

ALL HALLOWS' EVE

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ALL HALLOWS' EVE/"PILOT"

ACT ONE

EXT. PHARMACY - DAY

We're outside on this gray, Autumn day. The tree-lined street adds some color to the drab day with its red and gold leaves. As do the Halloween decorations on every business up and down main street.

TWENTYSOMETHINGS and TEENS eagerly make their way down the sidewalks. All going in the same direction.

A handsome man EXITS the pharmacy, dousing his pupils in eye drop solution with an EXHAUSTED GROAN-- Det. PARRISH CUTLER, 40s; a good man with secrets.

TWO TEEN GIRLS accidentally bump into Parrish. They quickly apologize and continue on their way.

Parrish approaches the car parked right in front of him. He bends down into the open passenger window.

PARRISH

You really want to go to this thing?

There's a woman in the driver's seat: his wife, JENNIFER "JEN" CUTLER, 40s; a small town girl smarter than she's perceived.

JEN

It's a party. Of course I want to go.

PARRISH

"Party" is a loose definition, Jen.

JEN

Everyone in town is going. Look at all these excited kids.

PARRISH

Nah, something's up. No way a bunch of nineteen year olds are this excited about a new campus library.

JEN

Just get in the car. It's free food and booze.

PARRISH

Finger food and a Dixie Cup of watered-down whiskey. And everybody's going to be talking about books.

JEN

You read.

PARRISH

Sports bios and the occasional news article. When I can stomach it.

JEN

Stay for an hour then slip out. I'll make an excuse for you.

PARRISH

You sure?

JEN

Yes. I can get a ride home from Ruby.

That's all he needed of convincing. Parrish hops into the car.

Jen pulls into the street. She's going the same direction as everyone else walking the sidewalks.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Jen reaches the very end of the street headed toward a college campus with Gothic buildings resting on wet, green lawn.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

The library is brand new and out of place with the rest of the campus' architecture; it's a large, modern building entirely of glass and steel.

Jen pulls into the parking lot. She and Parrish climb out of their car.

Parrish holds her purse for her as she puts on a cardigan. He helpfully adjust her collar.

She smiles and rewards him with a peck on the cheek as she takes her purse from him.

They head toward the library with other TOWNSPEOPLE.

INT. CAMPUS LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

The inside is just as slick and contemporary as the outside.

BAR

Parrish approaches the makeshift "bar" at the reception desk.

A bearded man in flannel-- NED, 40s-- casually leans on the desk.

NED

Hey, boss.

PARRISH

Ned. Ruby con you into bartending this thing?

NED

Told me I didn't have to clean the gutters if I did.

Parrish chuckles.

PARRISH

Fair trade. Can I get a white wine and whiskey neat? Whatever is fine.

NED

No hard alcohol. Just red and white wine, or your choice of Bud or Bud Light.

PARRISH

Not even the cheap stuff?

Ned shakes his head.

PARRISH (CONT'D)

Alright. A white wine and a Bud.

Ned pours generic white wine into a disposable wine goblet and uncaps a bottle of Budweiser for Parrish.

PARRISH (CONT'D)

Thanks.

NED

No problem.

Parrish looks around as he takes a sip of his beer.

PARRISH

Lot of kids here.

NED

I think it's some Facebook thing?

PARRISH

What Facebook thing?

NED

I don't know. Like, a meet-up or something.

PARRISH

To come to the library? On a Saturday afternoon?

Ned shrugs.

NED

What are you thinking?

PARRISH

Just that if I didn't want to come to the opening of the new campus library, I'd assume people twenty years younger than me wouldn't either. But they're flooding the place. It's like every kid that goes here or the high school showed up.

NED

Maybe they're really into books.

PARRISH

Yeah. Right.

Parrish isn't buying it, but doesn't have his own answer so what else can he say?

PARRISH (CONT'D)

I got to find Jen.

Ned nods.

Parrish EXITS.

INT. CAMPUS LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Parrish wanders the sci-fi/supernatural section of the library, head rotating as he looks for his wife.

ADORA (O.S.)

You look lost, Little Red.

Parrish's attention is drawn to a beautiful Black woman sitting alone in a reading corner.

She's in a long, black dress; the slit exposing her long, smooth legs. Her makeup is dark, Gothic. Giving her a vixen appeal.

She slips a bookmark into the novel in her lap and removes the red, cat eye glasses on her face, letting them dangle from her pointy black nails.

Her sultry gaze fixes on Parrish.

This is ADORA WEATHERS, 30s.

PARRISH

And now I know why all those kids are here...

ADORA

Shhh. Supposed to be a secret.

PARRISH

Some secret if half the town knows.

ADORA

Only the half in the know. And they've done pretty well keeping it from the rest of you.

He smirks.

PARRISH

I'd say so.

ADORA

I'm more of a red wine kind of girl.

PARRISH

What--? Oh. Oh, shit. No, this is for--

ADORA

Your wife.

PARRISH

...Yeah. H-Have you--

ADORA

No. Haven't seen her.

PARRISH

This is her favorite section so I thought she'd be here browsing.

ADORA

Just me. Little ol' me.

PARRISH

Try as you might, I don't think you're very good at making yourself sound insignificant.

ADORA

I wasn't. But it's good to know you find me significant.

They share a moment...

They're clearly attracted to one another. And shouldn't be.

ADORA (CONT'D)

You're not sleeping.

He's taken aback by her intuitiveness.

ADORA (CONT'D)

Mr. Altman?

PARRISH

Yes.

ADORA

Towns like this don't see that kind of violence. Hits harder here. I'm sorry.

PARRISH

Everyone seems to have pressed on.

ADORA

What else can they do? Stay home all day with doors locked?

PARRISH

Until I find out who killed him and Gloria Mott, yes. It'd be nice.

ADORA

You care a lot about the people here.

PARRISH

I try to. I try to do what's right by them.

ADORA
Should do right by yourself, too.
Otherwise, nights become long. And
sleepless.

PARRISH
Well, that's what Ambien's for.

ADORA
I can think of better ways to go to
bed.

They share a heated moment. Her innuendo not lost on him.

PARRISH
You--

They're interrupted by a sweet-looking, middle-aged woman in
a silly sweater with cats all over it-- head librarian,
CAROLINE, 60. She makes her way up the stairs toward them.

CAROLINE
They really didn't consider an old
woman like me when they redesigned
this place.

PARRISH
Old?

ADORA
Nonsense, Caroline. You're as spry
as you were 20 years ago.

CAROLINE
Oh, you, too. Stop that.

Parrish and Adora exchange smiles.

ADORA
Ready for me?

