

RED BIRD LANE
A THRILLER IN EIGHT ACTS

ACT ONE: THE INVITATION

By
Sara Gran

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THE GUESTS

ISABELLE (33) is brunette, sophisticated, and hard-edged, although not unkind. She came to the house for sex.

HUGH (38) is white, old-money, exhausted by life, well-dressed, and passive. He came to the house for resolution.

JANE (25) is youthful, white, very pretty, an odd mix of highly intelligent and lacking common sense. She came to the house for drugs.

TANNER (40) is rich, white, and arrogant. He came to the house for something unspeakable.

JESSICA (27) is Chinese-American, quiet at first, sarcastic and arch once she warms up. She came to the house for fraud.

ELOISE (30, looks 25) is biracial, tall and blunt. She came to the house for a dinner party.

KESHA (25) is black, Caribbean-American, soft-spoken, elegant, upper-class, and hard as nails. She came to the house to save a life.

SIGMUND (28) is smart, handsome, and cruel. He came to the house to bury a secret.

THE HOST

CATHERINE (40) is brilliant, beautiful, chic, and insane.

THE HELP

RABBIT MASK (30), aka Mikki, short hair, butch, smart, cruel. She came for the hosue for fun.

CAT MASK (25), aka Sam, is genderfluid, African American, well-meaning, in over their head. They came to the house for hope.

DOG MASK (27), aka Jonah, is a very bad man. He came for the house for money.

MOUSE MASK (23), aka Rose, is at a crossroads. She came to the house becasue she was desperate.

FADE IN:

FLASHBACK: INT. UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Sunlight streams in to a Victorian parlor room converted to a classroom, with elegant wedding-cake moldings on the white walls.

It's an undergraduate philosophy seminar, led by professor IAN GOODMAN (35, attractive, cynical). About ten students. The name of the class is on the blackboard: Advanced Topics in Philosophy.

JANE, 25, Ian's teaching assistant, sits next to Ian's desk. Jane is pretty, brilliant, and complicated.

IAN
Really? Again?

Jane senses the students' frustration, hesitates, then finds her confidence and stands up.

JANE
That's not a bad question, Elliot.
We've talked about it before but it
bears repeating.

CARD: MAY 1, 2018. ONE YEAR AGO

FLASHBACK: INT. UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Student ELLIOT, 20 is confused, Ian is bored, Jane is eager to do what she's good at: teach.

Ian tosses his pen in the air and catches it, rolling his eyes. Elliot and the other students look frustrated.

JANE
So Elliot asked how we can make sense out of all the disparate schools of thought we study in this class -- from postmodernism to materialism to psychoanalysis to zen buddhism. Each gives us a whole different set of problems to think about, and whole new set of answers. But I think what they all have in common isn't content, it's form. All the theories we talk about in this class have one thing in common: not WHAT to think but HOW to think.

Jane has a gift for teaching. The class is rapt.

JANE

I mean, these are big questions about how we're going to live. No one -- not me, not St. Augustine, not Nietzsche -- can tell you WHAT to think. The point is to get you thinking for yourself. The finger is not the path, remember?

The students are excited, listen closely. Ian is annoyed.

JANE

What do we owe each other? Does life have meaning? Do we want to live like predators, going after what we want without thought for others? Or do we want to live like saints, giving and giving of ourselves until there's nothing left? Do we --

IAN

And that's time.

The class breaks up. Ian and Jane are alone.

Jane is happy, hopeful, proud of her work. Ian approaches Jane. Leans in as if to kiss her -- and then doesn't. They're clearly in a relationship.

IAN

I'm the teacher. You're the TA. Remember that. No one is here to listen to you.

Jane looks like she's been hit.

JANE

I'm sorry.

Ian leaves.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. CAUSEWAY - DAY

Overhead shot of a twenty-year old Honda driving north across Lake Pontchartrain, just north of New Orleans.

CARD: MAY 1, NOON, 2019. TODAY

INT. CAR - DAY

Jane drives the Honda. She's now messy and unkempt, with a few spots on her chin and dirty hair. Elvis Costello's SHABBY DOLL plays. Jane seems stressed, in a hurry. Admonishes other drivers.

JANE

Come on, come on, come on.

INT./EXT. CAR - ROAD - DAY

CARD: JUNE 1, 3 pm, 2019

Soothing CLASSICAL MUSIC plays as ISABELLE drives a black Porsche SUV through a sparsely populated oak woods around Abita Springs, an elegant suburb a few miles north of Lake Pontchartrain.

It's afternoon. Sunny and bright. Spring. Flowers just starting to bud on the trees.

Isabelle is 33, dark-haired, and wears an attractive, expensive slip dress and high-heeled leather boots. Impeccable hair and make-up. She's elegant, sexy, and highly intelligent, but there's a hard edge to her.

At a stop sign Isabelle comes alongside a Tesla. Driving the Tesla is MIKKI, a sexy woman with short hair. She and Isabelle make eye contact.

Isabelle rolls down her window. Mikki does the same.

Isabelle smiles. Mikki smiles back. They're both flirtatious.

ISABELLE

Do you know where --

But Mikki drives away.

ISABELLE

Thanks.

INT./EXT. CAR - ROAD - DAY

Isabelle keeps driving. Doesn't pass anyone else. The roads get more isolated, smaller. The foliage becomes more dense. Occasional swamps visible through the trees.

Isabelle wrinkles her brow. Is she lost?

But after another few minutes Isabelle drives by something that she doesn't notice at first.

Stops. Backs up. It's a swamp with a wooden bridge over it. No marker or number, but there's a painted wooden sign: a red bird, like a fat little cardinal.

Isabelle turns up the driveway, crosses the bridge.

INT./EXT. CAR/RED BIRD LANE - DAY

After a shaky few moments over the swamp, the wooden bridge takes Isabelle to solid ground, where a high, spiked iron gate surrounds the property. A gravel driveway picks up where the bridge leaves off.

The gate is open. Isabelle drives through. It closes after her, LOCKS with an audible sound.

Isabelle pauses at the sound, raises an eyebrow...but continues up the driveway to a sparkling, light-dappled clearing of about a square mile. Acres of bright, flawless green lawn punctuated by shade oaks and cypress trees and perfect garden beds. A small fruit orchard of a dozen trees to the south.

EXT. HOUSE - WEST SIDE - DAY

In the center of the clearing is a large, beautiful, dark house from the 1800s. The house is huge and irregular: two full stories plus an attic, plus three large wings and a number of additional rooms, clearly added later. It's confusing and a bit of a mess. The driveway ends in a cul-de-sac in front of the house.

Isabelle drives up, parks the car, makes her way to the house. It's eerily quiet.

At the giant WEST DOOR, Isabelle looks for a buzzer or knocker. There is none. Odd. She frowns slightly.

But she tries the door and it's open...

FLASHBACK: EXT. ORGY HOUSE - NEW ORLEANS - NIGHT

An early-1800s mansion in the Garden District.

CARD: APRIL 30, 2019/ ONE DAY AGO

FLASHBACK: INT. ORGY HOUSE - NIGHT

A sex party in robust progress in a wealthy, luxurious, Garden District home (our flashbacks are shot in the same cinematic style as present day). The music of a STRING QUARTET plays. Some people chat over cocktails while others have sex in couples, threesomes, and indeterminate groups in the corners, some naked, some in erotic costumes. In one of the groups is ISABELLE.

Across the room an attractive woman named AMANDA is engaged in her own sexual scenario. She watches Isabelle intently.

FLASHBACK: INT. ORGY HOUSE - AN HOUR LATER

Isabelle, wearing a lavender kimono, takes a break and enjoys a glass of champagne. Amanda approaches, still naked.

AMANDA
Isabelle, right?

ISABELLE
That's right.

AMANDA
Amanda. Listen, I was just on my way out, but...I'm having a little party this weekend. I would really like it if you could make it.

Amanda smiles, cute and flirtatious. Isabelle smiles back.

ISABELLE
Sure. Sounds fun.

Amanda slips her a piece of paper. Written on it is: RED BIRD LANE, Abita Springs.

Amanda's hand lingers significantly on Isabelle's.

