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Writers Draft

American Horror Story

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RYAN MURPHY TELEVISION

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TITLES UP: **San Francisco, 1978.** The words dissolve, and we hold on blackness. Hear soft eerie wind chimes. CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE -- AFTERNOON

PUSH across a leaf-strewn lawn to find a GIRL, eight, with long braids, staring at an abandoned Victorian house that has fallen into grave disrepair. Shutters missing, paint peeling...an ingenue turned dowager by the march of time.

Suddenly, a rock whizzes by the girl's head and SHATTERS an upper story window. She turns and we finally SEE her face. This is ADELAIDE, and she has Down Syndrome.

TWO BOYS, TEN, bash a gate open with a baseball bat and strut into the yard. This is Troy and Bryan...the Rutger twins.

TROY
Hey, retard.

They head into the empty derelict house, on a mission.

Adelaide suddenly speaks.

ADELAIDE
Excuse me.

They stop, turn.

ADELAIDE (CONT'D)
You're going to die in there.

They stare at her a beat, the moment is shocking. Then Troy runs to her, viciously pushes her to the ground. He regards her, spits on her, then heads back into the house.

INT. HOUSE -- AFTERNOON

CLASSICAL music plays. FLASHLIGHT BEAMS illuminate stunning Victorian fixtures as they are shattered by the bat. Leaded stained glass, intricate moldings...the destruction is horrifying and complete, punctuated by the loud gunshot firecracker sound of SNAP and POPS the boys throw everywhere.

INT. KITCHEN -- AFTERNOON

Troy bashes stunningly beautiful leaded cabinets, shattering the glass. Suddenly, with alarm from another room --

BRYAN
Troy!

INT. LIVING ROOM -- AFTERNOON

We are on Troy's face as he slowly makes his way across the empty room. All we HEAR is the sound of flies...a faint buzzing, then a cacophony. He finally stops near where his brother is standing and kneels down.

TROY

Awesome.

He is looking at a dead gutted POSSUM...someone, something, has feasted here. The possum's face is frozen and twisted in fear. ANGLE: the boys crouching reflection in the gray flat dead eye of the animal. Just then, a NOISE. Faint childish LAUGHTER. Adelaide? The boys investigate.

They walk down the hall, when suddenly a BASEMENT DOOR at the other end slowly creaks opens. The boys freeze, then --

TROY (CONT'D)

(afraid)

Go.

BRYAN

You go, shithead.

A dare. Troy moves forward. His brother follows.

INT. BASEMENT -- CONTINUOUS

A murky soup, the flashlights cut a swath.

The beams illuminate the odd stray cobweb, nothing much down here. The boys split up to investigate, Troy throwing the odd snap and pop. Until --

TROY

Check it out.

Bryan approaches and stares with wonder. The flashlights illuminate a wall of dusty SPECIMEN JARS filled with yellow viscous fluid. Within the fluid: monstrosities. Severed deformed hands, feet, a twisted jaw...a horrifying tableau in the style of Joel Peter Witkin.

Next to the jars: a neat line of surgical equipment. Clamps, disembowelers, spreaders...all caked in rusty blood.

A moment of awe from the boys. WE SEE (but they don't) something move behind them. A flash of white.

Troy picks up one of the jars, studies, it.

BRYAN

Don't.

But Troy smashes it against a wall, it shatters.

TROY

It stinks down here. It stinks like
shit.

(beat)

Last summer, when we had a raccoon
stuck in the chimney? That's what
it smells like. Let's go find it.

BRYAN

No, it smells bad. I'm going.

Bryan starts off. Troy starts investigating, throwing the
snap and pops. Bryan is half way up the stairs, when the snap
and pops ABRUPTLY STOP.

BRYAN (CONT'D)

Troy?

There is no sound. Then, a faint childish laugh.

BRYAN (CONT'D)

(freaked)

Who's down here!

Silence. He moves down the creaking steps. Until his
flashlight beam finds...

Troy...eyes wide with fear...his throat ripped out.

Terrified, Bryan feels something behind him. He hears a
noise: breathing. He slowly turns, his beam ILLUMINATES:

A blonde two year old BOY, wearing a Lindberg-era white
christening gown with seed pearls long yellowed. His mouth
and face is smeared with blood, his skin is wrinkled like an
ancient man. The INFANTATA smiles, gurgles...

Then ATTACKS.

The lightlight falls to the ground.

FADE TO BLACK.

A SINGLE WORD POPS UP: **TODAY**

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE -- DAY

THE SOUND OF RUNNING WATER. Come up on a TRAY of
INSTRUMENTS.

A stainless steel SPECULUM, a large SYRINGE with NEEDLE, COTTON SWABS, COTTON BALLS, RUBBER GLOVES. The water stops and the hands of DR. DAY come into view. He towels them off, pulls on the gloves.

DR. DAY
Are your periods regular again?

He messes with the instruments as a WOMAN speaks. It's VIVIEN HARMON.

VIVIEN
Pretty much. Every other month.

Dr. Day turns. REVEAL Vivien, gowned, on her back, her legs in STIRRUPS. She's pretty, forty, but she looks thirty five.

VIVIEN (CONT'D)
I'm not complaining. After all of that blood.

Day inserts his gloved fingers into Vivien, beginning his exam. She takes in a sharp breath.

VIVIEN (CONT'D)
Ben hates blood.

DR. DAY
How are you two doing? Sexual relations?

Day is clinical. He's not looking to get off here.

VIVIEN
Sometimes.

He inserts the speculum. She exhales. It hurts a little.

DR. DAY
You having trouble with arousal?

VIVIEN
A little. Thought maybe it was pre-menopause.

He pulls out the speculum, takes off his gloves.

DR. DAY
Could be. Any issues achieving climax?

VIVIEN
I don't know, it depends. When I'm alone it's fine.

He nods.

DR. DAY

Well, things look great from a physical standpoint. Are you anxious about having sex? About something happening?

VIVIEN

You mean like getting pregnant?

DR. DAY

It would be a normal response.

VIVIEN

Well, I would like to go back on my birth control pills.

He takes out her FILE. Writes --

DR. DAY

I want to wait a beat on those. They can cause irregularities in your hormone levels and I think you're already having some issues in that department. Your cycle, the sexual issues.

VIVIEN

I don't have sexual issues.
(then)
Maybe I'm just depressed.

Day takes a beat, then keeps writing -- that's not his field of expertise.

DR. DAY

I've recently had some success with women your age using bioidentical hormone treatments. Estrogen, progestin.

VIVIEN

Wait, so I am going through menopause?

DR. DAY

I don't think so. This is more of a pre-emptive strike. Your body is like a house, you can fix the tiles in the bathroom and the kitchen but if the foundation is decaying, you're wasting your time.

VIVIEN

Are there any side effects?

DR. DAY

The bHRT's are great for your skin, your organs. Most of the women I give these to tell me they make them feel ten years younger.

VIVIEN

I don't let my family use plastic bottles or hold their cell phones to their ears, now you want me to put something in my body and not tell me side effects? Don't they make those things with horse pee?

DR. DAY

Feel and look ten years younger.

VIVIEN

The arousal issue is mine, not Ben's. I'm just reconnecting with my body after what happened, I don't want to give it away again.

DR. DAY

You're worried about losing control, I'm offering you something to help you get it back.

VIVIEN

I'm not a house.

DR. DAY

Vivien, what are you so afraid of?

Off Vivien, unsure of the answer --

INT. BACK BAY BROWNSTONE -- DAY

Vivien comes home with GROCERIES. Goes into the KITCHEN. Starts unloading. Along with the food is a LITTLE PHARMACY bag. She pulls out the hormone pills and creams, looks at them, thinks, then HEARS A NOISE from upstairs. A piece of furniture being moved? Her eyes go wide. Then, the sound again, longer, louder. She's TERRIFIED, dials the phone. 911.

OPERATOR

911 operator, what is your emergency?

VIVIEN
 (whispering)
 There's someone in my house.

OPERATOR
*Are you sure it's not a member of
 your family?*

VIVIEN
 No. My daughter is at school and my
 husband is at work. I think someone
 is robbing us. Someone robbed the
 brownstone next door two weeks ago.
 What do I do?

OPERATOR
We're sending a patrol car.

