

Killer
by
Kenny Golde

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HANDHELD VIDEO CAMERA POV UNDER A BRIGHT LIGHT.

We're in a crime scene. The camera POV reveals police officers moving around a small house.

Glimpses: A couple of partial footprints in blood, circled in white chalk. A trampled, bloodstained pizza box spilling cold pizza.

RAINS (O.S.)

Hey, Steiner.

The shot swings up quickly to reveal LIEUTENANT JOE RAINS, early 50's, heavy set and gritty looking.

RAINS (CONT'D)

Get a shot o' this.

He points toward the fireplace, cold with gray ash. The camera leans for a closer look at a broken gold chain, then picks up something else. A pendant a couple of inches away. A dolphin.

OFFICER AIMES (V.O.)

Lt. Detective Martin is here.

The camera swishes up again, finding Rains turning to look at DETECTIVE BEN MARTIN, early-40's, just outside the front door, shaking off a wet coat. Rain falls behind him. Martin is good looking under a few day's worth of five o'clock shadow.

RAINS (V.O.)

You look like shit. You just wake up?

MARTIN

Gotta sleep to wake up.

RAINS

You get a night off, I figure maybe you'd sleep.

MARTIN

You'd figure.

RAINS

I guess that means no call from Gina yet.

MARTIN

No.

RAINS
How long's it been since you heard
from her?

Martin glares at the cameraman, OFFICER STEINER.

MARTIN
Would ya get that thing out of my
face?

STEINER (O.S.)
Sorry, Detective. I--

RAINS
(to the cameraman)
It's all right.
(to Martin)
Captain's orders. He wants everything
recorded. No O.J. in the footprints.

Martin gives in with a half sneer. Looks around the room.

MARTIN
They here? For sure?

RAINS
(grimly)
One. The boy. In the bedroom.

MARTIN
(a painful sigh)
The girl?

Rains shakes his head indicating he doesn't know.

RAINS
Maybe she got away.

MARTIN
Maybe.

Martin's face looks less than optimistic.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
I came here on the canvas. Recognized
it when I drove up.

RAINS
I know.

MARTIN
I wrote down the guy's name. What the
fuck was it? Dressed like a golfer.

He takes out his note pad, starts to flip through it, but Rains has the answer first.

RAINS

Edward Applegate. The address popped your file at the station. No record. No prints. Not even a driver's license. Gave you a fake name.

MARTIN

Fuck. FUCK! I was here, Joe.

RAINS

We're not having beers, Ben.

MARTIN

Sorry, *Lieutenant*. I was here.

RAINS

I know.

MARTIN

Those kids were here. They were fucking right here. They were probably alive.

RAINS

Don't go there. You don't know--

MARTIN

Don't do that!

RAINS

What?

MARTIN

Don't pacify me. I was here!

RAINS

You were at a hundred houses! You don't know who was alive in this house, who was dead. You wanna sit on a pity pot, do it out in the rain. Otherwise, let it go, 'cause it ain't helping!

Beat. Martin takes that in, nods.

RAINS (CONT'D)

All right, then. Tell me about this.

Rains produces a business card. Martin recognizes it.

MARTIN

I gave it to him on the canvas. Maybe he dropped it.

RAINS

I don't think so.

Rains flips the card over. Something is written on the back. Martin takes it for a closer look.

MARTIN

(reading)

"He knows how I feel." What the fuck is this?

RAINS

You tell me.

MARTIN

I have no idea what this means.

RAINS

You ever talk to him again after the day you were here?

MARTIN

No.

RAINS

You sure?

MARTIN

I'm sure. I came on the canvas. I wrote down his name. I left. I wish I'd blown his brains out but I left. Haven't been back till now and I have no idea what this is about.

He means the business card. Rains takes it back

RAINS

Come on. There's something else.

Martin follows him into the BEDROOM (CONTINUOUS). The camera trails from behind. Rains nods toward a closet.

RAINS (CONT'D)

You want a look at the kid?

Martin looks that way, shakes his head.

MARTIN

Later.

He follows Rains out of the bedroom into a hallway.

Steiner stays behind and pushes into the closet with the camera POV. The bright light splashes on the face of a dead young man, about 20, worn, pale, suggestive of much suffering before death. One wrist and one ankle are chained to a concrete wall.

2

INT. HALLWAY / SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

2

The bright light of the handheld camera bounces down a short hallway toward another bedroom.

MARTIN (V.O.)

What's all this?

Entering the room, the shot reveals a desk set up with a computer and monitor.

RAINS

Computer's clean except for one file.
A video.

MARTIN

You watch it?

RAINS

Not yet.

MARTIN

Why?

Rains nods toward officer ANNA LORENTO, late 20's, who presses a button on the keyboard. A PASSWORD box comes up. The text above it says, "Who is missing?"

MARTIN (CONT'D)

"Who is missing?"

RAINS

What do you think?

MARTIN

Maybe Ellen. Ellen Fowler.

RAINS

Tried it. I also tried "Gina."

Martin's eyes snap over to him, flaring.

RAINS (CONT'D)

He called you here, Ben. Asked for you by name.

He flips the business card between his fingers.

RAINS (CONT'D)

I gave it a shot. Didn't work.

Silence hangs.

RAINS (CONT'D)

So what do you think he means?

MARTIN

I don't know.

RAINS

The guy's clearly got a thing for you! Come on, Ben! Who is missing?!

MARTIN

I don't know!

RAINS

What'd you talk about when you were here?

MARTIN

Nothing, the Fowler kids and... kids.

RAINS

Kids? What kids?

MARTIN

He asked about Gina and told me about...

A memory comes to Martin's face. Realization.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Aaron.

RAINS

Who's Aaron?

MARTIN

His kid. Aaron's who he's missing.

Rains nods to Loreto who types "Aaron" into the password box. It's accepted.

RAINS

Guess you talked about more'n you recall.

The monitor begins to show a roughly edited home-movie, dark images shot within this very house, glimpses of walking legs, turning shoulders, bodies in shadow.

Cheep horror music, high pitched riffs.

An amateur graphic gives the title. "KILLER." The credit sequence continues. "Written by ME. Produced by ME. Directed by ME." All over a montage of frightened victims of the Killer.

MARTIN

You've got to be kidding me. What is wrong with people?

RAINS

The list is too long to enumerate.

Horrifying shots of the young victim we saw in the closet when he was alive and another, a girl the same age. Both screaming. Crying. Pleading. More bad title graphics: "Starring HIM, and HER."

Then another woman appears, about 30, in an extreme close up, hyperventilating and terrified. "And HER." A hand reaches into frame and knocks her down, then the shot cuts to the bathroom mirror. APPLGATE's face comes into frame, dripping with water.

APPLGATE

(on the monitor)

And me.

RAINS

That the guy?

Martin nods. The shot changes to a hand-held close up of Applegate, cleaned up, mid-to-late 30's, average looking, wearing a Polo-style golf shirt.

APPLGATE

Hello, Detective Martin.

Everyone's attention perks up again.

APPLGATE (CONT'D)

Do you ever go to the movies? A lot of people think movies are just to entertain but that's b.s. I mean, what is entertainment? Just distraction. A lot of things are distracting.

Through Applegate's speech, Steiner's camera will move between the monitor, Martin, Rains and Lorento.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Distraction is meaningless. No, for a movie to have meaning, to really be worth your time it has to make you feel. That's what people are missing in their lives. Feeling. They cover up their feelings with distractions. Video games, drugs, sex, fast food, loud music, late nights, crime, perversion. All because they think those things will make them feel something, anything but numb. We're all so numb. She's feeling right now.

He spins the camera around and shows a woman, about 30, bound and gagged, terrified.

APPLEGATE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

She's feeling fear. That's a feeling.

MARTIN (V.O.)

Who's she?

The shot swings back on Applegate.

APPLEGATE

You feel, don't you, Detective Martin? I hope so. It's why you're here. I need your help. I need an ending that's gonna be meaningful and by meaningful I mean really make me feel something. Can you help me with that, Detective Martin? Help me find feeling? If you can, you might be able to save her.

Applegate moves so that he and his captive are in the shot together.

APPLEGATE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I'm mean, killing is just a distraction like all the others. Why am I a killer if not to fill my empty life with meaning? But hell if I can get the meaning from you, maybe I won't have to kill for it. What do you think, Detective? Can we help each other?

RAINS

He sure took a liking to you.

The image dissolves from Applegate's face to shots of weddings. Several shots of different couples at different altars. The music segues to sappy wedding video music.

MARTIN

We know who the woman is?

RAINS

(to Lorento)

Let's get a frame grab out. See if we can ID her.

MARTIN

She might not even be alive. Who knows when he made this. He could be completely fucking with us.

RAINS

He might be doing that also. I guess we'll find out.

The wedding videos become a collage of different wedding pictures from different weddings, all layered over each other. Then a "film burn" effect starts in the center and burns up all the photographs.

The police camera pushes into the monitor and we go FULL FRAME into Applegate's film.

3

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

3

Two fixed camera angles. No movement. One from the front door shooting down through the house toward the back. The other closer, from within the dining room, showing a couple, TODD and STACY, late's 20, standing as if waiting for something, looking around.

Stacy is the woman that Applegate has bound and gagged in his video. She idly plays with a pendant on a gold chain around her neck.

The room is very clean. Just the table with a plant. An old painting on the wall. Nothing personal. Nothing "homey."

Applegate, dressed like a golfer in dockers and a brightly colored Polo-style knit, comes out of the kitchen carrying a cup of coffee.

APPLEGATE

You sure I can't get you anything?

STACY

No. Thank you, though.

APPLEGATE

It's fresh.

TODD

We're good.

Applegate exits the dining room. They follow.

4

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - DAY

4

The very room the cops are in. Again, fixed camera positions, though in here, each shot shoots the opposing camera on a tripod. They fit right in among the shelves of other video equipment. We start to get a feel for how Applegate has filmed himself.

STACY

I'm so excited.

She holds onto Todd's arm, bubbling. He smiles down at her. Gives her a quick kiss.

APPLEGATE

It's not as far along as I hoped it would be.

STACY

Oh. Well, how far?

APPLEGATE

About half.

TODD

Half? We wanted to show it to our parents this weekend.

APPLEGATE

I'm sorry. Just, see what you think and if you like where I'm going you'll understand why it's taking so long. Do you mind if I um...?

He picks up a handheld video camera.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Sometimes it's nice to get your reactions when you first see the video.

They are very awkward with this.

STACY

I'm not really prepared to be on camera.

She shies behind her husband, touching her hair awkwardly.

APPLEGATE

It'll be okay. I promise. If it's not
it won't get cut into anything.
There's a ton of footage from every
wedding that never gets used. I'd
never get hired again if I did.

They begrudgingly acquiesce. He lifts the camera and this
adds a third angle to the scene.

Applegate presses a button on the keyboard and a WEDDING
VIDEO begins to play on the monitor. It shows Stacy
putting her wedding dress on in a nice bedroom. She
curtsies for the camera. Then Todd in his tuxedo, making
the "Hang Loose" sign with both hands.

Stacy elbows him.

STACY

Goose.

Fancy graphics on the monitor show the images come together
in a split screen then the title "Todd and Stacy, September
19, 2009. Married in a moment. Happy for a lifetime."

ON THE HANDHELD SHOT OF THEM:

STACY (CONT'D)

Oh, that's so cute. Did you make that
up?

APPLEGATE (V.O.)

You like it?

STACY

It's adorable.
(to Todd)
Married in a moment. Happy for a
lifetime. Isn't that cute?

TODD

(teasing her)
It's adorable.

She scowls at him. He kisses her.

APPLEGATE

What's that you're playing with?

He means the pendant on the chair.

STACY

Isn't it cute? It's a dolphin. My
favorite. A wedding gift.

Clearly from Todd. She gives him a kiss. Applegate ZOOMS IN on the dolphin pendant.

APPLEGATE (V.O.)

I'll try and work dolphins into the video.

STACY

Oh, that'd be great.

The handheld shot swishes to the floor and cuts back to the wide angle.

APPLEGATE

You like dogs? You want to meet my dogs? They're in the other room. Cutest things. You want to meet 'em? Come on.

STACY

Can we just keep watching?

APPLEGATE

Sure. I'm just gonna check on 'em. Be back in a sec.

They keep watching the video. He exits.

5

INT. HALLWAY/BEDROOM - DAY

5

Cutting back to the handheld shot on the hallway carpet, then rising into Applegate's POV as it enters the BEDROOM (CONTINUOUS).

The shot turns toward the CLOSET where we saw the dead body. Applegate's hand reaches in and opens the closet.

Inside are two captives. One is the dead man we saw, CHRIS, and the other a girl, ELLEN, also around 20 (we saw her in the "title sequence." Both are alive though gaunt and weak, with unhealed wounds on their faces. Each has a leg and an arm chained to a concrete wall.

Their clothes are dirty. Torn in places. Both are barefoot.

A shelf, too high for them to reach, has another camera mounted on it. When the handheld angle cuts to a shot of Applegate holding the camera, behind him we see a third camera in the room, on a tripod, that has a wide angle of the whole room and closet.

APPLEGATE

Good "quiet." Good "quiet."

He reaches into his pocket and tosses a piece of beef jerky to each of them.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Wait.

A pause for a few beats, then:

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Okay.

Each grabs for the jerky and eats it ravenously.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

We're having company tonight. Are you going to be good?

Neither answers.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Speak. Are you going to be good?

ELLEN

(timid, slow)

Y..yes.

APPLEGATE

No talking?

ELLEN

No.

The handheld swings onto Chris.

APPLEGATE

Are you going to be good?

Chris nods.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Speak.

CHRIS

I'll be good. Quite.

APPLEGATE

Good.

