

"THOUSAND OAKS"

by

Steve JC Johnson

INSPIRED BY A RADIO INTERVIEW  
CONDUCTED BY BRIAN VIKE

While based around a true story, certain characters,  
events, dates and locations have been changed or  
created for dramatic purposes.

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FADE IN:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #1 - EVENING

STEVE ROBINSON (20) and his wife, VIV (20), are sitting up in bed, watching television. A caption fades in: 20<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 1975.

They are an attractive couple. Steve has shoulder-length, blond hair and a 'surfer look', while Viv is slim and pretty with jet-black hair.

Steve has his arm around Viv and are watching the TV movie, 'The UFO Incident'. One scene shows a woman (Betty Hill) having a needle inserted into her stomach by aliens. Viv squirms a little and places a hand on her tummy.

VIV

Do we have to watch this rubbish?

STEVE

It's based on a true story. This stuff actually happened.

VIV

Yeah, right. Like aliens grab people from their cars in the dead of night, huh?

Viv rises from the bed and flicks off the TV set.

STEVE

Hey, I was watching that!

VIV

(caressing her tummy)  
It's not good for the baby.

Steve gets up and places his arms around her waist. He kisses her gently on the lips.

STEVE

Was that movie upsetting you?

VIV

(looking a tad embarrassed)  
A little. I don't like needles. You know that. (pause) Doctor Wise says that babies can tell when their mom is upset (smiles) and we don't want our baby having neuroses before she's born.

STEVE

Or he...

They smile and kiss again.

INT. SUPERSTORE - DAY

A caption reads: ONE MONTH LATER

Steve, Viv and Steve's brother, RICK (19), are browsing through the aisles of their local supermarket. Steve is pushing a trolley, laden with food and a couple of cases of beer. Rick is only a year younger than his brother, but he is definitely the 'kid brother'.

RICK  
Did Kim tell you if Suzie was coming?  
Dude, she's so hot!

STEVE  
(grinning)  
Suzie the Floozie?

RICK  
Hey, man, you're talking about the girl  
of my dreams.

STEVE  
Well, there's no accounting for taste.  
Pass me a jar of pickles. (Rick hands  
him a jar from a shelf) She's got a nice  
rack, though.

Viv slaps Steve's arm and he flinches theatrically.

STEVE  
Ow! What was that for?

VIV  
(with mock indignation)  
For objectifying the female form.

STEVE  
Yeah, well, my boy here definitely has  
her form as an objective.

They laugh. They approach the row of tills and Viv picks up a newspaper from the nearby stand. She looks at the front page and tuts.

VIV  
They still haven't caught that rapist.  
Says here another woman was attacked in  
Agoura Hills.

RICK  
Well, if he comes round here, he'll get  
his ass kicked.

He performs clumsy karate, almost knocking over the news stand.

STEVE  
(smiling)  
Easy, Kwai Chang Caine.

Steve and Viv begin paying for their shopping, while Rick smiles at the attractive, YOUNG GIRL operating the till. She smiles back, obviously attracted to his rugged youth.

She has long, dyed-black hair, deep, green eyes, black lipstick and a small stud in her nose.

RICK  
So,  
(looks at her nametag)  
Debbie, we're having a little party tonight. Nothing fancy, just some dudes hangin' out, smoking some dope, drinkin' a little beer. Listening to some tunes. Wanna come?

DEBBIE  
(smiling sweetly)  
I'd love to.

Rick seems a little taken aback, but quickly recovers.

RICK  
Okayyyyy. It's the last house on Saprass.  
You can't miss it. 7:30, okay? Bring a friend.

DEBBIE  
I will. Thanks.

Steve shoves Rick out of the checkout with the trolley, now filled with packed shopping bags.

STEVE  
All right, move it, Valentino.

When they are out of earshot of Debbie, Steve smiles at his brother.

STEVE  
So, what happened with Suzie?

RICK  
Just keepin' my options open, bro.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - NIGHT

Steve, Rick, Viv, their cousin and neighbour, KIM (29), her boyfriend, Joe (31), and several male and female friends are sitting in the Robinson's garden. Music is playing on a portable turntable and three or four people are dancing.

Rick is drawing on a joint and grimacing. Steve is drinking a beer, while Viv glares at Rick with disapproval. They are sitting at a large, wooden garden table with benches in either side at the bottom of the small garden.

From their vantage point, they can see beyond the house to the twinkling lights of nearby streets and a large, open, grassy area in darkness.

RICK

Chill, sis. It's just a bit of weed.  
Nuthin' yo baby can't handle. (looks  
towards the house) Shit, dad's coming!

Rick tosses the joint over the fence, onto the waste land that overlooks Saprass Street. TODD ROBINSON (55) is the patriarch, a Korean War veteran and a man with whom not to be trifled.

He is carrying a tumbler filled about a third with dark liquid. He smiles at his family.

TODD

Hey, kids. How's the party?

Rick is holding joint smoke in his mouth and turning green.

STEVE

Great, dad. Want a beer? (

He offers Todd a can of beer.

TODD

No, thanks, son. Got my JayDee.

He brandishes the tumbler, then looks to Viv.

TODD (CONT.)

How's my grandson doing?

VIV

Or granddaughter, Todd. (smiles) The  
baby's doing fine. Thanks.

(looks around Todd)

Where's Eleanor?

TODD

Oh, she'll be out in a minute. I think  
she's been in the kitchen again.

ELEANOR

(O.S.)

Are my ears burning?

ELEANOR ROBINSON (52) emerges from behind Todd, carrying a tray of cookies. She is a small, yet vocal, woman, who keeps a neat house and loves her husband dearly.

ELEANOR

I baked you kids some cookies.

She places the tray on the garden table and smiles lovingly at Viv, who seems a little uncomfortable.

VIV

Hi, Eleanor. Thanks for these.

ELEANOR

I keep telling you to call me mom, sweetheart.

TODD

Don't start, Ellie. You'll embarrass the girl.

Eleanor waves him off with a 'pfft'.

ELEANOR

Now, how are we feeling? Is your back plaguing you? Oh, the back problems I had when I carried these two boys. You wouldn't believe the pain I...

VIV

I'm fine, thanks, Eleanor.

Rick suddenly coughs, a plume of smoke billowing from his mouth. Todd looks at him with disapproval.

TODD

You been smoking dope, boy?

Rick looks to his brother sheepishly. Steve shrugs.

RICK

Just a little weed, sir.

TODD

(smiling)

Had you goin' there, didn't I? I know what you kids are like. Just don't overdo it, okay? And keep it away from Vivienne. (pause) Come on, Ellie, let's go fool around in the den.

ELEANOR

Todd Robinson! (giggles) Whisk me away.

Todd and Eleanor leave and go back inside. Rick looks to Steve and Viv and they all burst out laughing.

RICK

Eeewww! Mom and dad getting' it on? I don't even wanna think about it!

Just then, Rick sees DEBBIE walk around the side of the house. He stands up and starts to walk over, but stops when he sees that she is with a very young and very handsome YOUNG MAN.

His smile vanishes, then reappears as Debbie notices him. She walks over with her boyfriend.

She is wearing a black, low-cut top and displaying a decent amount of cleavage. Her long skirt is also black, hiding the thigh-length boots beneath.

Her boyfriend is the polar opposite, with neat blond hair, a square jaw and casual clothes of jeans, t-shirt and sneaker.

DEBBIE

Hi, this is my boyfriend, Mark. I didn't catch your name earlier, did I?

RICK

Er, Rick. Rick Robinson.

He shakes Mark's hand.

RICK (CONT.)

Glad you could come. There's beer and nibbles on the table over there. Dive in.

They walk away and Rick mouths 'SHIT!'

KIM

Aww, what's the matter with my little Ricky Wicky.

Rick's cousin, Kim, appears and places an arm around his shoulder. She is dark-haired and very attractive with almost Latin features.

RICK

Ricky Wicky's pissed.

KIM

Don't worry. Suzie will be here soon and you'll forget about her.

She nods towards Debbie and Mark, who are now dancing sexily with each other.

KIM (CONT.)

So, how's my favourite cousin now?

RICK  
Kim? Blow me.

KIM  
(laughing)  
In your dreams, little man. In your  
dreams.

Kim walks away, still laughing, and Rick rejoins Steve and Viv at the table by the fence. He takes a huge tug on a beer can and belches loudly.

RICK  
My life sucks, man.  
(looks at Debbie and Mark)  
I mean, look at that. I tell her to  
bring a friend and she brings her  
boyfriend? Sick bitch!

STEVE  
(laughing)  
Jesus, bro, you're seriously damaged,  
man.

RICK  
You got that right, dude.  
(smiles suddenly)  
Aaaah, my goddess awaits.

Rick leaves them again and we watch him cross to a young woman with long, blonde hair and tight clothes. She smiles at him and they begin chatting out of earshot. This is the previously-mentioned SUZIE.

STEVE  
(shaking his head)  
That kid.  
(puts his arm around Viv)  
When did I get old?

VIV  
You're only a year older than Rick.

STEVE  
Yeah, but look at him. All young and  
carefree.

VIV  
(laughing)  
Carefree? I think you inhaled some of  
his dope smoke. C'mere.  
(she kisses him lovingly)  
You're not old. It's just that you've  
got responsibilities now. (pats tummy)  
To both of us.

Suddenly, the garden is illuminate by a brilliant, blue light. Steve, Rick and Mark look up as a huge, blue-white fireball silently streaks overhead.

They watch as it strikes a grassy field across the street with a thump and a shower of sparks. Tendrils of electricity lash out from the impact point, then everything becomes dark once again.

Steve looks around. Apart from Mark and Rick, nobody else appears to have noticed this incredible event. Rick rushes over to his brother.

RICK  
What the hell was that?

STEVE  
I don't know. A meteor?

VIV  
(puzzled)  
What are you talking about? What was what?

RICK  
You didn't see that? How couldn't you?  
It lit up the whole place!

Mark notices the conversation and he and Debbie join them.

MARK  
I saw it too. Amazing. (to Steve) You think it was a meteorite?

STEVE  
I don't know, but I'm gonna find out.

DEBBIE  
I didn't see anything.

VIV  
Me neither. (laughs) Looks like Rick's dope was stronger than I thought.

STEVE  
(a little angry)  
It wasn't the weed, Viv! We saw it, didn't we, guys?

Rick and Mark both nod.

RICK  
Let's check it out, right now. Come on.

They start to leave, but Viv grabs Steve's arm.

VIV

Oh, no you don't. You've got party guests, Steven Robinson.

STEVE

But, Viv...

VIV

But nothing. You can check it tomorrow, when it's daylight. Not that there'll be anything there.

RICK

We didn't imagine this, Viv.

MARK

I definitely saw it. A huge, blue ball of fire. It hit the ground over there. There were sparks n' everything.

RICK

(to Mark)

Come on, man, let's check it out.

Debbie hangs on to Mark, pleading with her eyes for him to stay. Looking at the others, as if to say 'Don't leave me with these strangers'.

MARK

Maybe it can wait till morning.

Debbie and Mark rejoin the party and Rick and Steve exchange 'What's going on?' glances. Steve shakes his head and Rick trudges back to Suzie, who looks at him quizzically.

He shakes his head and opens another beer. Suzie grabs him and they head to where the others are dancing.

STEVE

We did see something, Viv.

Suddenly, there is a huge bang and Steve looks up. We follow his gaze to a pine tree a couple of streets away. It is in flames, appearing like a glowing, orange-red sword pointing skyward.

VIV

Jesus! What the hell happened there?

STEVE

It has to be connected with that fireball.

VIV

But you said it came down over there.

She points to the grassy area, which is some distance from the burning tree.

Steve shrugs. Then we hear the sirens of approaching fire trucks. Flashing lights appear in the distance and, as we watch, the blazing conifer is extinguished.

STEVE  
(to himself)  
Some bad shit's gonna happen.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Steve is having a nightmare, tossing and turning in bed, beside Viv, who is sleeping peacefully. We catch a glimpse of a small, shadowy form near the bed, then it vanishes as Steve sits bolt-upright, his eyes wide, his body covered with perspiration. He rubs his face with his hand.

STEVE  
(quietly)  
Holy shit.

He sits there for a moment, then we see the light come on through the slightly-open bedroom door. We see Rick pad by, his eyes bleary. He glances in at his brother and gives him a half-asleep wave.

Then, out of shot, we hear the bathroom door close. Steve sits, listening. The toilet flushes and Rick pads back to his room and the light goes out.

Steve lies back down, his eyes fixed on the ceiling above. Leafy shadows play across the painted surface and his eyes close.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. GRASSY FIELD - DAY

Steve and Rick are walking around the field where the fireball struck the night before. They look exasperated.

RICK  
Where the hell is it, man?

STEVE  
I don't know. There should be a crater or at least a burned area, but I can't see anything.

A car pulls up on the road beside the field. Mark climbs out and walks across to Steve and Rick. He has dark shadows under his eyes, as if he hasn't had much sleep.

STEVE

Hey, Mark.

They shake hands. Mark nods to Rick, but they don't shake.

MARK

So, found anything.

RICK

We haven't found shit, dude. It's like it never happened, man.

Mark seems puzzled. He looks around, nodding as he confirms that there is nothing out of the ordinary.

MARK

This is bizarre. I mean, we did see it right? It wasn't some prank, was it?

RICK

Would we be out here if it was a screw job?

Mark shrugs.

MARK

I don't know. I only met you last night. For all I know, you could be assholes.

Rick pushes towards Mark, but Steve blocks him.

STEVE

Steady, Shaft. He's right.  
(pause as Steve runs his fingers through his hair)  
Somebody could have been screwing with us. Maybe it was a firework or something?

RICK

Then where is it, Steve? We've been all over this field. It's just grass. Nothing else. (he starts walking back towards their house) I tell you, man, some bad shit's going down.

Steve smiles to himself as he recalls his muttered words the night before. He turns to Mark.

STEVE

Coffee?

MARK  
(smiling)  
Hell, yeah.

Steve and Mark follow Rick back in the direction of the ROBINSON HOUSE.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Steve and Mark are sipping coffee at the breakfast bar in the kitchen, sitting on stools. Rick is reading the morning newspaper at the table beside them.

Viv is frying bacon and eggs. Todd walks in from outside, wiping his greasy hands. He is wearing oily dungarees.

TODD  
(to Rick)  
Any jobs in there, son?

RICK  
(without looking up)  
Haven't got to that part yet.

Todd smiles and sits on the empty stool beside Steve. He nods at Mark, who nods back.

TODD  
You boys were up early this morning.

Viv hands him a cup of coffee and he sips it before setting it down on the bar.

TODD (CONT.)  
I thought you both might have gone out looking for work.

STEVE  
(sighs)  
Don't start, dad. I've been looking, but there isn't much call for rig workers in LA.

TODD  
I could put in a word with Larry, down at the motor shop.

STEVE  
I can find my own work, dad.

RICK  
(O.S. loudly)  
This is bullshit!

They all turn to Rick at the table.

TODD  
Language, Richard.

RICK

Sorry, dad, it's this news story.

