

# **PLAYING DEAD**

Written by

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Based on "Lynch"

THE CW  
FOURTH REVISED NETWORK DRAFT (clean)  
February 12, 2018

**ACT ONE**

EXT. ROCKLEIGH WOODS SANCTUARY. DAY (D2)

TIGHT ON: A LLAMA. Standing on the edge of a trail. She's enjoying the quiet wilderness of Bergen County, New Jersey, not remotely wondering how she got here, when suddenly:

**Zoom!** A FORD FOCUS races by!

**Vroom!** Then a MOTORCYCLE, hot on its tail!

**Pfffttt.** Then a HEARSE, chugging along. Trying to keep up.

The llama watches the chase with mild interest until it disappears from view. She's about to go back to her business of being a llama, chewing grass, contemplating her escape from the farm, when suddenly --

**KAPLOW!** A HUGE EXPLOSION! The llama shuffles away. CAMERA holds on the fire, burning in the distance.

MATCH CUT TO:

A different FIERY EXPLOSION. Equally scary. Only this one is in a video game, *World Of Tank Blitz*. It's being played by --

INT. BERGENFIELD HIGH. GIRLS' BATHROOM. MORNING (D1)

-- A kid named, **GEORGE PLUMMER** (16). Sweet, shy, African-American, and currently standing with one hand holding the door shut and the other playing this game on his phone.

**CHYRON: 36 HOURS EARLIER.**

GEORGE  
How's it going over there?

PAN OVER to reveal our hero, **TYLER RICE** (16) standing at the sink counter. Handsome (obviously), confident (but not cocky), the type of guy who is comfortable in any situation. Currently, he's cleaning a TEXTBOOK with a Wet Wipe.

TYLER  
Almost ready.

INT. BERGENFIELD HIGH. HALLWAY. SAME TIME (D1)

A PETITE GIRL approaches the bathroom, oblivious to the gaggle of GIRLS huddled nearby. She pushes the door, but it won't budge. Pushes again. Nada. Finally, she KNOCKS.

GEORGE/TYLER (O.S.)  
OCCUPIED!

INT. BERGENFIELD HIGH. GIRLS' BATHROOM. MORNING (D1)

Tyler removes a pouch from his backpack and pulls out various SYRINGES and VIALS. He lays them neatly on top of his book and begins loading a syringe full of drugs. And then another one, until he has a neat row of FILLED SYRINGES. Finally, he SWOOPS them all into a nearby shoebox and closes it.

He grabs George's iPhone. Turns the game OFF and the music ON. Something mellow, but hip. 4 AM by 2 Chainz.

TYLER

Let's do this.

George opens the bathroom door with a flourish. A DOZEN GIRLS enter, some jockeying for position.

TYLER (CONT'D)

One at a time, ladies. There's enough for everyone. Twenty bucks a shot - cash, Apple Pay or Venmo. See my accountant, George, about payment.

The first girl, **EMILY**, 17, steps up, holds her phone next to George's phone and we hear BLOOP as money is transferred.

TYLER (CONT'D)

Emily... step into my office.

Tyler gallantly holds the STALL DOOR open so Emily can enter.

INT. BATHROOM STALL. CONTINUOUS

Emily sits on the toilet lid, where Tyler has graciously placed a pillow. He picks up one of the pre-arranged needles.

EMILY

This is so cool. I never knew Botox could actually prevent wrinkles.

TYLER

Oh absolutely. It's all about retraining your facial muscles. I'll send you a link. Now close your eyes and count to five.

Emily does and Tyler MOVES FORWARD with the needle, but before he actually injects it, we REVERSE and it's a new girl named **JOANNA**, 16, and Tyler is pulling the needle back.

JOANNA

Thanks, Tyler.

She kisses Tyler's cheek. He "faux" blushes. He's that good.

INT. BERGENFIELD HIGH. GIRLS' BATHROOM. CONTINUOUS

George is counting cash when **CASSIE GREENBERG** (16), Chinese, cool nerd, definite style, walks in. George brightens.

GEORGE

Hi Cassie. Hey, what'd you get on that AP Bio quiz?

CASSIE

Twenty out of twenty. Nailed it.

George shakes his head. She's so damn smart. Meanwhile, Tyler walks another GIRL out of "his office" and approaches Cassie.

TYLER

Right this way.

CASSIE

Why? Are you planning to help me go to the bathroom?

TYLER

Oh, so you're actually here to...

CASSIE

Urinate? Yes. Get injected with toxins by someone pretending to be a doctor? No. If I wanted botulism, I'd eat a bad can of tuna.

TYLER

Well as someone pretending to be a doctor, I'd advise against that.

CASSIE

Your mom must be so proud of you.

TYLER

I don't have a mom. But thanks for the painful reminder.

PRINCIPAL TRAVERS (O.S.)

What exactly is going on in here?

Standing next to George is the formidable **PRINCIPAL TRAVERS**. He eyes the SYRINGE in Tyler's hand.

TYLER

Just giving some... flu shots?

Travers rips a piece of paper from a small pad he carries.

PRINCIPAL TRAVERS

Have your father sign this and return it to my office. Tomorrow.

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. BATHROOM. DAY (D1)

**JOE RICE** (early 30s) looks at himself in the mirror. The towel wrapped around his waist reveals a pale, slightly doughy upper body. He opens his medicine cabinet which offers a window into his personality. The few grooming products are neatly lined, like OCD "neat." He grabs the Propecia and begins his routine:

1) He carefully SQUEEZES out each drop. 2) Then RUBS his temples vigorously. 3) A quick SWIPE of deodorant. 4) An enthusiastic BRUSHING of the teeth. 5) Followed by a fervid FLOSSING. 6) A tongue SCRAPE. 7) Annnnnnd a mouthwash RINSE. When it's all over, he rips off one square of toilet paper and WIPES DOWN the sink. So, yeah. He's a meticulous dude.

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. BASEMENT. DAY (D1)

Joe enters the basement wearing his Gap best. A CORPSE lies on his mortician's table, covered by a sheet. He calls out:

JOE

Dinesh?

No answer. He approaches the body and pulls off the sheet, revealing a woman whose face appears to have been run over by a train. Literally, TRAIN TRACKS ON HER FACE. Joe sighs, annoyed.

JOE (CONT'D)

Not funny, Neesh.

And now we hear a CHUCKLE coming from the corner of the room where **DINESH JINDAL** (late 20s) is hiding. More style, more swagger and better abs, Dinesh is a BIG personality.

DINESH

It is funny. You just have no sense of humor.

Joe starts to delicately PEEL off the woman's face, which is when we realize it's not her face! It's a LATEX MASK. A gory, highly professional mask you'd find on a horror movie set.

JOE

How many times do I have to tell you? These masks are not toys. This one took me six weeks to design.

DINESH

It's very good. I think it's my new favorite. No. I take it back. Shark bite face is still my favorite.

JOE

You're fired.

DINESH  
I'm your only employee.

True.

JOE  
I meant as my friend.

DINESH  
I'm your only friend.

Also true.

DINESH (CONT'D)  
Relax, would you? I was just trying  
to lighten the mood before the big  
meeting. You feeling okay? You look  
great. You need a Tums?

Dinesh pulls a roll from his pocket and offers it to Joe.  
These two are like an old married couple.

JOE  
I'm fine.

Dinesh watches Joe continue his meticulous work of SLOWLY  
peeling off the mask. It's agonizing how long this takes.

DINESH  
You're gonna be late --

JOE  
I KNOW!

DINESH  
You're not fine.

Joe stops futzing with the mask and heads for the door.

DINESH (CONT'D)  
Good luck!

Once Joe is gone, Dinesh continues the work of peeling the  
mask off our dead woman's face.

JOE (O.S.)  
DON'T TOUCH MY MASK!

Dinesh stops peeling and addresses the dead woman.

DINESH  
He's not fine.

EXT. VALLEY BANK. DAY (D1)

A small, locally owned bank in a strip mall. It does not  
inspire a lot of confidence.

INT. VALLEY BANK. DAY (D1)

Joe nervously taps his foot under the desk while **ALICE MEYERS** (early 30s), the cute, buttoned-up loan officer reviews his case file on her old-as-shit computer. She cuts to the chase:

ALICE  
I'm afraid your loan application  
has been denied.

JOE  
Wow. That was fast.

Alice notices her SUPERVISOR hovering nearby. She straightens up, doing her best to represent the bank.

ALICE  
Mr. Rice, if I may. You've been a  
loyal member of our family here at  
Valley Bank for over 15 years and --

JOE  
17 years.

ALICE  
That's over 15 years.

JOE  
Two years over. Felt significant.

