONT'D)

It had a lot of personal things in there, some things I wish I got to do with my mother before she passed.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

The project you submitted is based around you?

MYRA

Isn't most artists work? I mean, I don't know if it's just me but a lot of my work stems from or at least is pulled from real life experiences.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Are you using this time to perfect the story you submitted?

Myra narrows her brow, leaning in a smidge as if to share a secret.

MYRA

I actually have been thinking long about this, about if I want to use this time to work on something new, or if I want to perfect the story I submitted to this competition.

(beat)

I think it would be a waste to sit here for three months trying to perfect something that I can do in my spare time. To create something new, that's what I came for. To use this time as a jumping off point for something fresh.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)
Good, I'm glad to hear that.

Myra sits, silently staring past the CAMERA. She takes a breath and smiles.

MYRA
Is that all?

CUT TO BLACK.

OVER BLACK

Title fades in and out on screen: ODIIOUS.

FADE IN:

EXT. LONG WINDY ROAD - ESTABLISHING

As the road stretches, trees engross the surroundings. Where it leads us to? A mansion that could be mistaken as a hotel that rests atop of a hill. Eerily pulling us in.

INT. HOTEL, LOBBY - DAY

The place, albeit old, holds up quite well for a modern era. The five authors enter, each carrying their respective luggage.

An older woman, about mid 60's, follows in behind the entire group. Her outfit is reminiscent of late 90's with its retro style pop, her hair complimenting it with her tiger striped glasses. This is ANNIE.

Shutting the door as she is the last to enter, the group looks around the lobby. Its quite beautiful with its split staircase and giant chandelier that hangs above them.

MYRA
This place is stunning.

TRINITY
I'm guessing this place was built in the late 1800's? Maybe earlier?

ANNIE
Actually, the early 1900's. It was a secret house that was owned by Sarah Winchester under an alias name.

JOSHUA

Sarah Winchester? The one who built
the mystery mansion?

ANNIE

That's the one. But it's not so
much a mystery once you know about
this house.

MYRA

Why is that?

ANNIE

The farmhouse, or the mystery
mansion, was a project home. She
tested a multitude of things there
with staircases leading to
ceilings, walls, doors that lead to
nowhere.

Annie walks slowly over to the staircase and makes her way up
a step, holding onto the railing.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

That's because once she found out
the specific layout she wanted for
this house, she would stop
production at the farmhouse and
have the workers come here. To
polish the layout they just
completed.

JOSHUA

For what purpose?

ANNIE

Sarah was definitely a complex
soul, I'll say that much. But she
wanted to leave a home behind for
her child to grow up in and be free
from the trouble that she believed
the Winchester name brought.

Everyone glances around the room, paintings and statues
litter the place.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

But! Enough of this for now. The
keys you were given earlier
correspond to the room's up stairs.
Happy hunting!

Annie walks off as the authors look at one another. Some pull out the small KEY in their pockets as others begin their ascent up the stairs.

INT. HOTEL, HALLWAY - LATER

Cadence walks with her bags in hand, fumbling her key as she attempts to pull it from her pocket and it fumbles to the floor.

Trinity rounds the corner with her luggage, not as much as Cadence, and sees her key resting at her feet.

TRINITY

I'll get that for you.

Cadence turns to see Trinity.

CADENCE

Oh! Thank you. I have so much shit, really tried to get ahead of this three month thing.

TRINITY

No worries.

Trinity picks up the key and tries to hand it back to Cadence who's hands are full.

CADENCE

Would you mind just--

TRINITY

No, you're good.

CADENCE

Thanks. I'll help you out too.

Trinity smiles and inserts Cadence's key she stands in front of. No luck.

TRINITY

Since I'm here, I might as well check for mine too--, right?

Cadence nods as she walks to the next door.

Trinity inserts her key, same outcome.

Following Cadence to the next door, Trinity rolls her luggage along.

TRINITY (CONT'D)
I don't think I got your name.

CADENCE
Oh! Cadence, family call me Cadee.
I'm good with either or.
(beat)
You?

TRINITY
Trinity. Like the holy trinity, but
not named after that.

CADENCE
What were you named after?

TRINITY
My father told me it sounded cool
and always wanted to use the name.

CADENCE
Was he religious?

TRINITY
Not even a little.

Trinity tries Cadence's key on the next door: NOTHING.

Trinity puts her key in: CHOOK! Door unlocks.

TRINITY (CONT'D)
Oh, thank god.

CADENCE
Yay!

TRINITY
Give me one sec, I'll just drop my
stuff in here and help you continue
looking.

CADENCE
No worries.

As Trinity enters her room, Cadence wanders down the hall.

Passing a few doors, she walks up to one that seems to pull
her in, the room number: 278.

Tilting her head to the side, it's almost like she could hear
someone from inside talking.

TRINITY (O.S.)
Cadence?

She looks over at Trinity who is now in arms length.

TRINITY (CONT'D)
Do you want me to try this one?

Cadence takes a step back from the door, nodding.

CADENCE
Yes, please.

Trinity walks up to the door inserting the key-- CHOOK!

Stepping away from the door and opening it for Cadence, she gives a gentle smile.

TRINITY
Alright, I guess we'll be
roommates.

CADENCE
Can you come and help me with one
thing?

TRINITY
What's that?

INT. HOTEL, CADENCE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Cadence is unpacking her things from her suitcase as Trinity sits on the floor.

TRINITY
So let me get this straight, you
wrote that book just because your
ex pissed you off?

CADENCE
I mean, don't we all do that
though?

TRINITY
What?

CADENCE
Dip into our reality and change
things to the way we want them?
That's pretty much all we are doing
when telling stories.

TRINITY
Somewhat. I dabble a little in my
past shit, but I don't--
(beat)

(MORE)

TRINITY (CONT'D)

I don't know. I guess I'm scared of the person coming after me if they ever found out I wrote about them.

Cadence giggles, shaking her head.

CADENCE

As long as you change names, locations, and maybe exaggerate the events enough, no one will no. And if they want to come out and claim that the story you wrote is about them, it just makes them look bad. It's kind of a win-win.

TRINITY

I guess the quote is true.

CADENCE

What's that?

TRINITY

Never fuck with a writer.

Cadence smiles at that as she continues to remove clothes from a suite case and put them on her bed.

CADENCE

I like that.

Trinity leans her head back against the wall, staring up at the ceiling.

TRINITY

That's funny. So you killing your boyfriend, it was really a metaphor of him leaving?

CADENCE

Him leaving, and the choices we made--

Cadence pauses, staring off into space.

TRINITY

Choices made?

Cadence looks down at her luggage, almost disappointed in herself now.

CADENCE

Yeah.

She takes a breath, then goes back to pulling her clothes from the luggage.

TRINITY

If you don't mind me asking, what choices?

Cadence shakes her head.

CADENCE

That I really don't feel comfortable talking about.

Trinity nods.

A faint BABY'S CRY comes from within a nearby bathroom.

Peeking around the corner, Cadence looks down a small hall leading to her bathroom.

It's dark, no one inside.

She shakes this off as she pulls more clothes from the luggage and notices something red on her hands.

TRINITY

And what plans do you have for this retreat?

Ignoring the question, Cadence hand's begin to shake as she looks in the SUIT CASE.

It's full of blood.

She takes a step back, a Babies limb floats to the surface.

Cadence's eyes go wide as she stumbles back and falls on her butt staring at the suit case.

Trinity shoots to her feet.

TRINITY (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

Cadence stares at the suit case, then at Trinity.

CADENCE

I'm sorry.

TRINITY

No, no. You're okay. Are you good?

Cadence looks down at her hands, clean.

Standing and looking at the suit case, it's the last little bit of clothing waiting to be removed at the bottom.

CADENCE

Yeah, just--,

(beat)

Thank you for not letting me be alone.

Trinity nods, slowly sitting back down on the floor.

Cadence tries to give a friendly smile followed by a deep breath.

CADENCE (CONT'D)

Tell me about your book.

INT. HOTEL, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Myra makes her way to a door, pulling out a key and pushing it into the lock. Trying to turn, it doesn't budge and she continues onward to the next door.

Behind her is Shaun. Placing his key in the door that just failed Myra.

SHAUN

This is kinda crazy, huh?

MYRA

It's like a little game of hide and seek.

Shaun's key fails him as well.

