

Hold Your Breath

by

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(Original Story)

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Darkness blacker than black. No sense of where we are at all.

Above us we hear A WOMAN, her voice muffled as if in another room.

WOMAN (O.S.)
(yelling)
What are you doing? Don't! Stop!
Stop!

We hear high heeled shoes scuffle across a hardwood floor. Heavier footsteps chase after...a struggle. A scream. A slap. Someone falls hard to the floor, the thud reverberating over us.

There's silence, nothing but dark, interminable silence.

Then someone dragging something heavy across that floor above. We hear low, throaty groans of exertion.

A sliver of light flicks on under a door several feet above us in the dark.

The door opens, light spilling down an open faced stair case, washing across dank basement walls.

We see the silhouette of a man standing in the doorway.

He heaves something to the stairs. A body, lifeless, a limp arm dangling over the top step. He pushes the body further over. We can make out long hair and the dark outline of breasts under a dress - a woman.

He steps over her, pulls her lifeless body down the steps, her head thumping one stair at a time.

He drags her across the basement floor by her dainty feet in black pumps. We see her fine legs in black nylons, a revealing diner dress tight to her supple, perfect figure. Her limp arms dragging behind her.

He drops her legs and steps into the dark corner of the basement. We hear something opened - a wooden creak.

The woman is dragged into the dark.

We hear the ripping of her dress.

SMASH TO BLACK:

INT. WOODEN BOX -

Utter dark. We only hear a woman whimper and gasp.

WOMAN
Help me. Oh God. Oh God.

We hear her moving. The creaking of wood. Her hands feeling around, her gasping more panicked with every touch.

WOMAN
Oh God. Oh no...

Now terrified, we hear her hands and feet pound into hysterical thrashing.

WOMAN
(screaming)
Help me! Help Me!

A BLACK LIGHT flicks on. She stops, startled.

Her face ghostly white in the bizarre hue. An otherwise beautiful, vivacious woman, face bruised, mascara streaked cheeks, eyes ripped wide and blood red, long hair mussed, stripped down to only A PUSH UP BRA AND G-STRING PANTIES. This is MONIQUE, 24.

She's in a WOODEN BOX, claustrophobia fueling her horror. She pounds away, frantic to get out.

MONIQUE
Let me out! Help me! Help Me!

Beside her we see a round hole cut into the wall of the box, right where the black light is encased behind protective, clear plastic. A car stereo speaker is screwed into the sidewall.

MONIQUE
Help! Help!

Inside the hole we can make out...a CAMCORDER camera lens.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

An uber kitchen, very modern, very clean.

An island counter top where every kitchen appliance is exactly as it should be.

Coffee maker dripping coffee.

A stir spoon set on a cloth napkin beside a waiting coffee cup.

We hear a radio turned on - *Good morning, Dallas.*

Orange juice is poured.

We see a man's hand, in a nice suit sleeve, grab a dish cloth and wipe the bit of juice that dripped on the island counter.

And to one side of the island is a small LCD TV where we see Monique, a wash of BLACK LIGHT, pounding inside the box frantically. The volume off.

Coffee is poured into the cup. Milk added. Stirred with relaxed strokes.

Monique has found the camera hole, her terrified face filling the LCD screen, screaming at it to get out while we hear morning radio tell us what a beautiful day it is in the greater Dallas area.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Barely sunlit.

MONIQUE (O.S.)
(inside the box)
Help Me! Anyone!

It's a moderate sized basement for a moderate house. Organized and clean.

Basement windows draped over with black garbage bags.

Washer and dryer with a crisp new laundry basket on top.

A big-assed old freezer hums away in the corner.

A tool bench, clean and wiped, tools exactly where they should be on the peg board. A NEW HAMMER AND SET OF SCREW DRIVERS perfectly laid out by size.

A THICK-GLASS SHOWER STALL with a front facing glass door, antiseptic clean, built on a foot high PLYWOOD PEDESTAL, PVC drainage pipe running from under the pedestal, across the floor to a central drain, clear flexi-air tubes trailing up the side and fixed to the top.

MONIQUE (O.S.)
(inside the box)
Someone!

THE COFFIN SIZED BOX IN THE CORNER, six feet long, three feet wide and two feet deep, painted black, elevated off the floor on three wooden saw horses. A CAMCORDER ON A TRIPOD, pushed up against a hole cut into the side.

A SPRING LOADED LATCH holds against Monique's thumping inside, her voice muffled and strained.

MONIQUE (O.S.)
 (inside the box)
 Please, help me...

And across the basement, A DOOR, sealed with strap iron hinges, a lock ensuring no one enters.

MONIQUE (O.S.)
 (inside the box)
 Help Me!

The open faced staircase leading up to the...

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Where we see Monique on the LCD TV, crying, defeated, mouthing "help me" into the lens while all we hear is morning radio.

The coffee cup lifted to his mouth, drinking it all down. A napkin touches his lips. Cup in the sink, washed and put away.

ON THE ISLAND we now see an open purse, personal contents strewn out. Perfume spray. Mini brush. Condom packages - *ribbed for your pleasure*. Some money. Pack of smokes.

A driver's licence with Monique's photo. An iPhone.

INT. WOODEN BOX -

Monique dowsed in black light, her crying stifles with the chilling realization she may be...

MONIQUE
 Buried. Oh God, he buried me...
 (frightened - whimpering)
 Oh my God.

She considers the camera hole, the black light, the speaker, the walls of the box. She lightly taps around, listening - it echoes.

Then she hears...

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Those nice, new dress shoes walk across the kitchen floor.

INT. WOODEN BOX -

Monique gasps, realizing.

MONIQUE
I'm in his house.

She laughs nervously, as if relieved a moment. But fear over takes her again. She's trapped, nearly naked, stripped to utter vulnerability in a box. Her trembling hand presses over her mouth.

Then she hears a door creak open.

She gasps, holds her breath, as still and quiet as can be.

We hear someone coming down the stairs one torturous step at a time.

Fear racks Monique mercilessly. She presses her hands harder over her mouth, squelching her whimpers.

Footsteps crossing the basement floor grow near. He's coming.

We hear his hand touch the lid above, slowly drag his nails over the wood.

Horrorified, she follows the sound as it scraps across to where the latch would be.

She doesn't even breath. Sweat oozes out of her. Tears drip from her eyes, mascara mixed droplets licking down the side of her face, a peculiar texture in BLACK LIGHT.

We hear him breathing, deep, aroused breathes.

We hear the sound of a cock valve being opened underneath the box.

She gasps. A hissing behind her head.

The odor grabs her nose, fear exploding her fists frantically.

MONIQUE
Let me out!

A gaseous smoke creeps in. She coughs. She pounds harder, desperate to live.

MONIQUE

Let me out, you asshole!

The wispy smoke dances around her face, finds her nostrils. She coughs, again and again until her face spasms and rejects the gas infecting her, subduing her.

Her pounding weakens, her eyes flutter.

MONIQUE

Let me out...let..me....out.

Her hands drop, her head tips to one side, eyelids close.

We hear a CELL PHONE ringing upstairs...

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

That iPhone ringing beside the open purse on the island. And ringing...and ringing...and ringing...

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

He stands at the base of the stairs, listening to the ringing iPhone while gas hisses inside the box.

We see clear flexi-tube trickle from under the box, along the cement floor to a battery of gas cannisters labelled NITROUS OXIDE.

The phone keeps ringing. He straightens the sleeves of his nice suit, calmly.

EXT. STREET - DAY

MEGAN, 27, is the all-American every mom, strolling the sidewalk in her up scale neighborhood with her cell phone to her ear and a SMALL WHITE POODLE tugging the leash.

Her precocious daughter, KAELIN, 5, peddles her tricycle a few paces ahead.

KEALIN

C'mon, Fluffy.

The poodle strains the leash to catch up with a yappy bark.

MEGAN

(to Kaelin)

Slow down, Sweetie.

Her cell call rings and rings. No one answers. This concerns Megan.

In a driveway across the street, she sees two hoody-wearing TEENAGERS, 19, hand something off. They look at her as if to say - *what's your problem?*

Megan turns away as all nervous suburbanites do when they witness drug deals go down in broad daylight.

Then Kaelin gets further ahead than she should.

MEGAN

Kaelin.

Her little legs unable to stop the tricycle wheeling down a slight grade for the intersection.

MEGAN

(alarmed)

Kaelin!

Megan bolts after her. Kaelin giggling away, veering beyond control, unaware of the danger. Fluffy barking like crazy.

Megan breaks into a run, practically pulling Fluffy on the end of the leash. A car horn honks, death could be eminent.

Kaelin's feet can't even touch the spinning pedals, can't do anything but hang on. She's scared now, sees cars, sees her fate. She screams.

KEALIN

Mommy!

MEGAN

Kaelin!

Then suddenly A MAN snatches the seat of her tricycle just in time. A car whizzes past, horn honking.

He's a nice man, in a suit, a guy who was walking to work with a friendly smile. Let's call him DAN, 30.

DAN

Whoa there, kiddo.

Megan catches up, beyond rattled. Fluffy barking like she could actually attack.

MEGAN

Thank you!

DAN

No problem. Cute dog.

MEGAN
Fluffy, quiet.

The dog won't shut up. Kaelin nothing but a toothy smile.

KAELIN
That was fun!

MEGAN
No it wasn't. You have to be
careful, alright. Fluffy, quiet.

She gives Kaelin a quick hug and maneuvers the trike away from the curb. Dan helps out, takes Fluffy's leash.

DAN
I got her.

MEGAN
Thanks.

Kaelin back safely onto the sidewalk. Megan white as a sheet.

DAN
You going to be okay?