ISABELLE
That's it? That's the address?

AMANDA
Yep. It's a private lane. Stay the weekend.

Amanda smiles.

ISABELLE
Maybe.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
It's hard to find. Don't miss the
turn.

Isabelle smiles a little as she watches naked Amanda walking away. We stay with Amanda as she walks through the house to a smaller room in the back --

FLASHBACK: INT. ORGY HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

-- where she send a text to CATHERINE.

TEXT: Done.

INT. HOUSE - WEST ENTRANCE - DAY

Isabelle enters the house into a large, bright, high-ceilinged, walled-off foyer. Original moldings on the wall.

Quiet. No one seems to be around. But the rest of the house can't be seen.

THREE DOORS lead out of the foyer and into the house.

ISABELLE
Hello?

No answer.

Isabelle approaches the middle door first. Puts her hand on the knob with hesitation. Slowly turns the brass knob and opens --

And a MANNEQUIN pops out, Jack-in-the-box style.

Isabelle gasps, almost screams.

The mannequin is naked except for a black garter belt, a crooked wig, and a lace mask. The mannequin looks a little like Isabelle.

A note is stuck where the mannequin's thighs meet. Isabelle takes the note. Beautiful script on heavy paper: WELCOME TO THE PARTY. Behind it is a black curtain.

Hmmm. She opens the door on the right. It's a hallway.

She looks at the door on the left -- the unopened door. Doesn't open it. Goes to the hallway on the right.

But we stay in the foyer, and narrow in on a detail in one of the moldings.

In the center of the plasterwork is a tiny CAMERA LENS.
FOLLOW the tiny camera into the wall...

INT. HOUSE - INSIDE WALL - DAY

Up through the house...

INT. HOUSE - CONTROL ROOM #1 - DAY

And through the walls to a room in the attic, where we SEE the foyer on a video monitor. The monitor is surrounded by other audio visual equipment, some of it mysterious.

Sitting in a metal folding chair, watching the monitor, is a woman in a trenchcoat and high heels. She holds a cigarette and a walkie-talkie in one hand.

A child's mask in the form of a RABBIT covers her face. She has short hair, could be the woman in the car Isabelle spoke to.

RABBIT MASK
(into radio)
First guest arrived. Fun starts...

She looks at another screen. On a different lane, a black BMW drives toward the house.

RABBIT MASK
Now!

EXT. BLUE BIRD LANE - DAY

A different path to the house, from the south. An expensive black BMW drives up a barely-paved road, surrounded by more swampland. Drives through the small fruit tree orchard south of the house. Comes up to a different entrance through the big iron gate.

It's locked.

The car stops. JESSICA, 30, gets out.

Jessica is Asian-American, all-black outfit, big dark glasses. Looks like she's in the art world; we'll find out she deals in rare wines.

She's already annoyed.

JESSICA

Hello?
 (beat)
 Hey, hello? Anyone here?
 (sarcastically)
 Fantastic.

REVEAL another little camera, this one fixed in the hinges of the gate.

The gates swings open. Jessica jumps back to avoid them.

Jessica gets back in her car, drives through the gates, the gates close behind her, keeps going.

EXT. HOUSE - SOUTH SIDE - DAY

Jessica drives up a long driveway. Eventually pulls up to the SOUTH side of the house.

There's a man (TANNER, 40, white, preppy, arrogant) standing at the south door, BANGING and trying to get in. He's furious. Parked nearby is Tanner's Porsche.

TANNER
 (with anger)
 Hello? Hello?

Jessica raises an eyebrow at Tanner over her glasses. Oil & water.

Jessica, cool and collected, ignores him, looks for another door.

Tanner sees her, jogs off the porch to catch up with her --

TANNER
 Hey! Hey! Miss.

JESSICA
 It's Ma'am.

She keeps walking. Tanner catches up with her. Eye roll from Jessica.

TANNER
 You're expecting me. We had an appointment. I'm --

JESSICA
 It isn't me. I was invited here.

TANNER

Invited?

JESSICA

To the party.

TANNER

Party? I didn't know...I thought it was just me

Tanner frowns. Jessica frowns, in response, sarcastically.

JESSICA

Is there someone who can help me?

TANNER

With what?

Jessica looks at him like he's an idiot.

JESSICA

With the wine?

EXT./INT. RANGE ROVER/HOUSE - WEST SIDE - DAY

A WASP-y Range Rover parks behind Isabelle's Jaguar. Inside is HUGH (handsome, white, rich, late 30s).

He sits silently for a moment. Looks pensive, morose. Just as quickly Hugh composes himself, and exits the car --

EXT. HOUSE - WEST SIDE - DAY

-- shuts the door, and heads to the WEST DOOR.

INT. HOUSE - WEST ENTRYWAY - DAY

Hugh enters the big, bright entryway. Looks around.

For no particular reason, Hugh picks the left doorway (the one Isabelle DIDN'T chose). He reaches for the door. Turns the knob...

And a HAND pops out. Hugh startles.

As he regains composure he sees the hand is, again, a mannequin hand. A black curtain behind it, like a puppet show.

Hugh looks closely. The mannequin hand holds a creamy white card...

But the mannequin hand FLIES at him, as if thrown at him by someone, in a quick confusing moment.

As Hugh gets his bearings, he hears a very faint LAUGH, and light FOOTSTEPS running.

Hugh lams the door. Looks at the card in his hand. One side says: WELCOME TO THE PARTY. He turns it over. The other says: "One of you is a killer/One of you is a whore/one of you is a victim/none of you are bores..."

There's more, but Hugh shoves the card in his pocket, annoyed. Not what he came here for.

He opens the middle door (where the mannequin popped out before). Now it's clear, and on the other side is a hallway. Hugh enters...

INT. HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Hugh tries to orient himself in a windowless hallway.

HUGH
Hello? Hello?

No answer.

INT. HOUSE - HALLWAYS - DAY

Hugh turns a few corners, looking for anything that makes sense, grows uncomfortable --

INT. HOUSE - COURTYARD HALLWAY - DAY

Hugh enters a long hallway, lined with glass on one side. Through the glass is a courtyard, then the rest of the house. The courtyard is in the core of the building, with glass on all sides. In the right light, you can see through it to other parts of the house. In the middle is a garden of blooming citrus trees, roses and jasmine.

INT. MINI COOPER - HIGHWAY - ABITA SPRINGS - DAY

Jane is stuck in traffic coming off the causeway.

JANE
Motherfucker!

FLASHBACK: EXT. RIVERSIDE - NEW ORLEANS - DAY

Jane and Ian walk down the romantic, sunny riverfront path. Music streams in from the French Quarter. They're smiling, laughing, holding hands. We meet them mid-conversation --

IAN

She did the same thing last week!

CARD: JUNE 15, NOON, 2018/ 328 DAYS AGO

FLASHBACK: EXT. RIVERSIDE - NEW ORLEANS - DAY

Jane laughs.

JANE

I know! I talked to her about it three times! Every time she cooks she ruins half my dishes.

IAN

You're too old for roommates.

JANE

I can't afford my own place. Are you offering me a raise?

Ian stops, pulls Jane close, looks into her eyes.

IAN

Move in with me.

Jane smiles, full of love and pride. But as they start walking again, she starts humming a strange little song, reminiscent of the theme song from BEWITCHED...

JANE

Da dum, da dum, da da da da da
dum...

END FLASHBACK

INT. CAR - ABITA SPRINGS - DAY

Jane honks her horn.

JANE

MOVE!

EXT. HOUSE - SOUTH SIDE - DAY

A taxi pulls up from Blue Bird Lane.

INT. TAXI - DAY

ELOISE, 30, dressed in an expensive neutral suit, high beige heels, sits in the back seat. She's tall, Southern, biracial. The DRIVER is an attractive black man in a cute uniform.

Eloise is poised and highly intelligent, deeply Southern lady, with a self-aggrandizing attitude. Her depth and complexity remain hidden.

About thirty feet away, in front of the house, Tanner is still trying to make Jessica help him, even as she walks away.

Eloise looks nervous. Picks up her designer purse, takes a card out, looks at it.