ALICE  
In any case, it has come to our  
attention that in all this time,  
you've never seemed... happy.

JOE  
The bank thinks I'm not happy?

ALICE  
In your business. When your dad was  
in charge of the funeral home, he  
seemed to enjoy the work. You seem  
to... accept it. Which isn't to say  
you're not doing a good job --

JOE  
I'm not doing a good job. Which is  
why I need a loan.

ALICE  
Which you're not getting.

JOE  
Because the bank thinks I'm sad?

ALICE

Because nothing in your past suggests that you'll be able to pay it back. Why not look at this as a chance to begin anew? A fresh start!

JOE

I would love a fresh start. Unfortunately, I'm a single father with a son who depends on me. Single parents don't get fresh starts, Miss Meyers. Single parents make do because their children have no one else to depend on, because someone either died or abandoned them. We were abandoned.

ALICE

I'm aware of that, too.

JOE

Although Isabel could be dead.

ALICE

Anything is possible.

JOE

Although evil rarely dies.

Oh boy. Empathetic, Alice drops her "official bank persona."

ALICE

I just think you could do other things with your life, Joe. Things that would make you happy.

Joe rises to his feet, done with this conversation.

ALICE (CONT'D)

You're behind on your last three payments. If you don't fulfill your obligations to the bank --

JOE

I'll get the money.

ALICE

-- We'll have to foreclose.

Fuck. He turns around and faces her, with true kindness.

JOE

Thanks for your time.

Joe walks out, head held high. Off Alice, feeling awful...



INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. TYLER'S BEDROOM. EARLY EVENING (D1)

An empty DUFFEL BAG sits open on the floor. Tyler goes through his hamper, smelling clothes to determine which of them are *actually* dirty and which are okay. The okay ones get tossed into the duffel bag. He's reacting to a particularly egregious sock when his cell RINGS. Noting the CALLER ID, he straightens up. He's been waiting for this call.

TYLER  
(all business, into phone)  
This is Norman Powell.

Um, no it's not.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
Thanks for getting back to me so quickly, Carlos. Good news I hope?

He furrows his brow. Apparently not good news.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
Unfortunately my dates aren't flexible and that's not the price range we initially discussed...

JOE (O.S.)  
Tyler! Dinner!

Shit! Tyler speeds things along, anxious to end the call.

TYLER  
Then keep looking. I have a client walking in. We'll talk tomorrow.  
(hangs up, then)  
COMING!

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. KITCHEN. EARLY EVENING (N1)

Tyler walks in as Joe doles out some Chef Boyardee Beefaroni from a saucepan.

JOE  
Do you want any salad?

TYLER  
Do we have salad?

JOE  
We have lettuce.

TYLER  
I'm good.

JOE  
We might have croutons.

TYLER  
Pasta's good.

Joe plops down in his chair and immediately starts eating. Tyler checks his phone. There's no malice between them, but no connection either. Joe makes his usual, minimal effort:

JOE  
How was your day?

TYLER  
Fine. You?

JOE  
Fine.

Okay, so they're not the *Gilmore Boys*.

JOE (CONT'D)  
We've got a funeral tomorrow. You want to help with the finishing touches? You did such a nice job on the last one. Which reminds me, have you seen my 32-gauge needle? I can't find it anywhere.

So that's where Tyler gets his needles. And needle SKILLS.

TYLER  
I haven't seen it. But I can't tonight anyway. Going to George's. Actually, I should probably dip. I'm not that hungry.

JOE  
Home by ten.

And he's gone, his plate of food completely untouched. Off Joe and the sound of a TICKING CLOCK...

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. JOE'S WORKSHOP. NIGHT (N1)

Vintage horror movie posters line the walls. Latex masks are everywhere - some collected, some created. An especially valuable one, the Creature from the Black Lagoon, sits in a glass box. We now realize that TICKING CLOCK sound is coming from a TV playing *Rosemary's Baby*.

ROSEMARY  
*What have you done to it!? What have you done to his eyes?*

CAMERA finds Joe fine-tuning his latest creation, the most content we've seen him yet. He "acts" along with the movie:

*CREEPY MAN/JOE*  
*He came up from hell and begat a*  
*son of mortal woman!*

Welcome to Joe's happy place.

EXT. GEORGE'S HOUSE. NIGHT (N1)

Tyler stands outside. The door opens and there's **MR. PLUMMER** (40s), who smiles when he sees Tyler.

MR. PLUMMER  
 Hey Tyler. Hope you're hungry.

TYLER  
 Starving.

Tyler follows him in. This is his happy place.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM. LATER

Kitchen/dining room/living room. Tyler is in a world quite the opposite of his own. It's a noisy, happy house, which is why he loves it here. Tyler and the Plummers are seated around a table, having just finished dinner. George's TWIN siblings, BEAU and LORELAI (10) sit at one end of the table, currently playing on their iPads. **MRS. PLUMMER** (40) and her husband sit at the other end with George and Tyler.

TYLER  
 Honestly Mrs. Plummer? That was maybe the best spaghetti I've ever had. No joke.

MRS. PLUMMER  
 Thanks, Tyler. You're always welcome here. Even when you don't lie to me about my cooking.

Mr. Plummer notices the twins on their iPads.

MR. PLUMMER  
 Did you two somehow forget there are no electronics during dinner?

BEAU  
 I'm just holding it.

LORELEI  
 We're technically finished eating.

\*  
 \*  
 \*

Meanwhile George slyly shows Tyler a picture on his PHONE of a used green JEEP CHEROKEE.

GEORGE  
 I checked our bank account and we can officially afford this car. I think we should do it.

TYLER

It's great, but it's our backup, dude. We've waited this long, what's a few more months to get the one we really want?

Tyler takes the phone and SWIPES the picture to a beautiful, black 2002 LAND ROVER that looks shiny and new.

TYLER (CONT'D)

I mean, look at that. That thing is sick. And I can get the price down, I promise. What do you think we should do, Mr. Plummer?

MR. PLUMMER

You're spending some serious bank on this car. I think you get the one you want or you'll regret it.

MRS. PLUMMER

As long as you're sure. This is a chunk of your savings --

GEORGE

(ugh)

Right. My savings, Mom. We're sure.

Mrs. Plummer throws up her hands; she's not arguing. She and her husband leave the boys alone. The twins are now in the background, back on their iPads not paying attention.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

God, she's so annoying. You're lucky you don't have to deal with all that "mom" crap.

Tyler says nothing and George feels a pang of guilt.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Sorry. Was that --?

TYLER

It's fine.

GEORGE

But we can talk about your mom now, right? I mean, you played the card with Cassie this morning, so --

TYLER

I didn't "play" any "card." I stated a fact. My mom is gone, right?

George knows it's a sore spot and backs off. But now he wants some other information that he's worried about.

GEORGE  
So, what's the story with you and  
Cassie? Are you into her?

TYLER  
Into her? I barely know her.

GEORGE  
(covering)  
Oh, right. Yeah, me too. Barely.

Tyler looks at him oddly, but then Mrs. Plummer re-enters  
with a carton of ice cream.

MRS. PLUMMER  
Anybody want some ice cream?

TYLER  
You don't have to ask this guy  
twice.

Mrs. Plummer starts scooping. As George looks bothered and  
the twins rush back with glee, Tyler can only smile.

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. BASEMENT. THE NEXT MORNING (D2)

Joe walks in and is thrown by the CHILL in the room. He looks  
up and notices THE WINDOW IS OPEN. That's odd. Nervous, Joe  
grabs a scalpel and begins to investigate. The door to the  
supply closet is closed. He approaches the door, turns the  
handle, then THROWS it open --

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. SUPPLY CLOSET. CONTINUOUS

-- Annnnd it's empty. Joe relaxes. Until he sees a few  
bottles of formaldehyde lined up in a way that does not  
please him. He goes to organize the shelf when suddenly, a  
figure appears behind him, SPINS him around and PINS him  
against the wall, causing him to drop his scalpel. Joe reacts  
as if seeing a ghost.

JOE  
Isabel?

CAMERA reveals our attacker, **ISABEL REYES**. Wicked,  
capricious, fearless, clever, and stunning. She smiles at  
Joe, a twinkle in her eye:

ISABEL  
Miss me?

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. BASEMENT. MOMENTS LATER (D2)

Joe sits in a chair, speechless and rocked to his core, as  
Isabel uses his scalpel to dig mud out of the bottom of her  
fancy boots. The gym bag still strapped across her chest.

ISABEL

This is why you don't spend eight hundred dollars on boots. One night in the woods and they're destroyed.  
(then, eyeing him)  
You've lost weight.

JOE

It's been fifteen years.

