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Dead Zone Production Corp.

THE DEAD ZONE

"MISBEGOTTEN"

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THE DEAD ZONE

"MISBEGOTTEN"

CAST

JOHNNY SMITH	PENNY BARTON, mid 20's	
SARAH BANNERMAN	ANITA, early 30's	
WALT BANNERMAN	MADDY POWERS, 20	*
BRUCE LEWIS	MIKE KENNEDY	
REV. GENE PURDY	DEPUTY ROSCOE	
JOHNNY BANNERMAN	CHERYL CONNOR, 39	*
	DANIEL CONNOR, 47	*
<u>NON-SPEAKING</u>	TINA CONNOR, 12	*
2 HOME SECURITY TECHNICIANS	NICHOLAS CONNOR, 12	*
SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES (incl. "Rudy" & "Alice")	HOTEL MANGER (MR. SPICUZZA)	
FAITH HERITAGE STAFFERS		
NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE POLICE OFFICERS		
<u>ANIMALS</u>		*
PENNY'S CATS		*

THE DEAD ZONE

"MISBEGOTTEN"

SETS

INTERIORS

SMITH HOUSE
 KITCHEN
 LIVING ROOM

BANNERMAN HOUSE
 FOYER

FAITH HERITAGE ALLIANCE
 PURDY'S OFFICE
 MAILROOM/SORTING ROOM/
 MAIL STORAGE ROOM
 HALLWAY

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

BRUCE'S APARTMENT

MOTEL
 RECEPTION
 ANITA/MADDY'S ROOM

FARMHOUSE
 UTILITY SHED
 HALLWAY
 KITCHEN
 LIVING ROOM
 MASTER BEDROOM
 PLAYROOM
 BASEMENT
 DEN
 BATHROOM

*

VEHICLES

JOHNNY'S JEEP

OLD CHEVY

2 SHERIFF'S DEPT. CRUISERS

EXTERIORS

FARMHOUSE
 UTILITY SHED

COUNTRY ROAD

BANNERMAN HOUSE

FAITH HERITAGE ALLIANCE

UPSCALE RESTAURANT *

MOVIE THEATRE

THE DEAD ZONE"MISBEGOTTEN"TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. JOHNNY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

1

JOHNNY has a visitor, PENNY BARTON. She's mid-20s, definitely attractive and completely at home as she shuttles around Johnny's kitchen, fixing a meal. The table in the b.g. is set for two, candles burning. A classic song plays on the stereo.

PENNY

I'm so glad we're finally able to do this, you know? I can't tell you how long I've been wanting to cook for you.

(looks around)

Frying pan... big one?

JOHNNY

Oh, uh... down there.

Johnny points to a cabinet, looking on from a seat at the counter. He's oddly dressed considering the occasion: pajamas, hair mussed. Penny doesn't seem to mind. She finds the pan, puts it on the heat, tosses in a slab of butter...

PENNY

Your house is amazing. I've been sort of picturing it in my mind, but it's even nicer than I expected. Comfy, you know?

She goes to a GROCERY BAG on the counter, reaches in, then STOPS, hesitant to reveal what's inside.

PENNY

Okay. I don't know if you're a seafood guy, but you have to trust me on this.

(takes out a bag of shrimp)

You'll love it, I promise. It's sort of my specialty. Olive oil?

JOHNNY

(points to cabinet)

Uh, in there... Next one over.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

She finds it, starts measuring... Stops, smiles, honest...

PENNY

All right, confession... I've been practicing this recipe all week. Probably made it six times.

(barks a laugh)

If my cats never see another shrimp again, they'll be happy.

JOHNNY

So you've got cats.

PENNY

Yeah.

JOHNNY

A whole bunch, I bet.

PENNY

(smiles, touched)

I do. How'd you know?

Johnny shrugs, waves it away with a smile. The shrimp hit the frying pan with a sudden SIZZLE.

PENNY

Okay, the key is, three minutes a side. Any more, they go rubbery.

She sips her wine, eyes Johnny, smiling, so happy to be here. Then her hand finds a LARGE KNIFE in the knife block. Shing! Johnny's eyes go wide.

PENNY

Geez, look at you. A little jumpy tonight or what?

As she starts slicing a lemon, a NOISE comes from the hall, the DOOR OPENING.

DEPUTY'S VOICE

Mr. Smith?

JOHNNY

In here!

PENNY

(confused, pouting)

Johnny, I thought it was just gonna be us tonight.

TWO DEPUTIES enter. One sees the knife, goes for his gun. Johnny raises a hand --

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (2)

1

JOHNNY

It's all right. She's pretty
much harmless... I think.

Penny sets the knife aside, hurt.

PENNY

Johnny, what's going on?

DEPUTY

C'mon, sweetie. Time to go.

JOHNNY

She said she rowed a boat across
the lake...

DEPUTY

(to Penny)

You scaled that rock wall out
back?

He shakes his head in disbelief. She smiles, shrugs...

PENNY

I knew he'd like me if he got to
know me.

As she's cuffed and led out, she calls back to Johnny --

PENNY

Remember, three minutes a side.
Anymore and they're rubber.

Off Johnny...

FADE OUT.

SUPER: A WEEK LATER

BRUCE (V.O.)

You have a public profile now,
man. People are out there, aware
of you, watching you, thinking
about you...

FADE IN:

2 TIGHT ON A POWER SCREWDRIVER

2

Whirrrrr. It spins a screw into the face of a shiny new
HOME SECURITY PANEL. WIDEN to reveal we're...

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

INT. JOHNNY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

PURDY and BRUCE look on as a pair of SECURITY TECHS work on Johnny's system. Holes in the plaster, ladders, bundles of Cat 5 cable suggest a major upgrade in progress. Johnny looks on ruefully... unhappy that his life's been disrupted...

BRUCE (CONT'D)

I know you don't like to think about it but you've got to now. Before someone decides to shoot you to impress Jodi Foster. People do these things.

JOHNNY

(shakes his head)

Why don't we just dig a moat while we're at it, fill it with sharks?

BRUCE

Hey, don't knock it. It worked for Rob Roy.

JOHNNY

Rob Roy.

BRUCE

Scottish dude. Kilts and castles.

JOHNNY

Every new lock on the door doesn't just lock the crazies out... it locks me in, Bruce... I feel isolated enough as it is... I used to have a life once...

Purdy enters with a contractor... holding a set of plans... moves to Johnny... hands him the plans...

PURDY

Safe room. Reinforced walls, steel door, separate communication system... Impenetrable.

JOHNNY

No.

PURDY

All the best homes have them nowadays. Nothing to be embarrassed about.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

2

JOHNNY

I'm not embarrassed. I'm
speechless. Thanks anyway.

Purdy accepts the verdict, moves off with the contractor...

PURDY

(to contractor)
Can we talk about the buffer zone
around the perimeter... are you
sure 200 feet is enough...?

He's gone. Johnny shakes his head...

JOHNNY

I gotta get out of here. I have
a lunch date with Dana...

Moving with them toward the front door...

BRUCE

How's that going?

JOHNNY

(sighs, tension)
I don't know. Didn't call her
for awhile, then called and
canceled once...

BRUCE

So, you're screwing up.

JOHNNY

(knows very well that's
true, dry)
You could say that.
(beat)
And of course, she thinks it's
because of me and Sarah.

BRUCE

There is no 'you and Sarah'.
Gotta get beyond that, man. It
was a one night mistake...

