KILLER RENTAL

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FADE IN:

INT. SMALL WAREHOUSE SPACE - 1994 - DAWN

JENNIFER ROSE -- her 19-year-old face caked with dried blood. She stares up at flickering fluorescents. Tears stream from her red, swollen eyes. Her wobbly legs can barely hold her.

MUFFLED MENS VOICES CARRY ON IN THE DISTANCE.

A PIERCING TONE GROWS LOUDER, OVERWHELMING THE VOICES, then STOPS.

Jennifer winces. Her eyes drift down to the pentagram carved into her partially exposed chest. She modestly tightens a black emergency blanket around her trembling body.

She sobs.

Jennifer's hazy vision fills with the chaos around her --

Several cops hurry past her in all directions to gather evidence, their VOICES CLEAR.

Jennifer weaves around the officers seemingly unnoticed. She's consumed by the sound of HER OWN DEEP BREATHS.

The abandoned warehouse-turned-unholy lair contains arcane symbols and pentagrams, including a sacrificial circle etched into the floor and bordered by black candles.

Jennifer stops behind a Crime Scene PHOTOGRAPHER who snaps pictures near a bulky VHS camera on a tripod. The cassette compartment is open, but empty.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Son of a bitch.

Jennifer follows the Photographer's gaze to NATHANIEL (50s), who lies nearby in a black cloak. A rusty nail protrudes from his blood-splattered larynx. She moves a step closer, but --

A DETECTIVE blocks her and peers into her eyes with concern.

DETECTIVE (O.S.)
Hey! Who let her back in here? And where's that damn ambulance?

PHOTOGRAPHER (O.S.)
Jeez. What causes people to do this shit?

CUT TO BLACK:

SUPER: KILLER RENTAL

FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBIA - THREE MONTHS LATER - NIGHT

Nice. Middle class-yuppie. Quiet, except for the LOUD, AGGRESSIVE PUNK MUSIC, GRUNTS, AND GROANS coming from --

INT. KENNEDY RESIDENCE - COOPER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

ON THE TV

Two monstrous video game characters punch and kick the blood out of each other in a Mortal Kombat-like side scroller.

COOPER KENNEDY (17) taps the buttons on his controller, locked-in to his 16-bit battle. Behind the excitement in Cooper's eyes lives a pained sadness. Loneliness. Rejection. Fear. But also charm. Mischief. Defiance.

COOPER
Shit! Come-on-come-on-come-on, yes!

Cooper beats his enemy. "BLOODY MURDER" flashes on the TV.

Cooper grins. His eyes drift to his controller, where he mashes buttons in a sequence. Then, he watches his character rip the limbs off his opponent, spurting blood everywhere.

COOPER
Wicked.

Cooper's door swings open.

DICK TUTTLE (40s) barges in like he owns the place and turns off Cooper's boombox. With his furrowed eyebrows and gritted teeth, Dick looks as tightly-wound as a DMV employee halfway through a double shift.

DICK
Cooper! I told you not to bring this vulgar garbage into my house!

COOPER
It was my dad's house, Dick. And this was his favorite band.

Dick smolders, then sighs, smugly.

DICK
Enjoy it now, kid. Once I ship you off, you'll have some regrets. Now, get your ass downstairs. Your cousin's here, and I don't plan on babysitting either one of you little shits while your mom's away.

COOPER
Feel free to leave anytime, Dick.

Cooper drops his controller on the bed and gets up. As he heads to his SNES, Dick flicks his head toward the TV.

DICK
Is that a violent video game?

Cooper sighs and shuts off the TV.

INT. KENNEDY RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ERIC BAUDERER (17) sits sullenly at the edge of a couch, eyes on the floor. Despite his big, comfy hoodie with a large front pocket, he looks uncomfortable. Eric's looks, style, and build imply he's a popular, disciplined high school athlete, but the anxious lines on his forehead imply he's not as conditioned mentally as he is physically.

Sisters RITA and SHARRON (both 40s) set luggage by the door.

RITA
I'll call you when we get there.

Eric nods.

SHARRON
And help yourself to anything in the fridge. Our home is your home.

ERIC
Will do, Aunt Sharron.

Dick clomps down the stairs. Cooper trots down after him.

Cooper leans against the wall, hands in his pockets, seeming too cool for this, but he looks as uncomfortable as Eric.