Fluffy is wrapping around his ankles.

MEGAN
Yeah. She just got away from me.

DAN
It happens.
(more tangled)
Ah...

MEGAN
Fluffy, stop.

DAN
She's okay.

KAELIN
She likes you.

Megan takes the leash, untangles Dan. Fluffy yapping like she could be a bull dog.

DAN
She's feisty.

MEGAN
She's my sister's dog.

KEALIN
Auntie went on a date.

MEGAN
Kealin.

DAN
(amused)
Well, that's nice.
(recognizes Megan)
Hey, aren't you the ones who moved
into the Fraser house?

MEGAN
Uh...

DAN
(points up the street)
519, right.

MEGAN
(guarded)
Yeah.

DAN
I'm Dan.

MEGAN
Hi.

DAN
Hi. And this is..?

MEGAN
Kaelin.

KAELIN
I'm Kaelin.

DAN
Hi, Kaelin.

KAELIN
And Fluffy.

MEGAN
(off Fluffy's yapping)
And...yeah..Fluffy.

DAN
The watch dog.

MEGAN
You might say.

DAN
(checks his watch)
Oh, I'd better get going. Nice meeting you.

MEGAN
You too.

KAELIN
Bye.

DAN
Bye, Kaelin. Keep the speed down or you're going to scare mom half to death.

KAELIN
(waving)
Okay.

He hustles across the street.

KAELIN
He's nice.

MEGAN
(suspicious)
Yeah. Nice. Don't do that again, alright.
(to fluffy's barking)
Fluffy, quiet.

KAELIN
Mommy, did you talk to Auntie?

MEGAN
(puts her cell in her pocket)
No.

KAELIN
Where'd she go?

MEGAN
I don't know, Kealin. Let's get you to school.

They go to continue the walk, but then Megan notices AN ECONOLINE VAN PARKED ACROSS THE STREET. It just looks like it shouldn't be there.

Something about it leaving her uneasy.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

A man's mouth leans close to a computer microphone.

His perfectly manicured finger flicks a light switch fashioned in a homemade box beside the computer monitor and...

INT. WOODEN BOX

The black light flicks on.

Monique was sleeping. She stirs, the light forcing her eyelids to squeeze.

She wakens slowly, then snaps rigid - that instant she remembers where she is. That same fear. She sniffs. The gas is gone. She rubs at a headache.

Suddenly, a disguised voice...

MAN
(over car speaker)
Are you hungry?

She startles, eyes the speaker. She quells her crying, the absurdity of her predicament throwing an angry punch at the lid.

MONIQUE
Let me out!
(right at the camera hole)
Let me out, right now!

She sobs a moment, her hands over her face again.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Monique on the computer monitor in black hue. We can hear her groggy, tortured sobs leak from computer speakers at minimal volume.

MONIQUE
(over speakers)
Let me out.

MAN
(to mic)
Are you hungry?

INT. WOODEN BOX

She nods.

Then she notices something. She moves her foot, shocked to find her ankle leashed with DOG CHAIN, padlock secured with amble slack coiled up at the base of the box.

MONIQUE

What the fuck! Oh my God.

(to the camera hole)

What do you want with me? Huh, what? Jesus, Jesus.

(hysterical laughter)

I can't believe how stupid I am. My God.

(laughter to crying)

Please, let me go...just let me go.

She gasps, suddenly quiet. Those slow footsteps coming down the stairs again.

Her eyes flicking with fear, not knowing what's coming to torturous to bare.

Suddenly a HATCH pops open behind her head. She gasps. Anger her only reaction.

MONIQUE

Let me out, you fucking asshole!

A tray is slid in with a sandwich and juice box. The hatch quickly shut.

MONIQUE

You hear me!

She eyes the sandwich. Rejects it. Punches the lid.

MONIQUE

Fucker!

Punches it again. And again.

MONIQUE

(screaming)

Let me out!

His footsteps trail off back up the stairs. We hear the door close.

It's hopeless. She sobs again.

MONIQUE

Why don't you let me go...please.

MAN

(over speaker)

You should eat something.

Monique's anger gets the better of her. She works her arm over in the cramped space, trying to reach the sandwich. She finally gets it, squishes it into pulp that she presses into the camera hole.

MONIQUE

Fuck off!

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The computer monitor nothing but black.

His hand calmly moves from the computer mic button, over the desk for a fader button that anyone could pick up at Home Depot. His finger rests on it a moment, anticipating.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

While Monique sobs inside the box, we see the length of dog leash chain leading from a hole in the bottom to the cement floor.

We follow it for several feet to where it's coiled tight around a steel pole lagged to the floor, then continues on for another few feet before we see two heavy wires soldered to the chain end. The wires trail along to...

AN ELECTRIC BATTERY CHARGER, where a dimmer box has been rigged on top with small fixture wires leading up the joists to the floor above, disappearing into the...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

...and running along the baseboards behind the computer desk, up the desk leg to the...

FADER BOX.

His finger pushes the fader up and...

INT. WOODEN BOX

Monique screams blue murder, thrashing hysterically.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

THE METER NEEDLES ON THE ELECTRIC CHARGER light up and spike to RED.

Monique's guttural screaming inside the box a relentless torture. Her thrashing teetering the box on the saw horses, close to it tipping over, enough to jar the camcorder and throw the tripod off balance.

It slams to the floor.

Suddenly the basement door whips open, kitchen light silhouetting him as he runs down the stairs, right for the box, his angry fists...

INT. WOODEN BOX

...hammering the lid while Monique writhes and grits against the electricity coiling through her.

MAN

(deranged rage)

Do you see what will happen when
you misbehave! Do you see!

(punches the lid)

Do you see!

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

His hand yanks the plug for the electric charger out of the outlet.

The METER NEEDLES drop to zero.

INT. WOODEN BOX

The electricity stops. Monique disoriented with after shock, over-wrought fear and exhaustion.

He punches the lid. She screams.

He pushes the mashed sandwich out of the camera hole, his WICKED EYE PEEKING through, his voice the menacing snarl of a lunatic.

MAN

You will give me what I want. Do
you hear me?

MONIQUE

(screaming)

You fucking asshole!

His eye leaves the hole. We hear the camcorder picked up. The lens positioned back in place, auto focusing on Monique.

She punches at the hole.

MONIQUE
You sick fuck.

We hear the COCK VALUE being twisted open under the box. Monique suddenly horrified.

MONIQUE
(begging)
No. No!

The gas creeping into the box. She struggles to grab the mushed sandwich, desperately stuffing her mouth.

MONIQUE
I'm eating! I'm eating!

The gas finding her nose.

MONIQUE
Please don't...please.
(whimpering)
Please.

The gas choking. Her hands clamped around her neck.

MONIQUE
Please.
(sudden anger)
Fuck you! Fuck you!
(punches the lid)
You fucker!
(loosing consciousness)
...you...
(sleepy)
...fucker...

She's out.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Meager light filters down the stairs.

That crisp new laundry basket on the dryer is tossed to the floor, replaced by A PORTABLE CD PLAYER.

The CD TRAY slides out. A CD dropped in and closed again.

We hear Monique sobbing beyond the OPEN CHAMBER DOOR with strap iron hinges, but can't see anything in the dark and forboding room.

Suddenly a HARK ROCK SONG blares through the basement.

His bare feet cross the cement floor for the chamber room. He steps inside and closes the door.

INT. CHAMBER - NIGHT

The only light in the room seeps under the door.

We see Monique's bruised and marred face streaked with tears and mascara. Complete terror consuming her.

She's prone facedown on a bare bed, stripped naked, rope spooled around her neck and gagging her mouth, looping under the bed frame and tied to her wrists, affirmatively pulling her arms over the edge and out of the way.

Her ankles lassoed to the bed posts, anchoring her legs into a forced spread eagle.

The hard rock music thumping beyond the door.

The NAKED MAN A SHADOWY MENACE, the same average physique we've seen before.

The sliver of light sneaking under the door casts an eerie silhouette as he crawls over Monique, touching her smooth buttocks.

His breathing heavy and laboured, thick with arousal.

Monique whimpers as the silhouettes meld into one, the bed creaking with the weight of two.

MONIQUE
(crying through her gag)
please don't...

WE SEE THE TAUNT ROPE TIED TO HER WRISTS

Loop under the bed, vibrating like guitar strings as...

Rhythmic creaking quickens and his THROATY MOANS drown Monique's whimpering and the muffled music beyond the chamber door.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Coffee grounds spooned into a filter.

Water poured into the coffee maker.

The coffee brewing.

Morning radio found on the dial - *Good morning, Dallas.*

The stir spoon spotlessly wiped and set on the cloth napkin beside the waiting coffee cup on the island.

Orange juice poured.

The LCD screen: Monique in the GLASS SHOWER STALL, wet and naked and asleep while thin wisps of frost fog the glass.

He sips the juice, dabs his mouth.

He methodically takes a fresh syringe out of a plastic wrapper.

The needle pokes through the skin cap of a serum bottle.

He flicks air bubbles out of the needle, places it on another napkin. The serum bottle set beside it, the label reads: SODIUM THIOPENTAL.

He pours his coffee.

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - DAY

Megan at the FRONT WINDOW, peering through sheer curtains at her normal street where she sees...

A GUY, 30, in casual sport jacket and jeans with two day beard growth, trotting two extra large TAKE OUT COFFEES for the back of the ECONOLINE VAN! The same van that troubled her before.

The guy double takes the neighborhood, then looks right at us before he opens the back doors and disappears inside the van.

Megan bites her nails she's so on edge. Fluffy yaps from somewhere in the house.

EXT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - BACKDOOR - DAY

Megan shoos Fluffy outside. The dog whimpers, hangs by the door.