SHAUN

Yeah, well, it's not fun when you're carrying a bunch of shit.

Myra walks up to the next door, placing her key in the lock, and fails to open.

MYRA

Yeah, it is slightly annoying, but none the less amusing.

Shaun walks up to the next one, places his key-- CHOOK! The door unlocks and the look of gratification flows over his face.

SHAUN

Found my room.

Myra looks back, smiles and nods.

MYRA
Congrats.

SHAUN
I'll put my stuff down and help you
look for yours if you want.

Myra nods and keeps walking as Shaun enters his room.

Look at each door, she begins to walk past some as she stares at one at the end of the hallway... almost like it's pulling her.

Walking up to it, she pulls out her key and stares at it for a moment, then pushes it into the lock before--

CHOOK! It unlocks.

Twisting the doorknob and pushing the door open, the room is dark but filled with SHADOWS staring at her.

SHAUN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You found it!

Myra looks back to see Shaun approaching.

Looking back into her room, the drapes are open as sunshine illuminates the room. She stares, then enters.

Shaun stops right at the door and looks in awe.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
Wow, this is a lot better than my
room.

MYRA
Really?

SHAUN
Yeah, I don't have a window. And my
room is a lot smaller.

Myra throws her stuff down in the center of the floor and plummets herself on the bed.

MYRA
Oh, shit.

SHAUN
The beds are nice?

MYRA

The beds are very nice.

INT. HOTEL, BUFFET AREA - LATER

Trinity, Joshua, and Cadence all sit apart from each other. Each with a plate of food right next to their lap tops, eating as they type away.

Trinity finishes her plate and rises from her seat, throwing her plate away and moving from a table to a nearby fireplace where she sits on the floor.

The fireplace CRACKLES as she watches the flames engulf the logs.

She takes a breath.

Her environment slowly morphing into...

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

It's raining, a car is flipped on it's roof. Flames engulf the car.

Trinity holds a notebook where she writes down everything around her.

She slowly approaches the car, getting close and looking inside.

TWO BODIES are charred hanging upside down in the car.

She jots this down, then looks up to see a SHADOWY FIGURE standing off in the distance.

TRINITY

Who are you?

No response.

Trinity rises from the car and takes a step back observing everything.

TRINITY (CONT'D)

I need to see what happened.

Suddenly the flames go in reverse, the smoke that was emanating from the car now flows back into it.

The CRUNCHING from the car is the indents popping out as TIME REVERSES.

The car slowly flips back through the air from the way it came, the fire slowly going out as it lands on it's tires and we see the Shadowy Figure throwing what looks to be a MOLOTOV at the windshield.

Trinity walks over as time comes to a standstill and makes her way to the Shadowy Figure.

At first the face is hidden, but she notices small details that makes her gasp. She realizes...

TRINITY (CONT'D)
That's me?

She looks down at her notes, writing the details. Not noticing the Shadowy Figure turning to look at her.

As Trinity looks up from the notebook and at the car, she makes her way to the passengers side door where she look inside.

TRINITY (CONT'D)
And in the car is my parents?

She jots this down as she walks back over to the shadowy figure looking at everything, calculating.

TRINITY (CONT'D)
A story of a daughter killing her parents. But for what? What would the motive be?

Trinity looks at the Shadowy Figure, noticing it's gaze staring at her.

TRINITY (CONT'D)
What would your motive me.

The rain doesn't stop, it fills the silence.

As Trinity goes to write, she stops--

SHADOWY FIGURE (O.S.)
For all the times your father raped you.

Trinity narrows her eye brows and looks up at the Shadow, both now looking at one another. Shadow eerily smirking.

The car slowly starts to move forward.

TRINITY
What?

SHADOWY FIGURE

And your mother, who just watched
and touched herself. It was so
disturbing to just sit here, and
watch as everything unfolded.

Trinity shakes her head slow.

Car moves forward more.

TRINITY

Tha-, that's not true.

SHADOWY FIGURE

But it's okay now. I'm here to make
everything better.

The car lurches full speed as Shadowy Figure throws the
Molotov at the car.

Trinity stands in the path of the car.

INT. HOTEL, BUFFET AREA - NIGHT

Joshua sits at his lap top, finishing his food on his plate.
Cadence walks over with her lap top and sit's besides Joshua.

CADENCE

Have you thought of anything to
work on?

JOSHUA

Huh?

CADENCE

Are you working on something?

Joshua takes his last bite and turns his laptop, nothing but
a white page.

CADENCE (CONT'D)

Ah, same.

Cadence turns her laptop revealing a blank page as well.

JOSHUA

(Swallows food)

I don't know. I can't just come up
with something on the spot.

CADENCE

You have to allow things to
manifest?

JOSHUA
Yeah, it makes the process much
easier.

CADENCE
Same.

Joshua looks over at Trinity who sits in front of the fire
place writing.

JOSHUA
She seems to know what she want's.

Cadence looks over at Trinity, a small smile forms.

CADENCE
Maybe she came in with an idea?

JOSHUA
I'd go ask her. See what she's
working on and bounce some ideas
around.

CADENCE
We can do that?

JOSHUA
Do what?

CADENCE
Tighten up a previous work we've
done?

JOSHUA
I believe so, kind of a cop out but-
-, yeah.

Cadence nods and rises from her seat. She makes her way over
to Trinity holding her laptop staring at the blank page.

Trinity is typing ferociously.

Cadence sit's down next to Trinity.

CADENCE
Hey, I se-

Trinity POPS like a water balloon.

Blood splatters all over Cadence.

Looking at her side and seeing all the blood, Cadence looks
over at Trinity who appears to be flattened; as if hit by
something.

Cadence rises to her feet quick, screaming.

INT. HOTEL, LOBBY - LATER

Cadence is covered in blood as EMT's wheel out Trinity's dead body. She shakes as she sits in front of an EMT (M, 20's) who is trying to talk to her.

EMT
(to Cadence)
You're a little shaken up, but
you'll be okay.

CADENCE
I didn't do anything to her.

EMT
I know. You're okay. We're going to
give you some medication to help
the nerves a little.

Annie walks into the lobby as Joshua watches from the far away hallway.

Myra and Shaun watch from the staircase.

ANNIE
What happened?

EMT turns to see Annie walking in with her night gown on.

EMT
Annie, we had an incident with one
of the guests. We're taking them in
to get looked at.

ANNIE
Are they okay? What happened?

EMT shakes his head.

EMT
It doesn't look good.

ANNIE
What happened!?

CADENCE
She burst! Like a fucking pimple!
She popped right next to me for no
fucking reason!

Annie stares at Cadence with wide eyes finally noticing the bloody mess.

ANNIE
Oh, child.

Annie makes her way over and hugs her.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry. Come, lets get you
cleaned off.

Cadence looks down at her hands, both shaking still.

The two walk off as the EMT exits the hotel, closing the door on his way out.

Joshua looks up at Myra and Shaun.

JOSHUA
You two okay?

Both nod.

MYRA
You?

Joshua takes a deep breath and nods.

JOSHUA
I think so.
(beat)
I think I know my next story.

Shaun and Myra nod.

MYRA
Do you want to come up with us in
the library? That's where we've
been working.

Joshua nods.

JOSHUA
That doesn't sound like a bad Idea.

INT. HOTEL, ANNIE'S BATHROOM - LATER

Cadence sits in a bathtub, knees to her chest as Annie hums softly. She pulls a step stool close to the tub and sits beside Cadence.

Grabbing a sponge, Annie dunks it in the bath water and begins to wash Cadence's back scrubbing off the blood splotches.

CADENCE

(soft)

I don't even know what happened.

ANNIE

It's okay. Things happen.

Cadence narrows her eyebrows, still seeming confused on the matter.

Annie notices this, taking a breath.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

You know, maybe she was going through something that she didn't share with us.

CADENCE

What do you mean?

ANNIE

Well, I read her bio, it was quite sad knowing what she went through as a child.

Cadence turns away, hiding her face.

Annie scrubs the last little bit of blood off Cadence's back and rises to her feet. She makes her way to the sink where she sets the sponge and washes her hands.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Everything is okay now. I'll go get you a robe and walk you to your room.

Annie dries off her hands and marches through the bathroom door into a small hall that leads into her BEDROOM.

INT. HOTEL, ANNIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

It's dark, and as Annie rounds the corner out of sight, Cadence continues to sit in the bathtub in the fetal position.