He holds up the newspaper and points to a couple of paragraphs near the bottom of a middle page.

RICK (CONT.)

It says that a pine tree caught fire after a nearby electrical transformer exploded. There was no exploding transformer!

STEVE

Yeah, if that transformer had blown, half the neighbourhood would have gone dark. That definitely didn't happen.

TODD

What tree?

STEVE

Dad, you didn't notice anything odd last night, did you? Bright flashes, loud bangs? That kind of stuff?

TODD

No, son. Me and your mom were (beat) occupied during your little soiree.  
(he smiles to himself)

Viv shakes her head as she places a plate of bacon and eggs in front of Todd. She smiles at Steve.

STEVE

I don't think we wanted to know that, dad.

TODD

Nothin' to be ashamed of, son. It's important for a marriage to maintain a healthy sex life.

ELEANOR

(O.S.)

Are my ears burning again?

Eleanor walks into the room, carrying a sack of groceries. She plonks them down on the counter and kisses Todd lightly on the cheek.

STEVE

Morning, mom.

ELEANOR

(kisses Steve on cheek)

Morning, sweetheart. Morning, Rick. Found a job, yet?

RICK  
Still looking, mom.

ELEANOR  
Look harder, Richard. (to Mark) And who is this?

MARK  
Mark Stephens, ma'am. Pleasure to meet you. You have a lovely home.

ELEANOR  
(smiling)  
And you are welcome any time, honey.

Eleanor turns away, still smiling, and begins to put away the groceries. Viv slides two plates of bacon and eggs in front of Steve and Mark. The plates clatter on the marble worktop and she puts a hand to her forehead.

STEVE  
You okay, honey?

VIV  
Just a little dizzy. I need to sit down for a minute.

Mark immediately vacates his stool and offers it to Viv, who sits down slowly. She smiles at Mark.

STEVE  
Thanks, Mark. (to Viv) You need to go lie down?

VIV  
No, I'll be fine.

ELEANOR  
Goes with the territory, sweetie. Dizzy spells, backache, nausea. I had the lot. Couldn't keep anything down right up to labour. Oh and the aches and pains...

TODD  
Ellie, give it a rest, will you? Vivienne doesn't want to hear your horror stories again.

ELEANOR  
(a little put out)  
Only offering some friendly advice, Todd. I mean, that old bed in Steve's room can't be doing much good for Viv's back, can it?

VIV

The bed's fine, Eleanor. It's only temporary anyway, until Steve finds work and we can get our own place again.

Todd reaches across and squeezes Viv's hand.

TODD

You know that you can both stay here as long as you need, don't you, Vivienne.

VIV

Of course, Todd. Thanks. We do appreciate all that you're doing for us, don't we, honey?

STEVE

We sure do. But we need our own place, you know?

Todd nods and returns to his breakfast. Eleanor continues sorting the groceries.

STEVE

What did I say? Mom? Dad?

Todd sets down his fork and turns to his son.

TODD

We were going to tell you this later.

STEVE

Tell me what, dad?

TODD

Your mother and I have decided, after a lot of thought and a lot of discussion, we've decided... well, I don't know quite how to put this, but... we've decided...

ELEANOR

We're giving you and Vivienne this house.

TODD

Eleanor!

ELEANOR

Well, you were taking your time, sweetheart.

Steve and Viv look shocked. Rick looks up from the newspaper, also stunned.

STEVE

I don't know what to say.

TODD

You don't have to say anything, son. The house was going to be yours anyway, after we died. We just changed the rules a little.

VIV

We couldn't... really.

ELEANOR

(a little angrily)

Oh yes you could, young lady. This is your house. It's all in writing and legal and binding. Todd and I are moving to a nice little house near Lake Sherwood, so we won't be far away.

RICK

I thought me and Steve would share the house, after... you know.

TODD

Don't worry, son, you'll get your share of the spoils when we go.

RICK

Dad, I didn't mean that.

He rises from the table and crosses to Steve and Viv.

RICK (CONT.)

You deserve the house, dude. (to Todd)  
You did the right thing.

Rick steals a rasher of Steve's bacon and darts away.

RICK

I'm off. Suzie's waiting for me. See ya.

Steve and Todd shake their heads.

MARK

Congratulations, man.

STEVE

Thanks, Mark. More coffee?

MARK

Thanks, no. I've got to shoot too.  
(does quotes with fingers)  
Debbie's waiting.

STEVE

Well, call by anytime.

MARK

Thanks, Steve. Goodbye, Viv. Mr and Mrs  
Robinson.

ELEANOR

Bye, honey. Don't be a stranger.

Todd grunts a goodbye and Mark leaves the house. Steve and  
Todd continue eating their breakfast and Viv helps Eleanor  
in the kitchen.

STEVE

Dad, about the house. Rick's right. Half  
of it should be his.

TODD

(smiling)

Then give him half. It's your house now,  
son. You can do what you please with it.

Steve smiles and we

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Steve and Viv are sitting in bed watching television. Viv is  
cuddling up against her husband. Steve has his left arm  
around her. The bedside clock reads '8:07PM'.

VIV

What a day, huh?

STEVE

What's that, baby?

VIV

What a day. We were just given a house.  
What do you think of that?

STEVE

At least we won't have to worry about  
the mortgage.

He kisses her on the head and they continue watching TV.

Suddenly, a horrendous SCREAM rings out from outside. They  
both jump with surprise.

STEVE

Christ! What the hell was that?

The SCREAM pierces the quiet again and Steve leaps from the bed and crosses to the window. He looks out, across the garden and beyond the fence to the waste ground beyond.

All is in darkness. The SCREAM rings out again and Steve backs away from the window.

VIV

What is it? Is it an animal or a person?

STEVE

I don't know.

Steve pulls on a t-shirt and his pants. He slips on a pair of old sneakers and turns to Viv.

STEVE

I'll just go and have a look outside.

VIV

Be careful, hun.

STEVE

Don't worry, I'll have the dogs with me.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Steve exits BEDROOM #1 and meets Rick exiting BEDROOM #2. He has also hastily pulled on clothes and they hang from his body awkwardly.

RICK

Did you hear that too?

Steve nods.

RICK

I was thinking somebody could be hurt out there. You know, the rapist?

STEVE

Shit, I hadn't thought of that.

They head down the hall to the kitchen and the back door of the house that leads into the rear garden and yard.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - NIGHT

Steve and Rick, both holding flashlights, walk across to the fenced-off area of the garden, where their two German Shepherds are kept as guard dogs. Steve whistles, but they are nowhere to be seen.

He shines the torch around the yard and at the large, concrete kennel at the back. The beam picks out a pair of eyes reflecting in the kennel. He whistles again just as the SCREAM is heard once more.

A whimper emanates from the kennel and the reflected eyes disappear.

RICK  
Great guard dogs, huh?

The SCREAM is heard again. They run to the fence and climb onto the garden table, shining their torch beams into the dark scrub beyond. The SCREAM again.

STEVE  
It sounds far away. Maybe a mile?

RICK  
Yeah. Over by Westlake, maybe? That new development? Could be coyotes? They can make a lot of noise sometimes.

STEVE  
I don't know. It didn't sound right. I mean, it sounded almost human.

They listen, but the screaming has stopped. We CUT to a POV of something watching them from the bushes high up on the hillside.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #2 - NIGHT

Rick is having a nightmare. His legs thrash beneath the sheet and his face is anguished. A very faint, blue light appears above the bed and slowly descends. It disappears into Rick and he wakes up with a yell of surprise.

He climbs out of bed and leaves the room. We hear him padding across the hall to the bathroom. The light emerges from the empty bed and slowly glides out of the closed window.

We hear the toilet flush and Rick re-enters his room and gets back into bed, settling down to sleep once more.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. LARRY'S MOTOR SHOP - DAY

Steve and Todd are standing talking to LARRY, a wizened, yet tough-looking old bird, in mechanic's overalls.

LARRY  
So, what did you do in Alaska, Steve?

STEVE

Mostly welding. Oil and gas pipes, that kind of thing.

LARRY

Well, we can always use good welders. (he throws his head back, indicating a group of men working on several cars behind them) These jokers can't weld for shit. One of them welded his watch to a '74 Ford one time. No shttin' ya.

Steve smiles, glancing at the men hard at work.

STEVE

Well, I can start anytime, sir.

LARRY

Good for you, son. I tell you what. You get here bright and early Monday morning, with your own work clothes and you got yourself a job.

STEVE

Thank you, sir. I'll be here.

LARRY

Okay. Call me Larry. These other bastards do. No respect, I tell ya. Well, I gotta run. Buy me a beer later, Todd.

Larry disappears into the workshop. Steve turns to Todd.

STEVE

Thanks, dad. I mean it. I don't know what Viv and I would do if it wasn't for you and mom.

TODD

Oh son, that's what we're here for. You're a good, hard-working kid. It wasn't your fault the work dried up in Alaska. You need all the help you can get, what with a baby on the way an' all.

They turn to leave, but Larry comes running out.

LARRY

They got the son-of-a-bitch.

TODD

Got who?

LARRY

That goddamn rapist. It was just on the radio. Arrested him last night over by Westlake. The bastard was in the middle of raping some poor girl when they got him. It was her screams that were heard by somebody and they called the cops. Luckily a patrol car was nearby and they caught him. They should give him the chair. I'd have blown him away right there and then.

Larry disappears back inside. Steve has a worried look on his face. Todd notices.

TODD

What is it, son?

STEVE

Hmm? Oh, nothing, dad. Just something that happened last night. I think Rick and me might have heard that attack. We thought it was coyotes.

TODD

Jesus, son. Come on, let's get back home.

EXT. OAKBROOK COMMUNITY PARK - DAY

Rick and Suzie are lying on the grass, making out. The park is almost deserted, except for a man walking his dog along one of the paths that trail through the park.

As Rick and Suzie kiss and caress each other, we suddenly get a FLASHCUT of a shadowy form and an echoing fragment of the SCREAM.

Rick pushes himself away from Suzie with a start, his breath suddenly coming in terrified gasps.

SUZIE

Baby, what's the matter?

Rick looks around, confused. The dog-walking man glances in his direction, but carries on along the path. Rick looks back to Suzie.

RICK

I (beat) don't know. I thought I...

Suzie smiles and pulls him back down to her on the cool, damp grass. She tries to kiss him again. We see another FLASH CUT of the shadowy form, this time superimposed over Suzie, and he pulls back once more.

SUZIE  
(a little concerned)  
What's wrong, Rick?

RICK  
I... Nothing.

Rick stands up and looks around, his eyes darting all over the place. Suzie stands up, looking at him with concern.

SUZIE  
Jesus, Rick, you're scaring me!

RICK  
I... er...  
(he looks at Suzie)  
Something's going on. I can't explain it. (pause) Ever since we saw that fireball...

SUZIE  
The fireball that nobody else seemed to notice?

RICK  
(angry)  
Two other people saw, Suzie! (pause)  
Ever since then, weird shit has been happening. Bad dreams. Seeing stuff in my room... I think. Then we heard this friggin' creepy screaming up in the hills.

SUZIE  
(with a wry smile)  
You saying you've got a haunted house?  
Cool.

RICK  
What? No, our house isn't haunted. This is something else. I can't explain it.  
(pause) Maybe I'm just goin' insane.

Suzie puts her arms around him and pecks him on the nose.

SUZIE  
You're not insane. Weird, yes, and a little crazy, but not insane. Come on, I'll let you buy me a burger.

Suzie drags Rick away and we

CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mark is sitting on the edge of his bed, his head in his hands. His fingers are gripping his hair tightly and he has a pained expression on his face.

He is wearing a white t-shirt and plain boxer shorts. Behind him, the bathroom door stands ajar, with the light on in the room beyond.

MARK

Get out of my head! (louder) Get out of my head!

Suddenly, he leaps to his feet and lets rip with an anguished scream.

MARK

LEAVE ME ALONE!

We hear faint whispering, indistinguishable voices, and a shadow passes behind the bathroom door. Mark turns and stares at the bathroom for a long moment.

MARK

(hissing through his teeth)  
I know you're in there. I'll kill you.

INT. MARK'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

He staggers into the bathroom. It is, of course, empty. Mark whirls around, searching for his invisible foe. His gaze falls on the bathroom mirror.

He slowly shuffles towards it, his reflection leering back at him with red-ringed eyes. He stops, staring into the mirror, leaning against the bathroom sink.

MARK

Who are you?

His reflection shimmers, then coalesces into a dark, vaporous mass with a roughly human shape. Large, black smudges emerge where eyes should be and a long, black tear rips across the 'face' where the mouth would be located.

The tear widens and we hear the SCREAM echoing around the bathroom.

Mark staggers backwards, trips over the edge of the bathtub and falls in, cracking his head on the white porcelain. He slides down, a red trail of blood emanating from the back of his head. His face retains an expression of pure terror.

As we watch Mark's life end, the SCREAM echoes again.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #2 - NIGHT

Rick and Steve are watching TV in Rick's bedroom. Rick is smoking a cigarette, sitting on his bed. Steve is drinking a beer and reclining in a chair.

RICK  
So, Viv kicked you out, huh?

STEVE  
She has a headache.

RICK  
So, the Stevemonster isn't getting' it  
no more.

STEVE  
Jesus, Rick, she's six months pregnant.  
(looks at TV Guide) What is this shit?

Suddenly, the SCREAM rings out. Rick and Steve stop what they are doing. The cigarette hangs from Rick's mouth. Steve's hand begins to tremble, beer sloshing out of the can slightly.

Again, the SCREAM.

VIV  
(O.S.)  
Steven! Steven!

Steve leaps from his chair and dives out of Rick's bedroom.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Steve rushes into the bedroom to find Viv sitting up in bed, hugging her knees and the covers pulled up to her chin. The SCREAM echoes once more, louder than before.

VIV  
Steve, what is it?

Viv clamps her hands over her ears as the SCREAM is louder than ever.

Steve looks out of the window, but can see nothing in the darkness. Rick runs in and joins Steve at the bedroom window.

RICK  
What the hell is it?

STEVE  
It ain't no poor girl being raped,  
that's for sure.

The SCREAM again.

RICK  
Christ, it's right up there (points to dark scrub just beyond fence). Gotta be only a hundred yards or so up there.

SCREAM.

VIV  
(in tears)  
Make it stop, Steve. I can't stand it.

SCREAM

RICK  
Fuck! It's moving. That came from over there.

STEVE  
You sure?

SCREAM

RICK  
Yeah, man. Listen. It's like it's stalking the hillside, moving from left to right.

SCREAM (louder)

STEVE  
Fuckin' hell. It's getting closer, too.

They look to one another and say in unison: DAD!

They leave the room.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - NIGHT

Steve, Rick and Todd emerge from the back door of the house. Todd is somewhat annoyed at being disturbed by his sons. Steve and Rick push him towards the fence. Steve is carrying a flashlight.

TODD  
I don't know what the hell you're...

The SCREAM rings out, apparently very close to them.

TODD  
Jesus!

They all stand still for several seconds. Waiting. The SCREAM is heard, even closer this time. It seems to be only yards from their fence. Todd rushes over to the yard where the dogs are kept.

