

"The Cambion"

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EXT. ABOVE A PLACID BODY OF WATER — NIGHT — TRAVELING

OPENING TITLES begin as dark, undulating water speeds beneath us, and "(How Little It Matters) How Little We Know" by Frank Sinatra begins to PLAY.

PAN UP as we travel down a narrow urban river that's flanked by glittering skyscrapers on both banks and traversed by numerous bridges teeming with pedestrians and automobiles.

We swoop gracefully among the city's glittering skyscrapers, and approach two buildings that resemble twin corncobs.

We catapult up to one of the balconied penthouses, and as the guardrail slides beneath us toward an open glass door, a stylish bedroom that's lit softly by a solitary table lamp on a nightstand beckons.

We enter the murky bedroom and approach a large ebony bureau with a white marble top.

INT. APARTMENT/BEDROOM — NIGHT

A large giant water bug lands on a white marble slab near an open glass door between two framed photographs.

It folds its wings under its shell as the song MORPHS from the soundtrack to the bedroom's audio system.

The first photo is a snapshot of a beaming teenaged boy wearing a tuxedo and a diffident young woman in a formal dress who are standing in front of a gleaming jet black 2002 sports car.

On the other side of the insect is a photo of an impassive ten-year-old girl wearing a one-piece swimsuit who's sitting on the shoulders of a smiling middle-aged man.

He's standing on lakeside beach, and although he's squinting into the sun, she's staring directly into the camera's lens with empty, reptilian eyes.

Above the dresser, the silhouettes of two people in the bed are visible in an abstract wall mirror with a fractured surface.

One silhouette appears to be a supine man, and the other is hunched over between his legs.

The bug spreads its wings and leaps off the dresser.

GIANT WATER BUG P.O.V. - TRAVELING

We fly over the couple on the bed and across the room toward the open door of a pitch-black walk-in closet.

As we approach the closet, the large and impassive face of ASMODEUS, 45, emerges from within.

He's wearing mirrored aviator sunglasses and a black hood over a black baseball cap with dark gray symbols embroidered across its front panel:

⚡ 7 ⚡ 4

From the neck down he's dressed completely in black: hoodie, sweatpants, running shoes and socks, and FDT Alpha Gloves.

The only images visible beneath his face are the vaporwave image of Michelangelo's statue of David on the hoodie's chest and the short stainless steel barrel of a .460 caliber revolver that glints from his gloved right hand.

When Asmodeus opens his mouth and extends his elongated tongue, we zoom toward its inky blackness.

BACK TO SCENE

The giant water bug lands on Asmodeus's outstretched tongue, he retracts it, closes his mouth, and smiles as the TITLES and MUSIC end.

In a blurred instant, he's standing beside the bed and shaking his head in resignation.

He frowns at a very handsome YOUNG MAN, 25, who's apparently naked and lying on his back as he winces his eyes in orgasmic pleasure.

SARAH, 33, is wearing white 1950s-style lingerie, including a sturdy bra, high-waisted panties, a garter belt, seamed nylons and red stiletto heels, as she kneels between his legs while her head bobs up and down on his groin rhythmically.

YOUNG MAN

Oh God. I'm coming

FLASH INSERT: CRIMSON UNICURSAL HEXAGRAM

SARAH'S P.O.V. – ASMODEUS BLACK SNEAKERS

are next to her, and her gaze PANS UP his legs until she sees the glistening stainless steel pistol.

BACK TO SCENE

Her her eyebrows arch as she panics and tries to jerk her head up, but the Young Man pushes it down as she GAGS and emits a muffled SHOUT.

VIDEO INSERT – “THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI”

Jane struggles against Cesare as he abducts her.

BACK TO SCENE

MONTAGE – THE YOUNG MAN'S MURDER

- A) A man's toes curl.
- B) The Young Man tilts his head back and GROANS.
- C) Asmodeus shoves the revolver's barrel into the Young Man's open mouth.
- D) The Young Man's eyes pop open, and he tries to rise up.
- E) A gun's hammer strikes the primer of a bullet.
- F) The back of the Young Man's head explodes onto the bed.

EXT. BALCONY – NIGHT

Sarah is looking at herself through the open balcony door as Asmodeus grabs her by the hair with his free hand.

He lifts her off the corpse and into the air with ease as she SCREECHES and claws at his hand while kicking her legs back and forth wildly.

The Sarah on the balcony winces, turns away from the door, and sees a 3D animation figure of BARRY, 19, who's standing next to her and leering through the window.

Without removing his gaze from the carnage and pandemonium in the bedroom, he grins and stage whispers.

BARRY

Is this your first time? Like your
first time ever?

She recoils as if she'd been struck, steps back, looks down, and sees that he's wearing only bright red, low-rise swimming briefs, which conceal a massive erection.

VIDEO INSERT - "BONNIE AND CLYDE"

Bonnie looks down at Clyde's gun and reaches for its barrel.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Asmodeus drags Sarah by her hair past a breakfast bar and into a kitchen as every light in the apartment turns itself on.

He stops in front of the electric range, twists a knob with his gun hand, and lifts her off the floor with the other so that her stocking feet dangle in the air.

ASMODEUS

At n'erh shevbebh, shevbebh.
[You're a naughty, naughty girl.]

[NOTE: The English text of all instances of Hebrew and Paleo-Hebrew transliterations shall be italicized, enclosed in brackets, and appear as subtitles on the screen.]

He turns her away from him to face the oven, and she sees that three people who are all naked from the waist up are sitting on stools behind the bar: RANDY, 30, MARK, 35, and TEDDI, 30.

Randy's eating popcorn from a bowl on the bar and leering at her as he licks his buttery lips, and Mark's sitting next to him with Teddi on his lap.

Mark's hands are cupping Teddi's bare breasts, and he winks at Sarah while Teddi inhales smoke from a huge, bubbling, psychedelic bong that's shaped like an erect penis.

Teddi extends the bong toward Sarah as she exhales a thick cloud of white smoke through a mischievous grin.

Asmodeus is behind Sarah, lifts her off the floor by her hair casually, wraps his arm around her waist, and pulls her close.

SARAH

Please. not again!

ASMODEUS

(whispers in her ear)

Matay sheani rotseh!

[Whenever I want!.]

CGI INSERT - MICHELANGELO'S STATUE OF DAVID

The statue cocks its head and turns it to look at us.

BACK TO SCENE

Asmodeus slams the right side of Sarah's face down onto the ceramic glass surface of the glowing electric range.

She SHRIEKS in agony and writhes frantically as the side of her face begins to SIZZLE.

He jerks her head up off the range, and turns her face toward him to examine it as she splays her trembling fingers above the swollen reddening flesh and SHRIEKS.

He spins her away from him again, and she stops screaming when sees that Randy, Mark, and Teddi have all vanished.

Instead, a dozen huge snails whose heads have been replaced by human penises are now slithering across the breakfast bar.

ASMODEUS (cont'd)

Zechor oti.

[Remember me.]

Asmodeus begins to push her head back down onto the range, but she gains purchase on the countertop, whirls to her left, GRUNTS, and elbows his face with all of her might.

His head snaps to the side as his nose fractures, and his glasses fly across the room and CLATTER to the floor.

He turns back to Sarah, and she SCREAMS because he has no eyes, merely two empty sockets above a nose that's bleeding into a toothy grin.

He tosses her into a corner of the room, wipes his mouth with his sleeve, and extend his hand toward the sunglasses.

They tremble for a moment before they leap off floor and fly into his outstretched hand.

He puts them back on and turns toward Sarah as she cups her blistering face and cowers on the tile floor.

Instead of lingerie, however, she's now wearing checked pajama bottoms and a Rosie the Riveter T-shirt.

She looks down at her new clothes and knits her brow as she rubs the T-shirt's fabric between her thumb and fingers.

When she looks up, she sees that Asmodeus has disappeared and been replaced by DADDY, 45, who's hanging from the kitchen ceiling with a noose around his neck and lifeless, bulging eyes.

He's wearing the same 1950s-style white lingerie that Sarah had been wearing, as well as red stiletto heels, a slightly askew black wig, thick foundation makeup, and ruby lipstick.

His eyes suddenly reanimate through his mascara.

DADDY

'Twas better for me to die, Sweet
Pea, than to endure so much misery
in life, and to listen to such
reproaches!

She buries her face in her hands, but the moment she touches her facial burn, she SCREECHES in pain.

When her head jolts up, she sees Asmodeus leering at her as he reaches down and grabs a handful of her hair again.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The front door EXPLODES open, and four women with assault rifles charge through the smoke and into the living room.

They're wearing full Yamam regalia including olive drab uniforms, combat vests, backpacks, military balaclavas, goggles, helmets, and tactical shoulder patches.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Asmodeus is bent over Sarah and clutching her hair.

When they hear the EXPLOSION from the living room, they turn their heads toward the sound in unison.

Then they look at each other as he releases her hair and rises.

ASMODEUS

Shalom, afuneh metuqah.

[Goodbye, Sweet Pea.]

She sees that his right hand has become the revolver, and when he puts the barrel of his gun/hand into his own smiling mouth, the trigger pulls itself, and the top of his head explodes.

Asmodeus's lifeless body pitches forward, and his large corpse topples onto Sarah heavily, which causes her to SHRIEK in panic. She tries to squirm out from underneath it and crab crawl away.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SARAH'S MASTER BEDROOM — DAWN

Sarah is lying in bed wearing Rosie the Riveter pajamas and SHRIEKING with her eyes closed as she squirms out from underneath her bedding and crab crawls toward the headboard until she hits her head and her eyes pop open.

She stops screaming, fumbles with her bedside lamp, turns it on, and her eyes dart around the bedroom, but she's alone.

Hyperventilating, she throws her legs over the side of the bed, sits up, and begins to caress an old contracture scar on the right side of her face as her panting subsides.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HEALTH CLUB/RANDY'S OFFICE — DAY

Sarah's caressing her facial scar as she sits on a stack chair in front of an inexpensive desk in a small utilitarian office.

Randy is sitting behind the desk, KAREN, 27, sits beside him, and all of them are wearing identical T-shirts and sweatpants.

SARAH

Randy, I'm really sorry, but it won't happen again. Ever. Really.

RANDY

So what was it this time?

SARAH

I guess I slept through my alarm.

RANDY

Again?

SARAH

I know, and I'm really, really sorry. It's just that I haven't been sleeping very well lately.

KAREN

Maybe you have a medical problem. Have you seen anybody about it?

SARAH

Anybody?

RANDY

Like a doctor. Or a psychologist.

SARAH

I'm not going to waste my time talking to some stupid shrink.

RANDY

Okay. Well, I'm sorry, but we told you: three strikes and you're out, so I'll need your I - D.

Sarah's takes an ID card out of her bag, flips it onto his desk as she rises, and turns toward the office door.

SARAH

(under her breath)

Asshole.

KAREN

I beg your pardon?

Sarah spins around, and her eyes flash as she glares at Randy.

SARAH

You don't think I notice, but I do!

(MORE)

SARAH (cont'd)

I see everything. The way you look at me. The way you lick your lips.

RANDY

Lick my what!?! What are you talking about?

KAREN

Sarah, if you have a complaint about --

SARAH

Sure, sure. Well, why don't you both just eat shit and die!

She storms out of the office, slamming the door behind her.

INT. HEALTH CLUB/LOBBY – DAY

Sarah hurries past SUE, 25, at the reception desk with downcast eyes on her way out of the club.

SUE

Oh Sarah. Damn. Sarah, wait up!

Sarah SIGHS, stops, and returns to the desk.

SUE (cont'd)

I just heard what happened. Listen. I called Teddi. She wants us to meet for lunch. Can you make it?

Randy turns a corner, but he stops when he sees Sarah and Sue.

SARAH

Yeah. Sure. I guess so.

SUE

I'll call Teddi and then call you with where we're gonna meet, okay?

Sarah sees Randy begin walking toward them, so she turns her back on Sue and hustles toward the entrance.

SARAH

Sure. Fine. Whatever.

INT. CASUAL RESTAURANT/DINING ROOM – DAY

Sarah's sitting in a booth in her health club uniform.

Teddi's across the table from her wearing a T-shirt inscribed "Unless You Puke, Faint, or Die, Keep Going".

Two glasses of iced tea sit between them on a paper tablecloth.

TEDDI

I talked to Mark. Can you can make dinner at our house tomorrow night?

SARAH

Just you guys, or are you planning on dragging another sacrificial lamb to the altar?

TEDDI

Well, Mark did mention there's a new guy at his office who just transferred here from Atlanta. I could ask Mark to invite him over.

SARAH

Maybe next week. I'm not up for two rejections in a row.

TEDDI

OK, so just me and Mark then.

SARAH

Thanks, but I really just want to be alone for a little while.

TEDDI

OK, if you're sure. So what happened with Randy?

SARAH

I was up most of the night so I guess I slept through my alarm clock. Missed my Triple Threat.

TEDDI

What'd he say?

SARAH

That I was irresponsible. That he can't count on me. Blah, blah, blah. Same old shit.

(MORE)

SARAH (cont'd)

But after he's done yelling at me, he kinda grins at me and says that he'd make an exception for me if I'd make an exception for him.

TEDDI

No!

SARAH

Yes! I swear to God he even winked!

TEDDI

You're kidding! He didn't.

SARAH

I wish. You remember that I told you he's been bugging me to go out with him for like ever, right? Well, I've always turned him down, but this time he said he'd forget it if I made it "worth his while".

TEDDI

That bastard! What did you say?

SARAH

That his fingers were too small.

Teddi grins and sips her drink as Sarah picks a crayon out of a glass on the table and begins doodling on the paper tablecloth.

TEDDI

Sarah, this sucks. You should report him to H - R or something.

SARAH

Sure, and then what? He'd just deny it, say that I'm making it all up, and I'll bet that Karen would back him up, too. The little bitch probably has a thing for him.

TEDDI

But you can't let him get away with this. He'll just do it again.

SARAH

Maybe. But maybe not. Maybe it's just me. But even if I do tell H - R, then what? It's still my word against his. And I was late a couple of times, so the prick can use that to cover his stanky ass.

TEDDI

Are you sure? I'll back you up.

SARAH

I know you would, Teddi, but you don't want to get involved in this crap. Let's just drop it, okay?

TEDDI

I suppose so. How ya set for money?

SARAH

I'm fine. I've still got a lot left over from the settlement. I don't even need the stupid job. I just took it because I was there every day anyway.

TEDDI

Remind me to get into a car accident someday, will you?

SARAH

It's not worth it, Teddi. Really. Not by a long shot.

TEDDI

Oh, Sarah. I'm sorry. Jeez, I just say the dumbest things sometimes.

Sarah shrugs her shoulders and resumes doodling.

TEDDI (cont'd)

So what are you going to do for a living anyway?

SARAH

I dunno. Maybe I'll just walk the earth until God puts me someplace. Like that guy from Pulp Fiction.

TEDDI

Well, ain't gonna be the same.

Sarah puts down the crayon, tears off the portion of the tablecloth on which she's been doodling.

As she begins to crumple the paper, dozens of tiny anatomically correct stick men become visible.

TEDDI (cont'd)

Look! There's Sue.

As Sue approaches the table, Sarah picks up her glass of iced tea and raises it to her lips.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SUBURBAN DINING ROOM – NIGHT

Sarah puts a glass of iced tea down on a tablecloth as she sits at a table that has empty dinner plates and serving dishes scattered on it in the dining room of a modest suburban house wearing a Pogo the Clown T-shirt.

Teddi, her husband Mark, and his coworker CLINT, 35, are also seated at the table as "Land of Hope and Dreams" by Bruce Springsteen PLAYS softly.

Mark pushes himself away from the table and twists his back.

CLINT

Thanks, Teddi. That was great.
Even for a ham hocks and chittlins
kinda guy like me.

MARK

Ham hocks and chittlins? Whadaya
talkin' about? You're from Philly,
aren't you.

CLINT

Well, we only had the chittlins
when we ran outta cheese steaks.

MARK

In fact you went to Villanova, too,
right?

CLINT

Yep. Double legacy. Mom and Dad actually met there.

TEDDI

Wow. Stereo legacies. Impressive.

CLINT

And I was born on March thirty-first, nineteen eighty five. Ya know what happened the next day?

MARK

April Fools' Day?

CLINT

That too, but when did the 'cats beat the Hoyas for the N - C double A championship?

MARK

Oh my God! That's right! April first, nineteen eighty five! The next day was the biggest upset in the history of college hoops. So you're the one responsible for David beating Goliath. Did you even have to go through admissions?

TEDDI

Here, let me get that for you.

Teddi rises, picks up her plate, and reaches for Sarah's.

She arches an eyebrow at Mark who nods at her, picks up Clint's plate and his own, and follows her into the kitchen.

SARAH

David? As in King David? I love King David. He's the hero of my all-time favorite Bible story.