Written on the front of the card, in elegant script: YOU'RE INVITED.

FLASHBACK: INT. PR OFFICE - BATON ROUGE - DAY

A handheld camera travels down a hallway in an elegant, *art nouveau* office building...

CARD: APRIL 26, 2019/ FOUR DAYS AGO**FLASHBACK: INT. PR OFFICE - BATON ROUGE - DAY**

...eventually finding Eloise at a desk in her office. A conference call on speakerphone. At the same time, Eloise looks at a Tinder-type website on her laptop.

AGENT (O.S.)
(on speakerphone)
I think this cover could work at
CostCo.

PR LADY (O.S.)
(on speakerphone)
Ryan, have you ever been in a
CostCo?

Eloise sees a HOT GUY. Clicks.

Hot Guy sends Eloise a message --

Hot Guy: PICS?

AGENT (O.S.)
 Jess, don't talk to me about middle
 America, I'm from Cleveland.

PR LADY (O.S.)
 Ryan, you're from Shaker Heights.

Eloise lifts up her shirt, snaps a photo of her breasts in a
 lacy bra on the laptop, sends the photo to Hot Guy.

AGENT (O.S.)
 Shaker Heights is, what, Dubai now?
 It's Paris all of a sudden?

Hot Guy: Niiiiiiiccceee

Hot Guy: Real??

A KNOCK on the door. Eloise quickly fixes her shirt. Mutes
 the phone --

ELOISE
 Come in.

PR LADY (O.S.)
 People in Costco are not buying a
 book with a gay octopus on the
 cover.

Eloise's assistant enters with a stack of mail, deposits the
 pile of mail on the desk, exits. Eloise ignores her.

AGENT (O.S.)
 Gay? I thought the fish was gay?
 The octopus is gay?

Eloise sorts through the mail.

Finds the card we've seen before: YOU'RE INVITED.

Eloise opens the card. We don't see what's inside. But she
 looks disturbed.

Hot Guy: You their??

Hot Guy: Hello??

Hot Guy: Reall???

AGENT (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Eloise? You there?

ELOISE
(to speakerphone)
You know, I don't think anyone's
going that deep. Why don't we keep
the design but work on the colors?
How's that?

But her attention is on the card.

AGENT (O.S.)
That works.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. HOUSE - SOUTH SIDE - DAY

Eloise's face is tense.

DRIVER
You sure you're OK?

ELOISE
(brusquely)
I'm fine.

Eloise steels herself, pays, and gets out of the car.

Across the bright green lawn she sees Tanner and Jessica,
arguing. Hesitates. Watches. The cab drives away.

Jessica sees Eloise, sense competence, approaches. Tanner
follows.

JESSICA
I'm Jessica. I brought the wine?

ELOISE
I don't know anything about wine.

JESSICA
For the party?

TANNER
You work in a liquor store?

JESSICA
Well, if you know a liquor store
that sells a 2005 Margaux Imperial,
then sure.
(looks around)
What the hell is this place?

ELOISE
I don't know.
(condescending)
Good luck with your wine.

Eloise walks away, toward the house.

INT. HOUSE - GRAY HALLWAY - DAY

Isabelle walks down a long, wide hallway. Pale gray walls, subtle picture rails and chair rails.

ISABELLE
Hello? Amanda?

She's starting to get impatient. Almost angry.

ISABELLE
Hello?

Reaches into her purse, gets out her phone, flicks it on. A message across the screen: SERVICE BLOCKED.

ISABELLE
Fuck.

INT. HOUSE - GRAY HALLWAY - DAY

Isabelle comes to a wide set of double doors. Throws them open to reveal...

INT. HOUSE - BALLROOM - DAY

A vast, sunny ballroom, where forty or so people in revealing 18th century costumes, with big white wigs, have sex of every imaginable kind in pairs, triplets, and crowds. Some people have on masks of cats, dogs, rabbits and birds.

A charming waltz plays, under which can be heard sounds of conversation and sex.

A smile spreads across Isabelle's face. Relief and anticipation. All is right and she's getting what she came here for.

She steps inside and walks around the edges of the room to a luxe refreshment table against the far wall -- glasses of champagne, fruit, oysters.

But as she walks, Isabelle realizes with a sickening feeling...none of the people in the orgy are real. They're life-like, immobile, silicone sex dolls.

But then one of them runs across the room -- so there's a few real people. It's deeply confusing and disturbing to Isabelle.

Anxious, Isabelle spots a door on the other side of the room, rushes to it...

As she does, the lights in the room start to go out behind her, one by one.

ISABELLE

Hello?

No answer. The lights keep going out.

Isabelle runs. Terrified, breathing heavy, Isabelle reaches the door...

She reaches out to the knob. Turns it. It's LOCKED.

Isabelle rattles the locked door in darkness. In the dark, she hears feet RUNNING.

ISABELLE

Hello? Hello? Who's there?

When the door FLIES open, flooding the room with light...

ISABELLE

HELP!

And, behind the door, is Hugh, almost as scared as Isabelle.

Isabelle SCREAMS.

HUGH

Jesus!

Hugh and Isabelle compose themselves.

ISABELLE

Who the hell are you? What is this place?

HUGH

Calm down.

ISABELLE

Don't tell me to calm down. Who the fuck are you? Where's Amanda?

HUGH
I don't know anyone named Amanda.

ISABELLE
This is her house. She invited me.
Who are you?

HUGH
Hugh.

Isabelle steps through the door...

INT. WHITE ROOM - DAY

...and meets Hugh in a different wing of the house. It's one huge room, not finished yet, with tarps on the floor and white sheetrock walls.

Isabelle and Hugh size each other up, lower their blood pressure.

ISABELLE
Are you a friend of Amanda's?

HUGH
I don't think so. Is that like
being a friend of Bill W.'s?

They look at each other. Complete confusion.

ISABELLE
I don't know what you're talking
about. I was invited to a party?

HUGH
So was I.

ISABELLE
Who invited you?

HUGH
I'm not sure.

ISABELLE
What are you talking about?

Hugh takes a card out of his pocket. Looks familiar. He reads

--

HUGH

"Shine or rain/joy or pain/come to
a party/on Red Bird Lane./An old
friend waits/just past the gates/to
Abita Springs/please come
posthaste."

ISABELLE

I'm lost.

HUGH

So am I. I came from...

He looks around the room. There's two doors out. Clearly he
doesn't remember which.

ISABELLE

Should we try one?

They walk to the door at the end of the room.

Isabelle OPENS the door. We don't see what she sees. But --

ISABELLE

Fuck!

EXT. HOUSE - SOUTH ENTRYWAY - DAY

Eloise approaches the south entryway to the house. Jessica
and Tanner also approach. Not really anywhere else to go, so
they follow Eloise. They're back together, if not by choice.

JESSICA

So, are you here for the same
party?

ELOISE

I wouldn't know.

JESSICA

Who invited you?

Eloise doesn't answer.

INT. HOUSE - SOUTH ENTRYWAY - DAY

Eloise tries the door. It's open now.

TANNER

That was locked just a minute ago.

JESSICA

Hallelujah. Someone unlocked it.

Eloise, Tanner, and Jessica enter through the south door. This entryway is airy and instagram-y. White plaster walls, a few ferns on matching wood stands, wood parquet floors. This room is also unfinished around the edges: the baseboards are half-way installed, a tarp is crumpled in the corner, and a ladder leans against one wall.

Tanner SINGS a little song, similar to the BEWITCHED theme. It's the same song Jane hummed earlier...

TANNER

Da-dum, da dum, da da da dad da
dum...

Eloise walks slowly, cautiously, her high heels a hazard in a work zone.

On the ladder is a paper coffee cup. Steam rises from it. Eloise sniffs it. Someone was just here.

Jessica examines the ferns.

TANNER

Hello? HELLO?

At the end of the entryway is a set of pocket doors.

Eloise approaches the doors with trepidation. She pulls the doors open...

And a person in a DOG MASK and a man's suit stands on the other side of the door. Eloise SCREAMS. Dog Mask also SCREAMS, mocking her. Then he JUMPS...and hands Eloise a note on thick white paper.

