

CREEPERS

Written by

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FADE IN:

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

FROM A MINI DV CAMERA.

We move through a clean, stylish living room toward an open sliding patio door. BOYS LAUGHTER and SLOSHING WATER can be heard outside.

Unseen, Carol chuckles to herself as we step out to --

EXT. PAULSON RESIDENCE - BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Summer and sunny. YOUNG AARON (11), upbeat but quiet, rocks a bowl cut, scoops an armful of water balloons out of a plastic kiddie pool, and playfully lobs them at YOUNG ROB (11), a scrawny tough kid in all black with a buzz cut. Rob blasts Aaron with a pump-action water gun.

CAROL (O.S.)

There's still a drought, you know?

The boys stop their assault to laugh at their observer.

YOUNG ROB

Better eliminate the witness then!

Rob sprays some water toward Carol, intentionally missing. The three laugh.

CAROL (O.S.)

I'm gonna order now. Pepperoni okay?

YOUNG AARON

Yup.

YOUNG ROB

Sure.

YOUNG AARON

Hey, 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 and scowls. Young Aaron laughs -- *boys being boys.*

CAROL (O.S.)

Not too rough, guys.

Carol takes the camera back inside. Then we hear:

YOUNG ROB (O.S.)

Fuck you!

The CRASH of the kiddie pool is heard outside. We hurry out to see Young Rob mounting Young Aaron; he chokes him out with his forearm, but the contact is just out of our P.O.V.

CAROL (O.S.)

Hey!

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

CAROL (O.S.)

Aaron? Are you okay?

Aaron nods. His watery eyes dart to Rob.

YOUNG AARON

(feigning a smile)

Yeah. We're just playing mom.

CAROL (O.S.)

... Okay ... why don't you guys come in and dry off --

CUT TO BLACK:

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

FROM A MINI DV CAMERA.

Many young trick-or-treaters and parents make their rounds through the neighborhood. Aaron spins our view to ROB POWELL, now 14, in full movie-quality zombie makeup and attire. Rob twitches toward the lens, growls, and chomps hungrily.

AARON (O.S.)

This is gonna be so much easier than going door to door.

ROB

Should've thought this up years ago.

AARON PAULSON, now 13, spins the camera toward himself. He's also in zombie makeup, but it's nowhere near as polished as Rob's, nor can it hide the awkward lanky teen beneath it.

AARON

He did. We just weren't big enough.

He smiles through his braces and then spins us back to Rob.

ROB

How's it look?

AARON (O.S.)
Pretty fucking real, dude.
(touching 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 see three kids dressed as *The Avengers*. They cautiously maneuver past realistic homemade zombie corpses scattered throughout the yard.

Aaron snickers behind the camera.

Rob jumps out as the kids approach the door. He growls and swipes at the kids' candy bags. Only two of the boys lose their candy, but all three run away screaming.

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 with a face of concern and approaches the door. Rob jumps out and snarls at her. The Princess SCREAMS, drops her bag, and slowly turns to her MOMMY, who storms up the sidewalk.

MOMMY
What's wrong with you?! She's just
a little girl! Do you live here?!

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 have to do that. Here -- just take it!

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

MOMMY

No! I moved here so my daughter could grow up in a safe neighborhood!

ROB

(to Aaron)
Just go, man.

Mommy pounds on the door, harder.

ROB

Please, don't -- he's taking a nap --

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 cautiously angles the camera back around to see Mommy scold Mr. Powell.

MR. POWELL

Boy, get your ass over here!

Rob approaches, 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.

We duck back around the side of the house.

CUT TO BLACK:

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

FROM AARON'S IPHONE CAMERA, POSITIONED VERTICALLY.

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

We glide out of the den, down the hall, and to --

THE WORKSHOP

Aaron's hand pushes the creaky door open. We scan the well-lit environment to see elaborate Halloween decorations and a wall of cubbies containing horror movie replicas and memorabilia (bladed glove, hockey mask, "killer" doll, etc.). We breeze past a mounted homemade *scarecrow* mask to --

THE WORKBENCH

-- Where a life-like severed hand drips blood on a newspaper-covered surface beside Rob, now 17, in a high-and-tight haircut and *Halloween* t-shirt. He touches up paint on a makeup appliance.

ROB

Oh, hi -- I didn't hear you come in.
No, 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

(laughing)

Satan's workshop! That's what's up.
Well, the devil got shipped overseas,
so this is 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 little short
film, *Dismembered*.

We focus on several bloody props, weapons, and "body parts" drying on the table behind him, as well as a black trash bag-turned-body bag exposed to show milk jugs and other household trash formed into the shape of an adult person.

ROB

We got blood, makeup, masks, and all kinds of nasty shit, so keep your eyes out for it sometime next month.

AARON (O.S.)

Yeah. Like it, share it, and subscribe to our page. We only have, like, ten followers right now.

ROB

Nineteen. But yeah, we need more, so share the fuck out of this or we're gonna murder you in your sleep.

Aaron laughs, but Rob's stare is bone dry.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - WORKSHOP - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S DSLR CAMERA.

The lights are dimmed for a horror ambiance. Aaron holds an iPad with a DigiSlate app facing the camera -- it's dated March 29th of last year.

AARON

Dismembered, scene six, take two.

Aaron marks the shot, then disappears behind the camera, picks it up, and aims it at the door.

AARON (O.S.)

Action!

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

NIGEL

Hello? Doctor Craven? Are you here?

AARON (O.S.)

(whispering)

Look scared.

Nigel looks into the camera with a "seriously, dude?" face.

NIGEL

(sigh)

Hello? Doctor Craven? Are you here?

Nigel forces a tremble, moves into the room, and sees a severed hand on the table.

NIGEL

Oh shit. Not Doctor Craven, too.
Fuck. He's dead. Fuck. This can't
be happening ... fuck.

Nigel 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 Nigel's head.

NIGEL

(dry)
Aaaahhhh!

He carefully falls to the floor. Robert mounts him and pretends to take several whacks. Robert drops the mallet and starts pretend-ramming Nigel's head into the ground.

Nigel giggles.

AARON (O.S.)

Nigel.

ROB

Fuck, dude!

Rob gets up, unmask, and throws the sack in Nigel's face.

NIGEL

I can't help it, it tickles!

AARON (O.S.)

Back to one.

Aaron returns to his position as we --

CUT TO:

Another take. Robert mounts Nigel and takes several whacks with the meat tenderizer. Fake blood splatters everywhere. Rob pulls out a saw and starts "cutting" limbs aggressively.

Rob picks up Nigel's glasses, stands up, and admires his handy work. Rob collects Nigel's "bloody limbs."

EXT. ROB'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Rob covers a dirt mound with a shovel full of dirt.

Rob tosses Nigel's glasses on top of the mound.

Rob spits on Nigel's glasses. Nigel retrieves/cleans them.

NIGEL (O.S.)
Ass hole.

AARON (O.S.)
Cut!

CUT TO BLACK:

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

FROM ROB'S DSLR CAMERA ON THE ENTERTAINMENT CENTER.

Rob sets the camera to record as Aaron plays with his pet tarantula, PENNYWIZZLE, on the couch. Rob joins them.

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

AARON
(points at tarantula)
And Pennywizzle.

ROB
And Pennywizzle. It's been a while since we've posted, so here we are. 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)
Dismembered Part Two.

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

AARON
We actually lost two subscribers.

ROB
They probably just 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. She appears confident in business casual attire, but the bags under her eyes paint a different picture.

CAROL
Hi, boys.

ROB
Hey, Mrs. P.

CAROL
What'cha doing?

AARON
Making a video for our adoring fans.

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

AARON
(laughing)
No -- we're doing a vlog. Just me
and Rob talking. And Pennywizzle.
(high pitched voice)
Hi Mom.

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

CAROL
(shrinking back)
No. Aaron, cage.

Aaron laughs hysterically.

CAROL
Now!

She wanders to the kitchen, shivering from a "buggy" feeling.
Aaron takes his pet upstairs.

AARON
Come on, Pennywizzle. Let's go
somewhere we can be appreciated.

Rob hops up and heads to the camera; he turns it off.

CUT TO BLACK:

SUPER OVER BLACK: **CREEPERS**

EXT. BRIDGE WOOD HIGH SCHOOL - DAY (TODAY)

FROM AARON'S iPHONE CAMERA.

Aaron gets out of Rob's black spray painted pickup parked on
the street. Rob walks ahead on the sidewalk that leads to
school. He glances at houses across the street.

ROB
This is bullshit.

Rob points at a house.

We turn to see cute jack-o'-lanterns and cartoon-ish cutouts.

ROB
Everyone's doing all this cute shit now. There's no horror. No fear. No screaming babysitters running up and down the street from deranged psychopaths.

We continue walking a few paces, then Rob shakes his head, drops his backpack off his shoulders and runs across the street. He picks up a jack-o'-lantern and punts it into the next neighbor's yard. Aaron laughs. Rob grins mischievously and jogs back to us.

The boys turn into the parking lot and head toward the school. A few jocks approach and enter Aaron's frame:

- DESMOND (18), the quarterback, buff, popular, and charming.
- ZACK (18), aggressive bully, on and off the football field.
- JOEL (19), a second-year senior, gearing up for a third.

Joel pulls up a picture on his phone; his companions huddle around to see it, directly in front of Rob, who stops dead and gestures back at Aaron as if to say, "W.T.F.?"

JOEL
Dude. You need to fuckin' hit that.

ZACK
I fully intend to --
(seeing Rob)
-- What?

ROB
What? You're the ones who stopped.

JOEL
So, go around, dog fucker.

Desmond spots the iPhone.

DESMOND
Hey, you fucking filming this shit?

Rob's jaw tightens. His fists clench ...

DESMOND

I asked you a question, dog fucker!

Desmond shoulder checks Rob and snatches Aaron's phone.

AARON

(voice cracking)

Hey -- give it back.

ZACK

(high pitched)

Give it back.

The bullies laugh.

DESMOND

You ready for the money shot, bro?

Desmond lowers the phone into his pants and rubs himself with it. He pulls it out and hands it back toward Aaron -- he drops the phone before Aaron can collect it.

DESMOND

Aww, my bad, son. My dick's still slippery from your mamma's tears.

The bullies carry on toward the school.

AARON

(under his breath)

Fucking ass holes. I'm so sick of this shit.

He picks up the phone and scans the screen for damage. Rob takes a peek.

ROB

Don't worry. It'll come around.

AARON

I doubt it.

ROB

It will. Promise.

Rob watches the bullies disappear from sight.

INT. BRIDGE WOOD HIGH SCHOOL - SPANISH CLASS - DAY

FROM AARON'S IPHONE CAMERA.

Rob and Aaron sit in the back of the classroom during "passing period." Students gradually funnel in and take their seats.

Aaron records a sketchbook on his desk -- a hand-sketched Anime character. He swings our view to Rob.

AARON (O.S.)

What are you doing for your birthday?

ROB

I dunno. My mom's gonna be at her boyfriend's all weekend, and Tom's doing overtime. Wanna blow shit up? We could take the drone out.

AARON (O.S.)

I'll ask my mom --

DESMOND (O.S.)

-- All set.

Aaron spins our view to see Desmond and Zack, who enter and sit beside NICOLE MILLER (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 playfully shoves Zack.

DESMOND

Fuck no! ... A'ight, kinda. All the hype, but no cops or explosions.

ZACK

My cousin's gonna D.J. And my other cousin's bringing a ton of alcohol.

Aaron catches a reaction shot from Rob. Nigel leans in beside him, intently eavesdropping on the "in-crowd." Back to *them*:

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

Word.

DESMOND
 (to Nicole)
 So, you down?

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

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

NICOLE
 Oh ... okay.

NIGEL (O.S.)
 We have play rehearsal on Saturdays.

The in-crowd turns to Nigel, as do we. Nigel shrinks back
 into his Jerga Baja *drug rug* hoodie.

NIGEL
 ... In case you forgot ...

The bullies scoff. We volley between them and Nigel.