JOHNNY

...that changed everything.

BRUCE

That's how we learn, my brother.
Except with your powers you should
learn from your mistakes before
you ever make them.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (3) 2

They move past a workman testing a new alarm sensor at the front door... it blasts a shrieking alert... startling Johnny and Bruce as they exit...

BRUCE

How about a moat with koi instead of sharks? Man-eating koi...

They're out.

3 INT. JOHNNY'S CAR - DAY 3

Johnny drives, piloting the Jeep down a tree-lined stretch of country road, no other cars in sight. He's lost in thought, the Dana/Sarah dilemma heavy on his mind. Suddenly, Johnny SEES SOMETHING, snaps from his trance...

4 JOHNNY'S P.O.V. - UP AHEAD 4

An ACCIDENT -- an old Chevy, veered from the road, nose against a tree. Steam rises from the hood. A single passenger, slumped behind the wheel. Johnny brakes hard, pulls off the road...

5 EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY 5

Johnny hops from the Jeep, approaches the Chevy. And we may notice California plates, some industrial band bumper stickers, but Johnny's eyes are on the driver: a very attractive woman in her early thirties, ANITA... she seems dazed and disoriented...

JOHNNY

Are you hurt?

Anita has to think about it for a second.

ANITA

I... I don't think so. God, I don't know what happened. I only looked down for a second...

JOHNNY

(pulling his phone)
I'm gonna call for help.

ANITA

No. I-I think I'm all right...

She starts to get out. As Johnny grabs the door handle...

6 *FLASH - JOHNNY'S POV PANS FROM ANITA BEHIND THE WHEEL OF THE SLOWLY MOVING CHEVY... TO PENNY STANDING IN FRONT, DIRECTING HER TOWARD A GENTLE COLLISION WITH THE TREE* 6

7 RESUME 7

THUNK! The door slams, snapping Johnny out of the vision. As he reacts, confused, WE SEE Penny suddenly appear behind him. Before he knows what's happening, she slaps a rag over his face. Chloroform...

Johnny struggles but --

SUBJECTIVE POV

His world is already spinning. The last thing he sees is a third woman, MADDY, 20, moving in, documenting the scene with a VIDEO CAMERA. What on God's earth is going on? Then DARKNESS overtakes him.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

8 INT. BRUCE'S APARTMENT - DAY 8

Bruce on the phone...

BRUCE

He left to meet you an hour ago.
You try his cell?

9 EXT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT - DAY 9

Dana on her cell as she waits for her car at a valet stand.

DANA

About twenty times. Do you have
any idea where he could be?

BRUCE'S VOICE (PHONE)

Sorry. I really don't.

A sudden suspicion shadows Dana's eyes.

DANA

Sarah didn't call him, did she?

BRUCE'S VOICE (PHONE)

Dana, if Johnny had a date with
you, he wouldn't...

DANA

If he checks in, ask him to give
me a call. That is, if it isn't
too much trouble.

She clicks off, thinks for a beat. Then grabs her bag
and goes.

10 INT./EXT. BANNERMAN HOUSE - FOYER - DAY - LATER 10

The doorbell RINGS. Footsteps, then SARAH appears.
Upbeat, smiling, she opens the door. The smile fades...

SARAH

Walt's not here.

DANA

(evenly)
I know. I'm looking for Johnny.

Sarah's eyes narrow. A beat.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

DANA

Is he here?

SARAH

No.

DANA

(beat, evenly)

Mind if I look for myself?

Sarah laughs incredulously.

SARAH

You've got a helluva lot of nerve.

DANA

(dry)

My secret of success.

SARAH

Excuse me, I'm very busy.

Closing the door in her face... Dana sticks her foot in the door... the door jams against it...

DANA

Ow.

SARAH

Well, get your foot out of the...

Dana pushes the door open and enters...

10A INT. BANNERMAN HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

10A

Dana's trying to move past Sarah, peering into the house.

SARAH

Hey!

DANA

Call a cop.

Sarah grabs Dana's arm hard, spinning her around.

SARAH

What is your problem?

Dana is looking at the problem -- Sarah... her cell phone rings...

(CONTINUED)

10A CONTINUED:

10A

DANA

Time.

(as in 'time out')

SARAH

'Time'? What is this - the
playground?

(CONTINUED)

10A CONTINUED: (2) 10A

DANA
This might be him.
(answering)
Dana Bright.

11 INTERCUT: EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY 11

Two POLICE CRUISERS parked near Johnny's Jeep. DEPUTY ROSCOE hunts for clues in the b.g. while WALT talks on his phone.

WALT
Dana, you seen Johnny?

DANA
No, but that seems to be the question of the day... I was just asking your wife the same thing...

Walt's a little thrown by this.

WALT
You're with Sarah now?

DANA
We were just sitting down to tea.

WALT
Has she heard from him?

DANA
(holding the phone so both can hear)
He wants to know if you've heard from him.

SARAH
No. Walt, what's going on?

WALT
I'm out on Cypress Hill Road.
One of my guys found Johnny's car on the shoulder...

Both women react with equal concern...

SARAH
He had an accident?

WALT
No. The car's fine. Engine runs, it's got gas...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: 11

WALT (CONT'D)
(looking around)
There's just no sign of Johnny.

In the b.g., Roscoe spies something on the ground.

ROSCOE
Walt... over here.

But Roscoe's waving for Walt to join him.

WALT
Look, I gotta go. I'll call you
if I find out anything...
(pause, then)
I'll call both of you.

12 INT. BANNERMAN HOUSE - DANA AND SARAH 12

look at each other... a long beat...

SARAH
I'm not sitting around here and
waiting for a call...

She moves out and Dana follows...

13 WITH WALT AND ROSCOE 13

ROSCOE
Check out these tracks.

He points out TWO RUTS gouged an inch or so deep in the dirt, running parallel, roughly eight inches apart.

WALT
Heel marks...?

ROSCOE
(nods)
Looks like someone was dragged.
(following their path)
They start there, come around
here, then boom, they stop.

Walt crouches to examine some TIRE MARKS where the heel ruts end. Then he turns to eye a tree with a broken branch and some missing bark (where the nose of the girls' car was previously jammed).

(CONTINUED)

- 13 CONTINUED: 13
 He stands, eyes narrowing, and we sense his cop's mind putting the pieces together.
- 14 EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY - ESTABLISHING 14
 A old rambling structure that juts starkly from the surrounding weedy fields like something out of a Wyeth painting. An aged Realtor's sign on a rusty post creaks in the wind. 'No sale' for many years, apparently.
- CLOSER ANGLE
 The windows shuttered and boarded, adding to the sense of abandonment. Camera finds the girls' car parked by a utility shed. *
- 15 INT. SHED - DAY - CLOSE ANGLE 15
 An electrical cable runs from a cobwebby breaker box to a portable GENERATOR. Anita leans into frame, punches the start button, and the machine HUMS to life. *
- 16 INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 16
 Dusty wall sconces flicker to life.
- 17 INT. OTHER ROOMS - VARIOUS ANGLES 17
 Including a playroom and a living room as more lights flicker on. Just enough to illuminate, but the place remains shadowy and spooky, a dusty time capsule of old furniture and knickknacks, faint rays of daylight slanting in through gaps in the boarded windows.
- 18 INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 18
 Penny unpacks grocery bags as an overhead fluorescent fixture buzzes to life.
- 19 INT. FARMHOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS 19
 PANNING ACROSS several dusty STUFFED AND MOUNTED GAME ANIMALS, coming to rest on an eight-point BUCK'S HEAD mounted above an EMPTY GUN RACK, the animal's lips bared in a grim rictus.
 MADDY works at an old desk, where she's hooked a LAPTOP to a SATELLITE PHONE and a big FLAT PANEL MONITOR. She's deftly editing a raw, fast- *

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

paced video sequence of the kidnapping: Johnny being drugged, dragged to the back of the Chevy and dumped in the trunk. Industrial rock music seeps from her HEADPHONES. She smiles as she admires her work.

