CREEPERS

Written by

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THE FOLLOWING IS TOLD USING A “FOUND FOOTAGE“ FORMAT.

INT. PAULSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - DAY (SEVEN YEARS AGO)

FROM A MINI DV CAMERA, TIME-STAMPED “AUGUST 12TH”

Carol (unseen) moves through a clean, stylish living room toward an open sliding patio door with her recording camcorder. BOYS LAUGHTER and SLOSHING WATER can be heard outside. Carol chuckles to herself and steps out to --

EXT. PAULSON RESIDENCE - BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Sunny afternoon. YOUNG AARON (11), always smiling, lobs water balloons at YOUNG ROB (11), a scrawny tough kid with a buzz cut and black clothes. Rob retaliates with a water cannon.

CAROL (O.S.)
There’s still a drought, you know?

The boys see the camera and laugh.

YOUNG ROB
Eliminate the witness!

Young Rob sprays Carol, intentionally missing. They laugh.

CAROL (O.S.)
Don’t make me get the hose!

YOUNG AARON
She will, too. Oh, hey, Mom, can Rob spend the night?

CAROL (O.S.)
Well... he’ll have to ask his mom --

YOUNG ROB
She doesn’t care.

Young Aaron pegs Young Rob in the face with a balloon. Rob turns red with embarrassment and scowls. Young Aaron laughs.

CAROL (O.S.)
Not too rough, guys.

Carol takes the camera back inside.

YOUNG ROB (O.S.)
Think that was funny?

A CRASH is heard outside.

Carol hurries out to see Young Rob mounting Young Aaron. Rob chokes him with his forearm, but it's just out of our P.O.V.

CAROL (O.S.)
Hey!

Young Rob quickly releases Young Aaron and dismounts, huffing and puffing. Young Aaron sits up and catches his breath.

CAROL (O.S.)
Air? You okay, bud?

Young Aaron nods. His glassy eyes dart to Young Rob.

YOUNG AARON
(feigning a smile)
Yeah. We're just playing, Mom.

CAROL (O.S.)
Okay... Why don't you guys take a break for a while?

CUT TO BLACK:

EXT. ROB'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DUSK (FOUR YEARS AGO)

FROM A MINI DV CAMERA

Several young trick-or-treaters and parents explore the neighborhood. Aaron spins his camera to ROB POWELL, now 14, in full movie-quality zombie makeup and attire. Rob twitches, growls, and chomps hungrily.

AARON (O.S.)
This is so much easier than going door to door. We should've thought of this years ago.

ROB
I did. We just weren't big enough.

AARON PAULSON, now 13, spins the camera toward himself. His zombie makeup isn't nearly as polished as Rob's.

AARON
Well, we are now.

Aaron smiles through his braces and then returns to Rob.

ROB
How's it look?

AARON (O.S.)
Pretty fucking real, bro.
(poking at Rob's face)
How long did it take you?

Rob coolly slaps his hand away.

ROB
About as long as it takes your mom
to do hers.

AARON (O.S.)
Fuck you. You'd still be doing it.

They laugh. Rob looks past the camera and backs off.

ROB
Shit -- get ready.

Rob hides behind a tree. Aaron moves to the side of the house and angles the camera to show three kids dressed as superheroes maneuvering past realistic homemade corpses throughout the yard.

Rob jumps out as the kids approach the door. He growls and swipes at their candy bags. The kids drop their bags and run away screaming for their lives.

Rob and Aaron laugh hysterically. Rob collects the bags.

ROB
Easy candy.

Rob glances up.

ROB
Dude -- reset.

Rob and Aaron take their places.

A little girl dressed as a PRINCESS weaves past the corpses cautiously and approaches the door. Rob jumps out and snarls at her. The Princess SCREAMS, drops her bag, and races to her MOMMY. The angry mom storms up the sidewalk to confront Rob.

MOMMY
What's wrong with you?! She's just
a little girl! Is this your house?

ROB
Whoa, Lady. Chill --

MOMMY
Don’t tell me to chill! You don’t do that to little kids! Where are your parents?

Mommy stomps toward the house, daughter in tow, and pounds on Rob’s front door.

ROB
You don’t gotta do that. Here -- take it!

Rob tries to hand her a bag of “recovered“ candy.

MOMMY
You don’t seem so tough and scary now that there’s consequences, huh?

ROB
(mouthing to Aaron)
Just go, man.

Mommy pounds on the door, harder.