She hears a THUNK -- like a body hitting the floor. She hangs up. Thinks. Grabs a KNIFE and starts upstairs.

INT. SECOND FLOOR -- CONTINUOUS

ANGLE: on the gleaming knife at her side. More sounds. Vivien slowly makes her way to the door, takes a deep breath and CREAKS it open. On her face, the blood rushing out of it.

GIRL'S VOICE (O.S.)
 Oh shit.

Vivien backs out into the hallway, almost goes over the railing. She's going to throw up. Before she can, her husband, BEN comes out, naked. He's 42, fit, handsome as she is pretty.

BEN
 Vivien....

He goes to hug her. She instinctively SLASHES at him with the knife. It SCRAPES his arm. Both of them look at the small, yet real wound, shocked. She drops the knife. He takes her in his arms and keeps repeating with hysteria...

BEN (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry...

She lets him hold her for a beat, then breaks away in tears and runs down the stairs. Off a naked, bleeding Ben we SMASH TO BLACK.

INT. CAR -- DAY

DRIVING OVER THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, SIX MONTHS LATER. Hard SUNLIGHT through the windows. Ben's driving.

Vivien in the passenger seat, staring out the window. Their fifteen year old GOTH daughter VIOLET in the back with six month old DOG, HALLIE.

BEN

Isn't it beautiful?

VIVIEN

The light is different from Boston. Feels like I can see more. I thought it was supposed to be all foggy.

VIOLET

I need to go to the bathroom.

BEN

It's just a little while longer.

VIOLET

I need to go.

BEN

Where would you like me to pull over, sweetie -- the Bay or the Pacific?

VIOLET

(re: the dog)

Bet if baby substitute had to shit you'd find somewhere.

VIVIEN

I don't like that word, Violet.

A beat, then Violet looks out the window. Thoughtfully --

VIOLET

Thirteen hundred people have jumped off of this thing -- at least that's what they think. They don't see them all and they stopped counting right before a thousand. I looked it up. Twenty six of them survived. You know what all of them said was their first thought after they stepped off?
(then, mischievous)
Oh shit.

Her mother's discomfort makes Violet grin.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

Kind of how I feel about this move.
(then)
I'm not going to like the school.
San Francisco is filled with
hippies and freaks and drug
addicts.

BEN

I'm glad we named you Violet
instead of our second choice.

VIOLET

Which was?

BEN

Sunshine.

They all kind of crack up. A fleeting moment of family
togetherness. Ben shares a smile with his wife, then reaches
out his hand to hold hers, but she PULLS it AWAY.

EXT. OLD VICTORIAN HOUSE -- DAY

They pull into the driveway. Everyone takes a good look --
it's looking better than it did the last time we saw it. New
paint, shutters, gutters. There's a FOR SALE sign on the
lawn. All three of them take it in as they come to a stop.

BEN

This is it.

Vivien is unsure. Violet is intrigued. MARCY, the RELATOR
greet them from the front porch with a WAVE.

INT. HOUSE -- DAY

Marcy shows them around. The FOYER is epic, beautiful,
soaring ceilings and a grand STAIRCASE. House porn.

MARCY

It's the finest Queen Anne on the
market. Venetian chandeliers,
original moldings. The stained
glass is some of the only of it's
kind that survived the great quake.
As you can see the previous owners
really loved the place like a
child. They restored everything.

VIVIEN

Gay?

MARCY
Sweetheart, it's San Francisco,
they're all gay.

Light laughter. Except from Violet, who rolls her eyes. Ben sees this and fights a laugh. They head into the KITCHEN.

INT. KITCHEN

It's beautiful. Looks original except with all of the modern bells and whistles.

MARCY
Do you cook?

BEN
Viv is a great cook. I got her cooking lessons a few years ago for her birthday and she ended up teaching the teacher a few things.

MARCY
Cooking lessons. Romantic. You're a psychiatrist?

BEN
Psychologist. You said something on the phone about there being a study upstairs that I could use as a home office? I'm planning on seeing patients here so I can spend more time with the family.

MARCY
How refreshing.

Vivien shakes her head.

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

Hallie sniffs around, PEES in a corner, then SENSES SOMETHING. Explores, then -- STARTS BARKING LIKE CRAZY.

INT. KITCHEN

Violet is staring out the window at the BACKYARD.

VIVIEN
Violet, will you go see what's going on with Hallie?

Violet storms out. Teenager.

INT. HALLWAY

Violet finds Hallie, barking madly at the BASEMENT DOOR.

VIOLET

Shut up!

She won't. Violet looks at the door. It's BOLTED SHUT. Old school bolted. Two heavy bolts and two HUGE PADLOCKS. Someone doesn't want to let anyone in -- or maybe out. Violet wiggles the doorknob, trying to pry it open.

INT. BASEMENT -- DAY

From the BOTTOM of the steps. POV of something watching the door move, the knob jiggle. We hear it's raspy breathing.

INT. HALLWAY

Violet tries the door a few more times, then yanks on the locks. No luck. She stares at the door, oddly drawn to it.

INT. LIBRARY -- DAY

Marcy shows Vivien and Ben the BEAUTIFUL GOTHIC LIBRARY.

MARCY

This is my favorite room in the house.

BEN

(to Vivien, trying)

When I saw the pictures of this room online I thought maybe you could use it as your music room.

MARCY

You're a musician?

VIVIEN

I was.

BEN

She's a cellist. She played in the Boston philharmonic.

She heads over to the WALL. Something isn't right.

MARCY

Why did you quit?

There's an answer, but we're not going to get it.

VIVIEN

This wallpaper is coming off.

She goes to the wall, grabs a tiny PEELING PIECE of seagrass wallpaper and gently pulls it off. It opens a small window to the ORIGINAL WALL, no bigger than a couple of postage stamps.

VIVIEN (CONT'D)

I think there's a mural under here.

MARCY

The last owners must have covered it up. They were modernists.

(then, with difficulty)

Speaking of the last owners, full disclosure requires me to tell you about what happened to them.

VIVIEN

Oh God, one of them didn't die in here, did they?

MARCY

Yes, actually. Both of them.

(off their shock)

Murder suicide. I sold them the house, too. Just the sweetest couple. You never know I guess.

BEN

So that's why it's half the price of every other house in the neighborhood.

MARCY

I have a very nice painted lady not too far from here but you're going to get a third of the house for twice the price if you go that way.

Vivien and Ben aren't sure. Violet comes in carrying Hallie.

VIOLET

Where did it happen?

MARCY

The basement.

Another beat. Violet grins.

VIOLET

We'll take it.

Off Ben and Vivien --

EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

As MOVERS finish bringing the last boxes in, Marcy pulls the IN ESCROW sign off of the FOR SALE sign and replaces it with one that says SOLD.

INT. HOUSE -- MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Ben comes out the bathroom in his pajamas, happy. Vivien is still unpacking, there are boxes everywhere. He comes in behind her, kisses her, she gently moves away.

BEN

Come to bed, we'll finish this in the morning.

VIVIEN

I'm worried about Violet. She's right about kids being different out here. She can't handle another year of not fitting in.

BEN

You mean you can't.

(then)

I treat kids like Violet every day. In three months she'll have lost all of the dark eye make up and combat boots and be walking around in Birkenstocks with unshaven pits smelling like patchouli.

She laughs. He takes her in his arms.

VIVIEN

It doesn't freak you out at all? What happened here?

BEN

My repulsion is tempered by the fact that this house is worth four times what we paid for it.

VIVIEN

But it's not like some old lady died in here. A murder-suicide. Gives me the creeps just thinking about it.

BEN

So don't think about it.

VIVIEN

That's your professional advice,
doctor?

BEN

No place is perfect. No place and
no person.

(then)

All I know is that for the first
time in months I feel at home
somewhere. Moving here, buying this
house was the right thing to do for
our family. It's a good thing and
frankly, we deserve some good after
all the shit we've been through.

(then, realizing)

Sorry.

She nods, not sure, but desperate to trust him. He kisses her. Another fleeting moment, this one of marital bliss, but she can't sustain it. She pulls away, leaves him to go do more unpacking.

EXT. SCHOOL COURTYARD -- DAY

Violet walks through the commons, SMOKING. She surveys the scene -- a few kids reliving their grandparents' Haight Ashbury fashion mistakes but most are unmemorable. Upper middle class high school in an upscale urban neighborhood.