MADDY

Oliver Stone is a pussy.

Anita comes up behind her, starts massaging her shoulders.

ANITA

How's it going?

Maddy slips off her headphones, smiles up at Anita...

MADDY

If the rest of it rocks this hard,
we're in business. Da movie
business, baby.

Anita meanwhile begins massaging more seductively.

MADDY

(re: massage)
Don't...

ANITA

(playing innocent)
Don't what...?

MADDY

Tease.

ANITA

Who says I'm teasing?

MADDY

It's always a tease with you.

Anita's hurt, awkwardly withdraws her hands.

ANITA

Sorry I bothered you.

Maddy regrets hurting her feelings...

MADDY

Nita, look I... I didn't mean
to...

ANITA

That's okay. We have work to do.

She pats Maddy on the shoulder tentatively... Maddy takes

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (2) 19

the hand and squeezes it intimately, smiles an apology at the older and yet somehow more vulnerable woman.

19A INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 19A

as Anita and Maddy come out and encounter Penny...

PENNY

There are spider webs everywhere.
You're sure I can't tidy up...

MADDY

Don't you dare.

ANITA

What happens when Johnny Smith touches a spider, I wonder...

MADDY

Maybe he sees himself ingesting a fly...

PENNY

(disgusting)
Oh, please...

MADDY (CONT'D)

I could recreate the vision - it would be a great shot...

As they enter the master bedroom, let's take a moment to talk a little about these three women - all of them are quite attractive in their own way but all quite different personalities. Anita, the oldest, is intense in a Sigourney Weaver 'Alien' sort of way, quite dedicated to solving the mystery at hand... Penny, the middle one is soft and affectionate and needy... Maddy is a bundle of auteur creative energy with youthful enthusiasm and ambition... as Penny enters...

20 INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - JOHNNY 20

gagged... staring straight ahead which is the only direction he can see because as we pull back, we reveal that he's duct-taped to an old office chair... in a grotesquely overkill manner a la King of Comedy...

In the background, the women enter. Maddy lifts a pro-quality digital video camera off a tripod, and begins filming... swooping in with 'steady cam' shots when the spirit moves her. (And she may be wearing a light-weight STEADICAM rig.)

(CONTINUED)

20

CONTINUED:

20

PENNY

Good morning, Sleeping Beauty.
We thought you'd never wake up.

A chilling comment in this context.

MADDY

His eyes are still glassy. You
used too much chloroform.

PENNY

I used exactly what it said to
use on the website.

Johnny's eyes stare and blink... a kidnapping website?,
he's thinking... is nothing sacred in this world?

JOHNNY'S BLURRY POV

PENNY

(distorted)

He's going to be okay, isn't he?

Anita crouches in front of Johnny, peers into his eyes.

ANITA

Mr. Smith, nod if you can
understand me.

RESUME

Johnny can't nod from his bonds.

MADDY

I don't think he can nod.

ANITA

Okay, blink if you can understand
me.

He blinks.

ANITA

Good.

PENNY

Johnny, this is not how I wanted
it to be; if we'd had the chance
to talk the other night...

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (2)

20

MADDY

She did that entirely on her own.
If we had known...

PENNY

I was hoping, once we got to know
each other, you might agree to do
this for us because I know that's
the kind of man you are... always
reaching out to people with a
helping hand. That's why I...
I...

(adore)

...respect you so much, Johnny.

(Johnny stares at her)

Oh and thank-you for not pressing
charges. That was sweet of you.

ANITA

Mr. Smith, rest assured we are
not professional kidnappers.

Johnny just stares at them... which is all he can do.

ANITA

Had your representatives responded
adequately to Maddy's formal
proposal, none of this would have
been necessary... but all she got
back was a form letter...

MADDY

From the Faith Heritage Alliance.
"Thanks you for your interest in
Johnny Smith. Have a great future
and God bless."

ANITA

So here we are.

Johnny blinks.

WIDER ANGLE

ANITA (CONT'D)

As you can see, Maddy is a
filmmaker. My name is Anita,
well, we don't need last names
here... and I'm a, what would you
call me...

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (3)

20

MADDY

Technical consultant...
historian...

ANITA

I've had an interest in this house
and others like it for some time...
we're from L.A....

PENNY

And I'm the local Smithophile and
caterer.

(beat, smiles)

We met in a chatroom. Isn't that
amazing?

ANITA

We're just across the state line
in New Hampshire. In an abandoned
farmhouse. Twenty years ago,
tonight, some terrible murders
occurred here.

PENNY

They say it's haunted.

MADDY

We thought if we put you
together... the psychic and the
abandoned farmhouse and the
camera... there'd be sparks...
instant chemistry.

PENNY

Like "Blair Witch"...

MADDY

"Blair Witch" was crap!
Commercialism masquerading as
verite. What we're doing is real.

PENNY

You're sweating... it must be hot
inside the duct-tape... good thing
I stopped by picnic headquarters
and picked up some supplies...
including, ta-dah...

(she pulls out a wipey)

Wipeys!

But as she rips open the pack and dabs his forehead with
the wipey... RAMP TO HIS FACE...

- 21 A JOHNNY FLASH - A BLOODY SICKLE SWINGS DOWN 21
- 22 RESUME JOHNNY REACTING AS SHE DABS HIS FACE 22
- 23 A JOHNNY FLASH - JOHNNY IS CUT BY THE BLADE... HANDS AND 23
FACE ARE BLOODY...
- 24 RESUME JOHNNY CLOSER - EYES WIDE WITH FEAR 24
- 25 A JOHNNY FLASH - HE FALLS NEXT TO MADDY ON THE FLOOR 25
WHOSE NECK IS CUT WITH A DEEP GASH, HER EYES OPEN IN
DEATH
- 26 RESUME JOHNNY 26

as he grunts his alarm...

PENNY

Yes, darling, I know, but I'm
going to take good care of you...
and this will give us a little
time to get to know one another...

And as Johnny reacts...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

27 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

27

Walt addressing Roscoe and his other DEPUTIES, along with Sarah, Dana and Bruce. Mid-scene as he answers a question.

WALT

We don't know for sure that this is an abduction, but we're gonna treat it as one to be safe. Roscoe, we need to be ready if the kidnapppers call. Take Rudy and Alice, get set up on the phones at Reverend Purdy's office, Johnny's house and here as well, just to cover our bases...

BRUCE

What about the girl who broke into Johnny's house last week...?

WALT

First call I made was to the Sheriff up in Braxton. They're trying to locate her now.

(to Dana)

I want an embargo on this story for 48 hours... I don't want every looney tune coming out of the woodwork...

DANA

(shrugs)

He's been missing for less than a day... no paper would run with it yet...