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

She contemplates a MAC BOOK PRO on the kitchen table. Paces a few times, debating if she should or not. Then she finally pops the Mac open, fires it up.

She mouses over the application dock, chooses the DASHBOARD app, clicks the iPhone GPS icon. It starts up and...nothing. An error message flashes on the screen: *device out of range*.

What!

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - DAY

She picks up her cell on the way to the window again, even more fidgety. The ECONOLINE VAN still there.

Then she sees the drug dealing Teenager saunter as cocky as you please out of his Daddy's upscale house for his pimped out STREET RACER, some European thing that looks like it would break speed limits.

Before she can dial a number, her cell phone rings in her hand. She nearly jumps out of her skin. It's a *UNKNOWN NUMBER*. She answers. A courteous man on the other end.

MEGAN

(leery)

Hello.

MAN

Hi, Ma'am. I'm calling from City Center Gas. We're doing an inspection of the houses in your block.

MEGAN

My block?

MAN

Yes, ma'am. There's complaints of gas leaks. Just a precaution. Is someone home between the hours of 9 and 5, ma'am?

She watches the teenager speed away. She rubs her aching forehead. Megan's a wreck, worried and stressed to the breaking point.

MAN

Ma'am.

Megan can't help it. The cry comes.

MEGAN

I'm sorry.

She ends the call, hides from her window.

MEGAN

Monique, where the hell are you?

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

All we hear is the sound of droplets drooping out of the SHOWER HEAD. They splatter on the SHOWER FLOOR.

A SHOWER LIGHT shines into the glass stall.

Mists of cold air expel from the clear flexi-tube fished over the top of the stall. It trails down the outside of the shower, across the floor and eventually fed under the lid of the big-assed old freezer.

Monique is slumped in the shower, shivering in her sleep, skin pickle white, lips a bluish hue. Her eyes a commingled mess of runny mascara and bloodshot red. Long, brunette hair tangled and soaked.

Her calves marked with rope burns. Her ankle still lassoed with padlocked dog leash. It snakes up the front of the shower, over the top and down to the floor, all the way to the BATTERY CHARGER with that make shift fader.

His finger hovers over it a moment then slides the fader.

Monique contorts awake, teeth gritting till her bluish lips bleed, legs spasmodically flexing from electricity pulsing through her rigid body.

MONIQUE

Aggggggh!

The fader down.

Her body relaxes. She cries.

MONIQUE

Please stop.

She can't see anything but black beyond the shower glass walls smeared with blinding shower light from above. Just the dog leash glittering.

Then, like the two square eyes of a villain, we can see the METER NEEDLES on the battery charger light up beyond the hazed shower walls.

Monique convulses against the current torturing her. Screams through gritted teeth.

Again it stops.

Her breathing rapid and scarred, pressing herself into the corner of the shower, rubbing her shivering arms.

MONIQUE

Why are you doing this to me?

(screams)

What kind of a monster are you?

Suddenly A SPOT LAMP flicks on outside the shower. We see him sitting there, mere feet from the shower, in a suit with a CLOWN'S MASK ON. The battery charger beside him. A mini laptop on his lap.

Monique startles at the sight of him. Quick to anger. She kicks at the glass.

MONIQUE

Let me go! Do you hear me! Let me
fucking go!

He raises a finger to his masked mouth - *quiet*. His finger hovering over the fader button on top of the charger.

She stops.

MONIQUE

Okay. Okay. Please don't do that
anymore. I'll do anything you want.
Please don't do that.

His finger rescinds. He watches her whimper a moment, his head tilting as if curious as to why she's so distressed.

He reaches over, clicks something on. A screen projector casts black light against the basement wall.

Monique shivers, not understanding what's going on.

MONIQUE

I'm cold.

His finger to his lips again. What he types on the mini laptop appears in black light on the wall. He gestures for her to read it.

She squints through the glared shower glass, sees...

No one knows where you are.

She looks at him, eyes wet, her expression begging his mercy. The clown mask unresponsive. He types again.

No one can hear you scream.

She begins to cry, hopelessness defeating her. More typing.

If you defy me, you'll be punished.

More typing.

If you disobey me, you'll be punished.

She cries more, hand over her mouth. More typing.

If you try to escape, you'll go back in the box.

MONIQUE

No. Not in there, please. Please.

The clown just stares at her, the happy face concealing any reaction. More typing.

If you run away, they will die.

She reads it then looks at him with a deep seeded dread.

MONIQUE

What are you talking about?

He touches a key, gestures to the wall.

We see camcorder video of...

Megan walking the sidewalk with her cell phone to her ear, Fluffy tugging ahead on the leash, Kaelin way ahead on her trike. Then Kealin peddles quicker, the trike speeding down the grade toward us, Megan giving chase. Suddenly the camcorder moves behind a hedge, watching Kaelin veer beyond control for the busy street.

The video off.

Monique's anger flies out of her fists and legs. She thrashes and bangs against the walls but the glass is industrial thick. The door sealed tight.

MONIQUE

You fucking asshole! Don't you fucking touch them!

His finger hangs over the fader button.

She bangs it one more time like a last gesture of defiance. And then she notices, for the first time, the thick glass confining her. This is no ordinary shower.

She looks above. Sees the flex-tube flung over the top, spewing frosty air, the tube running down the outside of the shower to the freezer. She shivers, stares at him with as much repulsiveness as she can muster.

MONIQUE

This isn't a shower?

He types.

Water chamber.

She eyes the drain between her legs, the water sealed door, deducing now what the shower was designed to do to her. She looks at him for some hope of mercy. But none reads in the mask.

MONIQUE

You don't have to do this. I won't tell anyone. Really. I can really keep secrets. And I've never seen your face. So there's nothing to tell, right? I mean I don't even know where I am. Please. Please, just let me go home.

He types. She reads.

You are home.

She doesn't understand.

MONIQUE

What?

More typing.

This is your home now.

She shakes her head, defeated and angry. Suddenly her temper explodes and she thrashes, screaming and writhing with unbridled rage, kicking and punching at the shower glass.

MONIQUE

You sick fuck!

Are you defying me?

His finger over the fader.

She reins in her anger, coils down in the shower, fearing more electricity.

MONIQUE
No. No. I'll do what you want.

Do?

MONIQUE
(defeated)
You can do whatever you want, just no more shocks, please.

His finger lowers. He looks at the chamber room. So does she, repulsed with being violated again. But what choice is there?

MONIQUE
Just don't tie me. It really hurts.

He looks at her for a long moment, then types again.

You know what I really want, Monique.

She wipes her tears, shivers to the point of chattering teeth now.

I want you to tell me something.

MONIQUE
What?

You know what I want you tell me?

Suddenly a glimmer this is not what she thought it was.

MONIQUE
What? Tell you what?

Tell me.

MONIQUE
What?

Tell me.

MONIQUE
What! What the fuck do you want from me?

Tell me.

MONIQUE

I don't know what you want, you
fucking asshole!

He gets out of his chair. She recoils, fearing what's to come now.

He steps into the dark beyond that spot lamp. We hear cannisters clang, then he comes back into the light with a NITROUS OXIDE bottle in his hands.

MONIQUE

No. Please, don't.

He pulls the flexi-tube out of the freezer, pushes it onto the cannister nipple.

Monique presses right to the glass, eyes ripped wide, clamoring for his attention, begging for him not to do it.

MONIQUE

Don't! Please! No.

He twists the valve. Watches her fear as gas flows up the tube, over the top, and fills inside the shower.

MONIQUE

Oh God. No. No.

She cowers down as low as she can get, but the gas finds her nose. She coughs, kicks against it, the dog leash smashing against the glass, but soon she's overcome.

Her eyes close. The clown, the basement dissolve away...

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

It's a nice room, the kind a normal person would have, TV on a stand in the corner, descent furniture, frilly curtains over the bedroom window that looks out over the normal neighborhood at night.

On the bed Megan slumbers on top of the blankets, still in her clothes.

Suddenly she startles for no reason, gasps when she sees...

Kaelin standing at the foot of her bed, a dolly clutched in her arms, a pout from that beautiful face.

KEALIN
Fluffy isn't here, Mommy.

MEGAN
What?

Megan sits up. And then Kaelin screams blue murder, pointing at the window.

Megan screams when she sees...

THE CLOWN standing there watching them. He's gone an instant later.

KEALIN
(terrified)
Mommy?

MEGAN
Oh, God.

Megan rifles through the settee, pulls out a handgun, fumbling with it like an amateur. She clenches Kealin's shoulders.

MEGAN
Stay here.

She runs out of the room, Kaelin right on her heels.

KEALIN
Mommy, don't go! Don't go.

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

Megan tears for the front door, heaves it open, determined to get her stalker, and runs down...

EXT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

...the front walk full out for the street. As she rounds the hedge at the foot of the driveway, she runs head long into...

Dan, the friendly neighbor, as if he was there all along.

DAN
Whoa! Whoa! Hang on now.

Megan pushes to get past him, desperate to get the intruder, but Dan holds her back.

MEGAN
Get out of my way.

DAN
Hold on, now. Hold on, Megan!

For a brief flash she sees a holstered gun under his sport jacket.

Her fight to push past quells, incredulously watching Dan catch his breath, sensing he's not who he claimed.

MEGAN
Who are you?
(aims the gun)
Who are you!

DAN
Whoa now, easy. Take it easy.
(reaches in his pocket)
Just getting my ID, alright.
(he flashes a badge)
Agent Dan Riley, FBI. Don't shoot.

Megan begins to cry.

MEGAN
I can't find my sister.

Dan eases the gun out of her trembling hand.