One of the dogs is visible, cowering in a corner of the yard. The other is not present. Todd calls to the dog.

TODD

Come here, boy. Come on.

The dog looks at Todd, whimpers, but remains huddled in the corner.

TODD

Get your ass over here!

The dog's hackles rise and it begins snarling at Todd. From inside the kennel, a low growl emerges, followed by a plaintive howl.

TODD

Stupid, useless animals.

The SCREAM is heard again and the visible dog runs into the kennel. Todd returns to his sons, who are standing on the garden table, scanning the scrubland with the flashlight.

RICK

Can't see shit from here.

Rick jumps down from the table and heads out of the garden, down the path to the side, followed by Todd. Steve remains at the fence, peering into the blackness.

A SCREAM from only a few feet away has Steve leaping from the table and running after his dad and brother.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN/DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Steve barrels down the tarmac drive, past his dad's car and sees Todd and Rick staring up into the hills from the front garden, the view unobstructed.

Suddenly, they both look up into the sky and duck, as though something, unseen by Steve or us, flew low over their heads. Steve cocks his head, as though listening.

He turns around and we follow his gaze to a busy road some distance away. Many cars are driving along, their headlights piercing the darkness, but we cannot hear them.

STEVE

(whispering)

Where's... where's the sound?

(cleans ears with little fingers)

No sound, except for that screaming. No traffic, no crickets. What's going on?

Just then, a SCREAM, twice as loud as any they had heard cuts through the cool, night air and Todd and Rick race up the driveway to Steve.

The SCREAM fades away, leaving silence in the darkness.

TODD  
(panting)  
Steve! Did you see that?

STEVE  
See what?

TODD  
Those fireballs!

STEVE  
I didn't see anything. I saw you duck,  
but I didn't see any fireballs.

RICK  
You didn't see those two, blue fireballs  
that flew over our heads and hit the  
hill over there.

He points to the area where the screaming had been coming from.

RICK (CONT.)  
You can't have not seen it!

STEVE  
I didn't see anything. I heard the  
screaming, though. It sounded like it  
was really close.

RICK  
Christ, Steve. They were bigger than the  
one we saw the other night.

STEVE  
I'm sorry, Rick. I wish I had seen them,  
but I didn't. What can I do? Lie to you  
and say I did?

TODD  
No, son. If you didn't see them, fair  
enough.

Steve looks down at Todd's hands. They are trembling violently.

STEVE  
You okay, dad?

Todd notices his hands and clamps them together.

TODD  
I'm fine, son. Just a little shaken up.  
Come on, let's get back inside.

A final SCREAM, quieter than before is heard and the trio rush up the path, disappearing behind the house.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Todd is replacing the telephone receiver as Steve and Rick look on with fear in their faces.

TODD  
I couldn't get through to Kim, so I called the police.

STEVE  
Kim only lives next door. She has to have heard that screaming. I'll call round.

TODD  
No, son. Leave it. Let the police handle this.

Eleanor pads in, wearing a dressing gown and fluffy, pink slippers.

ELEANOR  
What are you boys doing? And what was that ruckus?

RICK  
You heard it too, mom?

ELEANOR  
Well, of course I did. Was it the dogs, honey? Are they okay?

TODD  
No, it wasn't the dogs, Ellie. We don't know what it was. The police are coming.

ELEANOR  
Oh, my. The police? I'd better get dressed.

TODD  
You do that, baby.

Eleanor leaves the room.

STEVE  
Shit. Viv.

He dashes down the hall to his room, leaving Rick and Todd.

RICK  
Dad, I'm scared.

TODD  
Me too, son.

RICK  
Nothing scares you, dad.

TODD  
You'd be surprised. During the war, I was scared plenty. That was different, though. It was war. This... I don't know. This is America. Our home. Stuff like this shouldn't happen here. We're supposed to be safe.

Todd crosses the room to a drinks cabinet. He pours himself a large scotch and offers Rick one silently. Rick shakes his head. Todd downs a second shot.

RICK  
I've been having nightmares. Seeing weird stuff in my room. Today, with Suzie, I thought I was losing my mind.

Rick sits down on the couch, staring straight ahead.

RICK  
Suzie thinks the house is haunted.

TODD  
Well, I don't know what we saw and heard tonight, but I don't think it was any ghost, son.

Steve returns to the living room and accepts a scotch from Todd.

STEVE  
Viv's okay. Now the screaming seems to have stopped, she's calmed down. I told her the police were on the way.

Just then, blue and red flashing lights appear at the window. Todd, Steve and Rick go to the front door and open it as a pair of uniformed LAPD OFFICERS walk up the driveway.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN - NIGHT

Todd, Steve and Rick step outside to greet the police officers. A squad car sits by the kerb, its rotating lights bathing the immediate area with red and blue light.

OFFICER #1  
(to Todd)  
Evening, sir. You made a call about a possible assault in progress?

TODD

I did. Back there.

(points to the scrubland behind the house)

We heard some screaming and came out to check. Scared the pants off us. We used our flashlight, but couldn't see anybody.

RICK

I wondered if it was that rapist.

STEVE

He was caught last night, Rick, over in Westlake.

RICK

(eyes widening)

He was? What time exactly?

Steve makes an 'I'll explain later' gesture with his hands and we return our focus to the police officers. As OFFICER #1 asked questions, OFFICER #2 walked around the driveway, flashing his light into dark corners.

OFFICER #1

(taking out a notebook and pencil)

So, this screaming. You're sure it was a person?

TODD

We don't know what it was. It might have been. I don't know. Shouldn't you go and search up there? There could be somebody hurt.

OFFICER #1

In time, sir. How long did the screaming last?

TODD

I don't know. Five or ten minutes? We heard them at regular intervals, maybe thirty seconds apart.

OFFICER #1

Well, there you are, sir. If an assault was taking place, the screaming would have been random.

(he replaces the notebook and pencil)

It could have been coyotes or foxes fighting up there. I tell you, the things we hear late at night on patrol.

TODD

It wasn't any coyote or fox, officer. I know the difference. (pause) Now, are you going to do your job and investigate my report or are you just going to stand there with your finger up your ass?

OFFICER #1

Woah, sir. Calm down. Just doing my job. I have to eliminate all possibilities.  
(looks up the hillside)

Up there?

(Todd nods slowly)

Come on, Bob, let's check it out.

The police officers make their way to the base of the hill and peer up into the darkness. They scan the area with their flashlights and walk around the rough grass for several seconds.

STEVE

(whispering to Todd)

They won't find anything, dad.

As if on cue, the officers return.

OFFICER #1

Well, we can't see anything out there. It is very dark, though. Might be best if we came back in the daytime.

They turn to return to their cars. Rick moves to follow, them, but Todd grabs his arm, shaking his head.

They watch as the squad car turns around and heads down the street. Eleanor appears at the front door, fully-clothed and wearing make-up. She watches the police car driving away, slumps her shoulders and retreats back inside.

As the squad car disappears out of view, a loud SCREAM echoes from the hillside, close to the back fence.

The trio rush back up the driveway.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - NIGHT

Steve looks across to Kim's house, which is next door, barely twenty feet away, over a low fence. He can see a light on and somebody moving about.

STEVE

(cupping his hands to his mouth)

KIM! (long pause) KIM!

The SCREAM erupts once more, barely fifteen feet away, it seems.

RICK

Jeez! She had to hear that.

Steve looks up and sees Viv staring out of the bedroom window, a terrified look on her face. As the SCREAM is heard again, she disappears back inside.

TODD

(walking up from the dog yard)  
Well, the dogs won't come out. Nero almost took my hand off when I tried to grab his collar.

STEVE

Screw this.

He leaps over the fence into Kim's garden. He runs to the back door and pounds on it loudly. The light is on and he can see inside through the glass patio door.

KIM and her boyfriend are sitting, watching television, seemingly oblivious to Steve's hammering. He raps on the door again, but they do not take their attention away from the TV.

In fact, they seem mesmerized, staring vacantly at the moving images in front of them.

STEVE

Shit!

He returns to Todd and Rick.

STEVE

They're in, but it's like they can't hear me knocking.  
(he looks around)  
Listen, can you hear anything, apart from that screaming?

They all listen. The SCREAM is heard again, but, apart from that, there is dead silence.

RICK

Nothing. I can't hear a goddamn thing.

TODD

No crickets.

He looks to a nearby tree, its upper boughs swaying in the breeze.

TOD (CONT.)

Not even the wind. How is this possible?

STEVE

I don't know, dad. I noticed it earlier.  
It's like we're in a vacuum bubble or  
something. Whatever's out there only  
wants us to hear it and nobody else.

RICK

Holeeee crap.

The SCREAM.

TODD

I need another drink.

They head back inside through the back door. A phone can be  
heard ringing inside.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As Steve, Todd and Rick enter the living room, Eleanor holds  
out the telephone for Rick.

ELEANOR

It's for you, Rick. A girl called  
Debbie. She sounds upset.

Rick's expression becomes puzzled and he accepts the  
receiver.

RICK

Hello? Debbie?

(long pause as DEBBIE speaks,  
unheard)

What? When? (pause) How? I don't  
understand. (pause) Yes, he did come  
round here the day after the party.  
(pause) No, we haven't seen him. (pause)  
What do you mean, nobody had seen him?  
(pause) Slow down, Debbie. (pause) How  
did he die?

(Todd, Steve and Eleanor look over  
sharply)

Jesus. (pause, the quietly) Jesus. I'm  
so sorry, Debbie. (pause, then quietly)  
Bye.

Rick sets down the receiver and turns to his family.

STEVE

What's happened? Who's died?

RICK

Mark. It's Mark. Debbie's boyfriend. Er, apparently, after he left here, he went home and locked himself in his apartment. The neighbours heard some shouting this morning and called the cops. (pause) When they broke down the door, they found him in the bathtub, dead.

ELEANOR

Oh, my. That's terrible.  
(narrows her eyes)  
Was it suicide?

She makes a slashing motion against her wrist.

RICK

No, mom. He slipped and fell into the bath, cracking his head open.

ELEANOR

Ah, well, nothing more dangerous than a wet floor. There was this one time...

RICK

The floor wasn't wet, mom. Debbie said the police couldn't explain it. It was like he just fell into the bath backwards. His face, she said, was all contorted, as though he died terrified.

STEVE

Jesus.

A SCREAM resounds from outside, making them all jump.

TODD

Oh, for God's sake! Will it ever end?  
(goes to window and looks out)  
Not a soul out there. (to Steve) Try Kim again.

Steve picks up the phone and dials. He listens for several seconds then shakes his head and replaces the receiver.

STEVE

No answer. They're in. I saw them.

ELEANOR

Maybe they want a quiet night in and unplugged the cord?

STEVE

Mom, I saw them through the glass. I hammered on it, but they were in, like, a trance or something. Maybe everybody in the neighbourhood's the same way. Except for us.

They all look to one another.

RICK

So what do we do?

A scream is heard from down the hall. It is Viv. Steve rushes out of the room and we follow him. At the far end of the hall, we see the bathroom door wide open and a pair of naked legs poking out, toes up.

STEVE

VIVIENNE!

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Steve reels into the bathroom, skidding on the tiles. He turns around and sees Viv sitting near the door, her legs level with the floor. She is sobbing, her hands over her face. Steve grabs her and she flinches, squealing with fear.

STEVE

Viv... VIVIENNE! It's me. What's happened?

Viv looks up into his eyes, her own eyes swollen and bloodshot.

VIV

It was looking at me.

STEVE

What? What was looking at you? (pause)  
Vivienne, what was looking at you?

Viv points to the bathroom window, which is open about six inches. Steve crosses and looks out. A SCREAM pierces the night outside and Viv begins blubbing again.

Steve closes the window, locking it tight.

He crosses back to Viv and helps her to her feet. They walk out of the bathroom and into the hallway.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Steve gently guides Viv into the bedroom and sits her down on the edge of the double bed. He sits down next to her, holding her hands tenderly. Rick appears at the door, but Steve waves him away and he disappears back down the hall.

Outside, the SCREAMING continues at irregular intervals, some sounding close to the house, some further away.

STEVE

What did you see, Viv?

VIV

I needed to pee. So I went to the bathroom. I heard that screaming. It was driving me insane, so I went to the window to close it. As I reached for the latch, I saw it looking in at me. Right outside the window. IT WAS LOOKING AT ME!

She begins sobbing again and Steve holds her, rocking back and forth, trying to soothe her.

STEVE

What was it, baby? What did you see?

VIV

(muffled, her face buried in Steve's chest)

A baby. It looked like a baby staring in at me. (pause) Oh, God, Steve, what's happening to us?

STEVE

I don't know, love. I really don't know.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Todd is sitting in his easy chair, sipping another scotch. Rick returns from the hall and plonks down on the couch. Outside, the SCREAMING continues.

Eleanor comes in from the kitchen with two mugs of coffee. She hands one to Rick and sits down next to him, sipping her own pettily.

TODD

You know, when I was in Korea, I saw shit that would drive you insane in an instant. Arms, legs, heads blown off. Women and children hacked to pieces. Nightmare stuff. And I was only Air Force. I can't imagine what those young GIs saw on the ground in the thick of all that muck and piss.

ELEANOR

Now, Todd, I don't think this is the time or place for this kind of conversation.

TODD

But I never got scared like I was tonight.

(holds out his trembling hand)  
Never had the shakes like that.

RICK

Dad.

TODD

It's okay, son. Nothing wrong with being scared. Keeps you on your toes. Or so we were told.

(sips scotch)

I saw a UFO once, you know?

RICK

A UFO? What, in Korea?

TODD

(smiling)

No, right here, in the good ole Yoo Ess of Ay. May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1952. I'll never forget that date. Strange, huh?

ELEANOR

Todd, I think you're a little drunk.

TODD

Hell, yeah, Ellie. And I'm gonna get a whole lot drunker before this night is through.

(smiles at his wife)

I was a radar technician based in Sioux City, Iowa, right after returning from the war. Nice change of pace. Not much to do but chase girls and drink beer.

ELEANOR

Todd Robinson!

TODD

Until I met your mother, that is.  
(smiles) Anyway, on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1952, I was on duty when we got a call from another station, telling us that something was heading our way, coming down from Canada.

He takes another slug of scotch.

TODD (CONT.)

Then it appears on our scope. Big mother. Huge contact. Doing 1800 miles an hour at eighty-five thousand feet. I'm tellin' you, this thing had to be as big as an aircraft carrier and it was goin' nearly three times the speed of sound.

RICK  
So, what happened then?

TODD  
Well, we watched it heading right for us, dropping altitude all the time, and when it was almost on top of us, we all ran outside the shack and looked up. It was a beautiful night. Not a cloud in the sky. Stars as bright as I'd ever seen 'em.

(sips scotch)  
Then this thing just glides over and stops, right over the runway. Not a sound. Not a fuckin' sound from this thing that was a thousand feet long if it was a yard.

RICK  
(excited)  
What did it look like, dad?