It's quiet.

INT. HOTEL, ANNIE'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cadence looks back over where Annie was sitting.

She takes a deep breath and looks behind her to see the bedroom is DARK but a shadow sits on the edge of the bed watching her.

CADENCE
Is everything okay?

No response.

Cadence narrows her eyebrows and looks around the bathroom and sees a towel hanging on a nearby closet.

She looks back into the room.

CADENCE (CONT'D)
Ms. Annie?

No response.

Shadow continues sitting on the bed, watching.

Cadence rises from the tub and walks over to the closet and pulls the towel off the door and wraps herself in it.

Walking over to the hallway, she stops in the doorway staring at the shadow.

CADENCE (CONT'D)
Annie?

INT. HOTEL, ANNIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cadence makes her way to the doorway and reaches for the light switch.

Lights turn on revealing a man, no older than 25, with blood splotted on his plaid shirt and khakis. This is TRENT.

Something rests in his lap, chunks of something that he stares hopelessly at-- Fetus is cut into pieces.

Cadence is taken back, gasping at the image she sees.

Trent looks up revealing a bruise that goes all the way around his neck as if left by a noose.

TRENT
How could you leave us like this?

CADENCE

I di--

(chokes)

Trent. I didn't know you'd--

Trent looks back down into his lap, Cadence following his gaze as she slowly gets down on her knees and gets close.

TRENT

All I wanted was for us to be a family.

CADENCE

I know.

TRENT

And you took that from me.

Trent looks at her, noticing his eyes are swallowed with darkness.

CADENCE

We were young, Trent. We were so young.

TRENT

We can still be a family.

Cadence looks at him, eyes getting wide.

CADENCE

How?

TRENT

Come home with us Cadence. Come home.

Trent lends his hand out waiting for Cadence to reach for it. As she does, the door to the room flies open.

Annie enters with a robe.

ANNIE

Are you in here?

Suddenly the room is different, we're in--

INT. HOTEL, CADENCE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Cadence sits on the floor beside her bed in, still wearing the towel she got from the bathroom.

In her lap is her laptop, she stops typing to see Annie.

Both look slightly confused.

ANNIE
You were quick to leave.

CADENCE
How did I get here?

ANNIE
I was about to ask you the same thing! One moment you were sitting in the tub, the next you were gone. I figured you'd want to air some frustration maybe? Write down whatever you going through to help?

Cadence looks down at her laptop, four pages written.

She shakes her head.

CADENCE
(to self)
How did I get up here?

Annie takes a breath, walking over to the bed and rests the robe down. She pats it and begins to make her way out of the room.

ANNIE
I'm truly sorry for what you had to go through tonight. If there is anything you need, just let me know.

Stopping in the doorway, Annie takes one last look at Cadence before closing the door on her way out.

Cadence wipes a tear, stares at her laptop--

Then continues writing.

INT. HOTEL, LIBRARY - LATER

Joshua, Shaun, and Myra all sit close with one another with their laptops open.

MYRA
But you didn't see what happened?

Joshua shakes his head: NO.

JOSHUA

No, all I did was walk to throw out my food and heard this loud pop sound. And then Cadence she--
(cuts himself off.)
I don't know.

SHAUN

No one else was around them?

Joshua shakes his head again: NO.

Myra looks down at her laptop, blank page staring at her.

She closes it and sets it off to the side, rubbing her eyes in frustration.

MYRA

I don't know what I want to do.

SHAUN

We're in here for three months, I'm sure you'll think of something.

JOSHUA

Give it some time, maybe it'll come to you.

Josh looks at his laptop, small sentences with a large word at the top of the paper: BEATS.

SHAUN

How are you writing your project?

JOSHUA

My creative process?

SHAUN

Yeah.

JOSHUA

I need to make beats, have a flow of what I want. Then I go back and pick each beat and stretch it out until I have to go on to the next one. Usually it works for me.

SHAUN

So you have to plot the whole thing essentially.

JOSHUA

Have to. I need to know where I'm heading and what happens along the way.

Myra stands up and begins looking around the library. It's extravagant. Homey, but high class.

Shaun turns his attention to Myra.

SHAUN

And you?

Myra looks over her shoulder seeing that Shaun is speaking to her.

MYRA

I usually need an idea. And that idea has to sit with me for a while and not go away.

SHAUN

So you start with an idea?

MYRA

Every story starts with an idea, but I usually need a strong scene or a character I want to explore that usually kicks the idea into over drive and I go from there.

SHAUN

How do you start?

MYRA

I just pick a spot and run with it.

SHAUN

That doesn't backfire?

MYRA

It doesn't always work if that's what your asking. But for most of the time, it works for me.

Myra walks back over to the two gentlemen sitting at the table.

MYRA (CONT'D)

(to Shaun)

What about you?

Shaun looks up from his blank page, take a deep breath.

SHAUN

Honest answer? I ah, I use AI.

Myra and Joshua both look at Shaun with a slight amount of distain.

SHAUN (CONT'D)

But the process I use is I'll provide a hefty chunk of a story I want to tell, like I'll get twenty to thirty pages. Then I'll have AI fluff it up.

MYRA

That sounds boring as fuck.

JOSHUA

For real.

Shaun shakes his head.

SHAUN

Don't get me wrong, it's a huge cheat. But then to go back over what it gives me and then combing through it, it's actually a pretty wicked tool if you know what you're doing.

Myra shakes her head.

MYRA

Yeah, I prefer Jordan Peele's approach.

JOSHUA

The sandbox?

Myra nods.

MYRA

The sandbox.

Joshua smirks at this and goes back to his beat sheet.

MYRA (CONT'D)

But the only thing is, I'm hoping an idea comes sooner rather than later.

SHAUN

Same.

INT. HOTEL, MYRA'S ROOM - MORNING

The sunrays skip through the drapes and hit Myra's face, causing her eyelids to slowly flutter open.

She wakes up, gets out of bed, and slowly makes her way out of the room.

INT. HOTEL, BUFFET AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Joshua, Shaun, and Myra all sit within close proximity of each other eating breakfast.

Annie comes walking in with a smile and pep in her step. Her eye's twitch as she begins to notice--

ANNIE

Three, where's the fourth?

The three authors look at one another, shrugging.

Annie stops and narrows her eyebrows. She turns around and makes her way out the buffet area.

INT. HOTEL, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Walking past a bunch of doors, she stops at one and pulls out a key.

Slipping it into the lock and opening the door, all we see a pair of feet that gently sway over the wooden floor next to a tipped over chair.

Annie's eyes reflect that Cadence has taken her life by hanging herself within the room.

Taking a step back and closing the door, she locks it and takes a deep breath.

She stares aimlessly into space for a moment before turning back the way she came and rounds the corner out of sight.

INT. HOTEL, BUFFET AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Myra and Joshua dump their plates into the garbage as Annie rounds the corner and re-enters the room.

ANNIE

Sad news, Cadence has checked out and went home.

Everyone stares at Annie for a moment.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

With that being said, only three of you remain which changes the rules a smidge. Instead of two people winning the full publishing and marketing of their books, it will now only be one of you.

Myra steps forward.

MYRA

When did she leave?

ANNIE

Pardon?

MYRA

Cadence? When did she leave?

ANNIE

She left a note on her bed, said she wasn't comfortable with the situation last night and decided to go home.

Myra nods and sets her tray on a nearby shelf. Above it a paper that reads: Empty Trays Here.

She leans against the wall and stares at Annie.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

If there is anything, and I mean anything at all that we here can help you with in your creative process, please let me know. My team and I will be more than happy to accommodate your needs.

Annie smiles and leaves the room.

Myra looks over at Joshua.

MYRA

I guess it's time to get to work.

Joshua nods.

JOSHUA

I guess so.

INT. HOTEL, MYRA'S ROOM - DAY

A chalk board now rests in the middle of her room. At first it's blank--

Time speeds up as night and day pass. She begins to fill out the blank space on the chalk board with bubbles, ACTS, and beats.

She sits with her laptop open and writes, alternating from the chalk board to the laptop, back to the chalk board.

Time begins to slow down.

SUPER: TWO MONTHS LATER.

Folding her arms and looking at the chalkboard, she looks down at her laptop. Picking it up, she dips out the room with it.

