

INT. HEATHER'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

From an open doorway the glow of a computer bathes part of the room in an eerie glow. TYPING and INDISTINCT TALKING are heard.

The camera slowly moves to the doorway and reveals HEATHER, a beautiful woman in her mid-to-late twenties, sitting in front of the computer.

She is in a chat room. Several lines on the computer reveal she has been chatting with the other person for some time. As she types the words, she also speaks them.

HEATHER

I have to go to Pontiac to see my family.

Next to the computer is a photograph of a somewhat younger Heather standing with her parents and younger brother on the porch of an old farmhouse.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL DARK ROOM - NIGHT

A laptop computer lights the room. RAVEN is barely visible, his bare, muscular arms outlined in the ghostly light.

He is silent as he TYPES.

RAVEN

HOW LONG WILL YOU BE GONE?

HEATHER

Just till Sunday. . . .

CUT TO:

INT. HEATHER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

HEATHER (CONT'D)

I have to meet Karen at 6.

RAVEN

GOOD.

HEATHER

Did you take care of the matter that's been bothering you?

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL DARK ROOM - NIGHT

Raven types.

RAVEN

T-O-...

CUT TO:

INT. HEATHER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Heather is pained.

RAVEN

...N-I-G-H-T

HEATHER

TONIGHT????

RAVEN

Yes.

HEATHER

You said tonight is the night we
would finally meet.

No response.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

You there?

Nothing.

With a SIGH, Heather gets up.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

I thought this one was different.

She moves toward the kitchen.

INT. HEATHER'S APARTMENT/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Heather turns on the RADIO to an ambient sound level.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Probably some seventy-five-year-old
pervert.

She fills the kettle and puts it on the stove.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL DARK ROOM - NIGHT

Raven sits silently in front of the laptop. FAINT MUSIC in
the background might or might not be coming from the same
radio station as Heather's.

He types a brief message and then closes the laptop.

The room is almost entirely in darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. HEATHER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Heather carries a cup of tea to her computer.

On the screen are the words WE WILL MEET TONIGHT.

Smiling, she puts down the cup and types.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

What time? Where?

Her smile begins to fade. She bends over to type again.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Allen? When?

Frustrated she straightens up and reaches for her tea.

As she turns away from the computer -WHAM! Raven is up on her and has her by the throat. So hard in fact, she can't scream and her eyes roll back in her head. The music swells.

RAVEN

NOW!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HEATHER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

A television reporter stands in front of the building with a microphone.

REPORTER

Police are refusing to speculate
whether the apparent disappearance
of model Heather Makepiece

INSERT photo of Heather with her parents.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

. . . is connected to the string of
6 kidnapping/murders carried out by
the so-called Edgar Allen Poe
killer.

Behind the reporter, entering the building are KRIS WILLIAMS,
a pretty thirty-three-year-old, and her partner, SEAN
MICHAELS, forty.

CUT TO:

INT. HEATHER'S APARTMENT - DAY

The police are swarming all over the place. Among them is
Chief Detective BURT WILLIAMS, a man in his late 50s.

Kris and Sean enter.

BURT

Well, lookie, boys, the FBI's here.

Kris kisses Burt on the cheek.

KRIS

Hi, Daddy. Is it the Poe killer?

Burt gestures to the computer screen.

BURT

What do you think?

On the computer screen, at the end of Heather's conversation, are the words QUOTH THE RAVEN: THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP.

SEAN

What the hell is that supposed to mean?

BURT

Read your Poe.

A YOUNG POLICEMAN comes from the back of the apartment.

YOUNG POLICEMAN

Burt, we think we found where he was hiding.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL ROOM/ATTIC - DAY

The room can now be seen to contain a single bed and a chair and not much else.

A policeman points to the bed where a single BLACK FEATHER lies.

BURT

The son-of-a-bitch was in the apartment with her.

SEAN

And...

BURT

While he was on line with her!

KRIS

How do you know?

BURT

I had Hal run a IP INTERNET search. They were "chatting" for quit some time. The time she logged off is when 402 upstairs heard the commotion.

Burt looks right at Sean.

BURT

It doesn't take a genius to figure
that out.

Sean takes some satisfaction for what he's about to say.

SEAN

Well, you're out of it now.

BURT

What?

KRIS

We're taking over the case.

Burt is stunned.

BURT

I've been chasing this guy for
three years.

SEAN

That's the point, isn't it?

Kris looks sympathetically at her father.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE

Newspaper Headline: HEATHER STILL MISSING

Television news report:

ANCHOR PERSON

The search for missing model
Heather Makepiece entered its
second week today and the FBI says
an arrest is imminent. In a related
story the first case of West Nile
virus was found in a Raven found
dead on the playground of Monroe
elementary school early this
morning...

CUT TO:

EXT. FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Sean is giving an interview. Kris is by his side.

SEAN

The FBI is pursuing several leads.
We feel that we are very close now.

INT. BURT'S HOUSE -EVENING

The interview with Sean is on Burt's television. Burt pours
himself a drink from a nearly empty bottle of bourbon.

Burt raises a toast, slopping some of the drink on the floor.

BURT

Yeah. Well, lots of luck, asshole.

EXT. FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Heather's MOM and DAD, all dressed up, speak into the microphones.

MOM

Whoever you are, please let Heather go.

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - DAY

Raven is watching the news conference. He looks over at Heather's battered and bleeding naked body.

She hears her mother's voice and tries to open her swollen eyes. She MOANS softly.

MOM

Please. We just want our Heather home.

(pleading)

If anyone knows where she is please contact the police... And if the person who took our little girl is watching... Please, please don't hurt her... Please we beg... Of...
(she is helped out of the press room near hysteria)

Raven considers and then grins evilly.

RAVEN

Be it ever so humble . . .

CUT TO:

EXT. MAKEPIECE FARM - NIGHT

There is one light on in the house.

CUT TO:

INT. MAKEPIECE FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Mr. and Mrs. Makepiece are watching television.

Mr. Makepiece cocks his head.

DAD

Do you hear something, Edna?

He gets up and turns down the TV.

They both hear a rhythmic THUMPING.

MOM

What is that?

DAD

I don't know.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING/TECH ROOM - NIGHT

LARRY, a tech guy, sits monitoring a computer screen. A message begins to appear. Larry picks up a phone.

CUT TO:

INT. SEAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Sean picks up the phone.

SEAN

Michaels here. Yes Larry, what do you got?

(beat)

He what?

He slams down the phone and runs from his office.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING/TECH ROOM - NIGHT

Sean comes skidding into the tech room. Larry points to the screen: "QUOTH THE RAVEN: HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS."

SEAN

Oh shit!

CUT TO:

EXT. MAKEPIECE FARM - NIGHT

A BLACK FORD EXPEDITION pulls up to the Makepiece farm. Kris and Sean get out and head toward the house. They are met at the door by Edna Makepice. Her knees buckle as she instantly feels there is bad news. Mr. Makepiece grabs her and they move inside.

INT. MAKEPIECE FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Mr. Makepiece helps Edna to the sofa. He hears the NOISE again.

DAD
There it is again.

KRIS
What?

MOM
Ever since (beat) Heather was
(2 beats) we've been hearing
things.

SEAN
What kind of things m'am?

DAD
Shh... Listen.

The THUMPING SOUND is very apparent.

INT. MAKEPIECE MILK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They have found the source of the THUMPING which is much
louder now.

DAD
It's coming from the floor.

CUT TO:

INT. MAKEPIECE MILK ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Sean is on his knees with a crowbar while the others stand
watching.

With a SQUEAL of nails, the floor board comes up.

Staring at her parents is Heather. Or rather, Heather's
severed head. In its mouth is Heather's heart, a black
feather stuck into it. Next to it lies a mini-tape recorder
still THUMPING.

Both parents scream.