TODD  
(takes a deep breath)  
You know, I don't really recall. I can see it in my mind's eye, but I can't describe it. It was big with lights. And friggin' weird. Then it just took off and disappeared. Next day, a general turns up, swears us to secrecy and that's that. Weird. I never told that story before now (smiles) except to your mother one time. Didn't believe me, did you, hun.

ELEANOR  
(smiles awkwardly)  
Of course I did, dear.

Todd laughs out loud and finishes the scotch in his glass. We hear the SCREAM again. Todd points out the window.

TODD  
This is the same. I feel it. These fuckers are from another planet. (pause)  
What they want, I don't know, but they want something from us.

They sit in silence for a long time. Todd pours himself another scotch, while Rick and Eleanor drink their coffee. We don't hear a SCREAM during this time.

Steve and Viv enter the room. Viv is holding Steve for support. They sit down on the couch next to Rick and Eleanor.

ELEANOR  
There's coffee on in the kitchen. Shall  
I get you some?

STEVE  
Thanks, mom. I'll get it.

He disappears into the kitchen. They all sit quietly. Viv is biting her fingernails. Eleanor seems afraid to make eye contact with her daughter-in-law. Steve returns with two mugs of coffee and hands one to Viv. He then sits down.

ELEANOR  
(standing up)  
Hey, let's watch TV.

She walks to the TV set and switches it on. 'The Six Million Dollar Man' is playing.

TODD  
(giggling)  
We could do with that sumbitch here.

They all settle back to enjoy the show. We haven't heard the SCREAM for quite some time.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

We focus on the wall clock hanging over the fireplace. Its hands tell us that it is almost midnight. Todd is snoring in his chair. Eleanor is nowhere to be seen.

Rick is still watching the television. Steve is nodding, almost falling asleep, while Viv is sound asleep, her head resting on Steve's arm.

Suddenly, a huge SCREAM is heard, louder and longer than any previous. Todd wakes with a start, as does Viv. Steve sits bolt upright and Rick leaps from the couch.

RICK  
Christ Almighty! That was right outside!

Another SCREAM sounds, just as loud, but not as long. Then a strange, electronic BEEP is heard immediately afterwards.

STEVE  
What the hell was that?

Eleanor rushes into the living room, her hair a mess. She sits next to Viv, who is sobbing, and puts an arm around her.

Another SCREAM, followed by a BEEP.

RICK  
What the fuck?

STEVE  
Come on, Rick.

The two men start to leave the room, heading for the kitchen and the back door, when another, even louder, SCREAM is heard followed by a series of BEEPS, in a seemingly random pattern.

Suddenly, the whole room is bathed in searing, white light, accompanied by a deep rumbling sound, like a continuous earth tremor, without the violent shaking.

STEVE  
Hell!

ELEANOR  
No, not again. Not after all this time.

They all fling their arms in front of their eyes. Viv is screaming, completely out of control. She struggles from Eleanor's grasp and runs out of the room and down the hall towards the bedrooms. Steve watches her, rooted to the spot. Then she just stops halfway down the hall.

We see strange, shadowy forms moving about in the light. Some seem vaguely humanoid, but the blazing light makes it difficult to see.

Then the light goes out.

The family seems locked in time. Their expressions are vacant, gazing off into the distance. Then they calmly walk out of the living room, towards their respective bedrooms.

We PAN around to the wall clock. It reads half-past four. The SCREAM continues in the distance, not as loud as before.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. LARRY'S MOTOR SHOP - DAY

We have an external ESTABLISHING SHOT of Larry's motor shop. A caption reads: ONE MONTH LATER.

INT. LARRY'S MOTOR SHOP - DAY

Steve is hard at work, welding underneath a car. He is distracted when a pair of slim, female legs appears. He slides out and takes off his welder's mask. The legs belong to Debbie. She has a determined look on her face.

STEVE  
Debbie, isn't it? Hi. I'm afraid Rick  
doesn't work here with me.

DEBBIE  
I'm not here to see Rick. I'm here to  
see you.

STEVE  
Oh, what's the problem?

DEBBIE  
(looking around)  
Can we speak in private.

STEVE  
(shouting over his shoulder to  
LARRY)  
Taking a break, Larry.

Larry waves acknowledgement from beneath the hood of a car  
and Steve guides Debbie outside.

EXT. LARRY'S MOTOR SHOP - DAY

Steve wipes his hands with a rag and smiles warmly at  
Debbie, who appears distraught about something.

STEVE  
Well?

DEBBIE  
You know Mark died, right?

STEVE  
Yeah, I'm sorry about that. He was a  
nice man.

Tears begin to form in Debbie's eyes.

DEBBIE  
Well, about a week ago, my aunt, who  
lives on Erbes Road, killed herself.

STEVE  
Oh, Jeez. I'm sorry to hear that. That's  
terrible. But I don't see what it has to  
do...

DEBBIE  
The day before she took her own life, my  
aunt was terrified about something.  
Something to do with you, Steve.

STEVE  
Me? How? I don't understand.

DEBBIE

She called me and said that about a month ago, she was looking out of her bedroom window, across towards Saprass Street, where you live...

STEVE

We live on Saprass. Yes.

DEBBIE

Yeah. Anyway, she told me, over the phone. And she was scared, man, like real scared. And she told me that as she looked out, there was this huge white light hovering over your house. White with a bluish centre.

Steve suddenly gets a distant look in his eyes.

STEVE

I, er, don't know what to say. I don't recall any light recently. (pause) You sure she didn't just see the police chopper? That has a bright light.

DEBBIE

(shouting)

She didn't see no fucking police chopper!

She breathes deeply for a moment and calms down.

DEBBIE (CONT.)

Look. She saw something and it scared her. She was sure it was over your house because yours is the last on your street.

Debbie reaches into her purse and pulls out a blood-stained piece of paper. She hands it to Steve, who is reluctant to accept it.

DEBBIE

The police found this in her hand when they found her body. She... She cut her... she cut her own wrists.

Debbie begins to cry and Steve looks around awkwardly.

DEBBIE (CONT.)

She cut her wrists, but somehow managed to hold on to this. Read it.

Steve takes the piece of paper and unfolds it, careful not to touch any of the bloodstains.

STEVE  
Shouldn't the police have this?

Debbie shakes her head.

DEBBIE  
No, they gave it to me. I don't know why. They just called me in yesterday, me being her closest relative, and gave me that note. Maybe they'll contact you later. (sniffs) Read it.

Steve looks at the note. He reads it aloud:

STEVE  
DEAR MR ROBINSON, I AM SORRY TO TROUBLE YOU, BUT I THINK YOUR FAMILY IS IN DANGER. I SAW SOMETHING HAPPEN, BUT DIDN'T KNOW WHO TO TELL. SO I DECIDED TO TELL YOU. IF WHAT IS HAPPENING TO ME IS ALSO HAPPENING TO YOU, THEN YOU WILL UNDERSTAND. I SEE THINGS IN THE NIGHT. DARK SHAPES.

He looks to Debbie, who silently urges him to continue.

STEVE (CONT.)  
STRANGE SOUNDS. FACES PEERING INTO MY WINDOW. FACES THAT ARE NOT HUMAN, MR ROBINSON. DO YOU UNDERSTAND? I THINK THEY TAKE YOU AWAY. DO THINGS TO YOU AND BRING YOU BACK. GET AWAY WHILE YOU CAN. FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR CHILD, GET AWAY.

Debbie shifts from one foot to the other. Steve hands her the paper, but she shakes her head.

DEBBIE  
No, you keep it. Your wife is pregnant, isn't she?

STEVE  
Yes, but...

DEBBIE  
My aunt was pregnant. I used to visit her and she was so happy.

STEVE  
Debbie, I...

DEBBIE

(shouting)

Listen to me! (quieter) She was happy. She always wanted a child, even though she was single. She had a one-night stand and got pregnant. She didn't even tell the father. She was prepared to bring up the child by herself. She went to the doctor regularly and everything was fine.

STEVE

Are you telling me she lost the baby because of what she saw that night?

DEBBIE

No. I asked the police about the baby and they said the autopsy revealed that she had never been pregnant. I've seen her records from the doctor. She was definitely pregnant a month ago.

(points to the sky)

They took her baby. The they made her kill herself, just like they killed Mark.

STEVE

Debbie, I don't know what to say. I mean...

DEBBIE

Don't say anything, just look after your family. Don't try to contact me. I'm leaving this shit hole for good, maybe up north or back east.

Debbie walks away, leaving Steve lone with the note in his hand. He watches her for a moment, then turns and walks back into the motor shop, stuffing the note in his pocket.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - DAY

Todd is kneeling next to one of his dogs in the yard. The animal is lying on its side, panting and mewling pathetically. Rick is standing nearby.

RICK

What's the matter with Nero, dad?

Todd strokes the dog gently, concern etched on his face.

TODD

I don't know, Rick. He just... I don't know.

Todd continues stroking Nero and Rick stands, looking around the yard.

RICK

Where's Cleopatra?

TODD

She's in the kennel. Won't come out.

Rick walks across to the large, concrete kennel and peers into its dark opening. At the far end, we can barely make out the dog, lying down, staring at us, her eyes reflecting the light eerily.

RICK

Cleo. Come on, girl.

A low growl emanates from the back of the kennel.

RICK

What's the matter, girl? It's me. Come on.

There is a long pause. Suddenly, the large German Shepherd launches out of the kennel and, in a flurry of fur and gnashing teeth, sends Rick sprawling across the yard.

He struggles furiously, trying to keep the dog's fearsome teeth from tearing him to pieces.

Todd's foot strikes Cleo in the ribs, sending her scurrying across the yard. She yelps, then turns and growls menacingly. Todd helps Rick to his feet and they slowly back out of the yard.

Once out, Todd closes the chain link gate and secures it, just as Cleo bounces against it, snarling and growling, flecks of saliva flying through the air.

RICK

What the hell's got into her?

They watch as Cleopatra slowly walks around Nero three times, sniffing at the sick canine on the ground. Then she returns to the kennel, her eyes casting around warily.

TODD

You got me, son. They've not been right since...

RICK

Since we started hearing that screaming. You think there's a connection, dad?

TODD

I don't know. (turns to leave) I'd better call the vet. See if he can come over and take a look at them.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Viv is sleeping on the couch. From the kitchen, we can hear Eleanor pottering about and singing softly along to the radio. Viv's eyebrows crease and she begins to squirm. She is having a nightmare.

We see a series of FLASH CUTS, depicting a dark form in the bedroom, balls of blue light, spindly, pinkish-grey fingers pressing on human skin and finally, a creepy, baby-like face staring in the bathroom window. The face begins to smile eerily and...

Viv wakes up screaming and Eleanor rushes into the living room, throwing off a pair of oven gloves. She sits down and holds Viv, as her daughter-in-law sobs.

ELEANOR

Sweetheart, what's wrong? It was just a bad dream.

Viv continues crying, her breath coming in short gasps. She reaches down and touches her pregnant stomach.

VIV

Oh God, Eleanor, I think something's wrong with the baby!

She breaks down completely with wracking sobs and buries her face into Eleanor's chest. Eleanor looks out of the window, tears forming in her eyes.

INT. MARK'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Steve is standing inside Mark's apartment. The door is open and the MANAGER, a wiry man of about sixty, is standing beside Steve with a large bunch of keys.

MANAGER

Damn shame about Mark. He was a good tenant. Always on time with his rent. Got on with the neighbours. Even helped out Mrs MacNaught with her garbage.

He looks at Steve, who is gazing around the neat and tidy room.

STEVE

These are nice apartments. Can't be cheap, here in Agoura Hills.

MANAGER

No, sir, they are not. Mark had a good job in the city. Some sort of legal something or other.

(he looks at Steve keenly)

Are you sure you're family? I mean, you don't look like him at all.

STEVE

Distant cousin. We lost touch. Debbie gave me his address when I got into town.

MANAGER

Ah, yeah, Debbie. Nice girl. God knows how he hooked up with her. A bit odd.

He twirls his finger near his temple.

MANAGER (CONT.)

If you know what I mean.

Steve turns to the manager, anger in his eyes.

STEVE

No, I don't know what you mean.

The manager shuffles awkwardly.

STEVE

Well?

MANAGER

(blustering)

Well, you know... Kids these days? Into all sorts of weird shit.

STEVE

I have no idea what you're talking about. She seems like a normal girl to me.

The manager laughs, but stops quickly when he sees Steve glaring at him.

MANAGER

Sorry, son, but the rumours were that she was a Satanist. You know, sacrifices, sex orgies, black candles. That's why she wore all that shit on her face.

STEVE

(sighs and shakes his head)

Whatever. Look, what can you tell me about Mark? What happened the night he died?

The manager leads Steve into the living area and down a short hall, which leads to the only bedroom and en-suite bathroom. He opens the bedroom door and ushers Steve inside.

MANAGER

Well, I guess it started in here. From what the police told me, anyway. I'm sure you've spoken to them.

STEVE

Of course.

MANAGER

(smiling wryly)

Anyway, apparently, he suffered some sort of episode, began screaming to himself, went into the bathroom, tripped over the edge of the tub and cracked his skull.

STEVE

How do you know he was screaming at no-one? Maybe somebody was here with him.

MANAGER

No, sir. We played the closed-circuit tapes for the police. Nobody came in and out of his apartment all day, not even Mark. Locked himself in, you see. Stir crazy, I say. Debbie called a couple of times, but he wouldn't let her in and told her to go away.

Steve walks to the bathroom door and pushes it open. He flicks on the light to reveal a pristine room. He crosses to the bathroom cabinet and opens it. Empty.

He closes it again and jumps at the manager's face in the mirror.

MANAGER

(reflected in the mirror)

We cleared out all his stuff. Ended up throwing it all out. Apparently, he had no family and Debbie didn't want it, except for a framed photo he had of them together.

Steve looks down at the floor and sees it is covered with a thin, tan-coloured, nylon carpet.

STEVE

No tiles on the floor.

MANAGER

No. We use this waterproof carpeting.  
More comfortable for our tenants and  
less chance of slipping when you get out  
of the shower.

STEVE

So he didn't slip and fall into the tub.

MANAGER

Well, no, I guess not. I wasn't here, so  
I can't say. The police said he stumbled  
and banged against the tub, falling in  
and... you know.

STEVE

Could I have a moment, please?

MANAGER

Er, sure.

The manager leaves the bathroom. He mutters something under his breath as he walks out.

Steve looks around the bathroom again. He stands by the bathtub and tries to imitate banging into it and falling in. He shakes his head and goes back to the cabinet over the sink. He stares into the mirror.

The light flickers for an instant and Steve looks up, surprised. He looks back into the mirror and his expression turns to one of horror.

Staring back at him is a smokey, black form with jagged eyes and mouth. The mouth is opening and closing, but we hear no sound.

Steve reels back and bangs against the bathtub. He grabs the edge and prevents himself from tumbling in. The face in the mirror dissipates and Steve begins panting, as though holding his breath for a long time.

The manager reappears.

MANAGER

You okay? I saw the light flicker.

Steve looks to the manager and back to the cabinet.

STEVE

I'm... I'm fine. (pause) Thank you for  
your time. I should be going.