COOPER
Hey.

ERIC
What's up?

RITA
Oh, so cute! You used to spend so much time together before we moved. Now you're all grown up!

DICK
(under his breath)
Hardly.

RITA
(to Sharron)
Remember that time we ran out of diapers and we had to put the boys in pillowcases?

The teens blush.

RITA
I know I have pictures somewhere --

ERIC
-- Mom! You're gonna be late.

Rita checks her watch and gasps.

RITA
Oh -- we gotta go. Behave, kiddo.

Eric hops up and reluctantly accepts Rita's hug.

Sharron hugs Cooper, then Dick.

SHARRON
(whispering, to Dick)
Be nice to the kids. I'm serious.

Dick sees her sincerity. He smiles and kisses his wife.

RITA
I wish I could've seen Debbie!

SHARRON
Me, too. She said she'd be here, but you know teenage girls.

Rita winks back at Cooper.

RITA
We were like that, once upon a time. Always doing something. Your mom was a bad influence, you know. Heavens were we boy-crazy?

Cooper and Eric wince -- *GROSS!*

SHARRON
Okay, we gotta go.

Sharron collects her luggage and ushers Rita out of the house. The door shuts behind them.

INT. KENNEDY RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cooper and Eric sit across from each other, sloppily eating Chef Boyardee Spaghetti & Meatballs, sharing awkward glances.

ERIC
You still play football?

Cooper shakes his head.

ERIC
I started wrestling.

Cooper flicks his eyebrows, whoop-de-doo, wipes his mouth with a napkin, and goes to the sink to rinse his plate.

Dick enters with a glass and fills it with tap water before Cooper can get to the faucet.

DICK
You all settled in, Eric?

ERIC
Yeah, man.

Dick gives him an icy grin.

DICK
Kids today. No respect.

ERIC
Uh...?

DICK
The appropriate response is “yes, sir.”

ERIC
Uh... my bad. Yeah -- yes sir. I’m settled in... sir.

DICK
Good. And while we’re on the subject, we have a few ground rules in this house you may not be aware of. I don’t know how things were before your uncle died --

Cooper scowls.

DICK
-- but things are different now. This is a Christian household. That means we don't tolerate sinful things. No drugs, no alcohol, no smoking. And definitely no porn.

Dick glares at Cooper.

COOPER
No joke. If he finds it, he'll keep it. In your shoebox in the back of the closet, right, Dick?

DICK
Little bastard. You planted that!

Cooper rolls his eyes and smirks. Dick composes himself.

DICK
Also, profanity in this house is reserved for adults. So don't go waving your itty-bitty prick around till it grows some hair. Got it?

COOPER
You don't gotta wait till then to suck it, Dick.

Dick shakes with fury. He moves in, ready to strike Cooper.

The back door opens. DEBBIE and MEGAN (both 19) pop in and stop when Dick yanks Cooper toward him by his shirt collar.

DEBBIE
Ooo, tense.

Debbie, a material girl and cheerleader type, chews her gum, mouth open, and rolls her eyes like this is a daily routine.

Megan gapes, as though she's heard stories about this behavior but never saw it for herself until now. The tall volleyball player's eyes bulge in concern.

DEBBIE
This is why we never hang out here.

DICK
Where the hell have you been? You were supposed to be home before your mother left!

DEBBIE
Practice ran late, then --

DICK
-- Save it!

Dick softens, then looks Megan over like a juicy steak.

DICK
(suddenly charming)
Who's your friend?

Cooper rolls his eyes.

DEBBIE
(to herself)
Oh god.
(to Dick)
This is Megan. She brought me to pick up some clothes. I'm staying at her house tonight.

DICK
Did your mom give you permission?

DEBBIE
I'm nineteen. Don't need any.

DICK
You do if you're living under this roof. Don't like it? Move out. I left home and joined the military at eighteen. It made me the man I am today.

ERIC
(under his breath)
Remind me not to join the military.

DICK
Pardon?

Cooper smirks.

ERIC
Nothing... sir.

DEBBIE
(to Megan)
So, this is Dick, my mom's current husband. They're always doing this. It's like watching reruns of my least favorite Ricki Lake episodes.

Eric clear's his throat.

All eyes on Eric. He swallows, unaware of the spaghetti sauce on his chin and his pupils dilating at the sight of Megan.