ROLL CREDITS

MONTAGE

Headline: POE KILLER CLAIMS SEVENTH VICTIM

Headline: GRUESOME FARMHOUSE FIND

TV news:

ANCHOR PERSON
The partial remains of Heather
Makepiece were found in the home of
her parents last night around 11
pm. No other details are available
at this time. . .

Headline: RAVEN STRIKES AGAIN!

Headline: POE KILLER CLAIMS NINTH VICTIM

ANCHOR PERSON

The remains of Alicia Forester were found today after a seven-month search. FBI agents say she was walled up in an abandoned church and left to starve to death. This brings to eleven the number of kidnapping-murders perpetrated by . . .

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING/KRIS'S OFFICE - DAY

Sean pops in.

SEAN

Come on! Number twelve.

Kris leaps from her desk.

KRIS

Where?

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT/WILLIAMS' OFFICE - DAY

Burt tiredly piles a few things in a box. He takes off his badge and leaves it on his desk next to an empty bourbon bottle.

INT. TV STUDIO - NIGHT

ANCHOR PERSON

In a bizarre note, sales of the works of Edgar Allen Poe have skyrocketed . . .

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Raven is sitting in front of the TV. He is wearing glasses and reading a book. A black cat sits on his lap.

ANCHOR PERSON (O.S.,CONT'D.)

. . .since the so-called Poe Killer began. Now with the local forecast. Tonight continued cloudiness with a 60 percent chance of thunder showers.

Smiling, Raven shuts off the television. He pets the cat. In the corner shadows lies a struggling bundle.

RAVEN

Hungry, kitty?

INT. ABANDONED SCHOOL - DAY

Kris and Sean and other FBI and police types stand around a closet the door of which has been splintered. One policeman is being sick in the corner.

Inside are the half-eaten remains of victim number twelve and a very fat black cat.

Kris bends over and picks up a black feather.

END CREDITS

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - NIGHT

ANCHOR PERSON

FBI sources admitted that they are
no closer to catching the Poe
Killer. The latest victim . . .

CUT TO:

INT. KRIS WILLIAMS' APARTMENT - DAY

Kris wears a bathrobe and is drying her hair while she watches the TV.

ANCHOR PERSON (O.S., CONT'D.)

The partial remains of socialite
Havana Gustafson was found hanging
thirty stories above the train
station from a steel beam. The Poe
Killer has the whole city wondering
if they are the next "Tale" in his
book of death . . .

Kris picks up the remote and mutes the television.

She picks up the phone and pushes a speed dial button.

CUT TO:

INT. BURT WILLIAMS' UNIVERSITY OFFICE - SAME TIME

A telephone RINGS on a desk in an office full of books. Next to the telephone lies a newspaper with the HEADLINE: POE KILLER ONE STEP AHEAD OF POLICE. Someone has crossed out "POLICE" and scrawled "FBI" in its place.

Burt enters the office on the third ring and picks up the phone. He wears a sports jacket and tie and carries a briefcase.

BURT

Oh, hi, honey.

(beat)

I just got out of class. What's
up?

CUT TO:

INT. KRIS WILLIAMS' APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

KRIS
So? How's the life of
a Criminal Justice professor?

BURT (O.S.)
Beats sitting at home all day.

KRIS
What did you do last night?

CUT TO:

INT. BURT WILLIAMS' UNIVERSITY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Burt picks up the newspaper for a second, then throws it in
the wastepaper basket.

BURT
You know. The usual.
(beat)
What about you?

CUT TO:

INT. KRIS WILLIAMS' APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

KRIS
I went out and got drunk.

BURT (O.S.)
You don't get drunk.

KRIS
I figured I should celebrate my
birthday.

There is a long SILENCE.

BURT (O.S.)
Oh shit!

CUT TO:

INT. BURT WILLIAMS' UNIVERSITY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Burt is thoroughly ashamed of himself.

BURT (CONT'D)
God, Kris, I am so sorry.

KRIS (O.S.)
You never used to forget.

BURT

I know. It's just that I've been
working so hard . . .

KRIS (O.S.)

You mean drinking so hard.

BURT

Come on, Kris, that's not fair.

CUT TO:

INT. KRIS WILLIAMS' APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

KRIS

Let's just change the subject.

BURT (O.S.)

I promise I'll make it up to you.
Honey, I'm going to change, I
promise I will.

KRIS

Did you read about his latest?

BURT (O.S.)

I'll take you out for dinner
tomorrow night.

KRIS

Dad!

CUT TO:

INT. BURT WILLIAMS' UNIVERSITY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

BURT

Wait! I can't tomorrow. I'm
treating my grad students to a
night out. How about Thursday?

KRIS (O.S.)

Dad, I've been talking to him.

KRIS (CONT'D)

I can't Thursday.

CUT TO:

INT. BURT WILLIAMS' UNIVERSITY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

He looks through his planner and other scattered notes around
his desk.

KRIS (O.S.)

What about Friday?

BURT

What do you mean? Talking to who?

CUT TO:

INT. KRIS WILLIAMS' APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

KRIS
Talking with Raven. On the
internet.

BURT (O.S.)
Friday's good.
(beat)
Kris. That's too dangerous.

CUT TO:

INT. BURT WILLIAMS' UNIVERSITY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Burt stops looking through his papers and reaches in his desk
drawer for a bottle.

KRIS (O.S.)
We have to do something.

Burt shakes his head as he pours a tall one.

BURT
It will never work. He's too
smart.

KRIS (O.S.)
I logged in as Annabel Lee and sure
enough he bit. (beat) Remember, I
learned from the best.

A slight "proud father" smile graces Burt's face.

CUT TO:

INT. KRIS WILLIAMS' APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Kris speaks with a slight nervousness in her confidence.

KRIS
We're gonna lure him out, Dad.

Dramatic THEME MUSIC swells.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING/TECH ROOM - LATER

Larry is glued to his computer screens. Kris enters.

LARRY
Where you been? He's on.

Kris hurries to the computer and sits down. Minesweeper is on the screen.

KRIS
I don't see him.

Larry pushes a key and Raven is there.

RAVEN
HOW IS EVERYTHING IN YOUR KINGDOM
BY THE SEA?

Kris dictates while Larry types.

KRIS
Fine, Allen.

RAVEN
GOOD.

KRIS
Come share it with me.

RAVEN
SOON, MY LOVE.

KRIS
Tell me when, my prince.

A long pause ensues. Larry looks up at Kris.

RAVEN
FRIDAY NIGHT?

Kris bites her lip.

LARRY
Shall I ask him where?

KRIS
(to Larry)
I can't Friday night.

RAVEN
OR ARE YOU SEEING SOMEONE ELSE.

Kris stares at the screen as if asking herself whether he could know. Then she shakes her head.

RAVEN
WELL?

KRIS
Tell him yes, Friday's fine.

Larry types in the message.

RAVEN
I WILL MAKE YOU HAPPY.

Kris's face twists in a grimace.

KRIS

(hokey breathy voice)
I know you will.

Larry types that in.

KRIS (CONT'D)
You fucking monster.

LARRY
Want me to type that in?

Kris hits him lightly on the back of his head. He grabs her hand and kisses it. She pulls it away.

KRIS
For God's sake, Larry.

Larry pouts a little.

RAVEN
FRIDAY NIGHT.

KRIS
Okay.

RAVEN
I WILL TELL YOU WHERE TO MEET ME.

KRIS
(dictating)
I am so excited, my love.

RAVEN
GOOD

KRIS
(dictating)
I'm sending you a kiss.

Larry gives her a disgusted look and tries again to take her hand, but she snatches it away.

RAVEN
BYE

Larry punches some keys.

LARRY
He's gone.

KRIS
What do you think?

LARRY
I think you should sit on my lap.

He puts his arms around her waist.

KRIS
Not in the office!