ISABEL

Most people gain weight. I meant it as a compliment.

Isabel smiles. Joe doesn't. Isabel tries a new approach.

ISABEL (CONT'D)

How's Tyler? Is he gorgeous? I bet he's gorgeous.

Joe clenches his fist, fury rising.

ISABEL (CONT'D)

I can tell you're not in a chatty mood, so I'll cut to the chase. There are people who want me dead.

JOE

People other than me?

ISABEL

I need your help, Joe.

Now Joe smiles. Which turns into laughter. Tears rolling down his cheeks kinda laughter. When he's done:

JOE

Phew! Thank you. I needed that.

ISABEL

I can't get into the specifics --

JOE

No, of course not. Specifics have never been your thing. Like, your goodbye note? Very light on detail. What was it again? Oh yeah. "Dear Joe. I'm sorry. Don't hate me." Very concise.

ISABEL

Look, I understand --

JOE

You know what was fun? Putting an ad in the paper. That's the only way to legally divorce a spouse who deserted you. Did you know that? I didn't. Had to write up a little notice for the Bergen County Bugle and let the whole world know that you ran out on your husband and your son. So that was great.

ISABEL

The whole world doesn't read the Bergen County Bugle.

JOE

That's the detail you're choosing to focus on?

Isabel takes a step towards Joe, who instinctively takes a step back, folding his arms across his chest.

ISABEL

They're going to kill me, Joe.

She waits for him to take that in. And then she takes a step towards him again, vulnerable. This time, he doesn't move.

ISABEL (CONT'D)

I know you hate me and you have every right. But you loved me once. You might be the only person who ever did. Not that I deserved it.

We see this affect Joe. Barely. But there's movement.

JOE

Look, even if I wanted to --

ISABEL

I can pay you! I have money.

She UNZIPS the duffel bag and pulls out STACKS OF CASH.

ISABEL (CONT'D)

It's yours. All of it. Five hundred thousand dollars. If you help me.

JOE

Help you how? With what?

ISABEL

Help me fake my death.

Off this bombshell, we...

**END ACT ONE**

ACT TWOINT. BERGENFIELD HIGH. TRAVERS' OFFICE. MORNING (D2)

Tyler sits, discreetly scrolling through **airbnb.com** on his phone, as Principal Travers paces, chewing him out.

PRINCIPAL TRAVERS

I don't understand what's going on with you these last few weeks. Your teachers say you've been distracted in class, you blew off a college counselor meeting, and let's not even talk about yesterday.

TYLER

Okay.

PRINCIPAL TRAVERS

I mean, what were you thinking?!

TYLER

I thought we weren't talking about it.

(off his look)

Sorry. Look, I've been a little preoccupied. But all that's about to change. I promise.

PRINCIPAL TRAVERS

I'm holding you to that. Okay, class is about to start, so hurry up.

Tyler unzips his backpack, searches for something.

TYLER

Where we doing this?

PRINCIPAL TRAVERS

The couch is fine.

Tyler removes his little Botox pouch from his backpack as Principal Travers sits on the couch, ready for his "fix."

TYLER

Don't worry, this one's on me.

He SQUIRTS MEDICINE from the syringe. Gotta love this kid...

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. FRONT DOOR. DAY (D2)

Dinesh is walking in, just as Joe is heading out. He's in such a state, he barely registers Dinesh's presence.



DINESH  
Whoa, whoa. Where are you going?  
Funeral's in a few hours.

JOE  
I just need to get some air.

But Dinesh knows Joe too well. Something is up.

DINESH  
What happened?

JOE  
Isabel is here.  
(before Dinesh can explode)  
Don't worry, I locked her in the  
supply closet. Just make sure Tyler  
doesn't go downstairs when he gets  
home. Oh, and maybe do a little  
dustbusting? She tracked mud  
everywhere because of the woods.

DINESH  
Because of the... what?

JOE  
The woods. I'll be back.

Joe leaves. Off Dinesh, thoroughly confused. ISABEL IS HERE?

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. SUPPLY CLOSET. DAY (D2)

Isabel sits on the floor, brushing her hair and picking out  
the occasional stray leaf. Dinesh walks in with the  
dustbuster. He shakes his head, disgusted.

DINESH  
Unbelievable.

Isabel looks up from her grooming --

ISABEL  
Oh. It's you.

-- then resumes her hair brushing.

DINESH  
What the hell are you doing here?

ISABEL  
I have a better question. What the  
hell are you doing here? Don't tell  
me you still work for Joe's dad.

As Dinesh dustbusts around her:

DINESH

Daniel had a stroke. Joe took over the business. I run the day to day operations.

ISABEL

I guess that means you didn't get into law school. *Qué pena.*

Clearly, there is no love lost between these two.

DINESH

And I take it things didn't work out between you and Saul?

Isabel FREEZES at the mention of Saul.

ISABEL

What do you know about Saul?

DINESH

(dramatic)  
I know everything.

ISABEL

Then you know Saul is dead.

DINESH

Everything except that part.  
(off her eye roll)  
Whatever. I'm not about to shed any tears for the asshole who stole you from your family.

ISABEL

He didn't steal me. I left.

DINESH

And you're proud of that?

ISABEL

I'm not proud of it. But I own my decisions. I'm not a victim.

DINESH

No. You're just a bitch.

Dinesh starts to leave, but Isabel steps in front of him.

ISABEL

Do you know what it's like to have a baby when you're still just a baby yourself? To live in a house full of dead people with a husband who puts you on a pedestal?

DINESH  
So now it's Joe's fault?

ISABEL  
It's nobody's fault. Joe and I were never a perfect match.

DINESH  
Sure you were. He thought you were too good for him and you agreed.

Isabel shakes her head; Dinesh could not be more wrong, but there's clearly no convincing him otherwise.

ISABEL  
I ran away with Saul because he understood me. He knew who I was in a way that Joe refused to accept. And yes, he offered me a bigger life, a better life. We traveled the world, ate in the best restaurants, had sex in Jacuzzis --

DINESH  
So unsanitary...

ISABEL  
And the people we stole from had more than enough to spare. If he hadn't gotten so greedy --

DINESH  
(feigning boredom)  
Are you finished yet? I have a funeral to get to.

ISABEL  
Does Joe know about Saul?

DINESH  
You think I would keep something like that from my best friend?

ISABEL  
Maybe. You've kept bigger secrets.

Dinesh darkens. She clearly touched a nerve.

DINESH  
You know, I used to feel bad watching Tyler grow up without a mom. But I was wrong. Better to have no mother at all than to endure a thing like you.

Dinesh walks out, LOCKING the door behind him. We see a crack in Isabel's armor before she quickly shakes it off...

EXT. OLD MOVIE THEATER. DAY (D2)

A run-down theater that plays old movies. The kind you find on forgotten main streets.

INT. OLD MOVIE THEATER. DAY (D2)

"*Poltergeist*" plays onscreen. Joe watches, completely numb. All he can do is think about Isabel in his supply room.

**ON SCREEN:** The CLOWN attacks the little boy! (Jump scare!)

All six people in the theater SCREAM, including Joe. But then Joe keeps screaming. The other people look at him. Eventually Joe stops. That helped. He gets up and walks out.

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. SUPPLY CLOSET. DAY (D2)

Isabel is calmly going through the supply shelves, looking for something. She reaches into a box, pulls out a pair of LATEX GLOVES. Snaps them on. Finds another box, removes a large, HYPODERMIC NEEDLE. She then takes a thin tool with a HOOK on the end and walks to the door.

ISABEL

Dinesh? Joe?

Satisfied that no one is outside, she gets to work. Sticks the needle into the lower part of the lock, maneuvering it until it CLICKS into place. Takes the hook and places it INSIDE the lock right above the needle. Inserts and removes it a few times then slowly TURNS THE HOOK TOOL. We hear the deadbolt turn with it. Done! Smiling, she snaps the gloves off, opens the door and walks out...

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. FRONT DOOR. DAY (D2)

Dinesh stands at the open front door as FUNERAL GUESTS arrive.

DINESH

Welcome. The viewing and service will be held just down the hall in the second room on your right.

A mourner nods, and continues on. As another MOURNER arrives:

DINESH (CONT'D)

Very sorry for your loss.

CAMERA follows this mourner inside. As he walks, he's quietly JOINED BY ISABEL, who walks beside him as if also a mourner. As the mourner heads right, Isabel SNEAKS UPSTAIRS!

Back at the front door, a **CREEPY MOURNER** arrives. This one seems out of place, wearing too much leather and sporting a "bad guy" beard. Dinesh eyes him, suspicious.

DINESH (CONT'D)  
Can I help you?