DEBBIE
Oh. That's my little cousin Eric. He's chillin' for the summer while my mom helps his mom get divorced and sell their house.

Eric sulks.

ERIC
Hi.

Megan smiles, shy but flirtatious.

MEGAN
Hi.

DEBBIE
And you know my stupid brother.

COOPER
Fuck off, bitch.

DICK
Hey!

DEBBIE
Kiss my ass, bitch.

DICK
Debra! Enough, both of you!

COOPER
Come on, dude. It's annoying here.

Eric glances at everyone for approval. He gets up and catches up to Cooper on his way out the door.

DICK
(yelling after them)
Curfew's at nine, you little shit!

COOPER (O.S.)
It's summer!

DICK
Nine o'clock! And you stay away from that little heathen, too!

The DOOR SLAMS.

EXT. KENNEDY RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Eric catches up to Cooper as they cut across the yard.

ERIC
Hey, where’re we going?

COOPER
To see a little heathen. Duh.

Nearing the street, they spot a late 80s Jeep Wrangler spray-painted black. HEAVY METAL BLASTS FROM THE SPEAKERS WITHIN.

COOPER
Ah, shit.

INT./EXT. JEEP - CONTINUOUS

The MUSIC VOLUME DECREASES. TONY (20s) sticks his head out the window and scans the boys. His bandmates VINCE (lanky, 20) and GRAVY (hulking, 24) look on from their seats.

TONY
Hey! It’s Pooper! And he’s got a little friend!

VINCE
Probably his butt buddy!

TONY
Probably. Pooper, where the hell’s your sister?

COOPER
<u>Probably</u> with a real man. Sorry, dawg. Looks like you and your goons are circle-jerkin’ tonight.

Tony gives a fake, loud, obnoxious laugh. His bandmates join in. They all stop laughing in unison. Tony starts the Jeep.

COOPER
(hushed, to Eric)
You still run track?

ERIC
Yeah...?

Tony revs the engine. Vince CRANKS THE MUSIC UP.

COOPER
Good. Run.

EXT. SUBURBIA - NIGHT

The Jeep chases Cooper and Eric, skips onto the curb, and rams into trashcans while chasing the boys through yards.

The boys cross in front of a pizza delivery car. The driver swerves to a stop diagonally, blocking the Jeep's path.

Cooper raises his middle fingers and laughs triumphantly. The boys turn the corner and race into the night.

EXT. JUSTIN'S NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Decent-sized houses, but they're older and "lived in". Cooper and Eric catch their breath as they stroll.

ERIC
So, what the fuck was that about?

COOPER
That was Debbie's douchebag boyfriend, Tony, and his cocksmoker friends. I caught him cheating on her with another girl behind the 7-11. He denied it, of course, so Debbie stayed with him, and he's been fucking with me ever since.

ERIC
Damn, bro. That sucks.

COOPER
Yeah. Fuckin' hate 'em. I came up with about a hundred ways to kill them if I ever got the chance.

Eric laughs. Cooper doesn't.

COOPER
And here we are.

ERIC
Huh?

COOPER
Justin's house.

ERIC
Is he okay with me coming along?

COOPER
Well...

Eric raises an eyebrow.

INT. JUSTIN'S ATTIC - NIGHT

JUSTIN TILLER (18) slouches back on his torn up couch with a raised eyebrow and otherwise unreadable face.

Justin is the type to get drunk, get loud, moon people, make friends (and enemies), and get arrested on any given Saturday night, but in this moment, he is not at all jovial.

Eric and Cooper sit on weathered chairs nearby. Eric swallows, uncomfortably.

COOPER
He's cool, man.

JUSTIN
Yeah. Too cool, right?

Cooper sighs. *Here we go*.

JUSTIN
You a jock?

ERIC
I play sports. So what?

JUSTIN
So what, he says. This kid. So, I bet you're one of those douches who thinks he's all hard and gets away with whatever he wants because he's so much better than people like me.

ERIC
Am I?

JUSTIN
I dunno. Are you? Did your mommy and daddy buy you a shiny new sports car when you turned sixteen?

ERIC
No. They gave me their old one.

JUSTIN
I bet it was still shiny, though, right? And you're probably on the varsity team, so you bang all the cheerleaders in the backseat, too.

ERIC
Not that that's any of your business, but, no, I don't.

JUSTIN
I bet you would, though, huh?