DAN
I know, Megan. I know.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Monique slumped and wet in the shower, coming to slowly, groggy with eyes dilated much like an addict riding a good high. The dog leash still wrapped around her ankles.

The shower head spews droplets of steaming water - *hot*.

A few speckle Monique. She feels it. Frowns then gawks up with wonderment.

He sits in his chair with his clown mask on, an empty syringe in his hand.

Suddenly, the basement door opens at the top of the stairs. Someone comes down.

It's the guy with sport jacket and jeans and two day beard growth that we saw getting into the Econoline van. This is MARCO, 32. He has an extra large coffee to go.

He nudges the Clown's shoulder, gives him the coffee.

MARCO

Here.

The clown slips off the mask and reveals a smart looking young guy with trim hair, clean complexion, the kind of all-American guy we wouldn't suspect of such abhorrent acts. This is BILLY, 27.

BILLY

Thanks.

Marco steps right to the shower, studies Monique like a specimen in a jar.

MARCO

She tell you?

BILLY

She doesn't know anything.

MARCO

Bullshit.

BILLY

She has 20cc's of Sodium Pentothal in her, never mind trauma and stress...

(glances at the chamber door)

...add to that what you did. She's exhausted and disoriented. I'm telling you she doesn't know.

MARCO

She fucking knows. Give her more.

BILLY

(sips the coffee)

Are you nuts. It'll kill her then we've got nothing.

MARCO

If she doesn't know, she's fucking dead anyway. Do it.

BILLY

No.

MARCO

What?

BILLY

No.

MARCO

What do you mean 'no'?

BILLY

I mean no. She's had enough.

MARCO

She's had enough.

(getting angry)

Who are you to decide when she's had enough? I'll tell you when she's had enough, you little fag.

(off Billy's stare)

Yeah, that's right. I see you every fucking morning, cleaning the kitchen like a woman. You're one of those weird neat freaks or something. I knew you didn't have the balls for this.

BILLY

Fuck you.

MARCO

Fuck me!

Marco yanks Billy's coffee out of his hand and throws it at his face. Billy springs out of the chair, the hot burning. Marco pushes him right to the wall, smashes his head into the cement, a firm hold of Billy's perfect hair.

MARCO

Fuck me!

BILLY

You raped her.

MARCO

I'll do more than that if that bitch doesn't tell us where it is.

Marco eyes him with a killer's glare, a man capable of taking anyone's life. He releases Billy, steps over to the chair, picks up the empty syringe.

Billy watches, fearful what's going on in Marco's head.

Marco comes close, holds the needle at Billy's face.

MARCO

This could do more harm empty, huh.

(pulls the plunger back)

Embolism. Quick and painless.

BILLY
(musters courage)
Stop it.

Billy pushes him back - he's had enough.

MARCO
(throws the needle down)
Then do your fucking job.

Monique comes back a bit at a time. She sees the two of them, cognitive enough to be curious as to who the second one is.

Marco moves to the shower, peers in at her, looking over the tubes and dog leash, the torture so far. He eyes the PVC drainage pipe.

MARCO
She fucking knows.

He reaches under the plywood pedestal, gropes for a drain valve in the top of the PVC, yanks it closed.

BILLY
Marco...

MARCO
Shut up! Shut the fuck up!

Marco moves to the side of the shower, clasps the hot and cold taps fastened to the wall.

MARCO
She'll tell us.

He spins them wide open.

Monique gasps, the shock of cold water snapping her out of her state, bringing her back to the harsh reality.

MONIQUE
Agggh.

The water spraying her, shocks of hair dripping into her eyes and mouth. She gulps and struggles to get out from under the shower.

The drain sealed, water filling up on the shower floor.

Billy just stands there, watching with conflicted morality. Marco grins, confident this will get him what he wants. He presses his face to the shower wall.

Monique fully there now, scared, twitching from one corner of the shower to the other.

Marco knocks the glass. She gasps and pops to the opposite side of the shower away from him.

MARCO

Are you a fish, little bitch, huh?
You'd better be. You'd better be,
or come hell or...

(points at the water
level)

...high water, you're going to
drown in there. Swim, swim, swim.

BILLY

Marco...

MARCO

Shut up, you little fucking faggot.

BILLY

Marco, she's too drugged up. We've
gassed her and drugged her. She
will drown.

MARCO

(punches the shower)

Then she better give me what I
want.

(sinister laugh)

Or she'll bloat up like dead
fucking mermaid.

(another punch)

You hear me, bitch.

Monique tries to stand. The water filling around her knees now.

Marco steps back, grin widening, enjoying the spectacle. Billy growing more uneasy with every inch the water climbs up the shower wall.

Monique thrashes, her feet squeaking against the thick glass, her hands slipping for a hold. The water up to her breasts, enough that buoyancy teeters balance.

Her footing slips, her head dunks below. She pops back up, gulping for air.

Marco laughs like he's watching a rat in a toilet swirl around for it's life. He punches Billy's shoulder playfully.

Billy barely able to watch.

MARCO
Swim, swim, swim, little mermaid.
(laughs)
Or drown, drown, drown.

BILLY
She can't tell us if she's dead.

A darkness overcomes Marco, his maniacal laughter replaced with sheer evil.

MARCO
She's not dead...yet.

He steps to the battery charger.

BILLY
Marco, no!

MARCO
Shut up!

He grabs the fader box wires where they're soldered to the dog leash chain, takes up the chain slack one handful at a time.

Monique is nearly underwater now, bouncing on tippy toes to keep above the water, gasping short, panicked breaths.

MONIQUE
Help Meeeeee!!

For an instant she sees Marco's deranged smirk then...

He pulls the dog leash hard, the slack pulling taunt over the top of the shower, yanking Monique up by her ankles, her head swirling at the bottom of the shower.

Her cheeks bloated out with what little air she could gulp before going under.

Marco's face pressed right to the shower glass, eye to eye with her.

MARCO
Tell me what I want to fucking
know!
(punches the glass)
Tell me!
(more punches)
(MORE)

MARCO (cont'd)
Tell me or you'll fucking drown in
there you worthless whore!

Monique running out of air, desperately trying to reach to her ankles bobbing at the top of the shower. She hasn't got the strength to reach.

Her hands bang the glass, drowning, a desperate will to live.

BILLY
Marco, that's enough.

MARCO
(punches the glass)
Tell me!

BILLY
Marco!

MARCO
Tell me, little fish. Tell me!

BILLY
Marco, you're going to kill her.

Billy at his breaking point, looking around for something to use.

Marco laughing, hopping around the shower, slapping the glass like it's all a game for his amusement.

Monique moving less and less, out of air, eyes as wide as they can go.

Water spills over the top now, splattering the cement floor.

Marco dancing like a lunatic, making fish gill faces.

MARCO
Little fish, little fish, little
fish. Tell me, tell me, tell me.

Billy snatches the HAMMER off the work bench, marches to the shower and with all his might, strikes the straining glass door.

MARCO
What are you doing!

The glass shatters, the water spilling out of the shower like a water fall, knocking Marco and Billy into the walls in one big powerful wave.

Monique dangling upside down, her body banging against the broken glass, sucking huge breaths until the chain crumples the rest of the shower glass. She tumbles to the floor amid shattering glass panels.

Billy grabs the workbench, clamoring to get to his feet.

Marco just stares at him with a demonic gleam in his eyes. He stands in six inches of water, sees the hammer laying on the floor.

While Monique coughs precious air, Marco picks up the hammer, marches at Billy with it raised high over his head to kill.

BILLY
(screaming)
No! No!

Billy raises his hands, but it does nothing to fend off the blows.

Marco beats him with the hammer till Billy is a crumpled, bloody dead mass on the watery basement floor.

Bloody water spiraling down the main drain.

Monique slumped on the floor, vibrating with a fear we can only imagine.

Marco drops the hammer, like a satisfied killer, his face speckled with Billy's blood. His gaze locked on Monique.

She cries, knowing she's next. Knowing she's going to die.

MARCO
Where is it?

MONIQUE
(screams)
I don't know what you want!

Marco snatches her by the hair, drags her across the wet floor to the big-assed freezer.

MONIQUE
No! I don't know what you want!

Marco heaves open the freezer, wrestles Monique up and pushes her head in so she can see...

A DEAD MAN frozen inside. A frozen iPhone laying on his chest. Her iPhone.

She cries with sincere agony for the man's blue, lifeless face.

MARCO
Recognize him!

He throws her to the floor, her face slapping the cement.

MONIQUE
No! Oh my God!

He cranks her head by the hair, his face a menacing snarl, the same snarl we've heard before over the car speaker wired to the box.

MARCO
Now you know what I want, don't you
little fish?

He pulls her over the floor for the chamber room door.

Monique claws at anything to not go in there again.

MONIQUE
No! No! No!

He hauls her into the dark.

She grabs the door frame desperately.

MONIQUE
No! No! Please!

And then we see Monique pulled into the dark room, the door slamming us out, leaving us in the basement to hear her beaten and screaming within.

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dan is on his cell phone the way someone is when they don't want to alarm a child with what they're saying.

Megan is at the kitchen table with Kaelin and her dolly on her lap, stroking her beautiful hair as any mother would.

DAN
(to phone)
...no, she didn't call in a missing
person. Why would she, right? I
mean, Dallas PD wouldn't even find
her name in the databases.
(smiles at them)
Yeah, I'm here now.
(MORE)

DAN (cont'd)
 (something serious is
 said)
 Are you sure that's necessary, sir?
 I mean she's enrolled the girl in
 school and everything. They're
 getting settled--.
 (put in his place)
 Yes, sir. Sorry.
 (rolls his eyes)
 Yes, I'll file a report, sir. First
 thing in the morning, yes. Good-
 bye.