ROB
Please, don’t -- my Dad’s asleep --

The front door whips open. MR. POWELL (43), in fatigues and dog tags, rubs his eyes and steps onto the porch. Aaron ducks around the side of the house.

AARON (O.S.)
(laughing, quietly)
Oh shit.

Aaron angles the camera around to see Mommy scold Mr. Powell.

MR. POWELL
Boy, get your ass over here!

Rob nears his dad, sluggishly.

MR. POWELL
What the fuck did I tell you?

Powell slaps the back of Rob’s head. Rob’s face goes blank; he pees his pants. Mommy turns her kid away, horrified.

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - DEN - DAY (ONE YEAR AGO)

FROM AARON'S CELL PHONE CAMERA IN PORTRAIT MODE

Crumpled-up fast food bags, empty beer cans, and a few holes punched in the wall; a redneck's paradise.

Aaron moves through the den, down the hall, and to --

THE WORKSHOP

Aaron pushes the creaky door open. He shows the well-lit Halloween decorations and a wall of cubbies containing horror movie replicas and memorabilia . Aaron breezes past a mounted homemade scarecrow mask to --

THE WORKBENCH

-- Where a life-like severed hand drips blood on a newspaper beside Rob, now 17. He touches up the blood.

ROB
Oh, hi. I didn't hear you come in. Seriously, I can't hear shit in this fuckin' place.

Aaron laughs.

ROB
Anyway, welcome to the Workshop of the Damned.

AARON (O.S.)
Satan's workshop.

ROB
Satan's workshop! That's what's up. Well, the devil got shipped overseas, so it's all mine now. Good riddance. Anyway, I'm your host, Rob Menace. We got A-bomb on camera.

Aaron -- sans braces -- turns the phone toward himself and sticks his tongue out in a wicked sneer. Back to Rob.

ROB
And today we're gonna take you behind the scenes of our upcoming short slasher film, Dismembered.

Aaron zooms in on bloody props, weapons, and “body parts“ drying on the table behind Rob, as well as a black trash bag-turned-body bag. Household items give it a human body shape.

ROB
We got blood, makeup, masks, and all kinds of nasty shit, so keep your eyes peeled for it, huh?

AARON (O.S.)
Yeah. Like, share, comment, and subscribe. We only have, like, ten followers right now.

ROB
Nineteen. But yeah, we need more, so share the fuck out of this or we’ll murder you in your sleep.

Aaron laughs. Rob doesn’t.

INT. ROB’S HOUSE - WORKSHOP - NIGHT

FROM ROB’S DSLR CAMERA

Dim horror lighting. Aaron holds a slate dated March 29th.

AARON
Dismembered, scene six, take two.

Aaron marks the shot, then disappears behind the camera, picks it up, and focuses on the door.

AARON (O.S.)
Action!

MIGGY MEDINA (17), a husky anti-social nerd, enters the workshop with a lackadaisical expression.

MIGGY
Hello? Doctor Craven? Are you here?

AARON (O.S.)
(whispering)
Miggy! Look scared.

Miggy rolls his eyes.

MIGGY
Hello? Doctor Craven? Are you here?

Miggy enters the room and sees a severed hand on the table.

MIGGY
Oh shit. Not Doctor Craven! Fuck.
He's dead. Fuck. Oh fuck.

Miggy backs to the door. Robert, in a creepily-painted sack mask, and brandishing a bloody meat tenderizer, slams his way in and fakes a whack to Miggy's head.

MIGGY
(dry)
Aaaahhhh!

Miggy carefully falls to the floor. Robert mounts him and pretends to take several whacks. Robert drops the mallet and pretend-rams Miggy's head into the ground. Miggy giggles.

ROB
Fuck, dude!

Rob gets up, unmasks, and throws the sack in Miggy's face.

MIGGY
Eat me, it tickles!

AARON (O.S.)
Back to one!

CUT TO:

ANOTHER TAKE.

Robert mounts Miggy and takes several fake whacks with the meat tenderizer. Fake blood splatters everywhere. Rob pulls out a saw and starts "cutting" limbs aggressively. Rob admires his handy work. He collects Miggy's "bloody limbs."

EXT. ROB'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Rob shovels dirt onto a dirt mound. He drops Miggy's glasses on top of it and spits on them. Miggy quickly retrieves them.

MIGGY (O.S.)
(quietly)
Ass hole.

AARON (O.S.)
Cut! That's a wrap!