ZACK
 Who the fuck are you, talkin' to us
 like you know us?

NICOLE
 He's just some stalker from the play.

NIGEL
 I work the lights ...

NICOLE
 Whatever. Listen. I go to play
 practice when I want to go to play
 practice, and since I live for
 Halloween, I won't be going to play
 practice. Okay, Niles?

NIGEL
 It's *Nigel* ...

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

Nicole waves Nigel off; the bullies laugh. Zack's eye catches
 the phone; Aaron quickly hides it under his desk.

ZACK (O.S.)
You fucking filming again?

AARON (O.S.)
No.

The BELL RINGS.

EXT. BRIDGE WOOD HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Aaron records Rob as he paces anxiously on the sidewalk.

ROB
It's such bullshit! That's even
worse than the last one!

We see a house across the street full of pumpkins with happy faces painted on them, and happy-looking *Casper*-like ghosts.

ROB
This isn't Halloween! They're trying
to make it Thanksgiving or some shit!

AARON
Might as well. Walmart already put
their fake-ass Christmas trees out.

ROB
No!

Rob invades the frame.

ROB
It's Halloween! Tricks-and-mother-
fucking-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
(smirk)
Now, what kind of ass holes would do
that? No, it's done now. It's over.
Now they're doing *trick-or-trunk*.

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

ROB
Yeah. Fuck that shit! Kids are too
fucking coddled now. Someone needs
to 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 SCHOOL GIRL (10) approach while walking their dog. Our view turns to 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 not for a while.

ROB

Why not?

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 this year. I'm doing a cleans.

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

AARON (O.S.)

You're doing ... *a cleans?*

Granny laughs as they walk away.

GRANNY

They grow up so fast, huh?

Rob watches them depart, nonplussed.

ROB

Can you believe that shit?

AARON (O.S.)

She probably gave out toothbrushes for Halloween. That's why she stopped getting kids.

ROB

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

AARON (O.S.)

We'll just have to make it scary again ourselves.

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

ROB

... Maybe we do ...

Our view turns to the approaching Nigel.

AARON (O.S.)

Yo, Nigel. Besides your mom, what scares you?

NIGEL

Besides my mom, nothing scares me.

AARON (O.S.)

Good. Come over and vlog with us.

NIGEL

(to Aaron)

... Is your spider dead?

AARON (O.S.)

(laughing)

Yeah, that's what I thought, *pusswah*.

ROB

Are you going to that party at Desmond's tomorrow?

NIGEL

No. In case you missed our little chat, or the string of death threats that followed, I wasn't quite invited.

ROB

That's not stopping us.

AARON (O.S.)

We're going?

ROB

Fuck yeah. We're crashing that shit. Look at the facts.

(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)

It'll be my birthday at midnight,
it's a costume party, and who the
fuck's gonna know?

NIGEL

Yeah, okay ... maybe I'll show up.
If I'm not busy.

ROB

(jacking off motion)
If I'm not busy.

Nigel glowers and walks on.

NIGEL

If you're gonna be a dick, I'm not
gonna bring my card tricks.

AARON (O.S.)

Dude, don't bring your card tricks.

Rob heads to his truck.

INT. PAULSON RESIDENCE - AARON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

FROM AARON'S WEBCAM.

Organized chaos: Dim light, with Anime silk wall hangings
and a few horror movie posters.

Aaron, in pajamas, sits at his desk and records. He waves.

AARON

Hey. I just wanted to show you my
latest sketch before bed.

He displays his sketchbook -- an Anime interpretation of a
girl in a cheerleader uniform -- and it's not bad.

AARON

It's the best one so far, right? I
want to color it. Give her strawberry
blonde hair like yours.

His smile fades. His eyes droop.

AARON

Chances are, you'll never even see
it. Or any of these videos. I'm
not even on your radar, so ... why
even make any, right?

He taps his pencil on the sketchbook.

AARON

It's like -- have you ever wanted someone so bad that it's all you could think about? But you know you don't have a shot, so you keep it to yourself and just end up feeling like a creeper all the time?

He shuts the sketchbook.

AARON

Probably not. You can have anyone you want...

(sigh)

This is pathetic.

A KNOCK at the door.

Aaron turns off his monitor.

Carol pokes her head in, also dressed for bed.

CAROL

Hey. Go to bed.

Aaron snickers.

AARON

You first.

CAROL

Twist my arm. Good night, Air.

AARON

Good night.

She starts to close the door and pops back in.

CAROL

Oh -- how was the math test?

AARON

C-plus.

CAROL

Aaron.

AARON

Hey, it's better than a C.

CAROL

We want A's. A's.

She enters the room and pokes his head with her fingers as if literally drilling them in.

CAROL

A's!

AARON

(laughing)

Mom! Okay, okay -- A's!

Aaron playfully swats her fingers away. Carol kisses him on the forehead and heads out.

CAROL

G'night.

Carol shuts the door.

Aaron looks into the web cam and rubs his sleepy eyes.

AARON

You have no idea how hard it is to pretend like everything's perfect all the time. To put on a mask and hide everything we put up with at school just to not freak anybody out when we get home.

He packs his sketchbook in his backpack.

AARON

It's exhausting, and I hope you never have to experience it. I guess I just always assumed you never would. You're already perfect in my eyes. Anyway, I hope you're having the sweetest of dreams right now. Good night, Karen.

Aaron waves and shuts off the web cam.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - DEN - DAY

FROM ROB'S LAPTOP CAMERA ON THE BOOKSHELF.

Rob opens a UPS package with his switchblade. A white plastic shopping bag sits on the couch beside him, and a camera drone sits idly on the coffee table.

ROB

Shout out to Fright-Tanic studios, by the way. This is the third prop I've gotten from them, and they're always top notch.

He unpacks bubble wrap and packing peanuts to find a colorful jack-in-the-box with horrific clowns painted on the side.

ROB
 Fuck yeah. Three for three.

He throws the packaging aside and sets the toy on the table.
 He turns the crank, causing a DISSONANT TUNE to play.

ROB
 It's great having neglectful parents
 that buy you off so they can sleep
 at night. Then you can buy cool
 shit like this. I highly recommend
 it.

The jack-in-the-box pops. An evil, blood-splattered clown
 coils out and laughs. Rob smiles, mischievously.

Aaron enters the room on his cell and drops his backpack.

AARON
 (on the phone)
 I will. Oh, hey -- can I stay over
 tonight? It's Rob's birthday at
 midnight ...
 (to Rob)
 She says *happy birthday*.

ROB
 Thanks, Mrs. P.

AARON
 (on the phone)
 He said thanks ... I'll ask.
 (to Rob)
 She wants to know if you want to
 come over for dinner tomorrow.

ROB
 Sure.

AARON
 (on the phone)
 He said yeah ... no, just him. His
 brother works, his dad's overseas,
 and his mom ...

ROB
 (amused)
 She's with her drug dealer.

AARON
 She's at her boyfriend's house ...
 Okay. Hey, you should make lasagna.
 ... So? Ugh. Fine.
 (to Rob)
 She wants to know what you like.

ROB
 (laughing)
 Lasagna's fine.

AARON
 (on the phone)
 See? He wants it too ... okay.
 'kay. Bye.

Aaron hangs up as his jaw drops.

AARON
 It came.

Aaron picks up the jack-in-the-box and examines it.

ROB
 Yeah. I got some other shit, too.

Rob digs into the plastic bag beside him and produces two mini video cameras that look like shirt buttons when worn, followed by two identical "evil clown" masks.

AARON
 Noice. What is --
 (taking a camera)
 -- Is this a camera?

ROB
 (nodding)
 The prank just went *Super Saiyan*.

AARON
 Sick!

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - DEN - LATER

FROM ROB'S HIDDEN "BUTTON CAM."

Rob and Aaron, dressed in black cloaks with black gloves, stare at themselves in a very large mirror.

ROB
 Fun fact, there was a huge evil clown epidemic in twenty-sixteen.

AARON
 In the U.S., and Canada.

ROB
 Yeah. Clowns were popping up all over the place. Forests, schools --

AARON

-- Abby Howard said her little brother saw one at their cabin.

ROB

Good. But then, it just suddenly stopped. Nobody knows why, or why it even started in the first place. Well, we're about to pick up where they left off and take it to the next level.

AARON

We're bringing it back.

ROB

Fuck yeah. We're putting the fear back into Halloween, starting with that party full of ass holes tonight.

AARON

We're gonna turn their fog machine into a mega dry ice bomb and blow up their entire liquor supply.

Aaron holds a hand-held voice changer to his mouth, activates it, and laughs a deep, exaggerated maniacal laugh.

ROB

And that's just for starters. When they start pointing fingers, they'll either start blaming each other, or they'll try to blame us, but they'll never see us at the same place at the same time. We're ghosts.

AARON

We're everywhere and nowhere, mother fuckers. Under your bed, in your closet --

ROB

-- In your mother-fucking nightmares.

The boys slide their wicked clown masks on. They turn toward one another.

FROM ROB'S WEBCAM ON THE DESK.

Rob and Aaron face one another and make miming gestures; like a mirrored image, they are *one*.

EXT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S CAMERA DRONE.

Typical suburban house. FOG AND LOUD BEATS EMIT FROM WITHIN as a few teens smoke and laugh on the porch.

We elevate into the air, glide over the trees and see a group of teens drinking in the backyard beside a Tiki bar. We double back without anyone seeing us.

The drone lands in front of Rob and Aaron -- two identical clowns -- who hide in the shadows near Rob's truck.

ROB
(landing drone)
Good to go.

EXT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

ALTERNATE BETWEEN ROB AND AARON'S BUTTON CAMS.

Rob and Aaron move toward Desmond's and curl around the side of the house. They enter a tall fence gate to --

THE BACKYARD.

Rob peeks into the yard, then returns to the shadows. The creepers lift their masks.

ROB
Ass holes! The fog machine is in the house, the bar is on the patio.

AARON
So, now what?

ROB
We improvise. Rig it up inside.

AARON
Inside? We were just gonna blow up their liquor supply. No one gets hurt. That's the mission.

Rob sighs.

ROB
All right, fine. I'll get the dry ice to the kitchen, you drag it out to the Tiki bar from there. If you don't see me in ten minutes, something's wrong. Just carry out the mission and meet back at the truck. Okay?

AARON
Sure ...

ROB
Killer. Now, let's have some fun.

The boys replace their masks and depart. Aaron heads toward a group of teens by the portable Tiki bar. He weaves between them, among them -- they pay no notice.

FROM ROB'S BUTTON CAM.

Rob angles into --

INT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The kitchen is full of mingling teens who laugh and drink. Rob moves into --

THE LIVING ROOM

-- Where the dry ice fog machine spouts its signature atmosphere, and a few classmates dance near the DJ booth.

Joel and Zack, dressed as Trojans, point and laugh near a punch table. Rob sneaks up for a closer look.

The DOORBELL RINGS. A RANDOM TEEN heads to the front door.

Joel flips his empty cup into the air and catches it.

JOEL
Desmond should tap that other keg.

ZACK
It's gonna be a while. Last I saw,
he was trying to tap Nicole, and *the*
initiation did not take.

JOEL
Oh fuck. Not again!

Joel laughs and does a double take over his shoulder; he spots Rob.

JOEL
Cory?

Rob shakes his head.

JOEL
Rudy.

Rob shakes his head.

ZACK
Who the fuck is this clown?

JOEL
Not one of ours. We're all Trojans.

ZACK
Yo, who's under there?

Rob remains motionless.

ZACK
Dude, I ain't playin'.

Zack reaches for Rob's mask -- he dodges.

Zack grabs Rob, who struggles to escape ...

Random Teen leans over Zack's shoulder.

RANDOM TEEN
Hey, Zack. There's some nerd at the door. Should we let him in?

Zack turns toward the door. Rob breaks free and disappears into the crowd.

ROB (O.S.)
(to himself)
Fuck, fuck, fuck ...

He hurries up the stairs, passing other teens as he goes.

INT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - 2ND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

FROM ROB'S BUTTON CAM.

Rob makes it to the bathroom -- the door is open a crack. He pushes it open to see Nicole -- as a sexy *Cheshire Cat* -- on her knees vomiting into the toilet. She weakly clutches her cellular as Desmond, dressed as a Trojan, holds her hair back.

DESMOND
Fuck off, man!

He picks a bar of soap off of the bathtub caddy and launches it at Rob, who slams the door before it can hit him.

EXT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

FROM AARON'S BUTTON CAM.

Aaron approaches a pair of STONERS and stops.

STONER #1

-- But what I'm saying is, why even make Emperor Snoke seem like he's gonna have this epic backstory if they're just gonna kill him before --

They spot Aaron.

STONER #2

... Can we help you?

Aaron stares on.

STONER #1

... Okay ...

STONER #2

I mean, I get what you're saying, but honestly, nobody gave a shit that we didn't know anything about Palpatine before the prequel trilogy --

STONER #1

-- Dude, I'm sorry, but -- this clown's really freaking me out.

STONER #2

It's just some kid --

STONER #1

-- I know, I know. I just hate clowns.

The Stoners stare at us for a moment, then look at one another, shrug, and walk away toward the tree house.

Aaron chuckles to himself under the mask.

AARON (O.S.)

(laughing, to himself)

That's right. Bitches.

Aaron turns and heads into --

INT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Aaron follows the crowd to --

THE LIVING ROOM

-- Where he sees a crowd of Trojans and other teens gathered around Nigel, dressed as a masked magician (top hat, cape, and wand). Zack waves Nigel's white, featureless mask.

ZACK

You seriously thought we wouldn't recognize you? I mean, look at you!

Joel snatches the mask and wand.

JOEL

Thinkin' he's a fuckin' master of disguise. With this nappy-ass hair?

The teens laugh. Zack pretends to jack off with the wand.

AARON (O.S.)

(to himself)

Nigel.

ZACK

And, what the fuck is this?

Zack pulls a deck of playing cards out of Nigel's breast pocket. He takes them out of the pack.

NIGEL

Cards ...

ZACK

Dude, these aren't even real cards.

NIGEL

They're for a trick ...

JOEL

This fool was gonna do tricks!

The crowd laughs.

AARON (O.S.)

(to himself)

I fucking told you, dude ...

Zack shuffles a "fifty-two card pickup" in Nigel's face.

ZACK

I say we give him a make-over and make this little drama fag *disappear*.

The crowd roars.

KAREN (O.S.)

Zack, don't be a dick.

AARON (O.S.)

(to himself)

Fuck. Karen.

We turn toward the dry ice fog machine, then to Nigel, and then we hurry to the machine. There's an ice chest behind it; Aaron opens it to reveal several pounds of dry ice.

Aaron snatches the chest and drags it toward the kitchen. We glance back -- Random Teen hands Joel a Sharpie.

INT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - 2ND FLOOR - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S BUTTON CAM.

Rob's hand tries a bedroom doorknob -- locked.

ROB (O.S.)

Ha.

His hand disappears in his pocket and produces a homemade paper clip lock pick and inserts it into the lock.

He pays a quick glance to the bathroom, then the stairs -- the coast is clear. Rob wiggles the paper clip for a few seconds -- the lock pops effortlessly.

He pushes the door open for a peek and flicks on the light. Parent's room. Modern, chic, and spotless. He closes the door, then tries another one: locked. He picks it with ease.

Rob pushes the door open and peeks in -- Desmond's room. Sports trophies and posters. Piles of laundry. A lava lamp.

The BATHROOM DOORKNOB SQUEAKS. Rob turns to watch it twist. Desmond's voice is heard muffled on the other side.

INT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - DESMOND'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rob enters and gently shuts/locks the door.

The doorknob twists. We hear a KEY SLIDE INTO THE LOCK ...

ROB (O.S.)

(under his breath)

Fuck.

Rob hurries to the hinged door closet and hides inside, leaving the door open a crack.

Desmond helps Nicole stumble into the room. Her phone slips from her fingers and hits the carpet. Desmond lays Nicole on the bed. He tosses her "cat" mask beside her.

DESMOND

It's cool. We can just chill for a while.

Desmond kisses her on the forehead.

EXT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

FROM AARON'S BUTTON CAM.

Aaron drags the ice chest to the Tiki bar. He empties a large plastic trash bin and sifts through 2-liter bottles.

INT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - DESMOND'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S BUTTON CAM IN THE CLOSET.

Rob pulls out his cell phone and sets it to record. He eases it out of the door ...

FROM ROB'S CELL PHONE CAMERA.

Desmond and Nicole make out on the bed.

Someone KNOCKS at the bedroom door.

Zack peeks in.

ZACK
Hey, bro -- oh, my bad.

DESMOND
What's up, man.

ZACK
Yo, that Niles kid tried to crash.
We're having a little fun with him
if you wanna come down ... when
you're, uh ... available.

NICOLE
Zaccckkkyyyyy.

ZACK
S'up, Nicole.

NICOLE
Come'ere.

Desmond shrugs at Zack, who then approaches the bed.

NICOLE
I like your costume.

She caresses his loincloth. Zack gapes and looks uncomfortably at Desmond.

ZACK
This ... cool?

DESMOND
Whatever, bro. It's a party.

They laugh.

ROB (O.S.)
(to himself)
No fucking way!

ROB ZOOMS IN.

Desmond stands beside Zack and obstructs Nicole's actions, but she's obviously alternating between fellating them both.

Desmond pulls Nicole's panties off. He does a double take.

NICOLE
Sorry ... I thought it would be over
by now. You still can, if you want.

Zack and Desmond exchange a hesitant glance.

DESMOND
Yeah ... maybe not tonight, though.
This is good right here.

Nicole resumes her clumsy suction seduction.

EXT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

FROM AARON'S BUTTON CAM.

Aaron emerges from behind the Tiki bar and conceals his bomb with empty boxes. He snatches a bottle of Wild Turkey.

Aaron hurries through the yard en route to the fence gate. CHEERS AND LAUGHTER are heard within the house as we pass.

INT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - DESMOND'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S CELL PHONE CAMERA.

Nicole continues to pleasure Desmond and Zack.

And then ...

... And then ...

BOOM!!!

The house shakes from the explosion outside.

DESMOND

The fuck?!

Nicole laughs.

ZACK

Des ...

DESMOND

I don't know, bro.

Desmond quickly redresses and heads out to the hallway.

NICOLE

Noooo. Don't go.

Zack redresses, too, and hurries after him. Nicole reaches out as though she could will him back with *the force*. She giggles and settles into the bed.

Nicole lays quietly for a moment -- *is she asleep?*

EXT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

FROM AARON'S BUTTON CAM.

Aaron peeks around the corner of the house to see party guests funnel out to the backyard. The bar is destroyed, shards of glass are everywhere, and the guests wear faces of surprise.

JOEL

What the fuck was that?

Desmond pushes past the crowd and approaches what's left of the Tiki Bar. He picks up a shard of dry ice. Zack joins him a second later.

DESMOND

Fuck!

He grabs Zack by the cape.

DESMOND

How did you contain the dry ice?!

ZACK
 (pulling himself free)
 I didn't fuckin' do this. It was in
 the house, ventilated --

DESMOND
 -- Then explain this shit!

The Stoners approach.

STONER #1
 I saw that clown dragging something
 out here a little while ago.

DESMOND
 Clown? What fucking clown?

Joel and Zack exchange a glance of recognition.

Desmond works through the crowd, unmasking all clowns.

SIRENS can be heard in the distance.

ZACK
 That for us?

DESMOND
 You fuckin' think?

INT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - DESMOND'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

FROM ROB'S CELL PHONE CAMERA.

The partially-undressed Nicole remains motionless on the bed. Rob quietly sneaks out of the closet and approaches her. His cell phone looks her up and down.

The SIRENS GET CLOSER ...

EXT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

FROM AARON'S BUTTON CAM.

A few party-goers clean up the bomb debris.

JOEL
 Shut it down, man. They gotta go.

DESMOND
 Fuck.
 (he wipes his brow)
 Party's over, guys. Everybody out.

Joel ushers everyone toward the house and fence exit.

AARON (O.S.)
 (to himself)
 Ah, no. Shit!

Aaron pulls out his phone and dials Rob's number. He bolts through the fence gate and down the street.

INT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - DESMOND'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

FROM ROB'S CELL PHONE CAMERA.

Rob reaches a hand out, bound for Nicole's thigh ...

SWITCH TO ROB'S BUTTON CAM.

Rob's cell phone VIBRATES.

He retracts his hand, and sees a display on his phone that reads "AARON CALLING".

Nicole wakes up and sees *us*.

NICOLE
 Des?

She quickly covers herself and grabs her panties.

NICOLE
 Who's under there?
 (yelling)
 Des!

Rob snatches her cat mask and races out the bedroom door to --

THE HALLWAY

-- Where he laughs, triumphantly, swaps masks and escapes through the front door, just another masked face in the crowd.

EXT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - NIGHT

FROM AARON'S BUTTON CAM.

Aaron hides behind a shiny Jeep Renegade and works the drone's controls while cars escape in a hurry all around him.

AARON (O.S.)
 (to himself)
 Where the fuck are you, dude?

FROM THE CAMERA DRONE.

We move over the street toward the house as guests continue to disperse, including Nigel, who races off with a face full

of Sharpie hate-speech. Rob, in the cat mask, stands motionless among them. He stares into the lens, ominously.

The camera drone quickly returns to Aaron. He collects it.

ALTERNATE BETWEEN AARON AND ROB'S BUTTON CAMS.

Rob slowly crosses the street, the only *guest* not in a hurry.

AARON

... Menace?

ROB

(laughing)

Fuckin' ay, man. You missed out!
Nicole. Fucking. Miller. I was
upstairs --

He presents his cell phone -- Aaron nearly slaps it clean out of his hand.

AARON

Where the fuck were you? I just
blew up a whole fucking backyard!

ROB

I heard -- shit, that was way louder
than I expected. Did you blow the
keg? Ah! Still think you should
have rigged it in the living room.

AARON

There were people in the living room.
Like, all of them! They were all
fucking with Nigel!

ROB

So?

AARON

So?! Karen was there!

ROB

(sigh)

Look, it doesn't matter. We wanted
revenge --

(waving cell phone)

-- And we got it. We're gonna ruin
everyone who ever fucked us over.

AARON

What are you talking about -- no,
fuck it. We gotta go now --

The Jeep UNLOCKS and the headlights flash on.

NICOLE (O.S.)
Breezie! You gotta drive, 'kay?

We turn to see Nicole, who stumbles up with her keys.

NICOLE
Hey, that's my mask. You were the
one recording me! Fucking creeper.

AARON
Let's just go --

NICOLE
Who the fuck are you?

She rips at Rob's mask -- they struggle.

NICOLE
Help!
(over her shoulder)
Someone help!

Rob grabs Nicole and covers her mouth -- they struggle; Rob takes her down and quietly chokes her out. Nicole rips off the mask in the kerfuffle, but it's unclear whether or not she saw his face. She's out.

AARON
Fuck, dude. Is she ...

ROB
She's knocked out! I didn't know
what to do. If Desmond came out ...

AARON
Did she see you?

Rob stares at Nicole.

AARON
Did she see you?!

ROB
I don't know!

AARON
Fuck this shit. We gotta go! Now!

Aaron jogs toward Rob's truck down the street.

AARON (O.S.)
(looking back)
What are you doing?

Rob hoists Nicole over his shoulder into a fireman's carry and hurries to catch up to Aaron.

ROB

I think she saw me! She knows I recorded her. If she can identify us, we're fucking dead, assuming we don't get arrested first.

AARON

We are so fucked. So, what now?

ROB

I dunno -- just get in the truck!

AARON

Shit!

Aaron helps Rob load Nicole into the cab.

ROB

Tie her up -- blindfold her.

AARON

With what?

ROB

Anything!

Aaron frantically searches the truck. He finds a package of zip ties in the glove box and fashions them into handcuffs.

Rob starts the truck -- it takes a few tries to turn over.

AARON

Come on!

ROB

I'm trying! Shut the fuck up!

Aaron finds a black bandanna and a tube sock; he blindfolds Nicole and gags her.

Rob gets the truck started and pulls into the street with the lights off. In the rear view mirror, emergency vehicle lights can be seen on the horizon.

EXT. ROB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

FROM AARON'S BUTTON CAM.

Aaron helps a bound, semiconscious Nicole out of the truck. Tears stream down her face from beneath the bandanna.

Rob glances around for nosy neighbors and puts his hand-held voice changer to his lips.

ROB
(deeply altered)
Stay silent and do what we say.

Nicole sobs, but nods reluctantly.

ROB
(deeply altered)
Go.

Nicole allows Aaron to lead her into the house.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - WORKSHOP - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S BUTTON CAM.

Aaron, looking drained of all color, sits Nicole in a chair.

Rob searches a few drawers and cabinets, tossing different makeup materials (latex, foam, and costume accessories) aside. He snatches ear plugs and rope from one of the cabinets.

Rob ties Nicole to the chair.

ROB (O.S.)
(with voice changer)
You stay just like this until I get back. Understand? You move even an inch, and I'll cut off the only useful parts you have, and throw the rest away. Do you understand?

Nicole nods. Rob slips plugs into her ears.

Aaron leaves the room; Rob follows.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - DEN - NIGHT

ALTERNATE BETWEEN ROB'S AND AARON'S BUTTON CAMS.

Down the hallway, Rob locks the padlock on his workshop door and joins Aaron in the Den. They sit.

AARON (O.S.)
We have to let her go, man. This is kidnapping! This is even worse than the bomb!
(sigh)
It was only supposed to be a prank!

ROB (O.S.)
It's still a prank.

Rob calmly plops down beside him and takes a fun-sized Snickers bar from a bowl on the table. He savors every bite.

AARON (O.S.)
No, man. It's a felony now, so --

ROB
-- No, we're good. It's a prank.
Hear me out.

Aaron gapes -- *what is he even talking about?*

ROB
We wanted to make Halloween scary again, and we did, the minute we took Nicole. Kids will be terrified. Parents won't want to let their kids out of their sight. This is how urban legends start.

AARON (O.S.)
They'll try us as adults. Let's just call the police and explain that this is all a big misunderstanding. We can say she passed out in the truck and we took her for her own protection --

ROB
-- Yeah? And the zip ties and death threats?

AARON (O.S.)
We didn't do anything to her ...

ROB
Listen! We keep her for a couple of days. Through Halloween. And then we let her go. It all works out, exactly like we wanted -- better! We've spread fear, the whole town goes bat shit, we punish everyone who's ever fucked with us, and then Nicole goes home to tell the tale.

AARON (O.S.)
She saw you, dude.

ROB
We don't know that! She's so fucked up, she doesn't know what she saw!

The FRONT DOORKNOB TURNS.

ROB
Shit -- Tom.

TOM (20) enters the den, baggy clothes, a trucker's cap, and a week's worth of stubble.

TOM
'Sup?

ROB
Hey.

AARON
Hey, Tom.

Tom slides a cigarette between his lips, drops his backpack on the couch, and digs through it.

Rob casts Aaron an '*I got this*' look and a reassuring wave.

Tom pulls out a small wrapped package and hands it to Rob.

TOM
Happy birthday, imp.

Rob lightens up, even laughs.

ROB
Do I even wanna know?

He tears it open.

ROB
Night of the Dark.

TOM
The original.

ROB
We watched this shit on VHS when we were kids...

TOM
Every single weekend.

ROB
Yeah. Until we discovered porn.

The boys laugh.

ROB
(bittersweet)
Thanks, man.

He exchanges a half-handshake, half bro-hug with Tom.

TOM
What are you faggots up to tonight?

ROB
(laughing)
Fuck you. We were just, uh --

A THUMP comes from the workshop.

Tom squints down the hall, then looks the creepers over.

TOM
You having a party, or what?

AARON (O.S.)
That's just -- uh -- we were building --

ROB
(cool)
-- Sorry, I was gonna call you ...

Tom leans in, all ears.

ROB
Dad's here.

Tom's eyes bulge. He sucks one last drag from his cigarette and drops it in a beer can.

ROB
Came to surprise me for my birthday.
I guess he wants to stay for a couple
of days.

TOM
(quietly)
Fuck that. I'll be at Erica's.

Tom picks up his backpack and heads to the door.

TOM
Let me know when the dickhead ships
out. Be safe, huh?

ROB
Word.

Rob follows Tom to the door and departs. Aaron breathes a sigh of relief.

Rob shuts the door behind him and rejoins Aaron. Rob suddenly looks exhausted beyond words.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - ROB'S BEDROOM - DAY

Girlie pinups on the walls -- mostly tattooed and/or goth.

FROM ROB'S GoPro CAMERA -- HE FILMS HIMSELF IN HIS MIRROR.

ROB

I saw the comments you left for
Dismembered, but you ass holes know
you couldn't possibly do any better.

Rob flashes a smug smirk and leans in.

ROB

And to prove that, we're doing
something none of you pussies would
ever have the balls to do. We're
making a horror movie for real.
It'll be banned in every country,
but you'll see it one day. And
everyone will remember our names,
because we did it first. And after
that, you mother fuckers will be
making movies about us.

His cold eyes penetrate us through his reflection.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - WORKSHOP - DAY

ALTERNATE BETWEEN GoPro ON WORKBENCH AND ROB'S BUTTON CAM.

In rubber dish washing gloves, Rob sets the camera down a few feet away from Nicole and takes his voice changer with him. He touches Nicole gently on the leg and she jolts awake.

Nicole mumbles loudly through her vomit-crusted gag, which Rob removes, along with her earplugs.

ROB

(through voice changer)
Shhh. I'll remove your gag so you
can eat and drink, but if you scream,
I will slit your throat right here
and now. Understand?

Nicole nods.

Rob opens a bottle of water, and presses it to Nicole's lips. She drinks desperately, gasping, and then takes another swig. Rob caps the bottle and sets it aside.

ROB

(through voice changer)
That's enough.

NICOLE
Why are you doing this?

ROB
(through voice changer)
Why not?

NICOLE
Please. Just let me go. I won't
press charges. I don't even know
who you are. I don't have to know --

ROB
(through voice changer)
-- But I know who you are, Nicole.
And you deserve every fucking minute
of this.

Nicole cries.

NICOLE
What do you want? Money? My family
doesn't have much, but ... they can
get it. Just let me go. It's not
too late. You haven't done anything
you can't come back from.

ROB
(through voice changer)
So, you're a hostage negotiator now?

NICOLE
No. I'm just a kid. Just like you
... right?

Rob tenses, takes a step back out of her line of sight, in
case she can see him somehow.

NICOLE
You were at the party. I know you
were ...
(stuttering)
Do you go to Bridge Wood?

ROB
(through voice changer)
You ask too many questions, bitch.
Don't forget what curiosity did to
the cat.

He pulls her costume cat tail dangling between her legs.
She squirms -- it's very invasive.

He wraps his fingers around the gag and moves to replace it.

NICOLE
Wait -- can I go to the bathroom?

ROB
(through voice changer)
Nope.

He gags her and tightens the bandanna -- she winces.

ROB
(through voice changer)
But if I'm in a good mood, maybe
I'll feed you later.

He replaces her earplugs. She pleads through her gag.

Rob retrieves his GoPro from the workbench.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - DEN - DAY

FROM ROB'S GoPro CAMERA.

Aaron lays on the couch asleep, drooling on his arm.

The TV is on in the B.G.; a news report.

ROB (O.S.)
Hey. Get up, fucker!

Aaron twitches, sits up, and wipes his drool and sleepy eyes.

AARON
Huh?

ROB (O.S.)
Check this shit. Look!

Rob angles our view to the TV.

ON THE TV

A *Channel 5 News* REPORTER reports a distance away from Desmond's house, which is swarming with police, paparazzi, nosy neighbors, and concerned citizens.

ROB (O.S.)
Nicole Miller is missing! Nobody at the party seems to know where she went, and it turns out a bomb went off in the backyard. Bat shit, right?

THE SHOT CUTS TO AN INTERVIEW WITH --

-- MRS. MILLER, a conservative woman who sits on her couch and pets a fluffy white cat, intercut with B-Roll footage.

MRS. MILLER

If Nikki needed a ride, she would've called. But, for her to not call -- that's not my Nikki.

THE SHOT CUTS TO AN INTERVIEW WITH --

-- BREEZIE (18), a bubbly teen interviewed in a living room.

BREEZIE

They found her cell phone in Des's room, which is so crazy. Nikki doesn't let her phone out of her sight for a second. It's, like, part of her.

THE SHOT CUTS BACK TO THE INTERVIEW WITH --

-- Mrs. Miller, who gazes sadly into the camera.

MRS. MILLER

If anyone knows where Nicole is, I urge you, please report it. I just want my Nikki back.

WE TURN BACK TO AARON --

-- Who watches on in disbelief.

AARON

Oh, fuck.

ROB (O.S.)

Right?

AARON

We have to come clean.

ROB (O.S.)

Stop.

AARON

Before this goes any further.

ROB (O.S.)

A-bomb. This is exactly what we wanted. When she doesn't turn up, people are going to be scared.

AARON

They're already scared. When she doesn't turn up, they'll start a man hunt.

ROB (O.S.)
 Nah, man. We just keep doing what
 we're doing and it'll all be over in
 a couple of days.

Aaron's CELL PHONE RINGS. He answers, hesitantly.

AARON
 (on the phone)
 Hey, mom ... yeah, I just heard ...
 no, we just chilled at Rob's all
 night. Played video games

Rob laughs. He sets the GoPro down, with Aaron taking up
 half of the frame, and heads down the hall in the other half.

AARON
 (on the phone)
 Yeah. At six? 'kay. 'kay, bye.

Aaron hangs up. He watches TV with a concerned grimace.

Rob's HOUSE PHONE RINGS.

ROB (O.S.)
 Get that, would ya?

Aaron answers.

AARON
 (on the phone)
 Hello? No, this is --
 (listening)
 -- Oh, hi. Yeah. Just a sec.
 (yelling)
 Rob!

Rob comes back with a bucket full of water and a sponge, and
 a package of adult diapers.

ROB
 Who is it?

AARON
 It's your dad.

ROB
 (snort)
 Fuck you.

He drops the bucket/diapers and takes the phone, but he
 freezes when he catches Aaron's sincere stare. Rob's eyes
 become grim, fearful -- the only time we ever see this face.

ROB
 (on the phone)
 Hello? ... Hey, Dad ... thanks.
 Yes, sir. It came last week.

He sits down, perfect posture. Aaron gets up, retrieves the camera and aims it at the TV. The voices are inaudible, but shots of search teams at Bridge Wood High school are shown.

ROB (O.S.)
 (on the phone)
 Tom's good ... He's at his
 girlfriend's ... No, sir.

WE SWING BACK TO ROB AND GET CLOSER TO HIM.

ROB
 (on the phone)
 I will, for sure. I gotta go, though --
 I'm going to Aaron's for dinner.

He notices Aaron watching. He glowers and throws a half-crushed beer can at him.

We move down the hallway to the workshop door. Aaron pulls out his key ring, finds a black one, and unlocks the padlock. He removes it one-handed and slowly creeps into the room.

We see Nicole, strapped in her chair -- senses suppressed -- and shivering.

We move in for a closer look ...

AARON (O.S.)
 (whispering)
 I'm so sorry ...

Our view drifts down her body -- dried blood is crusted to her bare inner thigh and down her leg to the floor.

THE CAMERA SHAKES FROM FURY.

WE TURN AND HEAD BACK THROUGH THE DOOR AND DOWN THE HALLWAY.

Rob turns the corner with diapers and nearly runs into us.

AARON (O.S.)
 Did you rape her? You piece of shit,
 did you rape her?!

ROB
 What? No!

AARON (O.S.)

Then why the fuck is she bleeding
all over the floor?!

ROB

Shh!

Rob looks toward the room, eyebrow raised, and then relaxes.

ROB

She's on the rag, man.

AARON (O.S.)

What?

ROB

She's on her fucking period.

Rob waves the diapers at him.

ROB

That's what I was trying to tell you
last night. She had a threesome
with Desmond and Zack. Got it all
on video. But they wouldn't fuck
her 'cause she was already bleeding
all over the fucking place. It's
cool, man.

AARON (O.S.)

It's not cool, *man*.

ROB

What's your fucking problem --

AARON (O.S.)

-- She could have bled in the truck.
She may as well have left a trail of
bloody-fucking-bread crumbs all the
way to the workshop!

ROB

Would you -- !

(quietly)

You're freaking out, man. It's cool.

Rob closes the workshop door and lays his head against it.

ROB

Would you prefer to change her
yourself?

AARON (O.S.)

... No.

ROB
Then I have to do it. Okay?

AARON (O.S.)
We're never gonna get away with this.

ROB
Yes we will. We'll limit our interactions with her. We'll wear masks and gloves, and disguise our voices. We'll feed her, give her water, change her when necessary -- she'll live. Okay? Then, we'll let her go. November first, we just let her go, without a scratch.

AARON (O.S.)
What about our DNA? They can trace that shit.

ROB
Look, we'll figure it out, okay? We'll do some fucking research. If we ever get caught, our whole lives are over, so we have to do this. Unless you've got something better?

Silence.

ROB
Then we just finish the mission. We got this.

EXT. ROB'S HOUSE - DAY

FROM AARON'S GoPro CAMERA.

Rob drags two homemade body bags (fashioned from black trash bags) through the yard by individually tied pieces of rope. He flings one of the ropes over a high tree branch and uses it to raise the "body," upside down, into the air.

AARON (O.S.)
You sure this is a good idea?

ROB
It's what we do. My neighbors wouldn't expect anything less.

Rob smiles proudly and drags the second "body," beyond various other bloody decorations, to another tree. MRS. MCCLANAHAN (80s) limps onto the property with her cane.

MCCLANAHAN
Take'em down.

ROB
Good morning, Mrs. McClanahan!

MCCLANAHAN
Take 'em down now.

ROB
Take what down? These?

Rob starts to undo his belt with a little hip gyration dance.

ROB
You know, this is highly inappropriate, Mrs. McClanahan.

MCCLANAHAN
You know what I'm talking about, you little shit -- all of 'em. Now!

He tosses his rope over a branch and raises the second body.

MCCLANAHAN
This yard is in poor taste every year, but this is blatantly disrespectful. There's a little girl missing, and her mamma doesn't need to be driving through town seeing it. Take 'em down now!

Rob ties off the rope. McClanahan strikes the body bag with her cane. She hits it a few times to break it apart -- it doesn't.

ROB
It's not a pinata, Mrs. McClanahan. You have to go door-to-door for candy.

She drops the cane and digs into the bag with her fingernails. She rips out the body's innards -- leaves, milk jugs, and other re-purposed trash -- and flings them to the ground.

Rob smirks at the camera. We watch him lock up the house, then we follow him to his truck.

We spin to see Mrs. McClanahan panting, retrieving her cane, and striking down all the other elaborate decorations.

AARON (O.S.)
She's fucking up your yard, dude. Why are you laughing?

ROB
You kidding?

We turn back to Rob. He starts the truck, turns on some AGGRESSIVE METAL MUSIC, and backs out of the driveway.

ROB
She's giving us everything we wanted.

We turn to see nearby houses. A few neighbors safely watch from their yards and windows.

EXT. DESMOND'S HOUSE - DAY

FROM AARON'S GoPro CAMERA.

The truck slows.

There are police photo radars set up outside.

A couple of police officers are going door-to-door.

We slow in front of Desmond's house. There's police tape around the property. A few cops exit with boxes of "evidence," while a few others enter with empty plastic bags.

Cops talk to neighbors and witnesses on the street.

ROB
You see this shit, man? We did this.
We did.
(to camera)
Everyone who doubted we could make a scary movie is shitting their pants right now, because of us, and they don't even know it!

EXT. BRIDGE WOOD HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

FROM AARON'S GoPro CAMERA.

Rob pulls into the lot -- it's packed.

AARON (O.S.)
I've never seen this place so packed on a Sunday. And I've been to graduations here.

ROB
The news said they're organizing search parties or some shit.

The truck slows by a woman handing out flyers. Rob rolls his window down and accepts one.

ROB
Thanks.

He rolls forward, takes a look at the flyer, chortles, and passes it on to Aaron.

ON THE FLYER

A missing persons notice with Nicole's cheerleading photo, and text about a "\$10,000 reward" for information that leads to finding Nicole Miller alive.

ROB (O.S.)
 She wasn't fucking around about being poor. Ten grand? We could get more for this bitch on Craigslist.

BACK TO ROB.

ROB
 Shit's not even in color.

Rob snatches the flyer.

ROB
 Don't lose that, though. I wanna jack off to it later.

AARON (O.S.)
 That's so fucked up.

Rob looks ahead -- some teens are leaving the school.

ROB
 Let's check this shit out, huh?

Rob parks the truck.

EXT. BRIDGE WOOD HIGH SCHOOL - FIELD - DAY

FROM AARON'S GoPro CAMERA.

We follow Rob through a crowd of people and spot Nigel.

ROB
 Oh, look -- it's *Niles the Great!*

Rob bows with a magician's flourish.

NIGEL
 Fuck you, Robert. Oh, look -- a camera again.

ROB
 So, what brings you out to Bridge Wood Penitentiary on a Sunday?

Nigel lights a cigarette, avoids his stare.

NIGEL

Just looking for Nicole, like everyone else.

ROB

Classic Nigel, still desperately trying to fit in.

NIGEL

The question is, what are you ass holes doing here? You hate Nicole.

ROB

Well, yeah. Doesn't everybody?

Nigel takes a puff and diverts his eyes from the creepers.

ROB

Oh shit -- you don't hate Nicole -- you like her!

He shrugs it off and continues on. Rob blocks his way.

ROB

You do! Seriously, man! That whore's more of a bitch to you than she is to the rest of us!

NIGEL

She's still a person. And, maybe she's not really like that all the time. Maybe it's just what she has to do to survive high school. We all do fucked up shit. I mean, look at you two.

Nigel's face fills with a sudden horrific epiphany.

NIGEL

... You guys planted the bomb ...

Rob's smile dissipates.

ROB

(nervous laugh)
You jackass. We weren't even there.

NIGEL

Fuckin' liar. And, by the way, thanks for talking me into going. I hope they gave you as warm a welcome as they gave me. Especially after you bombed the fucking place --

Rob subconsciously looks around to see if anyone heard.

AARON (O.S.)
 (stuttering)
 -- Dude, we weren't fucking there.

ROB
 Yeah. I -- we were too fucked up.

AARON (O.S.)
 Day drinking.

ROB
 It was my birthday. We were at my house all night.

NIGEL
 Nope. I saw your truck.

ROB
 Wasn't mine, Nigel.

AARON (O.S.)
 We weren't there, Nigel.

Nigel looks between Aaron and Rob with a raised eyebrow.

EXT. BRIDGE WOOD HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

FROM AARON'S GoPro CAMERA.

We follow Rob through the lot and approach cheerleaders -- including Breezie and KAREN BENSON (17) -- a girl-next-door type with strawberry blonde hair -- hugging and crying.

ROB
 Ladies. Would you be so kind as to tell our audience why you're wearing your uniforms today?

BREEZIE
 (wiping her eyes)
 We're showing solidarity for our missing friend, Nicole Miller.

ROB
 That's so cool of you to do that. I just wish they'd tell us what's going on. The police aren't saying a goddamn thing. What do you think happened to her? Karen? Any idea?

Aaron zooms in on Karen, the love of his life.

KAREN
 Desmond knows.
 (MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

He did something to her. Abby said she saw him dose Nikki's drink.

ROB

(genuinely surprised)
Really?

BREEZIE

Abby was on shrooms. Who knows what the fuck she saw?

KAREN

There are some sick people in this world, and we all need to be careful. If this happened to Nicole, it could happen to you, or me, or any of us!

AARON (O.S.)

(to himself)
I'd never let that happen.

Rob grimaces and steps between Aaron and Karen.

ROB

Thank you, ladies. I'm sure she'll turn up ...

We follow Rob away.

ROB

... Someday.

Rob leads us to the edge of the parking lot, where an OFFICER stands beside his patrol car, listening to instructions through his WalkieClip. Rob approaches from a distance ...

ROB

Excuse me, sir?

The Officer nods.

AARON (O.S.)

(quietly)
What are you doing? Rob, don't --

Rob greets the cop.

ROB

We were just wondering, have you ever been part of an investigation like this before?

OFFICER

Once before.

(MORE)

OFFICER (CONT'D)

(acknowledging camera)

You making a little video for school
or something?

ROB

Sort of.

OFFICER

I'm fine with you recording, it's
your right as a citizen, but let's
be clear. This isn't entertainment.
This is someone's life, and I hope
you're taking it very seriously,
whatever you're doing.

ROB

Of course, sir. Right now, we're
documenting the heroes of the
community, and how bravely they handle
crisis situations like this one.

OFFICER

Good men.

(nod)

To answer your question a little
more in-depth, I was part of a similar
investigation about five years ago.

ROB

Did you find the victim alive?

OFFICER

The investigation didn't turn out
how we'd hoped, unfortunately, but
I'm very confident that Nicole Miller
is alive and well, and that we will
find her and get her home safely.

ROB

Is that why you joined the force?
To help people? And save lives?

OFFICER

It is. It's what I've wanted since
I was about your age. Are you
planning a career in law enforcement?

ROB

Filmmaking.

OFFICER

(laughing)

Right. Obviously.

ROB

I don't have the stomach for what you do. Like, if you can't protect someone, or if you're too late -- that's gotta be hard to get over.

OFFICER

(sigh)

That's the hardest part of the job.

Rob looks at the camera, a glimmer of mischief in his eye.

OFFICER

But, we don't let ourselves look at it like that. We have to be willing and ready to help at all times, no matter how the situation plays out.

ROB

Thank you, sir. I know you'll do your best.

We see Rob's hand reach for the Officer's; they shake.

INT. PAULSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S GoPro CAMERA.

Aaron wipes a tear as he watches the news from the couch.

ROB (O.S.)

Chill, man. You act like you're starting to buy into this shit. She's not dead, and you know damn well where she is.

Aaron avoids his gaze and shakes his head.

CAROL (O.S.)

Dinner's ready guys, come on.

ROB (O.S.)

Fuck yeah.

Rob hops up.

INT. PAULSON RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S GoPro.

Rob places the camera at the corner of the table so that he can get Carol's chair, as well as his and Aaron's across from her, in the frame.

Aaron sets the table.

CAROL (O.S.)
You boys ready?

AARON
Almost. I gotta feed Pennywizzle.

ROB
Oh! I wanna do it.

Aaron gestures as if to say "*be my guest.*"

Rob bounds out of the room and up the stairs with HEAVY STEPS.

Aaron ducks into the kitchen and returns with a bowl of garlic bread and sets it between the salads. He sits, sullenly.

Carol emerges from the kitchen with the lasagna. She organizes the arrangement with a prideful smile and sits.

CAROL
Hey. You okay?

AARON
Just tired.

Carol observes. Her eyes dart to the stairs, and then back.

CAROL
(quietly)
What's wrong, huh?

AARON
Just ... everything's so crazy ...
with everything going on right now.

CAROL
Want to talk about it?

Aaron shakes his head. Rob energetically hops back into the dining room and slides into his seat. He reads the tension.

ROB
'sup? What'd I miss?

Carol passes food around the table. She and Aaron take a modest amount, while Rob stacks up like it's Thanksgiving.

CAROL
You know, this thing -- with Nicole Miller -- it's hard for everybody. It's okay to be scared. I'm scared. But I'm here if you need to talk.

AARON

Thanks, Mom.

ROB

Yeah, thanks, Mrs. P.

Rob digs in. Carol smiles and picks at her food. Aaron follows suit, reluctantly.

ROB

This hasn't really been a safe place for a while now. Ever since that seventh grader almost got kidnapped.

CAROL

It wasn't always like that here.

AARON

Yeah. You used to leave your doors unlocked, right?

CAROL

Ha! That was before my time, kiddo. I'm not that old ... yet.

She takes her first bite. She frowns.

CAROL

Still, it wasn't like this. And then that thing at the corn maze --

AARON

(to Rob)

-- Oh, yeah. Did you hear? Something happened at the Daze Maze!

ROB

(amused)

No way!

AARON

They said some guy in a scarecrow costume tried to get up on one of the customers, but when she complained to the manager, he said they didn't have a scarecrow character.

CAROL

They never ended up finding the guy.

ROB

Shit.

(catching himself)

Shoot. Sorry.

Carol smiles politely.

ROB
(mouthful)
Oh my god, this is amazing, Mrs. P.

CAROL
Thank you, Robert.

They eat quietly for a moment; Rob really chows down.

CAROL
(to Aaron)
Have you been to that maze?

AARON
We used to go sometimes.

ROB
It's been sucking the past few years.
They need to make it scarier. Pass
the bread please?

Aaron obliges. Rob helps himself to more.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

CAROL
Excuse me.

She wipes her mouth with a napkin and heads out of the room.

THE FRONT DOOR CREAKS OPEN O.S.

Rob glances to the living room and stiffens up.

ROB
Pigs.

Aaron drops his fork. Rob grabs the GoPro and heads to the doorway. We get a sneaky view of Carol at the entrance. A Police INVESTIGATOR is partially seen at the front door.

CAROL
No, one son, and his friend.

INVESTIGATOR
May we speak with them?

CAROL
We're actually having dinner right
now, but if you'd like to leave your
card ...

INVESTIGATOR

We're just here to help, ma'am. If your son and his friend have any information that can assist us in our investigation --

CAROL

-- I completely understand, and we'd all be more than willing to help if we can, but we're having dinner right now, and frankly --

(glancing at kitchen)

-- These boys are traumatized by what's happened. Now, I can assure you they weren't anywhere near that party last night, but right now, they just need a little time to cope with all that's happened. Is that okay? Can they just have some time to cope?

INVESTIGATOR

(sigh)

Are you certain they weren't at the party, ma'am? You can personally vouch for their whereabouts?

CAROL

... Yes. I can. I'm certain.

(another glance)

... They were here ... all night.

We duck back into the dining room.

ROB

(whispering, laughing)

Oh fuck! Dude, I can't believe she fuckin' did that!

Aaron sighs. His body is tense and shaking.

EXT. PAULSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S GoPro CAMERA.

ON THE TV

A News ANCHOR reports from the *Channel 5* news room set.

REPORTER

-- As of yet, but police have officially named Desmond Derani as a suspect in the disappearance of Nicole Miller --

WE SPIN BACK TO AARON.

Aaron's eyes drift to Rob.

ROB (O.S.)
 This is fucking perfect, dude. I
 couldn't have planned this better.
 They probably found her coochie blood
 in his bed. Now, we just gotta send
 in the sex tape anonymously and
 we're off the hook.

AARON
 Except for the fact that she'll tell
 the cops she was being held captive
 while Desmond was in jail.

ROB (O.S.)
 She was drugged up and blindfolded
 for days. She has no concept of
 time. They won't get much --

Carol enters in pajamas.

CAROL
 I'm heading to bed. Don't stay up
 too late, huh?

AARON
 Sure.

ROB
 I'd better head out now, myself.
 Gotta feed my *dog*.

Aaron scowls at Rob for the inference.

ROB
 Thanks for dinner, Mrs. P.

CAROL
 You're very welcome, Robert. Happy
 birthday.

AARON
 Happy birthday, Rob.

Rob heads to the door.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - WORKSHOP - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S GoPro CAMERA.

Rob, in his Halloween guise, sets the GoPro on the table and proceeds to change Nicole's diaper (he obstructs the act). She whimpers. Rob removes her earplugs.

ROB
 (through voice changer)
 I'm going to take off your gag to feed you. That doesn't mean I won't kill you for fucking off.

Nicole groans and nods.

ALTERNATE BETWEEN ROB'S BUTTON CAM AND GoPro.

Rob records her vulnerable body -- such a predator ...

Rob loosens Nicole's gag. She clenches and unclenches her jaw. Her lips are dry and cracked.

NICOLE
 I'm allergic to gluten.

ROB
 (through voice changer)
 Bull shit.

NICOLE
 Can I have some water please?

Rob hesitates. He cracks open a water bottle and presses it to Nicole's lips. She drinks, weakly. Rob pulls it away.

ROB
 (through voice changer)
 That's enough.

NICOLE
 No, please. Just a little more?

Rob laughs, not through the voice changer.

Nicole raises her head; her ears perk up in recognition.

NICOLE
 ... I know you ...

ROB
 (through voice changer)
 If you know who I am, then you know what will happen to you.

Rob opens a fruit cup and inserts a plastic spoon.

NICOLE

Please. Whatever I did to you, I'm
sorry.

Rob shoves a spoonful of pears into Nicole's mouth.

ROB

(through voice changer)
Shut up and eat, or I'll shove
something else in your mouth instead.

Nicole eats, gratefully.

NICOLE

I'm sorry ... I'm so sorry

ROB

(through voice changer)
Apologize all you want. You deserve
much worse than this. So much worse.

Rob tosses the empty fruit cup aside.

ROB

(through voice changer)
That's enough.

NICOLE

You don't want to hurt me. I know
you don't. You could have killed me
already, but you didn't, and you
don't want money ... so, why are you
doing this?

ROB

(through voice changer)
You don't think I'll hurt you?

Rob gets behind Nicole and raises her blindfold enough to
see the bloody props all about the room.

ROB

(through voice changer)
Does this look like the kind of place
people go to not get hurt?!

Nicole screams in terror. Rob recovers her blindfold and
reaches for her gag.

ROB

Shhh.
(through voice changer)
Not that it matters anymore, but
just what is it you're sorry for,
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)

Nicole Miller? By all means, confess.
Use the last few hours of your life
to do something repentant for once.

Nicole composes herself.

NICOLE

I've done some fucked up things ...
and I've said things -- terrible
things ... but I'm not a bad person.
I'm not. I volunteer with my mom
sometimes. I donate to charities.

ROB

(through voice changer)
Oh, wow. There's a hero among us,
ladies and gentlemen.

NICOLE

I never said I was a hero! But I've
been through shit, too. I'm not
perfect. I was bulimic.

ROB

(through voice changer)
Ha! Here lies Nicole Miller. She
was a bitch because she was bulimic.

NICOLE

Let me finish! If you're going to
kill me, I at least want to die with
a clear conscience.

(deep breath)

I told Tia Garcia that I had an eating
disorder. I said it was a secret,
but she told the whole cheerleading
squad anyway. And, to hurt her back,
I slept with her boyfriend.

Rob snort-laughes.

NICOLE

(to herself)

That's the only thing anyone ever
wants from me anyway ...

(to Rob)

So, I told Tia what I did, and I
told her it was easy, because she
was ugly and fat.

ROB

(through voice changer)
... Tia Garcia tried to kill herself.

NICOLE

(crying)

I never wanted that. I wouldn't have pushed her so hard if I knew --

ROB

(through voice changer)

-- You had no right to push her at all. Or anyone else, for that matter. You put yourself on this pedestal, and then you post a million pictures of your perfect little life so that everyone can see it.

Rob pulls a small baggie of crushed Oxycodone out of his robes and funnels it into her water bottle.

NICOLE

I'm insecure. I post pictures so people can see me the way I wish I was. I use filters for perfect skin and perfect teeth, just to be noticed. I want to be interesting. Just like everyone else, I want to be ...

ROB

(through voice changer)

What? *Loved?* Fuck off.

NICOLE

Not everyone just has that. Not without ... conditions.

Rob hesitates.

NICOLE

I hurt you, too. Right? That's what this is all about, or you wouldn't be doing this.

ROB

(through voice changer)

I know what you're doing, Nicole. I promise, it won't end well.

NICOLE

Are you ... are you Tia?

Rob snort-laughes.

NICOLE

Dante?

Rob stirs his mixture.

NICOLE

... Robert.

Rob freezes.

NICOLE

You're Robert. I knew I saw this room before. That video you showed us in Film Study. That ... horror movie.

ROB

Sounds like I have a fan.

NICOLE

It was ... *good*. So, uh ... why do you like horror so much?

ROB

Why horror? Because no matter how dark, or bloody, or gruesome it gets, it's never as bad as the hell we suffer through every day.

Nicole swallows.

NICOLE

Ugh. I've been so awful to you. You're talented. You deserved better.

ROB

(through voice changer)

You don't know anything, bitch. Now drink up before I change my mind and feed you bleach instead.

He pours murky water into her mouth. She gasps between gulps.

NICOLE

We made out in the sixth grade. Paula Keller's Halloween party.

The bottle crinkles within Rob's tightening grip ...

NICOLE

In the basement. Seven Minutes In Heaven. Remember? It was nice, but, I denied it at school the next day. I told everyone you made it all up. There were all those rumors about you and your ... your dog. I never believed them, but I thought it would hurt my reputation somehow. My sixth grade reputation. Fuck.

She turns to Rob, as though she can see him ...

NICOLE

I can see why you think I deserve this. But, the truth is, I liked our kiss. I really did. And I'm sorry I hurt you.

Rob cautiously removes his mask.

NICOLE

Please, just let me go. We can start over. I promise I'll be better to you -- to everyone.

Rob watches her, unreadable.

NICOLE

And, maybe ... maybe we can pick up where we left off in Paula's basement. I'd let you. Would you like that?

Nicole's quivering legs spread, invitingly.

Rob scowls and pulls his mask back on.

ROB

(through voice changer)
You have no idea.

Rob shoves the water bottle into Nicole's mouth and squirts the rest down her throat. Nicole chokes and whimpers.

Rob gags Nicole and replaces her earplugs. He brushes her hair back with his glove.

ROB

Sweet dreams, *Nikki*.

INT. PAULSON RESIDENCE - AARON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

FROM AARON'S WEB CAM.

Dim room. Aaron rubs his swollen eyes.

AARON

I've never seen you look as scared as you did at school today. And then you said this could happen to anybody. And all I could think about was, *what if this happened to you?*

Aaron breaks down.

AARON

I'm gonna let Nicole go, because I don't want you to think I'm a monster. I'm not a monster. We never hurt her. This was all supposed to be a prank, and it went too far, but I'm gonna fix it. And, if Rob tries to stop me --

He bows his head in shame.

AARON

-- Then, he probably will. So, if something happens to me and I can't tell my side of the story, I want you to know the truth. I never meant for any of this to happen. I was just sick of getting picked on, and I wanted the jocks and cheerleaders to know what it felt like to be afraid for once.

He wipes his eyes.

AARON

I'm gonna go to Rob's before school tomorrow and I'm gonna fix this. But, the thing is, when Rob gets pissed, like, really pissed

Aaron reaches into his desk drawer and displays a CD.

AARON

This is the CD I want played at my funeral. It's a bunch of Anime songs that are gonna drive my Mom nuts, but they made me happy, and I'm almost never happy. Anime's always been my gateway to a world where outcasts are strong and interesting. I used to think, in a world like that, maybe I'd be strong. And, maybe I could be with someone like you ... that's all I ever wanted.

A KNOCK at the door.

Carol pops in.

CAROL

Hey. You okay?

AARON

Can't sleep.

CAROL

Me, neither. I feel like I'm not going to sleep till she turns up alive and well ... and she will.

AARON

That's what the cop said today.

CAROL

You talked to the police? ... Were you questioned?

AARON

Nah, they knew I'd press charges for discriminating against weird kids.

Carol lets out a cathartic laugh, shakes her head, and frowns.

CAROL

Sweetie, if you know something ... if Rob has anything to do with this, and you didn't come forward, you'd be held accountable, too. You'd be an accomplice. Like when they tried to blame you for slashing the seniors' tires last year.

AARON

That wasn't even us, Mom.

CAROL

I know, honey, I know ... I just ...

Carol conceals her emerging tears in a yawn.

CAROL

I just love you. Get some sleep.

AARON

You, too, Mom. Good night.

Carol shuts the door.

AARON

(to camera)

I love you, too.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - DEN - DAWN

FROM ROB'S GoPro.

Rob records himself as he smokes.

ROB
 Happy Halloween, mother fuckers.
 Let's see how Bridge Wood is
 celebrating today, shall we?

He flips us toward the TV -- the news is on. Rob zooms in.

ON THE TV

A news interview: Mrs. Miller sobs into a Kleenex.

MRS. MILLER
 -- And if they're watching, I just
 want them to know that Nicole is a
 good girl, with a kind heart.

Her cat hops up beside her. Intercut with B-roll footage.

MRS. MILLER
 (bittersweet smile)
 She loves cats. Everything cats.
 (to cat)
 Cleo misses her too, don't you girl?

ROB (O.S.)
 Pffft. Fuckin' psycho. I did your
 whore daughter a favor, lady.

MRS. MILLER
 My Nikki is sweet, and funny, and
 has a bright future ahead of her.
 She's going to school for acting in
 the Fall. She adores Meryl Streep,
 and knows all of her movies by heart --

BACK TO SCENE

Rob flips the camera back to himself and fills the view with
 his face -- a cold stare, like a poised, offended rattlesnake.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - WORKSHOP - DAY

FROM ROB'S GoPro.

Rob, sans disguise/gloves and carrying wet wipes, approaches
 Nicole, who's slumped over in her chair.

ROB (O.S.)
 Rise and shine, *Meryl*.

Rob leans her back and holds his fingers below her nostrils.

ROB (O.S.)
 Oh, shit! You made it through the
 night, after all. Good for you. Or
 bad, depending on your perspective.
 Well, you did say you *live for*
Halloween, right?

Rob yanks the earplugs out of Nicole's ears; no response.

ROB (O.S.)
 And the Academy Award for best
 bullshit performance goes to

Rob leans in face-to-face with Nicole and raises an eyebrow.
 He snaps his fingers by her ears -- she's unresponsive.

ROB (O.S.)
 Ah, fuck. Come on, Nicole. You're
 about to sleep through the best part!
 I mean, it's not exactly Paula
 Keller's basement, but I bet we can
 still manage to have a little bit of
 good, old-fashioned Halloween fun.

Rob puts on the GoPro's lanyard and picks up his jack-in-the-
 box -- he plays -- and moves in on Nicole's groggy face.

ROB (O.S.)
 (singing)
Trick-or-treat ... smell my feet ...

... We see Nicole's bare legs ...

ROB (O.S.)
Give me something good to eat ...

... Nicole's leg from knee to upper thigh ...

ROB (O.S.)
If you don't ...

... wraps his fingers around the tape on Nicole's diaper ...

ROB (O.S.)
I don't care ...

Rob rips the tape off -- it makes a loud TEARING SOUND

CUT TO BLACK:

EXT. ROB'S HOUSE - DAY

FROM AARON'S BUTTON CAM.

On the sidewalk, Aaron looks into the lens with a grim stare. He affixes the cam to the front of his backpack strap, takes a deep breath, and throws on the backpack.

We glide through the yard full of (vandalized) ghoulish decorations and dismembered "bodies."

Aaron knocks on the door.

AARON (O.S.)

Rob.

He waits a moment, then sneaks around to --

THE BACKYARD

We approach the backdoor. Aaron snatches a fake rock from the ground and retrieves a key.

He unlocks the door and enters.

AARON (O.S.)

Rob. Hey, man ...

We weave through the kitchen, through the hallway, and to the workshop. The door is open a crack.

A REPETITIVE CLAPPING SOUND emits from within.

We hesitate. Aaron's hand slowly pushes the workshop door open to reveal Rob, holding Nicole's legs above his shoulders, as he rhythmically thrusts himself into her unconscious body.

ALTERNATE BETWEEN ROB'S GoPro ON THE WORKBENCH AND AARON'S BUTTON CAM.

AARON (O.S.)

WHAT THE FUCK?!

Rob halts, yanks his pants up, and spins to confront Aaron.

ROB

Shit. You don't understand --

AARON

-- You're fucking raping her! Oh, my god!

ROB

Shh!

Rob glances back at Nicole as he pushes Aaron to the wall.

ROB
She's been playing us, dude! She
knew who we were all along!

AARON
What?

ROB
She knew it was us! She was trying
to get in my head. She was gonna
turn us in anyway -- she played us!

AARON
We're so fucked. You raped her!

ROB
Stop saying that!

Aaron cries, drops to the floor.

AARON
(sobbing)
What did you do? What did you do?

ROB
Bitch had it coming, man. She started
this shit six years ago, and she was
trying to do it all over again.
Nobody fucking plays me!

AARON
What are you talking about?

ROB
It doesn't matter now. We can't let
her go. Not after this.

AARON
What are you saying?

Rob braces himself.

ROB
We gotta get rid of her.

AARON
What? No. We can't just -- what
are you saying? We have to go to
the police. It's not too late --

Rob picks Aaron off the floor and slams him into the wall.

ROB
We gotta get rid of her!
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)

It's the only way! No body, no evidence. No one will ever know.

AARON

(sobbing)

No

ROB

What would Karen think of you if she knew what you'd done? And what about your mom? She lied for us, Aaron. You really want her to fry for this shit, too?!

AARON

(bawling)

What did we do?

Rob releases him and punches the wall.

ROB

Fuck!

AARON

How ... how would you ... do it?

ROB (O.S.)

I dunno. Something quick. The sooner the better.

AARON

I can't. I can't be the one ...

ROB (O.S.)

I know, man. I know. It's all good.

AARON

It is not all good!

ROB (O.S.)

You know what I fucking mean! So, maybe we strangle her or something. We can't leave blood.

AARON

How about ... suffocation?

ROB (O.S.)

Maybe.

AARON

And then what?

ROB (O.S.)
 We take her somewhere. My dad's
 cabin. There are lots of places to
 ... hide shit. It's a four hour
 drive, but ... we can do this.

AARON
 What about your neighbors?

ROB (O.S.)
 It's Halloween. They won't see
 anything out of the ordinary.

Aaron casts the camera a concerned stare.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - WORKSHOP - LATER

FROM ROB'S GoPro.

Rob sets the camera on the workbench frames up the
 semiconscious Nicole.

AARON
 I can't see her, when you ...

ROB
 Fair enough.

Rob approaches the work bench, pulls a large paper grocery
 bag and some Sharpies out of a drawer, and scribbles on the
 bag. Aaron looks away from Nicole and covers his mouth in a
 barely-successful attempt to contain his vomit.

Rob takes the bag -- a sad face, complete with tears and a
 frown -- back to Nicole and places it on her head. Aaron
 turns to see it, then looks back at Rob.

Rob snatches the GoPro and turns us to see Aaron.

ROB (O.S.)
 Better?

Aaron scowls.

ROB (O.S.)
 Just trying to help, dude. Ready?

Rob returns the camera to the workbench. He then takes a
 clear plastic bag and throws it around Nicole's head without
 hesitation.

Nicole comes too and struggles, screaming into her gag under
 the bags, but Rob only tightens his grip. It seems to go on
 for an eternity ...

AARON
Robert ... stop.

Nicole emits horrific muffled screams ...

AARON
Stop!

He shoves Rob away and pulls the plastic bag free.

ROB
What?!

AARON
Not like this!

ROB
This was your idea!

AARON
I know! But, it has to be humane!

ROB
Fuck!

Nicole is motionless.

AARON
Is she ...

The boys approach Nicole, cautiously ...

Aaron reaches his hand to touch her neck -- almost to the paper bag ...

Nicole jolts back to life and screams through her gag, causing the creepers to jump.

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - WORKSHOP - LATER

FROM ROB'S GoPro CAMERA ON THE WORKBENCH.

Rob pops off the back of a yellow Highlighter and pours several Oxycodone pills into his hand.

AARON
Shit. If I knew you were holding
Oxy ...

ROB
It's my mom's, she doesn't count
'em. Been sneaking them for years.

He hands one to Aaron, who gladly accepts and downs the pill.

AARON

Why?

ROB

(shrug)

Just to see if I could, I guess.

Rob picks out three and replaces the rest in the Highlighter.

ROB

I'll dose her a little at a time
till she O.D.s. It'll be peaceful.
Humane. She'll feel like she's in
heaven before she drifts off to hell.
You should wait outside, though,
seeing as you can't handle your shit.

Aaron nods and heads out to the hallway.

Rob hangs the GoPro around his neck and takes us, the three pills, and a fifth of Wild Turkey to Nicole. He removes her ear plugs.

ROB

I'm going to give you something.
You swallow it, okay? Don't go fuck
up and get yourself hurt. Understand?

Nicole nods. Rob removes her gag.

NICOLE

(sobbing)

I wish I could take back everything
I ever did to you. I swear, I would
if I could.

ROB

Open.

Nicole opens wide; Rob drops one pill in her mouth.

ROB

Drink.
(giving her whiskey)
Swallow.

Nicole complies, then coughs.

NICOLE

(stuttering)

What was that?

ROB
It's for the pain. I need you
conscious.

NICOLE
... For what?

Rob gags Nicole. She screams into the crusty gag in protest.

EXT. ROB'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S GoPro CAMERA ON THE PORCH.

Kids laugh as they trick-or-treat through the neighborhood. Each is practically attached to an adult, and they avoid Rob's house like the plague.

Rob takes a swig of whiskey -- his lips curl into a subtle smile -- as Aaron smokes beside him.

AARON
Why are you still filming this shit?

ROB
In case you ever try to pin it all on me. When these videos turn up, I want people to see that you were with me every step of the way. They could probably even argue that it was your idea.

AARON
My i--

Aaron clenches his mouth shut. He takes a drag.

AARON
Was it you? At the corn maze?

ROB
Fuck you. I can't believe you'd even ask me that.

Rob takes another swig. Aaron stares at him in disbelief.

ROB
I'm gonna give her another dose. Oh --
I need you to do something.

Rob pulls a plastic bag out of his cargo pocket -- it contains Nicole's panties.

ROB
Take these to the creek.
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)

Put on some gloves, open the bag,
and just toss them out the window.
Throw off the scent, ya know?

Rob hands Aaron the bag. Aaron looks at the panties with a defeated stare. Rob snatches the GoPro.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - WORKSHOP - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S GoPro ON THE WORKBENCH.

ROB

You said you wanted to make it up to
me. Now's your chance.

Rob pulls his meat tenderizer from among his props and rubs it across Nicole's face. She winces and struggles against her bindings.

Nicole's calves thrash wildly against the chair legs, which SCREECH across the floor. As the chair THUMPS, the impact knocks the GoPro over, giving us a clear view of the ceiling.

ROB (O.S.)

Aaaand ... action.

WHACK!

Nicole SCREAMS.

WHACK!

Nicole's gag comes undone -- she SCREAMS bloody-murder.

... WHACK! ...

Silence.

... WHACK!

Silence ...

... WHACK!

METAL CLANGING. Then, a SAWING sound as it rips through flesh and breaks through bone ...

LATER

FROM ROB'S GoPro ON THE WORKBENCH.

Rob sits on a stool with a bloody face and wild eyes.

ROB
That was so intense. Like, more
than I ever thought ... fuck.

The workshop door creaks open; Aaron enters.

AARON
My mom called. She was freaking out
that I missed school. I told her we --

Aaron freezes. The color drains from his face.

Rob retrieves the GoPro.

ROB (O.S.)
Did she say you could spend the night?

Aaron cries.

ROB (O.S.)
Oh, yeah.

We catch a glimpse of Nicole's remains -- bloody limbs on black plastic trash bags.

ROB (O.S.)
It's okay. It was peaceful. I had
to cut her up so we could spread it
around.

Rob sets the camera on the floor and bags an O.S. leg.

ROB
We just gotta bag her. Come on.
The sooner we start, the sooner this
is over.

Aaron wipes his eyes and approaches the remains, trembling.

EXT. ROB'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

FROM ROB'S GoPro.

The camera dangles from around Rob's neck as he and Aaron drag the bags through the yard's scattered decorations.

ROB (O.S.)

Ready? Go.

The creepers hoist the "body bags" into the back of the truck.

INT. ROB'S TRUCK - NIGHT

FROM AARON'S IPHONE CAMERA.

In a wooded area, three small mounds of dirt rest between two trees in the distant moonlight. The cam/phone spins to face Aaron -- his face is dirty, as are his hair and shirt. He records himself crying in the passenger seat.

AARON

I'm sorry. I didn't know what else to do. I had no choice.

Aaron quickly lowers his phone to conceal it and angles it toward the driver's side door, which Rob then opens. Rob climbs in and stacks two black duffel bags between the seats.

ROB

Had to grab some shit from the shed. Hey -- look at me. It's okay. It's over. Shit can go back to normal now. Desmond will take the fall, or someone else will. Nobody has any reason to suspect us. And now, there's no proof, okay? ... All right?

Rob starts the truck.

Aaron cuts the video.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - WORKSHOP - DAWN

FROM ROB'S GoPro.

Rob discreetly sets the camera on the workbench.

The workshop is pristine. Aaron mops the area around the chair, stone faced.

AARON

We're out of bleach.

ROB

Under the sink.

Aaron sighs, sets the mop down, and leaves the workshop.

ROB
 (to the camera)
 And that's how you get away with
 murder, mother fuckers. Just have
 to be evil and smart. And have
 friends that are legit. You know
 what they say. Friends help you
 move. But real friends --

Aaron re-enters with a bottle of bleach. Rob sees him and
 cuts the video.

EXT. BRIDGE WOOD HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

FROM ROB'S GoPro CAMERA.

Rob records the street, the aftermath of Halloween: discarded
 streamers. Splattered pumpkin guts. Lost pieces of candy.

ROB (O.S.)
 Ladies and gentlemen, the first scary
 Halloween in years has officially
 concluded. But, if you're lucky,
 maybe there'll be a sequel next year.

Rob spins our view to Aaron, who glares and turns away.

ROB (O.S.)
 Right? Chatty-fucking-Cathy over
 here. Fine. You film.

He hands the camera to Aaron, who puts on the lanyard and
 frames up a shot.

ROB
 I'll be bad cop and good cop.

Rob intersects with Nigel, who is headed toward the school.

ROB
Niles the Great!

Nigel looks away and quickens his pace.

ROB
 Hey. S'up?

Nigel shrugs and continues on.

ROB
 What the shit, man?

Rob cuts him off. Nigel avoids his stare.

NIGEL
Nothing. Just don't wanna be late.

ROB
(laughing)
To Spanish? Mother fucker, you are
Spanish.

Niles tries to maneuver around him, but Rob stops him.

ROB
(suddenly serious)
No, really, man. What's up?

A bead of sweat drops from Nigel's brow. Rob's smile fades.

ROB
Nigel ... what?

NIGEL
Desmond gave the cops a list of all
the weird kids at school, and they
came to my house -- they were trying
to pin that shit on me! They
interrogated me ... asked questions
about the party.

ROB
What did you say, Nigel?

Nigel stammers.

Rob's face burns red. He shoves Nigel against the fence.

ROB
Tell me!

NIGEL
I said I thought I saw your truck.

ROB
Fuck! What the fuck, Nigel?

Rob slams him into the fence repeatedly.

Aaron drops the camera and intervenes -- we see the boys'
feet as the dangling camera catches Aaron separating them.

ROB (O.S.)
That's what they do, ass hole! It's
a fucking mind game! They didn't
have shit, and they knew if they
fucked with you, you'd help them pin
it on anyone they wanted to!

AARON (O.S.)

Rob.

Aaron tilts the camera to show five cops going over paperwork in the lot about thirty yards away. Aaron zooms in.

Rob punches Nigel in the chest as hard as he can, sending him to the sidewalk like a ton of bricks.

ROB

You just killed us, ass hole.

AARON (O.S.)

Come on.

Aaron physically drags Rob away.

ROB

Get off me.

Rob breaks free of his grip and sprints to the truck. Aaron hurries to catch up.

AARON (O.S.)

What are we gonna do?

ROB

I planned for this.

AARON (O.S.)

... What? What do you --

ROB

-- I said we're prepared!

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - DEN - DAY

FROM ROB'S LAPTOP CAMERA ON THE BOOK SHELF.

Aaron sulks on the couch.

AARON

We should just go.

Rob enters and sets his duffel bags on the coffee table.

ROB

Yeah? How far would we get?

AARON

I dunno. We'll figure something out on the way.

ROB

No. This isn't gonna end on their terms. If they win and we die, then all of this was for nothing.

AARON

What are you talking about?

ROB

I'm saying it ends on our terms, in one final merciless, unrepentant act of destruction. Our legacy. Our movie. Our terms. Do you even know what my dad kept in his shed?

Rob gestures to the bags. Aaron carefully unzips one and peeks inside. He settles back into his seat, a face of dread.

ROB

We're gonna plant these bombs at every feasible entry point, and then we're gonna take this whole fucking house, and everyone in it, straight to hell with us.

Rob unzips the other bag and pulls out an assault rifle.

ROB

They try to get in through the front, we mow them down. They try to get in any other way, **boom**. We all go together. No matter what, we raise the body count and go out our way.

AARON

Your way. Shit, man.

ROB

Shut the fuck up. This is what we wanted. The news is gonna show pictures and videos of what we did, every fucking Halloween. You and I, *Menace* and *A-bomb* -- we'll be immortal. And once these videos get out, we will have created the ultimate horror movie, the first in a brand new horror sub-genre. *Reality horror*.

Rob checks his watch.

ROB

Let's set this shit up. We don't have much time.

AARON

This is wrong.

Rob's fingers tense around the gun.

ROB

Don't go bitching out now.

Aaron shakes his head and stands up.

ROB

(heading to laptop)

I'll show you how to rig the first one, and then you can do the rest while I arm the drone and import the video files. You want me to upload yours, too?

(smirk)

Or are they all just creepy pics of Karen through her window?

Rob collects the laptop.

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - ROB'S BEDROOM - DAY

FROM ROB'S LAPTOP CAMERA.

Rob clicks his mouse and looks smugly into the lens.

ROB

You ready for this shit? If you want to see how it all started, you'll find it on our YouTube page. And if you want to see how it ends, all you have to do is make some popcorn, click over to the news, and enjoy.

Rob pulls on a tactical harness and attaches his body cam.

ROB

But, what comes after is just as important. Let's franchise this bitch. This is a call to action to make your own sequel. Spread fear. Spread pain.

Rob is distracted by the "*Night of the Dark*" DVD sitting on his desk. He examines it with a bittersweet grin.

ROB

Don't worry about being hated by your communities, because you probably already are. Fuck them.

(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)

Let me be your hero, and you can be heroes to others. In the end, we'll all be immortal together.

He checks the progress of his upload.

ROB

Ugh. Fifteen more minutes. Good thing the cops are never on time, right?

INT. ROB'S HOUSE - DEN - DAY

FROM THE GoPro.

Aaron aims the camera at his fearful visage.

AARON

That thing that happened with the seniors' cars last year? That was us, too. It was Rob's idea, but I helped. I always do, I dunno why.

(quietly)

You always wanted me to be perfect, and I tried -- I really did, but, I'm not perfect, Mom. I'm not perfect --

ROB (O.S.)

-- All set?

Rob enters the den, aims the assault rifle at the door, and pretends to mow down intruders while emitting a battle cry.

AARON

I double checked. We're good.

Aaron casts the GoPro one final remorseful glance and sets the camera on the bookshelf. He heads toward Rob to block him from checking the bombs.

ROB

Hell yeah. ... Wait --

He raises an eyebrow at Aaron.

ALTERNATE BETWEEN ROB'S BODY CAM AND THE GoPro.

ROB

You fucked up.

Aaron feigns surprise, looks at his work, and opens his mouth to speak. Rob pushes past him to check another.

ROB
 This one, too. Did you even -- you
 gotta do it like this one --

Rob heads to the bomb he rigged himself and squints.

ROB
 ... This one's fucked, too ...
 (turning to Aaron)
 You did this on purpose. You're
 trying to sabotage me.

AARON
 Rob ... I

ROB
 I trusted you. You're the only human
 being I've ever trusted in my entire
 fucking life.

AARON
 We can't do this. We have to stop.

ROB
Stop.

Rob shrugs and puts his gun down. He backhands Aaron, sending
 him to the ground. Rob mounts and punches him repeatedly.

ROB
 You fucked us, ass hole! You fucked
 everything!

Rob bangs Aaron's head against the floor.

SIRENS FADE UP FROM OUTSIDE.

ROB
 FUCK!

Rob gets up and spins toward the gun. Aaron -- a bloody
 mess -- trips him. Rob lands hard. He crawls aggressively
 toward his weapon, but Aaron is attached to him at the waist.

ROB
 Get the fuck off of me! I'm not
 going down alone!

AARON
 You won't!

Rob stops to unpack this statement.

AARON
 You won't.

Rob wiggles free, snatches the gun, and heads for the door. Aaron drags himself to his feet and hobbles after him.

Aaron is on his heels ...

BOOM.

The front door BURSTS OPEN.

A S.W.A.T. team files in through the front door, sees Rob armed, and opens fire. They gun both teens down with ease.

Aaron lands first, then Rob on top of him, overlapping -- in front of Aaron as always.

The room is still for a moment.

The S.W.A.T. team fans out to secure the house.

One member examines the nearest bomb.

Rob and Aaron bleed out on the carpet, dead. A S.W.A.T. member cuts the recording.

CUT TO BLACK:

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

FROM A NEWS CAMERA.

The *Channel 5* News Reporter reports in the rain.

REPORTER

This just in. We have a verdict in the Bridge Wood case ...

The reporter squints and listens carefully to her earpiece.

REPORTER

Carol Paulson was found guilty of spoliation regarding her son's alibi on the night of eighteen-year-old Nicole Miller's disappearance. In addition to the civil case filed by Miller's family, Paulson will be held accountable for withholding information that may have been used to locate Miller before her tragic death at the hands of her son, Aaron Paulson and his accomplice, Robert Powell, both eighteen.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

- B Roll footage of Carol on trial.

REPORTER (V.O.)

After reviewing videos left behind by the suspects, it is believed that their sole intention was to spread panic and fear among the people of Bridge Wood. But, instead of leaving their community in fear, they've instead left it in mourning.

- Mrs. Miller sadly pulls photos of Nicole from an album.

REPORTER (V.O.)

For the families, neighbors, friends, and those who knew Robert and Aaron, they have to be asking themselves if there was anything they could have done to prevent this tragedy.

- Cheerleaders hug and hold hands on the football field.

REPORTER (V.O.)

And unfortunately, as often is the case in tragedies like this one, we may never know.

- Crosses, cards, and plush cats are pinned to a fence near the Bridge Wood High football field.

- Somber people of all ages attend Nicole's funeral in a beautiful, spacious cemetery.

EXT. PAULSON RESIDENCE - BACK YARD - DAY (SEVEN YEARS AGO)

FROM CAROL'S MINI DV CAMERA, TIME STAMPED "AUGUST 12TH".

From a voyeuristic view, we see Young Rob throw an arm around a flustered Young Aaron.

YOUNG ROB

I didn't mean it. I just got mad, and I'm sorry. Okay? Forgive me?

YOUNG AARON

Sure. I mean ... we're friends, right?

YOUNG ROB

Yeah, man. Best friends. Till the day we die.

A look of anxiety flashes across Young Aaron's face.

CUT TO BLACK.