INT. HOTEL, JOSHUA'S ROOM - DAY

Josh sits at his desk, typing away on his computer as he looks over a stack of paper that lays beside him.

On the paper, notes written in red pen.

As he types away, his breath begins to manifest, as if the room is cold. Freezing.

He shakes slightly, but ignores this as he rises from his desk and goes to put on a hoodie. Continuing to type, the door to his room flies open with Myra standing in the doorway.

MYRA

Hey!

Joshua stops, turning around.

MYRA (CONT'D)

Drink night at the fireplace. You coming?

Joshua nods.

JOSHUA

Let me finish these last couple sentences and I'll be down in a bit.

Myra nods and closes the door as she leaves.

Joshua continues to type away on the keys of his laptop.

INT. HOTEL, BUFFET AREA - LATER

The three authors sit around the fire, each with a drink in hand.

JOSHUA

But I still don't think it gives your character the right to do such a thing.

SHAUN

What do you mean? It's completely justified.

JOSHUA

No, you should draw the tension out. Let that shit build and allow the audience anticipate what's going to happen next.

Shaun leans forward in his chair.

SHAUN

But that's the sweetness of it. They won't expect he's part vampire.

JOSHUA

How would they not?

SHAUN

Because if I take away the fact that I told you from the beginning that he is, how would you know?

Joshua leans forward, intrigued.

Myra is sipping her drink, listening to all this play out.

JOSHUA

You wouldn't necessarily.

SHAUN

Exactly, and that's what I think I'm going to go back and change certain aspects of the story. I have to be sneaky with it, maybe leave bread crumbs, but a bounty hunter who is hired to save a town by vampires... from a vampire himself sounds pretty legit.

JOSHUA
Without the audience or people in
the book suspecting he is.

SHAUN
Correct.

Joshua nods and raises a glass to the idea.

JOSHUA
Doesn't sound bad.

SHAUN
Thank you.
(to Myra)
And how's your work coming along?

Myra finishes a sip she is taking and leans forward,
engaging.

MYRA
Shit, ah, it's going. I'm bouncing
between the drawing board and
writing it down.

JOSHUA
Have you determined what you're
story is?

MYRA
The idea?

JOSHUA
Yeah.

Myra takes a deep breath, staring aimlessly up into space.

MYRA
Kinda, there's three ideas I'm
fiddling with.

JOSHUA
Care to share or you holding it
close to your chest?

Myra shakes her head.

MYRA
No, I'll share. The first idea
hasn't gone anywhere so I think I'm
going to ditch it.

SHAUN
What is it?

MYRA

About a young kid who gets powers and has to choose if he want's to use them for good or bad.

SHAUN

Oh, shit. That sounds sick.

Myra nods.

MYRA

But the tricky part is balancing that view of wanting to save the world while also not. And I haven't puzzle pieced that together quiet yet.

JOSHUA

What's the next idea.

MYRA

The next idea, that I'm currently working on and almost finished with is--, you have these two brothers who grow up so close and yet both come out as adults with different views on the world. Ultimately it leads to a clash of the titans type of moment where one leads a nation and the other leads a rebellion to overthrow the government.

SHAUN

Damn, a political piece.

Myra has a small smirk on her face, almost taken back slightly from the comment.

MYRA

No! But like, you get both sides of the coin. I don't want the story to lean to heavily on who's right or who's wrong. I don't think that's our job as artist.

SHAUN

So you'd do your best to keep it fair.

MYRA

Yes, whole heartedly.

JOSHUA

And the last idea?

MYRA

I finished this story last month,
as the pages just spewed out once I
started writing, but it's about a
Father and Son.

Myra takes a sip, Joshua and Shaun look at her wanting more.

JOSHUA

And?

MYRA

And, the two travel back to their
home state where the father raised
the son for most of his life.

JOSHUA

Sounds heart warming.

MYRA

The son kills his father, blaming
him for moving when he wanted to
stay.

Both Joshua and Shaun raise their eyebrows, taken back.

SHAUN

Shit, did not see that coming.

MYRA

And so, the son spends three nights
in the house. Each night getting
progressively worse with his Dad
haunting him until the third night
a revelation is made.

JOSHUA

The twist.

MYRA

The father killed the son. The son
never left, the dad did.

Joshua and Shaun nod, as if understanding.

SHAUN

The son is haunted by the torment
of his father for leaving him in a
house he can never escape from.

Myra nods, pointing at Shaun.

MYRA

Bingo.

Myra looks over at Joshua.

MYRA (CONT'D)
How about you? How's your project
coming along?

Joshua sips his drink.

JOSHUA
It's coming. The project itself is
a little tricky but, like Shaun
said, I'm going back through trying
to leave bread crumbs for people
get what's going on.

Myra looks at him confused.

MYRA
What's the story about?

Joshua sits, visually thinking of how to conceptualize it
into words. Slowly he shakes his head.

JOSHUA
If I'm being honest, I don't know
yet.

He looks at Myra, then at Shaun with a sour look.

MYRA
We still have time.

Joshua nods, sips, and looks at the fire.

JOSHUA
It just feels like I'm writing, and
what I'm writing makes no sense.

SHAUN
You have pages written down?

Joshua nods.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
How many?

JOSHUA
308 pages so far.

SHAUN
And you don't know what it's about?

Joshua shakes his head again, taking another sip.

JOSHUA

Nope.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

High heels against wooden floor introduces Annie walking into the room.

She has a small pep in her step as she walks up to the three authors.

ANNIE

How's everyone doing?

JOSHUA

I think we're all doing pretty good. Everything okay?

ANNIE

Actually, everything is wonderful. And I'd like to show you guys something that's been somewhat hidden from you.

The three look at one another with slight confusion.

INT. HOTEL, BASEMENT - LATER

Annie leads the group with Joshua, Myra, and Shaun all following behind.

The hallway is littered with old paintings, statues, gold and silver platters on counter tops through the corridors.

MYRA

This was her part of the house, wasn't it?

ANNIE

Pardon?

MYRA

Sarah Winchesters.

Annie nods.

ANNIE

It was. She kept a lot of prized goods, secret items down here that not a lot of people even to this day know about.

MYRA

Like?

ANNIE

The rifle that killed her husband.

Annie opens a door leading into a room that opens up into a huge space.

INT. HOTEL, BALLROOM BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Annie enters and flickers on the lights.

On the wall is a mural of Sarah Winchester.

The floor is tile, gold trimming, exquisite and high class.

As everyone enters, they all look amazed.

ANNIE

This was her sanctuary.

SHAUN

A ballroom?

ANNIE

Not just a ballroom, a safe haven from the ghosts.

Shaun looks at her with a funny look.

SHAUN

I'm sorry?

ANNIE

She thought if she could just dance her worries away, they would just watch in awe. Not wanting to bother her.

JOSHUA

I thought the farmhouse was supposed to be for the ghosts.

Annie walks up to the mural of Sarah, oddly, a picture of a child next to her looks eerily similar to Annie.

ANNIE

No, like I said, that was a blue print. This is the house she kept all her secrets in.

Annie stares up at Sarah, almost looking as though
reminiscent.

PHOOM!

The power goes out and the room is PITCH BLACK.

JOSHUA
I don't like this.

ANNIE
Oh, it's fine. The power goes out
from time to time. Let me go check
the power box.

Annie's shoes click off into the distance.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
I'll be right back!

As Annie leaves, the three sit in silence for a moment.

MYRA
Anyone else kind of creeped out by
this?

SHAUN
Ah, yeah.

JOSHUA
Completely.

MYRA
Okay, just making sure.

Something is heard ruffling off in the distance, SPURS
rattling from boots.

JOSHUA
Shhh.

The faint sound of a horse is heard.

MYRA
What the hell? She's bringing
horses down here?

JOSHUA
Who has a phone?

MYRA
I forgot mine upstairs.

Joshua and Shaun take their phones out and turn on the light revealing the whole area has changed into--

INT. WESTERN JAIL DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

As they shine their lights around, they now stand in the middle of a prison with hay littering the ground.

Myra's eyes go wide.

MYRA
Weren't we just in a ballroom?

JOSHUA
What the fuck just happened?

SHAUN
There's no way.

Myra and Joshua look at Shaun.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
How the fuck did she rip this from my head?

JOSHUA
You know this place?

SHAUN
This is from my story. The bounty hunter, Hemming, he uses this place to wrangle the vampires.

JOSHUA
You mean you wrote this?