He tosses in two more pieces of jerky.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Wait... Okay.

They eat. Applegate closes the closet door. The shot cuts to one INSIDE THE CLOSET, low on the two captives, lit by the daylight from a small, high window. Chris and Ellen pause. Look at each other. So much said between their eyes. They keep eating.

6

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

6

Applegate is at the front door with Todd and Stacy.

STACY

I love it. He's mad that it's not ready but I love it.

APPLEGATE

I hope you love it, I made you look like a princess.

STACY

What? What does that mean?

APPLEGATE

I told you, a lot of stuff doesn't get used. You had your moments.

STACY

I--

APPLEGATE

Don't worry. What matters is you love it, right?

TODD

When will it be done?

APPLEGATE

Next week.

TODD

You said that last week. We paid you cash, man, come on, don't string us out like this.

APPLEGATE

You wanna meet my dogs? They're so cute.

TODD

We don't want to see your dogs. We just want our video. Okay?

Applegate nods.

APPLEGATE

Okay. I promise. Next week. She loves it. Focus on that. Don't focus on the meaningless stuff. She loves it. It makes her happy. That's a feeling. That's what's important.

Stacy is all smiles and pulls Todd out. Applegate closes the door.

JUMP CUT TO:

7

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

7

The same wide angle from the far corner though now it is night. On the jump cut, Applegate literally disappears from where he is standing at the door and reappears, in nicer clothes, on the other side of the frame walking toward the door. We hear knocking.

He opens it for SHEILA, early 30's, attractive in a "nice girl" kind of way. Jeans. A sweater. Cute.

SHEILA

Hey.

APPLEGATE

Hey.

SHEILA

Sorry I'm late. Traffic. Ugh.

A peck on the lips. She lays her purse on the lamp table, looks around.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

Nice place. I was beginning to think you had something to hide.

APPLEGATE

No. I just like to be sure before I invite someone over.

SHEILA

Oh? What are you sure about?

APPLEGATE

(teasing, charming)
I'm not sure.

She smiles, likes the flirting.

SHEILA
Smells good. What're we having?

APPLEGATE
Surprise.

SHEILA
I like surprises.

APPLEGATE
Oh, I've got plenty in me.

SHEILA
I like that, too.

She pulls him in for a deep kiss.

MARTIN (V.O.)
Who do we think she is?

RAINS (V.O.)
Looks like they've known each other
for awhile.

LORENTO (V.O.)
So gross.

The kiss ends.

SHEILA
No fair.

APPLEGATE
What?

SHEILA
You opened that bottle of wine.

APPLEGATE
How do you know?

SHEILA
I can taste it.

APPLEGATE
You can taste the wine on my lips?

SHEILA
Yes. Get me some.

He heads out of the room toward the kitchen.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
Can I put on some music?

8 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT 8

A smash cut to Applegate in the kitchen, looking toward the living room, waving the finger back "through" the wall and mouthing, angrily, "fuck you, fuck you, fuck you," cranking his arm each time for emphasis.

9 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 9

A different camera angle from near the front door shows Applegate returning from the kitchen with two glasses of wine. Sheila is at the stereo.

SHEILA

It's not working.

APPLEGATE

No?

SHEILA

Am I doing it right?

MARTIN (V.O.)

Hold on.

10 INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT 10

On Martin, Rains and Lorento watching the video.

MARTIN

Go back.

Lorento hits rewind. The image shows Applegate flipping his girlfriend off in reverse, then gets back to the original living room shot.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Stop it.

The shot freezes just as Applegate was walking out.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Where's the camera?

RAINS

What?

MARTIN

When he was in the bedroom we saw the camera on the shelf in the closet and the one behind him on the tripod.

(MORE)

MARTIN (CONT'D)

But that angle of him coming out of
the kitchen that was from the door.

Sure enough, the corner near the door is empty.

Martin runs out of the room. Rains follows. The cameraman runs after them, the shot bouncing erratically all the way into the LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS).

11 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

11

The shot hurries in and settles on Detective Martin's back near the corner by the door. It pushes in closer to see his fingers prodding along the wall until one finally pushes in some fresh putty. A hole goes all the way through.

MARTIN

He hid the camera.
(to Officer Aimes)
Look in that corner.

The shot swings around to show Aimes go to the far corner where the other living room shot was coming from. It only takes him a moment to find another hole in the wall.

AIMES

Yep.

The camera swings back onto Martin and Rains.

MARTIN

He had the whole house rigged. Hidden cameras all over the place, I bet.
(to Aimes)
See if you can find more holes like this.

AIMES

Yes, sir.

Aimes moves off for the search. Martin takes in the house.

MARTIN

He's a sick fuck.

RAINS

No more'n the rest of 'em, I guess.

12 INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

12

Martin, Rains and Lorento come back to the editing desk. The movie is still frozen. Lorento hits play. We see Applegate walking out of the living room again.

SHEILA

Can I put on some music?

RAINS

Fast forward.

It fast-forwards through the flipping-off in the kitchen then Applegate coming back into the living room with the wine. They fast-talk through a few lines then it cuts into the DINING ROOM where they are having dinner.

RAINS (CONT'D)

There.

Regular "play."

13 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

13

A nice meal. Candle light. Static shots.

SHEILA

(agitated)

I was clearly waiting for that spot, for like five minutes. Zip, right in front of me. Took me ten minutes to find another spot and then--

The audio cuts out and bad, white title graphics appear on the screen "BLAH BLAH BLAH" as Sheila continues talking MOS. "BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH" on the screen, plastered over her face like tape. Then the audio returns.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

...the store is closed! Can you believe it, after all that! Ugh! I was so pissed--

APPLEGATE

Ugh.

SHEILA

What? Are you making fun of me.

APPLEGATE

I would never.

SHEILA

I'm just sharing my day with you. No need to get hysterical.

APPLEGATE

Do I look hysterical? Do you know what hysterical looks like?

SHEILA

I know what hysterical means.

APPLEGATE

It means delirious, manic, raging mad. Do I look raging mad to you?

Though he's not "raging mad," there is an intensity and directness to his question. She just stares at him.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

You ever consider the word "hysterectomy?" Same root as "hysterical." Hyster. Which means womb. Look at that. The medical term used to describe a woman's reproductive organs is the same term used to describe someone as delirious or mad. You know why? Because doctors believed that it was a woman's reproductive organs that gave rise to the unstable emotions we associate with hysteria. And that by removing a woman's womb in a hysterectomy you'd also be removing the thing that makes women nuts.

A long beat, staring her down. She's frozen. Then he smiles, letting her off the hook.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Ready for dessert?

SHEILA

You're an asshole sometimes.

APPLEGATE

You like it.

He clears the plates, leaving us on her face. A twinkle in her eye. She does like it.

They are in bed having sex. Straight mish. Blankets over them. His face tucked into the nook of her neck. She looks a little bored.

APPLEGATE
Good quiet.

SHEILA
What?

APPLEGATE
I said it's good. Quiet.

SHEILA
Yeah.

They move like that. He looks over at the closet door and smirks ever-so-subtly.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
You want to try something else?

APPLEGATE
Something else?

SHEILA
We've been seeing each other more than a month. I thought, maybe, another position?

APPLEGATE
You don't like it like this?

SHEILA
I do. It's just, you know, why not move around a little?

She eases him up and rolls over onto her stomach. His eyes go wide. More than shocked. Perhaps even offended.

APPLEGATE
In your--?

SHEILA
-- No. Just regular but like this. From behind. You've never done it like this?

He looks so scared. So innocent. She puts a hand him.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
You're so sweet sometimes. It's okay.

He awkwardly lays down over her back and they start grinding slowly. She reaches an arm back behind his head and moans. He starts to like it.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
You like it?

APPLEGATE
Uh huh.

He's moving faster. Harder. She likes it.

SHEILA
Uh oh. Have I created a monster?

APPLEGATE
You just opened the cage.

SHEILA
I wish I had sooner.

Moan. Moan. He's thrusting hard now.

APPLEGATE
What else do you like?

SHEILA
What do you like?

APPLEGATE
I bet you want another girl here with
us, don't you?

That breaks her rhythm but he doesn't stop.

SHEILA
Another girl?

APPLEGATE
Don't you want another girl here? You
could eat her pussy while I fuck you
from behind?

He wraps her hair in his hand and pulls on it.

SHEILA
Ow! Stop!

APPLEGATE
What's a matter?

SHEILA
You're hurting me.

Thrust. Thrust. Thrust.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
Stop... Get OFF!

She throws him off and scrambles out of bed.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
What the fuck?

APPLEGATE
What?

She's reaching for her clothes.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. It was just... I thought
you wanted it.

SHEILA
For you to hurt me?

She pulls on her jeans.

APPLEGATE
Sit.

She pulls on her top.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)
I said sit!

SHEILA
What am I a fucking dog?

She's out into the living room. He follows. The shot
stays in the bedroom, showing them by the door.

APPLEGATE
I'm sorry. Come on, I thought you'd
like it. I'm sorry.

He holds her shoulder. She shrugs him off and opens the
door.

SHEILA
I'll call you later.

And out. He stands there in shock and shame, fury rising.

He marches back into the bedroom, past the shot so that
all we see is the empty bedroom looking toward the empty
living room. We hear the closet door open.

APPLEGATE
Bad! Bad!

The sound of beatings. The sound of crying and fear.
 Maybe only 20-30 seconds of it but it seems like forever.

THEN CUT TO:

15 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT 15

The girl, Ellen, is in a blood-filled bathtub, naked.
 Applegate bathes her arm gently. A high, wide shot over
 their backs.

APPLEGATE

I love you. You know I love you,
 right?

(she doesn't answer)

Do you love me?

(still no answer)

Speak.

Still no answer. We finally realize she is dead.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

I love you.

He lowers the one arm into the bloody water. Lifts the other.

16 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 16

Applegate sits on the bare, wood floor in the middle of
 the living room in front of a lit fire. Legs curled up to
 him in a ball. Sobbing.

Then a very melodramatic FADE TO BLACK with horribly over-
 the-top, self-romanticized music.

RAINS (V.O.)

Turn it off.

17 INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT 17

The handheld shot pulls back from the black monitor. It
 swings past a close up of Lorento, her face showing how
 shaken she is, then falls on Martin and Rains. Both of
 their faces register that they know now that Ellen didn't
 get away.

RAINS

What say we take a little break?

Lorento moves out of the room. Rains takes out a pack of
 gum and offers a piece to Martin.

He doesn't even register it. He takes out his cell phone and exits. Martin turns the proffered stick of gum toward the cameraman, Steiner.

RAINS (CONT'D)

Why don't you give that a rest, too?

The cameraman lays the camera on a table, still on, but with the shot skewed and sideways.

OFFICER STEINER, mid-20's, is seen for the first time as he moves into the shot with Rains to take the chewing gum.

STEINER

Pretty fucked up, huh?

RAINS

Yup.

STEINER

What's up with him?

A nod over his shoulder, out the door.

RAINS

You mean "Detective Martin?"

STEINER

(a bit rebuked)

Yeah. He seems edgy.

RAINS

Can't reach his daughter. She's upstate in college. Hasn't heard from her in a couple of weeks.

STEINER

Shit. Gotta make it hard to see all this.

RAINS

Now you know why he's edgy.

STEINER

Right. I'm a...

RAINS

You do that.

Steiner exits, squeezing through the doorway past Martin as he returns.

RAINS (CONT'D)

You call her?

Martin nods.

RAINS (CONT'D)

Anything?

Martin shakes his head.

RAINS (CONT'D)

She'll turn up. Probably skiing or something. You know, up in the mountains, no cell coverage. She got a boyfriend?

MARTIN

Can we get back to it?

RAINS

Yeah. Sure.

Rains goes to the computer, futzes around a little until he figures out the play button.

18 INT. BATHROOM - DAY

18

Going FULL SCREEN, The black FADES UP ON:

Applegate looks at himself in the bathroom mirror. We can see the camera on the tripod behind him. He's been crying all night. He rinses his face and lets it drip.

19 INT. SECOND BEDROOM - DAY

19

Shooting over Applegate's shoulder onto the editing station where he is working on Todd and Stacy's wedding video. The shot on the monitor is of Stacy breaking down into tears, yelling at one of her bridesmaids.

STACY

This isn't blue! Come on, Jen, it's not blue, does this look blue to you?

JEN (O.S.)

It looks blue.

STACY

It's not fucking blue. It's lavender or Navy or something but it's not blue.

JEN (V.O.)

Navy is blue.

The shot on screen cuts to Todd with his BEST MAN, tuxedoed on, toasting with a couple of beers.

BEST MAN

Married!

TODD

Married.

BEST MAN

How's it feel to know you'll never get another blow job?

TODD

What are you kidding? Stacy love to suck cock.

BEST MAN

When you say, "I do," they say, "I don't."

TODD

Fuck that. She stops sucking my cock I walk. And licking my balls. Ball licking is mandatory.

It's playful guy talk. Not like an asshole. We like him. They toast and smile.

Like before, in the "cute" video, the two shots come together in a split screen, Stacy and Todd side-by-side in a two-second loop where she says "Blue" and he says "Balls." "Blue." "Balls." Faster and faster. "Blue balls." "Blueballs."

The doorbell rings. Applegate stops the playback.

He spins on his chair so his face comes into view. His eyes are red and puffy from crying last night. He stands and exists frame.

20

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

20

Applegate answers the door. Todd and Stacy. She notices his weary face.

STACY

Hey, you okay?

Applegate just nods.

TODD

So, is it ready?

APPLEGATE

Yeah. Just finished. Coffee?

TODD

We're good.

APPLEGATE

I'll meet you back there. I'm gonna get a refill.

He slumps toward the kitchen, dragging his feet, shoulders hunched. Stacy gives Todd a concerned look.