CAROLINE
I can feel the natives getting
restless as they stand around being
denied alcohol.
(to Parrish)
Double-fisting?

PARRISH
No. One's for Jen, but I ran into
Adora and we started talking.

CAROLINE
Jen's already in the auditorium.

PARRISH
Shit.

CAROLINE
Language.

PARRISH
Sorry. Where is--

CAROLINE
Ground floor. Past newspapers and
magazines, make a right at the
first computer station, go all the
way down, then make a left at the
daycare center. This place is a
maze now.

PARRISH
Thanks, Caroline.

He turns to Adora.

PARRISH (CONT'D)
It was nice...running into you,
Adora.

ADORA
You, too, Det. Cutler.

Parrish EXITS.

INT. AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

ROW

Parrish awkwardly shuffles past people in his row as he makes
his way to Jen, trying to keep her wine from spilling.

He finally gets to the seat she saved him beside her.

JEN
Where were you? What took so long?

PARRISH
Forgot where you were. Then
Caroline told me to go to the
auditorium.

JEN
She tell you what's going on? I was
in the classic sections talking to
Dr. Murry and they asked us all to
go to the auditorium.

PARRISH
Surprise guest speaker.

JEN
(gasps)
I hope it's Stephan King.

PARRISH
You'll never get over running into
him at Target, will you?

JEN
Never.

STAGE

In the center of the stage, under a spotlight, sits a cushy armchair, microphone and mic stand, and an end table with a glass and pitcher of ice water atop it.

Caroline ENTERS on-stage and approaches the podium off to the side.

CAROLINE
Good afternoon. Thank you all so
much for coming and celebrating the
new campus library with us.

POLITE APPLAUSE.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
I hope to see more of you now that
we have a brand spanking-new
learning facility. And not just
during midterms and finals.

POLITE LAUGHTER.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
It meant a lot to me and my fellow
librarians to have this beautiful
building rebuilt. Not for us, but
for you guys. Your education is
important to us. It matters greatly
to us that you have the tools you
need to achieve, and that you
better your minds in a place you
can be proud of. And that would not
be possible without the generosity
of our biggest benefactor, Miss
Adora Weathers.

JEN

JEN
(low)
Should've known...

STAGE

Adora ENTERS on-stage to THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE.

There's a big, black book in her hands.

She hugs Caroline, then takes a humble bow to the CHEERS greeting her.

JEN

Jen watches the smile form on Parrish's face as he CLAPS along with everyone else.

STAGE

CAROLINE
Adora chose our little town to make her home one year ago today, and since, she's been a pillar of our community. She could live anywhere in the world she wants, but she chose Wolfden, Ohio.

CHEERS.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
And we thank her. We thank her for her time, energy, and care of Wolfden and its citizens. But we mostly thank her for scaring the daylights out of us.

Adora moves to the armchair on stage and takes a seat.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
If giving us a big, fat check weren't enough, Adora has decided to spend the next nine days, leading up to Halloween, reading from her new book, a short story collection, titled *All Hallows' Eve*.

CHEERS.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
Copies go on sale at midnight on Halloween. We ask that you refrain from any photos or recordings.

(MORE)

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Those caught will be removed immediately. You are the first to hear these creepy tales, so live in the moment and cherish the experience. Now, without further delay, the lovely Adora Weathers.

EAGER APPLAUSE.

Caroline EXITS the stage.

Adora slips on her eyeglasses.

She opens her book and leans into the mic.

ADORA

First, thank you all for being here. And for being diligent in your secret-keeping. I'm impressed. We're going to skip ahead a little, and start with chapter 4.

She CLEARS HER THROAT.

PARRISH

Not one for books, Parrish is suddenly enthralled; ready to absorb the story Adora is going to read to them all.

STAGE

ADORA (CONT'D)

"Elliot had never seen a ghost. Never so much as felt a cold breath of air brush against his arm, ever-so lightly. Heard a sudden, eerie noise in the deafening silence. Or saw something sharp and dark out of the corner of his eye. That is, until he did..."

CUT TO:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. HOUSE - DAY

It's dark. And quiet.

(3 beats)

The silence is interrupted by repetitive, hard BANGING...

The pitch black is disturbed by bright sunlight from an open front door as a dark-haired MAN stumbles inside, having shoved his way in.

Dust and soot and cobwebs kick up as the man COUGHS, walking further into the house.

He disappears into darkness for a moment...

He's revealed within the sunlight again, through the CLACK of open shutters he folds away from the front windows.

The man-- ELLIOT MILLER, late 30s; a hip, down-to-Earth intellectual-- COUGHS again with dust from the shutters floating through the air.

ELLIOT
Jesus fucking Christ...

Elliot moves all around the foyer, opening every shutter and window.

He jumps when opening the last shutter-- there's a MAN with his face creepily pressed right against the window.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
For fuck's sake, Ham!

The man LAUGHS.

Elliot flips him off.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Dickhead.

Elliot watches as the man makes his way around the house, to the front door.

The man-- CALVIN "HAM" MILLER, late 30s; good-looking, sweet, and intuitive-- steps into the house SNICKERING.

HAM
(chuckling)
I'm sorry.

ELLIOT
Yeah, I can tell. Can you quit
laughing at yourself, asshole, and
take a look at the house?

Ham gradually relaxes from laughing at Elliot.

HAM
You need me to look at a house I've
already seen with you three times
already?

ELLIOT
Indulge me, please.

Ham spins around in a quick circle, looking at everything.

HAM
Looks like a piece of shit.

He's right. The house is a Victorian mansion, but abandoned
and in need of massive repairs and renovations.

ELLIOT
Thank you for telling me something
I didn't know. Foundation is still
good. There's a hole in the roof
over the kitchen from what I
remember of the last time we were
here, the pipes are rusted, and
there's mold. I'd say...6-8 months.

HAM
That's pretty long for us.

ELLIOT
It's a big house, Ham. There's 7
bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, a
conservatory, an attic, and wine
cellar. Not to mention the garden
out back.

(off his look)
What? I thought you were in love
with this place.

HAM
This place is more dilapidated than
any other place we've renovated
before. Not to mention, 8 months.
In this tiny town...in Missouri.

ELLIOT

It's not that bad. As far as small towns go. It has a cool, French name at least-- *Ste. Genevieve*.

HAM

It's still small town, Southern USA, Elliot. And once we fix the place, is there going to be anyone wanting to buy a Victorian mansion in Bumblefuck, Missouri?

ELLIOT

We list it at a fair price like we normally do, why not?

Ham's eyes wander around the place, still appearing uneasy.

Elliot comes up behind him, wrapping his arms around Ham's waist, plopping his chin on the other man's shoulder.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

You know the rule; if you don't like, I don't like it.