CLINT

You have a favorite Bible story?

SARAH

You betcha. Goes like this:

(MORE)

SARAH (cont'd)

David kills Goliath, but King Saul gets jealous cuz he thinks that that makes him look like a wimp. When his daughter falls for David, Saul asks him if he wants to marry her. David's like, "Yeah, I'm down with that, but I'm poor shepherd and can't cover the dowry." Well, old Saul thinks on it and makes David an offer he can't refuse. Instead of sheep or goats or whatever, he says that his daughter's dowry is a hundred Philistine penises.

Mark returns from the kitchen and sits.

MARK

A hundred what?

SARAH

Well, the English translation in the Bible is "foreskins", but the ancient Hebrew word for foreskin is the same as it is for uncircumcised penis. So, since kinda hard to imagine a whole lot of Philistines lining up for free battlefield circumcisions, ya gotta figure that, like that song about love and marriage, you can't have one without the other.

MARK

Well, so much for one-eight-hundred-got-junk.

SARAH

Wait. It gets better. So Saul figures that he's gonna win either way. Either David takes the offer and gets killed in battle, or he chickens out, and it looks like he's the wimp instead of Saul. So Davy goes off with his homies and, guess what?

(MORE)

SARAH (cont'd)

Not only does he come home with the dowry in a bag, but he doubles it! Yep. Saul becomes the proud owner of not one but two hundred Philistine penises. Untrimmed, just like God made 'em.

MARK

Okay. Well, sounds like King David was one seriously badass Hebrew.

CLINT

No wonder he got his own star.

Teddi returns, sets a tray of coffee, cups, saucers, milk, and sugar on the table, and retakes her seat.

TEDDI

Sounds like a fascinating conversation. Who wants coffee?

CLINT

Yes, please.

MARK

Thanks hon.

Sarah nods, and Teddi begins passing coffee cups to her guests.

SARAH

Yeah, Dynamic Dave was my kind of macho Bible hero alright, but my favorite King David story didn't even make the Bible.

INT. BEDOUIN TENT – NIGHT – BEGIN STORY VISUALIZATION

As MUSIC ends, a diminutive and heavily bearded olive-skinned WARRIOR opens the flap of a murky Bedouin tent lit solely by the flame of a terra-cotta lamp.

He enters the tent wearing a bronze helmet, a leather vest covered with bronze scales, a woolen tunic, leather greaves and sandals, and he's carrying a short iron sword and a bronze shield adorned with a large hexagram hammered into it.

A goat's hair pillow lies on a woolen mat in the center of the tent, and a skin of water made from a sheep's bladder hangs from the center pole next to a kinnor.

SARAH (V.O.) (cont'd)

It's part of Kabbalah. You know.
That mystical Hebrew thing. Do you
guys know what a succubus is?

TEDDI (V.O.)

A demon who defiles sleeping women?

He lowers the flap, drops his helmet and vest on the ground,
trudges to the mat, collapses onto it, and closes his eyes.

SARAH (V.O.)

Close. That's an incubus. A
succubus is the female version.

He's supine on the mat when his eyes blink open, and he
immediately sees a dark-skinned and voluptuous WOMAN with long
ebony hair standing inside his tent.

SARAH (V.O.) (cont'd)

So, the story goes that Davy's
copping some z's in his tent one
night, all tuckered out from a
long day of de-schlonging the
heathens I suppose, when this
succubus, a vixen by the name of
Agrat, jumps into his bed.

She's naked except for a short leather skirt fastened around
her hips and a leather veil that covers the lower half of her
face so that only her dark eyes are visible.

The Warrior opens his mouth to speak, but in a blurred instant
the woman is sitting on his hips and holding her right index
finger across his lips.

MARK (V.O.)

De-schlonging the heathens?

She leans forward and puts her left hand between her legs and
under her skirt.

SARAH (V.O.)

So one thing leads to another and
voila', David becomes the proud
papa of a bouncing baby cambion
named Asmodeus.

The warrior's eyes widen as she adjusts her hidden hand, and then they close in ecstasy as she eases herself down onto him.

He GROANS in pleasure as his hands cup her breasts and she raises and lowers herself on him again.

INT. SUBURBAN DINING ROOM – NIGHT

Clint shakes his head and scowls as Teddi gives him a chagrined smile, and Mark stares at Sarah with his mouth slightly agape as the MUSIC resumes softly.

CLINT

Wait a minute. Are you saying that King David was the father of both King Solomon and a demon?

SARAH

So says the Kabbalah. But not a full-blown demon. A cambion. Half human and half not. The opposite of a demigod. Sorta like Achilles or Hercules. Or Jesus Christ.

CLINT

I beg your pardon?

SARAH

Not only that, he's the demon of lust, too. He murdered husbands on their wedding nights before they deflowered their virginal brides which means that not all bloody sheets are created equal, I suppose.

(beat)

But he wasn't all bad. Legend is that he gave King Solomon the shamir he used to build his temple.

CLINT

Asmodeus helped Solomon build the First Temple? Where they kept the Ark of the Covenant?

SARAH

And ya gotta love the irony, right?

(MORE)

SARAH (cont'd)

The demon of lust helps to build the place that God's chosen people use to stash their Commandments, like the ones against adultery and coveting your neighbor's wife.

(sips her iced tea)

Come to think of it, how'd Solomon score seven hundred wives but not commit adultery? Where's the one man one woman crowd on that one?

CLINT

Well, because, back then adultery only applied to married women.

TEDDI

Say what? Men couldn't commit adultery? How was that fair?

MARK

Hey, at least you guys can covet.

CLINT

Well, it wasn't. Three thousand years ago wives were treated like property, so a ban on adultery guaranteed that a wife's husband was the father of her kids.

SARAH

Funny how it always seems to come down to paternity, doesn't it? Men trying to control women's bodies. Like birth control a hundred years ago, or abortion today. They want us barefoot and pregnant.

CLINT

Wait a minute. You can't compare birth control to abortion.

SARAH

Of course you can. Why not?

CLINT

Birth control doesn't kill unborn babies. Abortions do.

SARAH

A fetus. Not a baby. Unborn babies don't exist. It's not a baby until its born. An unborn baby is like an undead corpse. Babies gotta be born, and corpses gotta be dead.

CLINT

Call it whatever you want, but it's still a human being. If it isn't human, what is it?

SARAH

It's a part of my body.

CLINT

But when you get pregnant it's not just your body. It's yours and the baby's. You share it.

SARAH

So the second I conceive, people like you have control over my body?

CLINT

No, not me, but you have to consider your baby.

SARAH

It's not a baby. It's a fetus. If it was a baby, shouldn't we celebrate our conception days instead of our birthdays?

CLINT

That's what all you pro-abortion people just don't understand. A fetus may not be a person yet, but it is human life, and because it's human life, it should be respected. And protected.

SARAH

Life, maybe, but not human life. Human beings breathe air; fish and fetuses don't. How about this: have you ever been to a funeral for a miscarriage?

CLINT

Excuse me? A funeral for a what?

SARAH

A miscarriage. If a fetus is human, its gotta have a soul, right? And if it has a soul, then there should be a funeral when it dies. But if it doesn't have a soul, then it's not a person. And that's why no religion on Earth has funerals rites for miscarriages. Fetuses aren't people until they're born.

CLINT

Well, even if it's not fully formed, yes. I think fetuses have, I don't know, a preliminary soul.

SARAH

Preliminary soul? What the hell is a preliminary soul?

CLINT

It's pre-human, and I believe that it's immoral to destroy something that's almost a person because human life is a gift from God.

SARAH

A gift from who?! Are you for real? A gift from your God, maybe, but not from mine.

CLINT

God is God for everyone, and he created the miracle of human life. And because it's sacred it should be respected and protected, both before it's born and after.

TEDDI

So if a fetus is human, then killing one is murder, and there's no difference between expecting a baby and having one.

(MORE)

TEDDI (cont'd)

And if it's murder, then the mother's a murderer who belongs in prison because murder's murder, right?

CLINT

No, murder's not murder. Not legally anyway. There's first degree, second degree, and a bunch of different kinds of manslaughter. But just because abortion isn't homicide doesn't mean that it should be legal. That's why feticide's illegal. You can get life in prison for killing a fetus.

MARK

That's right. You can kill your own fetus, but not someone else's, which kinda makes ya wonder if the morons who write the laws ever actually read them.

CLINT

Yeah. It's like a stupid answer to a dumb riddle: when is an unborn baby not an unborn baby? Answer: when it's yours.

SARAH

Well if you ask me, feticide's a joke. If you kill my fetus, you injure me, not my uterine contents.

CLINT

Your uterine contents?

SARAH

If two kids and a fetus get killed in a terrible car accident, who are the victims? Bobby, Suzy, and Fetus Jones? Ridiculous. That just doesn't make any sense, even for the bible-thumpers.

CLINT

What makes you think that it's not alive in the womb? That it can't be alive before it's born?

SARAH

Alive? Yes. But human? No. It may be alive inside of me, but so what? B - F - D. So is a tapeworm.

CLINT

A tapeworm? Your baby's a parasite?

MARK

That's how my Dad saw my tuition.

SARAH

For the last time, it's a fetus, not a baby. And legally yes, they both have the same constitutional rights, which are none. But I have a constitutional right: the right to control my own body. Me and me alone. And I don't hafta answer to you or any of your sanctimonious asshole buddies in Congress about what I do with my own body.

TEDDI

Sarah! Clint's entitled to his opinion, just like anybody else.

CLINT

You don't have to answer to me, but you do have to answer to God.

SARAH

So that's it? You're God's interpreter here on Earth. Or maybe you think you're God.

CLINT

No, I simply believe in him, that's all.

SARAH

Oh yeah? Well, fuck you and fuck your God!

TEDDI

Sarah, please!

SARAH

You holy fuckin' rollers just don't fuckin' get it, do you? Well, I'm sick of this Sunday School horseshit. Women go from being sex objects to baby ovens to milk dispensers without ever controlling our own goddamn bodies. Men and kids make us jump through hoops our entire fucking lives!

MARK

C'mon Sarah, take it easy.

TEDDI

Sarah, calm down, it's not --

CLINT

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to --

SARAH

I don't need your fucking permission to do whatever the fuck I want with my own fucking body!

Sarah jumps up, grabs her purse, and begins to storm out when she stops short, turns back to the table, and glares at Clint.

SARAH (cont'd)

You shoulda been aborted.

Sarah stomps out of the dining room, and silence descends before the front door SLAMS (o.s.).

MARK

So, do you want her number?

Teddi throws her napkin at him.

CLINT

Milk dispenser? That's a first.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE/EXERCISE ROOM — NIGHT

Sarah sprints on an inexpensive treadmill wearing running capris and a T-shirt inscribed with the pentagram of Solomon.

She's in a bedroom that's been converted into a makeshift gymnasium with a completely mirrored wall opposite the door.

A small TV monitor suspended from the ceiling above the treadmill that's PLAYING the video of "212" by Azealia Banks.

When the video ends, she stops running, sits on the bench, and as she pants and wipes the sweat from her forehead with the back of her hand, she picks up a water bottle and begins to guzzle it.

SARAH'S POV - THE MIRRORED WALL

Sarah's looking at her own reflection and the dark hallway through the open door behind her when a gigantic, three-foot-tall, bronze water bug scampers into view.

It pauses for a moment, turns its head toward her, wiggles its pincers, and then scuttles down the hall.

BACK TO SCENE

She GAGS on the water, drops the bottle, jumps to her feet, and spins to face the vacant doorway.

SARAH

Oh. My. God.

She crosses to the doorway, inches her head out of the exercise room, and looks down the murky hall.

Seeing nothing but two closed doors at the far end of the hallway, she darts into a dark room directly across the hall.

INT. SARAH'S MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sarah's standing in an open closet doorway.

She reaches up to a shelf, takes down a large sheathed Bowie knife with a leather-wrapped handle, removes the scabbard, and tosses it onto the bed, revealing a gleaming stainless steel sawback blade with machined slot cutouts.

As the scabbard lands next to a book entitled The Testament of Solomon, a cordless telephone on the nightstand JANGLES.

Startled, she drops the knife, narrowly missing her foot, but she regains her composure, retrieves the knife from the floor, strides to the bedside, picks up the phone, and listens.

ASMODEUS (V.O.)

Ani nakemah.

[I am vengeance.]

Sarah YELPS, drops the headset onto the floor, and kicks it under the bed.

Clenching her teeth, she lifts the knife to her shoulder, marches to the closed bedroom door, and flings it open to reveal a vacant and murky hallway.

INT. SARAH'S HALLWAY – NIGHT

Sarah's inching her way along the wall toward the back of the house when she freezes as the two doors at the end of the hall swing open simultaneously revealing the dark rooms behind them.

The gigantic insect scuttles out of the room on the right, stops for a moment, turns toward her, waves its huge pincers at her, and then scampers across the hall into the other room.

The doors swing closed concurrently, and Sarah gapes at them for a moment, but she sets her jaw and strides down the hall to the door of the room that the huge insect has just entered.

Thin strips of light between the door and its frame are visible as she turns the knob, raises the knife to her shoulder, and eases the door open to reveal a small vacant bathroom.

A claw-footed bathtub is directly across the brightly lit room, and it's concealed by a shower curtain that's bedecked with a large cartoon caricature of a snail.

As she steps across the threshold, her face slackens, and she lowers the knife as her eyes lose their focus.

INT. SARAH'S GUEST BATHROOM – NIGHT – (VHS VIDEOTAPE FLASHBACK)

Unscarred ADOLESCENT SARAH, 12, is standing in a bathroom doorway wearing jeans and a Buffy the Vampire Slayer T-shirt.

She's looking at DADDY, 40, who has a horrified expression on his face as he sits on the toilet with his pants around his ankles because his right hand is between his legs and beneath a women's soft-core porn magazine that's open on his lap.

DADDY

Goddamn it, Sarah! Knock!!

ADOLESCENT SARAH

I'm sorry, Daddy. I --

DADDY

Get out of here, now!

He holds the magazine over his groin in his left hand and raises his right hand as he begins to rise.

ADOLESCENT SARAH

But, Mommy said I should --

DADDY

I said now!

Adolescent Sarah grimaces, turns her head to the right, and closes her eyes.

CUT TO BLACK and a loud SLAP (o.s.) as FLASHBACK ENDS.

INT. SARAH'S HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sarah has turned her head to the right and closed her eyes as she grimaces and caresses her face with her left hand.

She opens her eyes, looks down at the knife in her right hand, and furrows her brow.

When she lifts her head and looks back into the bathroom, recollection flashes in her eyes, so she sets her jaw, raises the knife to her shoulder, and strides across the threshold.

INT. SARAH'S GUEST BATHROOM - NIGHT

She stares at the closed shower curtain as she shuts the door behind her and creeps toward the tub.

Holding her breath, she sees the curtain billow faintly and extends her free hand toward it.

She jerks the curtain open to reveal Daddy who's wearing white 1950s lingerie, white nylon stockings, red stilettos, heavy make-up, and a black wig.

He's standing in the bathtub with his back to the wall as he cowers in fear and holds his hands out in front of himself with his fingers splayed.

DADDY

Sweet Pea! Wait! No, please!

His mouth gapes open, and he GAGS as a giant water bug crawls out onto his protruding tongue.

Sarah SHRIEKS and slashes down with her knife, but slices only air because he's vanished.

Her eyes dart around the room and her breathing slows.

She crosses to the sink, turns on the water, picks up a washcloth, dampens it, and begins to wipe her face when a loud THUD strikes the door.

She SCREAMS, jumps away from the door, drops the washcloth, and raises the knife to her shoulder in a reverse grip.

The POUNDING continues as she backpedals across the room into a wall as both she and the door shudder with each blow.

When the pounding stops, the knob turns, the door cracks open a few inches, and the short barrel of a .460 stainless steel revolver emerges through the narrow gap.

It rises to a 45 degree angle, and a single drop of a viscous white fluid drips out of the barrel and onto the floor.

The revolver then withdraws, and the door CLICKS closed.

Sarah leaps across the bathroom, flings the door open, and SHRIEKS as she stabs downward, but the hall is dark and empty.

Sarah's shoulders slump, and she drops the knife, which CLATTERS onto the tile floor between her feet as she stares into the vacant hallway.

Stupefied, she's reaches down for the knife and sees a large drop of a milky white fluid lying on the floor next to her foot.

Her stomach heaves, and she rushes to the toilet, drops to her knees, grabs the rim, and begins to vomit.

INT. TRENDY RESTAURANT/END OF THE BAR – NIGHT

A pale pink liquid fills a glass flute that contains a sprig of rosemary while "Her Strut" by Bob Segar PLAYS softly.

When the flute's full, MATT, a middle aged bartender, picks it up along with cocktail glass containing ice and an amber liquid, and carries them to Sarah and WILLIE, 37, who are sitting next to one another at a bar in a chic and trendy restaurant.