Steve pushes past the manager and almost runs out of the apartment. The manager watches him and looks at the cabinet and then the bathtub.

MANAGER  
Fuckin' crazy kids.

EXT. MARK'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Steve stumbles out of the apartment building and into the afternoon air of Agoura Hills. He is gasping for breath. He breathes deeply, but then doubles over and vomits onto the pavement. A passerby watches him with disgust and carries on walking.

STEVE  
(sarcastic)  
I'm okay, thanks. Shit.

He gets to his feet and crosses to where his car is parked by the road. He climbs in and fires up the engine. The sun is sinking low behind the hills that separate Agoura Hills from Malibu. The car pulls away and we

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BATHROOM - EVENING

Viv is washing in the bathroom when Steve walks in and puts his arms around her waist. She cries out and turns to him angrily.

VIV  
Jesus, Steven! You scared the crap out of me.

STEVE  
(smiling)  
Sorry, baby.  
(kisses her on the lips)  
How's your day been?

Viv returns to the sink and continues wiping off her make-up.

VIV  
Oh, the usual. Ate, slept, woke up screaming again, thought our baby was dead.

STEVE  
What?

VIV

(without turning from the sink)  
I had a dream our baby was dead. I had to go to the doctor's with Eleanor in the end, I was so upset.

STEVE

And?

VIV

And everything's fine. Our baby's perfectly healthy, but our baby's mother may be losing her goddamn mind!

She leans against the sink with straight arms and stares down into her reflection in the water. Steve holds her again and she throws her head back.

VIV

Oh, Steve. I don't know what to do. These nightmares.

STEVE

Did you tell the doc about them?

VIV

(sighing)  
Yeah.

STEVE

And what did he say?

VIV

He said it was common for women to have strange dreams during pregnancy and I shouldn't worry about it.

STEVE

(kisses her on the neck)  
There you go then. (beat) Mom says dinner will be ready soon.

Steve leaves Viv in the bathroom. She looks down into the water in the sink again and catches her breath when she sees the creepy baby staring back up at her.

Then it is gone. She pulls the sink plug and stomps out of the bathroom, we hear her slam the bedroom door.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - EVENING

Todd is watching with despair as Nero tries to haul himself of his feet. His back legs are not cooperating, though, and he keeps slumping back down with a yelp.

Eventually, he gives up and lies, panting, on the concrete surface of the yard. Steve appears behind Todd and presses a hand onto his dad's shoulder. Todd turns to see his eldest son and smiles weakly.

STEVE

When did the vet say he'd be here?

TODD

Sumbitch said he could only come tomorrow. (pause) Somehow, I don't think Nero will make it to then.

STEVE

Rick told me about what happened with Cleo. He thinks it's something to do with that screaming we heard last month.

TODD

Yeah, well, Rick thinks too much sometimes. (long pause) Maybe I should put Nero out of his misery.

STEVE

Jesus, dad.

TODD

I know, son, but look at him. He's in pain. (pause) I don't know.

STEVE

Why don't you call the vet again and tell him that Nero is getting worse?

Todd nods grimly and walks back into the house. Steve watches Nero for a little while, then he looks around the clear, but darkening, dark-blue Californian sky. He then also walks back into the house.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Todd sets down the telephone and looks Steve.

TODD

He's gonna try and call by tonight. Could be late, though, he said.

Steve nods sadly. Rick is sitting on one of the buffets, staring into his mug of coffee. Steve pulls out the note given to him by Debbie, looks at it briefly, then returns it to his pocket.

RICK

What's that?

STEVE  
Nothing. (sips his own coffee) How's  
Suzie?

RICK  
Steve, we broke up three weeks ago!

STEVE  
Oh, yeah. Sorry, dude.

Rick looks to his older brother, a look of concern in his eyes.

RICK  
Are you okay, bro?

Steve nods glumly.

STEVE  
Yeah. I'm fine. Just... I don't know. I  
guess I'm just a little stressed with  
the move coming up.

He swings his legs around and pushes himself from the buffet.

STEVE  
Rick, I need to check something out at  
the new apartment. Wanna keep me  
company?

RICK  
(smiling)  
Sure.

STEVE  
Dad, we just need to go over to your new  
place.

TODD  
What for?

STEVE  
The, er, burglar alarm was faulty. The  
guy said he'd fix it today. I wanted to  
make sure for you, is all.

Todd tosses Steve a bunch of keys.

TODD  
It's bullshit, boys. Just don't make a  
mess in there or your mother'll give us  
all a whuppin'.

Steve smiles innocently and he and Rick leave the kitchen and we FOLLOW THEM through the house and out of the front door. They walk to Steve's CAR. Before they get in, Steve turns to Rick.

STEVE

Look, man, I need to talk to you about something.

(he looks back at the house)

But not in front of mom or dad (pause) and especially not Viv. She's got enough on her mind right now.

RICK

Okay, dude. Let's go.

They climb into the car and the engine fires up. We watch as it rumbles down the road and turns a corner, disappearing from view and we

DISSOLVE  
TO:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #1 - EVENING

Viv is lying on the bed, stroking her bare tummy. A tiny lump appears under the skin and Viv smiles. Her baby is kicking.

A breeze wafts in through the open window and Viv turns her head to face it, enjoying the coolness for a moment. She closes her eyes.

We hear a very faint scratching noise and Viv opens her eyes, looking around without moving her head. Nothing. She closes them again and, once more, we hear the scratching.

She sits up quickly, her eyes darting around, suddenly full of fear. We see a small shadow flitter across the wall at the foot of the bed. Viv gasps, terrified, and pulls her knees up to her chest.

VIV

(whispering)

Not again. Go away and leave me alone.  
Please.

We hear the scratching again and we watch Viv's eyes follow something across the room to the window. We CLOSE-UP on Viv's eyes and see a distorted reflection of something small, yet humanoid, leaping out through the window.

A tear rolls down her cheek and we

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. TODD'S NEW APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Steve and Rick are standing in the living room of Todd and Eleanor's new apartment. At the moment, it is sparse, with few furnishings and a carpet only partially laid. A burglar alarm control box on the wall is open with wires dangling out.

To one side of the large room is a kitchen area, its counter acting as a barrier to the living room.

RICK  
Guess the guy hasn't been yet.

STEVE  
I never called him. (pause) Look, man, I got this today.

Steve pulls Debbie's note out from his pocket and hands it to Rick, who reads it quickly. Rick looks to his brother.

RICK  
What the hell is this?

Steve takes back the note, folds it and puts it back in his pocket. He begins to pace around the room, looking nervous.

STEVE  
Now, call me crazy, but...

RICK  
You're crazy, dude.

Steve throws him a sarcastic smile.

STEVE  
No, Rick. Well, yeah, maybe I am. But I went to Mark's apartment. You know, Debbie's boyfriend who died?

RICK  
Like I'd ever forget that? Why did you go to his apartment?

STEVE  
I wanted to know what happened to him. After reading the note, you know? (pause) I don't think he just slipped and cracked his head on the tub.

RICK  
You think somebody killed him?

STEVE  
No, not exactly.  
(wipes his top lip, which is  
starting to bead with sweat)  
I saw something today. There. In the  
bathroom. Mark's bathroom. In the  
mirror.

Rick can tell his brother is scared.

RICK  
Shit, man, what? What did you see?

We see a FLASH-CUT of the dark form with evil, black eyes.  
Steve blinks, now sweating profusely.

STEVE  
I saw...  
(he begins breathing hard)  
I saw...

Suddenly, his hand goes to his mouth and he runs into the  
kitchen area and we see him vomiting into the sink. Rick  
rushes to his side.

RICK  
Jeez, Steve. What the fuck?

Steve stops retching and he turns on the faucet, splashing  
his face with cool water.

STEVE  
I'm okay now. (breathes) Same thing  
happened at Mark's. Whatever I saw, it  
doesn't want me remembering it or at  
least telling anybody about it.

RICK  
What the fuck did you see, man?

STEVE  
I'm not sure, Rick, but it was either a  
demon or a fuckin' alien. (long pause)  
I'm scared man. I'm scared for myself.  
I'm scared for my wife. And I'm most  
scared for my child.

Rick walks away, rubbing his chin in thought. He is also  
scared, but only because he has never seen his brother  
acting like this.

RICK  
Look, man. Suzie knows this guy.

STEVE

I thought you broke up.

RICK

So? I still got her number. We ain't mortal enemies or anything like that.  
(shakes his head)

Anyway, she knows this guy who does hypnotherapy. Apparently, he can help you remember stuff you think you've forgotten. He can also help you stop smokin'. I think that's how he earns most of his dough. Maybe he could help you remember what you saw without you spraying your lunch all over the joint.

Steve pushes himself away from the sink and places his hands on Rick's shoulders.

STEVE

Thing is, bro. I don't think that's the only memory buried in here. You read the note. Debbie's aunt said she saw a UFO over our house a month ago, about the time the screaming stopped out back.  
(pause as he turns away) And then there's been the dreams. Viv's had them too. Weird shit.

RICK

Little people in your room? Shadowy figures hovering over you?

Steve slowly turns back to Rick and sees the fear in his little brother's face.

STEVE

Yeah.

They look at each other for a long time.

STEVE (CONT.)

Fuck it. Call Suzie. Get this guy's number.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Steve quietly enters the bedroom and crosses to the bed. We see that Viv is not present.

He looks around and sees her nightgown lying on the floor near the door. He picks it up and places it gently onto the bed.

STEVE

Viv? Vivienne?

He pads out of the room and we FOLLOW him across the hall to the bathroom. The door is closed and locked. He taps lightly on the door.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

STEVE

Viv? You in there?

There is no reply. He walks down the hall and peers into the living room. We can see Todd and Eleanor watching television.

TODD

(at the TV)

Ha! What an asshole.

Steve heads back down the hall to Rick's room. The door is slightly ajar and he pushes it open. Rick is lying on his bed with headphones on and his eyes closed. By his feet lies an open copy of Playboy. Steve smiles and pulls the door shut.

He goes back to the bathroom door and taps again, a little louder.

STEVE

Viv. It's Steve. Are you okay in there?

There is still no answer. Steve tries the door handle but it won't budge.

STEVE

VIV! (then shouting) VIVIENNE!

He begins ramming his shoulder into the door. Todd runs down the hall.

TODD

What's going on here?

Steve ignores him and slams his shoulder into the bathroom door again. This time, it cracks open and he falls inside.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Steve looks up from the bathroom floor

STEVE

Oh, shit!

We follow his gaze and see an arm hanging over the side of the bath. Blood is smeared on the porcelain. Steve leaps to his feet and we see Viv lying naked in a bath full of red water, her wrists deeply cut. Her skin is deathly pale.

STEVE  
(screaming)  
VIVIENNE!

Todd looks in and horror is printed into his features.

TODD  
Holy shit! I'll call an ambulance.

He disappears and we watch as Steve grabs towels from a rack and wraps them around Viv's wrists, in an attempt to stem the bleeding. He pulls her up and cradles her, smearing his clean clothes with her blood. He doesn't care.

STEVE  
Viv. Viv, come on.

A low moan comes from her lips and her eyes flicker.

STEVE  
Oh, thank Christ! (shouting) DAD! SHE'S  
ALIVE. GET THAT FUCKIN' AMBULANCE HERE  
NOW!

Rick's face appears at the door and his jaw drops.

RICK  
Fuck me!

He disappears, heading towards the living room.

STEVE  
Stay with me, baby. Stay with me.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Viv is lying in a hospital bed, her wrists heavily-bandaged and her eyes are closed. Steve is sitting beside the bed, his eyes red-rimmed. He strokes her hair, moving it out of her face and begins to cry quietly.

Rick is on the opposite side of the bed, leaning against the windowsill. He folds his arms and looks around awkwardly, his eyes also filling with tears.

A DOCTOR enters and places a gentle hand on Steve's shoulder.

DOCTOR  
Mr Robinson. Vivienne is stable now. The  
baby is fine. She just needs rest.  
(he looks to Rick who nods)  
Come on, go home. Get some sleep and  
come back tomorrow.

Steve silently rises from the chair and, without looking at anybody, leaves the room. The doctor begins examining Viv's dressings and Rick rushes after his brother.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR #1 - NIGHT

Steve is marching down the corridor, his mind whirling. Rick rushes to catch up. He grabs his brother's arm, who swings around, his eyes blazing with anger. Rick reels back with surprise.

RICK  
Steady, bro. It's me.

STEVE  
It was them, Rick.  
(he points skyward)  
They did this to her!

RICK  
Jeez, man. She cut her own wrists,  
Steve. Dude, I love Viv, but, honestly,  
she hasn't been right for a while, man.

Steve almost takes a swing at his brother, but stops himself.

STEVE  
You're full of shit.

He storms away towards the elevators, leaving Rick standing by himself.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - NIGHT

Steve's car pulls into the drive, just as a station wagon is pulling away. A sign on the side reads 'THOUSAND OAKS VETERINARY HOSPITAL'. He climbs out and trudges to the front door. He enters and we

CUT TO:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve walks in and sees Todd and Eleanor sitting on the couch. Eleanor is crying and Todd looks equally upset. Todd looks up at his son, who still appears very angry.

TODD  
How's Vivienne, son?

Steve pulls off his coat and hangs it over the back of a chair near the door.

STEVE  
She and the baby are going to be fine.  
The doctor sent me home.

TODD  
Where's Rick?

STEVE  
We (beat) had words. He'll get a cab back. (pause) Was that the vet I just saw driving away? (Todd nods) What did he say about Nero?

TODD  
He took Nero away. He was too far gone. Kindest thing to do was to put him down.

Eleanor gets up and rushes from the room and down the hall to her and Todd's bedroom. We hear the door slam.

STEVE  
Sorry, dad.

Todd gives his son a weak smile and nods glumly.

TODD  
Hell of a night, son. Hell of a night.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT.

Viv is lying in bed asleep. The room is dim, but not dark, as we PAN to see light streaming through the partially-open blinds from a full Moon. A shadow passes behind the blinds and they rattle lightly.

We PAN back around to Viv, who is still sleeping. A thin, bluish-grey hand with four fingers appears and strokes her swollen tummy. Viv smiles in her sleep and the hand retracts out of shot.

A NURSE enters suddenly and stops as she thinks she sees a shadow disappearing behind the blinds. She crosses the room and opens the blinds quietly. The she opens the window and peers out into the night.

We go to her P.O.V. and see we are several storeys up. She looks up and gasps as we see a small, bare foot disappearing over the edge of the roof.

She ducks back inside and closes the window. The she draws the blinds shut, looks at Viv for a second and rushes from the room.

We HOLD on Viv as she sleeps, the little smile still on her face as we

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Rick and Suzie are sitting on a bench in a pleasant, green park. Children are playing on the grass nearby, their laughing and squealing can be heard in the background.

Rick is looking at Suzie and it is obvious he still has feelings for her. Her feelings are a little harder to read, as she tries to avoid making eye contact.

RICK

Thanks for meeting with me, Sooz. It means a lot. It really does.

SUZIE

You said it was important.

RICK

Yeah. It is. Very. (pause) Look, you remember that shit that went down a month or so ago?