Before anyone can react, Dog Mask LAUGHS and runs away down the hallway...

Eloise, Jessica, and Tanner catch a breath.

JESSICA

What the fuck?

Tanner grabs the card from Eloise. They all look at it:
FOLLOW ME.

JESSICA

I'm leaving.

ELOISE

Me too.

She turns back to the door they came in through. Tries to open it. But the door is closer, and locked behind them.

Eloise comes over, tries the door, same result.

JESSICA

There's got to be another exit
somewhere.

She looks at the hallway. Eloise and Tanner's eyes follow.

No choice but to go in.

As they do, we stay in the entryway, and narrow in on a tiny camera lens embedded in one of the ferns.

TANNER

Da-dum, da da da da dum...

INT./EXT. HOUSE - EAST SIDE - DAY

Isabelle and Hugh stand on the threshold. We still don't see what they see, but --

ISABELLE

Motherfucker.

REVEAL that the east door leads to a wood-plank catwalk over a deep, treacherous swamp. Cypress trees send up dark roots.

ISABELLE

I'm going to try. Maybe at least I
can find some reception, call
someone.

She steps onto the wooden pathway, starts walking. Hugh follows. Doesn't want to leave her alone.

But....

EXT. MAZE - DAY

An OVERHEAD SHOT reveals that over on the west side of the house, a tow truck is pulling Isabelle's car away right now. The car is towed out of frame to an unknown location. The other cars are all already gone.

Worse, the catwalks Hugh and Isabelle are heading into seem to form a MAZE, designed to trap them...

FLASHBACK: INT. ELEGANT HOUSE - NEW ORLEANS - DAY

Hugh, in casual chinos and button-down shirt, barefoot, walks to the door in his tasteful, masculine living room. There's a staircase to the second floor. Hugh opens the front door.

CARD: APRIL 25, 2019/ FIVE DAYS AGO

FLASHBACK: INT. ELEGANT HOUSE - NEW ORLEANS - DAY

Hugh stands in his living room, flips through the mail. A woman, 34, VERONICA, comes down the stairs, smiling.

VERONICA
Good morning!

HUGH
Mm.

Hugh focuses on the mail. Veronica is confused.

VERONICA
Do you want to get breakfast?

HUGH
Big day at the office. Thanks, though.

Hugh glances at her with a tight smile. She gets the hint.

VERONICA
See you.

HUGH
Yep.

Veronica leaves through the front door -- but then comes back in.

VERONICA
You know, you don't have to be this much of a dick.

Hugh stays focused on the mail.

HUGH
Whatever you say.

Veronica leaves, this time for good.

In the mail Hugh finds a card. He reads out loud --

HUGH

"Shine or rain/joy or pain/come to
a party/on Red Bird Lane./An old
friend awaits/just past the
gates/to Abita Springs/please come
posthaste."

On the other side of the card is written: RED BIRD LANE/
ABITA SPRINGS/SATURDAY MAY 1/ 3 O'CLOCK

END FLASHBACK

EXT. RED BIRD LANE - DAY

Jane finally arrives, drives over the swamp, through the same gate Isabelle drove through, now open. The gate closes and locks behind her, but Jane doesn't notice. SHABBY DOLL plays again in her car.

EXT. HOUSE - WEST SIDE - DAY

Jane drives up the gravel driveway to the cul-de-sac. Parks.

Jane takes a clear plastic cosmetics bag out of her shoulder bag. But instead of cosmetics, it's got other little plastic bags and empty prescription bottles in it. Drug kit. Mostly empty. One amber bottle has 1/4 of a white pill in the bottom, which Jane shakes out, swallows.

EXT. HOUSE - WEST SIDE - DAY

Jane exits the car, looks around.

She's confused. Heads up to the house. No doorbell. KNOCKS. No answer. Waits a moment, tries the door. Locked.

Fuck. She walks away from the door. Doesn't seem like a place you'd buy drugs, anyway.

Jane walks around the property, unsure. Walks north, through the clearing and toward the wood... something catches her eye...

EXT. NORTH WOODS - DAY

Jane spots a path in the woods of about fifty feet that leads to a little TEA HOUSE in the woods.

The Tea House is maybe two or three hundred square feet, same style as the main house, but white and cheerful. Curtains are drawn.

Jane tries the door. Locked.

Jane KNOCKS.

INT. TEA HOUSE - DAY

But the camera travels into the Tea House, where we see a surprising sight: KESHA (25, Caribbean American, ballet dancer, slender and chic) on the other side of the door.

In Kesha's hand is a stiletto.

FLASHBACK: INT. BALLET STUDIO - NEW ORLEANS - DAY

Kesha is leading an advanced ballet class in an airy loft flooded in sunlight. Beautiful, multi-ethnic, boys and girls in classical outfits and poses.

CARD: MAY 1, 10 am/ SIX HOURS AGO

FLASHBACK: INT. BALLET STUDIO - NEW ORLEANS - DAY

The class ends.

KESHA

Beautiful, everyone. Kareem, great improvement. Alyssa, see me for a sec.

ALYSSA, 14, approaches Kesha with a little fear as the other students stream out. Kesha looks at her.

KESHA (CONT'D)

How you doing, Alyssa?

ALYSSA

OK Miss Kesha.

KESHA

Let me see your hand.

Alyssa holds out her hand. It shakes.

KESHA (CONT'D)

Your mom forget breakfast again?

Kesha nods.

Kesha gets her purse from the corner of the room, gets out two twenties, hands them to Alyssa.

KESHA (CONT'D)

Don't give them to your mom. Buy some food and bring it home, OK?

Alyssa spontaneously hugs Kesha. But Kesha is oddly cold. Alyssa doesn't notice, lets her go and runs out.

Kesha notices that her phone, in her purse, has a bunch of messages. Picks it up, checks the voice mails and texts, all from a woman named KIKI.

KIKI/VOICE MAIL (VO)

Kesha...Kesha it's me. I'm in trouble. I need you. I -- I really fucked up. I texted you an address. I'm at this party, can you please come get me? And bring some money? Kesha. I'm scared.

Kesha frowns. Obviously she's going.

END FLASHBACK

INT. TEA HOUSE - DAY

Kesha listens to Jane walk away. Peeks through the window to make sure she's gone.

Kesha checks her phone again. SERVICE BLOCKED.

KESHA

Shit.

EXT. TEA HOUSE - DAY

Jane waits for an answer, hears none, walks away toward the other side of the house. In the distance, she sees Isabella and Hugh bickering as they try to make their way through the catwalks.

INT. HOUSE - GRAY HALLWAY - DAY

Eloise, Tanner, and Jessica hesitantly walk through the house. All three are getting scared, although hiding it.

ELOISE

We're lost.

TANNER

I'M not lost. We came in from the north. That's where we're heading.

JESSICA

And you're absolutely positive this is north because...

TANNER

Because I pay attention.

JESSICA

Unlike us dumb girls, right?

TANNER

Is this really the time for feminism?

JESSICA

Right, I forgot. That's for Tuesdays. So who invited you to this party?

TANNER

I'm starting to think I came to the wrong address.

They reach a T intersection in the hallways. Tanner looks around with alpha confidence.

TANNER

This way.

Tanner heads to the right.

JESSICA

Who made you the leader?

TANNER

You're free to do as you please.

JESSICA

(sarcastic)

Thanks.

They reach another intersection. Tanner looks RIGHT, to the GREEN HALLWAY, covered in luxe green patterned wallpaper and hung with botanical prints on one side.

TANNER

We're going this way.

Tanner heads down the Green Hallway.

Eloise turns and walks the other way, hoping to ditch Jessica and Tanner. Jessica follows Eloise.

FLASHBACK: EXT. FANCY RESTAURANT - FRENCH QUARTER - EVENING

A wide look at a classic, glittering, busy, New Orleans restaurant --

CARD: APRIL 29, 2019/ 42 HOURS AGO

FLASHBACK: INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - FRENCH QUARTER - EVENING

We pan through to reveal this is a wealthy corporate party, New Orleans-style: luxe food, colorful people, loud music, loud gossip, loud flirting.