CREEPY MOURNER  
Anderson funeral?

DINESH  
Of course. Right this way...

Dinesh tries to lead the man into the viewing room, but --

CREEPY MOURNER  
I'll find it.

Creepy Mourner walks away. Dinesh starts to follow him, but then Tyler walks in. Shoot! He quickly doubles back.

DINESH  
Tyler! Hi! Good day at school?  
(before he can answer)  
Great, great. Do yourself a favor  
and stay away from the basement. We  
had an embalming accident and it's a  
little unpleasant down there.

TYLER  
Yeah, sure, whatever.

More MOURNERS walk in. As Dinesh heads off to greet them, Tyler passes the room where people are gathering for the funeral. He passes another room and stops because he sees:

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. DISPLAY ROOM. CONTINUOUS

A YOUNG WOMAN looking around, with her back to the entrance. Displayed here are various caskets, urns, and coffin liners for sale. Tyler clears his throat as he walks in, charming:

TYLER  
Can I help you with anything?

The young woman turns around and it's... Cassie! Tyler's shocked, to say the least. So is Cassie for that matter.

TYLER/CASSIE  
What are you doing here?

TYLER  
I live here.

At first Cassie thinks he's joking, but then she realizes he's serious, and immediately forgets how much he bugs her.

CASSIE  
You live here? That is so cool.

TYLER

Thanks. But... why exactly?

CASSIE

I have what some people might call a morbid fascination with death. I just call it a fascination.

TYLER

So you just come to random funerals? Like that old movie? "When Harry Met Sally"?

CASSIE

"Harold and Maude," and no. This is actually my aunt's funeral.

TYLER

Oh. I'm sorry.

CASSIE

It's okay. We weren't close.

Tyler looks over at the other salon, where the family is gathering. It's pretty much all white folks.

TYLER

But your family is...

CASSIE

White?

TYLER

Right. And you are...

CASSIE

Adopted?

TYLER

Right. Which makes me...

TYLER/CASSIE

A moron.

She smiles. Even though she's insulting him, for some reason, Tyler still finds her charming, and thinks he has a shot.

TYLER

Hey, do you wanna maybe go out sometime?

CASSIE

Are you actually asking me out on a date at my aunt's funeral?

TYLER

Well, technically, it hasn't started yet.

CASSIE

I'm flattered... but not enough to say yes.

She heads towards her aunt's funeral. Off Tyler, intrigued...

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. TYLER'S BEDROOM. DAY (D2)

**TIGHT ON:** A photo of Tyler and George pinned to a corkboard.

REVEAL Isabel standing in Tyler's room, taking it all in. As if she could somehow piece together who her son became by what's hanging on his walls. Antique maps - *he must have a yen for travel*. Framed photography - *and he's an artist*. A drum set in the corner- *AND a musician!* What doesn't he do?

She sees a T-shirt hanging on the back of a chair. She can't help herself. SHE SMELLS IT. Annnnd, it's super gross. (Hello? He's a 16 year old boy. He smells like a foot.)

Isabel feels her eyes beginning to well up with tears. Determined NOT to fall down this emotional rabbit hole, she sits at a desktop computer and starts typing...

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. HALLWAY. DAY (D2)

Tyler walks down the hallway and goes upstairs. Holy shit! He's heading right towards his mother!

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. BASEMENT. DAY (D2)

Creepy Mourner wanders the basement, clearly looking for something. Or someone. Uh-oh...

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. TYLER'S BEDROOM. DAY (D2)

Meanwhile, Isabel has found what she's looking for and hits PRINT. As the printer CHUGS to life --

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. STAIRS/UPSTAIRS HALL. DAY (D2)

Tyler makes his way to the top of the stairs and heads down the hall to his room.

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. BASEMENT. SUPPLY CLOSET. DAY (D2)

Creepy Mourner guy confirms the supply closet is EMPTY. He leaves, completely missing ISABEL'S HAIRBRUSH which is hiding in plain sight on the floor...

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. TYLER'S BEDROOM. DAY (D2)

Isabel takes the paper from the printer, folds it up and puts it in her bag. She stands and sees a PICTURE FRAME next to his bed. She heads over, curious...

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. UPSTAIRS HALL. DAY (D2)

Tyler gets to the closed door of his room and is about to open it when his **PHONE RINGS**. He freezes!

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. TYLER'S BEDROOM. DAY (D2)

Isabel freezes as well!

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. UPSTAIRS HALL. DAY (D2)

Tyler looks at his phone, sees who it is. He looks down the hall to make sure no one is around. Which is when he sees --

CREEPY MOURNER! Halfway up the stairs!

TYLER  
Funeral's downstairs, buddy.

CREEPY MOURNER  
Bathroom?

TYLER  
Also downstairs, to your left.

Creepy Mourner considers pulling out his gun, but there's a houseful of people here. So he heads back downstairs, thwarted. Tyler waits until he's gone, then answers the phone as he opens his bedroom door. In his "older" voice:

TYLER (CONT'D)  
This is Norman Powell.

Not again! What is this all about?! Tyler heads into --

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. TYLER'S BEDROOM. CONTINUOUS

-- and closes the door behind him. Where the fuck is Isabel?!

TYLER  
Thanks for getting back to me so quickly. You spoke to the owner?... It's an improvement from yesterday, but I still feel like you could go lower if you wanted to, Carlos...

As Tyler walks over to his desktop to check something, CAMERA PANS DOWN to find: ISABEL UNDER THE BED. Tyler's feet are mere inches away from her as she listens to his conversation.



TYLER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 I get it. We all need to make a living. It's just that I have a new baby. Three months old...

Isabel reacts -- WHAT? Is she a GRANDMOTHER?

TYLER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 And I promised my wife some time away. We had this rat infestation in our condo. You ever heard of a rat king?

Isabel relaxes when she realizes Tyler is pulling a con. She smiles. He's like a chip off the abandoned mother block.

TYLER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 That's what I'm talking about, Carlos! So how do I get the keys?... Great. Okay. Gimme an hour and I'll get back to you.

Tyler heads out of his room. Isabel sighs, relieved.

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. FRONT DOOR. DAY (D2)

Joe is walking IN just as Tyler is walking OUT. They're both on edge, but trying to hide it as they engage in their usual non-witty banter.

JOE  
 Hey. Where are you going?

TYLER  
 George's. Why are you sweating?

JOE  
 It's hot out.

Tyler looks outside. It's gray and gloomy.

TYLER  
 Are you okay?

JOE  
 I'm fine. You'll be home for dinner?

TYLER  
 Yeah. See you later.

Tyler leaves. Joe closes the door and heads over to the...

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. RECEPTION ROOM. CONTINUOUS

Dinesh stands in the doorway, respectfully watching the funeral service in progress. Joe walks up behind him as his phone RINGS. He checks it, then hits IGNORE.

JOE  
Sorry I'm late. Any trouble?

DINESH  
No trouble. Although I still have  
no idea what she's doing here.

JOE  
Well, I obviously didn't invite her.

A MOURNER turns and gives them both the "stink eye." They stop "whispering" and turn their attention towards the service where a woman named MELANIE (20's) delivers a eulogy.

MELANIE  
What can I say about my sister? She was a drug addict. Loved her pills. She especially loved them with alcohol. That one time she got pulled over with my niece in the car? I remember wishing she died that day.

Guests MURMUR. Joe and Dinesh exchange a glance. *Awkward...*

MELANIE (CONT'D)  
But she didn't. She got better and worse and better and worse. That's what it is to have an addict in your family. It never ends. Until it does.

We see this land on Joe.

MELANIE (CONT'D)  
But that doesn't mean you stop loving them. I'm sorry I didn't do more to help you, Becca. I'm sorry I didn't do everything I could.

Melanie breaks into a painful SOB, as the PRIEST helps her back to her seat. CAMERA stays on Joe, taking it all in.

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. TYLER'S BEDROOM. DAY (D2)

Isabel stares at the photo on Tyler's night stand: **Young Isabel holding Tyler as a tiny baby**. She's barely visible in the shot, her face in profile and buried in his newborn skin. But she remembers this moment.

JOE (O.S.)  
What the hell are you doing in here?

Isabel spins around to see Joe in the doorway. FURIOUS.

JOE (CONT'D)  
Who gave you the RIGHT? What part of you thinks you DESERVE to know my son? MY SON. Not yours.

ISABEL  
That's not... I wasn't --

JOE  
Did it even occur to you what would happen if Tyler walked in and saw you here? Do you even care what that would do to him?

ISABEL  
Of course I care --

JOE  
Bullshit! You don't care about anyone but yourself. And you never did. I want you out of my house and away from my son. Now.