SUZIE

You mean when you wiggled out on me and accused me of being a monster?

RICK

What? I never... Oh, no. Before that. I... think. (pause) Look, Suzie, something weird is going on with my family and we need your help.

SUZIE

My help?

RICK

Yeah. You once told me that you knew a hypnotist guy who could help you remember stuff you'd forgotten. Remember?

Suzie looks at him for the first time.

SUZIE

Yeah. I remember.

RICK

You got his number?

SUZIE

Not on me, no.

RICK

Could you get it for me? Like now?

Suzie sighs and gets up from the bench.

SUZIE  
Come on, then.

Suzie and Rick walk away from the bench, keeping an awkward distance between each other.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Steve is once again sitting by Viv's bed. Her eyes are still closed. She has new dressings on her wrists, ones that appear less thick than the previous night.

Steve is holding her hand and gazing at her lovingly. Her eyes slowly open and she looks at Steve. He smiles broadly.

STEVE  
Baby.

VIV  
Steve? What happened? Where am I?

STEVE  
You had a little accident, but you're all better now.

She looks down to her stomach.

STEVE  
The baby's fine too.

Viv begin to cry and looks away from Steve.

STEVE  
What's the matter? Viv?

VIV  
(without looking at him)  
You must hate me for what I did.

STEVE  
No. (pause) No, of course not.

VIV  
I tried to kill our baby, Steve.

STEVE  
You were sick, but you're fine now.  
Really.

VIV  
Am I? (turns to him) What if I they make me try to do it again?

Steve looks concerned, the smile disappearing. He releases her hand abruptly.

STEVE  
Who?

VIV

The Shadow People.

(she begins to look a little wild-eyed)

They speak to me, whisper things, tell me to do things. They wanted our baby, Steve, but I tried to stop it. They don't want our dead baby.

(she laughs)

Oh, Steve. I think I'll go to sleep now. So tired. (quietly) So very tired.

Viv lies down and is soon sound asleep. Steve sits watching her for several seconds, then gets up and heads out of the door.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR #1 - DAY.

Steve sees the same doctor we saw earlier walking away and rushes up to him. He grabs him and spins him round, an angry look on his face.

STEVE

What the hell have you been giving my wife?

DOCTOR

Mr Robinson, your wife has just been prescribed some mild sedatives to help her sleep. Nothing more.

Steve releases the doctor's arm.

STEVE

Well, she just woke up and started spouting off some insane crap about wanting to kill our baby.

DOCTOR

Really? Are you sure? She shouldn't be awake for hours. The nurse over there was monitoring her on the CCTV.

We get a SHOT of the same NURSE we saw in Viv's room earlier. She looks up and smiles from behind her station as the two men approach.

DOCTOR

Nurse, Mr Robinson here says his wife just woke up and spoke to him.

The nurse's expression looks puzzled.

NURSE

I didn't see her wake up, doctor.  
(she smiles at Steve)  
I saw you sitting by her, then you came  
out here just now.

STEVE

What? She sat up and spoke to me. As  
clearly as you're speaking to me now.  
(he looks to the CCTV monitor by  
her side)  
Can you rewind that and show me?

NURSE

I'm sorry, sir, I can't so that. The  
feed is recorded in the security  
station.

Steve turns to the doctor.

STEVE

Can I go there and see?

The doctor sighs. After a long moment, he nods and leads  
Steve down the corridor.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR #2 - DAY

An elevator pings open and the doctor leads Steve down  
another corridor to a room with SECURITY stenciled on the  
door. He knocks and, after a moment, a rotund SECURITY GUARD  
opens it. He smiles out at the doctor.

DOCTOR

Hi, Bob. Could I ask a favour? Could you  
replay the security feed from Room 424?

BOB

Sure, doc. No problem.

Bob pulls the door open wide and allows the doctor and Steve  
to enter.

INT. HOSPITAL SECURITY ROOM - DAY

The security room is dark, with dozens of monitor screens  
filling an entire side of the dim space. Bob walks to a  
chair by a computer keyboard and taps in some commands.

He points to a particular monitor and we see a CCTV feed of  
Viv in her room. A timestamp shows us the time and date and  
a caption on the feed says 'ROOM 424'.

DOCTOR

Can you rewind it a few minutes? To  
where Mr Robinson here was there.

Bob sighs and taps in more commands. The timestamp runs backwards. Viv remains motionless. Then Steve walks backwards into her room and sits down. He appears to be speaking to Viv. Then he sits motionless, holding her hand for a long period.

STEVE

I don't understand. She hasn't moved.  
Play it forward again.

Bob sighs again and taps in commands. The footage plays forward in high speed. Steve is seen talking to Viv, but she is motionless and, seemingly, sleeping. Then he gets up and walks out of her room.

DOCTOR

See? She is sedated. She will wake up in  
an hour or two.

Steve looks at the doctor for a long moment. Bob glances from one man to the other.

BOB

Is that it, doc?

DOCTOR

Yeah, Thanks, Bob.

The doctor leads Steve out of the security room and we

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR #2 - DAY

The doctor looks into Steve's eyes. We see that they are heavy and a little bloodshot.

DOCTOR

You haven't had much sleep, have you?

STEVE

No, but...

DOCTOR

Go home, Steve. If your wife's condition changes, I'll phone you myself. I promise. (pause) You'll be no good to her if you're exhausted. And you look exhausted.

Steve looks down to his feet. Then back at the doctor. He nods.

STEVE

Okay. I'm sorry for wasting your time.

DOCTOR  
Not at all, Mr Robinson. Now, go get  
some rest.

Steve walks away and we

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #1 - DAY

Steve is lying on his bed, sleeping fitfully. His head thrashes from side to side and his eyes are moving rapidly beneath his eyelids.

We FLASH-CUT to a DARK, GRIMY ROOM. The walls are covered with peeling paint and the windows are boarded-up roughly. Moonlight filters through.

We PAN around and see that it is the ROBINSON HOUSE living room, only much different to the one we know. Steve slides into frame.

He is naked from the waist up. Below the waist, he is wearing loose, flannel tracksuit bottoms. He is barefoot. He looks around, confused.

STEVE  
Hello? (pause) Dad? Rick? Mom?

Suddenly, a piercing SCREAM fills the room and Steve reels backwards, tripping over a broken wooden chair. He falls on his behind and we hear the SCREAM again. Even louder.

Steve is breathing quickly, close to hyperventilating. We hear a scratching sound and he looks towards it. We PAN to see a small, bluish-grey being standing in the corner of the room.

It is about three feet tall, with long, thin arms and legs with four fingers on each hand. Its head is large and out of proportion with the rest of its body. It is facing away from us.

As we watch, it slowly turns and we see it has huge, black, almond-shaped eyes. Steve's eyes move down to the object it is holding. There is a glint from the knife in the creature's hand.

STEVE  
Shit!

The creature's lipless mouth contorts into a black gash and the SCREAM issues forth. Then it charges towards Steve, slashing him with the knife. He shrieks and looks down to

see blood pouring down his torso from a long, thin  
Steve opens his mouth to scream and we

CUT TO:

INT. ROBSINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #1 - DAY

Steve sits up with a sharp cry of fear. His hands go to his belly, but, of course, there is no blood. He looks around the room. Everything is normal.

STEVE  
(to himself)  
For Christ's sake, Steve.

He gets off the bed and exits the room.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Steve pads into the kitchen and helps himself to a cup of coffee from the percolator. He turns round and yelps with surprise when he sees Rick standing behind him.

STEVE  
Jesus, Rick!

He sits down on one of the breakfast bar stools. Rick smiles and sits down next to his brother.

STEVE  
Rick, about yesterday, at the hospital.  
I'm sorry, man.

RICK  
Don't worry about it, bro. I probably  
deserved a punch in the eye. I'm sorry.

They both smile.

STEVE  
Where's mom and dad?

RICK  
They went over to their new apartment.  
Dad needs to take his mind off Viv and  
Nero.

Steve nods and gazes into his coffee cup.

RICK  
I spoke to Suzie. She gave me the  
hypnotist's number.

STEVE  
I don't know, Rick.

RICK  
(pulling out a crumpled business  
card from his jeans pocket)  
Well, here's his card. Think about it.  
Gotta split. See ya.

STEVE  
Later, man.

Rick leaves the house and Steve picks up the business card.  
He reads the legend out loud.

STEVE  
Doctor Philip Z Mayfield.  
Hypnotherapist. What the hell does the Z  
stand for?

He turns the card around in his fingers and taps it on the  
counter. He gazes out of the window for a moment, sunlight  
streaming in, creating dust mote 'energy beams'.

He leaves the card on the counter, slides off the stool and  
exits through the back door.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - DAY

Steve walks across the neat lawn to the yard where Cleopatra  
now lives alone. He peers through the chain link. We can see  
the concrete kennel, but no sign of the German Shepherd.

A chrome dish is filled with dog food just outside the dark  
entrance of the kennel. Flies buzz around the old meat. His  
hand goes to the latch for the gate and lifts it. We hear a  
deep growl emanate from the kennel. Steve retracts his hand.

He reaches out for the latch, lifts it again and, once more,  
we hear Cleopatra growling.

STEVE  
(under breath)  
Screw you, then.

He turns around and walks down the path at the side of the  
house. As he walks away, we see the gate latch slip out of  
its groove and it swings open slowly.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN - DAY

Steve looks up and down the street. It is deserted. No  
people are walking around. No cars can be seen driving along  
the length of Saprass Street. It is as though he has entered  
a vacuum of silence, a one-man universe.

Steve turns to head back up the drive and stops dead in his  
tracks. Blocking his way, Cleopatra is down on her haunches,  
her hackles rising and a menacing growl issue from deep  
inside her throat.

STEVE

Jesus!

He takes a step forward and Cleopatra bares her fangs and snarls, saliva dripping onto the concrete surface of the drive. Steve is getting extremely nervous.

STEVE

Cleo, girl, what's up?

Cleo barks once and growls. She is coiled, ready to pounce.

STEVE

Get back, Cleo. Go on. Kennel!

Cleopatra lurches forward and Steve starts running. He charges out of the front garden, the dog in pursuit.

EXT. SAPRAS STREET - DAY

Steve is running for his life. His breath is coming in laboured gasps. Behind, Cleo is gaining, her teeth bared, yet silent.

Steve leaps over a neighbour's low hedge and races across a well-kept lawn. He continues this over several more knee-high edging shrubs until he ends up back on the sidewalk. Cleo is still in hot pursuit and gaining rapidly.

As Steve nears the junction with Carpenter Street, we begin to hear the blood pumping in his ears. In the distance, we can see cars moving.

Steve charges across the junction and Cleo leaps. She appears suspended in mid-air when a car appears and hits her. She rolls over the roof and lands with a sickening thud on the tarmac behind the vehicle.

Steve hears the screeching of the tyres and the squealing of the breaks and stops, turning around to see a ROTUND, MIDDLE-AGED MAN climbing out of his car and walking around to the rear.

Steve looks around and realizes that Cleopatra is no longer chasing him. He slowly walks towards the car and we see the rotund man kneeling down near his rear fender, his hand going to his brow. The car appears undamaged.

As he approaches, we see Cleo's body lying motionless in a pool of blood. Her back is broken and her body is horrifically contorted.

STEVE

Oh, shit.

The rotund man looks up at him. He is obviously very distressed.

ROTUND MAN

She just leaped out in front of me.

Steve kneals down beside the dog's body, his hands wavering over her twisted, lifeless form.

STEVE

(quietly)

Jesus, Cleo.

ROTUND MAN

She was your dog?

Steve nods. The rotund man stands and places his hands on his hips.

ROTUND MAN

I guess we should talk about insurance and all that crap. I mean, my car's pretty banged up now.

Steve leaps to his feet and points to the car.

STEVE

There's not a fuckin' mark on the car! Look at it.

ROTUND MAN

I got whiplash and I'm sure I'll have flashbacks about all this.

Steve bends down and gathers Cleo's body in his arms. He ignores the blood beginning to run down the front of his clothes.

STEVE

Go fuck yourself!

He walks away towards home, Cleo's head lolling beside him.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. HYPNOTIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Rick is sitting in the office of DOCTOR PHILIP Z MAYFIELD. Mayfield is about forty-five, with thick, grey, almost silver, hair and thick, horn-rimmed glasses.

Suzie is sitting beside him. Mayfield is scrutinizing Rick keenly, his fingers arched in front of him.

The dark-panelled office walls are adorned with certificates of dubious veracity and photographs of the doctor with various minor celebrities.

MAYFIELD

You look like a punk kid who wants to piss around with me.

RICK

No, sir, I'm not. I really want you to hypnotise me. Seriously.

Mayfield's eyes narrow. Then he smiles and claps his hands.

MAYFIELD

Okay. If it wasn't for Suzie, there, I'd have sent you packing. I have no time for bullshitters, son.

Mayfield stands and we see he is remarkably tall, well over six feet six inches. He crosses to a couch with a chair beside it and gestures for Rick to lie down on it?

RICK

You want to do this now?

MAYFIELD

Yeah?

Rick crosses to the couch and lies down, feeling a little embarrassed.

RICK

I thought you'd want to know my story first.

MAYFIELD

No, son. I like to know as little as possible about my clients.

(pause as he makes some notes on a pad he took from the chair)

This session will be free, but any future ones will be seventy-five dollars per session. Okay?

RICK

Er, I guess.

MAYFIELD

(in a quiet, soothing voice)

Okay, Rick. Close your eyes for me.

Thanks. Now, think back to the time in question. What do you see?

RICK

(opening one eye)

Don't you have to hypnotise me first?

You know, counting backwards or clicking your fingers or something?

Suzie giggles from across the office and Mayfield casts her

a rebuking stare.

MAYFIELD

No. Now think back. Think about the memories you want to retrieve.

Rick closes his eye and breathes deeply.

RICK

I'm at home. We all are.

MAYFIELD

Who is there?

RICK

Me, my brother, Steve, his wife, Viv, and my mom and dad. We're watching TV... I think.

Suddenly, Rick jolts on the couch. His brow furrows.

RICK

The screaming. We can hear the screaming. It's coming from the hill out back. It's so close. And so loud. There's a weird beep after each scream. Why is that? What does it mean?

MAYFIELD

What else can you see?

In the background, we can hear a low rumbling. Suzie looks around, wondering where the noise is coming from.

RICK

Shit! Ow! That hurts! There's a bright light. Brighter than... than the sun. Jesus Christ, there are things moving in the light. What the fuck are they?

Rick throws his arms over his face, as if shielding himself from his vision. The rumbling grows louder and now Mayfield looks around. He mouths 'earthquake' to Suzie, who shakes her head. This is no earth tremor.

MAYFIELD

What's happening now, Rick.

Rick opens his mouth wide and a terrifying scream fills the room. This is no human scream, it is the SCREAM we heard at the Robinson House, but continuous.

Mayfield reels back, almost falling from his chair. Suzie clasps her hands over her ears.

The SCREAM continues to grow louder and Rick seems oblivious to it. His eyes are still closed and his hands are folded neatly on his stomach. The rumbling is also growing in intensity and now the windows are beginning to rattle.