Sarah's wearing a revealing dress, and Willie is a very handsome man in a sharkskin suit, silk tie, and pocket square.

MATT

We've got Johnnie Blue with a splash for Willie, and a Vodka Blush for the lady. Feel free to spill some, if you want to.

Willie knits his brow as he hands a credit card to Matt, but Sarah grins at his comment and winks at him as she dribbles a few drops onto the floor.

WILLIE

Mille grazie, mi amico.

As Matt crosses to the cash register, Willie glances at Sarah in the mirror behind the bar, and grins at her reflection as he takes a sip of his drink and turns back to her.

WILLIE (cont'd)

So, I'm in this like stupid pick-up game the summer before my junior year, and like an idiot, I didn't stretch. So only a coupla minutes in, I like drive the lane, and I musta come down on some other guy's foot because I heard this like weird popping sound. Bam! Adios Achilles.

SARAH

That's terrible. Was it painful?

WILLIE

Yeah, hurt like a bitch, but the down time was worse.

(MORE)

WILLIE (cont'd)

My whole life was like basketball and my game never recovered. I'm not that tall, but I had like a decent shot and a wicked crossover.

SARAH

Crossover?

WILLIE

It's a special kind of dribble. So for like the first time ever, I really started to study. Then I shocked everybody, including me, and actually graduated. Then I found a business school that had low standards and would take my parents' money, so here I am.

SARAH

So you found the silver lining?

Matt returns with Willie's credit card and a receipt.

WILLIE

Yeah, I guess so. Thanks, Matt.

(signs the receipt)

Hey, how would you like to have dinner with me? I eat here a lot, and the food's really very good. Do you like fried chicken.?

SARAH

Well, remember that I told you that I'm supposed to be meeting my girlfriend here later?

WILLIE

Oh, yeah. Right. But didn't you say that that was a maybe?

SARAH

I said it was a probably.

WILLIE

Well she's late now, so if she does show up, we'll just like invite her to join us.

SARAH

Well, I really don't--

WILLIE

C'mon. I've talked about myself enough already. I want to hear what makes you tick.

SARAH

I'm really not very interesting.

WILLIE

I'll be the judge of that. Besides if the conversation like lags, we can always talk about something really fascinating. Like mergers and acquisitions.

SARAH

Sounds stimulating.

She grins at his joke, but his expression becomes somber when he places his right hand on his heart, crooks his left pinkie finger, and extends it toward her with ceremonial gravitas.

WILLIE

Alright. Fine. I promise: no M and A strategies. Pinkie swear?

Sarah's smile broadens at his mock solemnity.

WILLIE (cont'd)

And no college basketball. Or pro basketball. In fact, no sports talk of any kind!

SARAH

Well, okay, sure. I guess so.

She extends her left pinkie and entwines his. They shake.

WILLIE

Excellent. You could like teach the Donald how to make a deal. I'll see if I can get us a table.

SARAH

And I'll be right back, okay?.

Willie scans the bar and his eyes widen when sees a small group of four people who are in their early thirties conversing at the other end of it.

His smile disappears, but Sarah doesn't notice this change in his demeanor when she rises from her bar chair and departs.

WILLIE

Fine. See you in a minute.

INT. TRENDY RESTAURANT/ACROSS THE BAR – NIGHT

Willie is standing next to the group of three women and a man that he'd noticed from across the bar a moment ago.

WILLIE

Hey, Lynne. Judy.

JUDY and LYNN nod in acquaintance, but ANNE has her back to him as she listens to EDDIE and ignores his arrival.

Willie stares at Eddie who looks up at him and stops talking, but Anne doesn't turn around to acknowledge him.

WILLIE (cont'd)

Hey, Anne. I've been trying to reach you all week. Did you fall off the grid or something?

ANNE

(turning toward him)

I've been busy. Just like you were last Saturday. So who's the bimbo?

WILLIE

She's nobody. I just met her.

ANNE

Oh, I see. Just another bimbo. Old habits still dying hard, I guess.

(to her friends)

Would you guys mind if I went home?
I'm really very tired.

At the opposite end of the bar, Sarah returns to her seat next to Willie's empty chair, and begins to scan the restaurant looking for him.

LYNN

Do you need a ride, Annie?

ANNE

No thanks. I'll get a cab.

Sarah looks over her shoulder, smiles when she sees Willie, and takes a step toward him as Anne rises from her seat.

ANNE (cont'd)

Have a wonderful time with your new girlfriend, Willard. I'm sure that the two of you will be very happy together. I'm going home. Nice to meet you, Ernie.

EDDIE

It's Eddie.

WILLIE

C'mon Annie.

He follows Anne as she begins to march toward the entrance, but he stops after a few steps and looks over his shoulder.

When he sees Sarah looking at him with a wrinkled brow, he opens his mouth for a moment, but then snaps it closed, turns on his heel, and hustles after Anne.

WILLIE (cont'd)

Damn it, Annie. Wait up, will ya?

Judy, Lynn, and Eddie watch their departure in silence until Eddie turns to the two women.

JUDY

I'm guessing married in a year.

EDDIE

Do we ever leave high school?

As they begin to snicker, Sarah turns away, and looks across the room and sees print of Vincent van Gogh's "The Sower at Sunset" hanging from the wall.

She wrinkles her brow, and stares at the setting sun.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKESIDE BEACH — DAY (DUSK) — (3D ANIMATION FLASHBACK)

The sun is setting on a secluded beach, and "Highway to Hell" by AC/DC PLAYS from a boombox next to a blanket

An unscarred TEENAGE SARAH, 17, is lying on the blanket and clad in a white bikini as she kisses Barry, who's wearing bright red low-rise swimming briefs, deeply.

Barry puts a hand between her legs and begins sliding it up her thigh, but when it approaches her groin, her eyes pop open, she pushes his hand away, and sits up.

TEENAGE SARAH

Barry, no!

Frustration flashes across Barry's face, but his annoyance is replaced by longing as he stares at her breasts.

TEENAGE SARAH (cont'd)

I'm sorry, but I don't want to be just another notch in your belt.

BARRY

What do you mean? I'm not even wearing a belt.

TEENAGE SARAH

Very funny. I just I want it to be special. And beautiful.

BARRY

But you are special. And beautiful.

Teenage Sarah lies down on the blanket and snuggles next to him.

TEENAGE SARAH

I'm gonna miss you so much.

BARRY

Me too. I can't believe I've gotta leave for orientation tomorrow.

TEENAGE SARAH

Yeah, but you're gonna be a Blue Devil. Maybe I can come visit you. I've never seen a lacrosse match.

BARRY

(rolls on top of her)

Game, not match.

Kissing her deeply on her mouth, he eases his knee between her legs so that his thigh rests against her groin.

When his thigh begins to massage her groin, she enfolds him in her arms, and he responds by rolling on top of her and grinding his pelvis on hers.

TEENAGE SARAH

Oh my God, Barry. Please don't.
Please. I'm not ready.

BARRY

Oh, baby, I want you. I need you.
To be inside you. I love you.

TEENAGE SARAH

Oh Barry, I love you too.

Barry puts his finger on her lips and smiles at her before he begins kissing her again.

He shifts his weight, puts his hand between her legs, slips a finger under her bathing suit, and she MOANS in response.

JOEY'S P.O.V. — OBSCURED BY BUSHES

reveals Teenage Sarah and Barry from behind as he lifts himself off her and sits back on his heels.

He slides her bikini bottom off, tosses it aside, rises to his knees, and yanks his swimming briefs down.

TEENAGE SARAH

Do you have a rubber?

BARRY

(huskily)

I'll pull out. I promise.

He lowers himself on her, thrusts and GRUNTS with pleasure.

TEENAGE SARAH

Ow!

As the camera rises, the bushes disappear beneath us, and Barry freezes on top of her.

BARRY

Oh my God! Is this your first time?
Like your first time ever?

JOEY (O.S.)

You son of a bitch!

JOHN (O.S.)

Goddamnit! Get down, Joey!

BACK TO SCENE

Teenage Sarah and Barry are startled, and turn their heads in the direction of the voices to see JOEY, 18, standing behind some nearby bushes in jeans and a Clockwork Orange T-shirt.

Through the bushes they can also see JOHN, 17, kneeling next to him and tugging on his arm, while a third TEENAGE BOY, 17, leers at them through binoculars from behind a tree.

JOEY

Fuck off, John, I'm out fifty
bucks.

Barry jumps off her and jerks up his swimming briefs as Teenage Sarah rolls away from him and onto her stomach.

BARRY

Joey, you stupid cocksucker. I'm
gonna fuckin' kill you, asshole.

JOEY

Goddamn Barry, I'm impressed!.

BARRY

You're a fuckin' dead man, prick!

Clad only in her bikini top, Teenage Sarah gets to her hands and toes and leopard crawls away from them toward the lake.

JOEY

Oh yeah? Well fuck you, Barry.
You're the one who said you could
pork the little bitch, not me. The
bet was your idea, remember?

She throws herself into the water and splashes away from the secluded beach toward the picturesque sunset on the horizon.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SARAH'S KITCHEN – DAY (DAWN)

A sunburst wall clock comes into focus with its hands at 6:45 above a sink in a disheveled kitchen.

Sarah enters the kitchen with a red nose and cheeks, wearing slippers and black plaid pajama bottoms under a down parka, and carrying a wire cage with a large TABBY inside it.

With her free hand she unzips the parka and reveals a black T-shirt underneath it that's adorned with a print of Caravaggio's "David with the Head of Goliath".

She places the cage on a countertop, blows on her hands and rubs them together before opening the refrigerator, removing a quart of milk and filling a bowl that she puts in the sink.

She then opens the front of the cage, and reaches inside, but when the cat begins HISSING, and she jerks her hand away.

SARAH

Whoa! Well, are you afraid of me,
or just plain mean? I know you're
hungry cuz you ate all of the tuna
I left. Fancy albacore tuna. too.
But there wasn't very much, was
there? So here you go.

She tips the front of the cage into the sink and lifts it up, which forces the cat out of it.

She puts the cage on the floor with one hand and the milk under the cat's nose with the other.

As the cat begins lapping the milk, she rubs it behind its ears.

SARAH (cont'd)

That's better. Chasing all those
girl kitties must be hungry work.
So what am I going to call you?

The cat stops lapping the milk and looks up at her.

TABBY (ASMODEUS V.O.)

Ani malak hammawet.

[I am the Angel of Death.]

Sarah YELPS and jumps back as the cat resumes lapping the milk.

As she fixes her horrified gaze on the feeding cat, she slides a paring knife out of a hardwood cutlery block next to the sink.

Her eyes become canary yellow with vertical black irises, her tongue lengthens, her ears and teeth acuminate, and her face reddens into a crimson mask as she spins the knife into a reverse grip and pounces.

She grabs its head and begins to hack at it in a brutal frenzy.

Her ferocious SCREAMS commingle with the bloody cat's shrill SCREECHES as it twists and writhes in its death agony.

EXT. BASEBALL GAME — NIGHT — (HD VIDEO ON TV MONITOR)

The female and feline shrieks morph into the CHEERS (o.s.) of patrons in a sports bar as a baseball player begins a home run trot on a large flat-screen TV.

HD VIDEO ON TV MONITOR ENDS.

INT. SPORTS BAR & GRILL/TABLE — NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: "NINE MONTHS LATER"

ALEX, GEORGE, ADAM, and JEFF are four men in their early thirties who are wearing trendy casual clothes and sitting at a table in a sports bar congratulating one another.

ALEX

Doesn't that makes him three for three tonight?

GEORGE

Hey, guys. Check that out. Down there. At the end of the bar.

They turn in the direction he's indicated and see a DRUNK, 35, who's wearing an inexpensive suit, a white shirt, and a necktie with a hexagram pattern sitting next to Sarah at the bar.

Sarah's decked out in heavy mascara, blood red lipstick, thick foundation makeup that obscures but doesn't conceal her facial burn scar, a black leather skirt, and a revealing satin blouse.

The Drunk spills some of his drink on his cheeks as he gulps down the dregs.

He turns to the bartender, holds up his empty glass, and rattles the ice while Sarah stifles a yawn.

GEORGE

Looks like he's striking out.

JEFF

Putz. Somebody oughta go over there and defend our gender.

ADAM

Our gender is under attack?

ALEX

She's gorgeous.

GEORGE

Too much make-up for me.

JEFF

So wash her before you fuck her.

ALEX

Sir Lancelot lives.

ADAM

I'll bet she cleans up pretty good, but what's that thing on her face?

JEFF

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Who's lookin' at her friggin' face?

ALEX

So who's gonna go over there?

GEORGE

I'll go.

JEFF

Fuck you. You're married.

GEORGE

Yeah, but I'm not dead.

ALEX

I vote for Adam.

ADAM

Why me?

ALEX

Georgie's married, Jeff's stupid,
and I'm fat.

JEFF

Fuck you, fatty.

ADAM

True that, but what about Tuni?

JEFF

I wouldn't invite her. At least
not on your first date.

ADAM

Asshole.

GEORGE

Listen bud, she's your fiancée,
not your wife, and there's a big
difference. Yuge. Single is single,
and married is married.

ADAM

Deep. Very deep.

ALEX

Oh, shit. Look.

They turn to see the Drunk grabbing cocktail napkins off the bar and trying to blot Sarah's shoulder dry after having spilled some of his drink on her as she scowls at him.

JEFF

Alright Adam, you wimp. If you
don't make a move, I will.

ADAM

Okay, but I'm gonna be right back.

GEORGE

Don't worry, you'll do fine. Lotsa skanks actually like ugly guys.

ADAM

When I need advise from a putz, you'll be the first one I ask.

ALEX

And go easy on the Shakespeare. You can lead a whore to culture, but you can't make her think.

They all stare at Alex who shrugs his shoulders.

ALEX (cont'd)

Use horticulture in a sentence?

ADAM

Why am I here?

JEFF

And I'm the dumb-ass?

GEORGE

Okay, so now use "I'm a douchebag" in a sentence.

ALEX

Hey, I'm just trying to make sure that he doesn't "to be or not to be" his way out of a tasty morsel.

JEFF

Tasty morsel? It's pussy, not cat food, you moron.

GEORGE

No wonder you're in the gallon club at the sperm bank.

Adam smiles and shakes his head as he rises and crosses to

THE BAR

JEFF

Lemme know if you wanna borrow my condom. Only used twice!

Adam grabs a handful of cocktail napkins as he approaches Sarah and the Drunk who are focused on the spill and don't notice him.

ADAM

Can I help?

DRUNK

Sure, pal. You can get lost (hic).
That'd help.

ADAM

Tammy? Is that you? It is you!
Remember me? Adam from English Lit.

They both turn to look up at him in unison.

SARAH

English Lit?

DRUNK

Hey pal, why don't you go fuck off?

ADAM

Yes. Adam. From English Lit.
Mister Sanderson's class.
Sophomore year. Remember?

SARAH

Adam? Oh, Adam! Mister Samuelson's
class. Of course! And, look at you!
All grown up. Wow. Congrats on
losing all that weight. And I see
that your acne finally cleared up.

DRUNK

You (hic) know this guy?

ADAM

Well, you haven't changed a bit,
except maybe you're even prettier
than you were back then.

SARAH

Smooover, too. So how are you?

ADAM

Doin' great, Tammy. How about you?

SARAH

Me too, but not hashtag me too.

DRUNK

I thought (hic) you said that your name was Donna, as in Madonna.

Adam begins patting the damp spot with the napkins while Sarah appraises him frankly and replies to the Drunk.

SARAH

It's my middle name. Tamar's my first name, but I never liked it much. Or Tammy either. Kinda girly.

ADAM

Hey Tammy, I'd like to catch up on old times, but this place is kinda noisy. Wanna go someplace quieter?

SARAH

Well, I was supposed to meet one of my girlfriends here.

ADAM

Anybody I'd know?

Adam shoots her a mischievous grin, and she reciprocates instantly.

SARAH

No. No, probably not.

(beat)

Sure. Why not.

DRUNK

Hey, what about your drink?

SARAH

Why don't you finish it for me?

Sarah catches the bartender's eye and gestures for her check while the Drunk GRUMBLES to himself and departs.

While her back is turned, Adam looks at his friends across the room, smiles, and winks as he licks the tip of his index finger and makes a downward stroke in the air with it.

They respond with thumbs up and OK gestures that Sarah sees in the mirror behind the bar.

She flashes a sardonic sneer into the mirror and arches an eyebrow as the bartender approaches her.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Sarah is looking at Adam with a coquettish grin as they stroll down a busy city sidewalk on a balmy late summer evening.

ADAM

So it's Donna, as in Madonna?

SARAH

Tammy? Where'd that come from? Do I look like a Tammy to you?