ISABEL  
Joe --

JOE  
GET OUT OF MY HOUSE!

Oh shit. He's snapping. Isabel is surprised by his strength, but she doubles down and stands her ground.

ISABEL  
I can't do that.

JOE  
(grabbing his phone)  
You have five seconds before I call the police. One. Two.

Isabel PULLS A GUN FROM HER JACKET. Joe sighs, deflating.

JOE (CONT'D)  
Of course you have a gun.

ISABEL  
Put the phone down, Joe.

JOE  
So what? You're crazy? Like, actually crazy?

ISABEL  
That's right. Which means you better do exactly as I say.

Off Joe, suddenly afraid...

**END ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. KITCHEN. DAY (D2)

Joe, Isabel and Dinesh sit around the table, a bowl of popcorn in the middle. Dinesh is LIVID, while Joe seems more depressed and accepting of this shitty situation.

JOE

When do we get our phones back?

ISABEL

When we finalize the plan.

DINESH

Your plan that's going to put us all in jail? Guess what? We don't get to have phones in jail! Or soap. Forget it. I'm outta here --

Dinesh RISES. Isabel holds up the gun. Dinesh sits back down.

DINESH (CONT'D)

This is why people hate guns.

Joe quickly tries to put an end to all of this.

JOE

Okay, look. You need a death certificate? I'll pull some strings and get you one in a few days.

ISABEL

Great! I can also go on Amazon and get one in twenty-four hours.

JOE

(defensive)

Only if you're Prime.

ISABEL

These people won't stop because of a piece of paper, Joe. Focus.

She tosses a handful of popcorn into her mouth. Joe CRINGES.

ISABEL (CONT'D)

What?

JOE

Nothing, it's just... you're getting crumbs all over the floor.

ISABEL

See? That tells me you're not focused.

DINESH

We couldn't be more focused. Okay, so it has to be a public death. Something that gets in the news.

JOE

How about a drowning?

ISABEL

Guys, I --

DINESH

Drowning is so ugly. All the bloating.

JOE

What about a heart attack? Or a gunshot wound? Ooh! I can make one of those.

ISABEL

Listen, I already --

DINESH

Fake shark bite? We have the mask.

ISABEL

ENOUGH!

Isabel SLAMS the table, startling them both.

ISABEL (CONT'D)

Here's how it's gonna go. First thing we need to do is have Dinesh build a bomb.

DINESH

I'm flattered, of course, but I don't know how to build a bomb.

Isabel pulls out the piece of paper she printed off Tyler's computer and places it in the middle of the table.

DINESH (CONT'D)

"Six easy steps to build a homemade bomb." Where did you get this?

ISABEL

Pinterest. My rental car is hidden out by Rockleigh Woods. We're gonna drive there, put the bomb inside and blow it up. There's only one thing we need.

As the three of them exchange looks...

**TIGHT ON:** OUR DEAD WOMAN. Still in her coffin.

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. RECEPTION ROOM. DAY (D2)

Joe, Dinesh and Isabel stand around THE DEAD BODY.

ISABEL  
She's perfect.

JOE  
You are not a good human being.

INT. BUS. DAY (D2)

Tyler rides the city bus alone, nervously bouncing his foot. His phone DINGS with a text from George: **Where u at?** Tyler takes a moment, then texts back: **With Dad. New client. Talk later.** Well, clearly none of that is true. Why is Tyler lying to his best friend? We'll soon find out...

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. KITCHEN. DAY (D2)

Joe, Isabel and Dinesh are back at the table. Their plan taking shape as Dinesh stress eats popcorn.

JOE  
First things first. We have to make sure no one can identify the body.

ISABEL  
That's what the bomb is for.

Moving into SEQUENCE, we hear Isabel and Joe's conversation:

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. BASEMENT. DAY (D2)

The dead woman is now back on Joe's work table. Joe searches his TOOLKIT, looking for something while Dinesh works on the bomb at a nearby table.

JOE (V.O.)  
That won't necessarily take care of the teeth.

Joe pulls out a HAMMER...

JOE (V.O.)  
And if there are teeth, dental records will be checked.

Joe then pulls out a CHISEL and quickly starts KNOCKING out her teeth. All business. Isabel watches, impressed.

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. KITCHEN. DAY (D2)

Resuming their previous roundtable discussion:

JOE  
She should also be wearing at least  
some of your clothes.

DINESH  
Any opportunity to burn that  
sweater is a win.

ISABEL  
I love this sweater!

DINESH  
Of course you do.

ISABEL  
Why does she need my clothes?

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. BASEMENT. DAY (D2)

JOE (V.O.)  
To add more of your DNA cells to  
the crime scene.

Isabel pulls off her sweater, revealing a skimpy tanktop underneath. Joe watches, trying not to notice how beautiful she is. But it's hard. Because she's fucking beautiful.

ISABEL (V.O.)  
Clothes have DNA?

JOE (V.O.)  
You sweat, don't you? And your hair  
is always falling out everywhere.

As Isabel places her sweater on the dead woman, she sees several STRANDS of her long, brown hair. Joe was right.

She turns to look at him, and sees him already looking at her. A moment between them. Something that feels... intimate. Until Dinesh walks through and RUINS it on purpose.

DINESH (V.O.)  
Moving on...

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. KITCHEN. DAY (D2)

JOE  
The cemetery will be waiting for a  
delivery. We have to get them a  
casket or it will raise questions.

ISABEL  
But won't the casket be empty?

JOE  
They won't know that. Once we lock  
it, it's never opened again.

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. BASEMENT. DAY (D2)

Joe stands next to the empty casket, which sits on top of a metal bier. Joe goes about CLOSING and LOCKING the casket.

JOE (V.O.)

We deliver the empty casket to the cemetery. Once it's signed for...

TIGHT ON: A clipboard being signed by a CEMETERY WORKER.

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. KITCHEN. DAY (D2)

JOE/ISABEL

We're off to the woods.

DINESH

You know who hangs out in the woods? Serial killers. And bears. So just saying. This is a bad plan.

Joe and Isabel can't help but smile at each other, in sync. Whether they like it or not, they make a good team.

INT. BANK. DAY (D2)

Tyler enters and approaches a teller named **BETH**.

BETH

Hi there, how can I help you today?

TYLER

Yes... Beth... I have an account here. I'd like to close it out.

(then)

Also, would you happen to know where I can convert American cash into pesos?

Off this surprising turn of events...

**END ACT THREE**



**ACT FOUR**

EXT. WOODS. DAY (D2)

Joe arranges the dead woman's body in the driver's seat. As a final touch, Isabel removes her necklace and places it around the dead woman's neck. As Dinesh places the BOMB on the dash:

DINESH

Done. Enjoy your death, Isabel. I know I will. Joe, let's go.

Dinesh walks off. Joe starts to follow, then --

ISABEL

Joe, wait.

Joe stops. Dinesh turns around, annoyed.

ISABEL (CONT'D)

One minute. That's all.

DINESH

No can do. Joe? Coming?

But Joe doesn't budge.

DINESH (CONT'D)

Unbelievable.

Dinesh stomps off, hurt. Joe stands there, feeling a little foolish and a lot exposed as Isabel tries to find her words.

ISABEL

I just wanted to say... thank you.

Joe's guard immediately goes back up.

JOE

That's what you wanted to say? The only reason I helped was because you literally had a gun to my head.

ISABEL

It wasn't loaded.

To prove her point, Isabel SHOOTs the gun. Nothing happens. Joe shakes his head, feeling more and more foolish.

JOE

You must think I'm such an idiot.

ISABEL

Not at all! You're missing the point.

JOE  
What is the point, Isabel?

ISABEL  
That I would never hurt you.

JOE  
Except you did. More than a gunshot  
ever could.

For the first time, he's not being sarcastic. Or accusatory. He's speaking from the heart. They stand there, not knowing what to say, but neither of them ready to say goodbye.

JOE (CONT'D)  
So I have a question. Was any of it  
real? I mean... did you ever care  
about me at all?

Isabel looks at him - so much she wants to say. Finally:

ISABEL  
I noticed you before you noticed  
me. Mr. Carter's English class? You  
sat in front of me. I remember your  
flannel shirts smelled like  
cigarettes and Downey. The first  
time we actually met, I pretended I  
didn't know who you were. I was  
afraid if I said anything it would  
be too obvious how I felt.  
(then)  
It was always real, Joe. And then  
it got... too real. After Tyler was  
born... I wasn't ready to be a  
mother. But you... You were born  
ready. I always knew you'd be a  
great dad.

JOE  
What makes you think I'm great?