Suzie runs from the room when a glass jug of water flies from Mayfield's desk and shatter against the wall close to her.

MAYFIELD

Rick. (louder) Rick! Wake up! When I clap my hands, you will be awake.

Mayfield claps his hands, but nothing happens. The SCREAM continues and the rumbling grows louder still. Mayfield drops to his knees, his hands covering his ears. His face contorted with pain.

Suddenly, the room is filled with brilliant light and we can see nothing but white. After a few seconds, the SCREAM stops and the rumbling subsides and then we FADE back to the office.

Mayfield is lying on the floor, his head twisted backwards and a look of sheer terror on his dead face. Rick is gone. We linger for a moment and then we

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. SAPRAS STREET HILLSIDE - NIGHT

Rick is lying in long grass. He is in a foetal position, completely naked and his eyes are closed. The area is dark, but a full moon casts silvery light all around. We PUSH IN on him and see his eyes flick open.

He sits up suddenly and his eyes dart all around. He looks down and sees he is naked.

RICK

What the fuck?

He looks down the hill and we follow his gaze to see the Robinson House a hundred yards away. Rick is confused and petrified.

RICK

How? Shit!

He gets to his feet and scampers down the hill. He reaches the fence at the back of the house and climbs over, swearing as the rough wood cuts into his hands and feet. He lands on the garden table with a thump.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - NIGHT

The garden is illuminated closer to the house by the kitchen lights. We can see Steve moving around inside.

Rick scurries over to the window and taps lightly on it. Steve looks out and sees his brother's face peering in at him. He walks around the counter to the back door and opens it.

STEVE

Shit, Rick, what's...?  
(notices his brother's nakedness)  
What the hell happened to your clothes?

Rick stares at his brother, his hands covering his private parts.

RICK

I don't fuckin' know, man.  
(peers past Steve)  
Is anybody in?

STEVE

Mom and dad are spending the night at their new place. Don't ask. Viv is still in hospital. I thought you were going to meet me there.

Rick ignores him and barges past, running into the house.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #2 - NIGHT

Rick is sitting on his bed as he pulls on some clothes and looks up as Steve enters his bedroom.

STEVE

What's goin' on, dude? Suzie called earlier. Said something I couldn't understand and hung up.

Rick runs his hands through his hair and looks down at the floor. Then he begins crying. Not all-out sobbing, just a weep of confusion. Steve sits down next to him.

RICK

I went to see the hypnotist today. You know, the one on the card?

STEVE

Yeah, I thought about calling him, but got sidetracked with Cleo.

RICK

What's happened with Cleo?

Steve shakes his head, as if to say, 'I'll explain later'.

STEVE  
So, what happened?

Rick takes a deep breath and wipes his nose on his sleeve.

RICK  
That's just it, man. I can't remember. I arrived there with Suzie about noon or thereabouts and the next thing I know, I'm on the hill back there, naked.

STEVE  
Did he give you anything?

RICK  
(despairing)  
I don't know! I can't remember!

A loud knock on the front door interrupts them. Steve leaves the room, leaving Rick sitting on the bed. We hear him open the front door and a muffled discussion ensues.

STEVE  
(O.S.)  
Rick! I think you'd better get out here.

Rick looks up and we

CUT TO:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rick walks into the living room and we see two police officers standing at the door with Steve. They are the same policemen we saw earlier.

RICK  
Is this about the screaming we heard?

STEVE  
No, Rick, it's not.

The policemen enter the house and approach Rick, who begins backing away slowly.

RICK  
What's goin' on, dude?

POLICEMAN #1  
Richard Robinson, we are arresting you in connection with the death of Doctor Philip Mayfield.

Policeman #1 brandishes a pair of handcuffs.

RICK  
What? Fuck no. This is bullshit, man.

STEVE

Just go with them, Rick. I'm sure it's all a mistake.

Rick looks at his brother and then the policemen. Then he sprints towards the kitchen and out of the back door.

Policeman #1 pursues, while the other officer heads out of the front door. Steve follows the Policeman #2.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN - NIGHT

The red and blue lights of a police patrol car are flashing. Rick runs around from the back of the house and is tackled to the ground by Policeman #2.

Policeman #1 arrives and slaps on the cuffs, while planting his knee firmly in the middle of Rick's back. Rick howls with pain. Steve steps forward.

POLICEMAN #1

Now, you little shit. You do not have to say anything, but anything you do say may be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to speak with an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed to you, free of charge. Do you understand these rights I explained to you, you fuckin' punk?

RICK

(grimacing with pain)

Yes.

STEVE

Take it easy, will ya?

Policeman #1 looks up at Steve with disgust.

POLICEMAN #1

Take it easy? Did he take it easy with his victim?

They haul Rick to his feet and drag him towards their patrol car. Several neighbours appear at their front doors to watch the spectacle.

RICK

Steve, get dad. This is bullshit, man. Fuckin' bullshit!

Rick is bundled into the squad car and it roars away, leaving Steve standing bewildered on the pavement. He looks around and sees some locals still watching him.

STEVE

You got nothin' better to do, huh?

He stalks back up the path and enters the house, slamming the front door.

INT. VENTURA COUNTY JAIL - CELL - DAY

Rick is lying on a small cot in a cramped cell. There is a jangling of keys and the cell door squeaks open to reveal a policeman with a huge, red nose. He gestures for Rick to follow him.

Rick rises from the cot and follows the officer.

INT. VENTURA COUNTY JAIL - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Rick is shown to a chair behind a simple, wooden table in the interview room. The red-nosed policeman stands by the door.

An attractive, BLONDE WOMAN enters, carrying a file and sets it down on the table. She sits down in the empty chair opposite Rick. He notices the handgun under her jacket and the badge on her waistband.

BLONDE WOMAN

Now then, Mr Robinson. I am Detective Anna Schmidt. I apologise for the delay. You have seen your lawyer, I believe?

RICK

Yeah.

ANNA

Okay.

(she shuffles the papers then looks him in the eye)

How and why did you murder Philip Mayfield?

Rick stares back at her, his eyes filled with disbelief.

RICK

I haven't murdered anybody. I couldn't.

ANNA

You were the only person that Doctor Mayfield saw yesterday. According to his diary, he had no other appointments. In fact, he had no appointments at all. Your friend...

ANNA (CONT.)

(she looks at notes)

Susan Gillespie says he saw you on her recommendation and that you just walked in off the street. Is that right?

RICK

Yeah. She knew him because he helped her a few years back.

ANNA

That's what she told us, yes.

(closes file)

So, you didn't kill him. (Rick shakes his head) So how did his head get twisted around 180 degrees? Bad whiplash?

RICK

What? His head? What?

ANNA peers into his eyes. Then she looks down at the folder.

ANNA

Okay. I'll be right back.

She takes the folder and leaves the room.

INT. VENTURA COUNTY JAIL - CORRIDOR - DAY

ANNA exits the interview room and walks to a DETECTIVE who is standing in front of a vending machine.

DETECTIVE

Do you have a quarter?

ANNA

He says he didn't do it.

The detective turns around. He is tall, sun-tanned and handsome with brown hair and sunglasses.

DETECTIVE

Of course he does.

ANNA

I believe him, Tom.

Tom laughs and shakes his head.

TOM

Is this the famous 'Schmidt Intuition' kicking in? What did they call it at the academy? Schmintuition?

ANNA

Go look at the kid. He terrified. He doesn't know what happened. Have you read his statement? It's like something out of 'The Twilight Zone'!

Tom waves his fingers and mimics the 'Twilight Zone' music. She glares at him angrily.

TOM

Sorry. But he's out only lead, Anna. We have one witness, who fled the scene, she says, before the incident and nobody else entered the building, according to the manager.

ANNA

That's just it. The manager was sitting behind his desk and saw Gillespie and Robinson enter the building, but he only saw Gillespie leave. When he went to check on Mayfield, Robinson was gone. How'd he get out?

TOM

I don't know, Anna! Maybe he climbed out the window. Or hid in a broom cupboard.

TOM (CONT.)

Whatever happened, he didn't have aliens beam him away and dump him naked on the hill behind his house! That's fuckin' nonsense, Anna.

Anna seems upset.

ANNA

I know, Tom. But... but I have a strong gut feeling about this. My Schmintuition, if you like.

TOM

What do you suggest, then? We don't have enough to charge him with murder. At best, he's a reluctant witness.

ANNA

Lock him back up. We can hold him for questioning a little longer, but I want a guard on that door every second. No toilet breaks, nothing. I want his cell watched all night.

TOM  
For what?

ANNA  
I'm not sure. We'll see.

She slaps a quarter into Tom's hand and walks away. Tom turns to the vending machine and inserts the money.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Todd is stalking back and forth like a crazy man. Eleanor is crying on the couch. Steve is standing, looking out of the window.

TODD  
Why didn't you call us, Steven!

Steve turns around.

STEVE  
I tried, dad. You didn't answer the phone. It rang and rang. I even drove round and knocked on your door! I was there for an hour. The apartment manager threw me out.

Todd does not understand.

TODD  
We were in that apartment all night, boy.

STEVE  
I don't understand it either, dad.  
(he thinks for a moment)  
Remember what happened with Kim? When I hammered on their door that night?

We see a FLASH-CUT of Kim and Joe sitting in a trance-like state.

STEVE (CONT.)  
What if you were like that?  
(he turns back to the window)  
This is so fucked up, man.

Todd sits down next to Eleanor and places his arm around her.

TODD  
So, what did the police say?

STEVE  
They're holding him for questioning another 24 hours. If they can't charge him, then I guess they'll let him go.

TODD

Shit. What the hell's goin' on with this family lately?

(he gazes out towards the back garden)

And poor Cleo. Jesus, son.

STEVE

I know, dad, and I'm so sorry. I don't know what got into her. She just went crazy.

Eleanor looks up, her eyes red.

ELEANOR

How's Viv? Have you been to the hospital today?

STEVE

Of course I have, mom.

ELEANOR

No, I didn't mean...

(she starts crying again)

It's just that with everything that's gone on...

STEVE

I'm sorry, mom. I know. The doctor says she'll be able to come home tomorrow or the day after. She's feeling a lot better now.

Eleanor nods and smiles weakly. Steve sits down just as a loud knock at the front door is heard. He gets back up with a groan and answers it.

We see Anna and Tom standing outside. They show Steve their badges.

TOM

I'm Detective Harrison. This is Detective Schmidt. May we come in?

STEVE

Is it about Rick?

TOM

In a manner of speaking. We'd rather talk about it inside, if you don't mind.

Steve allows them to enter and they walk into the room, expertly noting everything in the surrounding area quickly and silently.

STEVE

This is my dad, Todd, and my mother,  
Eleanor.

The detectives nod at the parents and smile.

TODD

Has something happened to my boy?

Tom looks to Anna, as though saying 'Your turn'.

ANNA

We're not sure, sir. Richard, as you  
know, was being held for questioning in  
regard to the death of a Doctor Philip  
Mayfield..

ELEANOR

My Rick would never do anything like  
that.

ANNA

Of course, ma'am. As I was saying, we  
were holding Richard in our cells, but  
it seems he has escaped, somehow.

STEVE

What? How?

ANNA

We don't know, but I...

TOM

Have any of you seen Rick in the last  
hour? Please? (pause) Believe me, if you  
have, you won't be in any trouble. We  
just want to know what happened.

Steve, Todd and Eleanor all look to one another. They shake  
their heads in confused unison.

STEVE

No, we haven't seen him. In fact, I was  
only just telling my parents about all  
this when you arrived. They've been  
incommunicado.

Anna smiles.

ANNA

Incommunicado?

TODD

It means we couldn't be got hold of,  
miss.

ANNA

I know what it means, sir. (pause) So you have no idea where he could be?

STEVE

Have you tried Suzie's apartment?

ANNA

Yes, Miss Gillepsie hasn't seen him either. We have taken her into protective custody as a precaution.

TODD

(raising voice and standing up)  
As a precaution against what? My boy?  
(pause) My Rick wouldn't harm anybody!  
He couldn't, I tell you! He's a sweet boy. Lazy as a friggin' lame mule, but kind and thoughtful.

(he starts crying)

Where's my little boy? Help us, please.

Eleanor stands and it is her turn to console her husband. She holds him and he sobs into her chest.

She looks into Anna's blue eyes. She has a sudden, steely resolve.

ELEANOR

I think you know what's happened to him, don't you?

(Anne starts to speak)

No, let me guess. There was a bright flash and he was gone from the cell.

Anna looks to Tom

TOM

How could you know that, ma'am?

ELEANOR

Because it happened to me.

Steve whirls, his eyes fixed on his mother. Todd lifts his head and gazes at his wife through teary eyes.

TODD

What, baby? It happened to you?

They sit back down on the couch. The detectives are unsure what to do. Steve leaves the room and comes back a moment later with two wooden kitchen chairs. Anna nods in thanks and they sit down.

Steve remains standing, staring out through the open kitchen door and the black hill beyond the fence at the back of the house.

ELEANOR

I didn't want you to worry, honey. It was a long time ago, before we even met.

She takes a deep breath.

ELEANOR (CONT.)

I was waitressing at this all-night diner out near Barstow. It was a quiet night and so my boss said I could clock off early and get the last bus back home. (smiles) Saved him paying for a cab for me, you see.

We DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARSTOW DINER - NIGHT

A young Eleanor is standing beside the road, her arms folded. The only light is coming from a large, neon sign above her, advertising the all-night diner and truck stop, and the lights from the diner itself.

ELEANOR

(V.O.)

I waited, I don't know, maybe a half hour for the bus, but it never showed. I thought about going back inside, but I decided to start walking. There was a drive-in movie theatre not far from the diner and sometimes buses stop there. By the time I got there, though, it was closed and nobody was around. So I carried on walking.

The YOUNG Eleanor begins walking down the dark highway, her shoes kicking up dust. The lights of the diner are slowly receding as she walks. We PAN DOWN to her feet and, after a few steps, PAN UP again. We can no longer see the lights of the diner.

ELEANOR

(V.O.)

I'd walked maybe a couple of miles and I had about three more to go when I looked up and saw this light moving across the sky. Like a bright star. It was a beautiful evening, not a cloud to be seen and the stars were bright, but not as bright as this thing.

We see young Eleanor watching the light. Suddenly, it stops and then grows brighter. Suddenly, it is right overhead. A huge, oval shape, shimmering and coruscating. Young Eleanor is transfixed.

YOUNG ELEANOR

Oh my.

Suddenly there is a bright flash and young Eleanor is gone and the road is dark again.

We DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Eleanor smiles at Todd and he squeezes her hand reassuringly.

ELEANOR

Next thing I knew, I was naked on our back porch. Luckily, nobody saw me and I was able to slip into the house and go to bed.

(she breathes deeply)

I never spoke about it until now.

TODD

Oh, Ellie.

He kisses her lovingly on the forehead.

STEVE

Jesus, mom. That's... I don't know...

TOM

Aw, give me a break! You people are nuts.

ANNA

Tom! Go wait in the car.

TOM

Anna!

ANNA

Now, Tom. I'll be right out.