WALT

Good. Bruce and I are going to retrace Johnny's movements over the last 24 hours. Rest of you, you've got your assignments, so get to it.

As people move into action...

SARAH

What's my assignment...?

WALT

Sarah...

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

SARAH

Don't tell me to go home.

WALT

This is police business...

SARAH

You're taking Bruce along on police business...

WALT

Bruce and Johnny have been together during the last twenty-four hours... he's a... a... material witness...

SARAH

And he's not the sheriff's wife.

WALT

That too.

DANA

She can come with me...

WALT

No she can't.

He said that a little too quickly and realizes it as soon as the words come out. Off Sarah's glare --

WALT (CONT'D)

(to Dana)

Where are you going?

DANA

Faith Heritage mailroom. Fan mail might yield a clue...

WALT

Good idea.

(to Sarah, giving permission)

You can go with her.

(off Sarah's look that says I don't need your permission)

...if... that works for you.

Honey.

Sarah doesn't give him a reply, exits with Dana...

28 INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY - VIDEOCAM POV 28

on Johnny gagged full screen close-up...

MADDY (O.S.)
Cross your heart and hope to die?

Johnny blinks.

ANITA (O.S.)
We're miles away from civilization.
He can scream all he wants.

MADDY (O.S.)
Okay, go ahead, I'm rolling sound.

Anita's hand comes in and rips the tape off his mouth...
it hurts...

MADDY (O.S.)
How do you feel, Johnny?

JOHNNY
We have to get out of here.

MADDY (O.S.)
Great opening line.

JOHNNY
No, I'm serious. It isn't safe
here.

MADDY (O.S.)
If it were safe here, we wouldn't
have a movie.

JOHNNY
Listen to me. I saw a sickle.
There was blood everywhere.

ANITA (O.S.)
A sickle. Like this one?

She shows him a dated photograph of a sickle. We don't
need to see it.

JOHNNY
Yes... but what I saw wasn't in
the past...

ANITA (O.S.)
This was the kind of sickle used
in the murders, Mr. Smith... they
never recovered the actual murder
weapon...

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

JOHNNY

No, the sickle I saw... someone was attacking us with it... in the future, the near future... people were dying...

PENNY (O.S.)

(arriving)

Hot toll house cookies everyone.

The plate enters frame... Penny's hand holds one out for Johnny to bite...

JOHNNY

(shaking off the cookie)

Penny, you know me better than they do. Tell them they have to believe me...

PENNY (O.S.)

About what?

ANITA (O.S.)

He said he had a vision that we're all going to be killed by ghosts...

JOHNNY

I didn't say ghosts, I...

PENNY (O.S.)

What if he did see something?

ANITA (O.S.)

Come on, we expected this -- he's trying to scare us into letting him go.

MADDY (O.S.)

Nice try, Johnny.

JOHNNY

Will you please listen to me...

PENNY (O.S.)

Eat now... I used real chocolate chips... the bittersweet chocolate...

Off Johnny's frustration...

29 EXT. FAITH HERITAGE ALLIANCE - ESTABLISHING - DAY 29

30 INT. FAITH HERITAGE ALLIANCE HALLWAY - DAY 30

Sarah and Dana walk with Purdy...

PURDY

It's our job, our part of the bargain, to screen his mail, identify individuals who might pose a threat...

(beat)

But it's been an even greater challenge than I anticipated...

Purdy opens a door, they enter --

31 INT. FAITH HERITAGE SORTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 31

Two staffers are busy opening, reading and sorting mail.

DANA

You've gotta be kidding.

SARAH

This is all for Johnny?

PURDY

They're not all kooks. Most are just requests for autographs or "thank-you"s from people he's inspired.

Sarah's drawn to a side table - small plastic sorting bins, each with an object or knickknack of some kind...

SARAH

And these?

PURDY

We get some people who are hoping for a "reading." They send these things in, wanting Johnny Smith to touch them --

He tips a couple of bins for them to see...

PURDY

A baseball, a necklace...
(pulls out and holds up a bra)

31 CONTINUED:

31

SARAH

(re: bra, to Dana, a
dig, yes, but more
benign than before)

Yours?

DANA

(takes it in stride)

I don't need to mail him mine.

(re: the mail, to
Purdy)

How many weeks does this represent?

The staffers laugh.

DANA

What's so funny?

PURDY

This is just today's delivery.
We get six of these a week.

During which, he's crossed toward a set of double doors.
As he now gestures to the women to follow...

*
*

PURDY

We do our best to file everything,
of course.

*
*

Purdy throws the doors open to reveal a storage room...
rows and rows of shelves, boxes and boxes... all of it,
mail for Johnny Smith...

*

PURDY

Where do you want to start?

Off the women's reactions...

32 INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - (FILM NOT VIDEO)

32

JOHNNY

Look, whether you believe me or
not, this is just a bad idea...
you don't want to go to prison,
do you?

MADDY (O.S.)

No one's going to prison.

JOHNNY

The last time I checked, kidnapping
was still a felony...

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

ANITA

Can we stop wasting time...

Anita holds a large file of historical material...

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

32

ANITA

This house has a story to tell
and you're here to tell it. The
sooner you do, the sooner you get
out of here.

Johnny understands it's the only thing he can do in this
situation... is there an opportunity to escape here...?

JOHNNY

I... I need to touch things... I
can't very well do it while I'm...

ANITA

Use your feet...
(to Penny)
Push him...

Maddy starts the camera rolling again as Penny begins to
push Johnny...

ANGLE - VIDEO POV - JOHNNY, PENNY PUSHING, SMILING AT THE
CAMERA

MADDY (O.S.)

Penny, stop looking at the camera.

PENNY

Sorrrr--ryyyy.... it's not like
I've ever done this before, you
know...?

The shot pans down to Johnny's shoes sticking out from
under the tape... as they touch the bed... the leg of the
nightstand...

ANITA

Well...?

RESUME FILM

JOHNNY

I'm sorry... I'm not...

But as Penny moves him to a closet door... as his toes
touch... RAMP TO HIS FACE... a radio is playing "A Fire I
Can't Put Out" by George Strait... the room is
transformed... by a VISION:

33 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY (TWENTY YEARS AGO)

33

CHERYL CONNOR, 39, is slipping on a plain farm-type dress... she has a weathered but proud look... dark hair in a bun, simple...

MRS. CONNOR

I thought I'd buy a roast...

DANIEL CONNOR, 47, bushy moustache, silver hair, walks in from the bathroom, buttoning his checkered shirt, a genuine farmer who works with his hands... Johnny is standing there observing the most routine of conversations...

MR. CONNOR

I can pick one up on the way back from town.

MRS. CONNOR

If you want, I'll bake a pie. There were nice peaches yesterday...

JOHNNY

A man and wife... the radio is playing an old country song...

He turns to ---

34 REVEALING ANITA

34

who is standing there in a split reality (lighting on her is different) with her file... her eyes narrow... (the other women are not visible)...

ANITA

He has a moustache... Silver hair...?

JOHNNY

Yes.

MR. CONNOR

You want to invite the Petersons?

MRS. CONNOR

He drinks too much. And he gets mean when he's drunk.

ANITA

She has dark hair... probably tied in a bun...

34 CONTINUED:

34

JOHNNY

Yes. In a bun.

She walks incongruously into this vision, shows him a photograph... the moment he looks, the Connors FREEZE in mid-action...

ANITA

Daniel and Cheryl Connor.