HAM

I like it. It's just a really big project. For 8 months.

ELLIOT

In Missouri.

HAM (CONT'D)

In Missouri.

HAM (CONT'D)

I hate small towns. They all remind me of Stillwater.

ELLIOT

Stillwater, Oklahoma or *Ste. Genevieve*, Missouri, you think I'd let a damn thing happen to you?

He wouldn't. Ham knows he wouldn't.

HAM

Where would we even stay while fixing this place?

ELLIOT

I was thinking that adorable Bed & Breakfast with the wrap-around porch and black and white awning might be cute.

HAM

Oh, I am definitely being worked if you're suggesting a quaint bed & breakfast.

ELLIOT

Well, it's not like there's a Hilton around here.

HAM

A Hilton hotel for 8 months? The bill for that would be astronomical. We'd have to sell this house and our kidneys.

ELLIOT

Or skip town and never look back.

Ham chuckles at the idea of them on the lam over a hotel bill.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

(sing-song)

Yes, no, maybe so...

HAM

How much does the realtor want for this place again?

Elliot unravels himself from Ham and pulls his cellphone from his back pocket.

ELLIOT

Fucking cellphone...

HAM

Welcome to the sticks. No reliable WiFi.

ELLIOT

Ha. Found the email.

He shows it to Ham.

Ham bites his lip, contemplating... The asking price is too good pass up.

HAM

6 months. I can't do eight.

Elliot thinks a moment; brain rattling if it's as doable as Ham wants it to be...

ELLIOT

Okay. We'll shoot for 6 months. But that's if the plumbing situation isn't as much of a nightmare as I think it's going to be.

HAM

6 months. No plumbing problems. Fingers crossed.

Elliot smiles, happy they're renovating the house.

INT. BED & BREAKFAST - CONTINUOUS

The place is surprisingly posh yet still contains a sweet, Southern charm.

RECEPTION DESK

Elliot excitedly DINGS the service bell atop the desk.

WOMAN (O.S.)

(Southern accent)

I'm on my way! Don't run off just yet!

A Black woman in a flowy shawl, bangle bracelets, and eyeglasses at the tip of her nose hurries from the back room from behind the desk-- BARBARA BARNES, 60, a Southern belle that's 100% "auntie" vibes.

BARBARA

Well, good afternoon, gentlemen. Welcome to the Sycamore Inn. My name is Barbara and I am the proprietor of this here bed and breakfast.

ELLIOT

Hello, Barbara. I'm Elliot and this is my husband, Ham.

BARBARA

I'm sorry. But did you say what I think you said?

Elliot and Ham brace themselves for a homophobic rant.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

"Ham?" Baby, did you really say your name is "Ham?"

Elliot and Ham chuckle, relieved.

HAM

Um, yeah. Ham. I go by Ham.

BARBARA

Hmm. Well, alright. Not like I can judge. I got a cousin named Sox. Spells it with an 'X'.

She rolls her eyes at how ridiculous it is.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

What can I do for you darlings?

ELLIOT

We would like a room...for the next 8--

HAM

Six.

ELLIOT

(corrects)
6 months.

BARBARA

A room here? For 6 months?

HAM

Yes, ma'am.

Elliot puts a heavy Amex card onto the counter.

ELLIOT

Please.

INT. SYCAMORE INN - SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Barbara opens the door for Elliot and Ham. They ENTER carrying their bags.

BARBARA

This is the only suite which is why you're on the top floor. Gets hot up here, so don't be shy about kicking on that air conditioner. Lord knows I wouldn't be.

The room is large, tastefully decorated with white, shiplap walls, a vaulted ceiling, plantation shutters, and a king-size bed.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

You have your own bathroom. It's got a separate tub and shower. There's fresh towels and washcloths in there already. Shampoo and lotions, too.

Ham picks up the 'Welcome' basket off the bed.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

There's all kinds of sweet and salty snacks in there. Made by my sister, Shirley. She's the chef here and can't stand when folks aren't at the table on-time. So make sure when the food's ready, you are, too. Unless you want an ear-full from her. And Shirley don't mince words.

HAM

We'll be sure to make every meal, ma'am.

BARBARA

You're a Southern boy.
(off his look)
Called me "ma'am" twice now. Where you from, sweet pea?

HAM

Oklahoma.

BARBARA

What happened to your accent?

HAM

Lost it when I moved up north for college.

ELLIOT

It's rears it's head when he's "hopping mad."

Ham scowls at his husband.

Barbara chuckles.

BARBARA

Y'all seem sweet and like a bit of fun. Six months is fixing to fly by. There's two other souls staying here with you, but not as long: Adelaide and Mr. Driscoll.

(MORE)

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Adelaide is a hometown girl that lives in San Francisco now, but when she comes down to visit her mama she stays here. And Mr. Driscoll is a photographer that comes to stay with us twice a year; summer and Christmas. He's from New York City and needs to get away from all the noise and smells of the city sometimes, so he swings by Missouri and stays for a week or two.

ELLIOT

We'll be sure to not disturb his peace.

BARBARA

He'd appreciate that. Me and my two granddaughters, Tanisha and Nadine, do the laundry and clean the rooms every day from 2PM to 4PM. Breakfast is at 8AM, dinner at 6PM. It's Wednesday so that means ham hocks, black-eye peas, collard greens, and cornbread.

HAM

Is there sweet tea with that?

BARBARA

You ain't have Southern food in a minute, have you? Of course there is.

HAM

Can't wait.

BARBARA

Lunch is in an hour and a half, so I'll leave you to it.

HAM

Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

ELLIOT

Thanks.

Barbara EXITS, closing the door behind her.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Ham hocks?

HAM

Pig knuckle. It's exactly what it sounds like.

Elliot grimaces.

Barbara pokes her head back into the room.

BARBARA

Sorry to interrupt, babies. Just wanted to tell you that there's also prophylactics and lubricant in the nightstand drawer. Alright now. See you at lunch.

Barbara EXITS once more.

A beat.

Elliot and Ham break out into a fit of laughter. They can't believe she just said that so casually.

INT. SYCAMORE INN - DINING ROOM - LATER

TABLE

Elliot and Ham sit at the dining room table with Barbara and the rest:

SHIRLEY BARNES, 55, Barbara's no-nonsense sister who shows affection only through her cooking.

ADELAIDE, 30, "white-passing" Indigenous woman with a bohemian style.

And MR. DRISCOLL, 50, a quiet, solitary man with an unspoken crush on Barbara.

ADELAIDE

LA? What the hell are you doing all the way out here?

HAM

We flip houses. We go state to state, buy a property we like and renovate it.

ELLIOT

It was Missouri's turn.

