

DAYLIGHT AGAIN

Screenplay by  
CULLEN MCFATER

Story by  
MICHAEL MCCREARY, MANDY KILEY  
BLAIR SLATER, CULLEN MCFATER

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Draft 5.0



(M-) = Optional temp tracks to listen to via music guide

FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST - DUSK

(M-) A clearing - the sun, low in the sky, beams through the branches and brush of this moderately dense forest.

A MAN, practically spilling into the meadow, sprints across our field of view in the distance. The camera is still; observational.

We move closer to him as he runs, tripping, looking behind him, not making much ground over the logs and bushes that litter the forest floor.

He rushes over a larger knocked-over tree, continuing to look behind him. In his haste he fails to notice the steep drop in front of him, and tumbles down to the bottom, slamming into the ground and forcing the air out of his chest.

He struggles onto his knees before turning around - a noise; some snapping sticks, has piqued his attention.

He's not alone.

He peers around the forest - it's getting darker, becoming more difficult to make out details in the distant woods.

Suddenly: Rushing footsteps towards him. The leaves and sticks crunch rapidly. He whips around and we push in right on his terrified expression.

CUT TO:

THE CLEARING ONCE MORE.

The man is heard screaming in the distance - but as his screams are subdued, they are replaced by a roar. It sounds animal, but not familiar.

FADE TO BLACK

SILENCE

The dial tone of an outgoing phone call can be heard.

FADE IN:

INT. MAGGIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

A closeup on several overdue rent notices. Beside them is an open envelope of some money, certainly not a lot; "ALL I'VE GOT - LEAVE ME ALONE AND DON'T TRY TO FIND ME!" is written on top of it. We slowly pull out, through the course of MAGGIE's conversation, to reveal the rest of the apartment.

MAGGIE

(pacing)

Duane! Hey. -- It's Maggie. -- Yes, I know what I said last time we spoke -- I've rethought things! I think maybe I should have taken your offer to move in after all. -- I know it's been three years. -- I'm sure she wouldn't mind! -- Duane? Hello?

Maggie tosses her phone down on the counter and uses a pencil to cross the first name off of a list of many. She sighs, and her shoulders drop.

She brushes her hair back with her hands and picks up her phone once more, dialing in a number. (M~) She brings the phone to her ear.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Sara!

SERIES OF SHOTS:

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Jeff! It's Maggie!

CUT TO:

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Hally! Long time no talk.

INTER-CUT WITH:

NAMES BEING CROSSED OFF THE LIST. SEVERAL IN SEQUENCE.

CUT TO:

THE PHONE ON THE TABLE - SPEAKER MODE - "MOM" IS DISPLAYED ACROSS THE SCREEN.

Maggie looks miserable listening to her mother talk on and on.

## MAGGIE'S MOTHER

--And that's just the gutters, I called the city council six times to get them to trim the branches off of the trees that are so low over the side-walk, maybe if you move back in then you can get up on the ladder, you know I'm too old, and if you don't want to maybe you can convince Taylor, the Leslie family's boy, to do it for you. He's quite the looker, too, maybe you could talk to him some more now that you want to move back in--

Maggie hits the big red "hang up" button, and crosses "MOM" off the list.

She calls a few more numbers - Richard, Susan, Doug. No dice. Names are crossed off the list rapidly, more and more aggressively pencilling them out as she becomes ever the more frustrated.

Finally, she's crossed the final name off. She half-assedly throws the notepad across the kitchen as if to say "fuck you", and grabs her bag and phone to leave.

She gets to the door, bends over to pick up a large cooler on the ground but stops - slowly turning around to look at the envelope of money.

She tiptoes back over to the counter, slips a \$20 bill out and into her pocket, and proceeds back over to the cooler. She picks it up and sneaks out the door.

## EXT. MAGGIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Maggie tosses her backpack and cooler into the back seat of her car and nudges the door, letting gravity do the work while she sits down into the front seat with the driver's door still open.

She sits, one leg out the door, and scrolls down the contacts in her phone. Nada. She tosses the phone onto the dashboard with a huff and leans back into the seat.

She sits for a moment, thinking about her plan, before noticing a business card in the cup holder.

It reads: PETER EVERTON - REALTOR.

Maggie rolls her eyes - She doesn't really like PETER, but she's got no other option. She grabs her phone from the dashboard and dials the number. The buzzer rings.

PETER  
(over the phone)  
Hello?

As Peter answers, Maggie pops on a fake smile, as though he can see her.

MAGGIE  
Peter!

PETER  
Who is this?

MAGGIE  
It's Maggie! Your cousin. From Toronto.

PETER  
Oh, cool. Yeah, cool. How's it going, what's going on?

MAGGIE  
Nothin' much! Nothing's goin' on, ha-ha. How... How are you?

She squeezes the bridge of her nose with her fingers and closes her eyes, dumbfounded at her own moronic behaviour.

PETER  
Not really much *goin'* on... So...

MAGGIE  
Nice.

PETER  
Did you call me for something?

MAGGIE  
Yeah, you know what, I...

Maggie thinks for a moment. Is she really that desperate?

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
What... What are you doing over the next few days?

PETER  
Nothing, why?

MAGGIE

I just thought, why don't I come up and see you? It's been so long.

PETER

Ah, right, you know, I think it would be a lot easier if I came down to you, I haven't been to the city in-

MAGGIE

Nah, don't worry about it! I wanna get out of the city.

PETER

Right. Yeah. See, I think I have this work... thing?... for the next few days? So I probably won't be at the house.

MAGGIE

No worries! I can get myself up there and, you know, hang out. And stuff.

PETER

Right. You sure you wouldn't rather stay in a motel? I do live with two guys.

MAGGIE

Nah! I love guys. I mean, yeah. You know what I mean. I'll bring up some beer and stuff! It'll be fun.

PETER

Uh-huh...

MAGGIE

So.... I'll see you tonight?

PETER

Hang on. Let me... talk to my roommates.

MAGGIE

Great! Tell them I say hi.

She pulls the phone away from her ear and mouths "stupid, stupid!" at herself. She wants to crawl out of her own skin with how awkwardly this is going.

PETER

Maggie?

As Peter returns, so does her fake smile. She pops the phone back up to her ear.

MAGGIE

Peter!

PETER

Yeah that... Should be fine. I'll be away for the next few days but I might be able to see you if you get here early enough tonight. We don't have a landline, so just give me a ring on this number when you're almost here and I'll have everything ready for you.

MAGGIE

Sweet! See you then. And thank-

The call cuts off before she gets a chance to finish her sentence.

She slams the door of her car shut, giddy with the fact that she's gotten away with her games, and turns the keys in the ignition.

She pulls out of the driveway and begins to drive down the narrow town-house laden road.

As she nears the end of her road, her LANDLORD drives right by her. They make an extended, awkward eye contact.

The landlord slams on his breaks and jumps out of his car - Maggie floors it around the bend.

LANDLORD

(chasing after her)

I WANT MY RENT!

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. MAGGIE'S CAR - DAY

(M-) Maggie drives along the city roads. Something attune to "Everybody's Talkin'" by Harry Nilsson plays.

She watches the road roll by and is quite content with long drives. It usually allows her time to think.

Maggie's car drives down a somewhat-rural-somewhat urban road.

The sun pierces the trees that line the road and the traffic begins its morning routine - becoming more and more dense as time goes on.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

Maggie drives. We switch from her POV to tight angles of her eyes distractedly wandering. Occasionally a car honk brings her attention back to the road.

As she continues to drive, peeling back the layers and layers of city-scapes to more sparse suburbia, she reaches the hard stop of urban developments and continues on her drive northward, into the countryside.

There are still vague sightings of highrise apartments and bizarre brand-new neighbourhoods that seem to exist in a void.

EXT. DINER PARKING LOT - DAY

We pull back from a sign on the diner's window: "MEAL DEAL: \$10.99 for burger, fries, shake!" to reveal:

Maggie sitting in the driver's seat of the car as she chows down on a big meal. The \$20 in the cup holder has turned into a 5 and some change.

EXT./INT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

More driving. The day gets later, the sun directly overhead at this point. It's mid-day. Traffic is at a peak, even out in this country setting.

She drives and drives. And drives. The journey is pretty long and looks like it'll take her the bulk of her day to get there.

She spots a gas station/convenience store on the side of the road and pulls into it.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Once again, a sign out front displays:

"12-PACK BEER: \$13.99" and beside it "SALE: ICE CREAM SANDWICHES: \$5.99"

Maggie looks down at the pocket change in the cup holder. She rolls her eyes, grabs it, and opens the car door.

CUT TO:

Maggie tossing the ice cream sandwiches into passenger seat.

INT./EXT. MAGGIE'S CAR/COUNTRY ROADS - DAY

She resumes her drive. This time going for a ways longer.

Maggie drives along but catches a glimpse of the corner of the ice cream sandwich box. It's gooey and soggy.

MAGGIE

Oh, son of a....

She pulls off to the side of the road and gets out of the car.

EXT. SIDE OF RURAL ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

Maggie pulls the ice cream sandwich box out of the passenger seat and pops open the rear door, pulling out the cooler in the process.

She opens the top of the cooler and shoves the box of melted sandwiches into the ice bath.

SERIES OF SHOTS: MAGGIE DRIVES INTO THE LATE AFTERNOON

A dial tone can be heard. And an answering machine buzzer.

MAGGIE (V.O.)

Hey Peter! You told me to call when I was almost there, so... Here I am! Calling. Ha-ha. Took longer than I thought to drive up. Hope I haven't missed you. And hope you like ice cream sandwiches!

The road has gotten quiet. There is next to no other traffic occupying the narrow dirt path that careens Maggie through a small valley.

Finally - Her destination.

EXT. HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Maggie hops out of her car and stretches, yawning after the long drive.

She takes a look at the yard. It's big, and surrounded by forest on all sides. Not too dense, you could easily take a walk through it, but it's secluded.

The yard is big. Even larger so, the backyard, which can slightly be seen around the house.

Maggie pulls open the back door of the car and puts on her backpack - she gets the cooler out as well, and kicks the door closed behind her.

She takes a deep breath and heads towards the front door.

Maggie peers in through the door window and tries to knock, but hears no answer and sees no movement inside. She tries the door handle and voila, it's unlocked.

INT. HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Maggie shuffles inside with her things. She drops her bag and the cooler onto the ground to relax for a moment. It's cold, and she shivers. The sound and music of some sort of intense porn echoes through the entire house. It's muffled, so it must be coming from a distant room.

There's a note left on the front room's table. "MAGGIE" is printed in big letters at the top.

She pulls the ice cream sandwiches out of the cooler and heads to the kitchen - reading the note as she walks.