Behind a bar of outrageously expensive champagne stands Jessica. Next to her is JAKE, 50, fat, Texan, in a white suit, an enthusiast of all consumables.

JAKE

That is some champagne, girl.

JESSICA

I'm glad you like it. And I'm glad I was able to get it for you. Harder to find every year.

JAKE

And you think you might have some of that bourbon for the after party? Just a li'l sip?

JESSICA

I bet I can conjure some up.

Her phone rings --

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Excuse me --

She heads to a quiet corner, picks up the phone --

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Hello?

She's quiet for a moment, then her eyes widen --

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Oh! Yes, I can do that...Short notice is OK...No, That budget is...we can do a lot with that.

Jessica is very pleased.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
 Red Bird Lane? I don't know where
 that is -- listen, text me the
 address and I'll be there
 tomorrow... Thank YOU...

CAMERA travels back to the champagne service and narrows in on one of the bottles. The label is slightly askew, revealing a sliver of another label underneath.

END FLASHBACK

INT. HOUSE - GREEN HALLWAY - DAY

Tanner walks, thinking Eloise and Jessica are right behind him.

INT. HOUSE - GREEN HALLWAY - DAY

Tanner knocks on walls, trying to make sense of what he hears.

TANNER
 I may have been wrong. This may be -

Tanner turns around, sees that Eloise and Jessica are gone.

TANNER
 -- East.

Tanner gets a little anxious, but steels himself. He keeps walking. Hears something like TINY FEET RUNNING behind him.

TANNER
 Hello?

He whips behind him, around. No one.

Keeps walking.

TANNER
 Da-dum, da dum, da da da da da
 dum...

Tanner reaches a door, opens it: a room with furniture covered in white sheets, as if closed for the season.

But behind him he again hears what sounds like someone RUNNING --

Again he whips around

TANNER
Hello?

Beat. No answer

TANNER
(to the air)
Hey! I hear you.

Tanner tries to retain his composure but he's starting to get scared. Looks around. Swallows.

Walks down the hall alone for another long, lonely minute. Sweat beads at his temples.

Finally he comes across a WINDOW looking out to the wild beyond -- a thick bramble of sticks, thorns, vines.

TANNER
Hello? This isn't funny.

And then FOOTSTEPS again.

Tanner starts to lose his shit. In a panic, he tries to open the window. Can't. Frantically tries to BREAK the window. No luck.

Tanner turns around and terror passes his face as he sees what we see: a dim outline of someone walking towards him down the hall.

TANNER
Who is it?

But as the person gets closer, we see that it's a person in a CAT MASK. They wear a black trenchcoat and high heels. Long, neat, dreadlocks tied behind their head.

TANNER
Who are you? What do want?

And then --

TANNER
Are you --

Cat Mask nods.

Tanner leans against the wall. Sinks down to the floor as his blood pressure sinks. Cat Mask stands above him.

TANNER

Jesus, that was scary. I thought - I don't know what I thought. This is just -- who are those people? Do you know them? I mean, if you do - I mean, if you trust them. God, I don't know why I got so scared, I'm sorry - I'm sorry. But everything's OK now, right? We're OK now?

CAT MASK

Of course. Everything's fine.

EXT. RED BIRD LANE - DAY

SIGMUND (28, wears a two-hundred dollar t-shirt and three-hundred dollar jeans, looks smart), drives a red convertible sports car up Red Bird Lane to the house.

Checks his phone. Reads an address from a text: "Red Bird Lane, Abita Springs. 3 pm. Maxwell is expecting you."

But suddenly his phone screen goes black. A message on the screen: SERVICE BLOCKED.

FLASHBACK: INT. EXPENSIVE RESTAURANT - NEW ORLEANS - DAY

Sigmund sits at a table in a bright, modern restaurant. He looks slightly anxious.

He's joined by a woman who we'll recognize from the opening scenes as the Woman with Short Hair -- MIKKI, AKA Rabbit Mask.

MIKKI

Heidi.

(she's lying)

Great to meet you. We are thrilled to represent you in this.

CARD: APRIL 27/ THREE DAYS AGO

FLASHBACK: INT. EXPENSIVE RESTAURANT - NEW ORLEANS - DAY

SIGMUND

Thank you.

Sigmund regroups, is feline and arrogant, smiles charmingly.

MIKKI

And I need you to know we pride ourselves and helping our clients out of some remarkably sticky situations.

SIGMUND

So I'm told.

MIKKI

Due to our long relationship with your family, we've put some extra work into this, and we think we've found a way out for you. Are you free this weekend?

SIGMUND

For...?

MIKKI

I think we have a witness who can clear you. Maxwell wants to discuss in person.

Sigmund raises an eyebrow. Sounds fishy.

Mikki smiles.

MIKKI (CONT'D)

This is a real chance.

She gets out her phone, texts him, Sigmund gets the text.

MIKKI (CONT'D)

That address. Come on Saturday. Maxwell is having a little party. The whole team will be there. Everyone wants to meet you.

For a quick moment Sigmund looks troubled.

SIGMUND

Is there any news about...about the boy?

Mikki smiles.

MIKKI

He's nothing you need to concern yourself with. Don't worry. We're going to get you out of this safe and sound.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. HOUSE - WEST SIDE - DAY

Jane walks back to the lawn as Sigmund pulls up in his red car.

Sigmund looks at Jane, approves, parks the car where he happens to be, hops out, and approaches. Sigmund is lithe, sexual, charming. Jane hopes Sigmund is her drug hook-up.

JANE

Hey.

They meet on the lawn.

SIGMUND

Hello. Maxwell is expecting me?

JANE

Oh, uh, I don't...are you Carolyn's friend?

SIGMUND

I know A Carolyn.

Jane brightens.

JANE

Oh!

SIGMUND

I don't know if I know YOUR Carolyn. You don't work for Maxwell?

(looks her up and down)

No, you don't.

Sigmund smiles. Jane smiles back, not sure what to think, but she wants her drugs, and this guy might have them.

SIGMUND

Shall we go inside?

JANE

I tried. No one answered.

Sigmund smiles.

SIGMUND

Then we'll try again.

FLASHBACK: EXT. CAMPUS LAWN - DAY

Close on Jane as she bites her lip, trying not cry, looks a little crazy.

CARD: SEPTEMBER 15, 2018/ 225 DAYS AGO

Reveal Jane is standing by a cool, contained, Ian.

JANE

I was counting on that recommendation. This is my life, Ian!

IAN

Look, you need to take this like an adult, Jane.

JANE

An adult? Are you kidding? Me? You don't take my calls, you don't return my texts, now you won't help me with the fellowship? You promised me! I'm not the one who's crazy here --

IAN

Are you sure about that?

Ian looks around smugly. Jane follows his eye. People are staring at them. Jane does indeed look crazy. Jane lowers her voice --

JANE

You promised me you would give me a recommendation.

IAN

Jane. I'm sorry things didn't work out between us. But it's time to move on.

Ian walks away. Jane stands, alone, looking nuts, wiping away tears.

PAN UP to the window of a nearby building. CATHERINE DELACORTE, 40, chic, sharp eyes, is watching.

EXT. HOUSE - WEST SIDE - DAY

Jane and Sigmund try the front door. It opens.

SIGMUND

Ah ha.

JANE

I don't know about this.

Sigmund smiles his charming smile.

SIGMUND

Patience. You're with me. I am not a man who misses appointments, and I've been invited to a party. Therefore, we're safe. Maxwell is waiting for us.

JANE

Who's Maxwell?

SIGMUND

The man who's house this is, that's who. Who's Carolyn?

JANE

Uh... wait, so, do you know her?

SIGMUND

I thought we established I did.

Jane is confused, easily manipulated by Sigmund.

JANE

Do you...do you have any...?

Sigmund looks her up and down.

SIGMUND

Oh, I get it. We didn't come to this party for the same thing, did we? Don't worry, kid. I'll make sure you get what you need. I can't imagine Maxwell is holding, maybe it's one of the help.

Jane smiles, breathes a sigh of relief.

SIGMUND

We all need something, huh?

Jane and Sigmund enter the house together.