She passes THREE pretty girls -- seniors dressed like they're twenty-five -- talking up some boys -- LEAH, BECCA and ABBY. Overhears their conversation --

LEAH

So I let him.

BECCA

Do coke off of your nipples?

LEAH

They were numb for like two days.

They all crack up. Violet tries to disappear into her sweater as she passes, but --

LEAH (CONT'D)

Hey! Student council passed a rule
against smoking in public spaces.

The girls step in front of her.

BECCA

Second hand smoke kills.

Violet puts the cigarette out.

VIOLET
I didn't know. I'm new.

Violet nervously flicks her butt into a planter. Leah flips.

LEAH
What the hell is the matter with
you? People *sit* here. They *eat*
here.

VIOLET
You don't know me. Why are you
doing this?

BECCA
Leah's grandma died of lung cancer.
She takes this stuff pretty
seriously.

Leah holds the butt out to Violet.

LEAH
Eat it.
(off Violet's shock)
Eat it. Or I'm going to kick the
shit out of you.

ABBY
Come on, Leah, it's enough.

LEAH
No, I want to see her eat it.

She grabs Violet's face.

BECCA
Seriously, Leah, she's like twelve.

Leah starts trying to shove the cigarette into Violet's
mouth, but Violet resists, then instinctively SPITS in Leah's
face. That stuns everyone. Abby and Becca can't help but
laugh. A beat, then Violet takes off running.

LEAH
(calling after her)
You're dead! DEAD!

INT. HOUSE -- MUSIC ROOM -- DAY

Vivien drops the NEEDLE on an old record player. Classical cello plays as she sets out her INSTRUMENTS -- a large bowl of water, scraping tool, small knife. Slowly and carefully, she starts removing the old wallpaper.

As she does, the GOYA-ESQUE MURAL begins to reveal itself. She can't quite make out the first image -- until she pulls off one more sliver or paper to see -- A WOMAN, her face bent in pain, her body twisted and tortured.

Vivien stares at the image, transfixed and disturbed when suddenly a HAND touches her shoulder. She jumps out of her skin, turns, sees ADELAIDE, the child with Down Syndrome we saw earlier, now a woman in her forties.

ADELAIDE

You're going to die in here.

CONSTANCE (O.S.)

Adelaide!

Constance, Adelaide's mother enters from the kitchen carrying a BOX. Constance is a chain smoker, and she sounds like it.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

Adelaide. I put that "Dora the Explorer" on for you so you would sit and watch it.

ADELAIDE

It was "Go Diego Go." I don't like it.

CONSTANCE

Brown cartoon characters -- you can't tell the difference.

Vivien doesn't know what to make of this. Finally --

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

Hi. Hi. I'm Constance your neighbor -- the tear down next door. This is my girl Adelaide. Go home Addy. Now!

Adelaide storms out.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

That girl is a monster. I love her and I'm a good Christian but Jesus H.

(MORE)

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)
 Christ, if they'd invented some of
 those tests a few years earlier...

VIVIEN
 How did you get in my house?

CONSTANCE
 You left your back door open,
 though I have to warn you Addy
 seems to always find a way in.
 She's got a bug up her ass for this
 place, always has. You got a dog?

VIVIEN
 Yes. Is that a problem?

CONSTANCE
 Better for me. I run a little
 kennel out of my house. Doggy day
 care kind of thing. Don't bother
 calling the cops on me -- I'm in
 with one of the city managers and
 he always looks the other way.

VIVIEN
 Look, it's very nice to meet you
 but I wasn't really prepared for
 company.

CONSTANCE
 I'm gone. Brought this for you,
 housewarming. Addy wanted to cook
 you a pie but she tends to spit in
 the cooking so I figured this was
 better -- should help you get rid
 of some of the bad ju-ju.

She hands Vivien the box.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)
 Those homosexual boys were nice
 enough and I say live and let live,
 but I can't help but think that
 that lifestyle drove them to do
 what they did.

(then)
 I can't remember your name.

VIVIEN
 I didn't tell you. I'm Vivien
 Harmon.

CONSTANCE

Anyway, enjoy, relax, let me know if you need help with your pup. Glad you're getting rid of that wallpaper. Thought those people were supposed to be stylish.

She exits. Vivien can't help but laugh a little at their oddity. She shakes her head, opens the box to see a TIGHTLY WOUND BUNCH OF SAGE. A beat, then -- through the window she sees Constance walking back to her house.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

(calling back)

It's Sage. For cleansing the spirits in the house. Too many bad memories in there.

INT. HOUSE -- SAGE MONTAGE -- NIGHT

Vivien moves through the house, the burning sage bundle in her hand. She's not sure if she buys this whole cleansing the spirits thing, but she's committing. She moves into an UPSTAIRS HALLWAY --

She hasn't spent much time in this part of the house yet. It's barely decorated and there are even a few EMPTY BOXES stacked at the dead end. Suddenly, the flame in the sage bundle is BLOWN OUT. Odd. She looks UP for the source and discovers a DRAFT coming from a TRAP DOOR IN THE CEILING. The attic.

She puts down the sage, pulls over a chair. Standing on it, she pulls the DRAWSTRING.

INT. THE ATTIC -- LOOKING DOWN ON VIVIEN

The DOOR opens and STAIRS extend into the hallway. Common in these old houses. She climbs in. DARKNESS, SILENCE. Her eyes adjust. Miraculously, she finds a LIGHT CORD, pulls it.

The single bulb turns on and she's standing face to face with a BLACK RUBBER MAN.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Ben is on the bed, reading when he hears his wife SCREAM.

INT. ATTIC

Ben rushes up the stairs, finds Vivien sitting on some STACKS of old newspapers.

BEN

What happened? Are you okay?

She points to the rubber man -- he's actually just a large rubber suit -- known as a RUBBER ASPHYXIATION SUIT hanging from a hook. The suit is black, covers the entire body and has a mask with two small eye holes and two tiny breathing straws that can be pinched to temporarily suffocate the wearer.

BEN (CONT'D)

Guess those guys were into the kinky stuff.

(then)

Should I try it on?

VIVIEN

Stop it. It's not funny.

But they laugh. A beat, then Violet peeks her head in.

VIOLET

What happened?

(seeing the suit)

Holy shit.

VIVIEN

Get it out of here.

EXT. HOUSE -- NIGHT

Ben tosses the suit in the GARBAGE.

INT. BEN'S HOME OFFICE -- DAY

TIGHT on various items as we hear a therapy session. Ben's diploma from Yale; psychiatric books he has written.

BEN'S VOICE

These fantasies started, two years ago, three years ago...?

MALE VOICE

Two years.

We see Ben, very calm and professional in his shrink chair.

BEN

Is there a structure to the thoughts...a pattern...

MALE VOICE

It's always the same, it starts the same way.

BEN

How?

MALE VOICE

I prepare for the noble war.

We REVEAL TATE LANGDON...17, handsome, charismatic as hell...he could be a cult leader or a movie star.

TATE

I get a taste for the
bloodletting...and I pack up my
weapons of mass destruction.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. VIOLET'S BEDROOM -- SIMULTANEOUS

Violet neatly unpacks razor blades, raises one, examines it.

INT. OFFICE -- SIMULTANEOUS

BEN

Guns?

TATE

Obviously.

BEN

And then?

INT. HIGHSCHOOL HALLWAY -- DAY

Tate walks through a crowded hallway, smiling sweetly, wearing a trenchcoat and holding a duffel bag.

TATE'S VOICE

I'm walking through the halls, I'm
calm, I have the secret, I know
what's coming and I know no one can
stop me, including myself.

BEN'S VOICE

Do you target people who have been
mean to you? Unkind?

TATE'S VOICE

No. I kill people I like.

In the hall, a SWEET INNOCENT 16-YEAR-OLD GIRL smiles at him. He smiles back.

BEN'S VOICE

Do you feel sympathy?

TATE'S VOICE
No. I'm helping them.

INT. CLASSROOM -- DAY

Typical algebra tedium. Until Tate enters.

TEACHER
Can I help you?

TATE
No.