ERIC
I dunno. Would you?

JUSTIN
Every fuckin' day, twice on Fridays, but this ain't about me. See, I bet you pick on smaller, weaker kids like Cooper and me, just because you can, and nobody does anything to stop you.

ERIC
I've never picked on anybody a day in my life! But, if you keep coming at me like that, I'm gonna become the guy you're describing.

Cooper eyes Eric with wide eyes.

Justin studies Eric, unreadable, then shrugs.

JUSTIN
I guess you can stay. For now.

Justin gets up.

JUSTIN
Who wants a beer? Coop? Jockstrap?

Eric glares. Justin heads downstairs.

ERIC
His parents let him drink?

COOPER
Fuck no. His mom's never around, so he kind of just does whatever.

ERIC
He acts more like a jock than I do.

COOPER
He's so lucky.

ERIC
You know, some people actually want a stable family, right?

COOPER
Whatever that is. Dick's sending me to military school at the end of the summer, and mom just kind of goes along with whatever he says. Thanks to Dick, I feel like I lost both my parents.

Eric scans his environment -- rare underground horror movie posters and memorabilia cover the walls. There's torn-up furniture Justin likely found on the street, and an unmade bed with fake bloodstains.

COOPER
I just wanna fuckin' stab him sometimes.

On the back wall: an entertainment center complete with a 25" tube TV, a VCR, and classic video game systems ranging from Atari to Super Nintendo.

COOPER
That reminds me, you gotta see our new movie.

Cooper heads to the VCR, finds a cassette tape and plays it.

ERIC
Your movie? Like, you made it?

COOPER
Yeah. You'd never know it was made by two teenagers with no money.

The movie plays. The VCR tracks through lines of static to reveal a black piece of construction paper with the words "HACKED OFF" painted in red. It absolutely looks like it was made by two teenagers with no money.

ON THE TV

Cooper walks through the woods. He trips and sees his foot is caught in a bear trap (made of cardboard and aluminum foil). He howls in pain. Chunky ketchup bubbles up from his "wound".

Justin jumps out from the trees in an orange jumpsuit. He wears a plastic hockey mask and wields a butcher knife. He laughs like a high-pitched maniacal clown and hacks away at Cooper O.S.; Blood splatters everywhere in sloppy jump cuts.

COOPER (O.S.)
I did all the makeup, too.

BACK TO SCENE

Eric’s eyes bulge at the spectacle, more from pity than awe.

Justin emerges from the stairs with three cans of beer.

ERIC
You... really made this?

JUSTIN
Fuck yeah, we did. Two-and-a-half mother fucking hours of it!

ERIC
(whispering, to himself)
Two-and-a-half...

COOPER
I still feel like there’s something missing, though.

JUSTIN
Bullshit. There’s blood, murder, and monsters. The only thing missing’s some tig-ol’-bitties, and that’s cause you wouldn’t let me audition your mom.

COOPER
Fuck off. It’s missing something and you know it.
(to Eric)
What do you think?

JUSTIN
Yeah, what do you think?

ERIC
It’s... rad.

JUSTIN
Rad? That’s it? That’s all you got?

ERIC
Well...

JUSTIN
Everyone’s a critic. We’ll get some boobies in the next one, a’ight, ya fuckin’ pervert?

COOPER
What don’t you like about it?

ERIC
Nothing! You had plenty of -- a lot of -- it's a lot. Really. It's really rad... I just don't really watch a lot of horror movies.

Justin and Cooper glare at Eric, insulted.

ERIC
But, if you have any action or comedy tapes, I'm your guy.

Justin and Cooper look at the stacks of horror tapes.

JUSTIN
Fuck it. To the video store!

EXT. JUSTIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Cooper walks a bike out to the street. Eric follows awkwardly on a girl's bike, complete with flowers and streamers.

ERIC
There's nothing else I can ride? I know I saw a skateboard up there.

COOPER
You'd never keep up.

ERIC
Is this his sister's or something?

COOPER
He's an only child.

ERIC
Oh...kay?

Justin glides down the driveway in Rollerblades and meets Cooper and Eric in the street.

JUSTIN
Keep up, Jockstrap!

Justin wheels around them and takes off into the night. Cooper and Eric race after him.

EXT. SUBURBIA - NIGHT

The boys ride through town. They holler. They're rowdy and a little careless, but they're young. They're free.