INSERT - THE PHOTOGRAPH

a B&W shot of the same couple lying dead at the base of a stairwell, their clothes slashed and bloodstained... quick, more of an impression than a good look...

JOHNNY REACTS TO THE HORRID PHOTO

A GIRL'S VOICE

(sing-song)

"Big house, little house, back house, barn..."

JOHNNY

Someone's singing. A girl. In a near-by room.

Johnny follows the sound of the voice, moving past the frozen Connors...

35 INT. FARMHOUSE - PLAYROOM - DAY - PAST - VISION

35

A twelve-year-old girl (TINA) is swinging a jump rope... as Johnny walks in... a beat later, Anita follows...

ANITA

This was a playroom for the children...

JOHNNY

She's jumping rope...

TINA

Big house, little house, back house, barn...

TINA & JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Big house, little house, back house, barn...

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

ANITA

Long red hair...?

JOHNNY

Halfway down her back.

Anita shows him another picture... as soon as he sees it,
Tina FREEZES in mid-jump...

ANITA

Not after she was killed.

INSERT - B&W PHOTO OF TINA VIRTUALLY SCALPED LYING ON THE
FLOOR - BARELY A LOOK - JUST AN IMPRESSION...

ANITA

Tina Connor. They never found
her hair.

JOHNNY REACTS

looks away... then notices --

ANGLE - ANOTHER KID IN THE ROOM

*that he hadn't noticed before... a boy this time, twelve...
he's over in the corner... reading... and he's the sort
of kid you might not notice, just beginning to fill out,
gawky, pimply, glasses... he's frozen too...*

JOHNNY

There's a boy here too. Reading.

ANITA

Nicholas. He hid in a basement
crawlspace during the killings.
They didn't find him for three
days. He couldn't speak for a
year afterwards. He's spent most
of his life in and out of mental
institutions. No one's heard
from him in two years... I've
tried everything to find him...

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (2) 35

And as Johnny turns back to look at the frozen boy, there's
a --

36 FLASH 36

and we pull out to find Johnny is still bound to his chair -
though he's been wheeled into the playroom while we've
been in the vision... Anita holding the photograph for
him to see... further revealing Penny and Maddy... the
kids are gone and it's present day again...

MADDY

Great stuff! I have to recharge
the batteries. Johnny, if you'll
give me the details, I'll dramatize
the visions with actors later on.
Wonderful work everyone. We'll
break for dinner.

She moves out... Johnny is tired....

JOHNNY

I've done everything you've
asked...

ANITA

Except tell us who did it, Mr.
Smith... and that's why we're
here -- to identify The Reaper...

JOHNNY

The Reaper.

ANITA

That's what they called the drifter
who killed them all.

PENNY

Light pasta salad for dinner.

Exits.

JOHNNY

Please. I wasn't kidding before.
We can't stay here.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

ANITA

(sighs)

You are persistent, aren't you.

She starts to leave...

JOHNNY

(angry but controlled)

Obviously, so are you... to do something as crazy as this...

Anita shrugs, but she tries to explain, in her own way.

ANITA

I'm just trying to solve a mystery. A cold-blooded killer walked away from here scott free and may still be alive for all we know. It's important to me that we find him.

JOHNNY

Why?

ANITA

Did you know you can buy famous murderer action figures on the net, Mr. Smith? Bundy, Manson, Gacey in his clown outfit. They're all in jail or dead. Which is why they don't frighten us any more, why they can be toys. I'd like to add The Reaper to my collection someday soon. Very soon with your help.

Then she leaves him alone. A beat, then Johnny starts to struggle with his bonds...

36A EXT. FARMHOUSE - DUSK

36A

Pushing toward a basement window...

37 INT. FARMHOUSE BASEMENT - DUSK

37

So dark we barely can see... but something is moving in the shadows... or someone... moving to a plank on the wall... whoever it is is using some kind of tool to pull the plank away... it creaks a bit... and the entity pauses to make sure the sound isn't too loud... then gently opens a hole in the wall...

The entity reaches in and a pulls out a box... and opens

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

it, pulling out long red hair, stained with ancient dried blood. And on that disturbing image, we...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

38 INT. FAITH HERITAGE MAIL ROOM - NIGHT

38

Dana and Sarah sorting through mail... Sarah pausing on one...

SARAH

Whups, think I've got another one...

DANA

Penny Barton?

SARAH

(acknowledges)
Same handwriting as the others.
Same return address.

She opens it... nods...

SARAH

'Johnny, if you touch this letter, you'll be touching me...' Russell Crowe doesn't get letters like these.

DANA

Sure he does.

SARAH

That makes thirteen letters in three months from this Barton woman.

She refolds it and puts it on a stack of maybe a dozen others that she's set aside from the bigger pile...

DANA

I've still got you by two... with my pile from... Mrs. Hazel Glim of Butte, Montana who thinks Johnny's a sign from the Lord that the world is coming to an end...

Sarah nods wearily. We sense this seemingly futile search has forged a fragile truce between the two.

SARAH

All these people... complete strangers... and every one of them convinced that they know Johnny...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

SARAH (CONT'D)

(beat)

Intimately.

They continue sorting mail.

DANA

They should talk to us. We'd tell him the skinny on the guy... how he wears the same clothes for two days in a row sometimes...

SARAH

Oh, I hate when he does that. And... and... sings off key with the radio in the car...

DANA

And when he eats, he talks with...

SARAH & DANA

...his mouth full... uh huh, uh huh...

DANA

And snores.

Sarah avoids that one... with a 'does he, really?' look. More sentiment:

SARAH

He's good at finding lost car keys though.

DANA

Yeah. And he doesn't watch a lot of sports on TV because he knows who's gonna win, poor guy.

SARAH

(sighs)

You think he's okay?

DANA

What we need is a psychic to find our psychic.

(finding mail)

Hey, I think I've got one for you. Penny redux. She's only one behind Hazel.

SARAH

Let me see that...

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (2)

38

This letter is not the same girlish stationery of the other Penny letters but instead bears the LOGO of the Travelodge motel chain (no return address, though). Sarah checks the postmark.

SARAH

This one was just sent a few days ago... wonder what she was doing at a motel in Bangor...

And off their curious looks...

39 INT. FAITH HERITAGE - PURDY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

39

As Purdy enters with in-house counsel MIKE KENNEDY. An artist's rendering of the new Faith Heritage Theology Building is on an easel.

KENNEDY

Somehow they tracked down our IP address, breached the firewall, and shot their videostream down our T3 line.

PURDY

How much are they asking for?

KENNEDY

Actually, they want to pay us.
(off Purdy's reaction)
Just promise me you'll watch the whole thing before you say no.

Kennedy has already pressed a button on the computer and an animated PRESENTATION PACKAGE unfolds on the screen.

ON THE MONITOR

ANIMATED MADDY strolls onto the screen -- smiles and waves...

ANIMATED MADDY

Sorry I can't join you in person today, Reverend... but I'm on location on production of my new movie coming soon to a multiplex near you. Here's a sneak preview.

A remote control appears in animated Maddy's hand and she aims it at camera. VIDEO FOOTAGE fills the screen. First, Johnny's abduction. Then in his chair. Reactions.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

PURDY

My God, Johnny... have you called
the Sheriff...

KENNEDY

(acknowledges)

The deputies are downstairs...

The footage continues as:

ANIMATED MADDY (V.O.)