Elliot is practically licking his plate clean.

BARBARA

Good?

ELLIOT

My God. What was that again?

SHIRLEY

Sausage gravy on buttermilk
biscuits.

ELLIOT

It was incredible.

Shirley gives a disaffected GRUNT regarding his appreciation for her cooking.

Barbara shakes her head at her sister.

ADELAIDE

Miss Shirley is an excellent cook.

Adelaide gives Shirley a teasing smile the other woman scowls at.

BARBARA

Well, I think traveling around the country fixing up houses sounds like fun. Bet you meet all kinds of folks and see all different kinds of places.

HAM

We do. And it has been fun. I didn't think it would be, that we'd be good at it, but it's been going great for last couple years.

BARBARA

Where were you last?

ELLIOT

Illinois. Just outside Chicago.

ADELAIDE

I love Chicago. It's a great city. Don't know why it has such a bad rap.

ELLIOT

Me neither. Was great when we were there.

BARBARA

Our daddy is from Chicago. He moved to Missouri when he was 20 years old, looking for a slower life, but every now and then he'd feel an itch to head on home and would take me and Shirley up north to see kin. Now, the food ain't nowhere near as good as it is here--

SHIRLEY

Ain't that the truth.

BARBARA

--and it's colder than a witch's titty up there, but the thing we loved? The music. Just the best jazz and blues... That music is what had me traveling around to Memphis, New York, and New Orleans when I was young. I still hear Miles Davis in my sleep.

ELLIOT

You saw Miles Davis play?

BARBARA

Yes, sir, I did. And it was...church. Sorry to say I was too young to catch Bird play.

SHIRLEY

Daddy did.

BARBARA

He loved telling that story.

ELLIOT

If I ever say Charlie Parker play, I'd tell everyone with ears, too.

Barbara laughs.

MR. DRISCOLL

So, what house are you two renovating? I hope it's the place on Lawrence and First. That house is a damn eyesore.

ADELAIDE

It's not as bad as the ol' man Henry's house...or my mother's.

HAM
We're fixing up the house on 9th
and Vine.

The table turns abruptly quiet as all eyes, wide and
frightened, sharpen on Elliot and Ham.

HAM (CONT'D)
What?

BARBARA
...9th and Vine? The big, Victorian
house on a long, dirt road?

HAM
Y-Yes.

SHIRLEY
My God...

Elliot and Ham are full-blown nervous now.

ELLIOT
I take it you all know the place...
Is there something we should know
about it?

MR. DRISCOLL
You weren't told?

Barbara GASPS. She breaks from the table, near tears over
this whole thing.

Mr. Driscoll EXITS, following to check on her.

HAM
We were just told the place was
abandoned. Had been for over 30
years.

SHIRLEY
With good reason.

ADELAIDE
Who sold you that house? Showed it
to you.

HAM
A local realtor from St. Louis.
Lottie Douglas.

Adelaide chuckles wryly.

SHIRLEY

Lord have mercy...

ADELAIDE

That woman's a snake. And you might want to have a conversation with her.

INT. REAL ESTATE AGENCY - LOTTIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Elliot and Ham stand before a middle-aged, blonde woman, LOTTIE DOUGLAS, 55, wearing a burgundy blazer and way too much blue eyeshadow.

ELLIOT

A murder house?! You knowingly sold us a murder house and didn't tell us?!

LOTTIE

Well, beg your pardon, but I had assumed you knew about Tredmoore House.

ELLIOT

How would we know about it? We're not from around here.

LOTTIE

Well, obviously.

ELLIOT

Are you really making passive-aggressive gay comments right now?

LOTTIE

Do not imply that I am homophobic because I am not. My veterinarian is...

She makes "limp wrist" motion with her hand.

Elliot is at his wits end.

ELLIOT

Ham.

HAM

Okay, Elliot is done. So, we'll talk. You and me

Elliot takes a quiet seat in the corner. Leg shaking with anger.

HAM (CONT'D)

You unlawfully sold us an abandoned house that a murder was committed in.

LOTTIE

Uh-unh, mister. It was not unlawful. Here, in the great state of Missouri, I am not obligated to disclose that type of information to you unless asked. You did not ask if a crime had been committed in Tredmoore House, therefore, I did not disclose.

HAM

That sounds like bullshit, Mrs. Douglas.

LOTTIE

I assure you it is not.

She turns her laptop toward him.

Ham slips on a pair of eyeglasses to read the real estate disclosure laws she looked up for him.

She's right. As evident by the defeated look on Ham's face.

He turns to Elliot with a frown.

ELLIOT

(off his look)

I'm going to throw this chair.

Lottie smiles smugly at them.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Elliot sits in the driver's seat on his cellphone. Ham beside him.

Elliot ends his call.

HAM

What did Keisha say?

ELLIOT

Keisha said she'll take a look at our purchase agreement but doesn't think there'll be anything technically wrong with the sale.

(MORE)

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
More than likely Lottie's right and she sold us the house fairly.

HAM
Fuck.

Ham drags his hands down his face, frustrated and defeated.

ELLIOT
This is my fault. I'm sorry.

HAM
What? Elliot, no. This isn't anyone's fault. Except Lottie's. Definitely her fault.

ELLIOT
Yes. But I feel like I pressured you into saying 'yes' to this place. It's already a big, long project, and now we find out a goddamn capital crime was committed at the fucking pla--

Ham kisses him to shut him up.

HAM
Breathe.

Elliot takes a deep, slow breath...

A beat.

ELLIOT
I know you're really sensitive about stuff like this. This is already going to be stressful, and I don't want it to be overwhelming.

HAM
For me.

ELLIOT
For us.

HAM
But mainly for me. I'm not made of glass, Elliot.

Elliot kisses the back of Ham's hand.

ELLIOT
I know that. But this is a big deal.

(MORE)

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

And I just want you to know, if at any point you can't...you don't think you can handle any of this--

HAM

Elliot. I appreciate the sensitivity and care, I really do, but honestly, I just want to fix this place up, hopefully sell it, and then go back home.

Elliot nods, feeling the same way.

ELLIOT

Okay. Okay. Let's, uh, fix the murder house.

HAM

Let's not call it that--

ELLIOT

Got it. Agreed.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. HOME DEPOT - MORNING

About 20 UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS sit under the shade of trees at the curb. Some have tool boxes/kits with them.

Elliot pulls up to the curb in his truck. He hops out.

ELLIOT

(in Spanish)

*I got work for the next 6 months.
Three days a week, 8 hours each
day. Days, no nights. Lunch will be
provided. \$80 each day.*

UNDOCUMENTED WORKER

(in English)

What's the job?

ELLIOT

What's your name?