ADAM

No, it was just the first name that popped into my head. But I figured that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

When Sarah stops short and stares at him, Adam stops, too.

SARAH

Shakespeare? Five minutes in, and I'm already getting lines from Romeo and Juliet? What's next? Yonder window?

ADAM

Well, I wouldn't mind being a glove upon thy hand.

SARAH

You should be so lucky, But I'll think about it, if we can lose the "Tammy".

They resume walking.

ADAM

You gotta deal. So now that that's out of the way, I know a great place in Old Town.

SARAH

Know any places in Hoffman Heights?

ADAM

Hoffman Heights?!? That's a hike.
What's in Hoffman Heights?

SARAH

Me. You see, I just moved here, so I took a train into the city to check out the Bean and the Picasso, and then my girlfriend called and said that she'd try to hook up with me here. So I caught the bus uptown, but she didn't show and she's not answering her phone, so I guess that something came up.

ADAM

The bus? That reminds me of one of my all-time favorite Chicago jokes. Ahem. Guy gets on a bus and sez, "Hey driver, does dis bus go to da Loop?" And the driver sez, "Nope, it goes beep, beep."

SARAH

Well, thank you. My very first Chicago joke. That's great. Do you know any that are actually funny?

ADAM

Whadaya mean? That's hilarious. Was my delivery off? Well, here's my ride. Hoffman Heights, right?

Adam stops beside a late model car, looks at his wristwatch, and reaches into his pocket for his key.

SARAH

Hey, if it's too far out ...

ADAM

No. No, it's okay. Really it's not that far. Happy to help. Next stop Hoffman Heights.

He unlocks the car and open's the passenger's door for her.

As Sarah approaches the open door, she reaches out, puts her hand behind his neck, and gently pulls his face toward hers.

He's nonplussed for an instant, but recovers and leans forward, but just before their lips touch, she kisses him on the cheek.

SARAH

You're sweet. Thanks again.

ADAM

Hey, no problem. My pleasure.

SARAH

Well, I certainly hope so.

She enters the car, and he looks skyward as he mouths the words "Thank You" while he closes the car door behind her.

EXT./INT. SARAH'S FRONT PORCH – NIGHT – TRACKING

Sarah's inserts a key that's on a ring with other keys and a fob of a giant water bug encased in Lucite into a door lock.

ADAM (O.S.)

What's that on your key ring?

SARAH (O.S.)

Oh, nothing. Just a memento from
Daddy to his little girl.

Sarah opens the door and crosses the threshold into the

ENTRYWAY

She turns on the lights and pushes buttons on a security keypad, which BEEPS softly as Adam follows her inside.

FLASH INSERT: CRIMSON UNICURSAL HEXAGRAM.

She closes the door and hangs her key ring on a green, cast-iron, snail wall hook as he walks past her into the

LIVING ROOM

which contains an assortment of inexpensive furnishings: a coffee table, a sofa in the middle of the room, an easy chair, an end table, and slightly threadbare carpeting.

Sarah turns on ceiling-mounted track lights that spotlight a 65-inch 4K HDR TV on a narrow glass console table against the wall that faces the sofa and the windows behind it.

ADAM

Very nice. Watch a lot of TV?

SARAH

Actually, I think that it should be the eighth deadly sin, but in my defense, I don't get out much. So thanks again for the lift, and for rescuing me from that drunk.

ADAM

Hey, rescuing damsels in distress is my middle name.

SARAH

So can I return the favor? How about a snack as your reward, Prince Charming, before you drive all the way back into the city?

Adam crosses to the sofa and sees a plush snail hand puppet lying on a cushion, so he moves it aside, and sits down.

ADAM

You don't have to bother with any food. A cold brew works for me.

SARAH

Hey, it's no bother. Actually I made something earlier tonight, and I'd like your opinion on it.

INT. SARAH'S KITCHEN — NIGHT

Sarah is standing in front of a kitchen counter next to a running microwave and next to two frosty mugs, one of which is covered by a plastic wrap, and two open bottles of beer.

ADAM (O.S.)

So how do you like the LBO?

SARAH

The LBO?

ADAM (O.S.)
The Land Beyond O'Hare.

SARAH
Oh. The LBO. Well, I just moved in.

She removes the plastic wrap from the covered mug, pours a beer into each mug, and puts them both on a serving tray.

ADAM (O.S.)
So why out here? Family nearby?

SARAH
Oh no. It's just close to work.

ADAM (O.S.)
So have you been flying long?

SARAH
Seven years.

ADAM (O.S.)
No kidding? So you got a job as a flight attendant at fifteen?

Sarah smiles as the microwave DINGS, and she removes a plate that contains a small pizza, which she puts on the tray.

SARAH
Now that's how you score points.

ADAM (O.S.)
So, do you enjoy flying?

She picks up the tray and walks toward the kitchen door.

SARAH
Oh, every day's a joy. May I have your garbage please? And thank you for your garbage. And please let me know if you have any more garbage. Yep. Nothin' but glamour.

INT. SARAH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

They're sitting on the sofa next to one another holding beer mugs, and the tray is on the coffee table in front of them.

When Sarah picks up a remote control and presses it, "Rockin' in the Free World" by Neil Young begins to PLAY.

ADAM

Thanks. L'chaim.

Sarah arches an eyebrow at his toast as they CLINK their mugs.

SARAH

To all the men I've loved before.

ADAM

Hey this pizza smells great. What kind is it?

SARAH

The secret ingredient homemade kind. C'mon, try it. I'd really like to know what you think.

When Sarah puts the tray in his lap, he picks up the cutlery and cuts off a piece from the slice.

ADAM

Okay. Once a philosopher, right?
(begins chewing)
Wow, this really is great. You made it? From scratch?

SARAH

Neither delivery nor DiGiorno.

ADAM

Very impressive. So seriously, what's in it?

He cuts off another piece and pops it into his mouth.

SARAH

Oh, just some snips and snails and puppy dog tails. Or what is it? Eye of newt and tongue of dog?

ADAM

Hmmm, I think it's eye of newt,
toe of frog, wool of bat, tongue
of dog. Or maybe it's toe of dog
and tongue of frog. Whatever.

(swallows)

Hey, this really is very good. I
shoul'da called you Celeste instead
of Tammy. So what's in it? Really.

SARAH

Well, I start with baguette dough.
Then I add in the chanterelle
mushrooms and raclette cheese, but
no newts' eyes or frogs' tongues.
No snips or puppy dog tails either,
but it does have snails.

ADAM

Snails?!?! As in snails? Really?

SARAH

I call it my French pizza. As in
escargot. That's why I wanted you
to try it before you knew what was
in it. Don't you like it? Honestly?

He swallows the pizza with difficulty, picks up his mug, takes
a big gulp of beer, and puts the tray on the coffee table.

ADAM

No, it's really very very good. I
guess it's just the idea of snail
pizza. Anchovies, okay. But snails?

SARAH

Haven't you ever had escargot?

ADAM

I guess so, but I really don't
remember what they tasted like.

SARAH

The secret is fresh, not canned.

ADAM

Only a barbarian would use canned.

SARAH

Well, did you know that they stab each other before they mate? With love darts. Some people think that that's where the Romans got the idea for Cupid's arrows from.

ADAM

Not the Romans. 'Twas Greeks whose love of war turned him into a boy.

SARAH

You think that Cupid's a boy instead of a girl because the Greeks loved war?

ADAM

Don't blame me. If I remember right, that one's on Blake.

SARAH

Shelton? The county singer?

ADAM

William. The English poet.

A pregnant pause ensues as the SONG ends and is followed by "Pain Is So Close to Pleasure" by Queen.

SARAH

Okay, I guess that lets you off the hook. But why did he think so?

ADAM

He said it was because both girls and Cupid laugh when we do cry.

SARAH

So, I'll try to control my giggles, but just in case, do you plan on sobbing anytime soon?

ADAM

Guess that depends. Do I have to finish the pizza?

SARAH

I'll get you for that.

ADAM

(picks up the puppet)

So I guess the pizza explains this
guy, then. Does Mister Snail
Puppet have name?

SARAH

Hermaphroditus. But his friends
call him Hermie.

Sarah arches an eyebrow again and looks at him expectantly, so he replaces the puppet on the sofa, cuts a piece off from the slice, and SIGHS with resignation as he puts it in his mouth.

Then he grins at her, begins chewing with enthusiasm, swallows, and sips his beer.

ADAM

Wow, beautiful and a great cook. I
better watch out or I could get
into some serious trouble here.

SARAH

You're sweet.

Sarah slides toward him, so Adam puts his mug down on the coffee table as she runs her fingers through his hair.

He responds by cupping her face and kissing her.

She reciprocates, but after a moment, she puts her hand on his chest, pulls away, CLEARS her throat, and rises from the sofa.

SARAH (cont'd)

Okay. Well, first things first.
How about a guided tour of the
palace? Just in case you need to
find the throne room later.

ADAM

Sure. Sure, that'd be great.

She turns off the music and begins walking toward the hallway.

Adam scrambles to his feet, grabs his beer mug, and follows her out of the living room with this gaze fixed firmly on her undulating derriere.

INT. SARAH'S EXERCISE ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah turns on a dimmer switch and the recessed ceiling lights bathe an elaborate weight machine, an expensive treadmill, chrome free weights, and a balance trainer in pools of light.

Three of the walls and the ceiling are covered with thick acoustical foam tiles, and the mirrored fourth wall opposite the door is now traversed by two ballet barres.

Black rubber tiles cover the floor, except for a small trapdoor with a recessed floor ring next to the weight machine, and a large TV monitor hangs from the ceiling above the treadmill.

An image of Asmodeus, smiling under his mirrored sunglasses, flashes on the TV screen, but neither of them react to it.

ADAM

Wow. Very impressive. Plan on starting your own health club?

Sarah picks up a remote control and a live version of "Midnight Rambler" by The Rolling Stones begins to PLAY softly.

SARAH

So do you like to work out?

ADAM

As much as the next guy I suppose, but it's hard to find the time.

SARAH

That's why I bought all this stuff.

Adam approaches one of the ceiling-mounted HD dome cameras that are in each corner of the room.

ADAM

Wow. These look like the ones they have at the casinos. Impressive.

He turns to a wall and runs his hand over one of the acoustical foam panels that have been glued to it.

ADAM (cont'd)

And this stuff is soundproofing?

SARAH

Yep. I like to blast the tunes when I'm working out, but I don't wanna nettle the neighbors.

She cranks the MUSIC up to an earsplitting level for a brief moment and then turns the volume back down.

ADAM

Ouch! That would certainly nettle the neighbors. Very considerate.

He approaches a strobe light above a keypad on the wall.

ADAM (cont'd)

And how about this?

SARAH

My burglar alarm. "Frailty, thy name is woman," right?

ADAM

Yeah. Sure it is. So what's next? "Get thee to a nunnery?"

SARAH

What? And miss out on all the men? Thanks, but no thanks.

ADAM

All the men? Exactly how many men are we talking about here?

SARAH

Sorry, but I lost count.

ADAM

And that trapdoor down there leads to your secret man-stash?

SARAH

My secret man-stash. Now why didn't I think of that?

Sarah puts an arm around the weight machine and smiles.

SARAH (cont'd)

So, what's your favorite?

ADAM

Lifting exercise? Oh, gee, I don't know. The shoulder press maybe?

SARAH

Mine's the chest press. Gives the pecs a decent workout.

ADAM

I noticed.

She smiles at the compliment and turns to the weight machine.

SARAH

Thanks. So say hello to my workout buddy, "Agrat".

(off his confusion)

A G - R - A - T. It's a kind of trust fund. How I could afford her.

ADAM

Trust fund? As in trust fund trust fund? Wow. This just keeps on getting better and better.

SARAH

Wanna see how she earns her keep?

ADAM

Absolutely. Want me to spot you?

SARAH

Sure, but I really don't want to get my new blouse all sweaty. Would you mind?

Sarah lowers her eyes, removes her blouse, and hands it to him.

ADAM

Sure thing. Glad to help. No prob.

She straddles the padded bench in front of the chest press, shifts her pelvis forward to get into a lifting position, spreads her legs apart for balance, and begins to lift.

Adam glances at the mirrored wall and sees that her skirt has ridden up her thighs and that her panties and the outline of her vulva now are visible.

He leers at the view as Sarah continues to lift, but his grin fades, he begins to perspire, and as he wipes his brow, he takes a large gulp of beer.

ADAM (cont'd)

Wow, I think that this is harder
on me than it is on you.

Adam wobbles to the free weight bench and bends down to put his beer mug on it, but he doesn't stop and topples face first onto the rubberized floor.

Sarah squeezes the pec deck pads together and pauses for a moment when she hears the soft THUD (o.s.) of his unconscious body hitting the floor.

SARAH

William fucking Blake. Perfect.

She looks up at the ceiling, GRUNTS, and resumes lifting.

FADE TO:

INT. SARAH'S EXERCISE ROOM — NIGHT — SUBJECTIVE CAMERA

The ceiling's acoustical tiles come into focus as "Rape Me" by Nirvana PLAYS at a high volume.

PAN TO MIRRORED WALL

Adam's reflection shows him lying on his side in a circle of light next to the weight machine.

His hands are cuffed behind him in black steel handcuffs, and he's naked except for a black leather hood with the mouth and eye openings unzipped, a leather thong, and a spiked collar that's attached to a five-foot-long black steel chain padlocked onto the recessed floor ring.

ADAM

God damn! What is this kinky shit?

In the mirror he sees himself roll onto his knees and rise to his feet as the MUSIC stops mid-chord.

ADAM (cont'd)

Donna! Where are you?

VICTIM (O.S.)
Donna! Where are you?

FLASH PAN TO TV MONITOR

Adam spins toward the voice and sees that the monitor has come to life with images from four different cameras.

SPLIT SCREEN HD VIDEO ON TV MONITOR

The screen splits into four simultaneous HD surveillance video recordings, one from each corner of the exercise room.

A male VICTIM, 30, is in the center of each video also wearing a black leather hood, thong, and collar chained to the floor.

His hands are cuffed behind him, and he's sitting on his heels next to the weight machine with his head bowed.

VICTIM (cont'd)
Please. I'm thirsty.

The door bursts open, and Sarah strides into the room, glowering at the Victim and slamming the door behind her.

ADAM (O.S.)
Holy shit. Donna?

SPLIT SCREEN ON TV MONITOR ENDS.

INT. SARAH'S EXERCISE ROOM — NIGHT — (HD VIDEO FLASHBACK)

Sarah's hair is in a tight ponytail, and she's wearing a white bra, garter belt, panties, and seamed nylons, all of which are sprinkled with a spray of rusty bloodstains.

There's a black paracord bracelet on her wrist, red stilettos on her feet, and red pentagram contact lenses in her eyes.

In her right hand she's carrying a piece of rolled black burlap and a sawback Bowie knife with machined slot cutouts, and she's holding a lidded plastic bowl full of water in her left.

A three-inch-long water bug shares the bowl of water with a mouthpiece of large pointed dental veneers.

A live version of "Midnight Rambler" by the Rolling Stones PLAYS softly as the Victim raises his head, and although the hood's mouth is open, the eyes slots are zipped closed and painted over with kitschy caricatures of human eyes.

VICTIM

Donna? Is that you?

Sarah shakes her head from side to side in resignation as she strides to the Victim, and when she bends over to put the bowl of water on the floor in front of him, she reveals a large cherry-red Aramaic tattoo on her lower back:

Ασμοδαϊος

She removes the bowl's lid, takes the mouthpiece out of it, scoops a small amount of water into her hand, and splashes it into the mouth opening of the Victim's hood.

VICTIM (cont'd)

Can I have some more? Please?

SARAH

I don't know if you deserve any more. You'll just make a mess.

VICTIM

I won't make a mess, I promise.

SARAH

Alright, but what do you say?

VICTIM

Thank you. Thank you very much.

SARAH

If you spill it, you won't get any more for a very long time.

VICTIM

I know! I promise I won't spill!

Sarah guides his head to the bowl, and when he begins to lap up the water, she shakes her head, looks at him with disgust, inserts the dental veneers in her mouth, and adjusts them.

SARAH

You know how I hate it when you make a mess.

Suddenly, the Victim's head bolts from the bowl, and he emits a piercing SCREAM of agony because the giant water bug is now fastened onto his tongue by its pincers.

He shakes his head from side to side in a frenzied panic, but the insect remains locked onto his protruding tongue, so he chomps down on it, lowers his head, and begins SPITTING chunks of it onto the black floor tiles.

SARAH (cont'd)

Ani mevin. Hu dibber.

[I understand. He has spoken.]

Holding the knife in her right hand in an edge-up hammer grip, Sarah unfurls the piece of black burlap revealing that it's an executioner's hood, which she pulls over her head.

She drops down onto one knee beside him, grabs the chain with her left hand, and pulls the collar taut.