21

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - DAY

21

Applegate is in the room with them. They've clearly already seen the footage. Stacy is crying. Todd is furious.

TODD

What the fuck?! Seriously? Are you insane?! What the fuck, man?!

APPLEGATE

This is real! This is about you. You guys! It's got meaning.

TODD

It makes us look like shit!

APPLEGATE

It makes you look human. Would you rather a piece of meaningless drivel? A fabrication? A valentine?

TODD

Yes! It's a wedding video!

STACY

Can we just go?

TODD

No, we're not going. We paid him five thousand dollars. Cash. For this!

APPLEGATE

Money? This is about money for you?! Here. Here's money.

He opens a desk drawer that's full of cash. He pulls it all the way out and throws it at Todd, spilling cash all over the place.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

People and their fucking money. Life isn't money. Money is an illusion. The same illusion you want this video to be! A vanity. A falsehood.

TODD

Fuck you, man!

He gathers cash from around him, quickly counting about what he's owed.

TODD (CONT'D)

Let's go.

He turns a little bit to take Stacy's hand. When he turns back, Applegate smashes him across the face with the coffee mug. It breaks, cutting him and dousing him in scalding coffee. He screams, hands to his face.

Stacy screams.

Applegate throws Todd to the floor (where his body falls just off the bottom of the frame). He kicks at him. Stacy is the main shot behind Todd, curled into the wall, wailing, crying.

Applegate looks around, spots a crystal paperweight and palms it. He brings it down on Todd (also off screen).

When his hand and the paper weight come back up, they have blood on them. Stacy scream and cries. Another blow. Hand back up into the foreground, more blood.

Smash, smash, smash and stop.

Reverse onto Applegate, bloodstained, fire in his eyes, staring at Stacy, who is in shock.

APPLEGATE

I'm sorry. It's been a rough day. One of my dogs died last night.

Beat, then:

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Want to see her?

Applegate tosses Stacy into kitchen. She's scared.

STACY

Please... I don't know what you're doing. Please don't do this.

He takes keys from his pocket, bends down to the cabinets beneath the counter and fits a key into a U-bolt on the handles. He opens the cabinet to reveal Ellen's body stuffed inside. He pulls her out. Stacy SCREAMS.

23

INT. SECOND BEDROOM/KITCHEN - NIGHT

23

MARTIN

Have we looked in there?

A brief look between he and Rains and they run out. The camera follows behind them. Through the DINING ROOM and into the KITCHEN (CONTINUOUS).

There's the cupboard with the lock on it.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

(to Officer Aimes)

Break that open.

The cop takes out his billy stick, fits it inside the U-bolt and twists, breaking off the door handle. The cabinet falls open.

There's a body inside, seen from behind.

Rains and Martin reach in, turning it around. It's Todd, way dead, his face crusted over in open wounds.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Dammit it! He's fucking with us! He knew we'd see that in the video and come here and find... Fuck!

RAINS

Calm down.

MARTIN

He's fucking with us, Joe.

RAINS

Ben! Calm down!

Martin spins to the side and puts his cell phone to his ear. He waits for the ring. For the answering message.

MARTIN

Gina, it's dad. Baby, I really need you to call me.

He's trying to keep it together. Trying to hold in the emotion. The handheld shot zooms in for a close-up.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

It's been two weeks and I'm freaking out. I really need you to call me, okay, baby. Gina. Okay?
 (turns back into the shot,
 wiping his face)
 Okay. I love you.

He hangs up. Hold. Then he looks around where we imagine everyone else is looking at him. He walks out of the kitchen.

The shot zooms out to reveal the whole kitchen, Rains, Lorento, the other cops, Todd dead on the floor.

24 INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT 24

The camera follows Rains and Lorento back into the second bedroom. Martin is in there, seated on the couch, staring at the wall.

RAINS

You okay?

No answer.

RAINS (CONT'D)

(to Lorento)
 Let's keep going.

She presses play again.

25 INT. KITCHEN - DAY 25

Applegate drags Stacy out of the kitchen. She's screaming the whole way.

APPLEGATE

Quiet! Quiet!

26 INT. HALLWAY - DAY 26

As he shoves her down the hallway, Stacy sees Todd dead on the floor in the editing room behind them.

STACY

Todd! Todd, baby, Todd!

Applegate palms the side of her head and smashes it against the wall. She stops screaming but keeps crying.

The blow broke her gold necklace, which falls to the floor with the dolphin pendant.

27

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

27

Applegate opens the closet. Stacy sees Chris inside and the open chains beside him.

STACY

No. No, please, please. No, don't do this.

APPLEGATE

Quiet!

He hits her again. She keeps struggling as he forces first her leg into a shackle, then her arm. She keeps screaming and pleading.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

QUIET!

(to Chris)

Tell her!

He slams the closet door shut. On the slam we cut into:

28

INT. CLOSET - DAY

28

Chris and Stacy.

STACY

Let me out! Let me out, goddamn you!
Goddamn it, let me out!

Chris is frantically trying to get her to quiet down, though his voice doesn't raise above a sharp whisper.

CHRIS

Be quiet. Please! Please be quiet!

STACY

Why? Why the hell aren't you screaming?

(loud out the door)

Let me out, you fuck! Goddamn you!

CHRIS

He'll beat me. Shh. Shh, please.
When one of us isn't quiet he beats
the other. Please. Please.

He's almost in tears with the memory of his last beating,
whenever that was. She sees the wounds all over him, and
calms down.

STACY

I'm sorry, I...

She gives a little nod. The first step of acquiescence.
Her hand goes reflexively to where the pendant would be
and she realizes it's gone. She panics a little, looking
around her.

CHRIS

What?

STACY

(still teary)

Nothing. How long... how long have
you been here?

His face says he doesn't know exactly.

CHRIS

I sleep a lot. It's--

Whatever thought that was, he doesn't have words for it.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

What day is it?

STACY

March 5th.

His eyes close. Thinking wearily.

CHRIS

Five... five weeks I guess. We came
at the beginning of February. We were
getting an anniversary video for our
parents. They were married on
Valentine's Day.

STACY

We?

CHRIS

My sister. He took her out last
night.

Stacy's free hand jerks involuntarily to her mouth and her face shows regret. He reads it.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
She's dead, isn't she?

She nods.

STACY
I'm sorry.

Chris' eyes show the pain.

CHRIS
It's better. She's better... she's better... now. Ellen. My little ballerina. We're twins. Were. She used to dance.

He makes a finger twirl, as if referencing a ballerina.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
When we were kids. She pretend to be a ballerina and I'd be her audience.

A distant smile of recollection. Then more pain, a few sobs which he covers with his free hand. Then he stops, wipes his eyes, looks at Stacy.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
You came with someone. I heard a man.

Reality comes back to Stacy now. No tears. Too much shock.

STACY
My husband.

CHRIS
He killed him?

Stacy nods distantly. She tries tugging the chain in the wall. It's strong. She sinks. A beat. Then looks up.

STACY
Does he...? You know.

Chris shakes his head.

STACY (CONT'D)
Your sister?

Still shakes his head.

CHRIS
 No. He doesn't think of us like that.
 We're his pets. His dogs.

STACY
 (realization)
 His dogs?

CHRIS
 Fucking weirdo.

STACY
 We've got to get out of here.

CHRIS
 (urgently)
 You can't! If you try to escape, if
 you even try, he'll beat me. He'll
 torture me. He's done it. When we
 first got here I told Ellen to get
 out. She made it to the front yard.
 He brought her back and---

He drifts off.

STACY
 What?

Chris shudders, all the muscles in his neck and face
 tightening like sail-ropes in a hurricane. He shakes his
 head, cannot speak.

CHRIS
 Just... you can't. Please. Please!

Stacy sinks back, trapped.

OFFICER AIMES (V.O.)
 Lieutenant.

29 INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

29

The handheld finds Officer Aimes in the doorway.

OFFICER AIMES
 The owner is here. The lady who owns
 the house.

30

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

30

Officer Steiner hangs in the doorway, shooting out at Rains and Martin as they talk to MRS. BIJAN. Rains is looking at a paper, the lease. Rain falls behind them.

MRS. BIJAN

I only met him the day he signed the lease. He was a nice man. Dressed like a golfer. Reminded me of my nephew, the doctor.

RAINS

Charles Winters. Moved in eight months ago.

MARTIN

Think this one's real?

Rains shrugs, hands the paper to Aimes.

RAINS

Run it.

(to Mrs. Bijan)

Did you ever do a walk-through while he lived here? Notice anything personal? Mail? Pictures? Anything at all?

MRS. BIJAN

Last time I was here was the day I met him. He paid his rent on time. In cash. No complaints from or about him. You know I bet you hear this all the time, but I just can't believe he did the things you say.

MARTIN

Did he give you any ID when you rented to him?

She shakes her head.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

A social security number?

Another shake.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

You didn't do a credit check?

MRS. BIJAN

He paid cash. Six months in advance.
You know how many tenants with great
credit have skipped out on me?

RAINS

All right. Anything else you think we
should know.

MRS. BIJAN

Well, I sold the place.

RAINS

Sold it? When?

MRS. BIJAN

Just last month. Escrow closes in
sixty days. New owners applied for re-
zoning. I think they're building low
income apartments on the whole block.

MARTIN

(to Rains)

So he's getting kicked out.

RAINS

Why not just disappear? Why leave the
video?

Martin doesn't have an answer. Then his cell phone rings.
He looks at it, moves off the porch into the front yard,
remaining in the background. We can hear that he is
speaking, but not understand anything he's saying.

RAINS (CONT'D)

All right, ma'am. Thanks for coming
out so late.

MRS. BIJAN

Do you know when I'll get to rent the
house again?

RAINS

For two months?

MRS. BIJAN

Two months rent is two months rent.
Vacation renters pay by the week.

A "low battery" light begins to flash in the corner of
the screen.

STEINER (V.O.)

Shit.

RAINS

I don't know, ma'am. It depends on how long the investigation takes. This is a crime scene now. A murder scene.

MRS. BIJAN

Thank God I already sold it. I can't imagine what that would've done to the market price.

Martin comes back up the steps.

RAINS

All right , thanks again for co--

The screen goes black.

31 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

31

Like a jump cut, Rains and Martin are back in the house, mid-sentence.

MARTIN

-- we think he is, Winters or Applegate? Or either of them?

Rains rubs his eyes, tired.

RAINS

You hear her about the rent? At least three people killed and all she cares about is the property value. What the fuck is wrong with people?

MARTIN

The list is too long to enumerate.

Beat.

RAINS

Gina? On the phone?

MARTIN

No. Her mom.

RAINS

How's she?

MARTIN

Freaking out. Her tone on the phone is like, ah, I don't know. It's weird.

(MORE)

MARTIN (CONT'D)

It's not like she's calling her ex-husband, or the father of her only child. It's like... It's like she's calling the cop working the case.

RAINS

She trusts you.

MARTIN

Heather? Please. She didn't trust me enough to stay married to me.

RAINS

Well, you were a shitty husband.

MARTIN

(sarcastic)

Thank you.

RAINS

But you're a great father. And even your bitch of an ex knows there's no one on Earth who's gonna work longer or harder to make sure her daughter shows up safe.

MARTIN

(more humbly)

Thank you.

RAINS

And, when they meet you, the parents of that girl in the video, they'll feel the same way.

Martin nods pensively. The two silently turn and head toward the back bedroom.

OFFICER LORENTO (O.S.)

Lieutenant!

Officer Lorento is at the back door, an urgent look on her face. They run toward her.

Steiner has to follow in a run, the camera bouncing hard through the house, out the door and into the BACK YARD (CONTINUOUS).

Steiner chases them onto the rain soaked porch and FALLS. The camera image rolls. We hear him grunt and curse. A hard thud and a moan. The image goes black.

32 EXT. BACK YARD/GARAGE - NIGHT

32

The shot comes back on looking at the porch-edge Steiner tumbled off. He stands, turns and walks toward a small GARAGE with a light on inside (CONTINUOUS).

Lorento and Rains are in the garage standing over a hole in the concrete floor with the edge of a ladder poking out. It's in the corner. We see the washing machine has been shoved off to the side.

RAINS

-- like this?

LORENTO

No. One of the guys spotted it. The board.

The camera picks up a piece of painted plywood sort-of under the washer. Rains calls down into the hole.

RAINS

Ben? Anything?

MARTIN (O.S.)

(echo-y from down below)

Not good.

33 INT. BASEMENT UNDER GARAGE - NIGHT

33

The handheld camera is positioned on the ladder, the spotlight illuminating Rains and Martin in the basement standing over two other bodies.

Rains is holding a young woman, the one from the closet.

RAINS

It's Ellen Fowler.

Martin reaches for the other. The clothes indicate a woman. Turning it over, the face is just a skeleton.

MARTIN

This one's been here awhile.

RAINS

Guy's only been in the house eight months.

MARTIN

Then he brought her with him when he moved in.

RAINS

Mother?

MARTIN

Wouldn't put it past him. Surprised
he doesn't have her in a rocking
chair in the window.

He lays the skeleton down, looks around. Something
catches his attention in the corner.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Hey, gimme some light over here.

The camera POV jerks down the steps and walks toward the
corner. The spotlight illuminates a tarp over a pile of
something. A woman's foot and shoe are poking out.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Joe.

We hear Rains walk over and step into the shot. Martin
pulls back the tarp. A stack of bodies. Three. On top is
Sheila, Applegate's girlfriend.

RAINS

The girlfriend.

MARTIN

Guess she came back.

They move Sheila's body aside and lay out the other two.
Both men. One in his twenties, Latino, dark curly hair.
The other in his 40's. White. Chubby.

RAINS

Who are these guys?

MARTIN

I have a feeling we're gonna find out.