He hangs up and joins them at the table.

DAN
 How you doing there, Kaelin?

KEALIN
 (pouty)
 The clown was scary.

DAN
 I'll bet. Did you scream?

KEALIN
 Yeah.

DAN
 (smiles playfully)
 Well, then I'm sure he won't be
 coming back.

Megan knows what he's doing, goes along with it.

KEALIN
 How come?

DAN
 I heard you scream yesterday on
 your trike. I'm pretty sure you
 scared him off.

Kaelin's toothy grin returns, looks up at mom proudly.

KEALIN
 Think so, mommy?

Megan manages a nod, then shares a glance with Dan, knowing
 they need to talk.

MEGAN

Hey, sweetie, how 'bout you go watch some TV while I talk to Dan, okay.

KEALIN

Okay.

Kealin slides down, something else on her mind.

KEALIN

Do you think you could find Fluffy?

DAN

Fluffy?

Megan bits her lip with guilt.

KEALIN

Mommy put her out and I think the clown man scared her too. Do you have to make a re...a repo...

DAN

Report?

KEALIN

Yeah.

DAN

I'll call it in right away, okay. Promise.

KEALIN

(to Megan)

I like him, Mommy.

MEGAN

Uh, huh. TV, please.

The pouty lip again, she sulks into the livingroom, plops herself on the couch and points the remote. Cartoons echo.

DAN

She is one cute kid.

MEGAN

Yeah, she is.

(pleasantness fades)

So how long have you been watching us?

DAN
Ah, well, not long. A day or so
really.

Megan looks completely vulnerable.

MEGAN
I didn't think you'd actually be
watching us...really.

DAN
Normally we don't, but
Jake...uhmmm...fell off the grid
last week, so it's a precaution
more than anything.

This strikes some worry for her.

MEGAN
Great. Does he know where we are?

DAN
We don't think so, no.

MEGAN
So who's the clown in my window?

DAN
Probably just some teenagers
pulling a prank or something. I'm
sure it's nothing to really alarmed
over. Really.

MEGAN
So what do we do now?

DAN
First we find Monique.

MEGAN
And then, second, you relocate us,
right?

DAN
Ah...maybe. That decision comes
from higher up than me.

MEGAN
Great. Just great.

Megan wipes her eyes, contains her disappointment.

DAN
Do you think there is any chance
Monique would've contacted Jake --.

MEGAN
No. She hated him.

DAN
Was there someone else she was
seeing?
(off Megan's stare)
Sorry. Have to ask. We're gonna
have to retrace her steps from the
last time you saw her. When was
that?

MEGAN
Night before last.

DAN
Where was she going?

MEGAN
(reluctant)
She met a guy online.

DAN
Don't feel bad, Megan. Just because
you're in witness protection,
doesn't mean you're not allowed to
have a life. Do you at least know
his name.

MEGAN
Yeah, Billy somebody. I don't know
how to contact him.
(gestures at the MacBook)
I tried to look on her account, but
I don't know his ID on there. She
took her iPhone. I know she had his
number in there.

DAN
(eyes the MacBook)
Did you try to GPS the phone?

MEGAN
It's out of range.

DAN
Which means she's pretty far. At
least out of the city. Where was
she supposed to meet this guy?

MEGAN

She wouldn't tell me.

(off Dan's curiosity)

I didn't want her to go. She could've waited. At least till we had him checked out.

(fights crying)

You'd think after Jake, and everything we went through, she'd take it slow. I mean, our lives are...

(eyes Kaelin ruefully)

...my daughter has to live like this now, all because my sister had to get mixed up with that guy.

DAN

Jake Fuller was pretty bad.

MEGAN

Are they after us?

DAN

The cartel? No, I - I mean, we don't think so. Jake was the one who skimmed the money. Whatever he's done with that two million is anybody's guess.

He looks for a glimmer of guilt in her, sees nothing but sallow pity. He stands.

DAN

I'll start an APB through the agency using her new ID. That'll go nationwide. We can scan wireless networks for her iPhone too, okay.

MEGAN

(nodding like it won't help)

Okay.

DAN

And I'll stay close by...

(off her meek smile)

...just to be safe.

She follows him to the door.

DAN

If anyone else comes to the house or if you do hear from her...

(MORE)

DAN (cont'd)
(gives her a card)
...call me right away. That's my
cell, okay.

MEGAN
Okay.

DAN
Okay.

Before he goes...

KEALIN
(from the livingroom)
Bye, Dan!

DAN
Bye, Kaelin.
(to Megan)
Good night.

MEGAN
Night. Thanks again.

DAN
You bet.

And she closes the door after him, sure to lock it with the
dead bolt and chain.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

We hear Monique whimpering in the dark somewhere.

The only light trickles down the staircase, painting the dank
walls.

The black box on the saw horses, the lid open.

The blood stain on the floor where Billy was beaten to death.
Billy gone.

The shattered pieces of broken shower all over the puddled
floor.

The bloody hammer tossed by the freezer.

The dog leash trailing from the battery charger wires, snaked
across the wet floor, past the chamber door, into the dark
room where...

Monique is tied face down to that bare bed in the same forced
eagle, mouth gag choking any chance of a scream.

Marco stands in the doorway, the faint light glistening off his taunt buttocks. He clenches a broom handle in his hands, twisting it with eager anticipation.

MARCO

Now let's talk about my fucking money.

He steps inside. The door slammed shut.

Monique's muffled scream is all we hear.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Ding Dong...Ding Dong.

Megan snaps awake in bed still in yesterday's clothes, eyes sore, completely exhausted and paranoid. She has a kitchen knife clenched in her hand.

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

She cautiously makes it to the door, knife ready to stab, and peaks through the window at...

A man with a clip board and a CITY CENTER GAS jacket over his stout chest with a name tag that claims him to be RON, 40. He's checking out the Teenagers European race car parked on the street. Rings the doorbell again.

Megan berates herself with a - *keep it together* - and slips off the chain and twists the dead bolt.

She opens the door to his blistering smile.

RON

Hey, you're home! Great.

He reaches for the screen door, but Megan quickly grabs the handle from inside - *not so fast*.

RON

Ah, lady, I have to come inside to check for the leaks.

Megan peers over his shoulder at the race car, looking for the Econoline van that isn't there now. Her paranoia running rampant.

RON
You okay?

MEGAN
What's your name?

RON
My name?

MEGAN
Yeah. You're name.

He can see she's not letting him in.

RON
(points at his tag)
My name is Ron.
(she wants more...)
Ron Lahey. Want my Employee number?
(smiles)
You know, it's okay. With the kooks
running around now a days, I'd
check me out too. If want to call
my office first, I'll wait. It's
fine.

Something about Ron's smile wins her over.

MEGAN
It's okay.

RON
You sure?

MEGAN
One second.

She hides THE KNIFE UP IN THE CLOSET SHELF, then opens the door for him.

He steps in, sure to remove his boots. Megan regains her manners.

MEGAN
Would you like a coffee or
anything?

RON
No, no, that's okay. This doesn't
take long. Can you show me where
the basement is?

MEGAN

This way.

Megan leads Ron down the hall.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Monique naked and duct taped to one of the kitchen chairs from upstairs. Her ankles to the legs, her wrists to the arms, her mouth gag removed. Her face a nearly unrecognizable portrait of mascara, tears and blood, hair tattered beyond hope of repair.

A woman permanently damaged.

Marco sits in a chair opposite, within arms reach. His grin cocky, like he's sitting down for a speed dating round. He laughs the way one would when they're impressed with someone.

MARCO

You are one tough fucking chick,
you know that.

(pulls out a cigarette)

You want one? C'mon, I know you do.
I went through your purse. You
smoke. And you've been down here
for what, three days now, no
smokes. I'd loose my fucking mind,
y'know.

(offers it over)

Take it. Go on.

(off her blank stare)

Suit yourself.

(lights up - puffs)

I won't offer again though.

(settles back)

You see, that's the thing about me.
I don't make the offer twice. You
might want to keep that in mind
while we chat here.

Monique has no reaction whatsoever, any impulse to fight beaten out of her.

MARCO

(quips)

You know, I'm all out of ideas
here. I mean we've locked you in a
box, gassed you, nearly fucking
drowned you death in that Chinese
water fucking thing, beat you...

(gestures at the chamber)

...violated you.

(MORE)

MARCO (cont'd)

I mean, I just don't know what else to do. Quite frankly, it's becoming a little bit of a fucking problem. So, the way I see it now, considering what I want, and you need...I say we help each other out. What do you think? You tell me where my fucking money is. I let you live.

(off her wincing)

No, no. I know what you're thinking. He's going to fucking kill me the minute I tell him where it is anyway. That's not true. I could. Every ounce of common sense in me tells me I should, and for good fucking reason too.

(eyes her body)

But the truth is you're so fucking beautiful, what's a guy to do, y'know.

He takes a nice, long puff, relaxed as hell with this kind of intimidation.

Monique squeezes her eyes, afraid of more torture.

MONIQUE

I don't know what you're talking about.

MARCO

(surprised)

You don't know what I'm talking about?

(off her nod)

You don't know about the fucking money. Two million fucking dollars that that asshole of a husband of yours scammed?

(off another nod)

Monique, what the fuck, give it up already. It's only money.

MONIQUE

I don't know about any money.

MARCO

(points at the freezer)

And what about him?

MONIQUE

(sobbing)

I don't know who that is.

MARCO
You don't know who that is?

MONIQUE
I've never been married.