Johnny's fine... there's nothing
to worry about... he will be
released shortly if you follow
these instructions. Attached to
this file is a seven minute trailer
for our film that we'd like you
to run on the Faith Heritage
Network tonight at ten. We have
already advised potential
distributors of this broadcast
schedule.

The animated Maddy reappears.

ANIMATED MADDY (CONT'D)

In return, we're prepared to give
Faith Heritage Charities five
percent of the adjusted gross
profits should distribution be
secured as a result of your
telecast. It's only reasonable...
and we are reasonable people,
Reverend... for Johnny's sake, I
hope you are too. See you on the
tube...

The animation ends. Purdy is outraged, outraged.

PURDY

They may think they're going to
soothe their conscience or evade
prison with this blood money, but
I can assure you...

Kennedy shrugs, hands Purdy a document...

PURDY

What's this?

KENNEDY

They sent over the gross receipts
for a movie called The Blair Witch
Project.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

39

PURDY

The only thing I care about is
getting Johnny back unharmed.

(what is that anyway)

Blair Witch?

KENNEDY

150 million, domestic. Hundred
million, foreign. Eight-five
million, Video, DVD, cable and
pay-per-view. Five percent would
come to the neighborhood of
seventeen million.

Purdy sits, dazed at the numbers...

KENNEDY

I know how disappointed you've
been with the fund raising efforts
for the new Theology Building...

Purdy looks at him... looks at his lovely plans for the
Theology Building... almost has to laugh at the ridiculous
suggestion... almost laughs but not quite...

40 INT. FARMHOUSE - PLAYROOM - NIGHT

40

Johnny is practicing using his toes to slowly move the
chair... it's difficult but not impossible... it's hard
to see how this might help but it's the human spirit of
survival driving him on. He brushes up against a small
dressing table with a mirror and...

41 INT. PLAYROOM - DAY - PAST - VISION

41

*STARTING ECU on long red hair being brushed out. The
hair crackles with static as the brush passes along. The
hair is luxurious, the brush's passage electric, charged.
It feels almost sensuous... we should feel this too.*

*PULLING BACK to find Nicholas standing behind his sister,
TINA, as he brushes her hair, while Tina eyes her
reflection in the mirror. The brush hits a knot.*

TINA

Ouch. Nicholas, be careful.

*Nicholas keeps brushing... he glances at the mirror, sees
his own pimply reflection, then looks away unhappily...
back at his sister's hair.*

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: 41

Someone KNOCKS at the door. As both children turn...

42 RESUME - PRESENT 42

As Johnny looks up to see Penny knocking. She enters with a tray of food.

PENNY

Ready for some dinner?

JOHNNY

I'm not hungry.

PENNY

You have to eat.

JOHNNY

No really, the toll house cookies were really filling.

She puts the tray down on a child's round table... and sits in a child sized chair opposite Johnny.

PENNY

You're angry with me.

JOHNNY

No, I'm not angry.

PENNY

Promise?

JOHNNY

(a plan forming)

Penny, I like you. I'd really like to get to know you better.

PENNY

Well, I'm a leap year baby... I like to knit sweaters for everyone in my family... I'm the knitter... the rest of the family is in the canning industry... our house always smells like fresh tuna...

JOHNNY

(interrupting)

I mean I'd like to spend more time with you... away from here...

She studies him with some skepticism... wants to believe him... she stands and moves to him and looks him in the eyes with intimacy...

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

PENNY

Patty Hearst.

JOHNNY

What?

PENNY

The website told me how the victim begins to identify with the abductors.

JOHNNY

It's not that. I really do... feel close to you...

PENNY

Really...?

She shyly sits on his taped lap... tries to snuggle in but it's a difficult chore... Johnny tries not to show his fear of this crazy person... stays with his plan to turn her into an ally...

PENNY

Oh, Johnny... if I could only believe that.

JOHNNY

Penny, I need your help to get out of here.

PENNY

(torn)

I'm sorry, Johnny... I can't...

JOHNNY

You care about me, don't you?

PENNY

That's not fair. You know I do.

JOHNNY

Then help me.

PENNY

I'll never see you again. They'll lock me up this time.

JOHNNY

I won't let them. You and me... we'll be together...

She stares at him, wanting so much to believe him... she overcomes her shyness and does what she's dreamed of doing -

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2)

42

she kisses him...

PENNY
Relax your lips.

JOHNNY
Penny...

PENNY
I can't get my tongue in... I
want to taste you... I want you
to taste me...

She kisses him more deeply... he doesn't ever close his
eyes...

PENNY
It doesn't matter.

JOHNNY
Doesn't matter?

PENNY
If it is the Patty Hearst thing.

And as she kisses him again and he's helpless...

43 INT. MOTEL RECEPTION - NIGHT

43

A young MOTEL MANAGER (SPICUZZA) is checking his computer,
talking to Dana and Sarah...

MANAGER
I'm sorry, as I told you on the
phone, no Barton has been
registered here recently...

Dana slides a photograph of Penny across the counter...

DANA
Maybe you've seen her?

The manager glances at the photo... recognizes her...

MANAGER
Yes! She sang in our karaoke bar
a few nights ago. "Summer Wind" I
think it was.

That seems like a dead end.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

DANA

(dry)
Singing... karaoke.

SARAH

Might be a little premature to
call Walt in on this.

MANAGER

I think she was here visiting
some friends.
(checking the computer)
Two young women from Los Angeles.
They're still checked in but I
haven't seen them around for the
last couple of days.

Dana and Sarah exchange a hopeful look...

44 INT. PLAYROOM - AS BEFORE 44

Penny is unbuttoning her blouse...

JOHNNY

What... what are you doing?

And as she eases out of her blouse... starts on her skirt.

PENNY

Do you believe in destiny, Johnny?
Because I do. I believe it's
brought us together... brought us
together on this night.

And her skirt hits the floor, leaving her in just her bra
and slip, Johnny staring at her in disbelief... *

PENNY

I'm ovulating.
(then)
My temperature's up. I just did
a test while the pasta was
cooking...

She straddles Johnny's lap...

JOHNNY

You've got to be kidding.

PENNY

I want to have your baby, Johnny.

Push in close as she starts to kiss his neck... RAMP TO
HIS FACE...

45 *FLASH - THREE CATS TWINE AROUND PENNY'S LEGS... AS WE* 45
TILT UP TO REVEAL HER SITTING AND KNITTING, HUGELY
PREGNANT...

46 RESUME - JOHNNY CLOSE-UP 46

as he reacts with horror...

PENNY

Johnny, Johnny, Johnny. This is
all I've ever wanted.

46 CONTINUED: 46

JOHNNY
Penny, we can't do this...

PENNY
(devilishly, whispering
in his ear)
Oh yes we can...!

Off his curious fearful eyes...

47 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 47

As the manager opens the door for them, stands there, watching them... Sarah and Dana start looking through the debris... and immediately react as they find the room is filled with photos and artwork for Maddy's film. A STORYBOARD shows a few frames of Johnny's kidnapping, pretty close to the way it actually went down. Location survey photographs of the farmhouse from several angles... it is marked in typical production style: Connor Farm.

DANA
The Connor farm... a family was
murdered there twenty years ago...
just over the state line...

Sarah is already dialing her mobile phone...

SARAH
Walt...?

And before we hear Walt's answer...