34

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

34

A tea kettle is whistling. A handheld CLOSE-UP of eggs in
a frying pan. A spatula reaches in to flip them.

The shot swings to an electric kettle. A hand unplugs it,
then pours the hot water into a mug with a tea bag.

The doorbell rings.

35 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

35

Applegate walks to the door and opens it. Clearly seen in the doorway is Detective Martin.

MARTIN (O.S.)

Oh, fuck.

36 INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

36

The camera swings onto Martin's pissed off face.

MARTIN

Motherfucker.

Swing back to the monitor:

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Good afternoon, sir. I'm Detective Benjamin Martin, Metro Police. Do you have a moment?

APPLEGATE

I'm making breakfast.

MARTIN

This'll just take a moment. Have you seen either of these people?

He shows him two photographs.

APPLEGATE

No.

The shot on the monitor cuts to INT. CLOSET - DAY and shows Chris and Ellen, both still alive, sitting breathlessly in the closet.

MARTIN

Ten feet away. I was ten feet away!

RAINS

You don't know that.

MARTIN

There they are!

RAINS

It's a movie! Who knows when he took that shot. When he cut it in. They could have both been dead by the time you knocked on that door.

MARTIN

No. No. He's telling us they were
alive because he wants us to know how
close we were. He wants us to know he
beat us. How he beat me.

The shot on the monitor changes back to INT. LIVING ROOM.

37

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

37

Back to full screen.

RAINS

A-P-P-L-E-G-A-T-E? Applegate. Edward,
you said?

APPLEGATE

That's correct. You have kids?

Martin looks up, surprised.

MARTIN

I'm sorry.

APPLEGATE

You have kids.

MARTIN

A daughter.

APPLEGATE

How old?

Martin is a little awkward with the personal questions
but tries to be polite.

MARTIN

She's 20.

APPLEGATE

What's her name?

MARTIN

Her name?

APPLEGATE

I'm sorry if I'm being too personal.
I had a son once. Aaron. He died.
Childhood Leukemia.

Martin softens.

MARTIN

I'm very sorry to hear that.

APPLEGATE

I just, you know, ever since then I've always had a thing for asking people about their kids. Kind of a, I don't know, whatever.

MARTIN

Her name's Gina.

APPLEGATE

Gina. That's nice. She in college?

Martin nods tentatively.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Where?

MARTIN

Look, Mr. Applegate, I have a lot of houses to visit.

APPLEGATE

I understand.

Martin takes out his business card.

MARTIN

If you could just--

APPLEGATE

Do you miss her? Her being away in college.

Martin is getting irritated now, just tolerating him.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

I miss my son. I miss Aaron.

He seems genuinely sad when he says it and the moment hangs there awkwardly.

MARTIN

I'm very sorry, Mr. Applegate.

APPLEGATE

Thank you. I believe you. I appreciate it.

MARTIN

There are a couple of parents out there missing their children right now, too. So, if you see these kids or hear anything that might help, please let me know.

Applegate takes the card.

APPLEGATE

I sure will. They look like nice kids. I hope you find them.

MARTIN

Have a nice day, sir.

Martin walks away. Applegate closes the door and looks at the business card. He takes a pen from his pocket and writes on the back of it.

38

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

38

Rains is looking at the business card, reading the back.

RAINS

"He knows how I feel."

MARTIN

Fuck that!

(to the monitor)

Fuck you! I don't know how you feel, you sick fuck! Fuck you!

Martin rips the monitor down, smashing it to the floor where it breaks in a spark. The handheld swishes down onto it, then back up onto Martin, furious.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Get that thing the fuck out of my face!

He reaches in at the camera and the image is blackened and blurred in the struggle.

STEINER

Hey, what are you doing?!

RAINS (V.O.)

Ben! Ben! Get off him!

The image clarifies as Rains pulls Martin back away from the camera. We see Loreto in the side of the frame, frightened.

RAINS (CONT'D)
Don't take it out on him.

MARTIN
It's fucking annoying.

STEINER (O.S.)
I'm just doing my job.

MARTIN
Shut up!

RAINS
Hey! It's not his fault.

They all calm down.

RAINS (CONT'D)
Look at me. Look at me!

He does.

RAINS (CONT'D)
That was a helluva conversation you
didn't remember.

MARTIN
Oh, come on. It was small talk.

RAINS
He had a kid who died. How come that
didn't make it into your notes?

MARTIN
Cause it was nothing.

RAINS
Nothing is nothing. Nothing. Ever.
You're better than that... usually.

MARTIN
What the hell does that mean?

RAINS
We both know what it means.

MARTIN
What? Gina.

RAINS
You're distracted.

MARTIN

You have no fucking idea what is going on with Gina!

RAINS

I get it, Ben. I do. I love that kid, too. She's important to all of us. But so is this.

A longer beat. The tension ebbs.

RAINS (CONT'D)

And I'm sure she's fine. Maybe her cell phone's out. Maybe she went somewhere on vacation. But she's fine. And I need you to focus.

Rains reaches out a comforting hand toward Martin's arm. He shrugs him off and exits the room.

STEINER (O.S.)

That guy's losing it.

RAINS

Don't start.

STEINER (O.S.)

He attacked me.

RAINS

He's under a lot of stress.

STEINER (O.S.)

Still, he shouldn't be taking it out on--

RAINS

I know! I know, all right. Just, let's just get back to work.

(to Lorento)

Can you get another monitor out here?

She nods and exits.

RAINS (CONT'D)

(to Steiner)

Why don't you take a break.

There's a beat, held on Rains.

RAINS (CONT'D)

I said turn it off.

STEINER (O.S.)
You think he's got her?

RAINS
What?

STEINER (V.O.)
Him. You think he has his daughter?

Rains looks toward Steiner coldly.

STEINER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The way he's messing with him.
Taunting him. I mean, all of this is
for him it just seems so obvious that--

RAINS
Shut if off.

STEINER (V.O.)
How can you ignore--

Rains puts a hand over the lens. The camera powers down.

39

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

39

The shot comes back WITH NO LIGHT, looking out a window into the backyard, showing the garage in the background with a light above the doors, illuminating the area. The rain has stopped.

In the foreground, standing near a patio table, is Detective Martin on the phone. We realize that Steiner is shooting him without his knowledge.

MARTIN
Hey, baby. It's dad again. I'm a...
I'm. Shit.

A beat. One arm goes to the back of his neck, rests there. His eyes are closed. He cries for just a second, then takes a deep breath.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
I just want to hear your voice again,
kiddo. I want to see you. It would
mean so much to me if you could just
call me, just one call, you know, if
you don't want to, if you're mad at me
for something, for anything, you don't
even have to leave a message. Just let
me see your number come in so I know
you're okay.

(MORE)

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Just a text, could you send me a text, Gin? God, I wish you could just send me a text from wherever you are and just let me know you're okay. Baby, I love you. Your mom loves you. We don't love each other, I know that hurts you, but we both love you. Gina please just --

RAINS (V.O.)

Ben.

Martin looks up at Rains and shuts the phone closed.

RAINS (CONT'D)

Lotta drama back there.

Martin just looks at him, trying to hold it together.

RAINS (CONT'D)

I ah, I'm sorry about asking this, sorry before I even say it.

MARTIN

Then don't say it.

RAINS

Have to. According to your notes you came to Applegate's door seventeen days ago. When was Gina supposed to come home?

MARTIN

He doesn't have her!

RAINS

The guy's clearly taken a interest in you. You said Gina was coming home from school, then she disappears. Maybe she got here and he--

MARTIN

He doesn't have Gina! Just drop it, all right. He doesn't have her!

He bumps past Rains, angry, shaken.

The shot lowers down from the window and bounces as if Officer Steiner has just sat with the camera on his lap. The frame is just of the wall and an edge of the window he was just shooting through.

STEINER (V.O.)

Fuck.

The shot goes black as he turns the camera off. Then it comes back on in the same spot, but no longer in record mode. Now in video mode. A double "rewind" arrow appears.

The shots plays backward through the candid shot of Martin through the window until it reaches the shot of the broken monitor on the floor by Steiner's feet.

The indicator becomes a "stop" square. The camera turns off. Black again.

40

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

40

The camera comes back on to see Officers Lorento and Aimes connecting a new monitor to the computer.

Rains and Martin enter.

RAINS
(to Aimes)
Anything on Charles Willard?

AIMES
Haven't heard back yet.

LORENTO
We're all set.

Rains looks at Martin.

RAINS
This one's department property so how about we get it back in one piece.

Martin grimaces. Rains nods at Lorento. She hits play.

41

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

41

A wide shot from the door shows the dining table is set for dinner. Candlelight. Soft music.

Another angle shows Sheila on the couch. She is dressed nicely but her mood is cool. She sips at a glass of wine as Applegate finishes setting a log on the fire.

APPLEGATE
I'm glad you came over.

SHEILA
I'm still mad. You hurt me. You scared me.

APPLEGATE

I know. That's why I invited you over. To apologize.

He hands her a small, wrapped present. That softens her.

SHEILA

What is it?

APPLEGATE

Open it.

She unwraps the gift. It's a long jewelry box. We should see this coming. She opens it and, of course, it is the gold chain with the dolphin pendant.

SHEILA

Oh, (beep)...

The (beep) means her mouth moves to say his name, only it is BEEPED out on the audio track.

APPLEGATE

You like it?

SHEILA

It's adorable.

APPLEGATE

Do you like dolphins?

SHEILA

What girl doesn't like dolphins?
Thank you.

She gives him a small kiss.

APPLEGATE

Here.

She turns a little so he can put the chain on her.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Lemme see.

She turns back. He looks at the necklace.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Beautiful. Ready for dinner?

She smiles and nods.

42

INT. CLOSET - NIGHT

42

Stacy looks at Chris. He seems to be sleeping.

STACY
(a whisper)
Chris. Chris.

She nudges his foot with hers. He wakes. Then reality sets in. The closet. The girl who isn't his sister. He stiffens.

CHRIS
What? What happened?

STACY
There's someone here.

Chris listens. Hears muffled voices. The clink of silverware. He agrees with a little nod.

STACY (CONT'D)
What if we yell?

CHRIS
No!

It's too loud. He gets nervous. Quieter but still intense:

CHRIS (CONT'D)
No. Just be quiet. Good quiet.

STACY
Don't "good quiet" me. I'm not a goddamn dog and neither are you. We could yell, get their attention.

CHRIS
And what?

He yanks on the chains in the wall.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
So whoever it is comes to the closet and sees this? And what do you think he's going to do? He's going to kill them. You want to kill them?

She knows he's right. She slumps down and emotion returns. Fear.

STACY
We can't just... what do we do just stay here and wait to die?

A long beat of silence. She starts to cry.

STACY (CONT'D)

I miss my dad. He walked me down the aisle, he was so proud. He had, he had this tiny little yellow box. I love yellow. He gave it to me just before we walked out. You know what it was? A Cracker Jack ring.

(she laughs through her tears)

He said, "some rings a groom gives to his bride and some a daddy gives to his little girl."

(more tears, pain)

...daddy...

43 INT. EDITING ROOM - NIGHT

43

The camera swings off the monitor to Martin's stoic face. Whatever he's feeling, he's not showing it. The camera swings back to the monitor.

The scene has cut to the dining room.

44 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

44

Sheila is seated at the table, set beautifully. Applegate comes from the kitchen with the main platter of the meal. Roasted chicken, pasta, vegetables. He really went all out. It looks great.

SHEILA

Wow. Impressive. I'm going to get mad at you more often.

APPLEGATE

Please, no.

SHEILA

I didn't know you cooked.

APPLEGATE

You don't know a lot of things about me.

SHEILA

Like you like threesomes?

It's a dig. He pauses, looks at her.

APPLEGATE

Do you want to have a nice dinner?

A beat. She nods. Puts on a smile. Scoots a little closer to him. The coolness dissipates.

SHEILA

I'm sorry. This looks amazing.

APPLEGATE

You look amazing.

SHEILA

Thank you.

She leans him to kiss him. A longer one than on the couch. She breaks away with a smile, then reaches for her glass of wine. There's just a sip left. She finishes it and stands.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

There more wine?

APPLEGATE

I'll get it.

SHEILA

It's okay.

She takes his glass also and exits.

45 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

45

Entering the kitchen, messy with pots and pans, Sheila spots the wine bottle on the counter. She also spots the U-bolt on the cabinet handles below the counter.

46 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

46

She returns to Applegate with the wine and curiosity on her face. She sits at the table. He's eating. She's not.

APPLEGATE

What's a matter?

SHEILA

Nothing.

APPLEGATE

Eat. I mean, try it. Dig in.

She takes a couple of bites.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Good?

She nods.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

What is it?

A beat. She takes a sip of her wine. The U-bolt is clearly on her mind though she won't spit it out.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

What?

SHEILA

It's nothing.

APPLEGATE

Come on, we just made up, don't put something else between us.

SHEILA

Well, it's ah...

She glances at the locked cabinet behind him. He looks over his shoulder and sees what she's looking at.

APPLEGATE

A man can't lock a cabinet in his own house?

SHEILA

No, of course you can. It's just, it's a big ol' lock. It makes me curious.

APPLEGATE

Whatever it is, if it's locked, it's probably private.

SHEILA

Of course.

A few bites of difficult silence.

APPLEGATE

We're not going to get to enjoy this are we?

SHEILA

I just, I mean I could see a man wanting to keep some things private but maybe you'd put them in a drawer or in the closet.

APPLEGATE

In the closet?

SHEILA

But that big lock out in the open, it almost, well not almost, it draws attention to exactly the thing you're trying to hide.

APPLEGATE

I'm not trying to hide anything. I don't lock my closet.

SHEILA

Right. So I'm not curious about the closet.