SHAUN
Yeah, near the end of my book. The town turns out to be infested with vampires who are trying to kill Hemming.

Joshua takes a step towards Shaun.

JOSHUA
Okay, and what happens here?

Shaun's face slowly flips as he realizes and turns to a nearby cell.

SHAUN
Pick a cell and lay under it.

JOSHUA

Why?

SHAUN

Do what I sa--

BOOM!

HEMMING (M, 42) is launched through a wall and slides to a stop on the floor. He's wearing all black, his red eyes being the only thing that pierces the darkness.

HEMMING

(exhausted)

Mother fuck.

Through the hole, multiple people enter. All with yellow glowing eyes.

Myra and Joshua both quickly slip into a cell and close the door, locking themselves in. They walk themselves back to a bench/bed and get on the floor to crawl underneath it.

HEMMING (CONT'D)

I like these odds, these are good odds.

A man emerges from the small pact of people, taller and muscular. This is RIDER (M, 33).

RIDER

It took too long for this day to come Hemming. You'll have a spike in you with no way of coming back to disrupt us ever again.

Hemming smiles at this, wiping some blood from the side of his mouth.

HEMMING

Please, you'll only be doing me a favor.

Rider smiles, grabs Hemming by the throat and picks him up to eye level. With Rider standing at about seven foot, all Hemming can do is dangle his feet in despair.

RIDER

Say hello to your mother for me.

Rider opens his hand with someone from the pact giving him a wooden stake.

He drives the stake through Hemming's heart and drops him on the floor.

Shaun stares with wide eyes.

Joshua sit, waiting.

JOSHUA
(whisper to Shaun)
What's happening?

SHAUN
(whisper)
He's dead.

JOSHUA
(whisper)
What do you mean he's dead?

SHAUN
(whisper)
Dead. Dead as in d-e-a-d.

JOSHUA
(whisper)
What kind of story is this?

SHAUN
(whisper)
I wasn't able to finish it yet!

SNIFF!

Rider inhales the air as he takes a step past Hemmings still body.

RIDER
Ahhhh. I smell fresh meat.

Joshua silences himself as they look at Rider staring into the cells.

RIDER (CONT'D)
We have a few snacks here. Locking
themselves in just for us to feast!

JOSHUA
Fuck.

Rider sniffs the air again, trying to catch a scent.

RIDER
Ahhh... there's three of you here.
But I want only one of you.

Dragging his nails across the bars, he stops right in front of Shaun's cell.

Sticking his hand through the space between the bars, Rider eerily point his long decrepit nail at Shaun.

RIDER (CONT'D)

You.

Shaun shakes his head.

SHAUN

What? What do you mean?

Rider grabs the bars of the cell door and RIPS it open.

JOSHUA

This isn't real.

Myra just stares in silence.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

This can't be real.

Shaun begins to scream as Rider gets withing an arms length away.

Raising his hand and swiping down, Rider cuts Shaun's neck open causing BLOOD to spurt everywhere--

Some splashes on Joshua.

Rider gets down and begins to suck the blood and Shaun's helpless scream turns into a eerie silence.

Covering her ears, Myra gets herself into the fetal position and shakes her head.

MYRA

No, this isn't real. This isn't real. This isn't real.

She repeats this to herself.

Hands reach out, grabbing her and pulling her and soon she's--

INT. HOTEL, MYRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Getting pulled out from under her bed, she lashes out at Joshua who still has blood splatter on him.

He manages to dodge her attack and holds a finger up to his lip.

JOSHUA

Sh.

Myra tries to take in her surroundings.

MYRA

How?

JOSHUA

I don't know.

MYRA

Shaun?

JOSHUA

I don't know.

CLING-CLING!

Both look at the bedroom door. The sound of METAL being dragged on WOOD echoes outside the room.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

We need to find a way out.

MYRA

Where?

Myra looks past Joshua and eyes the window.

Rising to her feet and running to it, she opens it to look outside--

It's pitch black. The moon illuminates just enough to see a little outside.

MYRA (CONT'D)

I think we have a way out!

She turns back around and is greeted with a hand to her throat.

Being thrown from the window, she lands on the floor and slides to a stop as she sees a MAN who is much older than she is. He's wearing a bloodied wife beater and jeans. This is FATHER.

Myra's eyes go wide as she props herself up.

FATHER

What did I tell you?

MYRA

No, no this can't.

Father marches over and grabs her by the ankle and drags her out of the room.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. MYRA'S BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Myra tries to scream, the sound of dragging as she tries to get free before chains silence her.

MYRA

Please! Please don't do this!

A spot light shines down on her, blinding her for a moment before she's able to make out her surroundings.

Father releases the string that turned on the overhead lamp and begins to walk off.

Myra just watches as Father disappears into the darkness.

Slowly rising to her feet, she takes a step causing CHAINS to rattle.

Looking down at her ankle, she is shackled to the cement floor.

She slowly sits down and stares at the nail in the concrete holding her in place.

MYRA (CONT'D)

I can't let this happen again.

She grabs ahold of the chain and begins to yank on it.

MYRA (CONT'D)

LET ME OUT!

INT. HOTEL, JOSHUA'S ROOM - NIGHT

He sits at his type-writer, pounding away on the keys followed by a-- DING!

He reloads the paper, continuing to fly through the blank space until-- KNOCK-KNOCK!

Stopping, he looks at his hands and then back behind himself.

Annie stands in the doorway.

ANNIE

How's the writing going?

Joshua shrugs, appearing confused.

JOSHUA
I think it's going okay.

Annie seems thrown off by his comment.

ANNIE
Is everything okay?

Joshua looks back at his paper.

JOSHUA
I don't know. I feel--

His mind seems to drift from finishing the thought.

ANNIE
If you have a moment, I'd like to
have a word with you.

Joshua looks back at Annie, nods, and rises from his desk.

INT. HOTEL, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Joshua and Annie walk, Annie holds a light source.

ANNIE
Throughout the years this house has
seen many talented artist walk in
and leave the grounds. For many
years it has not been shared-- the
secrets of what goes on here,
Joshua.

JOSHUA
What secrets are you talking about?

ANNIE
The house, you can feel it. You
probably felt it when you first
arrived, did you not?

JOSHUA
The house?

ANNIE
Yes, the house is a creatives best
weapon.

JOSHUA
I'm not sure I follow.

ANNIE

Sure you do, but like all great
artist, you tend to get lost in
your own work.

Annie rounds the corner and the two wonder into--

INT. HOTEL, BUFFET AREA - CONTINUOUS

Annie lead the way to the fire place that is lit. She sits
down as she blows out the candle she was holding and gestures
to an open seat.

ANNIE

Please, sit.

Joshua looks over at the empty chair, hesitant at first, but
sits regardless.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

A house, do you know why a house is
a creatives best weapon?

Joshua sits for a moment, thinking, then shakes his head.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Because you can create whatever you
want in it. You build the walls,
lay the floor, the blueprint for
Christ sake is all plotted by you.

JOSHUA

By me?

ANNIE

You still don't get if do you?

JOSHUA

What are you trying to say?

Annie smirks and stares off into the fire.

ANNIE

My mother used to tell me of this
story every night before she would
put us to bed. The old man who
lived at the end of the world.

Joshua sits back in his seat and watches her, not noticing
the shadows behind him watching him.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

She would tell us that he would walk his dog to the end of the sidewalk, where he could see the stars and planets. He would take midnight strolls to see shooting stars and metros fly by his feet.

Annie leans forward, face turning more serious.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

I asked my mother one night, why he didn't share this with anyone? My mother laughed.

Annie turns to look at Joshua, her gaze heavy.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Do you know why there wasn't anyone?

Joshua shakes his head again.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Because he was dead.

Annie takes a deep breath, looking back into the fire.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Tell me, are you the one at the end of the world-- or the one telling the story?

This sits with Joshua, heavily.

INT. MYRA'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

Myra sits in the fetal position, whimpering into her knees as she sits on the floor.

FATHER (V.O.)

I tried everything in my power to make you see, Myra.

She shakes her head.

MYRA

(to self)

You're not real.

FATHER (V.O.)
 But you keep reverting back to
 writing these things about me that
 aren't true.

MYRA
 (to self)
 They are true. Don't listen to him.

FATHER (V.O.)
 But if you want to keep telling
 yourself that I'm the villain.