He RAISES HIS GUN, shoots the teacher. She instantly goes down. Tate looks at the shocked students, who are paralyzed. He starts roaming the aisles and just shooting.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

TATE
Some of them beg for their life,
but I don't feel sad, I don't feel
anything. Its a filthy world we
live in, a filthy goddamned
helpless world, and honestly? I
feel I'm taking them away from all
the shit and piss and vomit that
runs in the streets, you know? I'm
helping to take them somewhere
clean and silent and kind.

INT. CLASSROOM -- DAY

The entire classroom has been massacred, the walls are blood smeared. The sweet girl from the hallway has been badly wounded, but she's not dead. He stops in front of her, aims the gun. She raises her shaking hand, we SEE him through a gaping bullet hole.

INNOCENT GIRL
Please...

He shoots her dead.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

TATE
There's something about the blood,
man. All that blood. I drown in it.

INT. SCHOOL -- DAY

Tate is bounding down the stairwell, to escape. He hears something, stops turns.

A TORRENT OF BLOOD, A WALL OF IT, races down the stairwell at him. He spreads his arms, to welcome it. It envelopes him, he is obliterated.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

Ben shows no emotion, writes SOCIOPATH on his tablet.

TATE

The Indians believed that blood holds all the bad spirits, they would cut themselves once a month in ceremonies, let the spirits go free. There's something smart about that. Very smart. I like that.

INT. VIOLET'S BEDROOM -- SIMULTANEOUS

Violet cuts herself with the razor blade. She stares at the crimson gash on her arm with no emotion.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

TATE

You think I'm crazy?

BEN

No. I think you're creative, and I think you have a lot of pain you're not dealing with.

TATE

My mother's worried about me.

BEN

Yes.

TATE

She's a cocksucker. I mean, literally, she's a cocksucker. She sucked the guy off next door all the time, my dad found out, he left. He left me alone with a cocksucker, can you imagine? How sick is that?

Tate for the first time shows vulnerability.

TATE (CONT'D)

I'm not crazy, dude. Don't you think it's interesting? The idea of letting the bad blood out? The worlds a filthy place. A goddamned horror show. So much pain. So much.

INT. VIOLET'S ROOM -- DAY

Violet makes another cut.

MALE VOICE
You're doing it wrong.

She whirls around, revealing --

TATE
If you're trying to kill yourself,
cut vertically. They can't stitch
that up.

VIOLET
(freaked)
How'd you get in here?

TATE
If you're trying to kill yourself
you might also try locking the
door.

He leaves. She stares.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Middle of the night. So quiet you can hear the buzz of the DIGITAL CLOCK. Ben and Vivien in bed. Suddenly, from above we see BEN'S EYES SPRING OPEN. There's no life behind them though. He gets up, SLEEPWALKING.

INT. HOUSE -- STAIRWELL -- NIGHT

Ben, NAKED, walks down the stairs. The house CREAKS, GROANS.

INT. HOUSE -- LIBRARY -- DAY

IN THE SHADOWS we can make out some more of the mural. It's a HELLSCAPE. QUICK CUTS as Ben KNEELS down, turns on the GAS in the fireplace, LIGHTS a ROLL OF NEWSPAPER, tosses it on the logs, IGNITING A HUGE FIRE.

He stands, watches the fire. The room and his naked form GLOWS. As if he was reaching for a long lost love he reaches out to the fire, closer. Then --

VIVIEN (O.S.)
Ben!

Ben pulls his hand back, turns to see his wife. He's still not with it.

VIVIEN (CONT'D)

What are you doing? You're naked.
Come back to bed.

BEN

Am I in a dream?

Vivien softens, goes to him, starts leading him back.

VIVIEN

No, you're sleepwalking.

She leads him out, turns to look at the fire as she does and catches a glimpse of the MURAL as we...

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. BACKYARD -- DAY

Vivien hangs BEDSHEETS up on clothes lines, drying them. It's peaceful, golden light, an easy breeze. A TALL WOMAN, in her sixties comes around into the backyard.

VIVIEN

Can I help you?

MOIRA

I'm Moira O'Hara, I'm the housekeeper.

VIVIEN

I didn't know the place came with one.

MOIRA

Why are you hanging your sheets? Perfectly good electric dryer inside.

VIVIEN

I don't like the chemicals in fabric softener and the organic ones don't work. This is the only way to dry them without static cling.

Moira's impressed.

MOIRA

I work Monday through Thursday. Four hundred a week. If you have a dinner party and you want me to serve or straighten up, it's extra. Thanksgiving on, Christmas off. That was the deal with the last fellows.

VIVIEN

I'm sorry, I'm just not sure if we need a maid.

MOIRA

What have you been using to clean the floorboards?

VIVIEN

Murphy's oil soap.

MOIRA

No. White Vinegar. Oil soap kills the wood. Have you ever owned a house this old?

VIVIEN

No.

MOIRA

It has a personality, feelings. Mistreat it and you will regret it. Trust me, madam, you need me.

(then)

May I come in? My cab's left and I'd like to call another.

Off Vivien --

INT. KITCHEN

Vivien brings Moira some TEA.

VIVIEN

You worked for the previous owners?

MOIRA

And the ones before that. I've been the housekeeper here for years. They come, they go, I stay. My husband has been ill for some time so I'm the breadwinner.

(then)

They were both nice boys, the ones before you. I found the bodies.

VIVIEN

What happened? I mean, I hate to gossip.

MOIRA

I don't know. They fought a lot. Money I think. Who can know when something so horrible happens? Sometimes people just go mad.

(then, hushed)

I cleaned the mess. You'd never know.

Ben enters.

VIVIEN

Ben, this is Moira O'Hara, she's the last owner's housekeeper.

(MORE)

VIVIEN (CONT'D)

Well, actually she's been working here for years.

Moira turns to greet Ben. Ben's POV -- she's a STUNNING TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR OLD. Tiny waist, succulent breasts.

BEN

Nice to meet you, Moira.

They shake. Moira smiles, so hot. Her eyes cry sex. There's the sound of a CAR HORN.

MOIRA

That's my cab. I'll use the lavatory first if you don't mind.

She exits.

VIVIEN

What do you think?

BEN

Wait, you want to hire her?

VIVIEN

She's a bit of character but she's also the first person I've met since we moved here that I actually like.

BEN

(a beat, confused)

How long has she been working here?

VIVIEN

I don't know exactly. The point is that she knows the house, she seems honest and I could use the help.

Ben is baffled. She smiles as Moira comes back in. Vivien talks to her so Moira is old again.

VIVIEN (CONT'D)

Can you start tomorrow?

MOIRA

Thursday's better but I'll make it work.

She nods to both of them -- they both see different Moira's -- and leaves.

VIVIEN
(noticing something)
What?

Ben takes her in his arms.

BEN
Nothing. You just always surprise
me.

She likes that. He kisses her. Things get passionate. She so
wants to give in, but can't. She pulls away.

BEN (CONT'D)
You know, you're going to have to
forgive me one day.

He's hurt, exits. She shakes her head, disappointed in
herself. How long does she have to hold on to this?

INT. BATHROOM -- LATER

Vivien digs through the VANITY, finds the old PRESCRIPTION
BAG. Tears it open, removes the HORMONE REPLACEMENT MEDS Dr.
Day gave her. She fills a cup with water, SWALLOWS A PILL.

EXT. BASEMENT -- DAY

TIGHT on bolt-cutters slicing through the locks.

INT. BASEMENT -- DAY

Ben and Violet enters to investigate. There's really nothing
here now but dust and an odd piece of unloved furniture.

VIOLET
Crap.

BEN
What?

VIOLET
This is where those dudes killed
themselves, right? I thought maybe
we'd find a body or something.

Ben looks at her, laughs. So does she. A beat, he puts his
arms around her shoulders. Brightly --

BEN
Okay! I've really enjoyed this
father daughter bonding time.

He leaves. Violet takes a beat, then follows.

INT. LIBRARY -- LATE AFTERNOON

Vivien carefully works the WALLPAPER off the wall. The mural is becoming more clear. A WOMAN is dragged into HELL by a GRINNING DEMON. A BEAUTIFUL MAIDEN is splayed out on a bed with a MONSTER sitting on her chest. She tries not to take the images in, she has a job to do.

THE RUBBER MAN appears in the doorway behind her. SOMEONE has put on the suit. He slowly moves towards her.