Sean opens the door, and the two pull apart hurriedly. Embarrassed, Kris smooths her rumpled clothing.

SEAN

Hope I'm not interrupting.

KRIS

He says he wants to meet me Friday.

SEAN

No kidding? Where?

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Raven sits in a rocking chair reciting Annabel Lee.

RAVEN

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you
may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no
other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

He looks up and chuckles.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Burt Williams is entertaining five of his Criminal Justice graduate students in an unpretentious restaurant/bar.

LAYLA HARRISON is twenty-six, brunette, and beautiful.

VICTOR LEPPISH is something of a nerd. He is twenty-four and wears glasses.

STEVE FLETCHER is twenty-seven. In addition to his graduate studies, he has already had a novel published and is the unofficial leader of this group.

JERRY RUSSELL, twenty-five, is the joker of the group. He smoked a joint before coming to the restaurant and cannot quite keep himself straight.

CRYSTAL MARTIN is a long-legged blonde beauty of twenty-six.

The group has finished dinner. Everyone except Crystal and Burt is drinking beer. Crystal is drinking water, and Burt is on his fourth bourbon on the rocks. He is in the middle of a story.

BURT

We were giving chase at ninety
miles per hour, and it looked like
we might lose him.
And we only had an hour before the
anecdote would be rendered useless.

He pauses to take a drink and to increase the suspense.

VICTOR

What happened?

BURT

Sometimes you just gotta get lucky.

CRYSTAL

As in?

BURT

His car ran out of gas.

CRYSTAL

You're kidding.

JERRY

(to Steve)

Put that in your next novel.

BURT

Yep, by the time he coasted to a stop we had him surrounded. We gave him the shot and noone else was hurt.

STEVE

(to Jerry)

Nobody would believe it.

LAYLA

What about the Poe Killer? Is it going to take luck to catch him?

Burt stares at her a moment, then rises.

BURT

Excuse me. I have to go to the men's room.

He signals the waitress for another drink all around and leaves.

VICTOR

Why did you ask him that? You know he killed his wife.

LAYLA

I just think he should talk about it.

CRYSTAL

Why?

LAYLA

We're all going into police work, and this is the most important case around.

STEVE

I'm not going into police work.

JERRY

Steve Fletcher, after selling
10,000 copies of your first novel
in a single book signing. You're a
world-famous mystery writer, Where
do you go from here.

Steve ignores him.

STEVE

I just wish he would tell us what
he knows about this guy. It'd make
a great book.

VICTOR

What's to tell? His name is Andrew
Bird. He was born about twenty
miles from here, on the dead end
road off ol'fifty-six.

JERRY

Have you guys ever been out there?

LAYLA

No.

CRYSTAL

Have you?

JERRY

Yeah, I used to go out there all
the time when I was a kid. To smoke
weed and bang chicks.

LAYLA

Is it creepy?

JERRY

After you smoked a few joints it
was scary as hell.
(beat)
I heard they tore the place down a
couple of years ago.

STEVE

We should go there.

It's obvious Crystal and Victor would rather not.

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/DUNGEON - CONTINUOUS

Two dagger's stuck into the wall support a woman mounted on
the wall. She's been bled to death. Raven stares at her as he
works himself to a near frenzy. The camera pulls back to show
she is only the upper torso of a woman.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The group as are they were.

CRYSTAL

Why would you want to go to a
creepy old house?

JERRY

The chronic is in man.

VICTOR

I don't see the point.

STEVE

Research.

JERRY

Fuck, research. House or no house,
that whole area is creepy. No one
ever goes down there.

CRYSTAL

(to Jerry)

You just want to get high and act
like you're in tenth grade again.

STEVE

You and Victor don't have to come.

LAYLA

Come on. I think it will be fun.

On the other side of the restaurant, Burt emerges from the
rest room. He is not too steady on his feet.

STEVE

Let's ask Williams to come with us.

JERRY

Hell no. Do you think he smokes?

Burt reaches the table and sits down. An uncomfortable
SILENCE ensues.

LAYLA

Professor?

BURT

Layla, I'm not a professor, okay?
I'm just a lecturer, and I'd prefer
it if you'd call me Burt.

Layla looks as if she would rather cut off her thumb.

LAYLA

Is there some reason you won't talk
about the Poe Killer?

BURT

Because that case ended my police
career. And Joyce's life.

VICTOR

They fired you?

BURT

No. The FBI took over the case,

and I decided . . . Well, I decided
to call it quits.

JERRY

It doesn't look like the FBI has
done much better.

BURT

I was certain I was going to catch
him.

CRYSTAL

Couldn't you have worked on the
case anyway?

BURT

My daughter Kris is on the FBI
team. I was afraid to embarrass
her.

LAYLA

I didn't know that.

BURT

Besides, you got to know when to
fold 'em.

He signals the waitress for the bill.

BURT (CONT'D)

I was the one who arrested Andrew
Bird when he was thirteen, you
know.

VICTOR

For killing his mother?

BURT

And step-father.

CRYSTAL

He used a pitchfork.

BURT

It was a garden fork.

STEVE

(to Layla)

What's the difference?

BURT

They put him in a juvy hospital
until he was eighteen. Then, he
spent fifteen years in maximum
security federal prison.

(he takes a drink))

...they decide to transfer him to a
medium security prison downstate
and he kills the guards in route.
Pulled their hearts out with his
bare hands...

VICTOR

While they were still alive to
watch him do it.

The waitress brings the bill, and Burt makes a show of
checking the figures.

LAYLA

Oh my God?

BURT

When the authorities arrived on the
scene, among the carnage they find
a single black feather, a raven's
feather.

STEVE

And now he seems to be recreating
Edger Allen Poe murder scenes.

BURT

He's extremely smart and extremely
dangerous.

JERRY

Did he ever go back to that old
house?

BURT

Last I heard, the family who owned
it after the Bird's complained of
ghosts or strange happenings.
(beat) They say they heard a woman
screaming in terror almost every
night at midnight. (beat) A
developer ended up buying the
property.

Steve and Jerry exchange looks.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Raven sits in front of his laptop. He is talking with
Annabel Lee.

RAVEN

HELLO PRINCESS

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING/TECH ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Larry is in front of a computer screen. Sean and Kris sit
elsewhere in the room.

LARRY

Got him!

Sean and Kris get up and cross to Larry's computer.

SEAN

Let's play hard to get.

LARRY

What do you want me to say? If anything.

KRIS

Tell him I was afraid he wouldn't come.

SEAN

Come on, Kris. Make him sweat.

KRIS

Why?

Larry looks from one to the other.

LARRY

What do you want me to do?

Kris stares Sean down.

KRIS

Do it my way.

Larry types it in.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

RAVEN

We loved with alove that more than
love . . .

Raven is chanting a line from Annabel Lee. He types.

RAVEN

I AM HERE PRINCESS

KRIS

ARE WE STILL ON FOR TOMORROW NIGHT?

Raven considers.

RAVEN

(reflectively)
Are we?

CUT TO:

EXT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Burt and the students emerge from the restaurant.

CRYSTAL

Thanks for dinner.

They all murmur assent.

JERRY

Hey, Burt, can we buy you a last drink?

Burt looks at his watch. He knows he should probably call it a night. But...

BURT

Why not?

They move off down the street toward a bar.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING/TECH ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sean has pulled up a chair next to Larry's while Kris bends over them both.

KRIS

Ask him where and when.

Larry types it in.

They all lean in.

RAVEN

11 PM TOO LATE FOR YOU.

KRIS

Tell him that eleven will be great.

Larry types it in.

SEAN

Ask him where.

Larry types it in.

Nothing.

KRIS

Come on.

(beat)

Come on, damn you.

Larry types in a question mark.

RAVEN

SEACREST BOWLING ALLEY

KRIS

Seacrest Bowling Alley. Where's that?

LARRY

Out on old fifty-six.