SCREEEEEEEECH-- metal on metal sound.

FATHER (V.O.)
 Maybe I should show you how evil I
 can really be.

Father takes a step out from the shadows holding a metal rod.

FATHER
 Maybe you'll understand the
 difference better.

Running up and cocking his hand back, Father goes to strike Myra with the rod but DISSIPATES into a cloud of smoke just before impact.

Then again from a different angle.

And again.

And again.

FATHER (V.O.)
 Is this what you wanted from me?!

Myra is hugging herself tight, not looking up from her knees.

MYRA
 Leave me alone!

FATHER (V.O.)
 Is this how you viewed me before!?

Father emerges from the shadows and grabs Myra by the throat, slamming her against the wall and getting into her face.

FATHER
 You don't listen! You've never
 listened! All you do is blame other
 people for your troubles!

Father lets go causing her to drop to the floor gasping for air.

MYRA
I'm sorry!

FATHER
Sorry?

Father kicks her in the chest.

FATHER (CONT'D)
You're sorry?

Kicks her again.

FATHER (CONT'D)
How about you listen to me the first time! How about you stop challenging what I have to say!

Kicks her again.

She tries to crawl away.

MYRA
Please.

Father walks over to her and crouches, pushing her shoulder over to roll her onto her back.

FATHER
Let me put this a little more clearly-- you are the biggest mistake I've ever had.
(shakes head)
And I think I won't be able to take you with me where I'm going.

Myra's eyes go wide.

MYRA
No.

FATHER
Next time I come down into this basement, it'll be the last time I get to see you.

Father rises to his feet and walks off up a set of wooden stairs, closing the door behind him.

Myra stares at the ceiling, aimlessly.

Hopelessly.

A soft shuffle of feet catches her attention.

From the darkness of the room, a shadow emerges. Followed by the silhouette of a man. And breaking the into the light--

Joshua walks up to Myra.

Myra's eyes go wide.

MYRA

Oh my god.

JOSHUA

How do I get you out of here?

Joshua walks up to see the chain that is attached to Myra's ankle.

MYRA

The key. The key is on my father.

JOSHUA

Who?

MYRA

My father, he's upstairs.

JOSHUA

How is your father here?

MYRA

He's th--

Myra looks pitiful, avoiding eye contact.

JOSHUA

I'm going to get you out of here.

MYRA

Be careful.

Joshua nods and slowly progresses up the stairs and reaches the door.

Placing his hand on the doorknob, he twists it gently and pushes the door open.

He is greeted with darkness as he enters--

INT. MYRA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM AREA - CONTINUOUS

The place is littered with trash, the television off in the corner being the only source of light in the room.

As Joshua slowly progresses, he notices a GUN and FLASHLIGHT resting on a night stand near the door. Making his way to it and picking up the gun, he pulls the slide back to see a BULLET in the chamber.

Checking the magazine of the gun, there are an additional SIX bullets.

A small note rests under the gun: "Save one for yourself, just in case."

Turning on the flashlight and walking towards the front door, he attempts to open it. It's locked.

BOOM!

Quickly turning around, he aims his gun in the darkness.

Using the light after a moment, he shines it where he's pointing to see a set of stairs that lead up to the second layer of the house.

BOOM-BOOMBOOM-BOOM!

Something upstairs is knocking, HARD.

Approaching the bottom of the steps and looking up, darkness greets him with a oppressive void swallowing the stairs above.

He makes his assent.

Reaching the top of the stairs, a row of doors lead down a narrow hallway where, at the very end, a door is being BANGED upon from the other side.

Methodically placing each foot in front of the other, he makes his way up to the door where he reaches out to the door knob and grips it.

BANGING STOPS.

He stares at the door for a moment, takes a breath, then opens it.

INT. ANNIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As he opens the door, he is greeted with lit candles that line the room.

Mannequin dolls line the room, back facing toward Joshua, all contorted in weird positions.

At the end of the room, Annie stands like an alter; face up to the ceiling as she whispers a chant.

Around her neck is a KEY.

Joshua tightens his grip on the gun as he presses forward towards Annie, eyeing the Mannequins as he passes them.

Getting within arms distance of Annie, he turns off the flashlight and puts it in his pocket. Joshua places the gun against Annie's temple and grabs the key from her neck.

He looks back at the door he came from, still open with the mannequin dolls lining the room.

Looking back at the key, he rips it off Annie's neck and the candles go OUT.

JOSHUA
(to self)
Shit!

Placing the key in his pocket and pulling out his flashlight, he turns it on to see Annie is now gone.

Turning back towards the door, it is now closed.

The Mannequins have moved to the outside of the wall where they look like PEOPLE staring at the wall of the room.

Taking a step towards the door, the people on the outside of the room take a set BACKWARD towards Joshua.

Freezing mid step, he sees this and takes a step back.

The PEOPLE, we'll continue to call Mannequins, take a step forwards, towards the wall away from Joshua.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
(to self)
What the hell?

Looking around the room, no other doorways lead out.

THOOMP-THOOMP-THOOMP!

Heavy footsteps lead to the door, followed by the starting of a chainsaw.

YINGGG!!!!

The chainsaw cuts through the door and Father burst through it, more distorted and disfigured. Joshua shines his light on the Father, seeing his lips peeled back revealing his rotting teeth. A bar of metal screwed to his face hiding his eyes.

FATHER

Myraaaa... come here princess.

Joshua takes a step backwards, Mannequins take a step backwards making Father hear one of them.

Revvng the chainsaw and rushing over, he cuts one of the Mannequins up with blood spewing all over him.

Father takes a moment, catching his breath.

FATHER (CONT'D)

Your petty games aren't going to help you, Myra.

Joshua stares, pointing his gun at Father who is across the room.

Taking a step forward, the Mannequins take a step back. This does not catch Father's ear, instead, making him start wondering the room.

Avoiding his route, Joshua begins to make his way out of the room before stopping dead in his tracks.

A Mannequin stands a hairs length away from him.

As he takes a step back, the Mannequin takes a step forward.

One of the Mannequins trip over rubble on the floor catching Father's attention.

Father runs over to this Mannequin and chops her up as well.

Joshua takes a deep breath as he turns to look at the door, he's about halfway now-- but the Mannequins are much closer to him.

The gears in his head tick, he looks back at Father who is in the back of the room.

Looking back at the door, he makes a run for it.

The Mannequins spring into action, running after him as he tries to out run them.

Mannequin#1 runs up on Joshua and tackles him to the floor, mounting him and pinning him to the floor.

Mannequin#1's head twists, bones crackling as it's face sl--

YINNGGGG!!!!

A chainsaw rips through the neck of Mannequin#1 as it slumps over spewing blood all over Joshua. Kicking Mannequin#1 off and grabbing Joshua by his throat, Father brings him face to face.

FATHER (CONT'D)

Projecting our fears unto others
are we?

Father gives a grin, Joshua shoves the barrel of the gun under Father's chin and pulls the trigger.

Joshua drops to the floor, the door just a few feet away.

Getting to his feet, Joshua runs for it and just barely slips through the grasp of another Mannequin.

INT. MYRA'S BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Joshua makes his way down the wooden stairs, Myra sitting on the concrete staring up at him.

MYRA

Did you find the key?

JOSHUA

Yeah, but we gotta go.

As Joshua looks for the lock on the ankle of Myra, Myra's gaze falls to the top of the steps where her eyes go wide.

MYRA

Oh, my god.

Joshua looks at her, then follows her line of sight to the top of the steps where Father stands.

Taking his first step, the floor beneath him creaks and moans. Followed by the next-- and the next.

Joshua follows the chain to the lock that is holding Myra in place... only there is no lock and it's just straight chain leading into the cement.

JOSHUA
How the fuck?!

MYRA
Josh!

He looks back to see Father almost at the bottom.

FATHER
Once I gut you like the little pig
you are, I'm going to wear your
skin like a coat.

The chainsaw idles menacingly.

Joshua follows the chain, looking for anything.

JOSHUA
There's no fucking lock!

FATHER
Ahhh, but you hold the key.

Father takes his final step, staring at Myra. Josh narrows his eyebrows, looking at the key in his hands.

MYRA
Josh, please.

Father hovers the blade in front of Myra's face.

FATHER
So you must be the one to chose
fate.

Father turns his head slowly, looking at Joshua... and GRINS.