APPLEGATE

But you're curious about the cabinet.

SHEILA

Well... yeah.

A beat. Then he stands, irritated.

APPLEGATE

Fine. Let's go see what's in the cabinet.

He turns toward the kitchen.

SHEILA

No, it's okay.

APPLEGATE

What's okay?

SHEILA

We don't have to look. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to make such a big deal about it.

She stabs some pasta on her fork. He takes his keys out of his pocket and extends them to her.

APPLEGATE

Go see what's in the cabinet.

A beat, then she takes the keys and heads back into the kitchen. He turns and stands in the doorway, watching her.

Sheila bends down toward the cabinet. He's leaning at the kitchen door, silently watching her.

She opens the bolt and slides it out, pausing for a moment to look over her shoulder at him. His face is impassive. She opens the cabinet.

There's a box inside. She looks back over her shoulder at him. A question on her eyes. "Can I?"

APPLEGATE

Open it. But don't be upset if you find something you don't like. I had it locked for a reason.

She slides the box out onto the floor.

SHEILA

It's heavy.

She opens the box. Her eyes light up.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

She pulls out pictures. Handfuls of old snapshots. Even an album that she flips through.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

What wouldn't I like about this, (beep)? All your old... oh my god, you're so cute.

She looks at him.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

Why would you want to hide these? These are great.

APPLEGATE

Good pictures. Bad memories.

Her face clouds.

SHEILA

What bad memories?

His face goes back to some ugly place. He takes the pictures from her hands and stuffs them back in the box.

APPLEGATE

Can we put them away now? You've seen them. Let's put them away.

SHEILA

Come on. You can't hide them away now! I'll just be more curious.

She pulls more pictures out even while he's trying to pack them up.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
Look at your hair, I love it. Is that your mother?

He freezes. She looks at him with the question. He nods.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
She was beautiful.

APPLEGATE
Please, let's put them away.

He's trying to keep it together.

SHEILA
What's her name? Where does she live?

APPLEGATE
She's not far from here.

SHEILA
Can I meet her?

APPLEGATE
You want to meet my mother?

SHEILA
I'd love to.

APPLEGATE
Fine. I'll take you to meet my mother.

SHEILA
Yes, that'd be--

He smacks her hard across the face, knocking her to the tiled kitchen floor. Blood breaks from her mouth. She sputters. He lifts her by the hair and throws her into the wall. She bounces and falls. He kicks her twice in the gut, leaving her in a ball gasping for air.

Calmly, he crosses off screen and a second or two later comes back holding a large kitchen knife.

She looks up in time to see him coming at her with the knife. In time to realize her danger, to feel the fear.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
“(beep)”, no, I'm, I'm sorry, I--

She can only scramble further into the corner. He stabs at her.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

No. No. No.

The blade cuts her arm, her hand. Then his other hand blocks her defenses and he gets a jab through. The knife sinks deeply into her shoulder. She coughs in shock. Her face tightens. She can barely expresses the pain.

She looks down at the knife sticking out of her shoulder. He has let go of it so it's just sticking there. She reaches for it.

APPLEGATE

I wouldn't--

Even as she touches it she feels the pain surge and pulls her hand away, crying now.

SHEILA

What are you... why... what are you doing?

He falls back to a seated position, just looking at her there with the knife in her shoulder, bleeding down her blouse.

APPLEGATE

January 16th, 1991 was the day I lost my virginity. It wasn't much. I wish I could say I had a girlfriend and we'd spent two years falling in love and all that but love wasn't taught very well in this house. No one really liked me in school. I didn't have any friends. Or girlfriends. I was a virgin. They made fun of me for it.

During his speech, blood begins to pool around Sheila. Her face becomes more pale. Her breathing slows.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Then on this day, January the 16th, a guy comes to me and says if I pay him \$50, that this girl would have sex with me. It wasn't like he was a teenage pimp or she was a teenage prostitute or anything like that. There was a bet. He bet her fifty dollars that she wouldn't sleep me with me so she said she would.

(MORE)

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

He knew he'd have to pay her the fifty dollars if she did so he figured he'd get it from me. Well I paid of course. And we had sex. I wasn't circumcised. I didn't know I wasn't circumcised. I didn't know what circumcision was so when she said, "you have a foreskin," I didn't know what she meant. I asked her to explain but she just laughed at me. She laughed the whole time we were having sex.

Sheila slumps to her side. Still alive but life fading.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

That night I asked my mother, I said, "what's a foreskin?" You know what she said? She said, "why, don't you want yours?" I still didn't know what it was so I said, "I don't know." She said, "well if you don't want it, that's fine." She took knife from the kitchen, that one, in fact. She told me to lie down on the floor. She told me to remove my pants. And she circumcised me. I bled everywhere, my God, I bled so much. When she'd finished she held the piece of skin up to my face and said, "There, that's a foreskin."

He leans forward and pulls the knife from Sheila's shoulder. Blood pulses out over her chest. She crumbles, eyes fluttering, gasping for air, for life.

Applegate rips off the gold chain with the dolphin pendant. He exits the kitchen. She tries to crawl, tries to move, but can't really go anywhere.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Come on. Let's go meet my mother.

He scoops her up into his arms and carries her out of the room, out of frame, leaving us to look at the blood stained floor.

The trap door in the ceiling of the basement opens, revealing light above though it is dark below.

The light is obscured as Applegate rolls Sheila's body over the hole then drops it. She thuds to the floor.

APPLEGATE

Mom. Sheila.

The trap door closes, extinguishing the light.

49 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

49

Applegate throws the broken chain into the fireplace and just stands there.

RAINS (V.O.)

All right.

50 INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

50

Lorento, after wiping her face, stops the playback.

LORENTO

Can I get five?

Rains nods. She exits.

MARTIN

It's the mother down there. The skeleton.

Rains nods again.

RAINS

I think I'll take five myself.

He heads out, leaving Martin in there with Steiner. A long beat where the camera just holds on Detective Martin as he stares at the computer monitor, saying nothing. Then he looks directly at the camera.

MARTIN

Lemme see that thing.

STEINER (O.S.)

What?

Martin holds his hand out.

MARTIN

Gimme the camera.

The shot swishes during the handoff, then settles on Officer Steiner, squinting from the bright light in his face.

MARTIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
How's it feel?

STEINER
I don't--

MARTIN (O.S.)
You don't like it, do you?

STEINER
I'm just doing my job.

MARTIN (O.S.)
Spying on me through the window? That
part of your job description?

STEINER
I... I erased that.

MARTIN (O.S.)
What's going on in your life,
Officer Steiner?

STEINER
My life?

MARTIN (O.S.)
You married? Kids?

STEINER
No. Can we not--?

MARTIN (O.S.)
Girlfriend? Boyfriend? You got a
disease? Anyone you know sick or
dying? How can we improve the quality
of your footage by including your
personal pain on it?

He gets it.

STEINER
I'm sorry. I shouldn't have shot you.
I'm sorry. I did erase it.

The camera swishes as Martin hands it back to Steiner,
who sets it down on the couch so the shot is just of the
door and wall.

STEINER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I'll turn it off.

MARTIN (O.S.)
Pick it up.

STEINER (O.S.)

What?

MARTIN (O.S.)

Pick up the camera.

Swish again and settle on Detective Martin who takes a long beat, gathering some words.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

She's dead.

STEINER (O.S.)

I know, I saw--

MARTIN

No. My daughter. Gina. She was killed two weeks ago. Bus hit her. You believe that? It's a fucking punchline. Wha' d'ya call it, a figure of speech, no, what's the fucking word? I don't know. She got hit by a bus. Snowy road coming back from a weekend at a friend's house. Totalled her car. Done. The local police called me. I ah, I guess I haven't accepted it yet. I keep calling her, hoping she'll answer, knowing she won't. You ever lose someone? You know that feeling, that thing of just, why can't I pick up the phone and call her and she'll answer like she always did? What's different now? Any dad'll tell you he'd jump in front of a bus for his kid. A euphemism. That's it. A fucking bus hit my kid.

His head is held low, staring down. Then he stands and walks out of frame.

MARTIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Erase that. Erase it.

STEINER (O.S.)

Yes, sir.

The camera stops.

The camera is back on again. Rains and Lorento re-enter.

RAINS

They're ordering some pizza. Putting
on coffee. You all right?

Martin keeps his head turned away. Just grunts a "yeah."

Lorenzo presses play.

52 INT. CLOSET - NIGHT

52

Stacy and Chris are silent, tense.

STACY

I don't hear anything. Do you hear
anything?

He won't speak.

STACY (CONT'D)

We should--

The door opens. Applegate is there, covered in blood. He reaches in with his keys and unlocks Stacy's arm. She kicks at him.

STACY (CONT'D)

No, no, no!

He smacks her hard across the face. One, two, three times. She's goes unconscious. Chris just pulls back into the wall as far as he can. Applegate unlocks Stacy's leg and drags her out of the closet. The door closes. Chris is alone again.

53 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

53

A static shot. Applegate sits at the dining room table, still set with the meal though the candles have burned lower. Stacy is in the other chair, slumped, still unconscious.

He shakes her awake. She slowly comes to. Gathers her surroundings. She jerks, startled.

APPLEGATE

It's okay. It's okay. Eat.

She settles down, frightened and cautious but not kicking and screaming. She looks at the meal.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Eat.

She doesn't move.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)
It's okay. Eat.

She's nervous. Hesitant. There's a fork. She picks it up slowly. Takes a bite.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)
Is it good?

A nod.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)
How good is it?

STACY
Very good.

APPLEGATE
I'm glad you like it.

He brushes a hair back from her face. Looks at her.

LORENTO (O.S.)
He's elevating her.

MARTIN (O.S.)
What?

LORENTO (O.S.)
We did a case study like this. Serial killers dehumanize their captives so there is no moral issue with how they treat them. Applegate thinks of his as pets, dogs, but he's elevating her. Sitting her at the table. Letting her eat like a person. Asking her questions geared toward validating himself.

APPLEGATE
Would you like something to drink? Wine?
(a beat, Stacy doesn't answer)
It's my mother's recipe, that chicken. She used to make it for me all the time when I was a kid. I loved it.
(beat)
Maybe a soda? You want a soda?

The off screen chatter stops. Stacy shakes her head.

APPLEGATE
I had a son, you know. He died of Cancer. I didn't cry. His mother cried. She left me. I didn't kill her or anything, in case you were wondering. My mother cried. That perplexed me. I'd never seen my mother cry over anything.
(MORE)

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Certainly never for me. The very woman who taught me what it looked like to feel nothing was here, *feeling* over my son. Maybe she was faking it, I don't know. All I know is that I didn't feel anything. What kind of a man doesn't feel anything at the death of his child? You think I'm crazy?

A beat. Her face shows her contemplation on whether to answer or not.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

You can answer.

STACY

For real?

He nods.

STACY (CONT'D)

I think you're a fucking fruit bag.

He laughs a little, a quick snort with a smile.

APPLEGATE

(somehow charming)

That's colorful. I should've expected something witty after seeing all that wedding footage of you.

She drops her fork with a clatter.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

You don't like it?

STACY

Just... enough with this stupid small talk. You've got me chained to a wall in a closet. What? What? Are you going to kill me like you killed my husband with a fucking coffee mug? You want me to be scared? I'm scared, okay?

Fear shows up in a few tears that she fights back.

STACY (CONT'D)

I just...

(wipes her face)

I want to go. Can I go?

She looks straight at him. A long beat. What's he going to say?

APPLEGATE

How about dessert?

She closes her eyes tightly. The insanity. He goes into the kitchen.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

It's good. Chocolate cake. Not my mother's. Her chocolate cake was never very good. Too dry. It's just out of a box but I made it myself.

We hear the clatter of plates and silverware. He comes back out with a large piece of chocolate cake and a glass of milk. Sets both in front of her.

STACY

Seriously? You want me to eat chocolate cake?

APPLEGATE

Yes. Eat.

STACY

I'm not a fucking dog and I don't want any chocolate fucking cake!

She throws the plate of cake against the wall. It clatters to the floor. Applegate remains seated, unreactive, placid.

APPLEGATE

You think I don't know I'm a monster? I know. People think that people like me are totally disconnected from reality.

STACY

You're a fucking lunatic.

A beat. Will he react to that? He smiles. As he speaks, he gets up to clean the chocolate cake.

APPLEGATE

You know where that term comes from? Lunatic? From the moon. Lunar. Luna. Early psychiatrists thought that people's emotional disturbances were caused by lunar cycles, like the tides.

He sets the plate and most of the cake on the table. He takes napkins to wipe the rest of the cake and frosting from the wall and floor.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

It was usually applied to women, whose menstrual cycles were also thought to be influenced by lunar cycles because they came once a month.

(he finishes, sits)

Don't you find that fascinating?

He pauses for her answer but she says nothing.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

It's not rhetorical. I'm rarely rhetorical.

STACY

I've never thought about it.

APPLEGATE

I'm not a lunatic. Not in the padded-room, howl at the moon sense. I'm self-aware. I know you're not a dog. I know that I have human beings chained in my closet who I treat like dogs. And I know that doing those things consciously makes me a monster.

STACY

So why do you do them?

He sighs, eyes closing for a moment, reflective.

APPLEGATE

I have asked myself that question so many times.

He stands, collects the plates and goes back into the kitchen. She can see him through the kitchen door, his back to her as he does the dishes.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

I wasn't a crazy kid. I didn't torture animals or anything.

Cutting to an angle showing Applegate's face with a glimpse through the kitchen door of the dining table behind him. Stacy nervously tries to stand without moving her chair at all, contorting herself up very slowly.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

My dad hit me but what dad doesn't hit his kid now and then? I guess I deserved it a couple of times. Accidentally busted the TV once running through the house. What dad wants to see his TV get busted by his kid?