MARCO
(laughs)
Unfucking believable. You're telling me you've never seen that stiff in there?
(off another nod 'no')
You've never fucked him?
(off another)
You've never worn his engagement ring?
(another nod)
Never.
(getting pissed)
Do I look like a fucking goof to you, Monique? You don't think I don't know. You don't think I haven't seen pictures of the two of you. Seen video.

He puts the cigarette out on the floor, reins in his anger, contemplating another approach.

MARCO
I've seen video y'know.
(points at the blood stain)
Billy there, he liked to video people.
(gestures at the chamber)
That in there. He taped that. That's how he got off.
(points around)
All this torture shit. All out of his fucked up mind. That's what happens when you hole up in some cubicle, spying on people for the agency, using their secrets against them, y'know. You're head gets all fucked up.
(looks at the stain)
Course, he wasn't much of a man. I mean, c'mon, we have you down here, and he's up there whacking off to videos. Cleaning the kitchen and shit like that. Can't trust a guy like him when the it comes down to it, y'know.
(MORE)

MARCO (cont'd)
 Sometimes you gotta be tough.
 (eyes her over)
 But you know that, don't you. You
 know what a real man is.
 (eyes the freezer)
 Yeah, you liked 'em bad like Jake.
 (glances the chamber)
 I know you and I in there...I don't
 know, call me crazy, but I think
 you got there...y'know. You like it
 rough.

He smiles at her revulsed stare, her quivering lips.

MARCO
 That's why you hooked up with him,
 am I right? Got you off. The
 lifestyle. The money. All that
 fucking money.

MONIQUE
 I don't know who --.

MARCO
 (angry)
 Don't fucking lie to me, bitch!

He stands, kicks his chair into the basement wall. Monique
 quivers at his rage. He grips her arms, leans nearly nose to
 nose. She cries.

MONIQUE
 Don't hurt me.

MARCO
 You bounced his ass and took the
 money. Do you know how I know that?
 I know because that fucking pussy
 in there cried how his wife took
 all the money. She has it. She has
 it, he cried. Begged me to not cut
 him up.
 (leans off)
 But I don't cut up people.

Marco steps to the freezer, whips open the lid.

MARCO
 However, I'm not opposed to a
 little cutting up...

He reaches in and pulls out FLUFFY, nearly frozen, throat
 slashed, stomach cut open, white hair gobs of blood. He
 tosses the animal at her feet.

MARCO
 ...A fucking mutt.

Monique screams hysterically, pumping the chair to get away from the sight.

MARCO
 Huh. How 'bout that. The dog that
 fucking husband of yours got you
 for your birthday.
 (grabs her hair)
 You think I'm playing!

MONIQUE
 (wailing)
 No!

MARCO
 You think I'm playing.
 (draws his fist)
 I'll fucking kill you --.

Ding Dong...

MARCO
 (suddenly calm)
 Now who in the fuck could that be?

He lets her go, heads for the stairs, then stops, his nonchalant manor chilling.

MARCO
 Think about what we've talked
 about. I'll be right back. Okay.
 (smiles)
 Okay.

He hops up stairs.

Monique buckles over in the chair, crying so hard she gags.

MARCO
 (from upstairs)
 Stop the fucking crying, or I'll
 cut your niece's tongue out.

The door slams. But Monique has no more air to cry with, her face contorted with pain and heartbreak.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Ron, the gas man, presses the doorbell again.

Ding Dong...

At moment later the door swings open to friendly neighbor Marco. Ron with that blistering smile again.

RON
Good morning, sir. City Center Gas.

MARCO
(gestures at the jacket)
I can see that. What can I do for you? My bill that far behind?

RON
No, sir. I'm checking all the houses in the neighborhood. Possible gas leak, sir. Did my office not call to let you know we'd be coming by?

MARCO
I've been out of town. Listen, buddy --.

RON
Ron.

MARCO
Yeah, right, Ron. Now isn't it a good time. You know, long flight and everything, the wife breaking my balls till the wee hours, y'know what I mean...Ron.

RON
I do, sir. Unfortunately I'm kinda mandated here. You know city ordinates and everything, especially when a leak could threaten an entire neighborhood. It'll take just five minutes, a quick reading and look at the main pipe, and I'm out of your hair.

MARCO
And what if I don't let you in, cause for all you know I've got the neighbor's wife in here or something.

RON

Then my superiors come back with the police and stuff like that, sir. It's just, well, not pleasant. I am truly sorry, but I promise I'll be quick.

Marco glances the neighborhood, knows he's screwed if he doesn't comply. He smiles like a simpleton, swings open the door.

MARCO

(dofus laugh)

Okay..,Ron. But don't tell my neighbor, okay.

Ron laughs it off and...

INT. HOUSE - DAY

...Follows Marco to the basement door. He opens it and gestures for Ron to go ahead.

RON

Thanks, sir.

MARCO

(continues for the kitchen)

You bet. I'm just getting a coffee. You want one?

RON

Oh no, sir. Like I said, this'll just take a few minutes.

Marco strolls behind the island, fetches the coffee pot and cup.

MARCO

(gestures for him to down)

Okay, well, knock yourself out.

RON

Thank you, sir.

Ron slips beyond the basement door. Marco, the killer, eyes the KNIFE BLOCK ON THE ISLAND.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Ron scuttles the stairs one step at a time, but when he comes into view, what he sees takes him by surprise.

A naked Monique duct taped to the chair, a victim of unfathomable torture. The opened black coffin box, the mutilated little white dog, the busted shower stall, the blood stained floor and wall.

RON

Jesus.

Monique screams.

Suddenly the KITCHEN KNIFE pierces through Ron's chest, his face twisting agony.

Marco pulls the blade out, rams it through Ron's back again. The gas man collapses to the floor in a pool of his own blood.

Monique vibrates in her chair, crying painfully as Marco repeatedly stabs Ron like a mad man, a killer fixated on mutilating. Stab after stab after stab.

Monique turns away, whimpering when it's over.

Marco stands over the body, careful to not get blood on his feet. He's that killer again, winded but satisfied. He eyes the freezer.

MARCO

Shit, should've got another freezer at this rate, y'know.

(chuckles)

Who knew, huh.

But then Marco sees something under the corpse's uniform, something not right. He reaches in and pulls out...A BADGE.

MARCO

Fuck! Fuck! He's a fucking cop!

Marco pacing, the satisfied relief now hunted worry.

MARCO

An undercover cop. How could they know? How?

Monique can only cry, fearing Marco's wrath.

MARCO

They don't even know who the fuck you are. You're a ghost to them.

He's pacing, mind racing for a solution. Then he gets one.

MARCO

Okay, okay. I've got an idea.

He rushes Monique with the knife in his hand. She pumps to get away, screams. He slaps her over in the chair, tumbling hard to the cement.

MARCO

Shut up.

(holds the blade to her)

Shut the fuck up.

He slices away at the duct tape. Cuts her free.

Monique suddenly unleashes a flurry of punches, yells and kicks, it's the closest she's been to freedom since it started.

She's gets the better of Marco, knocking him over, and dives for the stairs.

But he heaves the chair at her head, knocking her into the stair case. She cries, clings to anything she can as he drags her back down, pulls her through pooled blood to the black box.

MONIQUE

No, please! Please!

MARCO

Shut up!

(punches her)

You stupid shit!

Another crunching punch to her nose. Broken, blood spurts over her face. Monique out like a light.

Marco staggers back, sits in the chair. He throws the knife away, the blade scuttling across the floor to the wall.

He has to think. A dead cop. An unconscious hostage. A bloody Fluffy. It's all gone to shit.

MARCO

Fuck. Fuck!

He pulls out a cell phone, flips it open. Speed dials. Someone answers.

MARCO

We've got a big problem here.

INT. WOODEN BOX -

We're in the dark again. Monique clawing at the inside of the box. We hear her short gasps, but something is different. The panic isn't there. It's anger.

We hear her banging inside the box, like she's lunging to and fro against the walls...

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

...rocking the coffin box on the saw horses. With every rock, the horse legs veer closer and closer to tipping, until finally it topples right over, spewing Monique across the bloody floor.

The dog leash still locked around her ankle, looped around the lagged pole, and connected to the charger. She tugs the leash, considers the pad lock - *this has got to come off.*

She looks around - *what to use?* The SCREW DRIVERS on the workbench.

She drags herself to the bench, climbs up the side and grabs a screwdriver, wedges the tip into a chain link and goes to work prying it open.

It takes some doing, but finally the link spreads enough to break the chain. She climbs the wall to get back up onto her shaky legs. It's one step closer to freedom, to living.

She looks at Fluffy on the floor. This is not the time to cry over a dog. She has to get out.

She walks for the stairs all hunched over, battered and sore. Climbs the stairs on all fours for the basement door.

She gropes the door knob. The touch of it in her fingers pulling a heavy sigh out of her - *almost there.*

She turns it. Locked. *Shit!*

She has an idea. Back down the stairs, grabs the biggest screwdriver off the workbench, then back up the stairs one achy step at a time.

She digs the tip between the door and the frame, but it's not doing anything. She tries with all her might to heave the screwdriver back and forth, wedge the door to submitting, but it doesn't yield. Escape out of reach - *fuck!*

She throws the screwdriver away. Needs another idea. What can she use?

She hunches back down the stairs again, back to the workbench, but a piece of broken shower glass cuts into her foot.

MONIQUE

Fuck!

She drops to the floor, rubs her bleeding foot. She is not going to cry anymore. It's time to fight, time to live. She rubs it, looks around desperately, needs something. What? What can she use?

The basement window! She struggles to get up, hops on her good foot to the window and tears off the black garbage bag.

The window impenetrable with outside bars - *shit!* But even that amount of sunlight is welcome relief. She lets it warm her a moment.