Joshua rushes Father in a quick attempt to push him out of the way but is grabbed by the neck and THROWN--

Joshua is thrown INTO Myra.

The two become one.

Myra looks at her hands, confused for a split second.

FATHER (CONT'D)
This will make it much more easier
to kill both of you.

Father raises the chainsaw over his head and brings it down.

In a split second, Myra grabs the chain and uses it as a shield.

The chainsaw rips, but doesn't cut the iron chain-- instead, the blade of the chainsaw rips off.

Myra throws the chain down and KICKS Father's knee, breaking it with a bone crunching SNAP!

Father tosses the Chainsaw and grabs Myra by the back of the neck and tosses her into a wall.

Winching at the pain, she eyes the gun that is a few feet away, crawling to it, she picks it up and aims at Father who limps over to her.

FATHER (CONT'D)

You were a horrible child. A monster!

MYRA

That's not true.

FATHER

You never listened. Always wanting to live with your mother!

Myra eyes a shot.

FATHER (CONT'D)

But you're just like her.

(beat)

A whore who won't amount to anything.

POP-POP-POP-POP!

Father drops to the floor, releasing his last breath.

Myra looks at her hand, shivers as if something released her, then looks over to her left to see Joshua staring blankly at Father.

MYRA

Are you okay?

Joshua looks over at her, gives a soft nod, and scootches a little closer. Myra does the same as she sets the gun down and rests her head on Joshua's shoulder.

JOSHUA

Are you?

Myra nods.

MYRA

Yeah.

She stares at Father for a moment, then at Joshua.

MYRA (CONT'D)
How do we get out of here?

Joshua stares at Father, a tear running down his cheek.

JOSHUA
(soft)
You feels so real to me.

Myra scrunches her eyebrows together.

MYRA
What?

Joshua turns to look at Myra.

JOSHUA
Where did you grow up?

MYRA
Ely Nevada.

JOSHUA
In a yellow house?

MYRA
Yeah.

JOSHUA	MYRA (CONT'D)
Where the mail man would come	--every Friday to ask how
and knock on the door every	pops was doing.
Friday to ask how pops was	
doing.	

They look at each other for a moment.

MYRA (CONT'D)
I'm just--
(no)
No, I'm not a character.

JOSHUA
To me you're not.

MYRA
Joshua. Stop.

JOSHUA
Let me see your knee.

MYRA
Stop!

JOSHUA

Let me see the scar.

Myra clenches her teeth, knowing now. Then proceeds to raise her pants leg and reveals a huge scar that runs across the knee cap.

Joshua does the same, on the same leg, revealing the same scar on his knee.

MYRA

How did you?

JOSHUA

Because, your not real.

MYRA

I am.

Josh licks his bottom lip, tears running down his cheeks.

JOSHUA

To me you are.

Myra takes a deep breath, staring off into space.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

I can't kill you off.

She seems taken back from the statement.

MYRA

Kill me off?

(beat)

What are you going to do with me than?

JOSHUA

I'm going to put you in a house, give you a dog, and you have to walk it to the end of the world every day.

MYRA

This house?

JOSHUA

No, you can leave this house. We'll build you a better one. One where you can feel comfortable in, were we don't have to reminisce in old memories.

MYRA

And what happens to all this?

Josh scootches himself backwards, contemplating.

JOSHUA

We'll watch it all burn down, every square inch. Until there is nothing left but your home, and a side walk.

MYRA

A side walk that leads to the end of the world?

Joshua nods.

JOSHUA

Something small, not too far. You'll walk your dog to the edge of it, right were stars would fly under your feet. You'll see world form and galaxies collide. You'll be at the center of it all.

MYRA

Why me?

JOSHUA

Because you're the one who started all this.

Myra squeezes her face, fighting emotions.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

You're the one all this stems from.

Myra takes a deep breath, accepting her fate and rises to her feet. She makes her way to the steps and looks back at Joshua who still sits.

MYRA

And what happens to you?

JOSHUA

Me?

MYRA

Yeah.

JOSHUA

I have to finish the story.

MYRA

And what happens if you don't?

Joshua lets this marinate for a moment.

JOSHUA

I haven't thought that far ahead.

MYRA

Maybe you should, because it would suck to come this far along only to be another ghost in the machine--

TING!

INT. HOTEL, JOSHUA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Joshua stops writing, looking at the paper in front of him. Myra's name is written on it. He takes it from the typewriter and gives it a look up and down before setting it off to the stack of paper off to his right.

His breath is very present, like his room is cold.

Rising from his seat, he makes his way to the thermostat of the room and it reads: 47 degrees Fahrenheit.

Rubbing his hands together and trying to turn up the heat, it doesn't work.

He makes his way to his closet where there is nothing, it's empty.

Taking a step back and looking around the room, he now comes to notice that none of his belongings are in the room, just his typewriter and himself.

He makes his way out of the room--

As he exits he enters...

INT. HOTEL, LOBBY - MORNING

FLASHBACK

Joshua enters the main lobby carrying his bags and a typewriter.

A lit cigarette hangs from his mouth as he takes in the new sight. The house, although much more decrepit, has an eerie beauty to it.

INT. HOTEL, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Walking through, he walks up to a room and wiggles the door knob.

After a strong push, he is introduced to a...

INT. HOTEL, CADENCE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Walking in, the windows are open and the live growth from outside has dipped into the room, putting his typewriter and suitcase down at the door, he slowly walks in.

Taking a toke from his cigarette, he eyes the room, he takes a step back and looks at a pipe that perfectly comes out of the ceiling.

He looks over at a chair and rolls it over to right under the pipe.

Standing on the chair, he reaches up and can touch the pipe.

JOSHUA

(to self)

Hm.

He takes a step down from the chair and looks at the bed, then the bathroom. He nods to himself.

He's plotting.

INT. HOTEL, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Walking with his suitcase and typewriter, he walks up to a door that he sets his belongings down again. This time, he pulls out an envelope that has JOSHUA written on the outside.

Opening it, a letter that reads:

"I know you've been having some hard times thinking of new things to write. This place helped me a lot when I was fighting through writer's block. Look for room 473. Lock yourself in. Don't come out until you have something worth telling."

A small skeleton key falls out from the envelope into Joshua's hand.

He puts the key in, unlocks the door, and enters the room.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. HOTEL, BUFFET AREA - NIGHT

Joshua sits at the fire place, a blanket draped of him as the flames dance in front of his face.

A figure from the dark walks up and sits beside Joshua.

He seems not to look as his fixation on the fire keeps his gaze.

ANNIE

You're still lost in your own creations.

JOSHUA

How long have I been here?

ANNIE

You are one day away from being three months.

Joshua turns to look at Annie now.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

And how has your story come along?

JOSHUA

I don't have one.

Annie laughs this off.

ANNIE

Oh, boy. Of course you do. You've been writing all along. Do you not remember?

JOSHUA

What do you mean?

ANNIE

You've been doing it the whole time.

JOSHUA

Writing?

ANNIE

Creating. You really think this is my house? Do you think I'm Sarah Winchester's daughter Annie? Or was that a more subconscious decision that you made on the fly?

JOSHUA

There's something wrong with this place.

Annie shakes her head, her grin eerie.

ANNIE

No, sweet heart. This place holds no power.

(beat)

However, this place is only as powerful as the creator. And you only came here because you were down on your luck.

Joshua looks back at the fire, not phased by the dialogue.

JOSHUA

So you're not real?

ANNIE

I'm as real as you make me out to be.

JOSHUA

So I can leave whenever I want?

ANNIE

Whenever you want.

He shakes his head.

JOSHUA

You're lying.

Footsteps are heard coming from the darkness. The rattling of chains followed with each step.

ANNIE

You came here, Joshua. You came at a time where you felt like you were at your lowest.

He slowly turns to look at her.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

And you've managed to hide this for some time through everything you've done.

The chains get louder, footsteps closer.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

But with the issues you've had with your father, the suicidal thoughts after your ex-girlfriend's abortion, I have one important question for you.

Someone makes their way right next to Annie, out of sight.

The look on Joshua's face reads fear as his eyes go wide.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Who are you truly afraid of?

EVIL JOSH (M, 25) sits in a chair across from Joshua. His eyes are red, clothes tattered, fingernails pointed and long.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

What do you keep searching for and trying to tell yourself?

JOSHUA

That's not me.