INT. HOUSE - WEST ENTRYWAY - DAY

It's the same entryway Hugh and Isabelle entered, with three doors to choose from.

SIGMUND

Hello?

Sigmund steps towards the middle door. Opens it.

But now, there's a staircase when she opens it.

SIGMUND

After you.

They head up the stairs.

FLASHBACK: INT. UNIVERSITY SEMINAR ROOM - DAY

A rapt group of students in a dark room.

CARD: APRIL 30, 2019/ YESTERDAY**FLASHBACK: INT. UNIVERSITY SEMINAR ROOM - DAY**

A SLIDE SHOW shows a series of disturbing images:

- Artemisia Gentileschi's painting of her killing her rapist.
- Reuben's painting of Medusa's gory, decapitated head.
- Goya's painting of a titan eating his children.
- A photograph of the WWI battlefield.

It's a masters-level classroom of ten students, among them Jane, now a TA here, sitting by the teacher's desk again. A similar beautiful classroom as the opening scene. The walls are robin's-egg blue.

But Jane is different: cynical, anxious, maybe already addicted.

Catherine quotes from MACBETH --

CATHERINE

"Out, out, brief candle!/ Life's
but a walking shadow, a poor
player/ That struts and frets his
hour upon the stage/ And then is
heard no more;

(MORE)

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
 it is a tale/ Told by an idiot,
 full of sound and fury,/ Signifying
 nothing."

Catherine looks out on the class. Smiles like a contented cat.

CATHERINE
 Those words were written almost
 four hundred years ago. But to me,
 they're far more exciting than
 anything on twitter or snapchat.

The class laughs, charmed.

CATHERINE
 The one consistent strand we can
 find, through all of the glorious
 mess of human history, is violence.
 Could it be that revenge and
 violence are the most authentic
 expressions of human life? What
 does this do to our good Christian
 thoughts and positive vibrations?

The class is rapt as the slide show switches to new images of violence and cruelty.

CATHERINE
 Is it possible, as Shakespeare
 said, that nothing is signified,
 and meaning is an illusion? That
 life is a candle, to be blown out
 without consequence?

She looks around the room.

CATHERINE
 Or maybe one of you will have a
 counter-argument to this dilemma --
 the essential meaninglessness of
 life?

A young man named ED speaks up --

ED
 Well, we're still repeating
 Shakespeare's words four hundred
 years later. He died, but his work
 lives on. How can you say that's
 meaningless?

Jane answers with a cynical smile --

JANE

One ant tells another ant a really good story about a leaf. Is that meaning? Does that prove the existence of God?

Catherine smiles, pleased with Jane's answer.

CATHERINE

Thank you Jane. Very good.

The students are thrilled. Except Jane, who looks troubled.

CATHERINE

And that's it for today. Have a wonderful weekend, everyone.

The class breaks up.

CATHERINE

Good work, Jane.

JANE

Thank you.

We stay with Jane as she exits the room --

FLASHBACK: INT. UNIVERSITY HALLWAY - DAY

...Jane gets out her phone and makes a call.

SPLIT SCREEN with --

FLASHBACK: EXT. FRENCH QUARTER - STREET - DAY

-- A gritty street in a shitty part of the Quarter. Graffiti on the walls and punk kids in the background. CAROLYN, a young woman about Jane's age, wearing a long leather coat and high leather boots. Carolyn takes out her phone, dials --

SPLIT SCREEN Jane/Carolyn.

JANE

Hey? What's up? Are you nearby? I was actually just going to call you. Can you come by?

CAROLYN

Actually, I'm going out of town for a few days. That's why I'm calling you. I wanted to give you a heads up.

Jane is visibly panicking.

JANE

Shit shit shit. I am totally out. Like, really out. I was actually just waiting for you to call. Can you come by first? I mean, I could come to you. I could --

CAROLYN

No, but listen, I got you covered -- I'm gonna text you directions. It's a little hard to find but it's a friend of mine. He's got you covered. He's expecting you tomorrow. He's gonna hook you up, big-time.

JANE

You sure?

CAROLYN

Yeah yeah yeah. He's expecting you. I'm texting you the address right now. It's all totally cool.

Carolyn hits SEND on her phone. Address goes out.

JANE

What's his name?

Carolyn improvises.

CAROLYN

Uh, Jack. His name is Jack. He's having a little party this weekend.

JANE

A party? I don't want to go to --

CAROLYN

No, it's just a little thing, a few people. Just swing by tomorrow.

Jane is now feeling good about this.

JANE

Awesome. Thanks, girl. Thanks. I -- this just isn't a good time for a break, you know?

CAROLYN

I know. I got you. OK. I gotta go. I'll see you when I get back.

FLASHBACK: INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Jane is off the phone, relieved but ashamed.

END FLASHBACK**EXT. MAZE - DAY**

Isabelle and Hugh walk the wooden walkways over the swamp. Tricky in Isabelle's heels.

Isabelle checks her phone. Still SERVICE BLOCKED.

ISABELLE

This isn't working...This way.

HUGH

If you say so.

ISABELLE

So what are you doing here?

HUGH

I was invited to a party, I told you.

ISABELLE

Yes. Strange invitation. Why did you come?

HUGH

I thought someone I wanted to see would be here.

ISABELLE

Is she?

HUGH

I don't know yet. I think so.

The walkway they've taken DEAD ENDS in front of them.

Isabelle turns back the other way. Another dead end.

ISABELLE

SHIT.

HUGH

How about you?

ISABELLE

It was just a friend -- I don't
even know her that well.

Hugh and Isabelle lock eyes.

HUGH

Do you know who this house belongs
to?

ISABELLE

I don't know, I...I can't be sure.

HUGH

Are you scared yet?

Hugh knows something. Isabelle doesn't answer, leads them
back the way they came. Hugh follows. But nothing looks
familiar.

ISABELLE

This was a mistake. I never should
have come here. I just want to go
home --

Isabelle starts to go forward, but Hugh GRABS her --

ISABELLE

What?

HUGH

Look --

Hugh points out a RED RIBBON across the walkway.

Hugh and Isabelle look at it with dread...

INT. HOUSE - RED ROOM - DAY

Jessica and Eloise have ditched Tanner and made their way to
a large, luxurious red-wallpapered hall with a wall of
windows at the end.

ELOISE

You can go find your wine thing
now.

JESSICA

I'm just looking for a way out.

Eloise looks behind her.

ELOISE
Maybe that way --

They reach the windows. But instead of outside the house, the windows look out to the courtyard.

Through the courtyard, in a window in another part of the house, RABBIT MASK looks back at Eloise and Jessica.

Rabbit Mask waves. Jessica waves back.

ELOISE
What on earth?

Rabbit Mask holds up a large, old fashioned, KEY on a very particular, large, metal KEYCHAIN.

JESSICA
I don't know if we should try to
find them or avoid them.

But Eloise is HORRIFIED by this key/keychain.

JESSICA
I mean the Rabbit.

Eloise's jaw drops open, a hand flies to her mouth, and she begins to back away...

ELOISE
Oh Jesus Christ...

Jessica watches in confusion as Eloise RUNS AWAY, leaving Jessica alone.

EXT. MAZE - DAY

Isabelle and Hugh look at the red ribbon.

ISABELLE
What is it?

CAMERA follows the ribbon through the cypress and the walkways to a RIGGED, GEARED CONTRAPTION that, through a series of ropes and pulley, leads to a LARGE KNIFE -- pointing right at the step past the ribbon...

HUGH
Come on. Let's retrace our steps.
We'll get back.

INT. HOUSE - RED ROOM - DAY

Pick up with Eloise, clearly freaked out by what she's seen, as she runs through the giant room and out to another giant room --

INT. HOUSE - BALLROOM - DAY

--the room where Isabelle found the mannequin orgy, still in progress.

Eloise looks around, confused, scared and angry --

ELOISE

No. No. No.

But across the room, she spots Rabbit Mask, with the LARGE KEY in her hand.

Eloise chases Rabbit Mask, who eludes her by weaving through the sex dolls. Finally Eloise traps her in a corner of the room. For some reason she's terrified of this person and the key they hold -- but Eloise is tough.