She can see grass along the bottom edge of the window, the outside world. A suburban house. A normal neighborhood. Freedom could be close.

Needs another idea.

MONIQUE

C'mon, Monique, think. Think.

She looks around, sees the bloody hammer tossed in the corner by the freezer. She considers the window again. What the hell.

She grabs the hammer, hobbles to the dryer, climbs up so she can get a good swing at the window. And then...

Remembers something.

She climbs off the dryer, hops across the freezer and opens the lid.

For a brief moment she allows herself to mourn the frozen man inside. She touches his face like a wife would, fleeting remorse, but then she snatches her iPhone, slams the lid closed.

There isn't much life in the iPhone, frozen and barely enough battery left to even turn on.

No signal - shit!!

And then behind her...

MARCO!!!

His rattling backhand sends her reeling across the floor and broken shower glass, the frozen IPHONE ZIPPING ACROSS THE FLOOR AND REBOUNDED OFF THE WALL.

Monique screams a scream that chills us to the core.

He reaches down with that maniacal glaze in his eyes and picks up the hammer.

She crawls for the stairs with no hope of making it.

He snatches her by the head, yanks her over and straddles her, pulling her raggedy hair until she cries.

MARCO

I want that fucking money!

MONIQUE

Fuck you! Fuck you!

The hammer raises high over his head. She sees it coming down. Screams as it slams the cement floor right by her ear.

MARCO

The money!

MONIQUE

Fuck you!

Another swing, closer.

MARCO

Where is it, Monique?

Another swing, the hammer banging cement, hurting her ear. She tries to pull out of his grip, but his power exceeds her own.

Another swing. This time hard against her shoulder. She cries from the searing pain. Marco's grip holding her hair against her thrashing to get away.

MONIQUE

Fuck you!

MARCO

Where is it? Tell me!

Another swing, her shoulder crunching.

MONIQUE

(wailing in pain)

No! Oh God!

She writhes with unbridled anger, enough to rock him off of her, and lands her bloodied foot hard into his groin.

Marco tumbles over, clutching at his balls, groaning heavy.

Monique pulls herself across the floor with her good arm, nearly at the stairs when she's suddenly dragged back.

MONIQUE

No!

He pulls her by her foot across the broken glass to the dog leash. Punches the resistance out of her, then spins her around, looping the leash around her throat, pulling till she squirms for air.

Her feet kick against the dryer, banging and banging to live.

Marco's face a twisted snarl of rage, gritting with all his might to strangle her.

Then suddenly...

Shadows race past the basement window.

MARCO

What?

He releases the chain, holds her firm by the hair. Monique choking air back into her lungs. She has no fight left.

He watches another shadow speed by the window - *what is that?*

He lets her go, hops up on the dryer and sees...

THE DALLAS SWAT TEAM running past the house like a tactical raid.

He jumps down, suddenly scared.

MARCO

Shit! Shit!

Monique crawls pathetically away from him, so slow and crippled, barely conscious of where she is at all.

He thinks fast. The box tipped and open - *no good*. The shattered shower stall - *no good*. The Chamber room door open.

He reaches for her hair again and pulls her across the floor. Monique too beaten to scream anymore.

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - DAY

Megan watches the SWAT TEAM swarm the TEENAGER'S HOUSE across the street, tactical weapons at the ready.

She's completely overwhelmed. Kaelin on the couch watching her cartoons, oblivious to the raid.

KEALIN

Mommy, maybe Auntie just wanted to go away for a bit. She misses uncle Jake.

Megan keeps watching...

MEGAN

Yeah, sweetie, that must be it.

...The swat team bust into the house, while others sentry the street. It looks like a military operation.

KEALIN

I hope Dan finds Fluffy though. I miss her.

MEGAN

Me too.

KEALIN

You said she was just a peeing machine.

MEGAN

(still watching)
Shouldn't listen to everything I say, Sweetie.

Then the swat team hauls the teenager out of the house, forces him to his knees under gun point, handcuffs him.

Off to the side of the street, she sees the Econoline van.

A few SWAT TEAM are talking to someone pointing at the teens house and the fancy European car, just out of view behind the corner of the van.

Megan leans across the window, curious to see who it is. And then, finally, she sees...

Dan! Who looks right at us while the SWAT TEAM check his badge.

Megan draws a deep breath, hand over her mouth, hiding it all from Kaelin who giggles away at the cartoons.

Dan jogs across the front lawn for the door and...

Ding Dong.

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Megan opens the door for Dan, eager to know.

MEGAN
What's going on?

DAN
(closes the door)
It's okay. Turns out the kid across the street was a Meth dealer. Apparently Dallas PD have been on him for months.

MEGAN
(relieved)
Oh my God.

DAN
They had an undercover going through the neighborhood, posing as a gas inspector. I guess they were hoping he could get into the basement when the kid was at school.

MEGAN
He was here. Ron...somebody.

DAN
No surprise.

MEGAN
He was a cop?

DAN
Looks like it. But he didn't report in. They can't find him, so they moved in.

MEGAN
They think that kid killed him?

DAN
They don't know. Listen, we can't
find anything on your sister yet.
Has she called or anything?

MEGAN
Nothing.
(looks past the door)
I'm loosing my mind here.

Megan's head tips into her hands. It's too much.

DAN
You going to be okay?

MEGAN
I just don't know what to do.

Suddenly...THE MAC BOOK PRO beeps from the kitchen.

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Megan sits at the table, looks at the laptop screen and
gasps. Dan over her shoulder.

MEGAN
Oh my God. It's her iPhone. The GPS
found it!

DAN
Really. Where?

Megan fingers the mouse pad, finally some hope. They both
stare with blank expression.

MEGAN
(shocked)
That can't be! She's only --.

DAN
Next door?

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Marco scuttles the stairs two at a time, goes straight for
the chamber door and heaves it open to find it...

EMPTY.

What the fuck!

Suddenly...*THUD!*

MARCO

Aggh!

He drops to his knees, clutching the back of his head.

Monique behind him with the hammer in one hand and a killer's look in her black eyes. The dog leash looped in her other hand.

She tosses the hammer and coils the leash around Marco's neck, props her foot on his back and pulls with all her might, through all her pain.

They fall to the floor, Monique hanging on despite broken glass cutting her legs. Her teeth grit, pure conviction to end his life.

Marco's eyes bulge, hands claw the floor for anything to get out the choke. The chain squeezing his throat, cutting into the skin.

MONIQUE

Die. Fucking die!

Monique puts her other foot against his back, heaves with everything she's got.

Marco gagging, choking, feet kicking involuntarily. Then his fingers find THAT KITCHEN KNIFE on the floor.

He seizes it and whips it behind with lethal force, the tip driving into Monique's leg.

She screams in pain, lets the chain go, and rolls over, grabbing to pull the knife out.

Marco coughs, rallies to his feet, his anger unbridled.

He grabs the leash off the floor with that demonic look in his eyes.

Monique crawls for the staircase. She's nearly there when...

Marco flips her over, straddles her, but Monique has THE SCREW DRIVER SHE USED BEFORE in her hand, and drives it through Marco's forehead.

MONIQUE

Fuck you!

He wobbles on top of her, cross-eyed, trying to see the tool sticking out of his head. He looks at her, as if surprised she's killed him, then frumps off of her, dead on the floor.

Monique sobs a moment - she's going to live.

She looks up the stairs. The basement door is open, her port out of hell.

She crawls for the stairs on all fours. One slow step at a time. The door nearer and nearer.

The feeling of surviving washing through her more and more, until finally she touches the kitchen floor.

A deep gasp of relief oozes out of her at the mere touch of linoleum against her bloody fingers.

She goes to heave herself out of the basement once and for all when suddenly...

She's pulled from below. Her jaw bangs the step. A deadly force hauling her back down into hell.

Marco has her foot, a monster possessed, a screwdriver sticking out of his forehead.

MONIQUE

(screams)

Help Me! Help Me! No! No!

She's back on the basement floor. He straddles her again, the KNIFE in his hand, raised high.

She screams her last scream and then...

Two GUNSHOTS ring out.

Marco teeters on top of Monique, two bullet holes bleeding from his head. The life already gone out of his eyes.

He falls over.

He's gone.

MEGAN

Monique!

Megan flies down the stairs, quickly taking Monique in her arms. Monique wails into her bosom.

Megan appalled when she sees the basement, sees the torture that has happened, sees Monique's brutalized face and body.

She holds her sister like a broken doll and cries from her heart.

Dan at the top of the stairs, his GUN smoking from the barrel.

We hear Swat team rush the house upstairs. Dan holds up his badge and gun - *it's me*.

A Swat team member with a tactical helmet and mic, takes a quick look downstairs. He lowers his rifle.

SWAT TEAM MEMBER
(to mic)
Clear. All clear.

Dan makes his way down the stairs, kneels at Megan comforting Monique. Monique wearily looks up at Megan, somehow confused.

MONIQUE
How did you find me?

Dan glances around, sees what he's looking for. He walks across and picks up the iPhone. Looks at it and shakes his head with a curt quip.

DAN
Must've warmed up enough the battery came back.

He puts it in Monique's bloody hand. She looks at it like it's the key to life, it saved her. The deep cry comes. She collapses into Megan's arms and weeps hard.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - DAY

Police mingle in the foyer with Dan, who seems to be deep in conversation with a POLICE CAPTAIN, 50. They talk and glance into the living room at...

Megan and Kaelin on the couch while Monique gets first aid care by a young PARAMEDIC, 25. But Monique is vacant, sitting there with an ARM SLING and after shock set in.

PARAMEDIC
(to Megan)
She should go to the hospital.

Monique snaps back, shaking her head vehemently.