48 INT. PLAYROOM - NIGHT - CLOSE ON A SERRATED STEAK KNIFE 48

sawing its way through the tape toward his groin...

PENNY

on her knees doing the sawing...

PENNY
If it's a boy, we'll name him
Johnny...
(Johnny reacts)
And if it's a girl... we'll still
name her...
(with a triumphant
upward slash)
...Johnny.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

JOHNNY

Penny... not here... not like
this...

PENNY

(driven, intense)
Yes. Exactly like this.

And as she stands and reaches behind her to unsnap her
bra... she suddenly realizes they're not alone... turns
to see --

ANGLE - MADDY

with the camera in the shadows... in the passion of the
moment, they didn't see her sneak in...

PENNY

What are you doing?!

VIDEOCAM POV - PENNY

covers herself...

MADDY (O.S.)

Keep going. I'm not even here...

PENNY

Go away. This is a special moment
between me and Johnny...

MADDY (O.S.)

Don't look at the camera...

Suddenly Penny charges over, grabs at the camera...

MADDY (O.S.)

Hey. Let go!

As the camera view jerks all over, a chilling SCREAM from
the other room ends it and we...

CUT TO:

MADDY AND PENNY - ON FILM

exchange a look, turn and run out, Penny grabbing her
clothes as she leaves... leaving Johnny stuck there,
fearing for his life. But at least now he's got some
leverage to move his legs. As he starts struggling to
work his ankles free...

49 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

49

as Maddy and Penny (whose blouse has gone back on en route) rush in to find Anita staring at what looks like a big RED QUESTION MARK that's scrawled on the wall...

PENNY

A question mark...?

Maddy shoots it with her camera...

MADDY

That's no question mark.

ANITA

It's a sickle.

Off their reactions --

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

50 INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT 50

CLOSE ON THE WHEELS of Johnny's chair as they roll slowly over the worn floorboards.

JOHNNY'S shoes, now freed from the duct tape, push the chair along. Slowly, cautiously.

CLOSE ON JOHNNY'S FACE as he hears the women's arguing voices coming from the doorway to the master bedroom that's looming up...

PENNY (O.S.)
Who put it there?

ANITA (O.S.)
(accusing)
Maddy?

MADDY (O.S.)
Why would I?

ANITA (O.S.)
To make your movie more exciting maybe?

MADDY (O.S.)
I swear... it wasn't me...

As Johnny reaches the door, he reacts as --

51 A VISION - MR. CONNOR AND NICHOLAS 51

walk out of the bedroom in a split reality... both holding hunting rifles... the father is stern-faced... the boy is unhappy... they may have just had an argument... but it's quick, they pass by Johnny and are gone from view...

52 JOHNNY 52

reacts curiously... sneaks a peek in the room, the women are out of eye-line, though he can see the sickle on the wall...

ANITA (O.S.)
Somebody's either lying...

PENNY (O.S.)
Or there's somebody else in this house.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: 52

He pushes himself quickly past the door... propels himself farther along. He rounds a corner... and finds himself at the top of a flight of stairs, a landing halfway down. Shit. No way he's getting out this way, not tied to the chair anyway. Suddenly --

ANITA

What are you doing out here?

She grabs his chair and as she does -- RAMP TO HIS FACE -

53 *HIS POV - VISION - ANOTHER ANGLE - NICHOLAS CHARGING TOWARD HIM WITH A SICKLE - VERY QUICK SHOT* 53

54 RESUME JOHNNY 54

and so shocking that he leans back out of Anita's grip...

THE CHAIR WHEELS

slip over the top step as the chair slips off the landing...

JOHNNY'S CHAIR LANDS ON ITS BACK, SKIDS LIKE A SLED... AND WITH EACH IMPACT AGAINST THE STAIRS...

55 *ANGLE AT BOTTOM: OOF! JOHNNY LANDS HARD ON THE LANDING, MORE OF THE TAPE TEARING, FREEING ONE ARM, WHICH FALLS TO THE SIDE... FINDING THE THREE MURDERED CONNORS LYING BESIDE HIM IN A SPLIT REALITY SHOT... AND NOW HE LOOKS UP TO SEE YOUNG NICHOLAS COMING SLOWLY DOWN THE STAIRS. HELD LOOSELY AT HIS SIDE, A BLOODY SICKLE...* 55

56 JOHNNY - CLOSE UP 56

SAME POV - BUT IN THE PRESENT - ANITA

coming down the stairs with the other two women following close behind (Penny hurriedly putting her clothes on)...

PENNY

Johnny, are you okay...?

VIDEO POV COMING DOWN STAIRS

moving toward Johnny on the floor...

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

MADDY (O.S.)
(muttering)
I can't believe I didn't get this
on film...

JOHNNY
(weak)
Nicholas... Nicholas did it.

ANITA
What?

JOHNNY
There was no drifter. It was
Nicholas. He killed them.

ANITA
His own family? That's ridiculous.
Nicholas was just a young boy.

Penny is helping him turn himself right side up... The chair is broken. No sense trying to put Johnny back in it, so Penny just tears at the remaining tape, freeing him... his legs are stiff and the circulation is weak after sitting for so long... it's hard to walk...

RESUME FILM

JOHNNY
I saw the sickle in his hands...

ANITA
He's lying - he just wants to get
out of here...

PENNY
He's not the only one...

Johnny grabs her by the hand...

JOHNNY
Come on...

They move to the front door... as Johnny tries to open it... he sees a padlock has been attached to the door... touches it...

57 *FLASH - YOUNG NICHOLAS USES A KEY TO LOCK AN INNER
PADLOCK, THEN POCKETS IT*

57

58 RESUME JOHNNY - VIDEO POV - PUSH IN TO HIM AS HE REALIZES 58

JOHNNY

Nicholas is here. He's in the house.

ANITA

Don't you see what he's doing --
(camera swishes to show her)
He's trying to scare you.

JOHNNY

(to Penny)
Is there another exit?

MADDY (O.S.)

There's a back door... but it's boarded up.

PENNY

For godsakes, turn off the camera already... what about the windows?

Johnny limps to one, throws open the sash, pries at the boards.

ANITA

I... I have the psychiatric reports right here... "Subject suffering a complete infantile regression consistent with severe emotional trauma." Maybe there is someone else in this house... but it's not Nicholas.

RESUME FILM

The boards don't budge.

JOHNNY

These boards are an inch thick... and the nails've been in there for years.

ANITA

Listen to me!

She grabs Johnny's arm, TOUCHING HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE SHOW and initiating a startling VISION as --

59 ANITA MORPHS INTO YOUNG NICHOLAS, HIS HAND STILL ON 59
JOHNNY'S ARM...

YOUNG NICHOLAS
(speaking Anita's
words in his own
voice)

*Nicholas isn't a killer; he's a
victim. Whatever he saw or heard,
it completely terrified him... it
almost paralyzed him...*

*Johnny looks down at the boy's hand on his arm, then the
vision ends as...*

60 ANITA 60

follows his look and a horrified realization blooms on
her face. And as she JERKS her hand away and RUNS OFF up
the stairs...

MADDY (O.S.)
Anita...?

She starts to go after her, but Johnny blocks her.

JOHNNY
Let her go.

As both women turn to Johnny, wondering what the hell
just happened...

61 INT. FARMHOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT 61

Anita has locked herself in, paces, like an animal...

ANITA
He's lying, he's lying, he's lying,
he's lying, he's lying, he's lying,
he's lying, he's lying...