SEAN

We got him.

KRIS

Tell him I'll be there.

Larry types it in.

Kris takes out her cell phone and steps into the hallway,
punching a speed dial button.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

Burt and the five graduate students have just gotten their
drinks.

Burt's cell phone rings.

BURT

Who the hell's this?

He looks at the phone.

BURT (CONT'D)

My daughter.

(beat)

Hi, honey. What's up?

KRIS (O.S.)

I can't make it to dinner tomorrow
night.

BURT

Why? You got a hot date?

KRIS (O.S.)

Sort of.

BURT

Sort of?

KRIS (O.S.)

I'm meeting him.

Burt sits bolt upright.

BURT

Bird?

KRIS (O.S.)

Yeah.

BURT

You can't! I Don't want to lose you
too.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

KRIS

He's got to be stopped.

She disconnects.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

BURT
Kris! For God's sake!

The others are agog with curiosity.

Burt hangs up the phone.

VICTOR
Problems, Sir?

Burt has not heard him.

BURT
I hope she has backup.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

Steve and Layla are walking in one direction and run into Victor.

STEVE
Hey, Victor. You going with us tonight?

VICTOR
I suppose so. But I can't get away until after midnight.

LAYLA
What about Crystal?

VICTOR
She's in.

LAYLA
I hope this place is as creepy as Jerry says it is.

STEVE
I hope Jerry's weed is as good as Jerry says it is.

VICTOR
I'm not going to smoke any.

Layla ruffles his hair.

LAYLA
There's a shock. Get a life, Victor.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING/TECH ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Kris is alone with Larry.

LARRY

What about a kiss?

He tries to pull her to him.

KRIS

Larry, stop it!

LARRY

Why else are you here except to see me?

KRIS

I am here in case he changes his mind or changes the plan.

LARRY

So? We can amuse ourselves while we're waiting.

KRIS

No. I'm going to get ready.

She heads for the door.

LARRY

This weekend?

She pauses in the doorway.

KRIS

Absolutely. We'll have a celebration.

Larry grins lasciviously.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As Kris walks into frame a figure in the background comes out of a side corridor and stands in the hall momentarily before disappearing into the shadows.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING/TECH ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Larry is busy typing on the computer checking his sources for any latest developments.

Out of the air vents a greyish smoke begins to flow.

LARRY (CONT'D)

What's going on?

His eyes begin to water and he begins to choke.

He gets up and tries to reach the phone, but he collapses.

CUT TO:

INT. KRIS WILLIAMS' APARTMENT - LATER

Kris has dressed as if for a big date. She applies one last touch of lipstick and heads for the door.

She has a last-minute thought and goes back to her dresser and takes the gun off it and puts it in her purse.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY PARKING LOT - LATER

Kris and Sean sit in Sean's car. There are only two other cars in the parking lot.

SEAN

Okay, back-up is two bocks away.

Kris checks her two-way radio and puts it in her purse.

SEAN (CONT'D)

I go in first and start to bowl.
You come in ten minutes.

KRIS

I got it.

SEAN

(bitterly)
He's not going to be there.

KRIS

I hope you're wrong.

Sean opens the car door and walks toward the entrance.

CUT TO:

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - TEN MINUTES LATER

Kris enters. The bowling alley is mostly in darkness, with pools of light scattered about. At first, the whole place seems deserted. Then she notices an old man, MERTON OVERBANK, behind the desk.

She approaches him.

MERTON

Evenin'.

KRIS

(looking around)
A friend of mine came in here about
ten minutes ago.

MERTON
Nope. Ain't nobody here but me and
the kid that polishes the lanes. I
was fixin' to close up till you
came in.

KRIS
Where's he?

Kris looks around. Merton does as well, then shrugs.

KRIS
I'll look around if you don't mind.

MERTON
Look round all you like. If you
the kid send him my way.

Kris moves away, into the dusky open area of the bowling
alley.

She looks back, and Merton is gone.

She opens her purse and takes out her two-way radio.

When she activates it, all she hears is STATIC. Frantically
she pushes buttons.

One of the alleys lights up and the reset mechanism resets
the pins.

She draws her weapon and heads to the rear of the building.

Slowly, she peers around a corner and sees a black feather in
a pool of blood.

She hears the sound of BIRDS FLAPPING THEIR WINGS. Then the
sound of a CREAKING DOOR. Kris follows the sounds.

She follows until she ends up back at the front. She is
standing near lane number 13.

A THUMPING comes from the ball return.

To Kris's horror, Sean's severed head rolls out of the ball
return. She screams and turns to run.

A pair of arms grabs her. She tries to pull the gun out of
her purse. Her purse is knocked to the floor. She continues
to struggle.

Two hands encircle her neck and Raven's face appears. He
licks her ear.

RAVEN
We meet at last, my princess.

She shrieks.

FADE OUT.

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY PARKING LOT - AN HOUR LATER

The lot is jammed with police cars, ambulances, etc.

CUT TO:

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

All the lights are on. A gurney removes Sean's body.

PARAMEDICS attend to the head of MERTON. COPS and FBI types mill about.

MERTON

I told ya, I didn't see nothin'. I was just talking to that woman, she walked away, and I got hit from behind.

He tries to rub his head, but the paramedic stops him.

COP

You're lucky to be alive.

MERTON

Am I?

CUT TO:

INT. BURT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Burt has passed out on the couch. The phone is RINGING. Slowly, he fights his way back to consciousness.

As he stumbles to his feet, he knocks over an end table.

BURT

Damn it!

He staggers toward the phone. He looks at his watch.

BURT (CONT'D)

Who the hell?

He picks up the phone.

BURT (CONT'D)

Williams.

(beat)

Who? Oh yes, Lieutenant.

(beat)

What? What do mean, missing?

(beat)

What about Michaels?

Burt's face twists in agony. His knees give out beneath him.

BURT (CONT'D)

Where was the backup?
(beat)
I'll come there.

Burt drops the phone and buries his face in his hands.

CUT TO:

EXT. STUDENT HOUSING - 12:10 A.M.

Victor waits in front of his apartment building.

A car, old but in good shape, pulls up. Jerry is the driver. Crystal is in the front seat, and Steve and Layla are in the back seat.

JERRY
(to Victor)
Ready for some adventure?

Victor climbs in the back.

VICTOR
(mocking a Poe-like
phrase)
I ought not to be doing this.

CRYSTAL
Stop whining, Victor.

The car pulls away from the curb.

VICTOR
No, seriously, I should be
studying.

Jerry slams on the brakes. He gets out, walks around to Victor's side of the car and opens the door.

JERRY
Out!

VICTOR
What?

JERRY
I'm not going to listen to your
moaning the whole way.

VICTOR
I only said . . .

LAYLA
Come on, Jerry. Get back in the
car. Victor will be good, won't
you?

CUT TO:

INT. BURT'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

BURT

Where would he take her?

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Raven half pushes, half carries a struggling Kris into a dark room. She is bleeding and bruised and half naked. He throws her to the floor. She emits a CRY as she hits the floor.

Raven looms over her.

RAVEN

So now we can be together, my princess.

KRIS

Why are you doing this? I thought you were nice.

RAVEN

(mocking)
You thought I was nice.
(beat)
Isn't that sweet? I am the wind that comes out of the night . . .

He grabs her by the hair and pulls her halfway up.

KRIS

Please don't.

RAVEN

How's your boyfriend?

Kris finds it difficult to talk through the pain.

KRIS

What boyfriend? I don't have a boyfriend.

RAVEN

Oh, Annabel. What about Larry?

Kris's eyes widen with horror.

KRIS

Larry?

RAVEN

Isn't he your boyfriend?

Painfully, Kris shakes her head no.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

Actually, even though you are LYING TO ME . . .

He shakes her by the hair.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

. . . you're right. Larry is no longer your boyfriend.