Tom exits, mumbling under his breath. He slams the front door as he leaves. Anna smiles apologetically.

ANNA

I'm sorry about my partner. He's very much old school.

STEVE

And you're not, I take it?

ANNA

Well, let's say I like to keep an open mind about things.

Anna pauses for a long time, as though gathering her thoughts.

STEVE

So, what do we do about Rick?

ANNA

I don't know. I guess he'll show up soon enough. (pause) Okay, let me put this succinctly. We have Rick at a murder scene and a doctor with his head almost twisted off. I don't think Rick did it. My partner would argue, but I think there's something else at work here.

STEVE

Something? You mean space aliens. UFOs. All that shit.

ANNA

As I said, I like to keep an open mind. Look, I'm not some UFO nut, but I've seen enough in my time to realise that there's some crazy stuff goes on in this world and it's not all done by people whacked out on drugs or nut jobs with axes to grind. Sometimes we have real mysteries on our hands and I think that's what we have here.

She leans forward, her elbows resting on her knees.

ANNA (CONT.)

We had a guard on Rick's cell the whole time he was in there. There was a flash of light, as you rightly said, Mrs Robinson, and, whoosh, he was gone. Now Tom has tried to rationalise it as some form of mass hypnosis. That Rick hypnotised the guard to unlock the cell and allow him to escape, but that's a crock, as I think you'd agree.

She looks to everybody in the room in turn.

ANNA (CONT.)

I think you good people have genuinely been abducted by aliens and, for whatever reason, they keep coming back for you. If anybody gets in their way, they die.

ANNA (CONT.)

Like Doctor Mayfield. He was just in the wrong place at the wrong time. I don't know, maybe the hypnosis session triggered an abduction. Alerted them somehow.

STEVE

Are you for real? I mean, you are a cop, right?

Anna laughs. She shows him her badge again.

ANNA

Yes, I am a real cop.

ELEANOR

So what can we do? How can we stop these things happening to us?

ANNA

I have no idea, Mrs Robinson. They don't teach us this stuff at the academy, I'm afraid. (pause) Look, we'll post a black and white outside, in case Rick returns. He is a material witness and suspect, after all. And technically an escaped prisoner at large. If anything happens, anything at all, I'll have them call me and I'll be right over. Any more than that, I can't do I'm afraid.

Anna stands and brushes the creases out of her plain skirt.

STEVE

We appreciate that, Detective Schmidt.

She nods and leaves the house. Steve crosses to the window and we see Anna arguing with Tom. Then they get back into their car and drive away.

ELEANOR

She was a nice lady.

STEVE

Yeah, she was. Pity she can't help us, though.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Viv is sleeping in her hospital bed. The colour has returned to her face and she seems much healthier. She now has only light bandages on her wrists.

We hear a CLICK and PAN around to see the window swing open. A bluish-grey, three-fingered hand appears over the sill. We WHIP PAN back to Viv. She is still sleeping.

We hear SCRATCHING and a light thud of something hitting the floor. A shadow falls across Viv's body. She opens her eyes and smiles up at her visitor.

VIV

Is it time?

The bluish-grey hand appears from off-screen and she takes it with her right hand. She climbs out of bed and walks off-screen. We hear a rustle and the blinds rattling and then a click.

We PAN around and Viv and the creature are gone, the window is closed and latched from the inside.

We HOLD the shot and then

DISSOLVE  
TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

We PAN around to see Steve and a confused doctor looking around the empty room.

STEVE

Where the fuck is my wife? What have you done to her? Didn't you have anybody watching her?

DOCTOR

No, she was out of danger, as you know. Mr Robinson, please calm down. We will find her. She has to be somewhere in the hospital.

Steve crosses to the window and rattles the latch. It is firmly seated. Then he looks down and sees a dirty smudge on the tiled floor. We CLOSE-UP and see that it is a bizarre, three-toed FOOTPRINT.

STEVE

Oh, shit. Oh my God! They took her.  
(he turns to the doctor)  
They fuckin' took my wife!

DOCTOR

Who took her? Mr Robinson, you're not making any...

Steve barges past him and out of the room. The doctor's eyes fall on the footprint and he turns to follow Steve.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR #1 - DAY

Steve marches down the corridor towards the elevator, the doctor hurrying to catch up.

DOCTOR

Where are you going? Who do you think took your wife?

Steve thumbs the button on the elevator.

STEVE

You wouldn't believe me, doc.

The elevator PINGS open and they step inside after an orderly exits, pushing an old woman in a wheelchair. She smiles up at the two men. The doctor returns the gesture, but Steve ignores her. The doors hiss shut.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR #2 - DAY

Steve hammers on the security room door and Bob opens it, looking angrily at Steve and the doctor.

Steve pushes past him and enters the security room.

BOB

Hey!

INT. HOSPITAL SECURITY ROOM - DAY

Steve looks at the array of monitors and the computer keyboard.

STEVE

Room 424. Play black the footage for last night.

Bob looks to the doctor, who simply nods. He sighs and nudges Steve out of the way. He points to the same monitor we saw earlier.

He rewinds the footage and we see that Viv's bed is empty. Then there is a period of interference and Viv then appears in bed, asleep.

STEVE

Play it forwards.

The footage begins playing normally. Viv is sound asleep in bed. Then the screen fills with static for several seconds. When it ends, the bed is empty.

STEVE

Oh, for fuck's sake! What happened?

BOB

I don't know. All the other feeds are fine for that time frame. I can't explain it.

STEVE

I can.

Steve marches from the room, leaving Bob and the doctor staring at the monitors.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Steve's car skids to a halt outside his home. He bolts out of the vehicle and races up the path and into the house. POLICEMAN #3, sitting in the patrol car across the street, looks on curiously, then returns to his magazine.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - VARIOUS ROOMS - AFTERNOON

We CUT to various rooms as Steve searches in vain for his wife. He calls out her name repeatedly. Nobody else is in the house.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #1 - AFTERNOON

Steve is sitting on the edge of the bed, holding one of Viv's fluffy, woollen tops. He holds it to his face and breathes deeply, his eyes filling with tears.

STEVE  
(shouting)  
VIVIENNE!

He collapses on the bed, sobbing and we watch him for several seconds as he is lost in his despair.

DISSOLVE  
TO:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Steve is asleep on top of the bedclothes. He is still holding the woollen top. Moonlight streams through the wide-open window, the open curtains rustling quietly as a breeze disturbs them.

We hear a scratching sound and a shadow falls across Steve's sleeping form. Suddenly, Steve's eyes snap open and he rolls off the bed quickly, terror etched in his face.

STEVE  
What the fuck?

We PAN around and see what appears to be the same, bluish-grey creature that Steve had dreamed about earlier. It stares at him with huge, black, unblinking eyes.

STEVE  
Get the fuck away from me!

He crawls out of the room, the creature watching him patiently.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #3 - NIGHT

Steve flings open his parents' wardrobe and starts rummage around for something. He finally finds it and we see a shotgun in his hands. He checks it and finds it is loaded

with two shells. He then rushes out of the room.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BEDROOM #1 - NIGHT

Steve barrels into his bedroom, the shotgun pointing forward, ready to fire. The creature has gone. The window is now closed. Viv's woollen top is also missing.

Steve slowly backs out of the room and we see him head down the hallway.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Steve stalks into the kitchen, shotgun at the ready. There is no sign of the creature. He flings open the back door and heads out into the back garden.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - NIGHT

Steve looks around. Nothing stirs in the immediate area. Above is a cloudless, starry sky. The Moon is low on the horizon. Steve looks towards KIM'S house, but it is in darkness.

STEVE  
(shouting)  
Come on, you cowards. Take me! TAKE  
MEEEEEE!

Nothing happens. A light breeze moves Steve's hair and we see a tear run down his cheek. He slumps to his knees, dropping the shotgun.

STEVE  
Take me.

There is a scratching noise and Steve grabs the shotgun. He spins around on his knees and fires both barrels.

TODD  
Jesus fuckin' Christ, boy! You almost  
took my head off! What are you doin'  
with my shotgun?

Steve drops the shotgun again and stares at his mother and father, who are standing in the doorway, in disbelief.

STEVE  
Shit, dad. I thought...

Todd runs over and scoops up the shotgun. He checks it and shakes his head. He looks down at his son, who is quietly weeping, still on his knees.

TODD  
We just came from the hospital. The  
doctor told us what happened. I'm sorry,  
son.

STEVE  
(quietly)  
I saw one of them, dad. It was here.

TODD  
Saw what?

Steve stands up and rubs his face with his hands.

STEVE  
An alien, dad. Plain as day. Standing as close to me as you are now. Why do you think I had the shotgun? I wanted to kill the fuckin' thing!

TODD  
What happened to it?

STEVE  
I don't know. I got the gun and when I came back, it had gone. Maybe I scared it away?

Eleanor disappears into the house, her face sad.

Policeman #3 appears from the side of the house, his pistol in his hand.

POLICEMAN #3  
What's going on here?

Steve looks away and mouths 'shit'. Todd leans the shotgun against the wall of the house.

TODD  
It's okay, officer. Just a minor accident. We're all okay.

Policeman #3 holsters his weapon.

POLICEMAN #3  
I'm going to have to make a report about this, sir.

TODD  
I understand, officer. It won't happen again.

Policeman #3 leaves the scene, presumably returning to his squad car.

STEVE  
I wonder if he called Detective Schmidt?

TODD  
Dunno. I guess we'll find out soon enough.

Todd scans the sky with his eyes and breathes deeply. His eyes fall on the dark hill beyond the fence. He curses under his breath and walks into the house, after retrieving the shotgun. Steve follows.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Todd tosses the shotgun into an armchair and turns round to face Steve. Eleanor is not present.

TODD

I know how you must feel about Viv, Steve, but you can't go round firing shells at anything that moves.

STEVE

You didn't see the thing, dad. I was friggin' terrified! What was I supposed to do?

Todd slumps down onto the couch. Steve perches on one of the kitchen chairs that are still in the room from earlier.

TODD

I don't know, son. What can we do? This whole situation is plain nuts.

STEVE

Dad, they've taken Rick and now they've taken Viv. Rick still hasn't come back. Do you understand what I'm saying here?

Todd looks at his son, his face etched with fear and worry.

TODD

Yes, son, of course I can see what's going on. The bastards are taking us one at a time. (pause) But why? What makes our family so special? What have we done? We're no different to anybody else.

A knock at the front door interrupts him and Steve rises to answer it. Anna walks in, her hair a little unkempt and she is wearing casual clothes. She seems somewhat angry.

ANNA

What's going on here? I got a call that shots had been fired.

STEVE

That was me. I mistook dad for an alien.

Anna looks to them both, her mouth open.

ANNA

You think this is fucking funny?

TODD

No we don't miss. So, I'd ask you to watch your tone in my house.

ANNA

I have a corpse over in the morgue, a missing suspect and now I find our suspect's family doing a little target practice at (looks at her watch) at almost fucking midnight! I'll take whatever tone I wish, Mr Robinson.

Eleanor appears out of the hallway. She looks dazed and confused. We see she has a bottle of Jack Daniels in her hand.

ELEANOR

(slurring)

It's all screwed. We're all screwed, you know.

(she sees Anna)

Hello, dear. Todd, it's the nice police lady from earlier.

She staggers around the couch and flops down next to Todd.

TODD

Jesus, Ellie. How much of this did you drink?

ELEANOR

(smiling and slurred)

Enough. And a little bit more for luck.

Anna looks on with disapproval. She stands to leave.

ELEANOR (CONT.)

They're coming back you know. Right now. I can feel them. They're on their way.

ANNA

Who?

ELEANOR

(pointing upwards)

Them.

(she swigs from the bottle)

Not a damn thing we can do about it. Oops, I said damn. Sorry.

STEVE

Mom.

ELEANOR

My sweet Steven. My good boy. Just like Rick. Both good boys. The best boys in the whole world.

(another swig)

Won't help, though. That's what they want.

(points up again)

They want good people. They know if you're good or bad, you know. Don't ask me how, but they know.

She drops the bottle and struggles to pick it back up. Liquor spills out onto the carpet.

TODD

I think you've had enough, Ellie.

ELEANOR

(suddenly angry)

You don't tell me when I've had enough!  
(calms) I thought if I got wasted, they'd think I was bad and leave me alone. What do you think, lade policeman... woman... person? Does getting drunk make me bad?

ANNA

No, ma'am, it doesn't.

ELEANOR

Shit.

(puts her hand to her mouth and giggles)

I did it again.

TODD

(to Steve)

Come on, son, let's get her to bed.

Todd stands up and he and Steve haul Eleanor from the couch. They haven't taken more than two steps with her when light floods into the room. Anna whips out her pistol. Steve and Todd hang on to Eleanor.

ELEANOR

Told you.

The light grows brighter until we can only see Anna, Steve, Todd and Eleanor with their edges softened by the brilliance.

Anna casts about with her pistol. The Robinsons just stand, blinking into the light.

ANNA  
(panting)  
Everybody stay calm!

A form emerges from the whiteness. It is identical to the creatures Steve saw. Then three more appear, all identical. They stand looking at the group for several seconds, their heads cocking occasionally, sometimes in unison.

ANNA  
Stay back!

A creature steps forward and Anna squeezes her trigger. Nothing happens. She tries again, but we just hear a dull click. She drops the gun, but we don't hear it hit the floor.

ANNA  
Shit! (she looks to the Robinsons) DO something!

The other creatures glide across to Steve, Todd and Eleanor and each takes a hand. They lead them into the light and disappear.

Anna stares at the remaining creature, the one she tried to shoot. It watches her with unblinking eyes. Then its mouth opens and we hear the SCREAM. Anna covers her ears and closes her eyes.

There is a FLASH and we find ourselves back in the living room. Anna is alone with her pistol by her feet. Smoke is rising from the muzzle, as if it has just fired.

She is panting, still with her hands over her ears and her eyes closed.

She opens her eyes slowly and looks around. She picks up her gun and checks the clip.

ANNA  
Two shots fired. What's going on here?

Policeman #3 appears at the door, his pistol drawn again.

POLICEMAN #3  
What happened? I heard more shots. (he looks around the room) Where is everybody?

Anna looks skyward and then at the police officer.

ANNA  
You didn't see anything? Like a bright light?

POLICEMAN #3

What? No. You went inside. Then I heard  
two shots and came running in.

Anna smiles thinly and walks towards the front door.

ANNA

You can out your weapon away. There's  
nothing more to do here.

Policeman #3 reluctantly holsters his gun and follows her  
out of the door.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN - NIGHT

Anna walks down the path towards her car, Policeman #3 in  
tow. He grabs her arms and she stops, turning to face him.

POLICEMAN #3

What the fuck is going on?

ANNA

How should I know?

(pause as she looks around the  
quiet street)

I guess you can go back to the station.

Confused, the police officer returns to his squad car. We  
see him climb inside, start the engine and drive away. Anna  
stands for a while on the Robinson's path and looks up to  
the star-filled sky.

ANNA

(smiling)

I guess I wasn't good enough.

FADE OUT:

THE END

FIRST DRAFT  
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