The worker steps forward. He's tall, with a thick goatee, and wearing a St. Louis Cardinals cap.

UNDOCUMENTED WORKER

Julio.

ELLIOT

Hey, Julio. I'm Elliot.

They shake hands.

UNDOCUMENTED WORKER/JULIO

What's the job?

ELLIOT

House remodel.

JULIO

(to other workers; in
Spanish)

House remodel.

All twenty workers step up, wanting the job.

ELLIOT

(in Spanish)

*You have to have your own tools
though.*

Five of them step back, not meeting Elliot's requirement.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
 (in Spanish)
*...And it's the Tredmoore House. On
 9th and Vine.*

Five more workers step back, not wanting anything to do with said house.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
 (to Julio)
 That okay by you?

Julio looks to the other workers still standing with him.

JULIO
 Work is work. Besides, people die
 differently in houses all the time.
 Tredmoore is just one of them.

EXT. TREDMOORE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ham pulls up to the house in his truck as DAY WORKERS move in and out the place with tools and lumber as they work.

Ham climbs out of the truck. He grabs a large box full of wrapped sandwiches and bags of chips from the passenger seat.

He tucks the box under his arm and grabs a case of bottled water from the truck bed.

As he turns, he spots a BOY in dirty overalls peeking at him from behind a tree.

Ham steps closer to get a good look at him.

The boy, nervous he's been spotted, takes off running into the neighboring field.

Ham watches as he climbs over the horse fence and keeps going, headed toward the woods.

INT. TREDMOORE HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

TEJANO MUSIC plays loudly from an old boombox as Day Workers diligently strip walls, take up rotted flooring, and replace parts of the foundation.

Ham ENTERS with the sandwiches and water.

INT. PARLOR/LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Elliot and Julio are using sledgehammers to knock out a cut piece of the wall.

Ham sets the sandwiches and water atop a small table.

Ham smiles as everyone CHEERS and Elliot gets into a strong-man pose at their shouting.

Elliot takes notice of Ham grinning at him and his laughable antics.

Elliot pulls Ham close and kisses him.

Julio and the other Day Workers WHISTLE and HOOT at their affection.

Ham playfully pushes Elliot away, embarrassed and turning beet red at the attention they've received.

Ham grabs a sandwich from the box and shoves it at Elliot.

HAM

Take your stupid sandwich.

ELLIOT

(grimaces)

Is there mayo on it?

HAM (CONT'D)

There's no mayo on it.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Thank you.

(to Day Workers; in Spanish)

LUNCH BREAK!

The entire crew stops working and makes there way to the parlor for food.

Ham grabs two sandwiches before they're all gone.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Two?

HAM

I'm going to see if I can give one to the little boy.

ELLIOT

What little boy?

HAM

The one in the overalls. He ran toward the woods when I saw him, but he might've come back.

ELLIOT

I didn't see a kid, but yeah, bring him a sandwich if he shows back up.

EXT. TREDMOORE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ham EXITS the house, onto the front porch.

He takes a seat on the creaky steps and unwraps his sandwich.

We see a creepy, shadow of a MAN in the dusty windows, watching him from inside the house.

Unbeknownst to Ham that he's being watched...

A bug crawls on his boot. Ham shakes his foot, getting it off, as he casually eats his sandwich.

The eerie man is no longer there...

(long beat)

BOY (O.S.)

What you eating?

At the one end of the porch is the young boy Ham saw running toward the woods-- CLAY, 7. His overalls are dirty. As is his hands and face, spotted with dirt smudges. His shoes are just as worn and caked in mud. But he has the most angelic face.

HAM

Sandwich. Got an extra if you want.

Clay rounds the porch hurriedly.

He takes the sandwich from Ham and sits beside him. Clay unwraps it and takes a huge bite.

HAM (CONT'D)

What's your name?

CLAY

(mouth full)

Clay.

Ham smiles, not understanding him with his mouth full.

HAM
Take your time and try again.

Clay does; swallowing his food carefully until his mouth is empty.

CLAY
Clay. I'm Clay.

HAM
Nice to meet you, Clay. I'm Ham.

CLAY
Your mama named you "Ham?"

HAM
No. She named Calvin. But I hated that name. So I used to make everyone call me by my last name-- Hammish. Then it got shortened to "Ham" and just stuck.

CLAY
Oh. Thought she named you after a pig or something.

Ham laughs.

HAM
No.

Clay takes another bite of his sandwich.

HAM (CONT'D)
Hungry?

Clay nods.

HAM (CONT'D)
Good?

Clay nods again.

HAM (CONT'D)
Yeah, I like Thanksgiving Sandwiches, too.

CLAY
That what this is?

Ham nods.

CLAY (CONT'D)
It's good. Real good.

Clay licks his dirty fingers clean of mayo and cranberry sauce.

CLAY (CONT'D)
You buy this house?

HAM
I did.

CLAY
You fixing to live in it?

HAM
No. Just make it up real nice for someone else to live in.

CLAY
Ain't nobody going to live here.

HAM
Why do you say that?

CLAY
'Cause there's a ghost inside.

HAM
There is?

CLAY
Yes, sir.

HAM
You seen it?

Clay nods.

HAM (CONT'D)
When?

CLAY
...All the time. You ain't seen him yet?

HAM
Can't say that I have. And I'm usually...sensitive to that kind of thing.

CLAY
What's that mean?

HAM

Means when I was about your age, I saw a ghost. Saw her all the time actually.

CLAY

You saw a lady ghost? Where?

HAM

My house. She lived there before me and my family.

CLAY

Was she nice?

FLASHBACK

INT. BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

YOUNG HAM sits up in bed, looking very concerned for the WOMAN-- the ghost-- at the foot of his bed, sobbing.

NOTE: There are jagged, bleeding scars running down her wrists.

HAM (V.O.)

I don't know about nice, but she was certainly sad.

CLAY (V.O.)

About what?

Ham puts a gentle, comforting hand on her shoulder.

She pats his hand, thanking him for his care.

BACK TO:

EXT. TREDMOORE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

FRONT PORCH

HAM

I don't know. She just...cried a lot. I hated it. Kept me up some nights.

CLAY

Was you the only one to see her?

HAM

At first. Then my sister started seeing her, too. Even though she lied about it to our parents.

CLAY

Why she do that?

HAM

So she didn't seem as crazy as me.

CLAY

Ain't crazy if it's true.

HAM

Agreed. You live around here?

CLAY

No.

HAM

Where do you live then?

Clay finishes his sandwich.

CLAY

You got a cold drink?

HAM

I do. Wait here.

INT. TREDMOORE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Elliot and the day laborers are scattered around the place, eating their lunch and socializing.