She's up, shaking as she looks at him. She moves slowly around the table and out of frame.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

My mom wasn't kind. That's true. I guess I had it worse than some kids but not as bad as others. She didn't like being talked back to, that's for sure. You wouldn't have lasted very long in this house.

He tosses a smile over his shoulder, as if he's sharing something cute with her, but stops when he sees the empty chair.

REVERSE ANGLE

Of the dining room with him in the kitchen. He runs out, fury on his face, the faucet still running behind him. He looks one way, then the other. Runs that way.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Across the dining table, the back door is open. Applegate pushes through.

We hear trash cans banging. Frightened yells. Dogs barking. A distant struggle.

STACY (O.S.)

(far off and muffled)

No, let me go! Let me go! Help!

The cries get closer. More trash cans banging, louder. Applegate finally drags her back into the house, struggling and screaming and crying.

STACY (CONT'D)

No, please! Please let me go! I won't tell anyone. I promise. Please, please!

He drags her off screen and...

54

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

54

...into the bedroom, still kicking and screaming. He opens the closet. Chris looks up, scurries back into the wall as Applegate throws Stacy down and re-chains her.

STACY

Please... please!

She keeps screaming and fighting.

APPLEGATE

Quiet now. QUIET!

He kicks her. She stops screaming and tries to suck up her tears. Still sobbing.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

(yelling)

You tried to run away!

CHRIS

You ran?

APPLEGATE

Why would you try to run away? Don't I love you? Don't I?!

He takes a key from his pocket and unlocks Chris's chains.

CHRIS

What'd you do?! What did you do?! No! No! I didn't do anything. I've been good!

Applegate drags him from the closet. As he pulls him up, Chris's kicking hits the shelf that has the video camera on it. The camera gets knocked off and falls to the floor, landing in a skewed angle looking at Stacy.

CHRIS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

No. I didn't do anything. No!

The shot stays with Stacy in the closet listening to Chris scream, watching as Applegate drags him out of the bedroom.

She pulls herself into a ball, crying as Chris's screams get bigger, more intense, more pain-filled.

Then the screams just stop. Silence. Stacy rocks herself, knees pulled up, arms across her chest, in tears.

STACY

No no no no no no no no no no...

She hears footsteps and tries to catch her breath. The bedroom door opens. Then the closet door.

The wider, full room shot: There is Applegate with Chris. He's a mess. Severely beaten. He drops him to the floor. Thud. Barely breathing.

Applegate resets the fallen camera, then puts the shackles back on Chris's ankle and wrist. While he's still squatting there, he looks right at Stacy.

APPLEGATE

Maybe you're right. Maybe I am a fucking lunatic.

He stands and closes the closet door. Stacy slowly reaches out for Chris. Touches his leg.

STACY

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

His eyes flutter. Weak and delirious.

CHRIS

Ellen?

Her lips pout and tremble. His eyes close again. A last breath. He dies. She cries in pain and fear and sadness.

STACY

I'm so sorry.

She continues to cry until one of the policeman's voices breaks the scene.

OFFICER AIMES (V.O.)

Detectives.

The video stops. Goes black.

55

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

55

OFFICER AIMES

Sorry to interrupt.

Everyone takes a deep breath. Aimes hands a set of papers to Rains.

OFFICER AIMES (CONT'D)

The file on Charles Willard. And the food's here. Rain stopped so we set it up outside.

56

EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

56

The shot reveals Rains and Martin in the backyard where there are a few pizzas set on the patio table. Neither Martin nor Rains eat. Rains reads the papers.

RAINS

Charles Allan Willard. Driver's License number A77595. Same address as the house. Social Security number...shit.

MARTIN

What?

RAINS

Born October 6, 1943.

MARTIN

'43? That'd make him almost seventy.

RAINS

Another fake.

MARTIN

No one at Motor Vehicles noticed this guy wasn't seventy when he came in to get his picture taken?

RAINS

They don't exactly have Ph.D.'s at those counters.

Martin grits his teeth in frustration. His hand rests on the back on his neck again.

RAINS (CONT'D)

What do we think about all that stuff about wombs and moons?

MARTIN

He's obsessed with menstruation.

RAINS

You just gonna crack wise, detective?

He rebukes Martin's sarcasm with a glare. Martin gives in, grabs a piece of pizza.

MARTIN

Med school? English major? Or maybe he just watched a lot of TV.

LORENTO

He was in the system.

RAINS

Hmm?

LORENTO

Lunatic. Hysteria. Colorful old terms for insanity. Probably heard it all on the psych wards.

RAINS

And there'd be records of him on the psych wards.

MARTIN

If we knew his real name.

Rains scowls. Grabs a piece of pizza himself.

RAINS

Here's what I think about the Death Penalty. I say give the scumbags all their due process. Full jury trial, the right to an attorney, all that *scumbags rights* shit. If they're convicted, give 'em a full sentencing trial. The whole nine yards, jury of their peers, make it all tight as a drum. In the cases where there's any doubt, I'm talking a shred of a hint of a possibility of a mistake, I'm not talking reasonable doubt I'm talking reasonable inkling, no death penalty.

He finishes up his pizza. Wipes his hands. Pours a coffee.

RAINS (CONT'D)

But in the cut and dry cases, the one's where the school video camera shows the shitbag smiling when he unloads his modified AR-15 into a math class, in those cases when not a neck in the world can even have a hair go up when we say "that's the guy who did it." Then, when that jury comes back and says "death," you take him right out back and shoot him in the head. Right then. Right there. No appeals. No twenty years eating on the tax payer's dime and getting better health care. Just bang. Done. Dead.

MARTIN

Where'd that come from?

RAINS

I don't know. Just felt like I had to say it.

MARTIN

Well, you're more generous than me.

RAINS

A bullet in the head is generous?

MARTIN

I've never been a big fan of due process. I'm gonna shoot this guy in the head the second I see him.

He takes a cup of coffee off the table and heads inside. Steiner turns the camera toward Rains.

STEINER (V.O.)

Maybe I should erase that?

57

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

57

The camera comes on to find Lorento sitting at the computer playing back the scene of Applegate sitting on the kitchen floor giving his speech about circumcision to Sheila as she bleeds to death.

STEINER (V.O.)

Wasn't horrid enough the first time?

LORENTO

There's something he said. "This house."

STEINER (V.O.)

What?

LORENTO

Twice, here and later. He didn't say "the" house. He said "this" house. I think he grew up in this house.

STEINER (V.O.)

This house. The one we're in.

LORENTO

Yes.

She's up and moving out of the room.

LORENTO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Detectives.

Steiner's camera hangs on the monitor. He reaches in and hits the keyboard to start the playback.

APPLEGATE

(on the monitor)

...love wasn't taught very well in this house.

He stops it.

58

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

58

The camera opens on Lorento, Steiner and Rains in the kitchen. Rains is just hanging up the phone.

RAINS

From 1962 to 1973 the house was owned by Charlene and Martin Walker. They had one son, Bruce. Born 1965. Married to Eileen Foster. They also had one son, Aaron, who died of Leukemia.

MARTIN

Bruce Walker.

RAINS

House was foreclosed on. That's when the lady we met bought it.

LORENTO

He rented back his childhood home.

MARTIN

Now he's being kicked out again and it's getting torn down. He's making his last stand.

RAINS

Great. A nut job with nothing left to lose.

(to Lorento, sincerely)

Nice work, Lorento. All right, let's get back to--

AIMES (O.S.)

Lieutenant!

They run out of the kitchen. The camera follows them into the LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS) where Officer Aimes is holding a man at the front door. The man, HENRY MORRISON, is trying to get past him.

AIMES (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, sir, you can't--

RAINS
What's going on here?

MR. MORRISON
Where's my daughter?

RAINS
Sir, this is a crime scene, you can't be--

MR. MORRISON
I'm not going anywhere until I find out where my daughter is.

Martin moves right in to help Aimes.

MARTIN
All right. All right! Just step outside.

The man stops struggling and allows Martin to back him up on to the porch.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Now who are you?

MR. MORRISON
My name is Morrison. My daughter is Stacy Tyler.

Rains and Martin exchange a look that the man picks up on.

MR. MORRISON (CONT'D)
So it's true. She was here. The news said this was the house where those Fowler kids were found. Was my daughter here?

RAINS
It's an on-going investigation, Mr. Morri-

MR. MORRISON
Don't give me that? Where's my daughter? Is she alive? Where is she?

MARTIN

We don't know.

The man starts to cry a little.

MR. MORRISON

I just want to see my daughter. Can you understand that? Do you have any idea what it's like to have your daughter missing? To not know if she's... if some madmen... please, I just want to see my daughter.

He really breaks down now. Martin turns his head around and gives a look to Steiner. We get to see his face. Then the camera lowers to the floor then turns off.

59

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

59

Four men are playing poker with Applegate at the dining room table. STEVE, SAM, RALPH and JACK. All 30's to 40's, different shapes and sizes though Sam is definitely the Alpha Male, biggest personality. (You MIGHT recognize Sam as one of the two male bodies that were also found in the basement under the garage.)

SAM

(comic, Italian accent)

You fold'a the cards, I take'a the money.

Steve looks at the cards and chips on the table. At his own pocket cards. He finally folds. Sam cheers. Ralph goes to the fridge for a beer. Jack deals.

JACK

You still seeing that what's her name?

STEVE

Which one?

JACK

I dunno. The one with the big pussy.

STEVE

Jessica! Yeah.

SAM

You like that shit? The big pussy bat wings?

STEVE

Love it. All pink and juicy.

SAM

Gimme one of them porn star pussies.
Credit card slot. That's what I'm
talkin' about. Ten bucks.

The other three call. Applegate who takes his time.

SAM (CONT'D)

Yo, (beep), you got ten bucks? Come
on. What? You gotta ask your mom for
it? In or out?

As Applegate continues to study his cards, Sam goes on a
riff to the others.

SAM (CONT'D)

What's up with this guy? He's
colder'n a coal miner's ass in the
winter. Fold that deuce seven and let
the big boys play some cards. Come
on!

APPLEGATE

I call.

He throws in the chips.

SAM

Donkey call. I gonna nut on your
face. Come on, bat man, deal 'em up.

STEVE

I'm not dealing.

SAM

Yeah, but you knew I was talking
about you, didn't you.

Jack deals the flop.

SAM (CONT'D)

Got it, need it, want it. Who's up?

RALPH

Check.

SAM

Check your dick at the door. All in.

STEVE

Fold.

It comes to Applegate, who pauses again.

SAM

Oh, again with the snooze button.
Come on, (beep), this century. Shit,
did your momma put up with this? Did
your daddy? I bet you weren't potty
trained till you were twelve.

APPLEGATE

I call.

SAM

Hallelujah.
(to Jack)
What are you doing? What?

JACK

Folding.

SAM

Uh, huh.
(to Applegate)
Whaddaya got, Princess?

He flips up pocket Kings. Applegate flips up an Ace / Ten
suited. Sam pops to his feet.

SAM (CONT'D)

Oh, you're going down, Charlie Brown,
look at the nuts. Look at the nuts.

The next card comes up. A King.

SAM (CONT'D)

Oh, ow, the pain, oh god do you feel
the pain. Look at the nuts.

60

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

60

The game is over. The putting on their coats.

JACK

What happened to the pizza? We
ordered it like an hour ago.

SAM

So much for the best pizza in the
neighborhood.

He tosses a sarcastic glance toward Applegate.

APPLEGATE

It's worth the wait.

SAM

Not if it never comes.

APPLEGATE

I'm sure it'll be here soon. Hang out.

STEVE

Naw, I got big pussy waiting.

SAM

Don't get swallowed up.

JACK

I got a wife at home, so no pussy for me.

It's clear that no one is staying for the pizza. The front door is open, now.

APPLEGATE

Hey, Sam, before you go. Can you help me with something?

SAM

What, you wanna a shot at your money back already?

APPLEGATE

No, I just, I gotta move a big thing, file cabinet. Just take a second.

The other guys are already out the door. Sam doesn't like it, he grimaces.

STEVE

You cleaned the guy out, Sammy, give him a hand.

SAM

Yeah, yeah, all right.

Applegate closes the door as the other three men leave.

SAM (CONT'D)

Let's get to it.

APPLEGATE

Yeah, yeah. Just here in the bedroom.

He opens the bedroom door and walks in. Sam follows him.

61

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

61

APPLEGATE

It's in the closet.

SAM

What?

APPLEGATE

Just open the closet.

Sam opens the closet. There is Chris's dead body, dried blood all around him. And Stacy, alive, chained to the wall.

SAM

What the fuck? Yo, dude, what the fu--

He spins to see Applegate swinging a metal pipe at him. He clocks him right across the face, dropping him hard.

Angle of Applegate walking toward Sam. He grabs his sack.

APPLEGATE

Look at the nuts.

He moves in and starts beating him with the pipe. Stacy watches in numb fear. No more tears. No more screaming.

Finished, Applegate drops the pipe to the floor and hefts Sam over his shoulder, then walks out.

Stacy is alone. She hears the footsteps get further away. She hears the back door open and close.

She sees the pipe on the floor a few feet away.

She's nervous. Frightened. She leans toward the pipe but can't reach it. She shifts and stretches her unchained leg. Not quite... not quite... then she gets a toe on it.

It takes a lot of effort but she manages to slide it a little bit, enough to get her whole foot over it and draw it towards her.

She hears a dull "thud" from the distance and freezes. No other sound. She picks up the pipe and tries to slip it through the bolt on the lock. It won't fit, too wide. She can fit it through a chain link, though. She puts it through near the bolt and tries to pull.

Nothing. No matter how hard she strains, it will not budge the bolt. No leverage.