The Victim GAGS, lifts his head, and his slimy mouth gapes open to reveal a watery chartreuse sludge has filled it and trickled down the hood's chin.

Holding the knife in her right hand in a hammer grip, she draws it behind her and swings it forward towards his anus with all her might.

HD VIDEO FLASHBACK ENDS.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE/EXERCISE ROOM — NIGHT

The Victim emits a bloodcurdling SHRIEK (o.s.), and Adam's mouth opens and his eyes widen as he gawks at the monitor.

After a moment, he grimaces, turns away from the TV, and winces as the SCREAMS (o.s.) crescendo.

ADAM

Jesus Christ.

When the screams stop, he opens his eyes and sees Sarah standing behind him in the reflection from the mirrored wall.

She's wearing the same white lingerie, stilettos, pentagram contacts, and a paracord bracelet, as well as a belt that holds a sheathed knife against her hip.

He spins toward her and sees that she has a glass of water in one hand and a tweed drawstring pouch in the other that's inscribed with crimson characters:

𐄂𐄃 x 𐄄 / 𐄅

She puts the glass of water on the console table, opens the bag, removes a box of erectile dysfunction tablets, and rattles it.

SARAH

Time to take your medicine.

When she sees a stream of urine begin to run down his leg and puddle on the floor, she frowns at it, lifts her gaze, and glowers at him while shaking her head.

SARAH (cont'd)

Now look at the mess you've made.

INT. SPORTS BAR & GRILL/BOOTH - DAY

A paper napkin falls on a small puddle of yellow liquid on a table, and a woman's hand wipes it up.

The hand belongs to BOBBI, 50, who's wearing a gray polo shirt and seated at a booth in a sports bar across the table from TUNI, 30, who's dressed in a white linen peasant blouse, and JERRY, 33, who's wearing a garish Hawaiian shirt.

Three glasses of lemonade sit on the table, and a baseball game PLAYS on video monitors scattered throughout the bar.

JERRY

I thought you detectives had a reputation for hard drinking.

BOBBI

Well, I guess we can't all be Philip Marlowe now, can we.

JERRY

Or Nancy Drew.

BOBBI

Wanna get any more clichés out of your system before we start?

JERRY

So which do you prefer? Gumshoe or private dick?

TUNI

Jerry, do you mind if we hear what Miz Tobin has to say?

BOBBI

Please, it's Bobbi. Okay?

(beat)

Great. First, nothing back from the cops or the N - C - I - C database. Second, he's not in a hospital or morgue on a John Doe.

Bobbi notices Tuni grimace slightly as she flips open a black leather notebook.

JERRY

You don't use a tablet?

BOBBI

Tablets are for headaches.

(beat)

Next, I can't find anyone who's seen him within the last week, none of his friends or co-workers. He hasn't used his credit cards, cell phone, or bank account, and he's not in any legal trouble. His credit rating is fine; he doesn't have a ton of debt; and he isn't into anybody for gambling or drugs or anything else, at least as far as I can tell. So, all of the typical reasons are dead ends.

JERRY

So he disappeared for no reason. That's great, but we were kinda wondering if you have any clues as to why he did, or are you clueless?

BOBBI

(glaring at Jerry)

Has he ever done anything like this before, Tuni?

TUNI

No. Never.

BOBBI

What about that time in college?

TUNI

I'm sorry. I don't know what you mean. What time in college?

BOBBI

When he got a room off campus his junior year so that he could study for his exams.

JERRY

So are you telling us to scour the Midwest for a thirty-year-old man who's gone to ground in a motel room so he can cram for his finals?

BOBBI

Listen son, I don't give enough of a shit about your mother's money to take this kinda crap from you, understand? Keep it up, and I'll walk right out that door, and you can find him yourself, okay?

TUNI

Jerry, please? This isn't helping us find Adam. So what can you tell us, Bobbi? Will the police help?

BOBBI

Maybe if he was rich or famous. Otherwise, don't hold your breath. It's legal to disappear, so the cops ain't gonna do much more than put him up on the NamUs website, and there's fifteen thousand missing men on it right now. But that's where I come in, and I do have some good news. I talked to a guy at O - E - M - C. He was able to I - D Adam's license plate from a couple of street cams.

(MORE)

BOBBI (cont'd)

They picked up his plate heading to the expressway and then exiting the tollway about an hour later.

TUNI

Surveillance cameras? That's great! Did they get any video of Adam?

BOBBI

No, just his car. It was probably him, but it coulda been anybody.

JERRY

The tollway? Where did he get off?

BOBBI

Northwest burbs. Out past O'Hare.

TUNI

What was he doing out there?

BOBBI

That's my question. Do either of you know why he might've gone all the way out there on a weeknight?

TUNI

No, I don't.

JERRY

Ya got me.

BOBBI

The reason I ask is that there isn't any record of him coming back into the city. Either that night or the next day. The suburbs don't have street cams, so he coulda taken another route back into the city, but why? And his car's still missing. Did he stop off someplace? Does he have any friends out there? Co-workers?

JERRY

Not that I know of.

TUNI

So was it a one way trip?

BOBBI

Could be, but I'm still digging,
and the cops have his plates, so
maybe they can turn something up.

(beat)

Tuni, I know that this isn't easy,
but how have the two of you been
getting along lately?

TUNI

Just fine. Great actually. He
seemed to be really excited about
the wedding. We were supposed to
be auditioning bands this weekend.

BOBBI

Did he stay in touch with any of
his former girlfriends?

TUNI

I don't think so. He was dating a
Tammy somebody when we met, but it
wasn't working out.

BOBBI

Cole. Married and moved to Boston.

TUNI

Why do you ask?

BOBBI

Well, we may have a lead.

JERRY

A lead?!

BOBBI

Yeah. The last time anybody saw
him was here at this bar.
According to his friends, he met a
woman here and then left with her.

TUNI

They left together?

BOBBI

Well, yeah. That's what Jeff said.

(MORE)

BOBBIE (cont'd)

They goaded him into approaching this woman, apparently, and the two of them left here together.

TUNI
What?.

JERRY
Those assholes.

BOBBI

Wait a minute, you guys. We can't rush to judgement here. We don't anything yet. Maybe he just gave her a lift someplace and then he stopped someplace else after.

JERRY

Goddamn it. I can't believe that he would pick up some slut in a bar and just disappear with her.

TUNI

Maybe she hurt him or is holding him hostage or something.

BOBBI

Well, it's possible, but unlikely. First, Jeff says he's sure that they didn't know each other, so that pretty much rules out revenge or reprisal. Second, nobody's made any ransom demands, and kidnapppers always want something, usually money and lots of it. If he's been snatched, we woulda heard.

JERRY

Maybe he hurt her.

BOBBI

I doubt it. If he's on the run, he probably woulda hit his bank account, or used a credit card, or borrowed money from somebody, or something before he skipped town.

JERRY

So it there anything we can do to help besides taping his picture onto street light poles?

BOBBI

Well, I'll check to see if I can find any more surveillance video, but, maybe you guys can help me by starting to work on the long shot.

TUNI

The long shot?

JERRY

Find the woman.

BOBBI

Right. We might not have a photo, but we do have a good description. Jeff said that she had a blemish or some kind of scar on her face. Inconspicuous, but it was there alright. Underneath her make-up. So if we find this woman, maybe we can see if she remembers Adam and knows what happened to him after they left here together.

TUNI

It's not much to go on, is it?

BOBBI

I know, but if you want to do something, this is it. And who knows? We might get lucky.

JERRY

Bad choice of words.

TUNI

Not funny, Jerry. Do you have to practice saying stupid shit, or does it just come to you naturally?

Jerry frowns as Bobbi lowers her head and chortles.

TUNI (cont'd)

Thanks for everything, Miz Tobin. Of course we'd be happy to help.

INT. JERRY'S SUV - DAY

Jerry and Tuni are sitting in the front seat of his off-road SUV as it idles at the curb of a residential city street.

TUNI (cont'd)

I think I'm having a nervous breakdown. I can't sleep, and I can't eat. I've already lost nearly five pounds.

JERRY

Just think of how great you're gonna look in your wedding dress.

TUNI

(opens her door)

I'll see you later, Jeremiah.

JERRY

Hey Tuni, c'mon. You gotta relax. You're too wired. Serenity now.

TUNI

(slams the door)

Goddamnit, Jerry! Why's everything a joke with you? Let's face facts. He's probably hiding out somewhere because he's been seeing somebody else. Or maybe this woman he met made him think twice about getting married. At least to me.

JERRY

Come on, Tuni. That's crazy. You know him. He loves you. You're all he ever talks about. And even if he did get cold feet, he didn't just pick up some tramp in a bar one night and disappear. No way.

TUNI

Well, maybe they weren't strangers. Maybe he's been seeing her all along. Maybe she's his secret lover, and they decided to run away together. Maybe they've been planning this for months, and --

JERRY

And horseshit! He doesn't have any secret lovers!

(MORE)

JERRY (cont'd)

I think he's told me about every girl he's ever met, much less dated. Ad nauseam. No, there's nobody else. Nobody. I'm sure of that. One hundred percent.

TUNI

I wish I was.

JERRY

And I'm sure that he's got a perfectly reasonable explanation for all this crap. We'll just ask him what it is when we find him.

TUNI

Or you can hold him down while I beat him like a rug.

JERRY

Deal. Now please try to relax.

Tuni opens her door as Jerry smiles and starts the engine.

INT. JERRY'S SUV — NIGHT

Jerry turns off his the SUV's engine, opens the door, and exits wearing khaki cargo shorts and a gingham shirt.

JERRY (cont'd)

Great. Another boring shithole.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK — NIGHT

Jerry approaches an urban sports bar on a sultry summer evening as a man and woman emerge from it and begin walking toward him. The woman is Sarah wearing a black camisole, distressed black jeans, black lipstick and nail polish, and a spiky black wig.

TOBEY, 38, is next to her, and he's wearing jeans and a black T-shirt with the logo of a defunct Chicago record label on it.

As they walk near him, Jerry does a subtle double take on Sarah's facial scar, but he recovers his equanimity and scowls as he pats his pockets.

JERRY (cont'd)

Damn. Where is it? Oh great.

When they pass him, he turns around and begins to follow them.

TOBEY

Sorry about your girlfriend.

SARAH

It's OK. She said it was a maybe.

TOBEY

Gotcha. Well, here we are.

Tobey removes a key ring from his pocket as they come to a stop in front of a 1965 Coupe DeVille convertible.

SARAH

Oh my God! Look at the size of this monster. Well, this is really gonna be a special treat for me.

TOBEY

Hey, no problem. It's my pleasure.

SARAH

Well, I certainly hope so.

She puts her hand on the back of Tobey's neck and lifts her face toward him.

He leans down to kiss her when Jerry approaches them WHISTLING "My Kind of Town".

Tobey turns his head to glance at Jerry, which spoils the moment, and Sarah follows Tobey's gaze, knitting her brow.

Tobey turns toward the car and opens the passenger door, ignoring Jerry as he passes them, but Sarah scowls at him as he walks down the street toward his SUV.

INT. JERRY'S PARKED SUV – NIGHT

Jerry's SUV is parked under a suburban street light across a dark and quiet street from a modest ranch house with a 1965 Coupe DeVille parked in the driveway.

He's looking out of the car's side window and sees silhouettes of two people in the house through the open slats of the living room window's wooden venetian blinds

When one of the occupants closes the blinds and blocks his view, he glances down at his dashboard clock and sees that it's 11:45.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JERRY'S PARKED SUV – NIGHT (LATER)

Jerry's dashboard clock shows that it's a few minutes past 1:30, and he yawns as he looks back out the side window of his SUV at the dark house across the lawn.

He jumps when a cell phone lying on the dashboard begins to PLAY "My Kind of Town" and announces "TUNI RAPHAEL".

JERRY
(into phone)
Hey Tuni. Where are you now?

EXT/INT. SARAH'S HOUSE – NIGHT – TRACKING

across the lawn toward the dark living room window.

JERRY (V.O.) (cont'd)
Okay. Well, you're only about half
any hour away. I'm just sitting
here and watching the house of
that couple I told you about.

Through a gap at the bottom of the venetian blinds, and into

SARAH'S LIVING ROOM

Strips of light from the street cut across a murky room and reveal the stationary silhouette of the back of a man's head and his bare shoulders as he sits motionless on the sofa.

JERRY (V.O.) (cont'd)
Well, I saw two people in a room
when I got here, but the house
looks deserted now, so I think I'm
gonna go take a look around.

He's facing the dark TV monitor, which makes him appear to be transfixed by the empty screen.

Out of the living room and down the hall to

SARAH'S BACK BEDROOM

An unmade bed is directly opposite an adjustable gaming table that has a 16 channel NVR for IP security cameras and a 38" curved IPS monitor on it and an ergonomic chair underneath it.

JERRY (V.O.) (cont'd)

I know, I know. But if I talk to Bobbi, she'll just tell me to stay put, and I may be onto something here. I'm not gonna let it just slip through my fingers.

The monitor's incidental light provides the room with its sole source of illumination, and its screen is split into sixteen HD video feeds from various locations around the house, but there is movement only in the four images from its upper left corner.

JERRY (V.O.) (cont'd)

I understand that, but so what? If they see me, they see me.

INT. SARAH'S EXERCISE ROOM - NIGHT - FOUR HD VIDEO FEEDS

The screen splits into four simultaneous high-definition video feeds from the ceiling cameras in each corner of the room.

JERRY (V.O.) (cont'd)

I'll just make up some bullshit excuse and get the hell outta here. And B - S is my strong suit, right? Like other men in oils or clay.

The HD feeds show Sarah wearing black nail polish and lipstick, white 1950s lingerie, nylons, and red stilettos as she kneels next the weight machine beside Tobey's inert and supine body.

He's still wearing his T-shirt, but a studded black collar that's attached to the recessed floor ring by a black chain is now around his neck, and he's naked below the waist except for a black leather thong.

His hands are cuffed behind him, and Sarah's large sawback knife and a leather mask lie beside him.

Sarah picks up the mask, slips it over his head, and adjusts it so that its eye and mouth openings are positioned properly.

She then pulls the ends of the leather lace behind the mask taut so that it fits snugly and ties them into a bow knot.

JERRY (V.O.) (cont'd)

Fine, I'll see you in a few and go ahead call Bobbi, but I'm still gonna go look around. I'm at ...

She bends down, puts her hands on either side of his face and slides her tongue into his mouth.

After a moment, she rises back to her knees, picks up her knife, and slides it under Tobey's T-shirt up his chest until its tip protrudes from the crew neck as the split screen ends.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SARAH'S EXERCISE ROOM - NIGHT

The tip of Sarah's knife protrudes from the collar of Tobey's T-shirt as "Man in Black" by Devil Doll PLAYS loudly.

Sarah cuts the crew neck in half, slices the shirt down the middle, hones the blade on his chest, and then smiles as she slides the knife into one of the shirt's short sleeves.

EXT. SARAH'S CURB - NIGHT

Jerry is standing behind his car and holding a crowbar when it BEEPS softly as he closes the open cargo hatch.

He then takes his cell phone out of his pocket, looks up and down the deserted street, turns on the flashlight, couches down, and starts to trot across the street toward Sarah's front lawn.

INT. JEN'S BABY NURSERY - NIGHT

JEN, 28, is wearing a bathrobe and burping a baby in a nursery in a house directly across the street from Sarah's.

She hears a car's cargo hatch CLOSE followed by a soft BEEP, looks up with a furrowed brow, strolls to an open window above a crib, and peers out of it.

JEN'S P.O.V. – OUT THE NURSERY WINDOW

She sees an SUV parked under a streetlight in front of her house and a crouching man across the street who's shining a light on Sarah's front lawn as he trots toward her house.

JEN (O.S.)

Sandy!

The man glance over both shoulders as he creeps up to the living room window, douses the light, puts it in his pocket, cups his face, and peers through the window for a moment.

BACK TO SCENE

Jen puts the baby in its crib and looks back out the window.

SANDY (O.S.)

Yeah, Jen, wassup?

JEN'S P.O.V. – OUT THE NURSERY WINDOW

Jerry is still crouching down, but he's retrieved the light from his pocket, and he turns on as he trots to the side of the house and disappears around the corner.

BACK TO SCENE

Jen takes a cell phone out of her pocket and swipes it.

JEN

(into phone)

Yes, I'd like to report something suspicious. I saw a man across the street sneaking around and peeping into a window.

EXT. SARAH'S BACK BEDROOM WINDOW – NIGHT

Jerry's standing behind Sarah's house and shining his cell phone's light on a window in front of him when it begins PLAYING "My Kind of Town".

Jerry mutters a curse, drops the crowbar onto the grass, turn off the phone, and slips it into his pocket.

He bends over, presses his nose against the window, cups his hands around his face, and peers through a narrow gap between the blinds and the sill.