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. PAULSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - DAY (LAST WEEK)

FROM ROB'S DSLR CAMERA ON THE ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

Rob adjusts the framing. Aaron plays with his pet tarantula, PENNYWIZZLE, on the couch. Rob joins them.

ROB
Sup, demon-nites? Menace and A-bomb here.

AARON
(pointing at tarantula)
And Pennywizzle.

ROB
And Pennywizzle. It's been a while since we've posted. We'll probably start doing some game reviews and horror movie trivia or some shit.

Aaron waves Pennywizzle's leg at the camera.

AARON
(high-pitched voice)
And Dismembered Part Two.

ROB
Maybe. We haven't decided yet. The first one only got a hundred and twenty-nine views, and it's been up for over a year now.

AARON
We actually lost two subscribers.

ROB
They probably don't have the stomach for what we do. Fucking pussies.

The FRONT DOOR OPENS and CLOSES O.S.

CAROL, now 43, passes through the living room in business casual attire and fatigued eyes.

CAROL
Hi, boys.

ROB
Hey, Mrs. P.

CAROL
What'cha doing?

AARON
Making videos for our adoring fans.

CAROL
Marvelous. Am I gonna find rubber body parts in my fridge again?

Aaron laughs.

AARON
Not today. We're just talking. Me, and Rob, and Pennywizzle.
(high-pitched voice)
Hiya Mom.

Aaron waves at Carol with one of Pennywizzle's legs.

CAROL
(shrinking back)
No. Aaron, cage.

AARON
(high-pitched voice)
Aaron, cage.

CAROL
Now!

Carol heads into the kitchen. Aaron takes his pet upstairs.

AARON (O.S.)
Come on, Pennywizzle. Let's go somewhere we can be appreciated.

Rob hops up and heads to the camera. He shuts it off.

EXT. BRIDGE WOOD HIGH SCHOOL - DAY (TODAY)

FROM AARON'S CELL PHONE CAMERA

Aaron gets out of Rob's black spray painted pickup parked on the street and follows Rob toward their school. Rob glances at houses across the street and gags. He points at a house with cute jack-o'-lanterns.

ROB
This is bullshit. Everyone's doing all this cute shit now. There's no horror. No fear. I hate it.

Rob runs across the street, picks up a cute jack-o'-lantern, and punts it into the next neighbor's yard. Aaron laughs. Rob grins mischievously and jogs back to Aaron.

The boys cross the street and near the school entrance. A few jocks incidentally slip into Aaron's frame:

DESMOND (18), the buff, popular quarterback. ZACK (18), an aggressive jock and bully. JOEL (19), a second-year senior gearing up for a third. The jocks stop to look at a picture on Zack's phone, directly in front of Rob, who stops dead and gestures back at Aaron as if to say, "W.T.F.?"

JOEL
Bro. You need to fuckin' hit that.

ZACK
Dead ass. She's supposed to --
(seeing Rob)
-- Uh, can I help you?

ROB
You stopped right in front of us.

JOEL
So go around, dog fucker.

Rob's jaw tightens. His fists clench.

DESMOND
You fucking filming this shit?

Desmond shoulder checks Rob and snatches Aaron's phone.

AARON
Dude, come on.

DESMOND
Here comes the money shot, bro.

Desmond slides Aaron's phone into his pants and rubs it on his underwear. He goes to return it but drops it instead.

DESMOND
Aww, my bad. Guess my dick's still slippery from your mamma's tears.

The bullies laugh, fist bump, and enter the school.

AARON
Ass holes. So sick of this shit.

Aaron picks up his phone and scans the screen for damage.

ROB
Don't worry. It's coming back around. They're long overdue.

AARON
I doubt it.

ROB
It is. I promise.

INT. BRIDGE WOOD HIGH SCHOOL - SPANISH CLASS - DAY

FROM AARON'S CELL PHONE CAMERA

Rob, Aaron, and Miggy sit in the back of the classroom. Students gradually funnel in and take their seats.

Aaron records a sketchbook on his desk -- hand-sketched Anime versions of Aaron and a girl. He turns the phone toward Rob.

AARON (O.S.)
Hey, what's up for your birthday?

ROB
I dunno. Mom's gonna be at her boyfriend's. Tom's doing overtime all week. We could go blow shit up. Maybe take the drone out.

DESMOND (O.S.)
All set.

Aaron spins his phone to show Desmond and Zack sitting down beside NICOLE MILTON (18), the popular head cheerleader with a running "cat" theme -- stickers, decals, socks, etc.

ZACK
It's gonna be like that party in Project X, but for Halloween.

DESMOND
Just the hype, not the cops or explosions.

ZACK
My cousin's gonna D.J. And my other cousin's bringing tons of liquor.

Aaron catches a reaction shot from Rob. Miggy leans in beside him, intently eavesdropping on the "in-crowd."

DESMOND
You gonna hook us up with some dry ice from work, or what?

ZACK
How much?

DESMOND
You tell me. I want that patio to look like some Silent Hill shit.

ZACK
Say less.

DESMOND
(to Nicole)
So, you down?

NICOLE
Halloween's on a Monday. My mom'll have me on lock down by seven.

DESMOND
Nah-nah-nah. It's going down tomorrow night.

NICOLE
Oh... okay. I'll be there.

MIGGY (O.S.)
We have rehearsal on Saturdays.

The in-crowd turns to Miggy, as does the camera.

MIGGY
In case you forgot...

The camera volleys between the popular kids and Miggy.

ZACK
Who the fuck's talkin' to you, drama nerd?

NICOLE
He's just some stalker from the play.

MIGGY
I work the lights.

NICOLE
Whatever. Mind your own shit Mickey.

MIGGY
It's Miggy...

NICOLE
It’s nobody, so just stop, okay? And don’t listen to our conversations because you’re not part of them. Please and thank you.

Nicole waves Miggy off. The bullies laugh. Zack’s eye catches Aaron’s phone. Aaron quickly hides it under his desk.

ZACK (O.S.)
You filming again, fucker?

AARON (O.S.)
No.

The BELL RINGS.

EXT. BRIDGE WOOD HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

FROM AARON’S CELL PHONE CAMERA

Aaron records a house across the street decorated with happy pumpkins and ghosts. He pans to Rob, who paces anxiously on the sidewalk.

ROB
It’s such bullshit! That’s even worse than the last one! This isn’t Halloween! They may as well put up fucking Santa Claus!

AARON
Walmart already has their fake-ass Christmas trees out.

ROB
No!

Rob invades the frame.

ROB
It’s Halloween! Tricks-and-motherfucking-treats! It’s supposed to be scary and interactive. When we were kids, we had to trick-or-treat to get our candy.

AARON (O.S.)
Or scare it out of other kids.

Rob smirks.

ROB
Now, what kind of ass holes would do that? But, it doesn't even matter, 'cause it's all over now. They're doing that trick-or-trunk shit everywhere!

AARON (O.S.)
Trunk-or-treat.

ROB
Yeah. Fuck that shit! Kids are too fucking coddled now. Someone should take Halloween back to its roots.

Rob aims his finger like a gun at the house, squints, and pulls the trigger, "shooting" at each decoration.

A GRANNY (50s) and a SCHOOL GIRL (10) walk their dog toward the boys. Aaron turns his camera to see them.

AARON (O.S.)
(to Granny)
Hey. Can I ask you guys a question?

GRANNY
Hello. Sure.

AARON (O.S.)
Do you celebrate Halloween?

GRANNY
Oh, not really, anymore. I used to give out candy, but it's been a while.

ROB
How come?

GRANNY
No kids. We'd get two, maybe three trick-or-treaters all night.

AARON (O.S.)
(to Girl)
What about you? Are you going trick-or-treating?

SCHOOL GIRL
Not me. I'm doing a cleanse.

Behind them, Rob angrily mouths, "what the fuck?"

AARON (O.S.)
You're doing a cleanse?

Granny laughs as they walk away.

GRANNY
They grow up so fast, huh?

Rob watches them depart.

ROB
Can you believe that shit?

AARON (O.S.)
She probably gave out toothbrushes for Halloween. That's why no one goes to her place.

ROB
I wish I knew where they lived. I'd show 'em what's up. Seriously -- a cleanse? Druids used to sacrifice their children on Samhain, but this little bitch is going on a cleanse?

AARON (O.S.)
I guess we just gotta make it scary again ourselves.

Rob smirks, as if to say, "now you're catching on."

ROB
We'll just have to.

Aaron turns his phone toward the approaching Miggy.

AARON (O.S.)
Yo, Miggy. Besides your mom, what scares you?

MIGGY
Besides my mom, nothing.

AARON (O.S.)
Good. Come over and vlog with us.

MIGGY
(to Aaron)
Is your spider dead?

AARON (O.S.)
(laughing)
You're such a pusswah, Miggy.