MEGAN
We'll be fine. Thanks.

The Paramedic not so convinced, but he bandages her gouged leg as best he can.

Megan meets Dan's side glance to the kitchen.

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Megan leaning against the fridge, keeping an eye on Monique getting bandaged. Kealin on the couch, her pouty lip suggesting she can't make sense of any of this.

MEGAN
So what's happening?

Dan glances back at Monique with sincere concern.

DAN
Well, I talked to the cops. They want her in the hospital, under their watch. But, ah, I have jurisdiction. So, that means I get to ask you what you and her want.

MEGAN
I don't know anymore. Who was he?

DAN
We're not sure yet. But it was definitely Jake in the freezer. Pretty obvious whoever that guy was, he was after the money.

MEGAN
You have to move us, right?

DAN
Can't imagine you'd want to stay here anyway.

Her reaction would suggest she can't argue with that logic. He rubs her shoulder, knowing another move can't be easy.

DAN
Anywhere you want to go?

MEGAN
Someplace safe.

DAN
Yeah, you've all earned that. Look, think about it tonight. I'll come back tomorrow, alright.

(looks back at Monique)
(MORE)

DAN (cont'd)
 Either way though, she's going to
 need some help to deal with
 everything that's happened. You
 know that, right?

MEGAN
 Yeah.

DAN
 Okay. I'll get the cops out of
 here. Let you all get some sleep.
 You look like you could use it.

MEGAN
 (self conscious smile)
 That bad, huh.

DAN
 Not bad at all. Just tired.

Megan watches Kealin climb onto Monique's lap and cuddle in.
 The Paramedic packing up.

MEGAN
 Are you far?

DAN
 No. Still got my card?
 (off her nod)
 Good. Besides, the police are
 putting a car out front, just to be
 safe.

MEGAN
 (relieved)
 Okay. Thanks...for everything.

DAN
 You bet.

Dan leaves to talk to the police captain again. Megan meets
 Monique's blank stare - something unsaid between them.

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Moonlight sifts through the bedroom window, cascading over...

Megan asleep under the covers with Kaelin and her dolly
 cuddle up tight.

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - 2ND BEDROOM - NIGHT

Monique laying in bed. Wide awake. Staring up at the ceiling like the tortures are replaying in her mind. Like the damage is permanent.

Then she looks at her iPhone on the settee beside her. Suddenly her eyes rip wide. A horrifying realization.

She springs upright, snatches the phone in her bandaged hand.

MONIQUE
How did he know?

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Monique nudging Megan to wake up.

MONIQUE
Megan. Megan.

Megan stirs, not happy with losing much deserved sleep.

MEGAN
What?

MONIQUE
How did he know?

MEGAN
(waking more)
Know? Who? What are you talking about --.

MONIQUE
(holds up the iphone)
How did he know it warmed up. He couldn't have known it was in the freezer.

MEGAN
Who?

MONIQUE
Dan.

Suddenly...Kaelin screams blue murder. They all scream at...

DAN WATCHING THEM THROUGH THE WINDOW, with the most sinister grin.

MEGAN
Oh God!

They snatch Kaelin's hands and tear out of the bedroom.

Dan runs from the window, a killer in pursuit.

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Megan leads them for the kitchen door. But before they can open it...

Dan bangs into it with undaunted force, his fist smashing out the glass.

They scream and run for...

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Whip open the door and tear across the lawn for...

EXT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - FRONT STREET - NIGHT

The cop car sentried at the end of the drive. Megan runs right up to the driver's window, pounds for her life.

Kaelin screams. Monique covers her eyes. Megan staggers back, hand over her mouth, hopeless.

The cop in the driver's seat, his throat slashed.

MONIQUE

Megan!

Megan looks up the driveway. They see...

Dan, his menacing silhouette marching from the back of the house for them.

They dive back for the front door and...

INT. MEGAN'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Slam it shut. Megan flips the dead bolt, trembles to get the chain slipped in.

KAELIN

Mommy, I'm scared.

What to do? What to do?

Megan not thinking well on her feet, to scared.

But Monique looks at the closet, a chilling calm suddenly overtaking her. A woman who's reached her point with being frightened.

Monique opens the closet door.

MONIQUE
Hide in here.

Megan leads Kaelin inside. Monique sees...

The KITCHEN KNIFE on the shelf that Megan had hidden in the closet when Ron, the gas man, had come calling. She takes the knife, the gleaming blade glinting moonlight into her black eyes.

Megan clutches Kaelin close, tucks down behind the jackets and coats.

Monique puts her gashed finger to her swollen lips.

MONIQUE
Be very quiet.

She closes the door.

MEGAN
(scared)
Monique.

But Monique slips out of Megan's sight beyond the closet slats.

The house quiet, deathly quiet. Megan peers through the slats at the still hallway, nothing but a trickle of light seeping from the kitchen.

Then, she gasps, seeing...

Dan walk by, .45 Colt in hand.

Megan covers Kaelin's mouth, squelching her whimpers, so scared she can't even risk taking a breath herself.

Megan watches through the closet slats as Dan stalks for the kitchen.

He whips open a pantry door like he's hoping to surprise whoever would be hiding inside. But he finds nothing.

Megan vibrates she's so scared, but not a breath passes her mouth.

Dan continues on until he disappears around the corner and out of sight into the kitchen.

Megan permits a breath, as if somehow sure he won't find them now.

But then suddenly...HE STEPS BACK, looking right at the closet.

Megan startles. Kaelin screams, her face warped with a horror a child should never see. Megan's hand tight over her mouth.

Dan points at them playfully, like they've misbehaved by trying to hide on him.

He steps for the closet, his eyes never looking away, as if seeing them right through those slats.

Megan tucks deeper in the closet, pulls Kaelin closer, coiled with fear.

DAN

I know you're in there, Megan. Make it ease.

(nearly to the closet doors)

Just give me the money. It's all I wanted.

Megan and Kaelin cling to each other when Dan's face presses right to the slats, looking in at them with a sinister grin.

DAN

Hi, Kaelin.

Kaelin screams. Dan whips open the closet doors

MEGAN

No!

He grabs Megan by the hair, hauls her out and holds her firm in a full nelson, the Colt .45 pressed into her face.

He pulls her up the hall, backing towards the kitchen. Kaelin screaming.

KEALIN

Mommy! Mommy!

MEGAN

Baby!

DAN

Shut up!

He aims at Kaelin.

MEGAN

No!

KEALIN

Mommy!

DAN

Tell her to shut up!

Megan holds her finger up to her lips as best she can in Dan's grip, urging Kaelin to stop screaming.

Kaelin slinks into the corner, against the front door, tears streaming her beautiful cheeks.

DAN

That a girl, Kaelin. I just need
mommy for a minute.

(yells)

Monique.

He's still backing her up the hall for the kitchen. Megan trying to resist.

MEGAN

Please, just let us go. Please.

DAN

Shut up!

(yells)

I just want the money, Monique. And
you all can go about your little
lives.

Suddenly, behind him Monique appears from around the corner, a chilling calm about her, her messed hair hanging over her battered face. The victim now the killer.

MEGAN

(fighting back)

Let me go! Let me go!

Dan, wrestling Megan backwards up the hall, doesn't see Monique behind him yet.

DAN

C'mon, Monique. You know how this
goes.

Monique raises the knife high over her head. And then...

Dan turns, surprised, raises his gun but not in time.

Monique drives the knife deep into the top of his head.

Kaelin screams. Megan breaks out of his grip and runs for her, covering her eyes while...

Monique takes another knife and stabs Dan like a frenzied killer, over and over and over, until she's sprayed with his blood, his mangled corpse slumped against the hall wall, dead as dead can be.

Monique staggers back, drops the knife, and slides down the wall to her butt, staring at the corpse like a deranged psychopath.

Megan clutching Kaelin crying in her arms, staring at Monique until their gaze meets.

We see that something unsaid between them again.

INT. BUS DEPOT - DAY

Monique, healed only a few days, bandaged, arm slung, and limping through the bustling depot in jeans and T-shirt, past the ticket kiosks for the storage lockers.

She finds the one she wants. Punches the lock code. The door opens. She pulls out a hefty duffle bag and leaves.

EXT. BUS DEPOT - DAY

She limps through the parking lot for a NONDESCRIBT SEDAN where Megan is waiting behind the wheel. Kaelin and her dolly up front with her.

Monique climbs in the back and opens the duffle bag, checks inside.

It's teeming with bundles of money - at least two million worth.

Megan and her share a smile.

EXT. HIGHWAY OUT OF TOWN - DAY

The sedan speeds along the endless ribbon of highway for the horizon. We hear the car radio blare mid day news.

RADIO NEWSMAN (O.S.)

And the top news story in Dallas this morning is the startling events that took place in a neighborhood on the north shore of Corder lake.

(MORE)

RADIO NEWSMAN (O.S.) (cont'd)

Two houses side by side were completely destroyed in an overnight fire right across the street from where a drug bust had occurred only just yesterday. As of yet, Dallas police have released no details, but Fire officials tell reporters the bodies of three men were found in the two homes. And this particularly has Fire Officials asking questions; one was discovered in the freezer and identified as Jake Randal, who disappeared from Miami last week after being in the FBI's witness protection program for the past year, following testimony against a Mexican cartel operating out of New Orleans. It was believed Mr. Randall had embezzled well over two million dollars before he had agreed to be a witness. Marco Padelli, a member of the cartel targeted in the investigation, is still at large and on the FBI's top ten list. Meanwhile in other news, Dallas police are mourning the loss of an undercover gang unit officer. Ron Lahey, whose body was discovered in a landfill site north of the city early this morning. Police have declined further comment until the investigation...

THE END