She begins to twist it, knotting the chain up into a ball. When it gets tight enough, she has some leverage on the bolt in the wall and with effort begins to turn it. Concrete dust starts to flutter down. She strains, grunts, and gets it to loosen. She tugs and it comes out.

She fights back a gasp of joy. One more bolt for the chain on her arm. She slides the pipe into the ring and twists it up, also.

62 INT. BASEMENT UNDER GARAGE - NIGHT 62

Sam's body lays in the foreground of a shot in the basement. The trap door above closes. The light around the edges of the door goes out.

63 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT 63

Applegate comes back into the house through the back door.

64 INT. CLOSET - NIGHT 64

Stacy is still fighting with the bolt. It's not moving.

65 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT 65

Applegate washes his hands in the bathroom sink. Blood and dirt run over the white, porcelain basin.

66 INT. CLOSET - NIGHT 66

The bolt breaks free. It seems really loud. Stacy freezes.

67 INT. BATHROOM 67

Applegate hasn't heard over the running water. He turns it off. Dries his hand. Looks at himself in the mirror.

APPLEGATE

Look at the nuts.

He smirks and laughs.

68 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT 68

Stacy starts to ease the closet door open.

69 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT 69

The doorbell rings. Applegate goes through the hall, disappearing into the dining room.

70 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT 70

Stacy moves very slowly out of the closet and into the bedroom. She can see light under the door that leads to the living room and hear Applegate's footsteps. She looks toward the door that leads into the hallway.

In the silence, the chains sound as loud as a train. She finds a jacket on a chair and wraps it around them as best she can, lugging the bundle as she crawls toward the door.

71 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 71

Applegate opens the door to see the PIZZA DELIVERY GUY. (Whom we also recognize as the other dead male in the basement, the Latino with curly hair). He's carrying one of those thick, padded, "hot-sleeves" for delivery pizza.

PIZZA DELIVERY GUY

Hey, man, I know this took forever.
Traffic was like, ugh! They told me
to give you 25% off.

APPLEGATE

No worries. Lemme get my wallet.

He reaches toward the bedroom door.

72 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT 72

Stacy freezes when she sees feet block the light beneath the closed door.

PIZZA DELIVERY GUY (V.O.)

That it there?

73 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 73

He points to the dining table where Applegate's wallet still sits near the poker chips and cards.

APPLEGATE

Oh yeah. We had a card game.

He walks that way and fishes money out of his wallet.

74 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT 74

Stacy opens the door, looking into the dark hallway.

75 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 75

Applegate gives the pizza guy a big tip.

PIZZA DELIVERY GUY

Thanks.

APPLEGATE

Woulda cost me that anyway.

PIZZA DELIVERY GUY

That's cool of you. Most customers
just get pissed off when it's late,
blame me instead of the kitchen or
the traffic and chintz the tip.

He starts to unzip the insulated carrying sleeve.

76 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT 76

Stacy crawls toward the dining room.

77 INT. DINING ROOM / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 77

She eases herself through the door, hugging the wall that
blocks her from the line of vision at the front door. She
can see the back doors from where she is.

She gets her head low and peeks around the corner. She
sees Applegate from behind.

The guy hands the pizza box over to Applegate.

PIZZA DELIVERY GUY

Have a nice night, huh. And thanks
again.

APPLEGATE

You got it.

Stacy bolts for the back door. One of the chains falls
loose from the coat and hits the floor with a clank.

Applegate tosses a look over his shoulder, sees Stacy
running around the dining table, then looks back at the
Pizza Guy whose eyes are wide, confused.

Applegate drops the pizza and reaches for him just as he runs down the porch. Applegate runs after him.

Stacy fumbles with the deadbolt on the back door but gets it open and runs outside.

The shots remains in the house, empty. Pizza box on the floor. We hear the pizza guy yelling and Applegate grunting in the front. Chains rattling in the back.

Then the yelling stops. A few seconds later, Applegate drags the guy back into the house, trampling the pizza. He throws him to the floor, bleeding, unconscious, maybe dead, either way not moving. He runs out the front door again.

Just the still house now, Pizza Guy on the floor, back door open. Silence.

Then the image goes black.

RAINS (O.S.)

What happened?

MARTIN (O.S.)

Why'd you stop it?

LORENTO (O.S.)

I didn't.

78

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

78

LORENTO

That's it. It's done.

MARTIN

(can't believe it)

Get the fuck out.

LORENTO

That's all there is.

RAINS

Mother fuck...

STEINER (O.S.)

You think she got away? The girl?
Think she made it?

No one knows.

79

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

79

Martin sits on the couch. Sighs.

RAINS

We're gonna wrap it up here for the night.

MARTIN

So I can go home and not sleep?

RAINS

Who said anything about sleep? We're gonna head back to the station. Get out of this trap. Get some perspective.

Martin nods. His phone rings. He looks at it.

RAINS (CONT'D)

Gina?

MARTIN

No. Heather.

He silences the phone and puts it away.

STEINER (V.O.)

You should tell her.

Martin's face snaps up toward the camera.

MARTIN

(sharply)

What?

STEINER (O.S.)

(cautiously)

You should tell her. She's her mother.

MARTIN

Get out of here!

STEINER (O.S.)

I'm just--

Martin pops to his feet and waves Steiner away angrily.

MARTIN

I said get out of here. Get that goddamn thing out of my face already!

He pushes Steiner aside. The image swishes around the room, showing the faces of Aimes and Lorento, all unnerved by Martin's outburst.

RAINS (V.O.)
Take it easy, Ben.

MARTIN (V.O.)
Take it fucking easy? Who's the kid think he is?!

RAINS (V.O.)
Ben... Ben! Tell her what?

The camera turns off. Blackness.

80

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

80

The camera comes back on at an odd angle as if it is resting on the couch.

RAINS (O.S.)
...with us.

Steiner lifts the camera onto Rains who watches Lorento look around the back of the computer at a security cable that chains it to the desk.

LORENTO
I'll get some cutters.

Rains nods. Martin is at the door.

MARTIN
I'll meet you at the station.

RAINS
Sounds good. We're just going to get this thing out of here.

He puts a comforting hand on Martin's shoulder. They share a look and we know that Martin told him everything.

Just as Martin turns, we hear Stacy's voice.

STACY (V.O.)
Please help me. Please.

They all look back at the computer. Steiner swings the camera that way.

It's a close up of Stacy looking right at the camera, full frame, crying, sniffing.

(This is the shot of her we saw at the very beginning of the "movie" when Applegate first appeared on the video.)

RAINS

You said it was done.

LORENTO

It was.

STACY

(on monitor)

He's going to kill me... I know he's going to...

RAINS

Rewind it.

She presses the buttons. Nothing happens.

RAINS (CONT'D)

Well?

LORENTO

This isn't on the drive. It's live. It's a live feed.

STACY

(continuing, on monitor)

...kill me. He already... Oh God, don't let this happen. He killed my husband. He killed them all. Please help me.

She goes on like that. Martin and Rains look at each other.

RAINS

Live? How can it be...?

Martin dives down under the editing table.

MARTIN

Gimme a light.

Lorento hands him a flashlight from her utility belt. He looks behind the computer and finds a cable feeding into it. He detaches it. Stacy's pleas cut out mid-sentence.

He follows the cable to the wall.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Screwdriver.

Steiner hands a multi-tool into frame. Lorento hands it down to Martin who props open the screwdriver and removes the switch-plate from the wall, exposing the cable inside.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

It goes down.

He pops out from under the desk and runs from the room, Rains on his heels. The camera bounces out after them then the "low battery" light flashes on screen again.

STEINER

Oh, gimme a fucking brea--

It goes black.

81 EXT. SIDE YARD - NIGHT

81

They've pulled a grate off the crawl space that goes beneath the house. Martin is already underneath, looking back at the camera.

MARTIN

Come on, you're coming with me.

STEINER (V.O.)

Seriously? All right, um...

He hands the camera to Lorento. She films him bending down, face nervous as he looks into the darkness below. Head in. Hips. Feet.

The camera POV leans in, swishes as the camera gets handed off to Steiner BENEATH THE HOUSE (CONTINUOUS).

82 INT. BENEATH THE HOUSE - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

82

It steadies on Martin, laying on his stomach in the soft dirt with less than a foot of headroom. He's looking around, spots something about fifteen feet away that gets his attention. He crawls toward it. Steiner crawls after him, the camera bouncing.

Martin finds a box, top open. A cable runs down to it from a hole in the boards above. He pulls out a video camera.

It's still playing. He pops open the little screen and sees Stacy in the extreme close up. Not talking now. Eyes down. Wiping tears.

APPLEGATE (V.O.)
 (on the tape)
 What's your middle name?

STACY
 Margaret.

APPLEGATE (V.O.)
 That's pretty. What's your favorite
 color?

Martin snaps the viewing screen closed.

MARTIN
 Come on. Let's get out of here.

83 INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

83

Lorento is connecting the video camera to the larger
 monitor for playback.

RAINS
 It could've been there the whole
 time.

MARTIN
 Battery's full. He had to be down
 there to press play ten minutes ago!
 Who the hell's watching the outside
 of this place?

ON THE MONITOR

The playback comes on. Stacy's face in close-up.

STACY
 Yellow.

APPLEGATE (V.O.)
 Yellow's pretty. Why yellow?

STACY
 Reminds me of the sun. Sunshine.

APPLEGATE (V.O.)
 Reminds me of mustard.

The camera swings around onto Applegate's face.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)
 Hello, Detective Martin. How do you
 like the movie?
 (MORE)

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

I left some popcorn in the kitchen
somewhere. Go make a batch. This next
part's great.

The shot on the monitor cuts to a shot of the second
bedroom from above, in a high corner, looking down on the
detectives as they are watching the playback of the poker
game in the movie.

Martin's eyes snap up to the corner where he sees a small
motion detector for an alarm system. He pulls the couch
over, steps up and removes it. There is a spy camera set
into the wall.

MARTIN

Son of a bitch. I told you he was
fucking with us.

He pulls it out so the cable just hangs, not pointing at
them anymore.

RAINS (O.S.)

Ben.

Martin turns and looks down. His expression changes
dramatically.

Steiner's shot follows Martin as he steps down from the
couch and looks at the monitor again.

ON THE MONITOR

It is a shot of the living room but not from the corner
as we'd seen before, from straight on at the couch. It
shows Rains and Martin delivering lines we only heard off
camera earlier.

RAINS (CONT'D)

Take it easy, Ben.

MARTIN

Take if fucking easy? Who's the kid
think he is?!

RAINS

Ben... Ben! Tell her what?

On the playback, Martin sits. Rains sits next to him. A
pause as Martin collects himself.

RAINS (CONT'D)

Tell her what, Ben?

Go to full screen.

84

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

84

RAINS

Look. I'm not the lieutenant now. I'm just Joe. I'm your friend. I'm your partner. What's going on?

Martin takes a deep sigh.

MARTIN

I know Gina's dead.

RAINS

No, come on, that was stupid what I said before. There's no reason to think--

MARTIN

She's dead. I got the call two weeks ago. She got hit by a bus. A bus. I woulda jumped in front of that bus. In a hot fucking second I woulda jumped in front of that bus. For my kid. For Gina.

He starts to cry. Deep, painful sobs. Rains puts a hand on his back.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

How am I going to tell her mother? Oh, God, how'm I going to tell her mother?

He sobs for a long time, then finally catches his breath in slow gasps.

RAINS

You all right? Need some water?

Martin shakes his head, wipes his eyes on his sleeve.

MARTIN

Why?

RAINS

No reason. Why this?

He means the house, the case they're on.

RAINS (CONT'D)

No reason. Life and death. It is what it is. Doesn't add up to anything.

MARTIN

It's got to. Why do, why do we do
what we do? It's got to mean
something.

RAINS

It "means," sure. We save someone,
that means a lot. Means a life. But
there's no score keeper. No arbiter
of success or failure. We save some.
We lose some. Some people live to a
hundred and ten and some get hit by a
bus. Just sucks it had to be your
daughter.

MARTIN

Yeah. Yeah, it does.

He snorts up snot. Exhales.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I'm gonna save this one, Joe.

RAINS

That's the goal.

MARTIN

No, I mean it. Whatever it takes.
This girl, Stacy the Newlywed, she
gets the life my Gina didn't get. I
swear it to you, to God, to everyone.
This girl lives.

Rains just nods slowly.

RAINS

Let's get some coffee.

Martin nods. They stand and exit frame.

The shot fades to black.

85

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

85

MARTIN

He's been watching us the whole time.

RAINS

(to Loreto)

That it?

LORENTO
(reaching for the machine)
I don't--

Then the image returns. Applegate holds the camera on his own face in what looks like the same shot he first appeared in when he gave the speech to Martin.

APPLEGATE
That was awesome! Wow! Really.

He claps his free hand against the camera hand, shaking the image.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)
We'll walk the aisle together, man. I'm talking Oscar. I mean, I thought I had talent in my movie, the kids were great, Sam was the perfect villain, but you, Detective, yes, yes! That's what I was hoping for. The heart. The real emotion. You made my movie and I thank you for that, really. Most people talk about such meaningless drivel. Parking spots and wedding cakes, Gawd, it's torture. They've got more gas coming out of their mouths than I do coming out of my ass. It's so refreshing to hear someone talk about real life. To show real feelings. Thank you. You have inspired me, Detective, so much so that I'm going to give you an opportunity. I'm going to give you the chance to jump in front of the bus that is roaring down on this young lady.

He moves next to Stacy again so they are both in frame. She is bound and gagged. Seated on the floor. Terrified.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)
Say hi, honey, it's your close up.