POV -- from within the mask. His BREATHING. He's almost upon her. She's oblivious -- Jesus fucking Christ, turn around!

Finally, she does --

VIVIEN

Violet! Can you take Hallie out?

He's gone. Nothing. She senses something odd, but then brushes it off, goes back to her work.

INT. BEN'S HOME OFFICE -- DAY

Tate is in session, Violet spies through a partially cracked door.

BEN'S VOICE

Are you taking the medications?

TATE

Yes.

He is aware of Violet, turns and looks at her. She takes in a little gasp, he's so handsome.

BEN'S VOICE

Thoughts of suicide?

TATE

Not lately. I met somebody.

Off Tate and Violet, eye-locked --

INT. VIOLET'S ROOM -- LATER

Post session. Music by The Smiths plays. Tate and Violet sit on the floor, their sleeves rolled up. He's showing her his cutting scars.

TATE

This one I did when my dad first left. I was ten I think.

(points to another)

(MORE)

TATE (CONT'D)

This one a year later. New school.
Got beat up.

Violet shows him her most recent cutting.

VIOLET

Last week, first day at my new
school which sucks.

TATE

Westfield?

VIOLET

Yep.

TATE

The worst. I got thrown out of
there.

VIOLET

I hate it here. I hate everyone.
All their bougie designer bullshit,
the east coast was much cooler. At
least we had weather.

TATE

I love it when the leaves change.

VIOLET

Me too.

They stare at each other, wildly attracted.

TATE

Why'd you move here?

VIOLET

My dad had an affair. My mom
literally caught him in the act.

INT. BOSTON HOUSE -- DAY -- FLASHBACK

Vivien climbs the stairs. She pushes the door open with the
knife, we see what was withheld from us. HER POV: Ben fucking
a blonde GIRL in her earlier 20s. Ben looks at her, we see
the pain in his face. The regret and self-loathing.

INT. VIOLET'S ROOM -- DAY

TATE

That's horrible. If you love
someone you should never cheat on
them, or leave them. Never.

VIOLET

Right? I know. And the worst part is that six months earlier my mom had, like, this brutal miscarriage. The baby was seven months old, we had to have this macabre funeral.

TATE

I'm sorry.

He takes her hand. She's thrown at being touched.

VIOLET

Why are you seeing my dad?

TATE

Don't ask questions you already know the answer to. You're smarter than that.

She nods, it's true. She looks down at her hand in his, she feels self-conscious. The song ends on her iPod player.

VIOLET

You like Craven? It's a new band.

TATE

I've never heard of them.

She gets up to play them.

VIOLET

They're really cool, they're from Oregon, the lead singer is dyslexic and a vegan...

She turns. Tate has left the room.

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Vivien comes in, is shocked by Moira's OLD LADY ASS. She's on her hands and knees, SCRUBBING THE FLOOR.

VIVIEN

Um...Moira, you don't need to do that.

MOIRA

These old floors are finicky. You have to treat them right.

The SPIDER VEINS are showing through Moira's panty hoes. Vivien tries not to look.

VIVIEN

Ok, well, Ben's in the shower.
While I'm gone will you finish
unpacking the guest room and make
up the bed?

MOIRA

Expecting company?

VIVIEN

No, just want to finish settling
in.

She exits. Moira stares after her, smiles tightly.

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY

Ben, wearing a robe and towel drying his hair --

BEN

Vivien? I can't find my razor
blades.

No answer. Where'd she go? He sees the door to the guest
bedroom OPEN -- someone is in there. He approaches, CREAKS
open the door.

IN THE BEDROOM --

Young, beautiful Moira is on the bed, MASTURBATING. It looks
like she's climaxed a few times already and is on her way to
another.

Ben watches. Breathless. She opens her eyes, sees Ben and
GETS EVEN MORE TURNED ON. Beckons him. He almost goes to her.
Desperate not just for sex but for some kind of affection.
Then, he steps back, closes the door on the temptation.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Ben comes in, locks the door, opens his robe and starts
masturbating himself. He's OUT OF CONTROL. He finishes
quickly, catches his breath. After a beat, a tear falls down
his face.

Ben sits on the bed. Things are starting to fall apart
again. Before he can ruminate, he looks out the window. There,
amongst the FLOWING, DRYING SHEETS is an OLD MAN, his face
covered in HIDEOUS BURN SCARS. He's looking RIGHT AT Ben.

Ben jumps up, heads out --

EXT. HOUSE -- BACKYARD -- DAY

Ben runs out, searches for the man through the sheets, but he's gone. It's like he was never there.

INT. HOUSE -- KITCHEN -- DAY (LATER)

The kitchen, gleams, spotless. Vivien enters with a bag of groceries, takes a second to appreciate her ordered home.

She sets the bag on a counter, takes out a jug of orange juice. There is the sudden firecracker sound of SNAP and POPS. Vivien jumps out her skin, turns and SCREAMS.

ZOOM WIDE: every cabinet door and drawer HAS BEEN OPENED.

Reveal Adelaide, giggling maniacally at the screen door. As she covers her mouth, amused by the horror we...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Adelaide sits quietly with her mother, looking intensely at Hallie, who is eating her dinner in a corner. Vivien and Ben sit across from them. Vivien leans in, intense.

VIVIEN

I want you to stay out of my house,
do you understand?

CONSTANCE

Can I smoke in here?

VIVIEN

No.

(then)

Adelaide, answer me please.

Adelaide suddenly looks up at them, like an innocent child.

ADELAIDE

Can I pet your dog?

VIVIEN

No. I want you to stop coming into
my house and opening things and
telling me I'm going to die.

BEN

She said that?

CONSTANCE

She says that to everybody. Addie,
say you're sorry.

ADELAIDE

No. I didn't do anything wrong.
They did it.

VIVIEN

Who?

ADELAIDE

The Mischief twins.

Constance takes a beat, this lands. She quickly covers by twirling her finger around her ear, the universal symbol for crazy.

ADELAIDE (CONT'D)

Can I pet your dog?

Vivien snaps. She takes Adelaide's face in her hands and focuses her.

VIVIEN
Adelaide, listen to me. I want you
to stop coming in my house without
permission, am I clear?

BEN
(she's gone too far)
Vivien.

VIVIEN
Am I clear?

ADELAIDE
(quiet)
Yes.

VIVIEN
Thank you.

She releases her. Adelaide goes to the door to leave, but then suddenly races over to pet the dog. Hallie, eating and territorial, bites her.

BEN
Hallie!

VIVIEN
(frantic)
Are you okay?

Adelaide stands there for a beat, her face darkens.

ADELAIDE
She shouldn't have done that.

She exits. Constance quietly gets up, heads for the door.

CONSTANCE
Sorry about all this.
(then, to Vivien, matter
of factly)
Touch my kid again, I'll break your
goddamned arm.

She leaves.

INT. HOUSE -- OFFICE -- DAY

Ben, in his chair. Into his TAPE RECORDER, about Tate --

BEN

Patient shows numerous signs of sociopathic behavior -- grandiose sense of self, lack of remorse. High intelligence makes it difficult to determine if symptoms are actual or created as a front for deeper psychosis...

Young, sexy Moira comes in with her BUCKET.

MOIRA

May I clean in here?

Ben shifts, uncomfortable --

BEN

It's not a good time, Moira.

MOIRA

It's Thursday and I'm off in twenty minutes. If I don't do it now, it's not getting done until Monday.

She enters, starts cleaning. A beat, then Ben grabs his things, starts out.

MOIRA (CONT'D)

(wanna fuck?)

Am I distracting you?

BEN

These dictations are confidential.

She moves to him, predatory.

MOIRA

Why don't you touch me a little?

BEN

Get out.

MOIRA

What are you afraid of? I won't tell. I didn't tell when you saw me playing with myself the other day. Did you touch yourself after you saw me?

(reading his face)

You did. Do it again, show me.

She's right up against him. He's tempted. It's been so long. He looks up -- sees Violet at the door. Fuck.

From Violet's POV -- OLD MOIRA is coming on to her dad. She flees. Ben pushes past a grinning Moira.

INT. HOUSE -- HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Ben grabs Violet, spins her around.

VIOLET

You are so sick! Will you just stick your dick in anything?

BEN

Hey! Do not talk to me like that! Nothing happened in there. She was coming on to me -- I was rejecting her.