ISABEL  
There aren't a lot of 16 year old boys  
who know how to book international  
flights. You've raised an independent,  
precocious young man. And I appreciate  
you encouraging him to explore his  
roots. It's good for him to know where  
he comes from.

At this point, Joe is completely baffled.

JOE  
What are you talking about?

ISABEL

Tyler's trip to Buenos Aires. I saw the plane ticket on his computer. I was surprised you'd let him go alone, but... I'm sure you know what you're doing.

Obviously, Joe did not know ANY of this. Any maybe she's tipping him off, but he won't give her the satisfaction.

JOE

That's right. I do.

Joe FLIPS the timer on the bomb.

JOE (CONT'D)

Good luck, Isabel. And this time? Don't come back.

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD. DAY (D2)

Away from the woods, Dinesh is waiting/stewing by the hearse when Joe marches up, his head spinning.

DINESH

Next time you fake your ex-wife's death, leave me out of it.

JOE

Did you know Tyler was going to Buenos Aires?

DINESH

I feel like you're purposely changing the subject.

JOE

I have to talk to Tyler. Give me the keys.

As Dinesh hands Joe the keys, he notices:

DINESH

Where's the money?

JOE

(suddenly remembering)  
Aw, crap.

DINESH

Unbelievable!

JOE

I was upset about Tyler! I forgot.

DINESH

Well go back and get it.

JOE  
Do I have to? I left on a high  
note. I never leave on a high note.

DINESH  
Is the high note worth half a  
million dollars?

Joe considers the question. Dinesh RAISES a brow.

JOE  
I'm thinking!

EXT. WOODS. DAY (D2)

Isabel opens the trunk and removes the GYM BAG FULL OF CASH. She straps it to her chest, GENTLY closes the trunk, careful not to disrupt the bomb, and heads into the woods.

MAN (O.S.)  
Hand over the bag, Isabel.

Fuck. Isabel turns around to find Creepy Mourner - otherwise known as **COLE** - calmly aiming a gun at her head! Isabel reacts, equally calm. She obviously knows him.

ISABEL  
Hi, Cole. Nice pants.

COLE  
The bag. NOW.

Cool as a cucumber, Isabel tosses him the gym bag.

ISABEL  
Did Saul send you?

Wait, what?! Isn't Saul dead?! SO MANY SECRETS AND LIES!

COLE  
Does it matter? The number of  
people you've screwed over, you're  
like the walking dead.

ISABEL  
So you're here to put me out of my  
misery? Is that it?

COLE  
That's not my call. Unlike you, I  
follow orders. Now shut up and let  
me do my job.

With one hand, Cole keeps his gun trained on Isabel, while the other attempts to unzip the gym bag and confirm the money is all there. The second he looks down, ISABEL ATTACKS!

Cole falls to the ground and HITS his head on a rock. Isabel grabs the bag, jumps into --

INT. ISABEL'S CAR. CONTINUOUS

She shoves the dead body into the passenger seat and starts the car. **TIGHT ON: THE BOMB.** Five minutes and counting!

EXT. HIGHWAY. DAY (D2)

Joe and Dinesh, still arguing.

DINESH  
If you'd tried MY therapist, like I asked you to --

JOE  
I told you! He wasn't on my plan!

Suddenly, they hear GUNSHOTS! They both instinctively DUCK.

DINESH  
What the hell is she doing?

JOE  
It can't be Isabel. Her gun wasn't loaded.

And then Isabel comes FLYING out of the woods in the car. Cole is hot on her tail, driving a motorcycle. Joe and Dinesh watch as they pass by. **As does a nearby LLAMA.**

DINESH  
Of course there's a guy on a motorcycle.

JOE  
Don't act like you saw that coming.

DINESH  
I totally saw that coming.

Joe JUMPS into the driver's seat. Dinesh sighs.

DINESH (CONT'D)  
Just like I saw this coming.

As Dinesh gets into the passenger seat...

INT. CVS DRUGSTORE. DAY (D2)

Tyler strolls the aisle, putting travel soap, toothpaste and toothbrush in a basket. **AND SOMEONE IS WATCHING HIM.** (At least, that's what the CAMERA is indicating.) And given what's currently happening in the woods, this could be a scary situation...

Oblivious to his stalker, Tyler pulls out a small bottle of Elizabeth Arden Mist. A saleswoman walks by.

TYLER  
Who doesn't like a calming,  
hydrating mist? Am I right?

She ignores him. As he puts the mist in the basket, he looks over and notices... George! (Phew! Not a killer!) But boy does he look pissed...

TYLER (CONT'D)  
Hey! This is a coincidence.

GEORGE  
It would be less of a coincidence  
if I wasn't looking for you after  
you LIED about where you were.  
(holds up his iPhone)  
Find My Friends.

Tyler silently curses himself for leaving that on.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
I was coming to tell you we'd been  
robbed. But then I found out from  
the bank that I'd been robbed.  
Apparently by you.

TYLER  
I can explain, George.

But he can't explain. Because explaining would involve talking about his mother which is something Tyler Rice simply WILL NOT DO. Too many feelings involved. So he punts.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
Here's a thought. Let's you and me  
grab some 'za --

GEORGE  
You know what? I don't even care.  
You're just going to say something  
to somehow convince me that what  
you did was right... because you're  
a manipulative, selfish narcissist.

TYLER  
I feel like some calming mist might  
help in this situation.

GEORGE  
Keep the stupid mist. And keep the  
money. The only person you've ever  
really cared about is you. Well,  
congratulations.

(MORE)

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
 Now you get to spend as much time  
 as you want with the person you  
 like most.

And George stalks off. Then turns back, just to make sure.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
 I meant you.

George leaves. Tyler sighs, UPSET, then SPRITZES himself.

INT. ISABEL'S CAR. DAY (D2)

BACK TO THE ACTION! The bomb is ticking down. THREE MINUTES AND COUNTING! The gym bag is stuck in the door of the passenger seat. Isabel does her best to pry it loose while driving. Through her rearview mirror, she sees the motorcycle gaining on her. She speeds ahead...

EXT. HIGHWAY/INT. HEARSE. DAY (D2)

Joe is driving as fast as he can. A solid 58 MPH.

DINESH  
 You never should have let her back  
 into our lives.

JOE  
 I didn't let her back in. She  
showed up!

DINESH  
 You should have kicked her out.

JOE  
 She had a gun!

DINESH  
 Not at first!

JOE  
 You know, you're being really  
 judgmental right now.

Up ahead, the motorcycle picks up even more speed. They're falling behind. Joe PRESSES his foot on the accelerator.

EXT. HIGHWAY. DAY (D2)

Cole has now caught up to Isabel's car! He has the gun out! Just as he SHOTS, Isabel's car makes a WILD LEFT turn, SCREECHING into the woods. The motorcycle follows. The hearse tries to follow, also SCREECHING, but instead of going left, it just ends up SLIDING out of control before coming to a stop. You know, because it's a hearse. And now it's quiet...

EXT. LONE PALM TRAILS. DAY (D2)

**KAPLOW!** Back to the beginning and our giant explosion.

INT. WOODS. DAY (D2)

... Joe rushes up to the car, which is engulfed in flames. HUNDRED DOLLARS BILLS are burning in the air. Cole lies DEAD on the ground.

JOE

Oh my God...

Dinesh looks at Cole, piecing it all together.

DINESH

This man... He was in the house today. I knew something wasn't right, no one wears that much leather to a funeral.

But Joe doesn't hear that right now. He approaches the car --

JOE

Isabel -- ?

Dinesh pulls him back, kind but firm.

DINESH

We have to go.

JOE

I can't leave her like this --

DINESH

There's nothing you can do for her now. And the cops are gonna show up. Or worse. More motorcycles. We can't be here...

Joe nods, unable to take his eyes off the fire. He tries to move, but he stumbles a bit.

DINESH (CONT'D)

Come on. I got you.

As Dinesh gently leads his friend away from the wreckage...

**END ACT FOUR**



**ACT FIVE**

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. KITCHEN. EVENING (N2)

Joe sits at the kitchen table, surprisingly calm. Or maybe he's dead inside. Hard to say. He hears the front door open --

TYLER (O.S.)  
I'm home!

JOE  
In here.

Tyler walks in, out of sorts from his fight with George.

TYLER  
What's for dinner?

JOE  
I was thinking we'd order fried chicken since you probably won't be able to get that in Buenos Aires. Although I hear the coffee is great.

Joe hands Tyler a printout of his plane ticket. FUCK. Tyler runs the gamut of teenage emotions. First, terror.

TYLER  
Dad, I can explain --

JOE  
Nope.

Okay then. Tyler moves past fear onto righteous indignation.