She's coming unglued. Suddenly she stops, stares in the
mirror.

ANITA
I-It was a stranger... A
drifter...

Her voice drops a register, clearly the voice of a MAN...

ANITA
You didn't kill them. You couldn't
have. It wasn't you!

61 CONTINUED: 61

Anita, hereafter NICHOLAS/ANITA, struggles to find reality. She stands at the sink, hands GRIPPING the sides of the mirror, softly, banging her head against the glass...

NICHOLAS/ANITA
What did you do? What did you do?

The banging grows more violent. The mirror is bound to break.

Suddenly Nicholas/ANITA STOPS, realizing that the mirror, the whole MEDICINE CABINET, IS LOOSE.

She tugs the cabinet, pulling it from the wall and opening a 12" x 20" hole. Unsure, driven by a faint memory, she reaches inside... and pulls out the blood-encrusted SICKLE, HORRIFIED but THRILLED at the discovery. She holds the sickle, running her fingers over the encrusted blood, the still sharp edge. Even after twenty years, the metal retains enough polish to offer a rough reflection...

61A INSERT - THE SICKLE BLADE 61A

As Anita sees her face reflected... then she spins the handle... and sees young Nicholas reflected on the blade's other side. Another spin: Anita; another spin: Nicholas.

62 EXT. HIGHWAY - A POLICE CARAVAN - NIGHT 62

rolling down a parkway... bubble lights flashing, sirens wailing... a sign says *Welcome to New Hampshire*... New Hampshire State police cars are waiting for them and join the caravan...

63 OMITTED 63

64 INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 64

Maddy and Penny reacting to what Johnny's just told them.

PENNY
Johnny, they're a couple. Maddy would know if... if she weren't a, if she were a...
(turning)
You'd know, right, Maddy?

Maddy goes suddenly pale.

64 CONTINUED:

64

MADDY

Ohmigod... I'm so stupid...

She numbly sets the camera on a tripod.

MADDY

We never messed around that much...
and when we did... she never wanted
to...

A beat as Johnny realizes what he must do, then...

JOHNNY

Get in the den.

He herds them toward it...

JOHNNY

Lock the door. Stay in there
until I come back or help comes.

Before he shuts the door, he sees his CANE leaning against *
a wall and grabs it. Then he heads toward the stairs... *

64A INT. DEN - CONTINUOUS

64A

Both women are terribly worried as Penny locks the door. Behind them on the TV monitor which is on, Purdy's image fades in... Maddy reacts as she sees it, runs over... Purdy looks uncomfortable as he addresses the camera from his desk... (before the sound comes up, he's saying good evening and introducing himself as Reverend Gene Purdy of the Faith Heritage Alliance.) As Maddy turns up the sound...

PURDY (TV)

..."Journey to Bethlehem" will
be delayed tonight so we may bring
you... a special presentation of
sorts... And I might caution you
that it's not for children or the
faint of heart...

MADDY

(overlapping)
Ohmigod! They're playing it!

65 FOLLOWING JOHNNY

65

Moving up the stairs now recalling Martin Balsam in Psycho...

JOHNNY

Anita... you said this house had a story to tell. Do you want to hear it?

No answer. He moves cautiously toward the bathroom... the door is cracked open... he pushes it... Anita's not inside... but he can see the hole in the wall where the medicine cabinet used to be... his eyes narrow... he moves on through the extremely dark hallway...

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

It's about a boy... a troubled boy who couldn't deal with the things he was feeling... so he lashed out... violently... at his own family.

He moves through the dark house... opening doors defensively... heading back toward the stairs...

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

He couldn't live with what he did... so he buried it... in himself... and eventually became a completely different person.

At the top of the stairs, he turns back to look down the hallway. And in that moment, shooting over his shoulder, we see a figure flash by the base of the stairs. Johnny turns again, sensing the motion but missing it. As he starts back down the stairs...

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

But some part of him must've wanted
the truth to come out...

(beat)

That's why you brought us back
here, isn't it? To tell yourself
the truth... and get the help you
must know you need...

At the base of the stairs, he enters the kitchen... as a shadow moves into frame behind him... a hand with the sickle visible in silhouette... Johnny senses it just before it swings... there's a blur of a slashing sickle... And Johnny reels back, his shirt ripped by the blade... he runs out of the kitchen.. the face of Nicholas/Anita moves past camera, sickle raised for another slashing attack.

66 INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

66

TIGHT ON the video camera, unmanned, propped on the tripod, recording... as Johnny stumbles in...

VIDEOCAM POV

As Nicholas/Anita follows, Johnny using his cane to block
some more crazed slashes, ducking others, as furniture is
SLICED, lamps are SMASHED... and this all happens very
fast:

*
*
*
*

RESUME FILM - FOLLOWING THE SICKLE

As it swings again, Johnny springs at her and they go
down to the floor but she/he's deceptively strong... and
has the brief advantage, raises the sickle up high for a
final blow...

CLOSE ANGLE - NICHOLAS/ANITA'S HANDS GRIPPING THE SICKLE'S
HANDLE SWING DOWN...

...and are CAUGHT by Johnny's hands, just in time... as
camera now travels down the curving blade to find the
point suspended just over one of Johnny's eyes.

NICHOLAS/ANITA

puts all her strength and weight behind the blade, trying
to force it into Johnny's skull, and Johnny resists. But
she has a frenzied strength and he's battered and
weakening...

Suddenly, he rolls, manages to pin her wrists... her wig

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

falls off, revealing a balding male pattern head... Johnny pulls the sickle from her hand. He holds her down, breathing hard. Sirens arriving outside.

JOHNNY

It's over, Nicholas. It's over.

And just as suddenly, the strength and madness ebbs out of her, and she begins to sob... like a child...

SMASH! The door busts in and Walt, his deputies and New Hampshire State police pour inside... Walt stopping as he and Johnny exchange relieved looks...

TIME CUT TO:

67 INT. FARMHOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

67

A short time later. The women are being led out in cuffs...

MADDY

(to cops)

That camera and all videotapes are my property. My entertainment attorney is in L.A.... his card is in my back pocket...

WALT

I don't think an 'entertainment' attorney is exactly what you need right now...

Penny moves by escorted by a state trooper...

PENNY

You really would have, you know...
(off Johnny's look)
Liked me... when you got to know me.

JOHNNY

Take care of yourself, Penny.

PENNY

(as she's moved away)
Write me?

For Johnny's benefit...

DANA

What in the world does she see in him?

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

SARAH

Got me.

DANA

Come on. I'll give you a ride
home.

The two women smile at Johnny, go off together...

JOHNNY

(to Bruce)

When did those two start...
(buddying up)

BRUCE

I think when they saw the
autographed bras and panties you've
been getting...

JOHNNY

That reminds me. I've got to
talk to Purdy about form letters.

As Johnny prepares to go, camera swings to show the video
camera on the tripod, its red recording light still
blinking.

VIDEOCAM POV

Of the group leaving. Then Johnny looks back.

JOHNNY

One second.

He approaches, reaches toward the viewfinder, and the
screen goes BLACK...

END OF ACT FOUR

THE END

Well, almost... because after all the credits run and the
logos do too... we fade in on a marquee on a city street...
it says FARMHOUSE, A MADDY POWERS FILM... A line wraps
around the corner for the next show.

68 OMITTED

68

FADE OUT.

And now this really is...

THE END