"Hey Maggie. You must have just missed me, sorry. Just a few ground rules. Don't go into anyone else's room - in fact, just stay out of the basement. That's basically Hector's room anyway. Don't touch the thermostat. Don't make a mess in the kitchen. And don't leave food out for Kyle--"

She walks over to the fridge/freezer and tries to pull the door open, but it won't budge. She tries harder, again, but still no luck.

Before she can finish the note and get the fridge open, JACKSON enters through the backdoor from the rear patio.

MAGGIE

(startled)

Hi! ...Kyle?

Jackson pauses and looks at her. She puts the ice cream and the note down on the kitchen table, not reading the rest of it.

JACKSON  
No... Jackson.

Maggie extends her hand to introduce herself.

MAGGIE  
Ah, hi. I'm Maggie. Peter's cousin.

JACKSON  
(looking at her hand)  
I figured.

She pulls back her hand as Jackson walks by her without shaking it.

JACKSON (cont'd)  
Peter tell you where your room is?

MAGGIE  
Ah, no. This was all kinda last minute.

JACKSON  
That's fine. You're over here.

Maggie follows him into another section of the main floor. He opens the door to a small room with a bed. It's filled with random nick-nacks.

MAGGIE  
Right... What's that noise?

JACKSON  
Oh, sorry. That's Hector. I've gotten used to it.

Jackson returns to the kitchen, followed by Maggie. He slams his fist on the door frame leading to the basement.

JACKSON (cont'd)  
Hector! Shut it down!

The sound subsides.

JACKSON (cont'd)  
Sorry.

MAGGIE  
That's okay.

Jackson motions towards a door off of the living room.

JACKSON  
That's my room, there. Bathroom's  
down that hall.

MAGGIE  
Okay, nice.

JACKSON  
If you need anything just knock.  
Unless I'm out. Then I won't hear it.

Maggie chuckles, but Jackson is straight faced. He walks  
over to the kitchen window.

JACKSON (cont'd)  
It's getting dark. You have  
everything from your car?

MAGGIE  
Yep. Light packer.

JACKSON  
Lock the doors?

MAGGIE  
Is that really necessary out here?

JACKSON  
Never know.

MAGGIE  
(chuckling)  
Yes, my car is safe.

Jackson leans on the counter as silence engulfs the room.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
Say... Why don't I cook some dinner  
for Hector and you, as a thank you  
for letting me stay here.

JACKSON  
It was Peter's choice.

MAGGIE  
I know, I know. But, you guys live  
here too. So?

JACKSON  
I've got some work to do.

He starts walking towards his bedroom.

MAGGIE

Well, why don't I start something and let you know when it's ready then?

Jackson pauses and sighs, turning to face Maggie.

JACKSON

Fine. Fridge door is jammed though, so you'll have to find something in the cupboard. And Hector's probably already eaten, so it'll just be the two of us.

He turns back around and continues to his room, slamming the door shut behind him.

Maggie stands alone in the kitchen.

MAGGIE

(repeating Jackson)

Just the two of us...

She smiles and heads back to the front door to grab her bag and the cooler.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - EVENING

Maggie looks at the sparse set of clothes she was able to fit into her backpack laid out on the bed.

She basically has a choice between two light dresses.

She puts one of them on and tries to do her makeup, using her phone's camera as a mirror.

We see her trying different things with her hair, smelling her breath and throwing a piece of gum in her mouth, until she settles on her look.

As she's about to leave the room one of the cat nick-nacks on the wall catches her eye. It's a clock with a waving cat on the top. She touches the nose, and heads out to the kitchen to start cooking.

INT. HOUSE - EVENING

Maggie enters the kitchen and first takes a peak at the long stairway down into the deep, dark basement.

From a POV at the bottom of the stairs, we look up at Maggie staring down.

She shivers a bit and then returns her attention to dinner.

But on the table sits the ice cream sandwiches. Melted, gooey, and oozing all over the tabletop.

MAGGIE

Oh, shit.

Maggie rushes over to the table and plops the ice cream box into the sink.

She goes through the cupboards looking for anything to clean the mess, landing on some perfectly folded towels to do the job.

She grabs the nice, pristine white towels from the cabinet and dabs up the sticky residue on the table with them.

She looks up to notice Jackson standing in the kitchen doorway, as if he's been watching her for a bit.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Hey!

JACKSON

Are those my towels?

MAGGIE

These?

JACKSON

Yep... The towels you're holding.

MAGGIE

Oh, yes. I mean I figured they were kitchen towels.

JACKSON

Yeah. My kitchen. And you're using them for... what exactly?

MAGGIE

Just... Cleaning up this mess.

JACKSON

Right...

Jackson goes over to her and takes the towels off of the table, tossing them into the secondary dish-washing sink.

He pulls out a roll of paper towels from below the sink and shakes them as if to say "use these, dumbass" and throws them over to the table.

She catches them to prevent them from rolling off, and tears off a long piece to clean up the remaining mess.

Jackson picks the ice cream box out of the sink and turns back to Maggie again.

JACKSON (cont'd)  
These yours?

MAGGIE  
Yes! I brought them for you guys. Any idea where I could put them? Since the fridge is locked?

JACKSON  
How about here...

Jackson walks over to the trash can and plops the box down into it, letting the lid slam shut.

Maggie looks awkwardly back down at the table. This isn't going quite as planned.

MAGGIE  
Any chance we could turn the heat up? It's a bit cold in here, a-ha...

JACKSON  
Have you started dinner yet?

MAGGIE  
Ah, no. I've just been cleaning this.

JACKSON  
You know, I think I might just drive into town and grab something.

MAGGIE  
No, no, no, don't worry, I'll whip something up fast. Please. It's the least I can do.

JACKSON  
You've done plenty already.

MAGGIE  
I... Yeah. I'm sorry. Let me make it up to you? Please, sit.

Jackson ponders his options for a moment and then sighs. He reluctantly pulls out a chair at the table and sits.

(M-) Maggie plugs her phone into a speaker and starts playing something upbeat (like "Shoo-rah Shoo-rah", non-descript and fun). She does a half-baked little dance to lighten the mood, but Jackson simply stares at her, deadpan.

She gives up on the dance and pulls open a sliding drawer to reveal some pots and pans.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
A-ha! Now we're onto something.

Maggie pulls a pot and a non-stick pan from the cabinet.

Jackson continues to bask in misery.

She fills up the pot with some water, sets it to boil and then goes for the cupboard above her - It's filled with regular pantry things. Spices, sliced bread, and what she was looking for: a box of pasta and an unopened jar of sauce.

She pulls the two down and tries to open the jar - Pretending to be tired after only trying once, she faux-wipes her brow of sweat and holds the jar out towards Jackson.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
Do the honours?

Jackson looks at her. She walks over and puts the jar down in front of him. He, without showing any expression, pops the lid off and hands it back to her.

She pours the sauce into the nonstick pan and pulls out a metal spoon to stir it.

JACKSON  
You shouldn't use metal on a non-stick--

MAGGIE  
(not hearing him)  
You know you should always simmer the sauce as you cook the pasta so you can finish the pasta in the sauce. Makes it taste great.

She pours the pasts into the boiling water and continues to stir the non-stick with the metal spoon. Jackson winces at the scraping sound.

CUT TO:

(M-) Jackson and Maggie sit at the table, plates empty. They've completed their meals and they sit back, making small talk. Jackson's expression hasn't changed. Some different music plays, more mellow.

There's a mess on the counter behind that Jackson can't seem to avert his attention from.

Maggie pours out a bit more wine into her glass. She's had more than a few.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
Want any more?

JACKSON  
I'm good, thanks.

Maggie shrugs and pours herself an even bigger glass.

Jackson watches the glass fill up.

MAGGIE  
What is this stuff? It's great.

She reads the label, understands none of it, and nods.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
Whatever it is, I'm gonna write it down.

Jackson stares at the table. There is nothing he wants more than for this dinner to be over.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
What did you say you did for work?

JACKSON  
I didn't.

MAGGIE  
What?

JACKSON  
I didn't say.

MAGGIE  
Well, come on, spill the beans!

JACKSON  
(under his breath)  
I think there's enough mess in here already...

MAGGIE

What?

JACKSON

Nothing. I cook.

MAGGIE

Cook?

JACKSON

I'm a line cook at a restaurant.

MAGGIE

Ah, so you're a chef then!

JACKSON

No. I'm a cook.

MAGGIE

Ha-ha, I guess you should have made dinner tonight then, huh!

JACKSON

If only.

Maggie picks at the metal foil on the top of the wine bottle.

MAGGIE

So... You just cook? Anything else to know about you?

JACKSON

Not really.

MAGGIE

Interesting. Mr Cook.

JACKSON

Sure. Well, that's me, then. I'm beat.

Jackson brushes off his lap and stands.

JACKSON (cont'd)

Thanks for dinner.

MAGGIE

Want to go for a walk?

JACKSON

No.

MAGGIE  
(mocking him)  
So stern. Big angry man.

JACKSON  
There've been some mountain lion sightings around here. Probably not a good idea.

MAGGIE  
Mountain lion, what, like a cougar?

JACKSON  
That would be what a mountain lion is, yes.

MAGGIE  
They're small, aren't they? I feel like you'd have an easy time protecting me.

JACKSON  
No.

MAGGIE  
Oh, come on. Are you scared?

JACKSON  
The way you're going right now I'd probably let the thing take you.

MAGGIE  
Ha-ha, very funny.

JACKSON  
You think I'm joking.

MAGGIE  
Okay...

They sit in silence for a moment.

JACKSON  
So I'm off, then.

He continues to walk out of the kitchen. Maggie sighs.

As he reaches the hallway to his bedroom, his phone buzzes.

TEXT FROM PETER: "EVERYTHING GOING WELL? ARE YOU KEEPING HER BUSY?"

Jackson lets out a frustrated breath. He looks to his left and sees a pile of board games.

JACKSON (cont'd)  
Do you like board games, Maggie?

MAGGIE  
Board games? Sure. Who doesn't.

He turns around to face her.

JACKSON  
Would you like to play one?

MAGGIE  
Sounds like fun.

She smiles at him. He shivers and walks towards the table.

Maggie clears the empty plates from the table as he sets up the game.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
Never seen that one before.

JACKSON  
I'm sure you haven't.

MAGGIE  
How do you play?

JACKSON  
You'll learn as we go.

MAGGIE  
(laughing)  
I'm really not good at these types of games...

Maggie sits and pours herself some more wine as he explains the game.

JACKSON  
You'll be fine. Basically, you want to surround your opponent. You do that by moving horizontally across the board. Once both players have made 5 moves, the dimension switches. You can only move vertically. Towards or away from the opponent. Then five turns on and it switches back. Get it?

Maggie looks dumbfounded.

MAGGIE

Sure.

JACKSON

You can go first.

MAGGIE

Okay...

Maggie makes her first move.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

So... How'd you and Peter meet? And Hector, I guess.

Jackson takes his turn.

JACKSON

Uh... We've been friends for a long time. Since we were like 12. Decided to move in together, cause why not.

MAGGIE

Hector too?

Maggie goes as they continue the game.

JACKSON

No. Hector was a... late addition. Peter's idea.

MAGGIE

Ah, cutting rent costs, I know all about that.

JACKSON

Something like that.

Jackson takes his next turn.

JACKSON (cont'd)

What about you? Why are you here, Maggie?

Maggie stares at him.

MAGGIE

Hm? Oh, you know, it had been a while. Peter and I are really close. Wanted to see him again.

JACKSON  
Funny. He's never mentioned you.

MAGGIE  
I'm sure I just slipped his mind, as  
I said, it's been a while.

JACKSON  
Right.

Maggie takes another turn - a more aggressive move.

MAGGIE  
So are you and Peter... Just  
roommates?

JACKSON  
What else would we be?

Maggie laughs and takes another sip of wine.

MAGGIE  
Who knows, anything goes.

JACKSON  
Are you trying to imply something?

MAGGIE  
I'm not implying anything. I'm just  
making conversation.

JACKSON  
Right.

MAGGIE  
That's an answer, anyway, though.

JACKSON  
What's an answer?

MAGGIE  
Just the way you responded to that, I  
see *right* through you.

JACKSON  
And what do you see?

MAGGIE  
Oh, deep, dark, juicy secrets  
Jackson. All of them laid bare.

JACKSON  
Uh-huh...

MAGGIE  
I'm just teasing you. Don't worry.

JACKSON  
I'm not worried.

MAGGIE  
Good.

Jackson looks down at the board and thinks for a moment.

He takes another turn and looks up at her.

JACKSON  
Nothing is going on here, just in case that's the impression I gave off... We're all just friends.

MAGGIE  
(smugly)  
I believe you, Jackson.

JACKSON  
I don't know why you wouldn't. Considering you're the one who's lied to me already.

MAGGIE  
And when did I lie?

JACKSON  
You and Peter aren't close.

MAGGIE  
My apologies, didn't mean to step on your territory there, Jackson.

JACKSON  
What's that supposed to mean?

MAGGIE  
I'm just kidding, I don't really care. I think it's great.

JACKSON  
(looking at her)  
Maggie, I really have no idea what you're referring to...

MAGGIE  
(more drunk)  
Fine, fine, I'll play your game. No idea. Out of sight out of mind.

JACKSON  
Now you're just saying things.

MAGGIE  
Hector!

Jackson's eyes widen and he turns around, looking at the empty basement door.

JACKSON  
What!?

MAGGIE  
What's Hector do. For a living! You know.

JACKSON  
(exhaling)  
He... He's in food preparation too.

MAGGIE  
Do you work together?

JACKSON  
Why are you asking so many questions?

MAGGIE  
(playful)  
Well what are you worried I'm gonna find out.

JACKSON  
(stern)  
I'm not *worried* you're going to find anything out, Maggie.

MAGGIE  
So then what's the problem?

JACKSON  
I don't know, you tell me.

MAGGIE  
Why don't *you* tell *me*?

JACKSON  
Tell you what?

MAGGIE  
About you and Peter. And Hector.

Jackson's eyes narrow.

JACKSON

What... about me, Peter and Hector?

MAGGIE

Whatever you wanna tell me.

JACKSON

Why don't you tell me the real reason  
you're here?

Maggie recoils and sits back in her chair. The game is going  
on, more aggressively at this point.

MAGGIE

I told you that already.

JACKSON

No, you told me a lie. Not the truth.

MAGGIE

(laughing)

Hokay, Jackson.

JACKSON

What are you doing here, Maggie?

MAGGIE

Visiting. My. Cousin.

JACKSON

Your cousin who's never mentioned  
you, who you haven't seen in what, a  
decade, you just suddenly decide to  
visit out of the blue?

MAGGIE

Is that illegal?

JACKSON

No, no it's not illegal, Maggie. I  
just don't think you're giving me the  
whole story.

MAGGIE

Ditto.

JACKSON

I've been honest.

MAGGIE

Have you?

JACKSON  
I have.

MAGGIE  
You sure?

JACKSON  
100%. Have you?

MAGGIE  
Of course. Always.

JACKSON  
Then what are we talking about?

MAGGIE  
You tell me.

JACKSON  
Nothing.

Jackson makes a final move on the board.

JACKSON (cont'd)  
I win. Good night.

MAGGIE  
How'd you win?

JACKSON  
It's in the rules.

MAGGIE  
I think you just don't want me  
finding out your secret.

JACKSON  
I don't have any secrets, Maggie, and  
I'm going to bed.

MAGGIE  
Oh, you don't huh? Well maybe Hector  
will tell me then.

Maggie stands up and starts playfully walking over to the  
basement door.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
(fake yelling)  
Heeectooooor.... Heeectooooor!

Jackson clenches his fists.

JACKSON  
Stop it, Maggie.

MAGGIE  
Heeeectorrrr!

JACKSON  
Maggie. Stop it.

Maggie almost reaches the basement steps as Jackson slams his fists on the table. Maggie jumps, startled, and backs up against the wall.

JACKSON (cont'd)  
Stop it!

A wine bottle falls off the table from the impact and bounces over to the basement stairs.

Maggie and Jackson watch as it rolls through the door frame and clinks down the steps, into the darkness.

And finally, as it reaches the bottom, it shatters. The sound echoes up.

Maggie looks at Jackson.

MAGGIE  
I- I'm sorry.

Jackson pushes out his chair and stands.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
I'll get some stuff and go down and clean it up.

JACKSON  
I think it would be better if you just went to bed.

MAGGIE  
I...

JACKSON  
Let me put it this way, Maggie. I don't trust you to clean it up without burning the place down.

Jackson stares at her from across the kitchen.

MAGGIE  
Okay. I will see you tomorrow, I guess. I'm sorry.

She walks out and back to her room.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maggie gets to her room and shuts the door. She puts her hands on her face in shame, and sighs.

She shuts the light off and flops down onto bed, on top of the sheets, fully clothed.

She flips over and looks at the ceiling.

Beat.

A few moments later, Hector's porn sounds blare through the house again.

She sighs and puts her pillow over her face.

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING

ESTABLISHING OF HOUSE AS THE EARLY MORNING SUN REFLECTS OFF OF THE DEWEY TREES AND GRASS.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - MORNING

Maggie lays in bed wide awake, the sounds of porn still echoing through the halls and vents as if they've been going all night.

JACKSON (O.S.)  
Hector! You're gonna be late for  
work!

The porn sounds comes to a stop.

Maggie pulls the pillow off of her face and looks miserable. She shivers again, still freezing. She didn't get a wink of sleep. She rolls over and checks her phone - five missed calls from her landlord are displayed.

She drops the phone on the bedside table again and walks over to the window, peaking out.

She sees Jackson getting into his car and driving off.

INT. HOUSE - MORNING

Maggie sneaks through the house, trying to make as little noise as possible. Not for any particular reason, but rather because she has that awkward in-someone-else's-house-alone feeling.

She gets to the kitchen - it's spotless - and sees a small pile of trash bags containing the formerly pristine white towels that she used to wipe up the ice cream - and leaning against it, the non-stick pan she had used the night before. It's covered in scratches, which she rubs her finger across.

MAGGIE

Whoops...

She returns the pan to the pile of trash bags and goes back over to her room.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - MORNING

She leans against the desk in the room, staring at the cat clock again, as her phone rings in her hand. Peter picks up on the other end.

MAGGIE

Hey, Peter.

PETER

Hi Maggie, what's going on?

MAGGIE

Nothing, I... I think I might have accidentally made a bad impression with Jackson last night. Has he said anything?

PETER

Nope.

MAGGIE

Well... I don't know, I just can't shake the feeling. I was drunk and I kept poking fun at you two...

PETER

Us two?

MAGGIE

Yeah, I- I want to buy him a nice lunch to make it up to him.

PETER  
Is that really necessary?

MAGGIE  
I don't know, but is there anywhere  
around that he really likes?  
Somewhere in town, maybe?

PETER  
I don't know. Just get a pizza or  
something, he'll be happy.

MAGGIE  
Okay. Thanks Peter.

CUT TO:

EXT. SMALL TOWN PARKING LOT - DAY

Peter stands in a parking lot, leaning against a car. A  
couple stands in the background, waiting for him.

PETER  
Yeah, no problem. See you in a few  
days.

Peter hangs up.

PETER (cont'd)  
(mouthing to himself)  
"Us two"?

He turns and walks over to the couple.

PETER (cont'd)  
Sorry about that - You guys ready to  
see some houses?

TOM  
Yeah.  
(to ROBERT)  
You ready?

ROBERT  
Mhm.

Peter smiles.

PETER  
Great! The first property isn't too  
far outside of town. Just follow me  
and we'll be there in ten or so.

Peter returns to his car and gets in. He checks his phone, which displays a text from Jackson:

"Got Hector up and ready for work. Tell your cousin to stay out of my things."

Peter rolls his eyes and throws his phone into the passenger seat. He puts his car in reverse and pulls out.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Maggie walks across the lawn and over to her car. She sits down in the drivers seat and checks her reflection in the overhead mirror, playing with her hair a bit. She turns the car on and puts it into reverse, beginning to back up.

BUMP

(M-) Maggie freezes.

MAGGIE

Oh no.

Maggie hops out of the car and sees the tail of a cat sticking out from under her car.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Oh no. Oh no oh no oh no oh no oh no.

Maggie picks up the cat.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Hey little guy! You're okay, you're okay.

She continues saying nonsensical words to the dead cat as she rushes back inside with it in her arms.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

She brings it into the kitchen and starts the tap in the sink, washing the cat and trying to get it to drink water.

MAGGIE

Come on, you're okay!

After a few moments, she gives up and shuts off the tap. She looks at the wet, dirty cat in the sink and buries her head in her hands.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Oh god...

She brushes her hair back.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Well... At least it's probably a  
stray.

She turns around and her eyes go wide - There's a kibble bowl on the grown with KYLE sprawled across it. She averts her attention to the wall. Photos of the same cat. And the fridge. More photos.

She whips back around to the sink and reads the cat's collar: KYLE.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Oh shit... Ooooooh shit.....

Maggie pulls the cat out of the sink and rushes over to the front door, but as she reaches it, she sees Jackson pulling into the driveway.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Oh shit, oh shit, oh shit.

Maggie scans the room from the front door. Nowhere to hide it.

She panics and runs to her room with the cat.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - DAY

Maggie busts into the room and looks around. The front door can be heard closing.

MAGGIE

Uh...! Uuuuuhhh...!

She lands on the cooler, runs over to it, flips open the lid, tosses the cat in and slams the lid shut, sitting on it just as Jackson arrives at her bedroom door. He's carrying a new pan in its packaging, and some new white towels under his arm.

JACKSON

Hey.

MAGGIE

Hi!

JACKSON  
Hector go to work yet?

MAGGIE  
Not sure!

Jackson rolls his eyes.

JACKSON  
Hector! You are going to be late for work!

He sighs.

JACKSON (cont'd)  
Sorry.

Jackson leaves the doorway and goes back to his room.

As soon as she's in the clear, she opens the lid and pulls out her phone; she googles "animal shelters near me".

She clicks the first link and calls the number. The tone buzzes, and there's an answer on the other end.

ANIMAL SHELTER LADY  
Hello?

MAGGIE  
Hi! I want to... Buy a cat.

ANIMAL SHELTER LADY  
You don't buy them from shelters, ma'am, you rescue them.

MAGGIE  
I want to rescue a cat!

ANIMAL SHELTER LADY  
Okay, you can come down and take a look at our-

MAGGIE  
Do you have any that are white on the bottom, sorta red with...

Maggie looks at the cat to get details.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
Dark brown spots on the top?

ANIMAL SHELTER LADY  
A tabby cat?

MAGGIE

A what cat?

Jackson returns to her door, and she hears him approach just in time to slam the lid and sit back down on the cooler.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Bye mom!

She hangs up the phone.

Jackson pauses for a moment, perplexed by Maggie's strange behaviour.

JACKSON

I'm gonna make myself some lunch...  
Buuut there's not really enough food  
for uh... you... so you might have to  
fend for yourself.

MAGGIE

That's fine! That's great. That's  
fine. I was actually thinking  
about... having a picnic! Out there.  
Outside.

JACKSON

...Where outside? Everywhere around  
here is woods.

MAGGIE

I'll find a place!

JACKSON

Hokay.

Jackson once again leaves and heads to the kitchen. Maggie waits for him to go, then picks up the cooler with a slosh.

She heads out for the rear exit as quietly as she can, but the cooler sloshes constantly as she moves.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

She goes through the house to the kitchen. Jackson stands, leaning against the counter, holding and eating an uncooked hot dog in his hands.

Maggie's eyes focus on his lips wrapping around the hot dog - Jackson notices this and pulls it out of his mouth, looking over at her. He puts the hot dog behind his back.

He looks at her and she looks at him. She cracks an awkward smile and continues out the back kitchen door.

EXT. HOUSE BACKYARD - DAY

(M-) Maggie starts walking through the backyard and notices a shovel and some other tools, a pitchfork, etc. leaning against a shed. She looks back at the house to make sure she's not being watched and then grabs the shovel and carries it with her out into the forest, still sloshing with the cooler.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Less than a dozen yards into her trek and Maggie is beginning to regret her decision. The shoes she brought, tennis shoes, are horribly inadequate for this type of terrain.

The trail is barely level. Its mostly comprised of peaks and valleys.

She reaches the top of the first large hill, then stops to catch her breath.

She gives it a beat before resuming her hike. She's not sure where she's going to bury the thing but she should probably make it a fair distance.

She takes one mighty step forward. Right into a mucky spot. Her shoes do not get the job done. She attempts to step back but loses her balance and:

Tumbles down a steep drop.

CUT TO:

EXT. OTHER BACKYARD - DAY

Peter stands with Tom and Robert in a big backyard that backs onto some woods.

PETER

So you can see you've got tons of room back here - Barbecues, sports, and who knows, you could probably put a pool back here and still have a ton of space.

Robert and Tom nod and look at each other. Tom nods at Robert to say his piece.

ROBERT

It's nice and all, but...

TOM

We've seen some news reports of disappearances in the area? In the woods, most notably... And you know, this place...

PETER

Oh, of course - I completely understand the concern there. It's a very recent problem, and the authorities are pretty certain that it's mountain lions being driven down from up north due to urban developments up there. Most of the disappearances have been more than an hour away from here, and joggers and hikers use the trails frequently without incident - so in the grand scheme of things, there's very little to worry about. If you want, I can give you a little tour of some local trails to ease your nerves.

TOM

I think we're okay--

ROBERT

Oh, come on Tom, it's the middle of the day. Let's just do it.

PETER

You don't have to, of course.

TOM

Eh, whatever. I could use a hike, anyway.

PETER

Great; We'll keep it short, only a half hour or so. Nice and easy. I used to walk these trails as a kid with my dad, there are some really great hidden spots. Waterfalls, meadows, you name it. Great places for relaxing if you've had too much work lately, or whatever. The trails tend to be flat enough to jog, too...

The three of them begin their walk towards the woods.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

(M-) Maggie jolts up from her fall and spits out some leaves and dirt from her mouth.

MAGGIE

Nice, Maggie...

She looks over and sees the shovel on the ground, beside the cooler, which lays open - the cat's body on the ground beside her.

Brushing herself off, she then picks the shovel up off the ground and figures here is as good a spot as any to bury the cat.

She looks around and plunges the shovel into the ground, tossing the dirt aside. She digs and digs until a hole of considerable size is dug out of the ground.

She wipes the sweat off of her brow and winces as she lifts the cats body and gently places it into the shallow grave, filling the residual dirt back in afterwards.

Once the hole is filled, she takes a moment to catch her breath, leaning against a nearby tree.

Out of the corner of her eye Maggie notices a strange spot on the ground not 20 yards to her left, further into the clearing.

She approaches this strange dark mark in the ground - it's about two metres in diameter - and crouches down for a closer look.

It's blood. There's nothing else it could be. She stands back up and looks around - Could it be a mountain lion nest? Do they even have nests, or do they have dens?

Despite realizing it's dried blood, she continues to look at it, curiously, as if looking for a clue as to what could have made the mess.

INT. FOREST, ELSEWHERE - DAY

Peter, Robert and Tom walk through the woods. They've gone relatively far and no houses or roads are visible from their location.

PETER

Do you guys plan on having any kids? There are some great activities here in the summer. There's a fun-run through these woods, tons of families take part in it. Of course, you don't really have to run, you can also walk, but it's a good time nonetheless. Well, I mean, it had to be cancelled this year cause of the, you know, but yeah. There's also the town festival that comes every year in June. Fall Harvest fair. Great apple cider there - You guys like apple cider?

TOM

Sure--

Suddenly, from the distant woods, a roar rings out.

All three of them freeze.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Maggie's head springs up at the sound of the roar - it's closer to her. She grabs the shovel and backs off slowly from the bloody spot, hiding behind a tree.

We push in on her as she hears footsteps approach quickly and sniffing like a dog, but snarling and growling that sounds unlike any animal she's ever heard.

There's a can of pop on the ground near to her left from the spilled open cooler - she bends down and crawls over, picking it up and returning to the tree for cover.

She shakes it up and opens the can, throwing it into the distance - the creature follows the noise and runs off, giving her time to sprint away with the shovel in hand.

The animal, whatever it is, starts to chase her - she can hear it coming behind her. We see glimpses of a dark creature galloping through the woods after her but nothing clear enough to make out.

When she thinks it's right behind her, she swings the shovel around, but it's gone. She stands in the silence of the woods for a moment and then backs into a large tree.

Twigs can be heard snapping nearby as the creature nears her tree.

She slides down onto the ground in hopes of hiding. The creature's noises are getting louder and louder when a sudden "HELLO?" in the distance draws it off.

She turns around the tree and sees something running in the distance, fast, but again can't make out what it is.

EXT. FOREST, ELSEWHERE - DAY

Peter stands on a bit of high ground.

PETER  
Helloooooo?

Tom and Robert stand down the hill a ways, looking up at Peter.

TOM  
Maybe it's not a good idea to yell  
like that if there's cougars around!

PETER  
There could be someone out there who  
needs help. You two head back to the  
house - You have my number, I'm going  
to go make sure everything's okay and  
I'll meet you back there.

Peter runs off in to the woods.

Robert tries to make it up the hill but is slipping and sliding.

ROBERT  
Hang on! We don't even know our way  
back!

They're surrounded by the sounds of the dense woods.

TOM  
Well, this is great.

Robert sighs.

ROBERT  
We should follow him.

TOM  
Absolutely not, you heard that noise.

ROBERT  
Well, what do you suggest we do? Go  
back to the house?

TOM  
Yes!

ROBERT  
Okay, lead the way, Tom!

TOM  
Fine! We came from that way.

ROBERT  
Uh-huh.

TOM  
The trail shouldn't be far from here!  
I'm sure if we walk in that direction  
we'll find it.

Tom turns back around to see Robert making his way more  
carefully up the hill.

ROBERT  
Peter!? Mr Everton!?!

TOM  
For God's sake...

Tom follows Peter up the hill and into the direction Peter  
went off in.

They make it to the top of the hill and look around, still  
nothing. No Peter, no trail.

TOM (cont'd)  
(out of breath)  
Great, now what?

ROBERT  
(shouting louder than  
before)  
Peter!? Where'd you go!?

TOM  
Would you please stop that!

ROBERT  
He can't be that far.

A man's scream, presumably Peter, is heard in the distance.

TOM  
Wait--

ROBERT  
Shh shh shh....!

The two stand in silence for a moment and perk their ears.

ROBERT (cont'd)  
Peter!?

TOM  
Mr Everton!?

Suddenly, a violent gust of wind followed by some deep footsteps and growls rushes past them with incredible speed - their bodies drop to the forest floor.

EXT. HOUSE BACKYARD - DAY

Maggie rushes out of the woods, out of breath, shovel in hand.

She trips over some appliance in the backyard and sprints to the door.

Finally noticing that she's still carrying the shovel, she tosses it on the ground and jumps up onto the patio.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Maggie jumps through the kitchen door and slams it shut behind her, out of breath. Jackson stops doing the dishes and turns around, looking at her dumbfounded.

MAGGIE  
(noticing Jackson  
staring)  
There's something in the woods!

JACKSON  
What, like a raccoon?

MAGGIE  
NO, not like a raccoon, like a - a  
beast!

JACKSON  
A beast...

MAGGIE

It was big, it had - Claws! Or something! I didn't get a good look at it, I was too busy running for *my life!*

JACKSON

Uh-huh.

MAGGIE

Jackson, I am not bullshitting you right now, there is something out there! Do you own a gun?!

JACKSON

No.

MAGGIE

We need something to protect ourselves!

JACKSON

Look, Maggie, I told you there were cougars out there-

MAGGIE

This was no cougar!

JACKSON

You don't even know what a cougar looks like.

MAGGIE

I know this wasn't a cougar!

JACKSON

Well that's the worst thing that's out there. That's literally the worst thing it could have been.

MAGGIE

This was not a cougar!

JACKSON

Didn't you say you didn't get a good look at it?

MAGGIE

I got enough of a look at it!

JACKSON

Right... Enough of a look at it to tell it wasn't a cougar but not enough of a look at it to be able to notice anything else.

MAGGIE

Jackson, why don't you go take a walk in the woods then, huh!?

JACKSON

I'm good.

MAGGIE

Then stop this-- This condescending shit!

JACKSON

Okay.

MAGGIE

God!

Maggie storms off and slams her bedroom door shut.

Jackson stands alone in the kitchen and peers out the window towards the forest beyond the yard.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Establishing of house at night -  
crickets chirp.

The yard is peaceful.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maggie lays on her bed staring at the cat clock on the wall. It taunts her, and she can't sleep while it's staring at her.

The sound of Hector's porn films can be heard again.

She tries to turn over and hold the pillow on her head but she sees another tiny little cat statue on the shelf beside her. She's being driven mad.

She's still freezing, too, which only makes matters worse. She shivers, and throws off her sheets to get out of bed.

She grabs her empty water glass and exits the room.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Maggie walks over to the kitchen. Hector's porn echoes through the whole house, as per usual.

She takes a glance at Kyle's food bowl and shivers, and then continues on to the kitchen sink to fill her glass of water.

She stands in the dark, leaning forward against the counter and stares out the window at the dark woods.

Suddenly, the light flicks on and she jumps, turning around.

Jackson stands by the light switch.

JACKSON

Sorry. Didn't mean to startle you.

Maggie sighs.

JACKSON (cont'd)

(banging on the wall)

Hector! Off!

The porn noises stop promptly.

JACKSON (cont'd)

Don't worry. I'm not a cougar.

Maggie rolls her eyes and grabs her glass of water, taking another sip.

Jackson walks over to the cupboard beside Maggie and pulls out a glass, filling it with water from the tap.

MAGGIE

Hey I... I'm sorry about yelling earlier.

JACKSON

It's cool.

Jackson leans on the counter opposite Maggie.

MAGGIE

I just, something out there chased me. Chase-chased me, like full on sprint. And it really startled--

Jackson's eyes wander as she speaks until he lands on Kyle's food bowl.

JACKSON  
(interrupting)  
Huh, that's funny. Kyle hasn't eaten his food.

Maggie's eyes widen.

JACKSON (cont'd)  
(jokingly)  
Maybe the thing ran off and got hit by a car or something.

He laughs.

MAGGIE  
No it didn't.

He stops and looks at her, confused.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
Hopefully that didn't happen.

She lets out a soft "ha-ha" but looks like a deer in headlights.

JACKSON  
Uh-huh. How'd your picnic go?

MAGGIE  
Good. It was good.

JACKSON  
Until you got chased.

MAGGIE  
Yes, well, obviously it was good until I got chased, yes.

JACKSON  
Well. I'm gonna go back to bed then.

Jackson leaves the kitchen and flicks off the light. Maggie continues gripping the counter with full force. She's about to explode from stress.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Maggie bursts out the front door, slamming it shut behind her, hyperventilating. She stands in the front yard and puts her head between her knees, trying to calm herself.

She finally relaxes a bit and stands back up.

(M~) She realizes now that she's outside alone - in the dark - with whatever that animal thing was. She shivers for a moment and hears the cold, night sounds out in the forest surrounding her - creeping in on her almost.

She turns around and goes back to the front door, pushing on it - but it's locked.

Suddenly: a meow around the side of the house, which piques her attention.

MAGGIE

...Kyle?

She can't see the cat. But she knows she heard it.

She runs around the side of the house after it and arrives at the back door - which sits wide open.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

...Hello?

She looks around and evaluates her options. Not much else to do.

She steps inside the door and grabs a flashlight to her right. She clicks it on and takes another few steps into the house.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Jackson...?

She continues in, shining the flashlight under the table in search of the feline-ghost.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Hector.....?

She peaks into the living room, shining the flashlight around more.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Kyle.....?

Suddenly, behind her, the kitchen door slams shut.

She jumps back and shines the flashlight towards the doorway.

Her face is stark white. She shakes and turns around, examining the whole space she's in with the flashlight.

A tinkle, like one you'd hear from a bell on a cat's collar, rings out on the other side of the house.

She creeps over with the flashlight, trying not to wake anybody.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
 Kyle.... is that you buddy....?

A meow, again, from the kitchen. She walks as quickly and quietly as she can back over to the kitchen and jumps in to find the cat. But there's still nothing.

Her attention is then drawn over to the basement door. She slowly approaches and tries to shine the light down, but it is so dark that it does nothing.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
 Kyle...? You down there?

We once again look up from the bottom of the stairs at Maggie, seeing her point the light down to the abyss.

DING DING DING

Maggie's phone rings in her room. She is startled by it and nearly drops the flashlight, but runs out of the kitchen towards her bedroom.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maggie rushes over to her phone to pick it up - but it's her landlord.

MAGGIE  
 I know I owe you a lot of money but  
 it's three in the fucking morning...

She hits decline and sits back on the bed. She's tired.

After a brief moment, she lies down under the covers and clicks off the flashlight.

But not for long.

She clicks the flashlight back on and aims it down at the same time that she pulls the covers back...

...and back...

...and back...

...until she sees the corpse of the cat, snuggled up in her bed.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ!!

Maggie leaps out of bed and backs out of the door, flashlight in hand.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Maggie continues to back away from the door at unstoppable speed.

MAGGIE  
Jesus Christ! Jesus! Christ!

She backs into the couch so quickly that she topples over it and slams into the ground, dazing her.

She shakes it off and stands back up, shining the flashlight at the door.

She looks around the living room where she stands, and then back at the door.

She puffs her chest and bravely takes a step forward, back toward the room.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maggie leans around the corner of the door. The flashlight shakes in her hand as she points it at the bed.

But there doesn't appear to be anything there - she approaches the bed to get a better look, and it's empty.

She looks around, and spots her shoes on the ground.

Her face turns from fear to determination.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

(M-) Lightning crashes. Wind roars. We tilt down from the sky to reveal Maggie, flashlight in one hand and shovel in the other, trekking through the woods to her burial site.

She arrives, finally, sliding down the hill and rushes over to the shallow grave.

But it's dug up. She shines her light at the bottom - no cat.

Maggie looks around the woods, wind blowing her hair, and shivers.

She falls down on the ground, onto her knees, overwrought with a sense of dread.

She's confused - and petrified, and begins to make her way back towards the house.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Maggie re-enters the house through the rear door, shaking both from being cold and being scared. She brushes and leave off and tries to warm her self up a bit, rubbing her hands together. She tosses the flashlight onto the kitchen table.

She approaches Jackson's door and knocks on it. The light is on, it seeps through the bottom of the door, but there's no answer. She slides down onto the floor beside the door and sits, on the verge of tears.

MAGGIE

Jackson...? I... I know you're in there, and I know you're... Probably fed up with me already. I just... Let me, let me just explain everything... okay?

We slowly push in on her.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Look, I... I lost my job a few months back. It was hardly even a job to begin with - that's, not really that important. I'm broke. That's what matters. I completely ran out of money because I was too damn stubborn to just, get another job and... God. My landlord started demanding rent, which I guess he can do.

(MORE)

MAGGIE (cont'd)

He sent debt collectors after me, followed me to places. Did everything but evict me. Which... I assume has happened by now. I ran away. I had nobody else to go to so I ran here. I barely even know Peter. I don't remember the last time I saw him and I only had his number from a damn business card. I was planning on staying here for a few weeks, not a few days. Living off of you guys. Like a leach. Everything has been a lie. A play to get you guys to keep me around. And... God, I'm sorry. You guys don't deserve that. I also....

She takes a deep breath.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

When I was going out... Yesterday morning.... I....

She pauses for a second.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

I think I'd rather tell you this face to face, so can you just open the door, please?

No response.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Jackson?

She tugs at the doorknob and creaks open the door, peering in - but there's nobody in the room.

INT. JACKSON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maggie takes a step inside.

She scans the room - it's clean, cleaner than she expected, and on the wall to her right is the thermostat - cranked down to the lowest setting.

However, shadows bounce around on Jackson's wall - someone's outside, through Jackson's window, on the front lawn.

Maggie walks over to the window and sees two silhouetted figures standing in front of a car - the car's headlights prevent her from seeing any details.

She can see them arguing, when one blows the other off and walks around to get back into the car.

She can tell one is Jackson, so the other must be... Peter!

INT./EXT. HOUSE FRONT LAWN - NIGHT

Maggie runs out of the room to catch him, but by the time she reaches the front door and pulls it open, the car's rear headlights can be seen leaving down the driveway.

Jackson looks at her as if to say "what are you doing?", but says nothing.

MAGGIE

Was that Peter!?

JACKSON

Who?

MAGGIE

The person in that car, was that Peter??

JACKSON

No, that car was nobody.

MAGGIE

What do you mean, "nobody"?!

Jackson walks over to the front door and looks at her, up and down.

JACKSON

I mean nobody. And why are you so filthy? And awake?

MAGGIE

What? I... I went on a walk, I needed some fresh air.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Jackson enters the house and Maggie closes the door behind him.

He heads for his room but Maggie stops him.

MAGGIE

Can we talk?

JACKSON

Why?

MAGGIE

Can we just talk in the kitchen,  
please? It's important.

JACKSON

(with a tired sigh)

Hokay.

CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER

Maggie and Jackson sit at the kitchen table. Maggie twirls her thumbs, trying to think clearly through her tired state.

JACKSON

So tell me what you think you saw...

MAGGIE

When?

JACKSON

I don't know. You've been seeing a  
lot of things, it seems. So, what do  
you think you saw?

MAGGIE

Here? Or out in the woods?

JACKSON

What do you mean "here"?

MAGGIE

I mean, are you asking what I saw  
here, in the house?

JACKSON

What *did* you see in the house?

MAGGIE

I don't know, it's... Hard to explain  
without sounding crazy.

JACKSON

(leaning forward)

Well why don't you try for me.

MAGGIE

Jackson, who was that outside?

JACKSON

I don't know why you're so concerned with that.

MAGGIE

Well, if it really wasn't Peter, then... Was it Hector?

JACKSON

Why do you want to know?

MAGGIE

I get it's not my house, I get... I mean I guess it's none of my business.

JACKSON

As are most things in this house.

MAGGIE

Sure. But when things are put in my room and doors slam behind me and--

JACKSON

The house is drafty.

MAGGIE

What?

JACKSON

That's probably why the doors slammed. The house has a draft.

MAGGIE

Okay...? I just want to know... If Hector went into my room.

JACKSON

I doubt it. He doesn't really come upstairs, 'cept for work.

MAGGIE

Why?

JACKSON

Does it matter?

MAGGIE

No, it's just... weird, I guess. I... this house is weird. Not you! I don't mean you. But...

JACKSON

....but....

MAGGIE

I... Don't know, never mind.

JACKSON

Maggie, did you see something... or not?

MAGGIE

I can't explain it!

JACKSON

(without breaking eye  
contact)

I'd really like you to try.

MAGGIE

Fine!... I do have- I have one question, I guess.

JACKSON

I'm all ears.

MAGGIE

Are you and Peter.... Are you guys...

JACKSON

Yes?

MAGGIE

I don't know *how* Hector fits into all of this, but... are you... well, do you guys... have a... er... secret?

JACKSON

What sort of secret, Maggie?

MAGGIE

You know what, maybe it was just... none of my business.

JACKSON

Maybe it is, maybe it isn't. Probably isn't.

MAGGIE

I think I just... I think I just need to sleep.

Jackson stands up and goes over to the counter behind her. He pulls out a glass and fills it with water, sipping from it.

JACKSON

You sure you don't want to take a shower first? You're not exactly... Clean.

Jackson leans against the counter.

MAGGIE

A hot shower would be nice.

Maggie, so tired she can barely stand, gets up and walks over towards her room.

Jackson reaches over to his knife block and pulls out a large meat knife.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Maggie stands shivering in the bathroom, shower running. She goes to take her sweater off but stops before rubbing her hands together from the freezing temperatures.

She looks over at the bathroom door.

INT. JACKSON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maggie sneaks over and looks into Jackson's room - It's empty.

She slides inside through slightly ajar door and looks at the thermostat.

She takes one last peak outside to ensure she's not being watched and puts the temperature up to about halfway.

Just as she's about to walk back over to the door and head to the bathroom again, Jackson walks by.

MAGGIE

(under her breath)

Oh shit...!

Maggie ducks back, but luckily, Jackson continues by and doesn't come into his room.

Instead he enters the... bathroom?

And as soon as he's illuminated by the bathroom light, Maggie sees his hand behind his back, tightly gripping the large knife.

Maggie stumbles back into the room, shocked and terrified.

She can hear the shower curtains pulled back -

JACKSON (O.S.)

What!?

Maggie rushes over to the window in Jackson's room and slides it open, slipping out, and sliding it shut again.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

She ducks below the windowsill.

MAGGIE

What the fuck...!

Jackson, seen above her through the window, enters his room and does a quick scan.

He's pissed that she's not there - He whistles.

JACKSON

Hector!

Jackson leaves the room and she looks back through the window to see if she can figure out where he is.

She can't see him so she tip toes around the wall over towards the front lawn.

As she rounds the corner towards the front door, her car's lights flash and the horn honks.

Maggie ducks back around the corner, worrying someone saw her, but it was just the car - HER car - locking.

MAGGIE

My car keys! They took my damn car keys! They're really pissed about this cat!

Maggie sneaks back around to the front door and slips in.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

She quietly scans the place to make sure she's not walking into a trap and then tip-toes into her room to her phone.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

She rips it out of the charger and goes through her contacts, calling Peter.

MAGGIE

Come on, come on, pick up!

Peter answers.

PETER

(over phone)

I get it, I'm on the way, stop calling me!

MAGGIE

What?

PETER

Oh... Wait, Maggie?

MAGGIE

Yes?

PETER

Sorry, I thought you were... Is everything okay?

MAGGIE

Look, Peter, I think Jackson's really mad that I... that I killed his cat.

PETER

Yes, Jackson is really mad and-- Wait, you what?

MAGGIE

It was an accident!

PETER

You killed the cat? As in Kyle?

MAGGIE

I'm sorry Peter, it just, ran out behind my car and I didn't mean to and now Jackson's chasing me around with--

PETER  
You *just* killed the cat?

MAGGIE  
What do you mean *just*? I didn't *just* kill the cat, I mean, I'm sorry about it, too. And I think Jackson's really mad about it.

PETER  
Yes, yes, Maggie, Jackson is very mad about the cat. So I think you should stay in your room until I get there.

MAGGIE  
Are you coming here?

PETER  
Yes, I'll be there soon.

MAGGIE  
I think I need to talk to Jackson, confess, I think that will calm him down.

PETER  
Nope! No you should definitely not do that. You should do as I say and stay in your room.

MAGGIE  
Peter, for once in my life I am going to take responsibility for something I fucked up. Don't ruin this for me.

PETER  
Maggie, wait--

Maggie hangs up the phone, drops it back on the bedside table and heads out to the kitchen.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Maggie walks tentatively into the kitchen.

MAGGIE  
...Jackson?

Suddenly, a phone - Jackson's phone - starts buzzing on the kitchen table.

Maggie walks over to it and looks at the screen: "CALL FROM: PETER"

Maggie narrows her eyes, confused.

From behind her, Jackson's hand raises up a knife ready to plunge into her.

At the last moment she hears him behind her and whips around, barely dodging the knife that stabs into the tabletop.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
Jesus Christ!

Jackson uses his brute force to knock Maggie back and twists her around.

Maggie reaches out for the knife and grabs hold of it just as she's toppled over the table and onto the ground on the other side.

Jackson rushes around and takes hold of her shirt, dragging her towards the basement door.

JACKSON  
You did want to meet Hector, didn't you?

Just as they arrive at the door frame and the top of the steep, dark staircase, Maggie stabs Jackson in the thigh with a THWAP!

Jackson belts out an angry yell.

JACKSON (cont'd)  
You fucking bitch!

Maggie manages to wrangle herself free while Jackson's distracted by the pain and sprints out into the backyard.

Jackson yanks the knife out of his flesh and throws it on the kitchen floor where it lands with a clang.

He limps out of the rear door, left ajar by Maggie.

EXT. BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Maggie runs in to the backyard and stops, trying to figure out where is the best place to run.

Jackson stomps out the back door and approaches the wall of shovels and hoes and more importantly - the pitchfork.

He takes the large fork with one hand and limps over to Maggie, who sees him coming and tries to dosey-doe around him by bolting for the front yard.

JACKSON  
You're dead, Maggie. Dead!

Maggie says nothing, sprinting around the house and over to her car. She tugs on the door, but it's still locked. She notices Jackson limping after her around the side of the house, and bolts back over to the front door.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Maggie darts into the front door and practically pushes it off of it's hinges. Without missing a beat, she slips and slides into her room.

INT. MAGGIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

She gets into her room and sees her phone, still sitting on the bedside table, ringing.

LANDLORD fills the screen.

She answers.

MAGGIE  
Call the police! Help me!

LANDLORD  
(over phone)  
Listen, you owe me five grand in rent, the only thing you're gonna need is an ambulance!

MAGGIE  
Call the fucking police!!

Mid conversation, Jackson stomps into her room and rips her back by her hair.

He yanks the phone out of her hand and tosses it out the door into the living room, and throws her out after it.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Maggie tumbles into the back of the couch and catches her breath for a brief second, before standing up and launching herself back out of the front door.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

She makes it a few feet when she's struck in the back by the cat clock - Jackson lobbed it at her from the front door.

She can hardly breath as Jackson yanks her back up and presses her against the wall, pitchfork at his side.

MAGGIE  
Okayokayokayokayokay!

Maggie sticks her hands up.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
Can we just talk about this!

Jackson prods Maggie's neck with the pitchfork.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
Jackson?! Can we- Can we have a conversation here!?

JACKSON  
Talking time is over, chump.

MAGGIE  
I'm very sorry about all of this, I was just about to come to you and tell you and apologize and then--

JACKSON  
You're gonna die.

Maggie gulps as Jackson continues to push the pitchfork closer and closer to her neck.

MAGGIE  
Jackson! Please!

SUDDENLY

Headlights fill up the whole front lawn. A car is pulling into the driveway, and a figure gets out.

PETER  
What the hell is going on? Jackson!?

MAGGIE  
Keep the car running!!

Maggie, using this distraction as a chance to wriggle her way free, manages to drop to the ground and rush over to Peter.

Peter walks over, putting himself between the two.

PETER  
What the hell is this?!

JACKSON  
She stabbed me! Look!

Jackson shows his bloodied leg.

PETER  
Maggie! Did you stab him!?

MAGGIE  
No! Well, yes! But he tried to stab me first! In the shower!

JACKSON  
What are you talking about!

MAGGIE  
You know what I'm talking about!

PETER  
Quiet, both of you! Jackson, Maggie - Inside! Now!

Maggie looks at Peter, dumbfounded.

MAGGIE  
Absolutely not!

PETER  
Maggie!

MAGGIE  
I'm not going back in there, I'm leaving right now!

JACKSON  
Don't let her leave, Peter!

PETER  
Shut up, Jackson!

MAGGIE  
I'm not going back inside!

JACKSON  
Well you're not leaving either!

PETER  
Jackson!

Peter eyes Jackson with a piercing glare. In return, Jackson lowers his head.

Peter sighs, and turns around to look at Maggie with a judgmental stare.

PETER (cont'd)  
Maggie, you're my cousin and I love you, but if you leave right now I will have no choice but to call the police. Not only for the cat, but for what you did to Jackson's leg. That's your choice. You can come in now and we can clear up this very,  
(looking at Jackson)  
very big misunderstanding,  
(back to Maggie)  
or we can explain the situation to the cops and you can try and figure your way out of that one.

Maggie shakes her head and gives Peter a "what are we doing here?" look.

PETER (cont'd)  
Last chance, Maggie.

MAGGIE  
Fine. Fine! Fine.

PETER  
Good.

Peter begins walking inside. Maggie follows, passing Jackson, who whilst doing so does a little "made you flinch" jump at Maggie.

Maggie hurries inside after Peter, and Jackson limps in afterwards.

INT. KITCHEN - DAWN

They all wind up in the kitchen. The sun is rising outside.

Jackson leans against the counter next to the pitchfork.

Maggie sits at the kitchen table, timid.

Peter paces, and then lands his eyes on Maggie.

PETER

So, Maggie, is there something you'd like to tell Jackson?

MAGGIE

Yes, but... Before I do that, can I please, please just have something to eat. I can't think. I have hardly eaten in two days.

Peter sighs.

PETER

Sure! Sure. Why not.

Peter walks over to the fridge, fiddles a metal rod into the side of it and pops it open.

Maggie tries to sneak a peak of the inside of the fridge but with no luck.

Peter pulls out a casserole dish full of gooey dip and drops it down on the table.

It looks grey, spongy, unnatural. The type of food described in *Rapper's Delight*.

PETER (cont'd)

Eat.

MAGGIE

You know, on second thought... I think I'm okay.

Peter shrugs and puts the dish on the counter beside Jackson, who grabs a big wooden stir-spoon and digs in.

Peter returns to the centre of the room.

He paces around for a bit.

Finally, he grabs hold of the back of one of the chairs, leaning onto it.

Peter sighs. He positions himself in between the two of them. He looks at Maggie.

PETER

So?

Maggie looks at Jackson, who's occupied with the grey residue.

She takes a deep breath.

MAGGIE

Okay. Before I say anything, I just want to say, I'm sorry. But also,  
(towards Jackson)  
he stole my car keys! Or Hector did.  
Someone has my car keys.

PETER

Maggie. Tell Jackson what you told me on the phone.

Maggie shuffles in the chair, she breaths in about to talk, but Jackson interrupts:

JACKSON

Peter, I don't know what she told you on the phone, but I can guarantee she was trying to cover her own ass.

PETER

Jackson, you are *this* close!

Peter holds his fingers up to motion a tiny crack between them.

MAGGIE

Cover up? Cover up!? Jackson, I was trying to come clean to you!

JACKSON

Trying to come clean to me! Hah!

MAGGIE

Yes! Yes! I was trying to tell you what happened and apologize for it!

JACKSON

What the hell are you talking about?!

PETER

Enough! Maggie! Tell! Jackson! What! You! Told! Me! On! The! Phone!

MAGGIE  
He already knows!

JACKSON  
Yeah! I already know!

PETER  
(to Jackson)  
No, you don't!  
(to Maggie)  
No, he doesn't! So tell him!

MAGGIE  
(taking a deep breath)  
Jackson, I'm...

She pauses. She fears coming clean, and taking this responsibility.

MAGGIE (cont'd)  
I... I was going out to get you  
lunch...

PETER  
Oh, for fuck's sake. Jackson, she  
didn't find anything, she *killed* the  
cat!

JACKSON  
What? What cat?

PETER  
Hector's cat!

JACKSON  
Kyle is dead?

PETER  
Yes! That is what Maggie did!

MAGGIE  
Woah, woah, Peter, it's not like it  
was on purpose!

PETER  
Maggie, just for one moment, please  
shut the fuck up.

JACKSON  
Peter, she's *clearly* trying to cover  
up what she's been doing. Snooping.

MAGGIE

Snooping?! I haven't been snooping!

JACKSON

You sure as hell have been snooping!

MAGGIE

What the hell does snooping even mean? I've been trying to bury the-- Gah! I'm sorry about the damn cat!

JACKSON

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

PETER

Maggie! Jackson *did* know about the cat

(eyeing Jackson)

and now that you've told us about it and apologized, everything's okay, *right Jackson?*

JACKSON

No! Everything is not okay, because I *didn't* know about the cat, and I don't *care* about the cat!

Peter buries his head in his hands.

MAGGIE

Wait - What?

JACKSON

Yes! I don't give a shit about the cat, I didn't even -- What the hell does the cat have to do with any of this?

MAGGIE

I killed the cat!

JACKSON

Cool! I don't care!

PETER

Jackson, stop talking.

JACKSON

Peter, she clearly knows!

PETER

No, she clearly does not!

MAGGIE

I know what? What is this about?

JACKSON

Oh my god, is she that dumb!?

Jackson walks over to the fridge and uses the rod to open it once more. He throws a severed, frozen arm on the table with a thud.

JACKSON (cont'd)

We eat people, you fucking moron!

Maggie looks at the arm, then back at Jackson, then over to Peter.

MAGGIE

Oh. I...

(she chuckles  
nervously)

I thought you guys were gay!

Maggie looks over at Peter, who looks stressed out of his mind. Jackson shakes his head in a "what?!" kind of way.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

So... The cat doesn't... matter...

PETER

(with a deep sigh)

No, Maggie. The cat does not matter.

JACKSON

See? Now she knows. Now we *have* to kill her!

Peter stares long and hard at Jackson, and then back at Maggie, who is still in a state of shock trying to piece everything together.

PETER

Well. He does have a point, Maggie.

MAGGIE

(hardly paying  
attention)

I'm... Gonna go to... my room...

Maggie stands up stiffly and begins to walk to the kitchen exit when Peter steps in her way.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Hello.

PETER

We can't let you leave, Maggie.

Maggie stares at Peter for a moment, then over to Jackson.

MAGGIE

Oh. Why?

Jackson picks up the pitchfork and approaches Maggie.

Maggie notices this - she puts her hands up defensively, and begins to back her way through the kitchen.

PETER

Maggie, you were a good cousin. And I'm sorry it has to be this way. Nah, who am I kidding. You were a pretty shit cousin.

MAGGIE

Wait, wait, wait-- That's uncalled for, Peter, I've been a good cousin, I... I brought you guys ice cream sandwiches!

PETER

I'm lactose intolerant, Maggie!

JACKSON

You know, I've been wanting to do this all weekend.

MAGGIE

I'm sorry about the cat! Sorry about the ice cream, and the mess! I'm sorry for snooping! Come on, Jackson, dinner wasn't that bad, was it?! Jackson?? Is this about me beating you at the game!? If you guys are gay, that's totally cool! I support it 100%!

Maggie backs into the kitchen table and starts to slide along the side of it to avoid the pitchfork.

But she stops when her hand touches something familiar - the flashlight she left the night before.

She pulls it over to her and holds it behind her back.

Jackson starts making weird, wobbly noises - sorta like he's shaking his face back and forth to play around with Maggie.

As Jackson gets closer and closer the pressure builds on Maggie to act.

She pulls the flashlight out from behind her and

SMACK

Brings it down right on Jackson's forehead. Jackson yelps and falls backwards into Peter, his forehead beginning to leak blood.

JACKSON

Ow!

Maggie runs for the exit but Peter catches up to her, essentially using Maggie's own momentum to throw her back into the kitchen wall.

Maggie's head hits the wall with force so she's a bit dazed but shakes herself out of it just enough to dodge the incoming pitchfork.

This has consequences however; her dodge is quick, but it knocks her off-balance. She trips down into the stairway to the basement, and loses her footing, falling backwards into the dark abyss, disappearing.

Peter and Jackson stand at the top of the stairs and look at each other - Jackson holding his forehead.

PETER

That was easier than I thought it'd be. Hope Hector has some fun.

Jackson nods.

JACKSON

So is she your cousin on your mom's side or your dad's side?

INT. BASEMENT - MORNING

Maggie groggily opens her eyes. She's been unconscious for a while.

Light barely reaches this place. It's cold, damp, and pitch black apart from a few light leaks.

The stairs were steeper and longer than she expected.

She rubs her head and sits up, looking around the dark and freezing labyrinth of hallways.

She gets up, brushes herself off, picks up the flashlight and slowly starts to creep through the halls - going deeper and deeper into this damp nest.

It's even colder down here than it was upstairs. Her breath can be seen. The walls are wet and the ceiling drips freezing droplets of water down onto her as she sneaks through the basement.

After what seems like an eternity, she finally arrives at a room suitable to make an exit - there's a window well, boarded off with some wood, but it should make easy work to get out of.

She scans the rest of the room to ensure she's safe: there's some tables, a sink, a projector hooked up to an outlet, some hanging bags of some sort, and a bed, which appears empty.

To her right, hidden by the darkness but now illuminated by her flashlight hangs a severed human head.

Maggie covers her mouth so as not to scream and stumbles back from the grotesque display - not realizing until it's too late that she's backed right into the projector and inadvertently turned it on.

Light spills out of the front lens - sound fills the room - a grotesque image of chains and whips and intense pornographic images are splayed on the wall.

The same music and noise that Maggie has been driven mad with over the past few days blares out from the speakers.

She stumbles around, trying to turn the thing off, but stops when she hears it.

Crinkling. Maggie turns around and looks behind her.

The bed is moving. A decrepit, dark figure stirs awake, slowly.

It rises like Nosferatu from his coffin and turns to face Maggie like an animatronic.

Maggie flicks the flashlight off and dwells back into the darker part of the room.

She finds a hidden spot behind a small shelf that shields her from Hector's direct line of sight.

She steadies his breathing, as if she were playing hide and seek, but this always makes it more difficult to breath anyway.

She covers her mouth, but her nose exhales become louder because of it.

Nothing is working. She'll just have to hope Hector didn't see her.

She peers through a slot in the shelf she's behind, past a severed arm that rests on the wooden frame, and watches as Hector hypnotically approaches the rays of light blasting out from the projector.

Almost like Kate Bush's dance in Wuthering Heights, Hector moves with the sounds and light - dancing, but slowly, zen-like.

Maggie watches him for a few moments and then decides to take her chances by going back up the stairs - she crawls as quietly as she can back to the maze of hallways that brought her to the room in the first place.

But she stops. The noises of Hector's dancing have ceased.

Maggie turns around to face Hector and sees him standing still, staring right at her. They look at each other, seemingly frozen in time.

And then Hector, out of nowhere, pounces at her with incredible speed and force.

Maggie manages to trip herself backwards and stand up, limping away from him down a narrow corridor, but Hector is hot on her tail.

He catches her - With claws tearing into her legs, he drags her back towards his lair.

She fights and pounds at him, but to no avail. Finally, as she is dragged past the projector, she tugs on the power cable, causing it to crash down on her.

She uses this opportunity to shine it directly into Hector's eyes, who recoils from the powerful light, dropping her legs just long enough for her to slap the projector into his head, knocking him back.

Maggie grabs one of the chains hanging from a bar off the ceiling and wraps it around Hector's neck - mimicking the image of chains and whips that now litter the wall sideways from the busted projector.

Hector smiles. It's a fantasy come true for him. And Maggie uses this brief moment to escape back into the hallways.

She limps through them, turning corner after corner, becoming more and more lost. She can see nothing but the beam of her flashlight as she searches for the stairs.

Finally, at the end of a long corridor she spots the way out. She sprints for it, still limping, but risking injury for freedom - However, before she's at the bottom step, Hector scurries by on all fours.

She skids on her heels to stop herself from being seen and clicks off the flashlight - luckily for her, she hasn't been spotted.

Maggie ducks herself into a small dark spot to hide.

Steam juts out of pipes near her - the sound of the porn echoes through the hallways with heavy reverb.

She pauses and breathes, trying to catch her breath and slow her heart rate. She's tired.

She peaks around the corner to see the bottom of the stairs once more - clear - until Hector returns and looks down the hallway, directly at her - though he still hasn't spotted her in the dark.

Hector begins to walk towards her hiding spot. He sniffs and snarls as he approaches and Maggie grips the flashlight hard.

Just as Hector's about to reach her, a harsh jettison of steam hisses out of a pipe at the base of the stairway, distracting him. He crawls back over to it and twists some nobs to get it to die down, then roars in the air. Maggie's fiddling with the thermostat has saved her life, inadvertently.

(M-) She crawls backwards, hoping she can find another way through the halls back to the window well - her original escape plan.

We are low to the ground, dollying backwards and looking up as Maggie half-crawls-half-walks through the basement depths. Lights flicker overhead. She looks in doors and hides behind different objects.

After a long, strenuous sneak through the never-ending twists and turns of the basement, she arrives back at the main room - the projector still on its side, the music still blaring.

She checks her back to make sure Hector's not around and then hops onto the table beneath the covered window well.

She pulls at the wooden planks but they won't budge. Then she hears something - far behind her - down the hallway from where she just came.

SLOW MOTION SEQUENCE (120FPS)

Time slows as Hector slides around the corner - he's spotted her.

We see closeups of the wood cracking and breaking, thin beams of light starting to burst through, and inter-cut between Hector nearing her.

She tugs at the planks with all of her strength, pulling and pulling, until finally

AN ERUPTION OF LIGHT AND SOUND

As the sunlight enters the room. Hector slides to a halt, still in slow-motion, as he brings his hands up to cover his eyes.

We see macro-closeups of his eyes straining from the intense light.

Maggie climbs through the window well as Hector claws for her, blindly, squirming around.

She makes it halfway out the window but she's caught her sweater on an exposed nail.

She tugs and tugs at it, her feet dangling in the dark dungeon below, as Hector feels around to grab a hold of her.

Finally he gets onto her ankle and grips it with his gangling hands. Maggie forces her foot in and kicks him in the face, sending him backwards into the ground with a thud, and climbs out the rest of the way.

BACK TO NORMAL SPEED (24FPS)

EXT. BACKYARD - DAWN

Maggie stumbles back onto her feet, rushes through the yard, and darts towards the woods hoping to lose her pursuers long enough to find help.

INT. KITCHEN - DAWN

Jackson and Peter lean on the counter, both eating out of the casserole dish.

PETER  
You know, he doesn't taste half bad  
for his age.

JACKSON  
I think age ripens it.

Peter hears commotion outside.

He puts down his spoon and approaches the window.

PETER  
She got out. For god's sake, she got  
out.

Peter rips open the back door and runs out, Jackson grabbing the pitchfork and limping behind.

EXT. FOREST - DAWN

Maggie limps along, keeping a surprisingly fast pace. She darts between trees, over logs, around bushes.

CUT TO:

Peter and Jackson, who's limping due to his bleeding leg a fair distance behind, pursue her.

But in the early morning light it's still difficult to see, and they lose sight of her, Peter trying to spot anything with his small flashlight.

JACKSON  
Did we lose her?

PETER  
No, no, we'll find her.

They continue on before Peter stops a few steps later.

PETER (cont'd)  
Actually, wait - You're just slowing  
me down, go back to the house.

JACKSON  
Why?

PETER  
In case she doubles back, you moron!

JACKSON  
You sure?

PETER  
Look at your leg, just go back and  
hide somewhere so you can ambush her.

JACKSON  
Okay.

Peter starts jogging away.

PETER  
(as he runs)  
And call me if you see her.

JACKSON  
Okay!

Peter stops once again.

PETER  
Wait, wait - Give me the pitchfork.

He walks over to Jackson.

JACKSON  
Give you the pitchfork?

PETER  
Yes, give it to me.

JACKSON  
But it's my pitchfork.

PETER  
(yanking it from  
Jackson's hands)  
Just give me the damn pitchfork,  
Jackson, for fuck's sake.

JACKSON  
What am I supposed to use?

PETER  
I don't know, get one of your knives  
when you get back to the house.

Peter jogs off into the woods.

JACKSON  
Don't damage that! It was my  
grandfather's.

Jackson turns around and heads back to the house.

EXT. HOUSE BACKYARD - DAWN

Jackson limps through the backyard and over to the kitchen door.

INT. KITCHEN - DAWN

Jackson enters through the door and walks over to the knife block on the counter - but it's empty.

He raises an eyebrow, confused, before

BANG

He's pierced by his own knife, right square in the back.

He whips around in immense pain and sees Maggie backing away from him.

He charges at her, limping like Frankenstein, arms outstretched.

Maggie pulls another knife from her waistband and plunges it into his stomach.

Jackson winces and exhales sharply, pausing for a moment before continuing at her.

Maggie pulls a third and final knife and brings it down from above into his chest. He gets his arms and hands around her neck and starts to choke, but life is leaving him with each breath.

They topple over, Maggie backwards onto the table, with Jackson on top of her.

Finally, he goes limp. His hands release from her neck.

Maggie coughs and catches her breath, before pushing Jackson to the side, off her.

He lays belly up, dead, on the table.

Maggie brushes herself off. She feels uncomfortable having been that close to Jackson, living or not.

MAGGIE

Gross.

She grabs the pristine white towels out of the drawer, wipes her bloody hands on them, and tosses them onto Jackson's lifeless corpse.

She's still out of breath, and gets lightheaded, leaning against the fridge for support.

She takes a moment to catch herself and clear her mind.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Keys. Keys!

She walks over to Jackson on the table and searches his pockets.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Keys, keys... come on...

But there's nothing.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Damn it, Peter!

EXT. HOUSE BACKYARD - DAWN

Maggie rushes back out into the backyard. She stops for a second and goes over to pick up the shovel that she left the day before.

She picks it up, does a few practice swings, then treks out into the woods.

EXT. FOREST - DAWN

(M~) She walks through the forest slowly so she doesn't make too much noise, and also so she can hear Hector in case he's close.

She tries to keep her head low, eyes peeled, ensuring she won't be ambushed. She's turning around constantly, shovel at the ready, keeping an eye on her surroundings.

From a high up tree stump behind her, Hector appears and pounces on her, causing them both to tumble down a steep hill.

She loses hands on the shovel and it falls away.

As they both collect themselves at the bottom of the hill, Hector pounces on top of Maggie.

He's like an alien - constantly biting at her, edging closer and closer to her face with each pulsing snarl.

She gets hold of a rock and smacks him across the head with it, giving herself a brief moment to get up on her feet.

She rushes over for the shovel, but Hector leaps onto her back again and knocks her over, scratching at her back.

She screams and Hector roars.

Filled with a rage of frustration, Maggie clenches her fist and clocks Hector right in the nose, sending him back.

Finally, she gets to the shovel and manages to baseball swing it around, hitting Hector right across the head - He tumbles down a steeper hill into the dark with a roar.

She collects herself and catches her breath.

MAGGIE

What a fucking weekend.

She runs off in search of Peter, carrying the shovel with her.

As she jogs through, she spots a light in the distance - it's Peter, with a flashlight in one hand and pitchfork in the other.

Maggie ducks back behind a large tree - he hasn't seen her.

But her luck gets worse: She hears Hector's panting and snarling nearby.

She shrinks down and grips the shovel.

Peter hears sticks breaking and focuses on a tree - we are led to believe that this is the tree that Maggie is behind. Peter slowly and quietly approaches it and we inter-cut between him with the pitchfork ready to strike and Maggie gripping the shovel with fear, pressed against the tree with her eyes shut.

Until finally the reveal - Peter and Hector both jump around the tree and Peter stabs Hector with the pitchfork - we boom down camera to see Maggie hiding behind a completely different tree, though only ten or fifteen feet away. Peter gets down to Hector's level and is crying with apology.

PETER

Hector! Hector buddy, I'm sorry! I  
thought - Oh god!

Hector screeches and snarls, squirming around on the ground.

Using this moment to her advantage, Maggie approaches Peter from behind. He hears her footsteps and lifts his head just as Maggie swings the shovel down on him with a WHACK.

Peter falls over, dead.

Maggie looks down at Hector. He's barely alive, shivering on the ground. She pities him - and this pity stays her hand. She decides to let him die on his own time.

Maggie tosses the shovel onto the ground, and goes to Peter's body - she goes through a few pockets and finally pulls her keys out.

MAGGIE

Finally.

She starts to walk away and gets a fair distance, but after some time, Hector's screeching stops.

She whips back around and Hector has vanished from the spot on the ground beside Peter.

Her face goes stark white.

She sprints back towards the house.

We inter-cut between her and Hector making their way through the woods at top speed.

EXT. HOUSE - DAWN

Maggie rushes around the side of the house to the front. She unlocks her car with a flick of the keys.

INT. MAGGIE'S CAR - DAWN

Maggie gets into the drivers seat and turns on the engine - but the car chokes.

The lights flicker on and off, and at once, she sees Hector, standing in the dark but illuminated by the flickering. He charges for her and leaps onto the hood.

Right as he lands the engine roars to life.

She slams on the gas and reverses all the way out of the driveway at a high speed.

Hector rolls off the hood and smacks onto the ground with a thud, but he quickly gets back up and continues chasing the car.

Maggie's tires screech as she pulls out onto the road. She shifts to drive and floors it away.

Hector fades away in the rear view mirror, chasing her but to no avail.

EXT. ROAD - DAWN

Hector slows his run and finally stops, roaring into the early morning air, with a fury unlike anything we've heard before.

INT. MAGGIE'S CAR - DAY

After driving for a few minutes, Maggie pulls over on the side of the road and softly presses her head into the steering wheel with a honk.

She takes a deep inhale and exhales.

MAGGIE

Fwoof.

She sits for a moment.

And then laughs. She buries her head in her hands.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

My fucking phone. I forgot my god damn phone.

(M~) "Sundown" by Gordon Lightfoot begins to play (if available).

She sighs. And shrugs. A smile grows across her face.

EXT. SIDE OF ROAD - DAY

Maggie peels out and heads back to civilization.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

We push in on Maggie's phone, still on the living room floor from when Jackson tossed it.

Texts from her landlord light up the screen: "WHERE ARE YOU???"

Hector's hands enter frame and pick the phone up.

He opens it and clicks "share current location".

Closeup of Hector dawning a dastardly grin, bearing his ugly teeth.

CUT TO:

BLACK.

The end.