VIOLET

So fire her. Get her out of the house. She creeps me out anyway.

BEN

I can't do that.
(off her confusion)
I'll have to tell your mother why I'm letting her go. After all that's happened she's not going to believe I was totally innocent.

VIOLET

(confused)
With her? Yes she will.

BEN

Your mom and I are walking a tightrope right now -- but we're making progress. I don't want to do anything to screw it up.

He's so emotional. Violet gets it. Still --

VIOLET

I don't want that bitch cleaning my room anymore.

EXT. SCHOOL -- COURTYARD -- DAY

Violet, smoking, minds her business when she's SHOVED from behind. She stumbles, drops her cigarette. Turns to see Leah and her bitch friends.

LEAH

I told you not to smoke out here.

Violet stands tall, no fear.

VIOLET

What is your problem, bitch?

LEAH

She just call me a bitch?

ABBY

Sounded like bitch.

VIOLET

Seriously. Mommy drink too much?
Daddy love your brother more? Your
uncle play with your titties when
you were a kid? I'm not scared of
you.

LEAH

You should be.

Staredown. Then Violet sees it: a twitch in Leah's face -- Violet might not be scared, but Leah is. Violet CHARGES her, grabs Leah around the waist linebacker style and DRIVES her into the concrete. OTHER STUDENTS notice, form a circle.

STUDENTS

Fight, fight, fight!

Violet gets two punches in before Abby and Becca attack. Three on one -- not very good odds for Violet. She gets the shit beaten out of her, but she still puts up a pretty good fight. Leah gets her down, punches through Violet's raised hands. Violet reaches out, grabs her STILL LIT CIGARETTE from the ground and pushes it into Leah's arm. Leah SCREAMS, jumps off. Violet scurries to her feet.

LEAH

She freaking burned me!

Kids disperse, there are teachers coming. Violet sees them. Takes off.

INT. HOUSE -- LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Vivien works on her wall. She's making progress, more images are being revealed -- all of them depicting some form of PAIN, some of them with a strangely SEXUAL component. PULL BACK to reveal Ben, standing behind her, looking.

BEN

My professional opinion is that
whoever painted that wall had some
deep psychological issues.

She turns, surprised to see him.

VIVIEN
I thought you had a patient.

BEN
They bailed. You want some help?

She motions to her tools. He grabs one. Starts working. They steal looks at each other.

BEN (CONT'D)
This thing doesn't freak you out?

VIVIEN
It's weird -- I know it should but for some reason I find it kind of comforting.

BEN
One of my psych professors told me that people tell stories to cope with their fears. All art and myths are just creations to give us some sense of control over the things we're scared of. Afraid of dying? Create reincarnation. Afraid of evil? Create a benevolent God who sends evil doers to Hell. I've treated soldiers with PTSD by having them draw pictures of what happened over there.

VIVIEN
I think I just like that I don't have to think while I do it.

He stares at her, smiles. She doesn't understand.

BEN
I always thought you were the prettiest like this -- no make up, hair in a messy braid.

VIVIEN
I'm old.

He puts down his scraper, moves in close --

BEN
Violet won't be home for an hour.

VIVIEN
No, Ben. Okay? No.

She pulls away. A beat, then he SWEEPS all of her tools and water off the table. He's in a RAGE.

BEN

How long, Vivien? How long are you going to punish me?

VIVIEN

I'm not punishing you, you narcissistic asshole -- I'm having trouble forgiving you for sleeping with one of your goddamn patients! You want me to have sex with you? When I can't even look at your face without seeing the look on it when you were pile driving her in our bed?

BEN

I screwed up! I'm sorry! I was hurting too!

VIVIEN

I'm sorry, did the life you were growing die inside of your belly and did you have to carry that corpse inside of you? Did you have to go into labor? Give birth to your dead baby?

BEN

My baby died, too! He was my son, too!

VIVIEN

And you buried your sorrow in some twenty-year-old's pussy.

BEN

I can show you statistics on how many men cheat after a miscarriage. I was there for you. I was patient and understanding and caring and I put your feelings first.

VIVIEN

My hero.

BEN

(so frustrated)
I don't know how to say this without coming off like an asshole.

VIVIEN

Never stopped you before.

(then)

You're angry at me -- fine, yell at me. Six months in therapy of you crying and apologizing was all bullshit. Give me the real story now.

A beat, and then it comes out --

BEN

You got a dog! I needed you and you got a dog! It was me you should have been curling up with at night! I needed you. I was suffering and you weren't there.

VIVIEN

Now it all makes sense. She was revenge.

BEN

We haven't had sex in almost a year.

VIVIEN

You're keeping track?

BEN

October 20th. And we had great sex, Viv. It was loving and sexy and personal and even a little...weird.

She laughs lightly through her tears.

BEN (CONT'D)

I love you. I moved across the country for you because in all my life the only thing I've been truly scared of is losing you. Losing this family.

(then)

Something horrible happened to us. More horrible than anything on this wall and then we handled it even more horribly. But this place is our second chance. It's not supposed to happen overnight but it's like this wallpaper, a little bit at a time. I just need to know that you want it, too.

She looks up at him, her eyes wet. She can't move. Wants to run to him but she's paralyzed by the fear of being vulnerable to him again.

He makes his move, kisses her. She's overwhelmed. His touch, finally letting herself feel it after so long.

Both of them crying as they fall to the floor. Kissing. Clothes coming off. Buckles and zippers fumbled with.

There, on the floor, they make love again. As they both reach climax, we CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY -- LATER

On the floor, post coitus. Him behind her. She's looking up at the wall.

VIVIEN

Thanks.

(off his look, smiling)

Not for the sex, idiot.

BEN

(kissing her neck)

For what, then?

VIVIEN

Giving up your practice, moving us out here, finding this house.

BEN

I want you to feel chosen.

She pulls him close.

VIVIEN

I always wanted a house like this growing up. You've been to my parents house out on the Island. Post war prefab hell. The whole place rattled when you walked down the hall. I used to dream about old places like this. A place with a soul.

BEN

What do you want to do about this wall?

VIVIEN

I know it's disturbing...like, deeply disturbing.

(MORE)

VIVIEN (CONT'D)
But I don't know...something about
it inspires me.

BEN
To pillage a small hamlet?

VIVIEN
To make art again...to play again.

That gets his attention. Forget the sex, her playing music
again would be a true breakthrough.

BEN
Your cello is up in the attic. You
want me to get it down for you?

VIVIEN
Relax, cowboy. If I want it, I'll
get it down myself.

They share a smile, kiss.

BEN
I really think we're going to be
happy here.

VIVIEN
Me too.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT (LATER)

Vivien straightens up, hopeful for the first time in a long
time. Violet tries to sneak by unseen, fails.

VIVIEN
What happened to your face?

VIOLET
I fell down.

Vivien stops her, takes a good look. She's a mess.

VIVIEN
(kind)
Sit down.

VIOLET
I'm fine.

VIVIEN
If you don't clean those up
properly they'll get infected.

Fine. Vivien grabs a FIRST AID KIT, runs hot water on some hand towels, sits. Tends to Violet.

VIVIEN (CONT'D)
Was it a girl or a boy?

VIOLET
Girls. Three of them.

VIVIEN
Hope they look worse.
You know their names?

VIOLET
I'm not narcing.

Vivien just keeps at the cuts and scrapes. A quiet beat. Just a mother taking care of her daughter's boo-boos.

VIVIEN
You want dad and I to look into switching schools? There are some good private schools in the area.

VIOLET
I'm not running away -- I'm not scared of them.

VIVIEN
You're not scared of anything. When you were in kindergarten you had me come pick you up from a sleepover party because the other girls insisted on keeping a night light on.

Violet almost smiles.

VIVIEN (CONT'D)
You got the short end of the stick with this one, kiddo. The move. Dad and I have been pretty hard to live with for a while now.

VIOLET
I just don't get why you guys won't get divorced if you're so miserable.

VIVIEN
We still love each other.

VIOLET

Really? Could have fooled me. I thought you hated each other -- well, at least you hated him. I don't blame you. He was a shithead.
(realizing)
Sorry.

VIVIEN

It's all right -- he was a shithead.

Shared smiles. Vivien finishes up. Violet starts out, turns.