ELOISE

Who are you?

Rabbit Mask holds out the LARGE KEY to Eloise, dangles it, as if teasing her.

Eloise reaches out and tries to SNATCH the mask off Rabbit Mask's head.

ELOISE

What the hell kind of a game is this?

Rabbit Mask nimbly steps back out of Eloise's grasp.

Eloise reaches out again, violently --

INT. HOUSE - GREEN HALLWAY - DAY

We catch up with Tanner, sitting on the floor. Cat Mask stands above him.

TANNER

Jesus. You scared me. I'm not usually so... weak. I don't know what I was so scared of. This house is enough to make anyone crazy. It's fucked up.

(MORE)

TANNER (CONT'D)

Who the hell designs a place like this? Anyone would have been scared. Anyone would be... You sure we're OK?

Cat Mask nods, takes Tanner's hand gently.

TANNER

So you have it? We're still... I mean you have it?

Cat Mask nods again.

TANNER

Where is she?

INT. HOUSE - YELLOW HALLWAY - DAY

Jessica, now alone, walks through a cheerful yellow and white hallway, pop art prints on the walls, occasional windows showing the greenery outside. She's more intrigued than scared. Calls out to no one --

JESSICA

Hello?

She hears a KNOCKING from the walls. The KNOCK is in a cute little riff -- maybe "shave and a haircut."

JESSICA

Hello?

Jessica KNOCKS on the wall in return, continuing the riff. Someone, or some thing, KNOCKS back.

They knock back and forth. Jessica smiles a little. Thinks this is a game.

The KNOCKS lead Jessica down the hallway, to a door, which she opens --

INT. HOUSE - CIGARETTE ROOM - DAY

-- and Jessica enters a room that looks like a kind of study or library. Shelves lined with books, a desk, a window that looks out to the lawn. A CIGARETTE burns in an ashtray.

It's as if someone just left. But no one's here.

Jessica recognizes this room. Not in a good way. We see another side of Jessica, who's perhaps seemed a bit weak before now -- she's angry and mean.

JESSICA
Holy shit.

She walks around, looks at everything --

JESSICA
(to the room)
You even got the books right.

CAMERA LINGERS on one book on the shelves -- a nice hardcover copy of Catherine Delacorte's THE BOOK OF CHANGE.

Jessica skims over it, pulls out another book instead. Proust.

JESSICA
(to the room)
Very funny.

She notices the cigarette. She's scared.

JESSICA
Jesus. Even his cigarette.

She picks it up, looks at it, puts it back. Swallows.

JESSICA
It wasn't my fault.

She looks for clues, finds none.

JESSICA
It wasn't my fault.

INT. HOUSE - GREEN HALLWAY - DAY

Cat Mask leads Tanner down the halls...

TANNER
So she's what I requested? You kept your promise this time?

Cat Mask nods. Cat Mask leads them to a DOOR, opens the door, they enter --

INT. HOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - DAY

Tanner and Cat Mask enter a TEENAGER'S BEDROOM -- not particularly fanciful or cheerful, but youthful.

Tanner practically salivates with expectation... but then FREEZES as he recognizes the room (from when? Where? We don't know).

TANNER

Wait --

Tanner turns around, but CAT MASK is gone.

Tanner is alone in this room he knows from somewhere, sometime. And, for whatever reason, he's TERRIFIED, although trying to hide under bluster.

TANNER

(to the room)

This isn't funny.

He looks around. No one answers. But while Tanner has his back turned, trying to figure this out, a CLOSET DOOR starts to open behind him...

TANNER

If this is some kind of stupid
little revenge fantasy, you can
knock it off.

Tanner is trying be angry but is fucking terrified, almost panting, nearly paralyzed with fear --

TANNER

I'm a very powerful man.

Maybe not. Behind him, unseen by Tanner, an unknown PERSON, deep in shadow, steps out of the closet...

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Upstairs, Sigmund and Jane walk down a dark hallway with doors on either side.

SIGMUND

How do you know Maxwell?

JANE

I don't.

Suddenly a door opens next to Jane...

And Jane is SNATCHED by a woman in a MOUSE MASK and pulled into a closet.

INT. HOUSE - CLOSET - DAY

A tiny, dark closet, lit only by a streak of light from a crack in the door.

Jane is, naturally, freaking out.

JANE

What the fuck? What is this?

Mouse Mask puts her hand over Jane's mouth and takes out a BUTCHER KNIFE.

Jane screams a muffled SCREAM.

EXT. HOUSE - EAST SIDE - DAY

Hugh and Isabelle finally reach a door back into the house.

ISABELLE

I don't want to go back in. Fuck this place.

HUGH

I don't see any choice.

ISABELLE

Me either.

Isabelle opens it, Hugh follows. They enter the house.

INT. HOUSE - EAST ENTRYWAY - DAY

Hugh and Isabelle walk through a rustic entryway, through a door...

INT. HOUSE - BLACK ROOM - DAY

A black, dark, windowless room. More sexual MOANS and CRIES.

Isabelle and Hugh look at each other.

ISABELLE

Hello?

No answer.

Suddenly the lights snap on. They're in an ugly, industrial-looking hallway. On raw, utilitarian media carts, monitors play loops of crass pornography.

It's revolting, not erotic. Isabelle and Hugh rush through it to...

INT. HOUSE - TECH HALL - DAY

...another ugly, cheap-looking industrial space, with audiovisual equipment on carts.

But instead of pornography, a film of a woman plays on multiple screens. Her long hair, brushed forward, covers her face, and she's CRYING.

Something is clicking into place for Isabelle and Hugh, although they both dance around it --

ISABELLE

Why did you come to this house?

HUGH

I told you, I was invited to a party.

ISABELLE

By who?

HUGH

I think you know who.

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Sigmund looks around, confused, scared, not sure what happened to Jane. He BANGS on the closet door.

When he turns back to the mouth of the hall, he's surprised to see Dog Mask walking towards him menacingly.

SIGMUND

What happened to her? Who are you?

Dog Mask says nothing. It's eerie.

INT. HOUSE - CLOSET - DAY

But instead of attacking Jane, Mouse Mask puts the knife into Jane's hand. Jane takes it. Mouse Mask whispers in her ear --

MOUSE MASK

When you need it, use it.

And shoves Jane back out to the hallway.

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Jane stumbles back into the hallway. Looks at the knife. There's a little note tied to it. The note says: DEFEND YOURSELF.

Jane looks up. Sigmund is being confronted by Dog Mask, who's coming closer.

SIGMUND

What is this, a game? Where's Maxwell?

Dog Mask points at Sigmund. Makes a beckoning motion.

Jane looks at the knife in her hand. Is she supposed to use it against Sigmund? Against Dog Mask? But before Jane can respond, Sigmund steps toward Dog Mask and PUNCHES him.

INT. HOUSE - BALLROOM - DAY

Meanwhile, Eloise stalks Rabbit Mask. Eloise grabs for Rabbit Mask, who manages to evade Eloise with surprising dexterity. The guests are already revealing hidden, surprising, strengths

ELOISE

Who the fuck are you?

Eloise tries to rip off the mask. Fails. Rabbit Mask deftly evades Eloise. The weave around the sex dolls --

ELOISE

Give me that key.

Rabbit Mask holds the key up, as if to tantalize Eloise -- but snatches it away as Eloise gets close.

ELOISE

Cute. But you're running out of room.

She's right. Eloise almost has the person backed up against a wall, covered in flowered wallpaper.

But just as Rabbit Mask backs up to the wall, she reaches behind herself and hits something -- there's a DOOR in the wall that, covered in the same wallpaper, was not immediately visible.

The door opens and, before Eloise can properly react, Rabbit Mask slips inside.

Eloise stops, thinks. Tries the door. Can't open it. Slowly, Eloise starts to back away. But just as she does --

The door opens and someone's HAND comes out. Is it Rabbit Mask? We don't know.

In the hand is another CARD like the invitation Eloise had earlier.

Eloise hesitates. Looks at the hand, the card.

Then Eloise lunges at the hand, tries to grab it, fails as the hand slips back behind the door and closes.