Ham ENTERS the house. He makes his way into the PARLOR where he left the case of water bottles.

NOTE: There's a YOUNG REDHEADED BOY with glasses in the b.g. that no one sees as he appears in whatever room Ham occupies.

Ham grabs a water and we keep FOLLOWING him as he makes his way back to the FRONT PORCH.

Clay is gone. Completely disappeared.

The only thing left of his presence is his sandwich wrapper which threatens to be carried off in a hot, summer breeze.

Ham steps on it to keep from blowing away. He picks it up and crumbles it into a ball.

Out of the corner of his eye, Ham catches the sliver of a FIGURE disappearing around the side of the house; far too tall to be a small boy...

Ham chases after it, but it too is gone...

Ham leaves the bottle of water on the porch railing. In case Clay comes back.

Ham EXITS.

As he goes, a DECREPIT HAND grips the side of the house...

INT. SYCAMORE INN - DINING ROOM - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

TABLE

The table is quiet as everyone eats in awkward silence.

(3 beats)

ELLIOT

So does anyone want to tell us what exactly happened in that house?

Barbara and Shirley exchange nervous looks.

(long beat)

ADELAIDE

No one really knows. Just that Marian Wilcox, who was a mail carrier at the time, stopped by the Tredmoore House one afternoon to deliver a package to Peter Tredmoore.

BARBARA

Peter Tredmoore was the oldest of the Tredmoore children and inherited the house from his parents when they died.

ADELAIDE

Right. Marian knocked on the door and waited for Peter to answer but he didn't. She needed him to sign for the package but it seemed like he wasn't home.

(MORE)

ADELAIDE (CONT'D)

She got ready to leave him one of those "Sorry We Missed You" notes on his door, when she peeked in the window and saw him lying on the floor...with blood all around him. She called the police. They came out to the house and found the body. He was nearly decapitated. And had been lying there like that for weeks.

ELLIOT

Christ...

Ham pushes his food away. No longer hungry.

SHIRLEY

The last people, before you two, that ever stepped foot in that house were those people that clean up crime scenes. Scared them so bad they had the whole town talking. And ain't a soul been inside since.

ELLIOT

What scared them?

SHIRLEY

Whatever's haunting that place.

Elliot looks to Ham for assurance.

Ham gives a slight shake of his head, "No." He didn't sense anything while there.

ELLIOT

So who killed him?

ADELAIDE

The police never found out who or why.

MR. DRISCOLL

Just last summer they finally closed the case from what I heard.

ADELAIDE

Peter was...beloved here. His murder was senseless to the people of this town. And the fact that it was never solved has always left an unrest over it.

BARBARA
And in that house...

HAM
I did-- We didn't see anything
abnormal.

BARBARA
Good. I hope you never do.
(stands)
I'll get dessert.

Shirley means to protest-- Barbara pats her sister's arm affectionately.

BARBARA (CONT'D)
Already up.

Barbara EXITS.

INT. SYCAMORE INN - SUITE - CONTINUOUS

BED

Elliot and Ham lie comfortably in bed together: Ham rests between Elliot's legs with his head at Elliot's feet as he reads a book.

Elliot-- hair still damp from his shower-- watches late night clips on his cellphone.

Ham finishes his chapter, bookmarks it, and tosses it aside.

He taps Elliot with his foot, trying to gain his attention.

Elliot removes his earbuds.

HAM
The little boy I met, Clay, told me
the place was haunted. Said he saw
a ghost there.

ELLIOT
You said you didn't see anything,
so...

HAM
Yeah. Right.

ELLIOT
Bad vibes though?

HAM
No. Not really.

Elliot puts his phone down.

He yanks Ham upward so he's sitting completely in his lap.

ELLIOT
What does "not really" mean?

HAM
I don't know. I think it means I'm letting everyone scare me. I mean, none of the other guys saw anything.

ELLIOT
Yeah, but I only care about what you saw.

HAM
Which was nothing.

ELLIOT
Then why the pensive look?

HAM
What if I do see something? Later?

ELLIOT
We pack our shit and get the fuck out of Missouri.

HAM
And just abandon the Victorian mansion we just bought? And the day laborers we hired and promised to pay for the next 6 months?

ELLIOT
Yeah. You want to stick around and piss off a hostile ghost?

HAM
They said Peter Tredmoore was a good guy and beloved around here. I don't think he'd be hostile.

ELLIOT
He was murdered. That'll piss any ghost off.

HAM

Oooh, but what if we get to solve a ghost mystery and find his killer? Like Scooby-Doo.

ELLIOT

You've never seen an actual episode of Scooby-Doo, have you? The "ghost" was always some money-hungry con man, not a real ghost.

HAM

Really?

ELLIOT

Afraid so, handsome.

Elliot rans a gentle hand through Ham's hair.

HAM

Hey.

ELLIOT

Hmm?

HAM

Thank you.

ELLIOT

For?

HAM

Never making me feel crazy.

ELLIOT

Different people have different experiences. And there's a lot out there in the world that can't be explained. If you say that something happened to you, or does happen to you, I'm going to believe you.

Ham smiles, touched his husband is so open and understanding.

He kisses him.

Their kissing turns heavy.

Elliot takes off Ham's sleep pants.

Ham helps Elliot out of his bathrobe.

They continue kissing, naked and eager.

INT. SYCAMORE INN - SUITE - LATER

The room is dark and quiet.

BED

Elliot and Ham lie in bed, post-coitus, wrapped around each other. They're both asleep.

(long beat)

Ham abruptly opens his eyes.

In a dark corner of the room, something moves...

Ham sits up, staring at it, watching. Waiting...

The thing in the corner focuses on Ham with lit eyes. It's made of black, smoke-like shadows.

It's long, clawed hand reaches, extends toward Ham...

Ham's frozen with fear.

The creature's hand suddenly grabs him by the throat and SCREAMS VIOLENTLY in his face!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SYCAMORE INN - SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Ham bolts awake, breathing heavy and covered in sweat.

Elliot is fast asleep, peacefully, beside him.

Ham climbs out of bed.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ham flicks on the light, then turns on the faucet.

He splashes cold water on his face.

He grabs a washcloth and wets it. He runs the cloth over his neck, arms, and chest, wiping the sweat from his body.

He dries his face and drinks a glass of the cool water.

Ham turns out the light and EXITS.

In the dark corner, something moves...

BED

Ham climbs back into bed. He cuddles up to Elliot.

Elliot stirs awake enough to pull him close.

ELLIOT
(sleepily)
You okay?

HAM
Yeah.

ELLIOT
Okay.

Ham's eyes slip close.