He sees an unmade bed on one side of the room, and a 38" curved IPS Monitor on the other, which is lighting the room dimly, but he can only see the side of the monitor.

He crinkles his nose, grimaces, and SNORTS as he looks down and sees a small window that's near ground level.

He takes his phone out of his pocket, turns on the light back on, shines it on the window, and sees thick curtains that have been sewn together and stapled to the sill behind the glass.

He turns the cell phone light off, puts it back in his pocket, and looks around to see if he's being observed.

Seeing no one, he takes a knee in front of the window, runs his hands around the frame, and picks up the crowbar.

Inserting it into the windowsill, he begins wiggle the crowbar back and forth.

INT. SARAH'S EXERCISE ROOM - NIGHT

"Man in Black" by Devil Doll continues to PLAY at a high volume while Tobey, who's wearing only a mask, collar, and thong, lies unconscious and supine next to the weight machine on top of his sliced T-shirt.

Sarah's wearing her lingerie and sitting on his groin while she MOANS and grinds her pelvis on the thong.

She's clutching her knife in one hand and gripping the leather mask with the other her when a siren begins to BLARE, and a strobe light near the door starts flashing.

Startled, she jumps off Tobey, drops the knife, crab crawls to the nearest corner.

When her back hits the wall, she draws her knees to her chest, wraps her arms around her shins and begins to HYPERVENTILATE.

INT. PARENTS' ATTIC - DAY (DAWN) - (BLACK-AND-WHITE FLASHBACK)

Sarah is wearing a Rosie the Riveter T-shirt and pajama bottoms as she stands in a silent and murky attic.

Through shafts of light and dust motes, she sees the back of a person with long black hair, white 1950s lingerie, and nylon stockings hanging from a rafter above an overturned chair.

A red high heel dangles from one foot, and the other is unshod.

Sarah steps toward the corpse, extends a hand and twists the hanging body to reveal Daddy's body wearing a paracord bracelet, a black wig slightly askew, ruby lipstick, and heavy mascara.

Sarah's eyes widen in horror when she looks up at his face, which is a cyanotic death mask: protruding tongue; bulging, lifeless eyes; and an elongated neck bent unnaturally.

When a giant water bug crawls out of his mouth and spreads its wings, she jumps back, GASPS, and prepares to scream.

BLACK-AND-WHITE FLASHBACK ENDS.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SARAH'S EXERCISE ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah EXHALES deeply as she regains her composure, rises, and turns off the alarm and the music.

She then kneels down next to Tobey, grabs his face with both hands, grins, and kisses his lips through the hood.

She rolls him into a prone position, and as she's checking his collar, chain, and handcuffs, a giant water bug falls onto his naked back and bites him with its pincers.

Neither she nor Tobey react to it, however, so she stands up, retrieves her knife, and crosses toward the door as a host of water bugs begin to stream out of her hair.

EXT. SARAH'S BACK BASEMENT WINDOW - NIGHT

As he kneels next to the open basement window, Jerry rips open the curtain and sees black steel security bars behind it.

As he lies down, he grimaces, shakes his head, and SNORTS.

He grabs his cell phone with his right hand, takes a deep breath, and inserts his head and right arm into the window.

INT. SARAH'S BACK BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dozens of water bugs crawl over Sarah as she sits down on the bed, tosses the knife onto a pillow next to her, pulls off a red pump, and as she unrolls a pair of black cotton socks, she hears a faint RIPPING sound from underneath her bedroom window.

She cocks her head toward the sound, picks up the knife, and strides to the gaming table with a lopsided gait leaving a trail of water bugs in her wake.

With her free hand, she picks up a remote control, points it at the monitor, and sixteen small videos are replaced by one large thermal image.

The lower half a man in short pants who's lying prone on the grass halfway into the basement window fills the screen.

SARAH

Son of a bitch. Who the fuck --?

INT. SARAH'S BACK BASEMENT WINDOW - NIGHT

Jerry's arm is between the security bars of a window high above the floor of a cluttered and dingy basement that's lit by a dusty forty-watt light bulb hanging from the ceiling.

His face is pressed against the bars, and he's looking at a stainless steel playground slide in the center of the room.

The top of the slide reaches the basement's ceiling, and the bottom is inside a large white claw footed bathtub, which is next to a steel pail full of bottles of cleanser.

INTERCUT BACK BEDROOM/BASEMENT WINDOW

BEDROOM

Sarah is free of bugs and standing next to the window as she raises her knife to eye level and uses it to lift one of the slats of the venetian blinds up a few inches.

BASEMENT

When Jerry turns on his phone's light, he sees a large galvanized steel livestock tank filled with dirt on the floor beneath him with dozens of large Burgundy snails inside it.

He scowls when he sees them slithering among small blocks of tofu and pieces of vegetables beneath a two-inch wide strip of copper foil tape that's been wrapped around the tank's top rim.

BEDROOM

Sarah peers out the window and sees the lower half of a prone man in short pants lying on the grass and facing her house.

BASEMENT

Half a dozen more oval stock tanks filled with dirt, vegetables, and snails are arrayed neatly across the basement floor, and an unfilled tank containing large bags of topsoil, fertilizer, mulch, ammonium nitrate, and quicklime sits in the corner.

A humidifier and a cardboard box with the words "LIVE REDWORMS OPEN IMMEDIATELY" stamped on its side sit against a wall underneath a practice target of a muscular man with a crude caricature of male genitalia drawn on it.

BEDROOM

Sarah storms back to her bed with uneven strides.

BASEMENT

A large mound of sawdust, a metal gasoline can, and a space heater are next to a washing machine and clothes drier against the opposite wall, and two twenty-gallon glass tanks sit on matching steel aquarium stands between the washer and drier.

BEDROOM

Sarah has a knee and her free hand on her bed, and she GRUNTS as she stabs and slashes one of her pillows in a frenzy.

BASEMENT

The glass tank on the right contains a swampy mixture of guppies, rocks, twigs, and giant water bugs in brackish water.

The tank on the left is filled with dozens of Venus flytraps whose dark red lobes and long green cilia gape open.

A jar of freeze-dried bloodworms sits under an aquarium stand next to large bags of peat moss, silica sand, and perlite.

BEDROOM

Sarah stands next to the bed PANTING as she stares at the knife, which is implanted to its hilt in the shreds of the pillow.

BASEMENT

The light slides up the wall to reveal that glyphs have been written on the dingy white wall in thick carmine letters:

ƆWƆG W ƆWƆG W ƆWƆG W ƆWƆG W ƆWƆG W
 ΔWƆG W ƆWƆG W ƆWƆG W ƆWƆG W ƆWƆG W

Jerry squints, wrinkles his brow, and with a slight shake of his head, he shifts the light to his right, and sees a plain wooden staircase that leads up above the ceiling

Six black leather hoods with crude caricatures of human lips and eyes painted on them have been nailed into the banister.

BEDROOM

Sarah's sitting on the bed and scowling at the monitor as she takes off her other high heel and flings it across the room.

BASEMENT

The ceiling above him THUDS softly, so Jerry shifts his light to the sound, but he sees only a faint trickle of falling dust.

His light follows the dust down to the basement floor, and he sees a plastic pail of sulfuric acid drain opener, a small wine press, a dry-flush portable toilet, and tower air purifier in the center of the room next to the bathtub.

A garden hose, car battery, large spool of fishing line, and dirty plastic tarp are inside the tub, on top of which are a pair of black butyl gloves and a full-face respirator.

The respirator's glass face mask glints back at him when the lower half of his body is illuminated by the harsh white light of two powerful flashlights.

PENNI (O.S.)

Freeze! Police!

Jerry jolts at the command and smacks his head again the top of the window frame.

JERRY

Ouch! Shit!

EXT. BASEMENT WINDOW - NIGHT (NIGHT VISION HD BODY CAM VIDEO)

Two hands hold a flashlight and a pistol in a Harries grip as they point at a man in short pants who's lying on the lawn with his head and arm inside a basement window.

BILL (O.S.)

Get out of there, asshole. Slowly.

Jerry begins to extricate himself from the basement window.

JERRY

Okay, okay. Calm down. I'm coming.

PENNI (O.S.)

Drop the phone and show me your hands. Now!

EXT. BASEMENT WINDOW - NIGHT

Two uniformed police officers, PENNI, 38, and BILL, 33, stand over Jerry as they point their guns and flashlights at him.

He drops his phone on the grass, looks up at them into the light, shades his eyes with his hand, and begins to rise.

PENNI

Back down! Get on your stomach.

Jerry lies back down on the lawn in front of the window.

JERRY

Relax. I can explain. I'm looking for my brother, who's --

BILL

Shut up and extend your arms!

When Jerry complies, Penni holsters her gun and flashlight, kneels on Jerry's shoulder, twists his arm behind his back, and cuffs his wrist.

PENNI

Give me your other hand.

Penni cuffs his other hand, pats his back, rolls him onto his side, rubs his chest, and shoves her hand into his groin.

JERRY

Hey! What the fuck?

PENNI

Okay. He's clean.

As Bill holsters his weapon, Penni rolls Jerry back onto his stomach, removes a wallet from his back pocket, and tosses it to her partner who opens it up as she rises to her feet.

BILL

Upsy-daisy, Jeremiah.

Both cops bend down, grab an upper arm, and stand him up.

PENNI

Are you alone, asshole?

JERRY

Yes! I'm looking for my brother ...

Penni jerks him toward the front of the house.

PENNI

Make sure the basement's clean,
will ya Bill?

Bill squats down next to the window, grimaces, SNORTS, and points his flashlight into the basement.

BILL

Jesus Christ! Did he shit himself?

EXT. SARAH'S CURB/SQUAD CAR – NIGHT

A squad car with its emergency light flashing is parked in front of Sarah's driveway behind the huge Coupe DeVille.

Jerry's scowling in the back seat while Bill's sitting in the front seat and typing on a laptop as a late model sedan squeaks to a stop behind it.

Tuni emerges from the sedan wearing a white guayabera dress, and when she looks toward the house, she sees a cop on a front porch talking with a young woman in a robe behind a screen door.

She approaches the squad car, and she can see Jerry speaking to Bill, but she can't hear what he's saying because the car's doors and windows are closed.

TUNI

Jerry, what happened?!

He turns toward her, frowns, and replies with a muffled shout.

JERRY

I think it's her!

BILL

Will you shut the fuck up?!

When Bill turns, he sees Tuni, so he turns off the emergency lights and steps out of the squad car.

TUNI

Did you see Adam?

JERRY

No, but I've been trying to tell Turner and Hooch here that --

BILL

Excuse me. Do you know this guy?

TUNI

Yes, he's my brother's fiancée, and ... I mean he's my fiancée's brother, and he disappeared, so we're looking—

BILL

Well, which is it?

Tuni sees the front door of the house swing shut as the cop on the porch closes her notebook and turns toward the squad car.

TUNI

We're looking for my missing fiancée. That's his brother.

BILL

And you think he's in there?

JERRY

Yes, for Christ's sake!

BILL

Will you shut the hell up?

TUNI

I guess so.

PENNI

(as she joins them)

What's going on?

TUNI

We're looking for my missing fiancée, Adam, and this is his brother, Jerry.

PENNI

Did you file a missing person's report?

TUNI

Yes. In Chicago, almost two weeks ago. They put out an A - P - B, and he's in the NamUs database.

PENNI

So why do you think he's in there?

JERRY

Because there's weird writing on the basement wall, and leather hoods, and --

BILL

Will. You. Shut. Up.

(to Tuni)

Listen, I looked in the basement, and I didn't see any hostages.

(MORE)

BILL (cont'd)

There's nothin' down there except a couple of livestock tanks, a kids' slide, and some storage crap. I saw the leather hoods, too, but kinky shit ain't illegal so it ain't none of our business. And we've seen weirder, right Penni? Remember that guy with the dog and the peanut butter?

TUNI

But he was last seen with a woman who resembles her description.

PENNI

Okay, let me get this straight. The missing guy's your fiancée, and he might have been last seen with the woman who lives here, and this guy here's his brother, right?

TUNI

Yes! Yes, that's right! Thank God. Can you help us?

PENNI

So why didn't he just ring the doorbell and ask her instead of trying to break into her house in the middle of the night?

TUNI

Well gee, I don't--

JERRY

Because she kidnapped him!

BILL

Kidnapped? C'mon, pal, did you see any hostages in the basement?

JERRY

Well, that doesn't mean she --

Bill smiles as he slams shuts the driver's side door, which makes Jerry's SPEECH unintelligible.

PENNI

So kidnapped, huh? Got any ransom demands? Anybody ask you to commit any crimes?

TUNI

No. Well, not yet anyway.

PENNI

How old is he?

TUNI

Thirty-one.

PENNI

Height and weight?

TUNI

Six feet and about one eighty.

PENNI

Any disabilities?

TUNI

Look, officers --

PENNI

No, miss, you look. You think that the woman who lives here kidnapped your young, healthy fiancée, but forgot to make any ransom demands. So then your brother-in-law-to-be here decides to rescue the poor guy by busting into her basement at two o'clock in the morning.

TUNI

I know it sounds funny, but—

BILL

Funny? It's friggin' hilarious.

TUNI

Well, can't you just search her house to see if he's there or not?

PENNI

No we can't. We need probable cause that some kind of crime has been committed or that there's some kind of emergency in order to search a home without a warrant.

BILL

Okay. Look, let's say you're on the level and telling us the truth. But maybe he's missing because he wants to be missing. That's not illegal. He's a big boy and doesn't need your permission.

PENNI

Sorry, but without probable cause we need a warrant to search her place unless she consents. Otherwise it's illegal.

BILL

If we tried to force our way in there, she'd probably sue the town. And she'd win, and we'd get fired.

TUNI

But Jerry said he saw --

PENNI

I know. He told us. Loudly and repeatedly. But weird isn't illegal. We can't just barge in there cuz you want us to.

BILL

Look, we caught him red handed hanging out of her basement window, so he's gotta say something to us, and it probably ain't gonna be "Ya got me coppers!"

PENNI

I'm sorry, miss, but there's nothing we can do.

ANGLELA

Nothing?

BILL

Sorry. No hinky; no searchie.

TUNI

Well then, can't you just go up there and ask for her permission, if that's what you need?

PENNI

I already did. Even though your friend never got inside the house, I asked her if she wanted me to check her basement, just in case. And she said no, which is fine by me. Her decision. But now you want me to go back up there again and ask her to let me search her home in the middle of the night because you think that your boyfriend might be in there with her? Sorry, but that ain't gonna happen.

BILL

If we did that to you, you'd call the station house in the morning and complain, and we'd get our asses chewed out royally. Or fired.

TUNI

Well, I dunno. Can't you just like pretend or something?

BILL

Pretend? You want us to lie?

PENNI

Okay. Enough of this shit. Here's the deal. We're taking your boyfriend here to the station and booking him on attempted burglary. He's gonna spend the night in jail, and go to court in the morning. If he was my friend, I'd get him a lawyer. C'mon, Bill, let's go.

As Tuni begins walking back to her car and MUTTERING to herself, one of the wooden slats on the venetian blinds covering Sarah's living room window rises.

INT. SARAH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah's carrying a sheathed Bowie knife as she enters the living room wearing 1950s lingerie, nylons, red stilettos, and pentagram contact lens.

The room is lit solely by thin horizontal strips of light through the blinds from the streetlight outside the house and a soft red bias lighting behind the dark TV monitor.

Ignoring the stationary silhouette of a man sitting on the sofa and facing the black TV monitor, she strides to the window, raises one of the slats with the knife, and peers through it.

SARAH'S P.O.V. - THROUGH THE WINDOW

At the curb in front of her house, she sees the cops getting into their squad car as a young woman trots toward a sedan that's parked behind it.

BACK TO SCENE

Sarah drops the slat, strolls across the room to the sofa, and sits down next to the motionless man without acknowledging him.

Although he remains immobile as he continues to face the silent monitor, she puts her arm around his rigid shoulders, picks up a remote control, points it at the TV, and snuggles up next him as it comes to life.

SARAH'S P.O.V. - HD VIDEO ON TV MONITOR

A ceiling surveillance camera shows a man who's naked except for a black leather hood, leather thong, and a spiked collar that's chained to the floor.

He's kneeling next to a Universal weight machine with his head bowed and his hands cuffed behind him.

Sarah struts into the room wearing her white 1950s lingerie that's sprinkled with droplets of dried blood, nylons, red stilettos, a paracord bracelet, and pentagram contact lenses.

She's carrying a rolled piece of black burlap in one hand and a sawback Bowie knife with machined slot cutouts in the other.

SARAH (ON TV)

Hi, Sweet Pea.

As the man raises his head, the video shows that the hood's mouth and eye openings have been zipped shut, and that garish caricatures of human eyes and lips have been painted over them.

SARAH (ON TV) (cont'd)

Have we been a good boy?

HD VIDEO ON TV MONITOR ENDS.

EXT. SARAH'S CURB - NIGHT

Bobbi's standing next to Jerry's vacant SUV wearing a gray oxford shirt, black chinos, and a black linen bomber jacket.

She glances into the SUV, reaches into a pocket, removes a piece of paper, unfolds it, and sees that it's upside down:

1570215

bbb

She spins it 180 degrees and crosses the street to check it against the number painted on the curb in front of her car.

BOBBI

So where the hell is everybody?

EXT. SARAH'S FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Bobbi's hand is poised to ring the doorbell, but she hears a muffled GROAN (o.s.) from within the house and pauses.

She steps off the porch and tiptoes to the living room window. The wooden venetian blinds have been lowered, but she crouches down to the sill, cups her hands around her eyes, and peers through the narrow gap at the bottom.

EXT. SARAH'S LIVING ROOM WINDOW - NIGHT

Bobbi sees the silhouette of a man sitting on a sofa and facing a large TV monitor that's framed by soft red bias lighting.

A woman is sitting on the man and facing the monitor, too, as she bounces up and down on his lap rhythmically, but except for a slight swaying as she bounces on him, the man remains completely stationary.

BOBBI'S P.O.V. — HD VIDEO ON TV MONITOR

shows a woman with a faint burn scar on her face wearing white lingerie, nylons, and red heels standing with her arms akimbo next to a man who's sitting on his heels next to a universal weight machine with his hands cuffed behind him .

The man is naked except for a leather hood that has caricatures of human eyes and lips painted on it, a leather thong, and a spiked collar that has been chained to a recessed floor ring.

The man raises his head as she lowers herself into a squat/kneel in front of him, grabs the chain, pulls it taut, and gives the mask a hard SLAP.

She drops the chain, picks a black burlap hood up from the floor, puts it over her head, and then grabs a sawback Bowie knife that had been lying next to it.

As she rises, she seizes the chain with her free hand, yanks him to his feet, and places the tip of the blade against his skin between his navel and his pubic bone

His abdomen flinches as the knife draws a drop of blood.

BACK TO SCENE

Bobbi's hands grip the sill as she gapes through the window.

When she hears a soft female GRUNT followed immediately by a piercing male SHRIEK, she grimaces, and her knuckles whiten.

She drops her head and puffs out her cheeks as she listens to the victim's muffled SCREAMS increase in pitch and intensity.

BOBBI (cont'd)

Shit!

When the screaming stops, she raises her head and peers through the narrow gap between the blinds and the sill again.

The silhouettes of the stationary man and bouncing woman on the sofa continue to face the TV monitor.

BOBBI'S P.O.V. — HD VIDEO ON TV MONITOR

reveals a man with numerous deep stab wounds in his back lying face-down in a large pool of blood on the floor.

The woman has been sprayed with fresh splatter stains and is towering over him while she holds a bloody knife in one hand and an executioner's hood in the other.

As the man's body twitches beneath her, she wipes the hood across her brow and the blade across her thigh, which leaves a bloody smear behind.

She tosses the hood aside, kneels down into the pool of blood, caresses a buttock, lifts the thong's waistband, slides the knife under it, and slices it open.

BACK TO SCENE

The woman on the sofa emits a guttural GROAN, slides off the stationary man, removes a plush snail puppet from her hand, tosses it on the sofa, pulls up her panties, and stands up.

Now clad in the same lingerie as the woman on the monitor, she points a remote at the TV and turns it off, which darkens the room except for the red bias lighting from behind the screen.

Finally, she tosses the remote onto the sofa next to the rigid man as she turns away from the TV and toward the window.

EXT. SARAH'S LIVING ROOM WINDOW - NIGHT

Bobbi ducks beneath the sill so that she's squatting under the window with her hands on her knees as she shakes her head back and forth in disbelief, stares at the ground in front of her.

She then looks over her shoulder back up to the window, sees nothing, and starts running back to her car in a crouch.

BOBBI (cont'd)
Too old for this shit.

EXT. SARAH'S CURB/BOBBI'S CAR - NIGHT

Bobbi's finger is poised over her cell phone when she pauses.

BOBBI (cont'd)
(shaking the phone)
Motherfuck! "Yes, officer, I was peeping in her window when I saw ... " Shit! Goddamnit.

INT. BOBBI'S CAR - NIGHT

Bobbi's sitting in the driver's seat of her car.

She tosses her cell phone onto the passenger's seat, opens the glove compartment, takes out a .38 caliber revolver, checks the ammunition and puts it in her pocket.

BOBBI (cont'd)

Gonna lose my goddamn license for
that fucking moron.

Reaching back into the glove compartment, she removes an infrared flashlight that she drops onto her lap and a black leather pouch that she puts into her other jacket pocket.

EXT. SARAH'S FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Bobbi's on one knee in front of a door, which is slightly ajar.

She puts two thin metal picklocks inside a black leather pouch, rises to her feet, and zips the pouch closed.

She puts the pouch into an empty pocket and removes her revolver from the other pocket.

As she slides the front door open, she pauses to check the crack between the door and the jamb, sees nothing, opens the door wider, and slides into the entryway.

INT. SARAH'S ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

FLASH INSERT: CRIMSON UNICURSAL HEXAGRAM.

She eases the front door closed and glances over her shoulder at the wall where she sees a ring of keys hanging from a green, cast-iron, snail wall hook next to a disarmed security keypad.

INT. SARAH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

She slips into the living room where the red bias light reveals that a pair of motionless bare feet, suspended in midair and parallel to the floor, protrude from behind the sofa's armrest.

Bobbi freezes and slides the flashlight out of her pocket.

She turns on its red beam, points it and the revolver at the sofa, and tiptoes toward the feet.

BOBBI'S P.O.V. — A LIFE-SIZE SEX DOLL ON THE SOFA

A life-sized naked male sex doll is a seated position and facing the TV monitor but lying on its side across the cushions.

Shining her flashlight on its face, she sees that the word "CESARE has been written on its forehead in black lipstick.

The beam pans down the doll's torso, past a snail puppet on the doll's hand, and halts on a large silicone phallus between its legs that glistens in the scarlet light.

Suddenly, in her peripheral vision she sees the mannequin's left eyelid flutter once in the darkness as if it's winking at her almost imperceptibly from its shadowy face.

BACK TO SCENE

Bobbi jumps back, points the red beam at the mannequin's face, and raises her gun in self-defense, but she regains her composure when she sees that the doll's face is inanimate.

She puffs out her cheeks, exhales, and whispers to herself.

BOBBI

Chill the fuck out.

A serving tray with two beer mugs and a plate of partially eaten pizza sits on the coffee table in front of the sofa, so she looks up at the kitchen door, and advances toward it.

INT. SARAH'S HALLWAY — NIGHT

Bobbi's holding her gun in a Temple Index position and her dark flashlight is by her side as she stands in a murky hallway between two doors that are across the hall from one another.

The door on her right is closed, but the door on her left is slightly ajar, so she eases that door open.

The soft light from the street through the venetian blinds shows her that the room appears to be an unoccupied bedroom.

INT. SARAH'S MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

She closes the door behind her, turns on the green beam of her flashlight, and points it at an open suitcase on the unmade bed, which is overflowing with woman's clothing and lying next to a leather cosmetic case inscribed with the word "AGRAT".

She goes to the foot of the bed and checks underneath it, but she sees nothing except a cordless phone handset and dust.

She stands back up and notices two framed photographs on a marble dresser top next to the bed.

One is a snapshot of a teenaged boy wearing a tuxedo and a young woman in a strapless dress standing in front of a sports car parked on a driveway.

She bends down to scrutinize the photo and sees that the pupils of the boy in the photo have been poked out.

The other photo shows an impassive ten-year-old girl wearing a bathing suit and sitting on the shoulders of a smiling middle-aged man who's standing on lakeside beach, and although the man is squinting into the sun, she's staring directly into the camera's lens with empty, reptilian eyes.

She turns and shines the green light on a closed door across the room, creeps toward it, turns the knob, and then shoves it open to reveal an unoccupied walk-in closet.

She sweeps the closet with the light and sees shoes, wigs, and dirty clothes lying on the floor, but when she turns back to the bedroom, the light illuminates numerous selfies of Sarah in various disguises stapled to a wall.

After scrutinizing them for a moment, she pockets one, leaves the doorway, and creeps across the bedroom to the

MASTER BATHROOM

Bobbi opens the door, sweeps it from the threshold with her green beam, and sees a cluttered but otherwise empty room.

As she turns back to the bedroom, her light flits across the mirrored medicine cabinet door to reveal Asmodeus's snarling face flashes in the mirror, but Bobbi doesn't react to the fleeting image.

INT. SARAH'S MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bobbi's standing in front of the closed bedroom door as she puts her revolver in her pocket.

As she eases the door open to peer out into the empty hallway, her flashlight flickers into the open closet and reveals Asmodeus standing in the open doorframe and leering at her.

In a blurred instant, he becomes a snarling monster standing behind Bobbi's back as she looks out the bedroom door.

He's now more than seven feet tall, his head is bald and cherry red, his ears and teeth are large and pointed, he has two sets of canary yellow eyes with vertical black irises set deeply beneath a narrow forehead and a protruding brow.

The creature's huge arm is extended fully so that the handgun's muzzle is only an inch away from the back of Bobbi's neck.

As the revolver approaches her skin, the fine hairs on the back of her neck rise in unison, her eyes widen, and she tries to look over her shoulder without moving her head.

She eases her gun back out of her pocket and spins around, crouching and raising the gun and flashlight into a firing position, but she's alone.

She flashes the green beam around the vacant room, EXHALES quietly, and shakes her head.

INT. SARAH'S EXERCISE ROOM - NIGHT

As Bobbi creeps into the exercise room, she sees the dim outlines of a large amorphous mound lying on the floor.

With her eyes glued to it, she eases the door closed, turns on the flashlight, and points both it and her gun at the shape.

BOBBI'S P.O.V. - THE MOUND ON THE FLOOR

is an inert man bathed in a pool of soft green light who's sitting on his heels with his hands cuffed behind him and bent forward at the waist so that his forehead rests on the floor.

He's naked except for a leather hood, leather thong, and a spiked collar that's chained to a recessed floor ring.

BACK TO SCENE

Bobbi slides the toggle of a dimmer switch on the wall up slightly, turns off her flashlight, and pockets it as she returns her gaze to the man who lifts his head off the floor.

She can see his bleary eyes blink rapidly behind the hood, so she hurries over to him, bends down, and whispers.

BOBBI

Jerry? Jerry, are you okay?

As Bobbi extends her hand toward him, his pupils focus over her shoulder, his eyes widen, and he emits a muffled SHOUT, which causes her to glance up at the mirrored wall.

In the reflection, Bobbi sees Sarah who's completely bald behind mirrored sunglasses standing behind her in the open doorway and snarling at her through pointed dental veneers.

She's dressed completely in black: sweatpants, sneakers, gloves, baseball cap, and a hoodie with a vaporwave image of the face of Michelangelo's statue of David on its chest.

She's holding a gleaming sawback Bowie knife in a reverse grip in her right hand, and a canary yellow Taser in her left.

Sarah points the Taser at Bobbi, and two red dots from its targeting laser flutter on her back while an electrical arc dances between the poles on the front of the CRACKLING weapon.

Bobbi spins toward Sarah with a swiftness that belies her age and begins to lift her gun when Sarah pulls the Taser's trigger.

Colorful confetti and two small steel darts connected to thin wires burst out of the front of the weapon and hit the spinning Bobbi who grimaces, spasms, and ...

INSERT SARAH'S HOUSE – NIGHT

A woman's faint GRUNT wafts from within Sarah's desolate house.

BACK TO SCENE

A rigid Bobbi lies supine on the floor, and Sarah holds down the Taser's trigger as she approaches her while Tobey scrambles as far away from them as his chain permits.

Sarah straddles Bobbi's torso, and sits down on her hips.

When she tosses the Taser aside, Bobbi muscles slacken, but she remains inert and incognizant.

Sarah then places the tip of the Bowie knife against her throat between her jaw and her larynx, tilts the knife to a 45 degree angle, and puts her left hand on its pommel.

SARAH

This is thy sheath.

As she leans forward, the knife breaks her skin, and Bobbi's eyes focus and widen momentarily, but then her pupils fix and dilate as it pierces her pharynx.

Sarah peers into Bobbi's lifeless eyes, puts the heel of her hand on Bobbi's forehead, glances at Tobey who's cowering next to the weight machine as she pulls the blade out of her throat.

As it withdraws, Bobbi's throat wound EXHALES softly, and Sarah places her nose against the gash, closes her eyes, flares her nostrils, and arches her eyebrows.

Sarah rises slightly, notices a small diamond stud in Bobbi's right earlobe, grasps the ear, slices it off, holds it up, and then knits her brow as she looks down at Bobbi's inanimate face.

SARAH (cont'd)

How who the fuck ...

INT. POLICE STATION/ENTRANCE LOBBY — NIGHT

An animated police OFFICER CONWAY, 40 is sitting behind a reception desk and talking to a dejected and frustrated Tuni.

OFFICER CONWAY

... do you think you are? The guy was caught red-handed. Open and shut. I don't care if it was Jack the Ripper's house. It's still illegal.

TUNI

But he wasn't --

OFFICER CONWAY

But nothing. Your boyfriend is spending the night here. It doesn't matter if your brother is missing or not.

TUNI

His brother. My fiancée.

OFFICER CONWAY

Whatever. Why don't you just go home? Deal with it in the morning

TUNI

Well, thanks for all your help, Officer Conway.

OFFICER CONWAY

Hey, you just can't go busting into somebody's house in the middle of the night, even if your brother's missing. Sorry, but us law enforcement professionals have a technical term for that. We call it a crime.

As Tuni turns to leave, he jots some numbers onto a notepad, tears off the top sheet, and hands it to her.

OFFICER CONWAY (cont'd)

Listen, why don't you call it a night and ask your lawyer to call this number in the morning?

A dejected Tuni takes the note and turns toward the front door when a startled expression crosses her face.

She opens her purse, removes her phone, dials quickly, and puts the phone to her ear as she exits the station.

TUNI

Call someone! Duh. C'mon, Bobbi.

EXT. SARAH'S CURB/BOBBI'S CAR — NIGHT

Tuni walks up to Bobbi's car holding her phone to her ear, but she lowers it when she sees a parking ticket on the windshield.

She furrows her brow, shakes her head, looks into the car, and sees Bobbi's cell phone sitting on the front passenger's seat.

TUNI (cont'd)

Shit.

She looks up and down the street, but it's deserted, so she removes the officer's note from her pocket, glances at it, and dials rapidly.

TUNI (cont'd)

(into phone)

Hello, Officer Conway? This is
Tuni. I'm the woman who --

EXT. SARAH'S CURB/TUNI'S CAR - NIGHT

Tuni is leaning against the fender of her car with her arms folded across her chest as she frowns at Sarah's silent house.

TUNI (cont'd)

Shit. This is stupid.

She pushes herself off her car and marches up the driveway past the Coup DeVille.

EXT. SARAH'S FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

When Tuni knocks on Sarah's front door, there's no response, so she creeps over to the living room window, bends down, and peers through the gap between the blinds and the sill.

She sees the silhouette of a man sitting in an ergonomic chair next to a sofa facing away from her toward a dark TV monitor, and she raps her knuckles on the window, but he doesn't respond.

TUNI

Hey you! In the chair! I see you!

She peers at the frozen figure briefly, and then looks over her shoulder when she hears tires SQUEAL from the street corner.

EXT. SARAH'S CURB/SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

A squad car SQUEAKS to a stop in front of Sarah's house.

Tuni trots up to it as Penni and Bill exit the car and don their peaked caps.

TUNI (cont'd)

Thank God you're back. I just rang the doorbell, and I saw --

BILL

Ma'am, I'm afraid you're going to have to leave.

PENNI

It's nearly three o'clock in the morning, and we can't allow you to bother anyone at this location any further.

TUNI

No. No, you don't understand. Something's wrong.

BILL

Yeah, there's something wrong alright. You're disturbing the peace. That's what's wrong.

PENNI

And we have a town ordinance against parking on the street between two and six A - M. Do you know whose car this is?

TUNI

Yes, it's Bobbi's. She's the private detective from Chicago we hired to help us.

Penni rolls her eyes as Bill smiles and shakes his head.

PENNI

Bobbi. Your private detective. From Chicago. Well, just keeps on getting better and better, doesn't it. Okay, Bill, that's it. I've had it. Write her up.

Bill takes out his ticket writer and removes the stylus as he crosses the street toward Tuni's car.

TUNI

She asked us to call her if we found --. A ticket?! You're giving me a fuckin' parking ticket?!

BILL

Shut up, lady. We just told you that you can't park on the street between two and six in the morning.

PENNI

Okay, princess. Listen up. Here's the deal. You're going to get your cute little ass into your car and get it the fuck out of here. Right now. If you don't, I'm gonna cite you for disorderly conduct. And if you give me a hard time, I'll throw in resisting arrest, and then you can spend the rest of the night in jail with your boyfriend.

TUNI

He's not my boyfriend.

PENNI

I don't give a shit. Leave. Now.

Tuni and the cops glower at one another, and she opens her mouth as if to speak, but she stops, closes it, turns on her heel, and MUTTERS to herself as she marches to her car.

INT. SARAH'S CURB/TUNI'S CAR – NIGHT = LATER

The squad car's gone, and Tuni's sitting in the front seat of her car, which is parked across the street from Sarah's house.

She takes a last swallow of an energy drink and tosses the empty can over her shoulder into the back seat where it lands next to another empty can of the same energy drink.

TUNI

So arrest me, assholes.

She yawns, glances at her phone, sees that it's 3:30, runs her fingers through her hair, leans back, and her eyelids droop.

INT. SARAH'S CURB/TUNI'S CAR – DAY (DAWN)

As the sky brightens, Tuni's eyes blink open, so she rubs them, yawns, and stretches as she looks out of the side window.

She bolts upright in her seat to see Sarah's dark and desolate house behind an empty driveway.

She glances up and down the deserted street, puffs out her cheeks, opens the glove compartment, and removes a penlight.

She points the light at herself, flicks it on and off, picks up her cell phone from the passenger seat, sees that it's 5:30AM, and she opens the car door.

EXT. SARAH'S FRONT PORCH – DAY (DAWN)

Tuni is POUNDING on the front door with her fist, stops, grabs the doorknob, twists it, and is surprised when it turns.

She pauses for a moment, bites her lip, and glances over both of her shoulders before she eases the door open, leans forward, and puts her head inside the house.

TUNI (cont'd)

Hello?

INT. SARAH'S HALLWAY – DAY

Tuni is standing in a hallway and shining her penlight at a closed door as she knocks on it softly.

There's no response, so she bites a lip, turns the knob, and pushes the door open.

TUNI (cont'd)

Hello? Bobbi? Adam?

INT. SARAH'S MASTER BEDROOM – DAY

Her penlight reveals a disheveled bedroom with shoes, clothes, and linens scattered around the room.

An ergonomic desk chair is lying on its side beside a bed.

When she shines her light on the bed, she sees the supine head, shoulders, and torso of a nude life-sized male mannequin,

Its lower body is covered by the bedspread, and the word "CESARE" written on its forehead in black lipstick.

She creeps toward it, lifts the bedding, and sees a naked male sex doll without genitalia under the covers.

As she stares at its empty crotch, she sees an eyelid flutter for an millisecond in her peripheral vision, so she YELPS, drops the bedclothes, and jumps backward, which causes the penlight's beam to flicker on the wall.

When she shines the light back at the mannequin's face, it's inanimate again, and its gaze is fixed on the ceiling.

TUNI (cont'd)

What the hell?

She spots a canary yellow Taser lying on the bed next to a book entitled The Medieval Hebrew Ashmedai Or The King Of Demons.

She grabs the Taser and points it at the mannequin with both hands, but she lowers it when the doll remains lifeless.

As she does, a bright electrical arc jumps between the poles on the front of the cartridge and CRACKLES, which startles her.

TUNI (cont'd)

Good Lord.

Turning her back on the mannequin, she extends the penlight and Taser in front of her and strides toward the bedroom's

WALK-IN CLOSET

She shines her light through the clutter, sees mirrored sunglasses glint from a shoebox on the floor.

She puts the Taser on a shelf, the penlight in her mouth, picks up the box, and begins to rummage through it, when she freezes.

TUNI (cont'd)

(garbled)

Oh my God.

She removes an expensive man's wristwatch from the box, turns it over, and sees the inscription on the case back:

Merry Christmas, Adam

All My Love, Tunni

She chokes back a SOB, throws the box into the back of the closet, puts the watch in a pocket, takes the penlight out of her mouth, picks up the Taser, and storms back into the

MASTER BEDROOM

She strides to the bathroom door, which is slightly ajar, flings it open, and points the light and Taser into it, which reveals a slovenly room with toiletries, clothes, towels, wigs, and garbage scattered on the floor.

She turns around and spies a bureau across the room with a white marble top and garments hanging out of open drawers.

She crosses to it and sees two empty picture frames on the marble slab with a wallet next to one of them, so she sets the Taser down on the bureau, searches the wallet, removes a driver's license, and shines her light on it.

TUNI (cont'd)

Sarah Amnon, you fucking cunt.

She puts the license into a pocket, picks up the Taser, and turns toward the bedroom door.

INT. SARAH'S EXERCISE ROOM - DAY

Tuni is silhouetted by the hall light as she stands in the doorway of the exercise room.

Her penlight darts about the vacant room, and as she closes the door behind her, she sees a dimmer switch on the wall.

She slides it up, turns off her penlight, and watches herself put it in her pocket from the reflection of a mirrored wall.

Looking down, she sees purple and yellow confetti has been sprinkled on the floor, and a bloodied towel is lying near a gaping trapdoor next to a weight machine.

The Taser trembles as she points it at the trapdoor, crinkles her nose, gags, covers her mouth, and creeps toward the towel.

She spots a .38 caliber revolver lying on top of the towel, so she bends down, puts the Taser on the floor, and grabs the gun.

As she rises, she unfurls the bloody towel and sees that it's decorated with a large cartoon image of a snail.

Suddenly a large water bug falls to the floor.

She YELPS as it begins to scurry away, but she drops the towel on the bug, stomps on it, and hears a sharp CRUNCH.

She retrieves the penlight from her pocket, turns it on, and extending both it and the gun in front of her, she points them at the hole in the floor and peers into its inky void.

TUNI'S P.O.V. — THROUGH THE TRAPDOOR

She sees the top of a stainless steel playground slide that's stained with carmine smears and splotches, which continue down the length of the chute.

When the light reaches the bottom of the slide, four human feet become visible: two bare feet pointing down on top of two shod feet pointing up.

The light travels up from the feet to the legs and torsos of two corpses, one stacked on top of the other, in a bathtub filled with a thin tawny liquid and human entrails.

The superior body is a prone man, who's naked except for a black leather thong and spiked collar.

His hands are cuffed behind him and numerous cuts and stab wounds riddle his back.

The inferior body is a supine woman who's wearing a black bomber jacket, a gray shirt, and black chinos, and she appears to be unharmed until the light reveals on a large, deep stab wound at the top of her neck.

Finally, the light reveals the back of the man's head which is encased in a black leather hood, beside Bobbi's submerged face.

The leather-wrapped handle of a huge knife protrudes from Bobbi's gaping mouth, and her gawking, lifeless eyes stare up through the amber liquid at Tuni.

BACK TO SCENE

Tuni SCREAMS and covers her mouth with splayed fingers, dropping her penlight and revolver into the hole.

They CLATTER own the slide nosily and SPLASH into the tub, where the penlight illuminates the disemboweled corpse through the liquid's soft bronze tint.

She takes another breath and begins to scream again, but she GAGS instead, falls to her knees, and vomits down the slide.

INT. AIRPORT/TICKET COUNTER - DAY

The cartoon of a cloud barfing a rainbow adorns Sarah's black T-shirt as she stands in front of an airline ticket counter.

She's also wearing black acid washed skinny jeans, mirrored sunglasses, a long auburn wig, black nail polish, ruby red lipstick, a gold wedding band, and a black baseball cap with four dark gray symbols embroidered across its front panel:

✱ 7 ✱ ♫

Her burn scar is obscured by thick foundation makeup, and a pair of black gloves protrudes from a back pocket.

As the uniformed TICKET AGENT behind the counter types on a keyboard, Sarah removes her sunglasses and looks at him through thick eye makeup and jade green contact lenses.

TICKET AGENT

Okay, Miz "Toy-fell", here we go.

SARAH

It's "Tuff-ull" in English. Rhymes with shuffle. "Toy-fell" is German. According to my husband anyway, and it is his name after all.

TICKET AGENT

Oh. Okay, Miz "Tuff-ull". Sorry about that. Well, you're confirmed on flight six ninety eight to Dallas, departing from Gate H ten, and connecting to Belize City from there. Are you sure that you don't want to book the return flight now?

SARAH

No, thanks. I'm looking to buy a vacation home in Belize, and I got that flexible fare thingie because I'm not sure how long it'll take.

TICKET AGENT

Okay. Well, here are your passport, boarding pass, and baggage claim. Have a great trip, and thanks --

EXT. SARAH'S FRONT LAWN - DAY (MORNING)

Tuni bursts out of Sarah's house, staggers out onto the lawn, drops down to her hands and knees, and begins to dry-heave.

She sits back on her heels, inhales deeply, and puffs out her cheeks as she reaches into a pocket and removes her cell phone, holds down its side buttons, taps the screen, and puts it against her ear.

TUNI

Murder! There are dead bodies in the basement!

EXT. SARAH'S CURB/TUNI'S CAR - DAY

Tuni is leaning against the fender of her car with with her hands on her knees, panting and spitting onto the street.

As she lifts her head and wipes her mouth with the back of her hand, she sees a squad car careen around the corner with flashing emergency lights and wigwagging headlights.

It speeds toward her and when it skids to a stop beside her, Penni and Bill jump out.

PENNI

Where are they?

TUNI

(points at the house)

Basement.

Penni draws her gun and sprints toward the house shouting over her shoulder to Bill.

PENNI

Put her in the cruiser!

Bill drapes his arm around Tuni's shoulders and begins to guide her to the squad car's open passenger door.

INT. BASEMENT STAIRWAY - DAY

The door at the top of the basement stairs bursts open, and Penni, who's holding her gun and her flashlight in a Harries grip, peers down the dark staircase from the doorway.

The stairway is empty, so she glances at the wall, sees a light switch next to the door, flips it up, and when a ceiling bulb blinks on to illuminate the stairwell and basement floor beneath her, she descends quickly but cautiously.

About halfway down, she stops, crouches down under the basement's ceiling, and sweeps the room with her light and gun.

She sees a dim bare light bulb hanging from the ceiling next to a blood-smeared playground slide that descends into a bathtub.

Four human feet jut out from the claw-footed tub and lay on the bottom of the slide: two wearing shoes and pointed up underneath two bare feet pointing down.

Inside the tub a man's virtually naked body lies face down and submerged under an amber fluid, and the leather-wrapped pommel of a large knife protrudes from the liquid at the tub's head.

Half a dozen metal livestock tanks are scattered throughout the room, and a humidifier and a box with the words "LIVE REDWORMS OPEN IMMEDIATELY" stamped on its side are across the room.

A paper target of a male outline with a caricature of male genitalia drawn on it is taped to the wall above the box.

Glancing over her shoulder, Penni sees some unintelligible graffiti written on the wall directly opposite the window, which causes her to wrinkle her brow.

She resumes her descent, and her foot depresses a thin thread of fishing line that's been stretched taut over the next stair.

When she hears a faint but distinct metallic CLICK, she freezes, her eyes widen, and her breath catches.

INT. SQUAD CAR PASSENGER SEAT - DAY

Bill closes the squad car's passenger door closed on Tuni who looks out the windshield to see another squad car skidding around a corner with its emergency lights flashing.

She turns her head back over her shoulder to look out the side window and sees Bill sprinting into Sarah's house, but she flinches when a huge EXPLOSION erupts and obliterates the house.

Debris is hurled into the air, and a bloody, cast-iron, snail wall hook flies across the lawn and embeds itself in the passenger window in front of her face.

INT. AIRPLANE COACH SECTION - DAY

Sarah is sitting in the coach section of an airplane looking out the window next to her as it speeds down the runway.

Suddenly she flinches and bends forward to retrieve her purse from under the seat in front of her.

SARAH'S P.O.V. - INTO THE PURSE

Female hands rummage through a purse, pushing aside a giant water bug encased in Lucite, a silicone phallus, a plush snail hand puppet, and a black paracord bracelet.

Finally, they clasp a clear plastic sandwich bag at the bottom that contains a human ear adorned with a diamond stud.

The hands unzip a side pocket and massage the bag for a moment.

Then they put it into the pocket, zip the pocket closed, take the wedding ring off, and drop it into the purse.

BACK TO SCENE

Sarah snaps her purse shut, puts it back under the seat, and when she sits back up, she sees a handsome male PASSENGER, 35, who's sitting in the aisle seat of her row and smiling at her.

She returns his smile across the empty middle seat with a subtle nod of her head.

As the plane banks, she turns away from him, knits her brow, and looks back out the window.

SARAH'S P.O.V. - THROUGH THE WINDOW

Below the plane a large cloud of gray smoke erupts from a nearby suburb and mushrooms up into the sky.

BACK TO SCENE

She grins with satisfaction, turns away from the window, stretches, yawns, and reclines her seat.

She crosses her arms across her waist and closes her eyes, but she's startled when a hand taps her shoulder from behind

She jolts upright, looks over her shoulder, and sees a WOMAN frowning and shaking her head from the row behind her.

WOMAN

Excuse me, miss, but would you mind straightening your seat?

SARAH

Oh, sorry about that. I forgot.

As she raises her seat, she glances at her row mate who's looking at her with an arched eyebrow and an affable grin.

PASSENGER

Nice shirt.

SARAH

Thanks. It's my lucky flying T - shirt. Haven't crashed yet.

PASSENGER

Good to know. Was Mister Cloud overserved last night?

She smirks and glances down at the image on her T-shirt.

SARAH

No, I think it's how God delivers on his promise to Noah.

PASSENGER

Ahhh. One of his mysterious ways.

She ponders his reply and gazes into the middle distance over his shoulder.

SARAH

God's mysterious way. Maybe so.
Let me see. I think it goes ...
(recites)

"His wonders to perform / He
plants His feet upon the seas /
And rides upon the storm."

PASSENGER

Riders on the storm? From the
Doors? You think that God's a
killer on the road?

SARAH

Oh no, not The Doors. I'm sorry.
Those aren't rock lyrics; they're
lines from a poem. An English hymn
actually. And I don't see God as a
homicidal hitchhiker. Do you?

PASSENGER

No, probably not his style. I
guess I see him more crusin' down
the highway on a Fat Boy than
squirmin' like a toad.

(beat)

So, is it business, pleasure, or
are you homeward bound?

SARAH

None of the above actually. I've
just got an appointment for a
little cosmetic surgery.

PASSENGER

Nothing too serious, I hope.

SARAH

Oh no. Just another example of
"Vanity thy name is woman".

PASSENGER

Frailty. Not vanity.

(beat)

Everyone thinks Shakespeare wrote
"vanity, thy name is woman", but
it's really "frailty".

(MORE)

PASSENGER (cont'd)

(beat)

It's from Hamlet. You know. The Haminator? To be or not to be? To sleep, perchance to dream? Something's rotten in Denmark?

(beat)

But my personal favorite is that conscience makes cowards of us all.

(beat)

I've always wondered if he meant that the opposite is true, too, you know? That brave people don't have a conscience. That heroes are what? Not immoral maybe, but amoral. The Übermensch and the Death of God, right? Ruthlessness with a bit of the old ultraviolence, every now and again.

Silence as she simply stares at him with a deadpan expression .

PASSENGER (cont'd)

Ooooookay. Well, so much for today's lecture on Elizabethan existentialism.

(smiles warmly)

Anyway, you're way too pretty for cosmetic surgery, if you ask me.

Sarah's amiable and heartfelt smile reappears in a flash.

SARAH

Why that's very kind of you to say.

PASSENGER

It's my pleasure.

SARAH

I certainly hope so.

The Passenger scrutinizes the scar on her face.

PASSENGER

Have you tried Cle de Peau?

SARAH

Clay who?

DOWN THE AISLE - TRACKING

aft toward the last row, which is empty except for a man sitting alone in an aisle seat who's reading the LIFE section of a national newspaper.

Only his hands, which are clad in black tactical gloves, are visible as they close the paper in order to turn the page.

The man is Asmodeus, who leans out into the aisle and looks forward with a rueful smile as Sarah and the Passenger shake hands.

He's wearing a hoodie with the face of Michelangelo's David on its chest, mirrored sunglasses, and a black baseball cap as he shakes his head with resignation and sits back in his seat.

As he reopens the paper, he yawns, and a giant water bug emerges from his mouth, leaps off his elongated tongue, and flies off into the cabin.

He breaks into a broad grin as he watches it fly away, flicks the newspaper, and lifts it back up in front of his face.

EXT. AIRPLANE - WIDE SHOT - DAY

An airplane jets off into the distance, and a "Come Fly With Me" by Frank Sinatra begins to PLAY.

FADE OUT.

THE END