She tries to scream "Help me" through the gag, tries to struggle against the ties. Then Applegate moves away from her and puts the camera back on himself.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

Here's what I'm going to do. If you go back into the living room and stand in front of the couch where I can see you, put a gun into your mouth and blow your brains out, I'll set her free and surrender. I'll surrender peaceably, or, if you like, I'll throw a knife at you guys and you can use that as an excuse to blow me away. Is that a deal or what? She goes free, I get killed and you get to be the hero, to save her, to give your life for another just like you say you wish you could have done for your daughter. You get to make meaning out of a meaningless world. What's it going to be?

He spins the camera back around to show Stacy again. She sees something off screen and gets even more terrified.

She scoots herself backward with difficulty until her back is against the wall and she can go no further. The large kitchen knife used to kill Sheila reaches into frame and strokes her cheek, her throat. The tip of the blade cuts through the gag. She starts pleading and crying.

STACY

Help me. Oh, God, please, please help me. Oh my God...

She breaks down in tears. The screen goes black.

RAINS

That was fifteen minutes ago when we were on the couch. He's can't be that far.

(to Lorento)

Radio the helicopters to sweep the neighborhood again. And get uniforms to start going door to --

Martin suddenly spins and rushes out of the room.

RAINS (CONT'D)

Ben! Ben!

He runs out after him. The camera follows, Steiner running, the camera bouncing.

86

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

86

The shot picks up Detective Martin kicking a coffee table out of the way. Officer Aimes has pulled a cable a few inches out from the wall.

OFFICER AIMES

I found the cam--

MARTIN

Put it on me!

Standing in the middle of the living room he faces the camera and draws his gun.

RAINS

Ben stop!

Martin puts the gun to his temple. He's frightened, torn, but clearly wanting to do this.

RAINS (CONT'D)

Come on! You think he'll do it?! He's not gonna let her go, not gonna give himself up!

MARTIN

He'll do it!

RAINS

It's bullshit!

MARTIN

He needs this. That's what the whole movie is. What his whole life is. A search for meaning. This is meaningful to him. He wants this. He needs this.

RAINS

He's gonna let you blow your brains out then he's gonna kill her and disappear and he wins. Ben! Come on, think!

MARTIN

And if I don't?! If I set my gun down now what he's gonna do?! He's gonna kill her. I can't do that to her, Joe! You want me to do that to her?

Rains moves cautiously forward.

RAINS

Whatever that guy does, you're not doing anything to that girl. It's not you, Ben. You're trying to help her but you can't help her if you do this. You can't. Put down the gun. Come on, you know you don't want to do this.

Martin's face tightens. His hand shakes. The finger starts to squeeze trigger. The hammer pulls back.

RAINS (CONT'D)

Ben... Ben don't! She could already be dead for all we know! Ben, God dammit!

Martin screams in agony and frustration, then aims the gun forward at the wall and pulls the trigger several times. Officer Aimes practically craps his pants as the bullet holes appear in the wall just inches from him.

Martin's yell lasts all the way through the shots then tapers off into silence. He snatches the camera cable from Aimes's hands and looks right into it.

MARTIN

I'm going to find you and I'm going to kill you. You fuck! You hear me? I'm going to kill you!

He rips the cord from the wall. Everyone stands stark and still. The tension slowly ebbs.

RAINS

(exhaling)

Jesus...

Rains walks out of the shot. Martin just stands there, tense, heavy. Then he walks toward the back door.

RAINS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Where're you going?

MARTIN

Call Heather.

As Martin exits through the back door, the shot swings back around to find Rains sitting in a chair.

RAINS

Give it a rest.

The camera turns off.

87

EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

87

It comes back on looking at the ground then swings up, catching sight of Martin under the light over the garage. He got the phone to his ear and has been crying.

MARTIN

(from a distance)

Yeah, baby, I know. I know...

Officer Lorento enters frame from beside the camera.

LORENTO

Detective. I'm sorry. Couple of morgue guys are outside. Want to know if it's okay to take the body.

MARTIN

What body?

LORENTO

The boy. Chris Fowler.

MARTIN

No. I haven't seen him yet.

(into phone)

Heather.... Heath... I've got to go. I'll come by later. Okay. Okay.

He hangs up, sniffing, wiping his face. He follows Lorento back into the house. The camera turns and goes in behind them (CONTINUOUS), into the LIVING ROOM.

Near the front door, Martin sees two MORGUE ATTENDANTS walking past Rains with a gurney.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Hold up a sec.

He pushes past them into the BEDROOM (CONTINUOUS).

Rains goes in with him, the camera behind them.

Martin kneels down door for a closer look at Chris in the closet. Beaten. Dried blood on his face and on the floor.

He looks at where Stacy ripped the bolts from the concrete, then up at the shelf where the camera used to be.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Gimme some more light.

Steiner moves in closer with the camera.

It's the first time we really get to see the inside of the closet clearly. There's nothing else in here. Just a wood floor and bare walls. The two side walls, where the captives were chained, are concrete. The back is drywall.

Martin stands, feeling up along the walls, looking for anything of note. He finally tilts his head all the way back to look at the ceiling. He taps Steiner who tilts the camera up.

STEINER (V.O.)

Sorry.

In the ceiling of the closet is a two foot square cut out crawl hole that leads to the attic. Martin looks around for something to stand on but there's nothing.

MARTIN

There's was a chair in the other room.

LORENTO (V.O.)

I'll get it.

RAINS

God knows what's up there.

MARTIN

God and him. They can take the kid.

Rains nods off screen. The two Morgue Employees enter with the gurney, which they lay down next to Chris's body. They ease him on. Martin looks at his pale face.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

(distantly)

I was here.

They carry him out. Lorento has returned with the desk chair. The camera shuffles as it gets slid into the closet. It's a swivel-type desk chair, not very sturdy as Martin steps on it and pushes at the crawl space cover.

RAINS

Let us get you a ladder.

Martin nearly falls, steadies himself, jumps to grab the edges of the crawl space and pulls himself up.

MARTIN

Gimme the flashlight.

Lorento hands her flashlight up to him. His other hand takes out his pistol and he disappears.

RAINS (V.O.)
Can you get up there?

STEINER (V.O.)
Seriously?

The camera swings onto Rains' face.

RAINS
Yes, seriously, what the fuck?

STEINER (V.O.)
Yeah.
(off Rains' scowl)
I mean, yes, sir.

Swish-shot as he hands the camera off to Lorento.

It goes OFF.

88

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

88

The camera comes back on, searching around for Martin.
The spotlight drifts off into darkness.

STEINER (O.S.)
Detective Martin?
(silence)
Detective Martin?

The light finally settles on Det. Martin about ten feet
away, peering down at something. He looks back at Steiner
and the camera, whispering harshly.

MARTIN
Turn it off.

STEINER
What?

MARTIN
The light. Turn it off.
(beat)
Do it.

The light goes off first, leaving us in near absolute
darkness, just the hint of light coming through cracks
here and there. We hear movement, then Martin's voice
much closer.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Let's go back. You can turn it off.

Full blackness.

89

EXT. FRONT YARD - NIGHT

89

It comes back on to find Martin and Rains standing in the front yard. Martin is finishing a rough sketch of the layout of the house on a pad of paper. A box, walls drawn for the living room, dining room, kitchen. Two bedrooms with the hallway connecting them and the bathroom in the middle.

Only between the bathroom and the bedroom is an empty rectangle that Martin circles.

MARTIN

I paced it out. The bedroom closet ends here, the bathroom starts here. There's about four feet in between. He's in there. I know he is.

RAINS

You're saying he's in the house? You saw him?

MARTIN

No. But he's there. It makes sense. It's his last stand.

RAINS

With the girl?

MARTIN

Safe bet.

RAINS

So what do you want to do, just smash our way in? I wish we could see him in there.

STEINER (V.O.)

We can.

They both look at the camera curiously.

STEINER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We've got a couple of his remote cameras. We can hook one up to this, drill a hole in the wall.

Martin looks at Rains for the go-ahead. Gets a little nod.

RAINS

But if he moves on the girl we pull back. And none of that "no due process" cowboy shit you were spewing earlier. Now I'm the L.T. again. A clean bust, you got it? I don't want this one getting away.

MARTIN

Neither do I.

Rains grimaces. They walk off. Steiner tilts the camera up for a shot of the moon. After a beat:

MARTIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Hey, Marty Scorcese, you coming?

The shot jerks down from the moon to Martin on the porch.

STEINER (V.O.)

Um, yeah, sorry.

90

INT. BEDROOM CLOSET - NIGHT

90

Officer Aimes holds a drill up to the wall. A pregnant pause. They all listen closely. Then Martin nods at him. The drill starts. It's loud. It grinds into the drywall.

When the drill comes out, it leaves a 1/2" hole looking into darkness. Martin holds a cautious hand up for everyone to be quiet. They listen. Nothing.

MARTIN

You in there, Mr. Applegate? You hear me?

Martin nods at Aimes again. He pokes one of the small spy cams on a cable into the hole. The image switches to the POV of the spy cam in the closet. Grayish dark.

STEINER (V.O.)

It's just dark. There's not enough light to pick up any--

He stops when he gets a glimpse of a body. Then the camera tilts upward (as if Applegate himself grabbed the cable and moved it up), until we are looking right at his face in extreme close-up.

APPLEGATE

Hello, Detective.

The shot switches back to the main camera image of Martin and Rains leaning to the wall, listening at the tiny hole.

APPLEGATE (CONT'D)

You disappointed me back there.

MARTIN

Stacy? Stacy can you hear me? This is the police. You're going to be all right.

Stacy's muffled pleas rise, then we hear a loud hit followed by silence.

APPLEGATE

I wasn't bluffing. If you'd killed yourself I'd have let her go.

MARTIN

There's nowhere for you to go, Bruce. No hiding any more.

APPLEGATE

Go? I don't want to go anywhere. This is my home. I was born here. I'll die here. So will you. So will she.

Stacy starts to scream again. Loud. Terrified. More than just fear. Pain. Martin pounds a fist into the wall, making a dent in the plasterboard.

MARTIN

God dammit, no!

The screams are blood-curling. Still muffled from the gag. Then it seems to fall away.

STACY

Help me! Help me, oh god, please help. Daddy....

Martin pounds his fist into the wall over and over.

MARTIN

No...she...won't.

He finally punches through. The screams continue, no more words, just pain. Martin and Rains tear at the drywall until Martin finally puts his whole body into it and crashes through. A cloud of drywall dust fills the air.

We see Martin but not Applegate or Stacy, both of whom are still hidden by the remaining wall. Then a large arm darts into frame and yanks Martin back behind the wall.

Gone. We hear the struggle. See the wall shake. The camera pushes forward into the closet.

We see Martin's face with Applegate's arm wrapped around his neck like a vice and the other hand holding a gun to his head. Applegate has Stacy pressed back behind him, completely trapped against the wall.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Turn the camera off!

APPLEGATE

No! This is my ending. This is why you're here!

MARTIN

God dammit, Steiner, turn the fucking camera off!

APPLEGATE

I'll kill her.

STEINER (V.O.)

What do I do?

APPLEGATE

Keep filming.

MARTIN

Turn it off!

Martin struggles to raise his own pistol, but can't get it high enough to get a shot behind him at Applegate.

STEINER (V.O.)

What do I do?!

RAINS (V.O.)

Ben?!

MARTIN

Don't give him the satisfaction!

RAINS (V.O.)

Turn it off.

APPLEGATE

No! I need my ending.

Applegate takes the gun away from Martin's head and presses it to Stacy's head. She screams.

MARTIN

Here's your ending.

Martin presses his pistol to his own chest, over his lung, and pulls the trigger. BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG.

Five times.

The camera jitters as Steiner is startled from the gun shots. It settles on Ben Martin's face, still alive but in shock and pain. Martin slides down revealing Applegate behind him, his chest also a bloody mess on his Polo-style shirt.

He tumbles down over Martin landing at Steiner's feet.

Stacy is seated against the wall behind Martin. She's screaming.

Rains wants to get in the closet but there's no room.

RAINS (V.O.)

Ben! Ben?

MARTIN

(to Stacy)

Shhh. Shhh now. Okay?

She quiets down. He looks at Steiner's camera lens.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Is he dead?

STEINER (V.O.)

What?

MARTIN

Is he dead?

The camera moves from Martin's face onto Applegate's back.

STEINER

I don't, I can't tell. Wait.

A tiny breath.

STEINER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

No. He's still alive.

Another gun shot. Applegate's body bounces right at Steiner's feet. No more breathing.

STEINER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ!

RAINS (V.O.)

Get the hell--

He shoves Steiner back and enters frame, climbing over Applegate and leaning in to Martin.

RAINS (CONT'D)

Ben.

He sees he's alive but in bad shape. Then he sees Stacy behind him, unharmed, terrified, relieved, overwhelmed.

STACY

Oh, God. Oh, God.

RAINS

You okay?

She nods in tears. Officer Lorento reaches in, helping Stacy to climb over Martin and Applegate and leading her out into the living room. The camera swings over to follow them for a moment, then swigs back onto Martin and Rains.

MARTIN

She made it. She lives.

RAINS

Yeah, Ben, she made it.

MARTIN

It means something, Joe. It means something.

RAINS

Yeah, buddy. It means something.

Martin's eyes flutter closed and he dies. A long beat. Rains stands. Steiner steps back to show Rains standing over the bodies of Martin and Applegate.

RAINS (CONT'D)

I wish I knew what.

He walks out of the room. The camera follows him into the LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS). Rains stops to see Stacy kneeling near the fireplace. Lorento is holding onto her shoulders, trying to ease her away. Stacy comes up with the gold chain and dolphin pendant. She clutches them in her hand as Lorento leads her outside where her father, waiting on the lawn, pushes past two uniformed officers and pulls her into his arms.

RAINS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You can turn that off now.

CUT TO BLACK.