TYLER  
So you went on my computer without asking me? Do you have any idea what a violation that is? Does privacy mean nothing to you?

JOE  
Nope.

Now Tyler is a little confused.

TYLER  
Nope, it means nothing, or "nope" you're not having this conversation?

JOE  
Oh, we are HAVING a conversation. But YOU are not leading it.

TYLER

Well, if I don't lead it, it won't happen. So... whatever.

JOE

What the hell does that mean?

TYLER

It means you don't talk to me about anything. EVER. So why would I have talked to YOU about this?

JOE

Because I'm your father! That's how this relationship works.

TYLER

But this relationship doesn't work! That's the point. I ask questions, you never give me any answers --

JOE

Because I don't have any answers!

TYLER

Which is why I'm going to Buenos Aires. Because she does.

JOE

You are not going anywhere. Except maybe back to Dr. Woo.

TYLER

I don't need a shrink, Dad. I need to talk to my mother!

ARGH! Joe wants to smack the stupid off this kid! Instead, he takes a breath. Tries to bring it down a notch.

JOE

What makes you think your mom lives in Buenos Aires? I'm just curious.

TYLER

I don't think she lives there. But I know Aunt Lucia does.

Joe reacts, legitimately surprised by Tyler's knowledge.

JOE

How do you know about Aunt Lucia?

TYLER

Remember that Target gift card you gave me for my birthday last month? I sold it for cash and hired a PI.

JOE  
 (genuinely confused)  
 Why would you do that?

TYLER  
 I'm sixteen, Dad. Did you really expect me to go my whole life without ever looking for her?

Joe realizes he did expect that. And maybe that was foolish. So he stops arguing and starts listening.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
 Turns out Aunt Lucia still lives in the same city where she and mom were born. I bought a cheap plane ticket and booked an Air B&B through this guy, Carlos. Although I probably should've done that in reverse. Lesson learned.

Speechless, Joe just shakes his head. He doesn't even know where to begin. His reaction makes Tyler more defensive.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
 Whatever. It's not a bad plan.

JOE  
 You're right. It's not bad. It's terrible. It's RIDICULOUS -- !

TYLER  
 What's so ridiculous about wanting to meet my own mother? Thanks to you, I don't even know what the woman looks like!

JOE  
 Thanks to me? This is MY fault?

TYLER  
You're the one who burned all her pictures! Seriously, who does that?

JOE  
 It's a thing. People do it! And the reason you don't know your mother isn't because I burned her pictures, it's because SHE LEFT US!

TYLER  
 She left YOU. And I don't blame her. I wish I could.

Ouch. Mercifully, this moment is interrupted by the DOORBELL.

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. FRONT DOOR. NIGHT (N2)

Joe opens the door to find a police officer, **JACKIE**, on the other side. Now it's Joe's turn to be terrified.

OFFICER JACKIE  
Joe Rice?

JOE  
Yes. Is everything okay?

Tyler appears behind Joe.

OFFICER JACKIE  
I'm here about Isabel Reyes.

JOE  
Isabel doesn't live here anymore.

OFFICER JACKIE  
I'm aware of that, but you're listed as her next of kin.

TYLER  
What about her?

Off Joe, dreading where this is going...

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. RECEPTION ROOM. MOMENTS LATER (N2)

Joe, Tyler and Officer Jackie sit in the salon. Tyler is unusually quiet, still processing the shock of what he's just been told. Joe is doing his best to appear "surprised."

OFFICER JACKIE  
... We found her car out by the trails near Rockleigh Woods. We think someone must have planted a bomb.

JOE  
(too quickly)  
Who would do that?

OFFICER JACKIE  
We don't have too many details. The investigation is still ongoing. But we think it may be some sort of revenge plot. Your wife --

JOE  
Ex-wife.

OFFICER JACKIE  
Ex-wife. It appears she had some ties to organized crime.

TYLER

My mom was in the mafia?

Joe is equally surprised by this little tidbit. *Jesus...*

OFFICER JACKIE

Like I said, this is an ongoing investigation. The explosion made it difficult to... That is to say, we won't be able to have you identify Isabel's remains.

The officer pauses, uncomfortable, but Tyler is now hopeful.

TYLER

Then how do you know it was her? Maybe it was someone else driving her car.

OFFICER JACKIE

That's what we're trying to find out.

The officer reaches into her case and pulls out a small evidence bag containing ISABEL'S NECKLACE.

OFFICER JACKIE (CONT'D)

Does this look familiar to either of you? We found it on the scene. I understand it's been some time since you've seen her, so --

And just like that, Tyler's hope dies.

TYLER

That's hers. That's my mom's necklace.

OFFICER JACKIE

Are you sure?

TYLER

She's wearing it in my picture. I have a picture...

OFFICER JACKIE

Alrighty then. That helps.

Joe sees how rocked Tyler is by all of this. Before the officer can ask more questions, he stands up -- ending it.

JOE

If it's all right with you, Officer, I think we need a moment.

Officer Jackie reads the room, decides Joe is right. She stands up, collecting her things.

OFFICER JACKIE  
I'll let myself out.

The officer walks out. Joe turns around to deal with Tyler, whose head is spinning, heart is breaking. For the first time he seems... young.

TYLER  
Do you think..? Has she been living  
here the whole time? Or maybe...  
maybe she was coming home?

Joe searches for something comforting to say, but no words come. Overwhelmed, Tyler jumps to his feet.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
Never mind. Doesn't matter.

JOE  
Tyler --

TYLER  
Just more questions you'll never  
have the answers to.

Tyler bolts up the stairs. Joe wants to follow, but his feet stay glued to the floor. We hear Tyler's bedroom door CLOSE. Off Joe, feeling like the worst father in the world.

**END ACT FIVE**

**ACT SIX**INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. JOE'S WORKSHOP. DAY (D3)

CLOSE ON the CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON MASK. Pull back to reveal that Joe has removed it from UNDER THE GLASS and is now taking photos of it with his iPhone.

He sits down in front of his LAPTOP which is open to eBay. The description of the Creature is listed along with a price. After Joe hits send on his phone, we watch as the image of the mask loads onto the laptop screen. The mask is now for sale. No turning back. He hears a NOISE from the kitchen.

JOE  
(calls up)  
Tyler?

Joe grabs a key off a shelf and unlocks a cabinet drawer. He rifles through some stuff we can't see, but then finds what he's looking for. A PICTURE OF ISABEL. She looks the same, just younger. As Joe walks out, picture in hand, he calls...

JOE (CONT'D)  
Ty?

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. KITCHEN. DAY (D3)

Joe walks in, ready to finally share a picture of Isabel with his son, but Tyler is already gone. Off Joe, looking at the picture with a touch of sadness...

INT. BERGENFIELD HIGH. HALLWAY. DAY (D3)

Tyler walks down the hallway, more subdued than usual. Cassie purposefully approaches, oblivious to his mood.

CASSIE  
Hey. Is your father hiring?

TYLER  
And good morning to you.

CASSIE  
(whatever)  
Sorry, I didn't realize we were in England. Good morning. Is your father hiring?

TYLER  
Hiring what?

CASSIE  
An intern? An assistant? I'll do anything. I just want the experience of working with dead people.  
(MORE)

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
I'm planning on pre-med and this would look great on college applications.

Tyler looks at her for a beat, or looks right through her. He's barely listening, you see. Lost in his own thoughts.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
Hello? Are you there?

TYLER  
Actually, no.

Without so much as an apologetic smile, Tyler makes a sharp left and heads into the bathroom. CAMERA REVEALS: George, having watched the exchange from afar. He approaches.

CASSIE  
What's up with Debbie Downer? Did he run out of Botox?

GEORGE  
No idea.

CASSIE  
You coming to class?

He should. Plus, any opportunity to walk with Cassie cannot be taken lightly. Unfortunately, George has a conscience.

GEORGE  
I'll see you in there.

George heads into the bathroom after his friend.

INT. BERGENFIELD HIGH. BOYS' BATHROOM. DAY (D3)

Tyler pees at a urinal. George enters. He tries to discern what's up with his friend without giving away any power.

GEORGE  
Nice mood. You planning on being a jerk to everyone today?

Tyler doesn't say anything. Just flushes. Which is annoying.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Hey. I'm the one who's mad at you.

TYLER  
So leave me alone.

GEORGE  
What the hell, man? Who died?

TYLER  
My mom, actually.



George reacts, horrified. Tyler remains completely stoic.

GEORGE  
Dude. I'm so sorry...

TYLER  
Don't be sorry. I didn't know her.  
So, who cares?

GEORGE  
You care.

TYLER  
I don't.

GEORGE  
You obviously do.

Tyler tries to leave, but George won't let him.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Why won't you talk about this?