Kris looks at him in terror.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

Yes, I'm afraid your Larry contracted a terrible choking plague earlier tonight and has gone to join the majority.

KRIS

You monster!

Raven slaps her hard across the mouth.

RAVEN

And of course you know your partner, the oh-so-competent Sean Michaels, seems to have lost his head.

Big tears run down Kris's cheeks.

Raven moves over to the only door out of the room. Next to it is a small table with a laptop computer. He opens the computer and turns it on.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

Now, if we can only get Daddy dearest to join us.

Kris is speechless with horror.

Raven types something into the computer and then closes it.

He swings around to face Kris.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

You don't know how upset I was when Burt was taken off the case. But to find his daughter, his own flesh and (beat) blood, is the replacement.

He chuckles at the irony and shakes his head.

KRIS

NOOOOOO!

Raven gets up and moves toward her.

RAVEN

But first, I think you and I should have a little more fun, don't you?

Kris struggles to get up, but he is on her in a flash.

CUT TO:

EXT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Burt's car pulls up to the curb. Burt jumps out and hurries up the steps. Waiting in the open doorway is GRACE ANDREWS, a late-forties police lieutenant with fiery red hair.

GRACE

You got here fast, Burt.

She smells his breath.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Looks like you could do with some coffee.

CUT TO:

EXT. TWO-LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

Jerry's car speeds through the night.

CUT TO:

INT. JERRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Crystal lights up a joint and takes a deep toke.

STEVE

Jerry, this your stuff?

JERRY

Yeah. The hippies call it creeper weed.

CRYSTAL

(trying to hold in the smoke, but coughing instead)

Smooth.

She passes the joint back to Victor.

VICTOR

No thanks.

LAYLA

Pass it, you fool.

Victor takes the joint and passes it to Layla.

VICTOR

Don't you idiots know that to get a job in law enforcement you have to swear you've never done drugs?

JERRY

So you lie.

STEVE

Yeah. What's the big deal?

Layla passes the joint to Steve.

VICTOR

And if they find out?

CRYSTAL

How are they going to find out?

VICTOR

Any one of us could blab.

Steve passes the joint up to Jerry.

JERRY

Why are you being such a downer,
man?

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Burt, Grace, and WALTER APPLEBY, a youngish cop, are gathered
in Grace's office. Burt is drinking a cup of coffee.

GRACE

You realize, Burt, we could lose
our jobs for telling you any of
this.

WALTER

You being a private citizen and
all.

GRACE

But since it's Kris...

Burt looks at his old friend Grace with a knowing smile

BURT

And you've got nothing.

GRACE

It's all the same. Same clues. Same
M.O. Always one step ahead..

WALTER

We don't know how he got to the
bowling alley, how he got Michaels,
how he got out. Each exit road had
a car stationed. It's like he
sprouted wings and flew away.

Burt doesn't find the humor.

BURT

(bitterly)

And what's the great FBI doing?

GRACE

Sending in another agent to take
over. Should be here tomorrow
morning.

BURT

In this situation you have to
assume there is no tomorrow.

WALTER

What are you thinking?.

There is a KNOCK on the door.

GRACE

Come!

The door opens to reveal a young cop. He holds a piece of
paper.

YOUNG COP

Lieutenant Andrews?

GRACE

What is it?

YOUNG COP

There's a weird e-mail for Mr.
Williams.

He holds out his hand for the paper.

GRACE

What does it say?

BURT

(to the young cop)
Is this the whole message?

YOUNG COP

Yes, Sir.

BURT

(reading)
The letter you seek is not an a,
not a g, not a i. Looking inside
out will tell you why!

WALTER

What's that mean?

GRACE

The Purloined Letter. A story by
Edgar Allen Poe. A guy hides a
letter by turning it inside out and
writing another letter on it.

Burt tries to puzzle it out.

BURT

He knows that Kris is my daughter.

GRACE

Apparently so.

BURT

He wants revenge on me and he got
upset when I was taken off the case
and what better way to bring me

back in.

GRACE

(to the other two)

When Bird was a kid, Burt arrested him for killing his mother and step father.

Burt is still trying to puzzle it out.

WALTER

Look inside out...

BURT

The Purloined Letter. But how does it fit?

He thinks some more.

BURT (CONT'D)

(to Grace)

You searched the bowling alley thoroughly?

GRACE

I believe so.

BURT

If he were hiding there, right under our noses, it would explain how he arrived and left without being seen. Just like the Makepiece girl...

GRACE

(to Walter)

Walter, take some men and search the bowling alley for hidden spaces.

WALTER

Yes, Ma'am.

GRACE

And be especially careful.

CUT TO:

I/E. JERRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The car drives slowly along a two-lane blacktop.

JERRY

I know it's along here somewhere.

LAYLA

It certainly is dark.

A dirt road appears in the headlights. The car turns and the headlights illuminate a sign saying DEAD END. The sign lists to one side, and there are numerous bullet holes in it.

JERRY

Yep, this is it!

STEVE

Light up another joint.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Raven holds Kris from behind. He licks her neck. She makes a sound of disgust.

RAVEN

Nothing can ever dissever my soul
from the soul of the beautiful
Annabel Lee.

KRIS

Fuck you!

She slams her heel down on Raven's instep. The pain makes him loosen his grip and she breaks away.

She rushes through the door of the room only to find herself in another empty room. Moonlight pours through the window.

Behind her, Raven is CHORTLING.

Kris rushes to the window and tries to open it.

Over her shoulder car headlights are visible on the road.

CUT TO:

I/E JERRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The outline of the house is visible as Jerry drives the car slowly down the dirt road. Marijuana smoke fogs the air.

JERRY

Yeah! Just like tenth grade!

STEVE

What a great spot!

Layla grabs Steve's arm.

LAYLA

(pretending)
Oh, Steve, honey, I'm so
frightened.

STEVE

Don't worry. I will protect you.

CRYSTAL

(to Jerry)
What about you, big boy? Will you
protect me?

Only Victor does not join in the fun. He rolls down his window to let out the smoke. Layla looks over at Victor. She sees past him, up to the house

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Kris still tries to open the window and is screaming for help.

CUT TO:

INT. JERRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The gang inside the car is laughing so hard, Kris's screams cannot be heard.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Raven comes up behind Kris and with a mighty shove pushes her through the window.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Kris crashes through the window, surrounded by broken glass and frame and arcs through the air.

CUT TO:

I/E. JERRY'S CAR/RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Victor sees her fall through the trees.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Kris hits the ground with a thud and lies still. She is bleeding from many small cuts.

CUT TO:

INT. JERRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Jerry, Crystal, Steve, and Layla are still joking around and listening to the RADIO.

LAYLA

Hey!

The group is too busy to hear her.

LAYLA
(hysterical)
You guys!

Jerry slams on the brakes.

CRYSTAL
What's wrong?

LAYLA
I think I just saw someone fall out
of the window.

VICTOR
I think I saw it too.

JERRY
(to Crystal)
This is good weed.

STEVE
I think Jerry's right. This
stuff...

LAYLA
I saw something, I tell you.

CRYSTAL
Let's go look.

She gets out. Victor does as well. Then the others.

JERRY
Wait! I have a flashlight in the
trunk.

He moves to the back of the car.

CRYSTAL
Is this the house?

Jerry holds up his hand in triumph.

JERRY
Got it.

Victor has changed his mind.

VICTOR
Is it?

STEVE
Yes, this is the house.

JERRY
(fake scary)
OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO.

Crystal hits him.

CRYSTAL

Stop it.

Victor has not taken his eyes off the house. He gives a real shudder.

VICTOR

Let's get out of here!

Jerry opens the trunk.

STEVE

You were the one who wanted to check it out.

Steve heads towards the house.

VICTOR

I imagined it. Let's go back.

Jerry turns on the flashlight and points it directly at Victor's face.