ANNIE

Oh, but we both know it is.

Annie smiles, rising to her feet and wipes off her dress as she makes her way back into the darkness, disappearing into the void.

ANNIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I hope you two have a nice long chat!

Evil Josh and Joshua stare at each other for a moment.

Each breath Evil Josh takes comes with CRACKLING and POPPING.

Evil Josh begins to smile, revealing his rotting teeth and drool that spill down his chest.

INT. HOTEL, JOSHUA'S ROOM - DAY

FLASHBACK

Joshua enters the room, still carrying the typewriter and luggage. As he enters the room, he sets his belongings down on the bed and makes his way over to a desk where he wipes off the small amount of dust.

The desk overlooks a nice window where he can see down the windy road he just traveled upon to reach the hotel.

Making his way back to the door, he's about to close it when the sound of footsteps catches his attention.

Outside the door? He leans in closer to listen.

Up the stairs? He focuses harder.

As the footsteps trail off, he opens the door to look out the room and sees no one.

Taking a step back in his room, he shuts the door and locks it.

Then proceeds to remove every mirror and item that causes him to see his own reflection, off the wall of the room.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. HOTEL, BUFFET AREA - NIGHT

Evil Josh sits with a crazed look.

EVIL JOSH
What's wrong with us?

JOSHUA
Nothing.

EVIL JOSH
Don't lie to me! You hide me away
in a room that's dark, Joshy. A
room where I don't get to see
light.

Evil Josh stares at the fire, like a moth drawn to flame.

EVIL JOSH (CONT'D)
Did I hurt you?

Evil Josh turns his gaze back towards Joshua.

EVIL JOSH (CONT'D)
Did I do something to use?

JOSHUA
No.

EVIL JOSH
Then what is it?

Evil Josh rises to his feet, inching his way closer.

EVIL JOSH (CONT'D)
Is it because of what I had to do?
To keep us safe.

Joshua's face tightens as he looks past Evil Josh and turns to the fire.

Evil Josh smiles.

EVIL JOSH (CONT'D)
(realizing)
It is, isn't it.

JOSHUA
No.

EVIL JOSH
You can't stand that I had to be
the one to suffocate that mother
fucker.

Joshua rolls his eyes, closing them in the process as this is pinching a very sensitive nerve.

EVIL JOSH (CONT'D)
For all the times we had to sit
around be let him touch us, as
mommy watched not able to do
anything. I finally took matters
into my own hands.

Evil Josh looks at his hands, wrist that are cuffed and chained.

He begins to mimic the squeezing of his hands as if tightening them around someone's throat.

A ghostly gasp begins to manifest.

EVIL JOSH (CONT'D)
It felt so good. It felt-- freeing.

Joshua begins to shake, hands starting to tremble as he opens his eyes to look at Evil Josh.

EVIL JOSH (CONT'D)
And when he took that last little
breath. It was like we could
finally breathe for the first time.

A loud gasp of hair followed by an eerie silence floats between the two. Evil Josh looks up at Joshua.

EVIL JOSH (CONT'D)

I set us free.

(beat)

I can do it again.

Evil Josh lunges at Joshua but is pulled back by a chain that is quickly wrapped around his neck and yanks him to the floor.

Myra holds Evil Josh to the floor.

MYRA

Go!

Joshua leaps to his feet and runs off.

Myra is thrown into a wall as Evil Joshua rises to his feet, breaking the chains he is shackled in.

EVIL JOSH

You're just a wanna be clone of me.
And you'll parish just like the
others.

Myra rises to her feet and lunges at him, the two duking it out.

INT. HOTEL, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

As Joshua enters and makes his way over to the set of stairs, a set of hands clapping catches his attention.

He stops mid step to see Annie, hovering inches above the ground, emerging from the darkness.

ANNIE

Bravo, you broke the rules. You
didn't write her off.

JOSHUA

I didn't need to.

ANNIE

No, but now I must make sure you
never leave.

Annie's eyes roll to the back of her head as she lets out a ear shattering scream.

The floorboards break as skeleton hands emerge from underneath. More coming through the walls.

Joshua looks at the undead army coming to life and quickly turns tail to continue his ascent to--

INT. HOTEL, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Rounding the corner and making his way to his room, a hand shoots up and grabs Joshua by the ankle.

Falling, Evil Josh emerges from the floorboards and begins to pull him down through the floor before erupting through the floor from Myra.

The two continue to fight, sending Joshua down the hall a bit.

Annie rounds the corner with her little skeleton army who march forward at Joshua.

Myra gets pinned by Evil Josh and begins to get choked. She looks at Joshua down the hall.

MYRA
Finish the story.

Joshua rises to his feet, making a gesture to want to help Myra.

MYRA (CONT'D)
Thank you for giving me a voice.

She turns to look Evil Josh and places both her hands his face.

A bright light begins to emit from his face as he screams in pain.

Then a pulse of light flows through the hallway, sending Joshua even further back but closer to his door.

The ringing in his ears slowly subsides as he looks down the hall to see Annie, her body contorted on the floor.

Where Myra laid, a pile of ash.

Slowly rising to his feet and getting to his door, he tries to open it but quickly realizes that it's locked.

JOSHUA
(to self)
Fuck.

Patting himself down, he doesn't notice Annie's body contorting and mangling itself to crawl like a spider.

Hearing something rushing down the hall, he sees Annie continue her pursuit.

Reaching quickly into his breast pocket, he pulls out the skeleton key and unlocks the door just in time to miss Annie's attack.

INT. HOTEL, JOSHUA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He closes the door and locks it as BANGING from the other side is heard.

Taking a few steps back, he hears clicking followed by a slide, then more clicking.

Behind him is himself, withered and fragile. Very Malnourished. Almost unrecognizable.

Walking up to the side of REAL JOSHUA (M, 25), he looks into his own face seeing only the whites of his eyes.

Real Joshua doesn't seem to hesitate with any words he types but just flows with the keys on the typewriter, almost like music is being played.

Waving his hand in front of his face, he sees this written down on the paper before it gets reloaded.

JOSHUA

You need to stop writing.

BANG!

Knocks from the door get worse, the wooden door audibly heard breaking and chipping.

Joshua focuses from the door back to himself.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

I have to stop writing the story!
Hey!

(beat)

God-damn it! Do you hear me! Stop writing!

More banging, and more banging until the door is close to flying off the hinges.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

Stop writing!

Joshua grabs ahold of himself and pulls himself off the typewriter--

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Real Joshua stops typing, the room he's in is much more worn.

The room is dark, no lit candles or electricity but the moon being the only illumination. It's so cold that his breath can be seen every time he exhales.

Looking behind him, the door is broken open but no one is there.

Just darkness.

Turning back to look at his work, there is a stack of paper that rests right next to him.

Pulling paper from the type-writer, he takes a deep breath and looks out through the window he sits in front of.

A horse drawn carriage slowly approaches.

He looks back down at the typewriter, each breath slow as he analyzes his work.

He slides the typewriter back and types out in big bold letters: **END**.

EXT. HOUSE - LATER

Real Joshua exits the hotel wearing multiple blankets. Taking the last few steps down the stairs, he turns to take one last look at the hotel.

The carriage pulls up.

As it comes to a stop, a door opens. We don't see anyone inside.

It's eerily quiet as a gust of wind gently blows through.

Joshua holds out the pages, the title page we catch a glimpse: HAUNTED.

A set of old decrepit hands reach out from the darkness to gently grab the book from Joshua.

He stands in silence for a moment.

ANNIE (V.O.)
Come. You have won.

Joshua nods, and climbs into the carriage.

Once inside, the door closes.

The horses trot off back down the windy road towards a city.

The story is finally done.

ROLL CREDITS

TAG

EXT. ROAD - MORNING

As the moon goes down and the sun goes up, a new day has dawned.

Off in the distance, a limo drives towards us.

Towards the hotel.

I/E. LIMO - DAY

Several strangers sit in the back of the car, each quiet and to themselves. Some sit on their phones, scrolling through their social media, others stare out the window enjoying the view of the ride.

As the limo comes to a stop, the door opens and slowly each one climbs out.

As the last person leaves, a voice speaks up from within the car.

ANNIE (O.S.)

Oh! Wait, I still need to get out.

The last person holds the door as Annie exits the vehicle, as if emerging from thin air to join the new batch of authors entering the house.

END