TYLER  
Because I don't want to talk about it  
with you. You wouldn't understand.

GEORGE  
Try me.

Tyler sighs, hating this.

TYLER  
Okay. You know how you and your mom  
have the exact same weird ears? I  
wish I had that.

GEORGE  
You wish you had my ears?

TYLER  
I wish I had what you had. I wish I  
knew who my mom was. Which is why I  
stole our car money and spent it on  
a non-refundable plane ticket to  
Buenos Aires. To try and find her.

George tries to process all of this. It's not easy.

GEORGE  
You were gonna move to Buenos Aires  
and not tell me?

TYLER  
No. It wasn't about, like, "finding  
my new family." I didn't think she  
was gonna solve all my problems --

GEORGE  
What problems?

TYLER  
 -- Part of me wanted to find her just so I could yell at her. 'Cause what she did... I mean, it was so messed up. And I'm rightly pissed off. But mostly, I wanted to ask her why. Why'd she leave? I wanted to know the truth. And now I never will.

George takes a moment, not sure what to say next. Finally:

GEORGE  
Non-refundable plane ticket?

Tyler can't help it. He laughs. George laughs. Thank God.

TYLER  
 Guess I owe you a Jeep.

GEORGE  
 Screw that. You owe me a Land Rover. And you have to help me get a date with Cassie.

TYLER  
 So you do like Cassie?

GEORGE  
 (nervous)  
 Why? Do you?

TYLER  
 (lying)  
 No.

GEORGE  
 Good. 'Cause that would've been awkward.

Off this promise of a love triangle, we...

EXT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. DRIVEWAY. DAY (D3)

Joe is writing a "For Sale" sign on his crappy car when Alice from the bank approaches.

ALICE  
 I left you two messages. You never called me back.

JOE  
 I'm sorry. Yesterday was...

Insane? Horrible? Worst day of his entire adult life?

JOE (CONT'D)

... busy.

ALICE

The only other time you didn't call me back was after our second date, and that was because I wore a beret.

Joe smiles. Wait, they're a couple? How cute is that?!

JOE

It wasn't because of the beret.

ALICE

You told me you hated the beret.

JOE

It was a bold choice for a second date. You need to let go of this.

Alice gives him a sweet kiss. Aw. They're a good couple.

ALICE

So are you still mad at me?

JOE

I was never mad at you. You were just doing your job. I'm not dating you for the bank loans.

Alice nods, feeling guilty but relieved.

ALICE

Have you told Tyler yet?

JOE

I will if it gets to that point. But I don't want to worry him until it's absolutely necessary.

ALICE

I can talk to him, too, if you want. I can explain the numbers --

JOE

It's probably better if I do it.

Alice does her best not to take this personally, but we get the sense that Joe keeps them apart. He tries to fix it:

JOE (CONT'D)

But maybe we can all have dinner this weekend? If you're free?

ALICE

Really? I'll check my calendar.

Joe pulls her in for a deeper kiss. When they break apart, Joe sees ISABEL ACROSS THE STREET.

His first reaction is SURPRISE. Next, RELIEF. But then she WAVES at him, and he remembers he hates her. So he SCOWLS.

JOE

Damn.

ALICE

Sorry. I had cheese for breakfast.

As Alice tries to smell her own breath:

JOE

No, I mean, damn! Look at the time!  
I have a client coming.

ALICE

Another funeral? That's great! God,  
I wish more people would die.

JOE

Me too, babe. Me too.

He quickly ushers her around the corner, away from Isabel.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET. CONTINUOUS

ALICE

You don't have to walk me to my  
car. You're so sweet.

JOE

You know what they say, never stop  
dating your wife.  
(then, realizing)  
Or your girlfriend. Same, but  
different. Both important.

He opens the car door and practically SHOVES her inside.

JOE (CONT'D)

Drive safe! Have a great day!

Alice reacts, flustered, as Joe rushes away. CAMERA follows him down the block. As he rounds the corner, he bumps into --

ISABEL

She's pretty.

JOE

You're supposed to be dead.

ISABEL

About that. Got a minute?

INT. RICE FUNERAL HOME. KITCHEN. DAY (D3)

Isabel sits at the kitchen table as Joe pours himself a large glass of water. Chugs it. Pours another.

ISABEL

You might consider a tablecloth on this thing. Something cheery. This room is a real bummer.

JOE

You know what else is a bummer? The fact that you keep showing up.

ISABEL

I'm sorry. But I need your help --

JOE

I already helped you. We staged your death, remember? It was REALLY good, by the way. Even I couldn't tell it was fake. PS, you owe me half a million dollars.

ISABEL

The money blew up with the car. Disappointing, but it happens. The good news is, I have a way to make it all back. Wanna hear the plan?

JOE

Does it involve the mafia?

ISABEL

Oh. You heard about that? It's not as bad as it sounds.

JOE

Sounds like you're in the mafia.

ISABEL

I'm not in the mafia. It's more like they're after me, but we can deal with that later. First, we have to fake another death.

JOE

Please stop talking.

Dinesh walks in. Upon seeing Isabel, he does an ABOUT FACE and starts to head out. She pulls him back.

ISABEL

Neesh! Stay! We need you, too.

DINESH

We? Are you back together? Does she have a key now?

ISABEL

I'm here on business. We've got another death to fake. Shouldn't be difficult. Nice man. Goes by Jerry. I met him in the woods.

DINESH

Told you. Serial killers.

JOE

The answer is no.

ISABEL

He's willing to pay TWICE what I was gonna pay.

DINESH

Twice?

JOE

Still no.

ISABEL

I thought you guys needed money.

JOE

What I need is for you to go away.

DINESH

True. Although, we also need money. And we're not exactly crushing the funeral industry. Maybe we could moonlight as death fakers.

JOE

Neesh!

ISABEL

Listen to your partner. There's a real business opportunity here. You could finally put all those toy masks you make to good use --

JOE

They're not toys!

ISABEL

Is this because of your girlfriend?

DINESH

You introduced her to Alice?

JOE  
We're not talking about Alice.

ISABEL  
Fine. Then let's talk about Jerry.

DINESH  
Who's Jerry?

ISABEL  
The guy whose death we're faking.

JOE  
We're not faking any more deaths!

DINESH  
Except Jerry's. And maybe we put an ad on the dark web, start accepting Bitcoin...

The three of them start ARGUING all at once, until they hear:

TYLER (O.S.)  
Hello?

They turn to see Tyler standing in the doorway. Holy shit!

TYLER (CONT'D)  
'Scuse me. Just grabbing a snack.

Joe and Dinesh remain frozen in awkward, paralyzed silence as Tyler grabs a piece of fruit, oblivious. Isabel stares at him, OVERWHELMED with emotion. Before he leaves, he turns to Isabel. Ever the charming lad...

TYLER (CONT'D)  
Hi. I'm Tyler.

Before Isabel can find her voice to respond:

JOE  
This is Dinesh's sister. Mariana.

Dinesh looks at Joe-- *WHAT THE FUCK?* Joe avoids his gaze.

TYLER  
I didn't know you had a sister.

JOE  
She lives in Mexico.

DINESH  
We don't really get along.

DINESH (CONT'D)  
Both of those things.

Tyler reacts, suspicious. Isabel forces a smile, taking on her new "role."

ISABEL  
Different mothers, of course. It's  
nice to meet you, Tyler.

As soon as Isabel takes Tyler's hand, tears spring into her eyes. Talking to her son for the first time, TOUCHING him. It's more than she can bear. So she pulls his handshake into a hug. Like a crazy, weird lady hug. Dinesh covers, explains:

DINESH  
We're a "huggy" family.

Tyler nods, as he delicately extricates himself from the hug.

JOE  
Anyway, Mariana is just visiting.

TYLER  
That's cool. How long you in town?

Before Joe can answer for her again--

ISABEL  
I'm not sure. But I was hoping I  
could stay here with you and your  
dad? My brother's apartment is so  
tiny. I can barely fit my suitcases!

She laughs. Joe and Dinesh do not. Tyler just shrugs.

TYLER  
Fine with me.

He starts to head up towards his room, then remembers:

TYLER (CONT'D)  
Oh, Dad. I almost forgot. I decided  
I want to have a funeral for mom.

JOE  
That's... but... why?

TYLER  
It's called honoring the dead. We  
can talk about it later. Nice to  
meet you, Mariana.

And he's gone. For a long moment, the three of them stand there feeling all the feelings. And there are a FUCK TON OF FEELINGS. Finally, Isabel breaks the silence:

ISABEL  
Well, this should be fun.

SMASH TO BLACK!

**END OF PILOT**