JERRY

Stop being a little girl, Victor.

Jerry turns and begins to walk toward the house.

JERRY

(over his shoulder)

You can stay here... alone... if you want.

Crystal and Layla follow.

Victor hurries to catch up with the others.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The five approach the house. Layla points at the second story.

LAYLA

That window is broken.

Jerry shines the flashlight on the ground. Something reflects back the light.

CRYSTAL

What's that?

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Raven carries the semi-conscious body of Kris down a dank corridor.

KRIS

(faintly)
Please don't kill me.

Raven opens a thick metal door and carries her into a dungeon like space. A skeleton in a cage hangs from the ceiling. Other horrors adorn the walls.

RAVEN
Not yet, Princess, not yet.

He plunks her down on a table with straps for her wrists and ankles. He snaps them in place.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jerry shines the light on the full wreckage of Kris's fall.

LAYLA
Wow! Somebody did fall.

CRYSTAL
Is that blood?

Steve squats down for a closer look.

STEVE
Yes.

VICTOR
(on the verge of hysteria)
I knew we shouldn't have come.

JERRY
Where's the body?

CRYSTAL
It was probably just some animal.

VICTOR
Damn it, let's get out of here!

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/DUNGEON - CONTINUOUS

Raven turns his head as if he's heard something.

He runs his finger along Kris's cheek and down her throat.

RAVEN
I wish I had time to play,
Princess, but I have other things
to do.

KRIS
(hoarsely)
Let me go.

RAVEN

You know I can't do that, Princess.
But I'll leave you with something
to amuse you.

He flips a button and a spotlight shines at the ceiling where
something glints.

Kris narrows her eyes trying to see what it is.

Raven pushes another switch.

A four-foot curved blade drops out of the ceiling.

He pushes another button.

The blade begins to swing from head to foot and back again.

KRIS

Oh no!

Raven chuckles.

RAVEN

I see you remember the story.

Kris SCREAMS.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

Don't worry. You have some time.
Each swing is only an eighth of an
inch lower.

Kris struggles against her bonds.

RAVEN

What a nice surprise for your
daddy, don't you think so,
Princess?

He leaves the room through a small crawl space in the back
corner. After a moment, a heavy door THUDS shut in the
distance. The room is filled with the fragments of light
bouncing off the pendulum and the WHOOSH of the blade cutting
through the air.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Grace perches on the edge of her desk. Burt sits in a chair,
his face in his hands.

BURT

I feel so helpless.

GRACE

You want to go over to the bowling
alley? We might see something the
others miss.

Burt thinks for a minute.

BURT

No.

GRACE

We'll find her.

Burt stares into his coffee cup.

BURT

Grace, I've done nothing but fail that girl since the day she was born.

GRACE

Don't be ridiculous.

BURT

I let her mother get killed. I let her get involved with that drug addict Phelps. I got angry when she decided to join the FBI. And now this.

GRACE

Stop feeling sorry for yourself, Burt. It's not going to help. You were in no way responsible for Joyce's death, and all the other things were Kris's choices.

BURT

She told me about this set up. I should have stopped her.

GRACE

She's old enough to make her own decisions, for goodness' sake.

BURT

(miserable)
And I forgot her birthday.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

CRYSTAL

What should we do?

LAYLA

It's obvious someone is hurt bad.

CRYSTAL

I'll bet it was an animal got trapped in the house and panicked.

STEVE

Let's search the house.

VICTOR

Are you kidding!

LAYLA

Someone should go for help.

STEVE

I say we split up. Some of us search the house. Some of us go for help.

Jerry is messing with his cell phone.

JERRY

Why the hell can't I get a signal?

STEVE

Come on, Layla. Let's find a way in.

Jerry holds out the flashlight.

JERRY

Here. Take this. Crystal, let's go get your phone out of the car.

Steve takes the flashlight and he and Layla move off to the right.

CUT TO:

I/E. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

POV shot moving toward the broken upstairs window and then looking down on Crystal, Jerry, and Victor. Raven's HEAVY BREATHING is heard throughout.

CRYSTAL

Well? What do you want to do?

Jerry shines the flashlight over the broken glass and blood one more time.

JERRY

It would have to have been a really big animal.

VICTOR

Can we go?.

JERRY

Okay.
(to Steve and Layla)
You guys be careful.

Raven moves back from the window.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Grace and Burt are as before.

BURT

Grace?

GRACE

What?

BURT

My students were talking about the old Bird place last night.

GRACE

Uh huh.

BURT

Anybody check out there lately?

GRACE

No need. The place is falling to pieces. Actually, I think it was slated for demolition by the developer who bought it years ago.

BURT

Yeah. That's what I thought.

He thinks a minute.

BURT

What if?

He stops and thinks some more.

GRACE

What if what?

BURT

The Purloined Letter. Hidden in plain sight.

GRACE

So?

Burt jumps to his feet.

BURT

Grace, I think that's where he is. The old Bird place. Hidden in plain sight.

Grace considers.

BURT

Can you call Smitty and see if the zoning committee knows anything?

GRACE

Worth a call.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Steve and Layla contemplate the collapsed front porch of the

house.

STEVE

We could probably get in here
somehow.

LAYLA

There must be somewhere easier.

They continue around the house.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/DUNGEON - CONTINUOUS

The pendulum swings lower now. Kris watches it with
horrified fascination.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Grace puts down the phone.

GRACE

The developer ED ALLEN never filed
the paperwork. Burt, the house is
still there.

EXT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Burt and Grace emerge from the station and get into a police
car, Grace driving. The lights and SIREN come on as the car
SQUEALS out.

EXT. DEAD END ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Crystal, Jerry, and Victor make their way back to Jerry's
car. Jerry looks at his phone.

JERRY

Hey! Hold up a minute! I got a
signal.

He dials 911. His face lights up.

JERRY (CONT'D)

It's ringing.

All three are hopeful.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Hello?

CRYSTAL

Tell them to hurry.

JERRY

Yes. We need an ambulance.

VICTOR

And the police.

JERRY

And the police.

(beat)

We're located about seven miles
east of . . .

With a BELLOW, Raven rushes out of the bushes, wielding the
dead end sign.

With one swing, he cuts off Jerry's head.

Blood splatters the faces of the other two. They begin
screaming.

CRYSTAL

(to Victor)

Victor Run!

They take off toward the car, but Raven heads them off.

They change direction and plunge into the forest.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Steve and Layla have found a door.

Layla stops, listening.

LAYLA

Did you hear something?

STEVE

What?

LAYLA

It sounded like Crystal's voice.

STEVE

(teasing)

Maybe it's the ghost that haunts
the "old Bird house".

LAYLA

Very funny.

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Slowly, Steve opens the door and shines the flashlight
inside.

STEVE

Looks pretty deserted.

LAYLA

Let's go have a look at that broken window.

STEVE

Okay. Where are the stairs, I wonder?

LAYLA

It feels like the floor is vibrating.

STEVE

Let's just hope the whole house doesn't collapse like the front porch.

They move cautiously from room to room.

LAYLA

There's the stairs.

They begin to mount the stairs.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Victor and Crystal are running down a forest path as fast as they can.

At a crossing of paths, they stop, panting.

VICTOR

(voice shaking)
Is he still behind us?

All is SILENT. An owl HOOTS.

CRYSTAL

Which way?

VICTOR

How should I know?

Crystal points to the left.

CRYSTAL

That way is toward the road I think.

VICTOR

(hysterical)
He's going to kill us!

CRYSTAL

Only if we let him.

They move cautiously down the left-hand fork.

They hear Raven CHORTLE, but they can't figure out where it's coming from.

Victor falls on his face, his hands over his head.

VICTOR

Let us alone. Please!!!

CRYSTAL

Oh, for god's sake, Victor. Get up!

VICTOR

(sobbing)

No!

CRYSTAL

Fuck you then.

She moves on without him.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/DUNGEON - CONTINUOUS

The pendulum is moving nearer. Kris decides to try screaming again.

KRIS

Please. Is anyone there? Please help me.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/SECOND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Layla and Steve are in the room with the laptop.

STEVE

Look at this.

LAYLA

Someone has been here.

He flips open the laptop. It is still on, and the last message is there: THE LETTER YOU SEEK...

LAYLA (CONT'D)

Oh my God. It's him.

STEVE

Yeah.

LAYLA

Let's get out of here.

She starts toward the door. Steve grabs her arm.

STEVE

Wait! Layla, don't you see what this means? We have a chance to catch him.

LAYLA

Steve, he'll kill us.

STEVE

Think of the story. We'll be famous. New York Times best seller list...

LAYLA

The others should be back really soon.

STEVE

Let's have a look at that broken window.

They leave the laptop open, and its eerie light fills the room as they exit it.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Victor still lies face down in the path.

RAVEN (O.S.)

Victor.

Victor scrambles to his knees.

VICTOR

No. Please.

RAVEN (O.S.)

(a little closer now)

Victooooor.

Victor gets to his feet and begins running.

He hears the POUNDING of feet behind him.

RAVEN (O.S.,CONT'D.)

Viiiiic-toooooor.

Victor has gone mad with terror.

Suddenly, he rounds a corner, and there stands Raven.

RAVEN

Victor.

VICTOR

N-n-n-n-n-oooo. Please.

Raven grabs Victor by the arm and SNAPS it across his knee.

Victor shrieks.

Raven gives him a push.

RAVEN

Run, Victor, run!

Victor begins to run, holding his broken arm with his other

hand and sobbing and panting at the same time.

RAVEN (O.S.,CONT'D.)
Viiic-tooor.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Crystal trips over a three-foot hole in the path. She notices several dead branches lying around.

She breaks them up and sticks them in the hole, jagged side up.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/DUNGEON - CONTINUOUS

The pendulum is now within a foot and a half from Kris's body.

Her eyes are held like a magnet by the flashing blade. She struggles to free herself but has made no progress.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Layla and Steve stand in front of the broken window.

LAYLA
Steve, I think he threw someone out
this window.

STEVE
I think you're right.

He steps closer to the window and looks out.

STEVE (CONT'D)
What the hell?

LAYLA
What?

STEVE
If the car's still there, Where are
they?

Layla pushes up next to him.

LAYLA
Steve, let's get out of here.

STEVE
Come on, Layla. His victim might
still be alive.

LAYLA

Do you think so?

STEVE

He likes to torture them before he kills them. What if it were your sister?

They make their way back the way they came. As they come to the laptop, Steve picks it up and hurls it against the wall.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS

Burt leans forward as Grace drives.

BURT

Can't you go any faster, Grace?

Grace floors it.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Victor is trying to run as fast as he can.

RAVEN (O.S.)

Viiic-toooooor

Victor sobs.

VICTOR

Please. Leave me alone.

RAVEN (O.S.)

Viiiiic-toooooor.

Victor screams.

CUT TO:

INT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Crystal leans panting against a tree beyond her "tiger pit." She holds a large branch she means to use as a club.

From some distance off she hears Victor's CRIES of terror.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/FIRST FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Room after room appear to be entirely deserted and derelict.

STEVE

There's nobody living here.

LAYLA

Good.

They cross into the kitchen.

LAYLA (CONT'D)

There. Do you feel that?

STEVE

What?

LAYLA

That vibration. I don't think it's
just the house.

Steve gets on his knees and puts his ear to the floor.

STEVE

I can hear something mechanical.

LAYLA

I doubt it's the washing machine.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/DUNGEON - CONTINUOUS

The pendulum is now about six inches above Kris's body.

She has closed her eyes, but tears pour from under her closed
lids.

She has worked a little movement in her left hand. She pulls
a piece of glass out of her arm and begins to try cutting the
restraints free.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

LAYLA

Should we look for the basement?

Steve hands Layla the flashlight, then bends down and lifts
his pant leg to reveal a hunting knife.

STEVE

Good idea, but how do you get
there?

He flashes his light around the kitchen looking for a door.

CUT TO:

EXT. TWO-LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

The police car barrels along, lights flashing and SIREN
WAILING.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEAD END ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The police car speeds right past the turn off.

As the car goes by, we see the severed head of Jerry on the remainder of the post that held the DEAD END ROAD sign.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Victor has stopped running. He is fighting to get his breath and moaning.

RAVEN (O.S.)
Viiiiic-toooooooooor.

VICTOR
(panting)
No . . . No . . . Please . . . I
can't . . .

Suddenly, Raven looms over him.

RAVEN
Can't do what, Victor?

Victor sees him and staggers back, throwing up his good arm to protect himself.

VICTOR
What do you want from me?

RAVEN
Give me your hand.

He reaches out toward Victor who staggers back until his back is against a tree.

VICTOR
No . . . Why?

RAVEN
Give me your hand, Victor.

Victor holds out his good hand. Raven takes it gently but firmly in his.

Victor does not know what is coming, but he tries to smile ingratiatingly.

RAVEN (CONT'D)
What's the name of the girl,
Victor?

Victor realizes he is about to betray his friends but he will do anything to save himself.

VICTOR

Which one?

RAVEN

What do you mean, which one?

VICTOR

Crystal or Layla?

RAVEN

There are more than just the three
of you?

VICTOR

Yes. Layla and Steve went to
investigate the house.

Raven realizes that while he was playing with Victor others
were invading his place.

He pulls Victor to him.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Please don't hurt me.

RAVEN

Play time is over, Victor.

Victor shrieks in terror as Raven lifts him up over his head
and uses his head like a battering ram against a tree.

Brains and blood spatter the tree. As Raven drops the body,
he looks at it contemplatively.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

Ah, broken is the golden bowl!

He turns to chase after Crystal.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

Cryyyy-staaal.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Crystal brandishes her club.

CRYSTAL

(under her breath)

Come on, you bastard.

She cries out at full volume.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Hey... Over Here!

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/FIRST FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Steve and Layla have searched the whole first floor and found no entrance to the basement.

LAYLA

The stairs must be outside.

STEVE

Come on.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/DUNGEON - CONTINUOUS

The pendulum is now only inches from splitting Kris in half.

CUT TO:

EXT. TWO-LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

The car speeds into the night.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS

Grace is on the two-way radio.

GRACE

Did you find anything?

WALTER (O.S.)

A dead body in the basement and a tunnel into the basement of a barber shop.

Burt looks panicky at the mention of a dead body.

GRACE

The body. Was it . . . ?

WALTER

Some old guy. I.D. Says Merton Overbank. Where are you?

GRACE

We're going to check out the old Bird place.

WALTER

Need backup?

GRACE

Not yet.

WALTER

Okay, we'll return to the station.

The radio goes off.

GRACE
(to Burt)
At least it wasn't . . .

Burt turns to look at a gas station they are passing.

BURT
Grace, I think we passed it.

GRACE
Are you sure?

BURT
We've gone too far.

GRACE
Damn. You're right. I thought
there was a dead end sign.

CUT TO:

EXT. TWO-LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

The police car does a 180.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Steve and Layla are in back of the house and have found no
basement entrance. Then they see the separate shed and head
in that direction.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Crystal has moved a few feet in front of her pit. She has
left the club behind.

RAVEN (O.S.)
Cryyyy-staaal.

CRYSTAL
I'm right here, you bastard.

Suddenly, he is on the path in front of her. He reaches for
her, but she just eludes his grasp as she turns and runs.

RAVEN
I'm going to get you, Crystal.

He tears after her.

Again his hand is inches from grabbing her.

She leaps over the "tiger pit," and he crashes into it, a
jagged branch piercing deep into his thigh.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

Aaaaaaargh!

Crystal grabs her club from behind a tree and smashes Raven over the head with it. He collapses unconscious on the side of the pit.

CRYSTAL

Take that, you son of a bitch.

(yelling)

Steve! Layla! Where are you?

CUT TO:

EXT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/OUT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Steve and Layla have found an open door. There are steps going down.

LAYLA

Wait! Did you hear something?

STEVE

Again?

LAYLA

I swear I heard someone.

They both listen.

STEVE

Let's keep looking.

They descend the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/DUNGEON - CONTINUOUS

The pendulum is now so close that its passing ruffles Kris's hair. She has turned her head to one side so that it will not cut her face, but her body is just about to be sliced. She is bleeding from the hand as she continues to cut at the restraints with the broken glass.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Crystal bends over to check that Raven is unconscious. The wound on his head oozes blood, and the jagged branch is still embedded in his thigh.

Crystal straightens up.

CRYSTAL

(loud)

Victor? Layla? Can anybody hear

me?

Unseen by her, Raven's hand reaches out to grasp the end of her club.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

Steve? I need help, people.

With a roar and moving incredibly fast, Raven leaps up, wrests the club from Crystal's grasp and rams it into the soft area between her throat and jaw. The branch pierces her brain.

Raven holds up the club with Crystal's head as if on a pike, the only difference being that her twitching body is still attached.

Raven rips off a piece of Crystal's clothing and binds it around his bleeding thigh.

RAVEN

A dirge for her, the doubly dead.

He runs off limping.

CUT TO:

INT. OUT BUILDING BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Layla and Steve are at the bottom of the stairs. The room is dark, blood smears and a couple bones are scattered around

Steve sees a small opening in the corner.

STEVE

Let's see where it goes.

LAYLA

We should get the others.

STEVE

We're almost there. (beat) We have to go!

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/DUNGEON - CONTINUOUS

Kris has cut half-way through the restraint.

CUT TO:

EXT. TWO-LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

The police car speeds back the way it came.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS

Grace is driving for all she's worth, and Burt is peering intently at the side of the road.

BURT
There it is!

CUT TO:

EXT. TWO-LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

The cop car makes the turn into the dead end road on two wheels.

INT. POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS

Burt is the first to see the head.

BURT
Uh Jesus...

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST/RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Raven's POV; Raven's PANTING. The camera breaks through the last of the trees and stops at the sight of the open door on the shed. Then begins to move in that direction.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/DUNGEON - CONTINUOUS

Both Layla and Steve come to another opening and exit the crawl space. A SCREAM comes from inside.

Their faces register horror as they rush inside.

Layla rushes to free Kris's hands and Steve unties her ankles. They pull her off the table. Kris drops the bloody glass.

KRIS
Oh, thank God!

CUT TO:

EXT. DEAD END ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The police car has stopped short of Jerry's headless body, the dead end sign lying on top of it.

Burt is bending over the body. Grace is in the car summoning backup.

BURT

(loud)

It's one of my graduate students.

Grace gets out of the car and pulls her gun.

GRACE

What the hell was he doing here?

Burt looks towards the house.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/DUNGEON - CONTINUOUS

Kris has collapsed on Layla's shoulder while Steve looks for a way to turn off the pendulum which is still SWISHING through the air.

Raven jumps into the room with a ROAR.

KRIS

Oh no!

STEVE

Jesus!

Raven grabs the two women and forces them toward the pendulum.

Steve grabs Raven from behind and pulls him away from the women.

STEVE (CONT'D)

(to the women)

Get out of here!

LAYLA

What about you?

STEVE

Go get help!

The women rush toward the door, but Raven heads them off.

Steve tackles Raven at the knees, and with a ROAR of pain Raven crashes to the ground. But he is between the women and the door.

Steve tries to kick Raven in the head, but Raven grabs his foot and throws him off balance.

Steve crashes to the floor.

Raven leaps up and pulls Steve to his feet. Layla jumps on Raven's back and rakes his face with her nails.

Raven pushes Steve's head back and under the pendulum.

The air is full of GASPS and GRUNTS.

Steve looks with horror as Raven forces his head back so that

the pendulum is just over his throat.

Both Kris and Layla are pummeling and scratching and gouging Raven from behind.

A terrible GURGLE and the faces of Raven, Kris, and Layla are drenched in blood.

LAYLA

Nooooooooooooo! Noooooooooooo!

Raven drops Steve's lifeless body and turns to grab the two women.

Layla is hysterical. Kris takes a brick and throws it and hits Raven's wounded leg.

KRIS

Come on!

She grabs Layla and moves towards a small dark opening in the wall.

INT. CRAWL SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Kris and Layla scurry through the tunnel as fast as possible. Layla is trailing behind Kris for there is only room for single file.

Layla is jerked back momentarily like the female swimmer in JAWS. Her eyes widen in terror then, suddenly she is yanked into the darkness and out of sight.

Kris turns to see Layla disappear.

EXT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Burt and Grace are up to the house.

Grace hands her gun to Burt. She pulls out another and motions for him to go around the back. She heads around the other side.

INT. CRAWL SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Kris hurries to the end where she finds a door above her head. She pushes on it. It's latched.

EXT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Grace rounds the corner of the house.

Raven is up on her from behind. He grabs the gun with one hand and puts the other over her mouth. She looks frightened as his face is right up on her ear. He speaks softly.

RAVEN

The boundaries that divide life and
death are at best shadowy and
vague. Who shall say where the one
ends, and where the other begins?

Grace bites his hand while elbowing him in the ribs.

GRACE

Not you, you son-of-bitch!

Raven lunges. She takes his full weight, drops and flips him
over onto his back.

He leaps to his feet.

Before he can focus, she swings an old piece of barn wood and
strikes him in the shoulder. The nails protruding the end of
the wood draw blood.

Raven sweeps her legs and takes her down. He grabs the
garden(pitch) fork.

Grace slowly crawls back. She now understands the fear Raven
imposes on his victims.

With no time to waste, he raises the weapon and plunges it
into her chest.

INT. CRAWL SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Kris Works continues to work the latch. It's free! She peers
out as she slowly opens the door.

INT. RAVEN'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Kris is slowly opening the old crawl space door. As she
climbs up and out, the old floor door blocks her view from
the rear.

Raven is about to slam the door down on Kris when he sees a
hand holding a gun come in the same outside door as he came
in. It's Burt.

Raven uses the garden(pitch) fork to knock the gun out of
Burt's hand and onto the floor. Burt's arm is gashed open.

Kris is wounded and on the floor about five feet from the
gun. Raven is ten feet from the gun and ten feet from Kris.
Burt is five feet from Raven and the gun is much too far. The
old "Mexican" stand-off.

RAVEN

You fancy me mad. But you should
have seen me. You should have seen
how wisely I proceeded --with what
caution --with what foresight -
with what dissimulation I went to
work...

Burt looks at the gun and then to Kris. There is a fleeting

moment, a look only a father can give. Kris is crying, shaking her head "No". Burt looks at Raven then at the garden(pitch) fork.

BURT

Andrew, you don't have to do this.

RAVEN

Never was I kinder to the old man and his offspring than during the week before I killed him.

With one swift move, Burt lunges at Raven and takes the full brunt of the weapon to the abdomen.

Burt drops, Kris rolls to the gun and in one move, picks it up and fires four rounds into Raven's chest.

Raven flies back and out the door.

Kris runs to her dad.

KRIS

(sobbing)

DADDY!

She tries to hold on to him.

He is dying.

BURT

Sweetie... I... told you... I would change.

Burt expires.

Kris bows her head to weep, then realizes Raven is outside.

EXT. RAVEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Kris comes out the back door with weapon drawn.

RAVEN IS GONE.

Left in his place is a bullet proof vest with four bullet marks on the front and a single black feather.

CUT TO:BLACK

ROLL CREDITS