But Eloise does end up with the card.

Eloise opens it and starts to read --

SPLIT SCREEN WITH --

INT. HOUSE - CIGARETTE ROOM - DAY

Jessica, prowling around the Cigarette Room, finds the same CARD propped up on a side table.

SIMULTANEOUSLY, Jessica and Eloise read the card out loud, both visible on the SPLIT SCREEN --

JESSICA/ELOISE

"Welcome to the party/I hope you're
having fun/it's a joy to welcome
you/don't even try to run --"

Suddenly, in the Cigarette Room, the lights start to STROBE on and off. Jessica drops the card and SCREAMS, all of this captured in the terrifying, intense STROBE LIGHT --

INT. HOUSE - BALLROOM - DAY

In the hallway, Eloise continues to read --

ELOISE

"I'll see you in the morning/if you
live through the night/but if you
live I've failed/your end is my
delight."

Eloise blanches, drops the card. Now her room, too, is lit by a frightening STROBE LIGHT. Eloise runs --

END SPLIT SCREEN

INT. HOUSE - CIGARETTE ROOM - DAY

Jessica screams in the STROBE LIGHT. Suddenly a small panel opens in the ceiling. Uh oh...

From the panel a SHOWER OF BLOOD POURS DOWN on Jessica from the ceiling. Blood pours down her face, gets in her eyes, mouth.

JESSICA

It wasn't my fault! It wasn't my
fault!

What's she talking about? We don't know. Jessica runs out of the room --

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Sigmund, Jane, and Dog Mask are in a highly tense standoff --

SIGMUND

Who the fuck are you? Where's
Maxwell?

Dog Mask and Sigmund are both strong men, and they get into a real fight. Jane watches, no idea what to do.

Dog Mask takes a PUNCH to the gut. He recovers to give Sigmund a punch the face that gives a him bloody (maybe broken) nose.

But Sigmund rallies, hits back hard, and brutally knocks Dog Mask out. Dog Mask is on the ground, unconscious.

JANE

Are you OK?

SIGMUND

Do I fucking look OK?!

This is too much for Jane.

JANE

I'm sorry, I...I gotta get out of
here.

Jane turns and runs...

INT. HOUSE - COURTYARD HALLWAY - DAY

Eloise looks out at the courtyard as she runs by. She pauses as she sees Tanner running across the courtyard, screaming in terror.

Eloise keeps running toward the door --

INT. HOUSE - HALLWAYS - DAY

Eloise retraces her steps, finds her way back to the door she came in through.

She opens the door. BREATHES a loud SIGH of relief. There's the outside world.

But then she hears a SCREAM...

The scream INTENSIFIES. She recognizes Jessica's voice.

Eloise's hand is on the doorknob. Leave or stay?

She heads back into the house to look for Jessica...

INT. HOUSE - RED HALLWAY - DAY

And into the Red Hallway, where she finds Jessica, soaked in blood, screaming and running.

Eloise runs to her, grabs her.

ELOISE
What happened?

Jessica is CRYING and MUTTERING --

JESSICA
It wasn't my fault, it wasn't...

ELOISE
Where are you hurt?

Jessica crouches down on the floor. Looks up at Eloise.

JESSICA
I'm not. Something bad happened --
it wasn't my fault. I swear, it
wasn't.

ELOISE
What did you do? Is someone hurt?

JESSICA

No, not here. Not today. I mean out there --

(the outside world)

I did something... I made a mistake. And someone here knows about it.

Eloise and Jessica meet eyes.

EXT. HOUSE - WEST SIDE - DAY

Jane runs out of the house, scared.

Her car is gone. Deep tire tracks indicate that it was towed away.

Fuck. Jane runs to the path she drove in on.

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

Kesha watches Jane run by, terrified...

EXT. RED BIRD LANE - DAY

Jane runs down to the iron gate.

Frantically, Jane rattles the gate. It's locked.

Tries to squeeze between the bars. Nope. Tries to climb. Straight smooth iron. No purchase, no friction, nothing to grab. And if she did make it to the top, 18 feet up, the sharp spikes would make it nearly impossible to get over. If she were to get over the fence, she would fall 18 feet from the other side, into a dangerous swamp of unknown depth.

Jane starts to cry. There's no way out. The house is already changing her -- she arrived unsure if she wanted to live. Now she's trying to save her life.

Something catches Jane's eye -- another tiny camera mounted to the gate.

EXT. HOUSE - RED BIRD LANE - DAY

Jane can't follow the camera -- it's wireless. But her curiosity is piqued. She stops crying, and starts investigating.

INT. HOUSE - ATTIC - DAY

Rabbit Mask peers in to the monitor as Jane peers into the camera.

RABBIT MASK

Look.

Cat Mask comes over and looks.

CAT MASK

She said she was smart.

INT. HOUSE - TECH ROOM - DAY

Back to Isabelle and Hugh in the room of disturbing tech. Suddenly the LIGHTS GO OUT, along with all the electronics.

ISABELLE

Fuck!

Hugh gets out his phone and turns on the flashlight app. He shines it up to Isabelle's pale, terrified face.

But just as suddenly, one light comes back on...and then another. The lights are leading them toward the north side of the house...

INT. HOUSE - RED HALLWAY - DAY

Eloise and Jessica are still huddled across the house when blackness hits them.

Jessica SCREAMS in the darkness.

In blackness Eloise, too, gets her phone and gets a light on. She shines it all around them. All clear. Jessica is bloody and crying.

JESSICA

What's going on?

The lights start to come on, one by one, down the hallway, heading north...

The light where they're standing goes out.

Two choices: follow the light, or blackness.

They follow the light.

INT. HOUSE - ATTIC - DAY

Dog Mask, Rabbit Mask, and Cat Mask watch Eloise and Jessica on the monitors.

CAT MASK
Hysterical.

RABBIT MASK
Look! They're so scared!

All three LAUGH.

Widen to reveal CATHERINE DELACORTE behind them. Catherine smiles, looks radiant in a black silk dress.

CATHERINE
It's going to be a fun night!

The Animal Masks hop up and get ready to leave the attic. They put on white, judicial, British-style WIGS.

INT. HOUSE - HALLWAYS - DAY

Hugh and Isabella follow the dim lights down a hallway and to a door.

They open the door and step out to a lawn (the lawn is in between the house and the woods where the Tea House stands.)

As their eyes slowly adjust to the light, a look of horror passes both Hugh and Isabelle's face.

Eloise and Jessica exit the house and join them, Eloise now almost as bloody as Jessica. Hugh rushes to her side, tries to help her stand.

HUGH
Jesus, are you OK?

ISABELLE
Who are you?

ELOISE
We're fine.

JESSICA
I'm not fine, are you crazy? And who the fuck are you?

ISABELLE
Are you hurt?

JESSICA
 No. It isn't mine.
 (re: blood)
 What the hell is that?

In front of the woods, a small stage has been set up. Looks charmingly home-made (or would, in better circumstances). Dark red velvet curtains hung across the stage.

The four watch with terrified anticipation.

Suddenly Cat Mask, Dog Mask, and Rabbit Mask enter the stage, light and buoyant, practically dancing in their wigs.

CAT MASK
 Welcome to our party.

DOG MASK
 I hope you're not too blue!

RABBIT MASK
 We're so glad you're here.

DOG MASK
 So if you try to leave, we'll kill you.

With that, they leap off the stage and the curtain opens. It's Tanner. He's tied to a chair. A ball gag is in his mouth. His eyes are wide open. He is, obviously, terrified.

Isabelle, Hugh, Eloise, and Jessica stare.

ISABELLE
 What the hell is going on here?

ELOISE
 Who is that man?

JESSICA
 I have no idea.

JANE
 I know.

Everyone turns around. Jane has approached behind them.

JANE
 I know him.

Jane swallows.

JANE

He's not a good man. Really, really
not a good man.

Everyone looks at the horrible stage, where Tanner struggles
and sweats.

Suddenly Catherine's voice leaps in through a PA system.

CATHERINE (O.S.)

Welcome, everyone. Let the party
begin!

CUT TO BLACK.