WALL

The same decrepit hand from Tredmoore House, drags it's rotted nails across the paneling, before disappearing into the bathroom...

INT. TREDMOORE HOUSE - ROOM - DAY

Ham is alone in the room, removing the peeling, dated wallpaper from the walls.

The whole house is a cacophony of noise: CONSTRUCTION and TEJANO MUSIC.

But Ham listens to Panic! At The Disco through his earbuds as he works.

His back is turned to the closet. Which creaks open slowly...

A TOY TRUCK wheels out of the closet, seemingly on its own...

It stays put there for a beat.

Then slowly rolls back into the closet...

(long Beat)

The closet door SLAMS shut!

It startles Ham. He turns around and takes out his earbuds, but...nothing.

WINDOW

HAM'S POV - CLAY

Ham spots Clay in the front yard, looking around curiously.

Ham smiles, happy the little boy came back.

EXT. TREDMOORE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ham EXITS the house with a wrapped sandwich and bottle of water in his hand.

Clay spots him and excitedly makes his way to him.

CLAY
You're still here.

HAM
Of course I am. Should I not be?

CLAY
Thought you'd leave after I told you about the ghost.

HAM
Nah. Told you, I'm familiar with ghosts. You just about missed lunchtime. But I saved you something.

Ham hands Clay the sandwich and water.

The boy takes it eagerly.

CLAY
Thank you.

Clay sits down in the dirt, under the shade of a large tree.

Ham sits with him.

CLAY (CONT'D)
You got kids?

HAM
No.

CLAY
Don't want 'em?

HAM
I'd loved to have kids. Came close to having one a couple years ago.

CLAY
What happened?

A melancholy memory seems to wash over Ham for a moment.

HAM
...Didn't work out.

CLAY
How come?

HAM
Long story.

CLAY
You should have 'em, if you want
'em.

HAM
I will. Soon. Hopefully.

CLAY
Where you from?

HAM
Los Angeles.

CLAY
Where's that?

HAM
California.

CLAY
How far is that?

HAM
(points)
Go that way until you hit the
Pacific Ocean.

CLAY
I ain't never seen a ocean.

HAM
It's big. Covers the whole world.

CLAY
I know. I seen pictures.

CLAY'S POV - ELLIOT

Elliot, shirtless, EXITS the house. He makes his way to his truck and grabs a impact driver out of the bed.

Ham WOLF WHISTLES at him.

Elliot blushes and shakes his head at his "silly" husband.
He returns to the house.

CLAY (CONT'D)
Who's that?

HAM
My husband.

CLAY
You ain't got a wife?

HAM
Um, no.

CLAY
Why not?

HAM
Don't really like girls. Not in
that way at least.

CLAY
...So you like boys?

HAM
Yes. I mean, they can be gross and
lo--

Clay tosses the rest of his sandwich at Ham and runs off!

HAM (CONT'D)
Wha-- Clay!

Clay hauls ass, as fast as he can toward the woods. Without
looking back.

Ham SIGHS, disappointed.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. SYCAMORE INN - SUITE, BATHROOM - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Ham aggressively brushes his teeth while Elliot showers.

HAM

This is what I'm talking about with small towns! Just preaching bigotry and fear to innocent kids who internalize it and then perpetuate the cycle that alienates us and gets us killed for just being ourselves.

ELLIOT

You're preaching to the choir, Ham. But I don't think it's fair to paint all small towns with the same brush. I mean, Barbara and everyone here has been nothing nice to us. And not in that overly, overcompensating way.

HAM

I know, just... Sorry. I'm just so worked up because Clay is a little boy and he's being taught to hate me. And right after I got him talking...

ELLIOT

What exactly were you hoping his talking would lead to?

HAM

He's...destitute. There's clearly some sort of food insecurity happening with him. And his clothes and shoes... For the short while we're here, I thought I could help him. Or be a relief to him.

Elliot shuts the water off and pulls the curtain back.

He grabs a towel and dries himself.

ELLIOT

Ham. What you want to do for Clay is sweet and kind, but "poor little Elliot" became *this* Elliot.

(MORE)

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

So you don't need to go around
rescuing other little Elliots
because that one needed rescuing
twenty-odd years ago.

HAM

That's unfair and untrue! And you
just contradicted yourself!

ELLIOT

What I needed was parents and a
government that didn't fail me. Not
a stranger to sweep me off my feet
with sandwiches.

HAM

I think that's exactly what you
needed; someone to fucking care.

Ham angrily tosses his toothbrush onto the counter and EXITS.

BED

Ham flops down on the bed and grabs his book. He opens it,
staring at the page.

Elliot appears in the bathroom doorway.

ELLIOT

I absolutely love that everything
affects you. That you care about
everything and everyone. But I hate
it, too.

Ham gives Elliot his full attention.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Because you put yourself out there
so deep and so often, you make
yourself vulnerable to getting
hurt. And as your husband, it is my
job to pick up the pieces of your
broken heart. Or fucking murder
whoever thought it was idea to
cause you even the slightest amount
of pain. So when you dive head
first into something with your
whole self, I have only two
options: 1. dive in with you, or 2.
wait on the sidelines for you to
tag me in because it got painful.

(MORE)

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

As your husband, I accept that responsibility, that level of support, but I don't have to like it. I don't have to like what it does to you when you're disappointed or letdown. I don't want you to care so much about this little boy you just met to the point of heartbreak.

HAM

...Because of Sarah?

ELLIOT

The shit that went down with Sarah is only half of what I mean.

HAM

So what...just ignore Clay? And whatever tiny bit of help I can give him?

ELLIOT

No. Just don't start thinking he's ours.

HAM

He's a human boy, not a puppy.

ELLIOT

I know that. And I know you know that. Just saying.

Ham tosses his book back onto the nightstand.

HAM

Doesn't matter anyway. He took off running when I said we were married. He's not coming back.

ELLIOT

You sure? Because I looked damn good with my shirt off today. So it might've been jealousy instead of homophobia.

Ham tries hard not to laugh, but he can't help it. Elliot is an--

HAM

Idiot.

EXT. TREDMOORE HOUSE - ROOM - DAY

Ham is wearing a respirator mask and smock as he goes over the bare walls with stark white paint and a roller.

(3 beats)

A rock comes flying through the window, shattering glass everywhere.

Ham rips off his mask and approaches the window.

HAM'S POV - CLAY

Ham looks out to see Clay with an OLDER BOY. They both scowl at Ham and flip him off.

Ham's not having any of this. He's not going to get hate crime-d by children.

He drops the roller into the paint tray and storms out.

EXT. TREDMOORE HOUSE - FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

Ham barrels out of the house toward Clay and the other boy.