VIOLET

What are you scared of?
You said I'm not scared of anything. But what scares you?

VIVIEN

Everything.
(then)
That's why we're not getting a divorce. You're dad's the only one who keeps me from feeling afraid all the time.

Violet gets it, exits. Off Vivien --

INT. VIOLET'S ROOM -- DAY (LATER)

Violet is pacing, in a teenage rage. Tate quietly watches as she spews.

VIOLET

I hate her. I want to kill her.

TATE

Then do it. One less highschool bitch in the world making the lives of the less fortunate more tolerable is, in my opinion, a public service.

Violet pauses, then laughs. He breaks her mood. She lights up a joint, inhales, hands it to him.

TATE (CONT'D)

No thanks. I like to stay pure.

VIOLET

Why?

TATE

I want to feel what I'm feeling.

A moment of connection, then --

TATE (CONT'D)

Look, you want her to leave you alone? Stop making your life a living hell? Short of killing her, there's only one solution: scare her. Make her afraid of you, that's the only thing bullies react to.

VIOLET

How?

TATE

It's simple. You simply walk up to her and say --

EXT. HIGHSCHOOL -- DAY

Leah is whirled around by a calm Violet.

VIOLET

Here's the deal. I need you to stop harassing me. I've got what you want. Drugs. Come to my house tomorrow, get your free sample. I'm a dealer, and a good one. I've got the best shit in town.

Violet smiles darkly, leaves. Leah is intrigued.

INT. VIOLET'S ROOM -- DAY

VIOLET

She's a cokehead. I don't have coke.

TATE

You won't need it. That's just an excuse to get her here. She'll leave empty handed and terrified and I promise you, you'll never be bothered by her again.

VIOLET

How am I gonna terrify her?

TATE

That's where I come in.

He smiles sexily. She laughs. It's a plan.

INT. HOUSE -- KITCHEN -- NIGHT

QUIET. The clock on the wall TICKS from twelve-ten to twelve-eleven AM. MOVE THROUGH THE HOUSE --

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Dark.

INT. LIBRARY -- NIGHT

Lit by a single LAMP. The silence broken by Vivien's excessive SCRAPING. She peels off the LAST SCRAP of wallpaper. Stands back to take in the WALL.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Ben has fallen asleep reading. His eyes OPEN. The same unconscious zombie-like awake he was the night of the fireplace.

INT. LIBRARY

SLOW PULL BACK to finally reveal...The WALL -- if the Anti-Christ had a Sistine Chapel, this is what would adorn the ceiling. It's a painted prayer to PAIN. Vivien is oddly undisturbed by the images of torture, murder, RAPE.

As she loses herself in the mural we see Ben SLEEPWALK behind her, unseen, into the KITCHEN.

INT. KITCHEN

Ben, at the stove. TURNS ON THE BURNERS -- all of them.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A TOILET FLUSHES and Vivien, in her pajamas, comes out of the bathroom, rubs lotion on her arms. Ready for bed.

She looks up, jumps when she sees THE RUBBER MAN standing silently in the doorway. A beat, then a smile --

VIVIEN

Hot. I thought I told you to throw that thing away.

The Rubber Man is silent.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Ben leans down. Eye level with the BLUE FLAMES. They HISS. He reaches his hand out.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The Rubber Man just stands there. Vivien laughs.

VIVIEN

I have to admit, I'm giving you
points for creativity.

(then)

You were pretty hot this afternoon.
Wanna go for a two-peat?

She gets into bed. Pulls off her pajamas. Rubber Man moves
towards her.

VIVIEN (CONT'D)

You going to take the suit off?

(off his head shake "no")

Okay, whatever, I can be kinky.

The Rubber Man approaches, RIGHT INTO CAMERA.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Ben lowers his hand, into the flames. It BLISTERS, CRACKS.
No response. Like it's happening to someone else.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The Rubber Man, on top of Vivien. FUCKING HER. It feels so
good, but it HURTS -- not just physically. She can feel the
darkness of the Wall inside of her. Her head is back, a tear
rolls down her cheek. He FINISHES and stops moving.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Ben's hand is being burned by the flames. His flesh bubbles.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The Rubber Man is gone. Vivien pulls up her pajama pants.
She's emotional, vulnerable. Gets under the covers, turns out
the light as Ben enters, still SLEEPWALKING. He gets into
bed. She rolls over. On her face.

VIVIEN

Good night. I love you.

Ben stares off into space.

BEN

Love you, too.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. HOUSE -- AFTERNOON (LATER)

A hand pushes open the gate. REVEAL Leah, who stops and stares at the house.

INT. LIBRARY -- DAY

Vivien takes her cello out of its case, looks at it. She hesitates, sits with it, slowly begins to play a John Cage solo. It's passionate, full of all her unexpressed feelings. An exorcism. INTERCUT the dramatic bowing of her cello with --

INT. HOUSE -- BASEMENT

From the bottom of the stairs, looking UP at the door. The sounds of muffled talking. The locks being UNLOCKED. The door opens. Violet and Leah look down from above.

LEAH

What's down there?

VIOLET

My stash. My parents toss my room every week.

Leah's not sure. Violet, playing it cool, starts down.

LEAH

If you're screwing with me...

Violet disappears down the stairs. Leah does NOT want to go down there. Violet reaches the bottom -- turns --

VIOLET

It's just a basement.

Fuck it. Leah comes down. Leah's POV, following Violet.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

I found the best hiding place. This is great shit, too. A lot of the coke coming into the US from Central America is smuggled in on lobster boats in Gloucester. I used to show my boobs to one of the lobsterman in return for a key or two before they cut it.

They come around a corner, find TATE, sitting on a RUSTED MEAT FREEZER.

LEAH
Who the hell are you?

TATE
So this is the coke whore.

SLOW MOTION -- Leah looks eyes with Violet. She can see it in Violet's face -- things are about to get scary for her. She flees. Too slow. Tate grabs her.

TATE (CONT'D)
(to Violet)
Get the light!

Violet TURNS OFF the light.

INT. LIBRARY

Vivien's solo moves toward a crescendo. The bow almost burns.

INT. BASEMENT

Now it's just sounds. Leah fighting. Tate laughing.

VIOLET
It's enough, Tate.

Violet's BUMPED to the ground. We can hear the wind being knocked out of her. Leah's screams become more desperate.

LEAH
Oh, God! Get it off of me! Please
God get it off of me!

VIOLET
What's happening? Tate it's enough!

Violet fumbles for her cell phone as screams continue. Turns on her NIGHT VISION APP. SEARCHES for Leah with the phone. Finds her. There's something on attacking her. The thing turns. It's the INFANTATA. It HISSES at Violet.

Violet SCREAMS, shocked, the phone falls to the floor, we see her kick her way to the wall. Turns on the light. Nothing is here now. It's all happened in milli-seconds.

Leah scampers to her feet. Her face is slashed. CLAW MARKS.

She runs up the stairs, out of the house.

TATE
I don't think she'll be bothering
you anymore.

He goes to Violet. She backs away.

VIOLET

What was that? Something was on her. What did you put on her?

TATE

What are you talking about? She kneed me in the balls and got away. She must have run into a wall or something.

VIOLET

I saw something. With my phone. It was like a monster or something.

TATE

You're talking crazy. Violet, this is cool. We just showed that bitch.

VIOLET

Get out. I don't want to see you again.

He tries to hug her. She backs away, moves up the stairs, never taking her eyes off of him. She's going to CRY.

TATE

(deadly)

I thought you weren't afraid of anything.

She doesn't like this guy anymore. She TRIPS backing up the stairs, gets her footing and runs out. Off Tate, a devilish grin on his face....

INT. LIBRARY

Vivien finishes. She's flushed and smiling, this was a personal triumph for her. She hears the front screen door slam -- Leah exiting. Off Vivien, enjoying a moment of rare happiness --

INT. SAN FRANCISCO DOCTOR'S OFFICE -- DAY

TIGHT on blood filling a syringe. As the draw continues --

FEMALE VOICE

Agitation, difficulty
sleeping...anything else?

REVEAL Vivien, having her blood drawn, talking to a new physician, DR. EMILY FLEMING.

VIVIEN
A little trouble sleeping, yes.

DR. FLEMING
Any hallucinations?

VIVIEN
I'm sorry?

DR. FLEMING
The hormone cocktail you are on can
sometimes cause hallucinations,
euphoria...

VIVIEN
No. No hallucinations.

DR. FLEMING
How long have you been taking it?

VIVIEN
A couple of weeks?

DR. FLEMING
Any sexual activity?

VIVIEN
Yes. Finally. It's helped with
that.

Another laugh. The doctor finishes the blood draw.

DR. FLEMING
Okay. Well we'll do a blood panel,
see what's going on.

The doctor calms Vivien, who nods. Everything's going to be
okay.

EXT. SCHOOL -- COMMONS AREA -- DAY

Violet enters, apprehensive. Abby and Becca -- Leah's buddies
-- come up and surround her.

ABBY
What did you do to Leah?

Violet is ready to rumble.

VIOLET
I didn't do anything.

BECCA
Bullshit. Something happened to her
at your house.

Violet tenses her fist. It's about to go down.

VIOLET
So?

BECCA
So it was awesome! She totally
dropped out of school, you
terrorized her! Great job.

The girls are laughing.

VIOLET
I thought you were her friends.

ABBY
We hung out with her because her
parents were always away so we
could party at her house.

BECCA
Killer pool.

ABBY
She was a total bitch.

BECCA
Hard core.

ABBY
Anyway. We're hitting up The Bagel
after school. It's a pretty cool
deli down in the Mission if you
want to come. A lot of the kids
from here go there.

BECCA
Serious dude-age.

VIOLET
Sounds all right. Should I meet
you?

ABBY
No, I got my dad's car. We're be
out front at three.

Violet nods. The girls heads off. As they go --

BECCA

You think I could pull off that
Taylor Momsen black eye shadow
thing?

Violet takes it all in, smiles. Holy crap -- she has friends.

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Ben stretches. Ready for a RUN. Senses something. He covertly turns. Spies the BURNT MAN in a car, lurking. A beat, then Ben starts his run. The car pulls out, following him.

EXT. PARK -- DAY

Ben runs into GOLDEN GATE PARK. The Burnt Man follows. Parks. Continues on foot. He's slow, but he cuts through the TREES to keep up.

Ben SPEEDS UP. Runs out of frame. We're with the Burnt Man now. Out of breath. Searching for Ben. He's lost him, then -- Ben grabs him. Spins him around violently.

BEN

Who are you? Why are you following
me?!

The Burnt Man cowers. We can see how old he is now, vulnerable, afraid.

BURNT MAN

Please. Your family is in danger.

Ben calms. Backs off. After a beat we CUT TO:

EXT. PARK -- DAY (LATER)

A bench underneath the Bridge. Ben sits beside the Burnt Man. We get a good look at him now -- his face is mangled, so are his hands. Burns that severe can't heal. The Burnt Man notices Ben's hand.

BURNT MAN

What happened to your hand?

BEN

What happened to your face?

BURNT MAN

It's not just my face. Seventy
percent of my body. You don't
survive something like that -- and
this was the sixties.

(MORE)

BURNT MAN (CONT'D)

(then)

I'm Larry Harvey -- and you have to get out of that house.

BEN

I could have you arrested, you know? Peeking in peoples' windows is a crime -- even in San Francisco.

LARRY

They're not going to put me back in jail. I have brain cancer -- terminal and inoperable.

BEN

I'm sorry.

LARRY

Don't be. That's the only reason they let me out.

(a beat)

Homicide. Triple homicide. San Quentin for forty-two-years without a cold then two months ago they diagnose me with these tumors in my head. Some people would call that fate.

BEN

God gave you cancer so you could get out of prison and tell me to move?

LARRY

Maybe. I don't know. I've seen stranger things.

BEN

Sounds more like a man who is searching for a chance at redemption for the awful things he's done.

Larry chuckles. There's no redemption for him. He pauses, then looks at Ben directly.

LARRY

I made it six months in the house you live in now before I started hearing the voices. My wife thought I was working too hard. My daughter Angie -- she was six. The older one Margaret was ten.

(MORE)

LARRY (CONT'D)

Looked like her mother. Funny how it skips a generation like that.

BEN

Look, I get that you're lonely and you're struggling. Getting out of prison after all of those years. I'm sure...

LARRY

I killed them all.

Off Ben, shocked we FLASH TO:

INT. THE HOUSE -- NIGHT -- FLASHBACK

A CAN OF GASOLINE. Larry's carrying it up the stairs. In a trance.

LARRY

Lorraine was ill that night. My wife. She took a pill and went to bed early. I put the girls down. Then the voices started.

We see him enter his children's room --

INT. KIDS' ROOM -- NIGHT

He pours the GASOLINE.

LARRY

They told me what to do. I was like an obedient child.

We're on his face. His eyes are BLACK. DEAD. He lights a match. TOSSES it. Stay on his face as the FLAMES illuminate the room.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Larry gives his wife the same treatment. He watches her BURN. Then, suddenly, she SPRINGS UP. Engulfed in flames. SCREAMING. She grabs him. He snaps out of it. Realizes what he's done. It's too late. He throws her off but now he's ON FIRE.

INT. HOUSE -- STAIRWAY -- NIGHT

SLOW MOTION as Larry, a ball of fire, runs down the stairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

And through the living room, past the MURAL.

FLASH BACK TO --

EXT. BENCH -- DAY

Ben is shocked. Larry is crying. He takes a beat.

LARRY

I don't know how I put the myself
out. I remember the night, but it's
like a movie. Have you been
sleepwalking?

The question hits Ben hard.

LARRY (CONT'D)

I've seen your family. Pretty wife.
You seem like good people. If you
don't get out of that house you're
all going to die in there.

BEN

There are some pretty serious side
effects to brain tumors. People
hallucinate, act strangely, invent
whole worlds in their heads.

LARRY

Look up my case. Read the
transcripts.

Ben gets up.

BEN

I'm a doctor. They might not put
you back in jail but I could
certainly get you committed to a
state mental institution. Trust
me, those places make prison look
like Club Med. Leave my family
alone.

Larry jumps up, desperate.

LARRY

Please. Please get out of there.
That place is evil.

BEN

Get off of me! I'm not kidding,
leave us alone.

Ben starts off. A beat before Larry calls after him --

LARRY

You never answered me -- what happened to your hand?

Ben looks down at his hand. Fear plays across Ben's face before he jogs off -- speeding up as he goes.

INT. BEN'S HOME OFFICE -- DAY

A LOCK is picked. Reveal Violet, on a mission. She feverishly goes through a drawer, looking for a patient file.

She finds Tate's, pulls it, exits.

INT. VIOLET'S ROOM -- DAY

Violet pours over the information. She is riveted by words her father has used to describe his patient. TIGHT ON THEM:

SOCIOPATH...MURDER FANTASIES...VIOLENT.

Violet pauses. She goes to her computer, types Tate's name in Google search. A beat. Her eyes goes wide.

REVEAL a flurry of headlines.

"Student, 17, Kills Fifteen in San Francisco Bloodbath."

"Shooter described as 'Charming' and 'A Loner.'"

There are several photos of grieving parents, and a school ID picture of Tate. Finally, Violet gasps.

Another headline:

"Student Takes Own Life After High School Massacre."

REVEAL the year of the shootings: 1994.

Tate died seventeen years ago.

Off Violet --

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Ben sits at the table, stunned, shaken. Vivien enters, comes up behind him, kisses him. It comforts him. He hides his burnt hand under the table.

VIVIEN

What do you want for dinner?

BEN

Whatever Violet wants.

VIVIEN

She's going out with some friends.

They share a look -- really? Ben smiles.

BEN

What do you want?

VIVIEN

I'm kind of in the mood for Indian.

BEN

You only like Indian food when
you're pregnant.

She smiles, tears forming in her eyes. He's stunned.

BEN (CONT'D)

Really?

She nods, emotional. She's pregnant.

Her face opens up in a huge grin, the first time we've seen her truly happy. He bolts up, hugs her, kisses her. Finally, after all this effort, they're back.

MOVE off them. Out of the kitchen. Into the LIBRARY. We look at the wall for a beat before The RUBBER MAN appears, a jolt. Off his face, looking right through us, we SMASH TO BLACK.

Over credits, Prodigy's "Firestarter."

END PILOT