Clay hides behind the older boy, but the older boy stays right where he is, insolent and unafraid-- DAVID "DAVEY" MARKS, 13.

HAM

You throw that rock up there?

DAVEY

What if I did?

NOTE: Clay and Davey look nothing alike; opposing features. And Davey's clothes are very 80s-looking.

HAM

You live around here? I want to talk to your mama.

DAVEY

She ain't home. And even if she were she'd have nothing to say to you.

Ham gets right in Davey's face.

HAM

You do not go around throwing rocks at people just because you don't like them.

(to Clay)

And I'm surprised at you.

DAVEY

Don't talk to my brother, pervert!

HAM

Don't call me that! Ever!

DAVEY

That's what you are!

HAM

No, I'm not!

CLAY

Yes, you are! You said you like boys!

Clay cowers behind Davey again.

DAVEY

And that makes you a pervert!

Davey pushes Ham with both hands. Or tries to anyway. He's too small of a boy to shove a grown man like Ham.

DAVEY (CONT'D)

So stay away from Clay!

And it dawns on Ham, what exactly they mean...

HAM

Oh, for Christ... I think there's been a misunderstanding--

DAVEY

Ain't no misunderstanding.

HAM

Yes, there is. I think Clay unfortunately took what I said literally.

(off their looks)

Exactly. You took what I exactly said to be what I mean...exactly. I'm screwing this all up.

Elliot approaches with a concerned look on his face.

ELLIOT

Ham. You okay? You boys okay?

CLAY

(to Davey; terrible
whisper)

That's the other pervert.

ELLIOT

"Pervert?!"

Ham leans in close to Elliot and WHISPERS, gesturing between himself and the two boys.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

And I'm the idiot...?

Ham frowns, embarrassed.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Boys. Ham, myself, and everyone in that house is *not* a pervert. I promise you that. Clay, when Ham told you he liked boys he didn't mean little boys. He meant men. Grown, adult men. Like me. His husband.

CLAY

What you say "boys" for then?

ELLIOT

Because Ham is a dummy who needs to choose his words more wisely when in the presence of children. We're sorry for the confusion.

HAM

I'm sorry for the confusion. I really did not mean to scare you and make you think I'd ever hurt anyone like that.

Davey narrows his eyes at Elliot and Ham, skeptical.

DAVEY

I don't believe you.

ELLIOT

That's fair. I think explaining things, clarifying, to kids is a good thing.

(MORE)

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Trying to convince them, or coerce them, into believing something is wrong. Even if it's the truth.

HAM

Agreed. But you should apologize for throwing a rock through the window--

ELLIOT

No.

HAM

What?

ELLIOT

No. He doesn't have to apologize for that. He was brave in his attempt to protect his brother because he thought he was in danger.

HAM

Okay, yes but that reinforces--
(off Elliot's look)
...Fine.

ELLIOT

We're sorry for the confusion. You guys can still hang around here if you want, as long as you're out of the way. But if you're uncomfortable, then it's okay if you don't come around anymore either.

DAVEY

No. We ain't coming around no more. This house is evil. And y'all are...weird.

CLAY

But they got sandwiches, Davey. Everyday.

DAVEY

I don't care, Clay. You shouldn've been out here anyway.

Clay pouts at Davey scolding him.

DAVEY (CONT'D)

We're going.

Clay takes Davey's hand.

Davey looks them over; Elliot and Ham standing side-by-side

DAVEY (CONT'D)
I didn't know you could marry
another man.

ELLIOT
Really?

Davey shrugs.

He and Clay trek through the tall, unkempt grass.

Ham and Elliot watch as they disappear into the woods.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
"Boys?" You told a little boy you
like "boys?" Seriously? You're
lucky all he did was get his
brother and not the police.

HAM
I know, I know. Bad word choice.

ELLIOT
Horrific word choice, Ham.

Elliot shakes his head at his ridiculous husband as he EXITS
into the house.

HAM
Ugh. You really are a dummy,
Calvin.

Ham puts his fingers to his temple like a gun and pretends to
blow his brains out.

He makes his way toward the house.

INT. TREDMOORE HOUSE - ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ham sweeps up the broken glass and dumps it into a plastic
bag.

He ties the bag off and picks up the rock. He sets the rock
down on the window sill.

HAM'S POV - WOMAN

There's a MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN at the property line, standing by an '83 Buick Electra. She's SHOUTING hysterically and pointing at the house.

She waves her palms to the sky and clasp them together in prayer.

HAM
For fuck's sake.
(exiting)
ELLIOT!

EXT. TREDMOORE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

FRONT PORCH

Elliot and Julio stand on the porch with half the day laborers, watching the woman SHOUT scripture and prayer in their direction.

Ham ENTERS from the house.

HAM
Wasn't today already not enough?

JULIO
You expected it not to be weird when you decided to renovate the haunted house in town?

PROPERTY LINE

The woman falls to her knees, in the dirt and gravel, SOBBING and speaking in tongues.

FRONT PORCH

ELLIOT
Well, Ham. Go get her.

HAM
What? Me?

ELLIOT
I straightened out that whole thing with those kids. Your turn.

HAM
You get kids and I get the mom from *Carrie*?

Elliot shrugs with a smug smirk on his face.

HAM (CONT'D)
Suck your own dick tonight.

CATCALLS and OOHHS sound from everyone around them.

But Elliot keeps grinning at his husband, too amused to be offended.

Julio and the day laborers CACKLE at Ham as he walks toward the woman like he's awaiting an execution.

PROPERTY LINE

The woman notices Ham coming toward her.

HAM (CONT'D)
Excuse me.

The woman gets to her feet, face red and wet with tears.

WOMAN
Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven--

HAM
Listen, ma'am--

The woman stops abruptly, eyes fixated on something past Clay.

Ham follows her eyeline--

WINDOW

The unnerving OLD MAN flagrantly peers out the window at them. He points his boney finger at Ham, mouth agape in horror.

The woman SCREAMS!

Ham rushes back toward the house!

The woman jumps into her car and speeds off!

INT. TREDMOORE HOUSE - ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ham bursts into the room he was painting-- It's empty.

He checks the closets.

Nothing.

He turns around, facing the wall he was painting:

In the center of the blank, clean wall is a black spot.

The black spot grows, spreads, getting bigger and bigger, like a moldy, rotting water stain.

HAM

What the fuck...?

ELLIOT (O.S.)

Ham?!

Ham turns to EXIT--

The smoky, shadow monster from his dream is suddenly there, right in front of his face. It SCREAMS a horrible sound, grabbing Ham by the throat!

DOOR

Elliot hurries up the stairs toward the room, but the door SLAMS shut just as he reaches the landing.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW.