

THE PANIC ROOM

by

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THE SKYSCRAPERS OF NEW YORK

tower like prison guards over the city. The camera moves down, but there's an odd quality to the perspective, the buildings don't shift the way they should. And there's that helicopter up there in the left corner, just frozen in mid-air. We're looking at a huge, high-quality still photograph.

We drift down further, toward an Upper West Side neighborhood in the foreground. Still further down, toward a row of brownstones; moving in to one townhouse in particular, number 26, a four story graystone, late 1800s. Nice. Homey. You want to sit on the stoop, have a coffee, play tag with the kids.

We drift off the photograph, which is on the wall of --

INT TOWNHOUSE - FOYER DAY

-- the airy foyer of that very townhouse. Aside from the picture on the wall, the place is completely empty. Dust drifts in the light coming through the window at the front. It's peaceful, if a little dead.

The front door opens and a REAL ESTATE BROKER sweeps in, trailing a WOMAN and a NINE YEAR OLD BOY in her wake.

BROKER

-- only single family townhouse that's even on the *market* right now, much less on the Upper West Side. It's seventeen feet wide, fifty-five feet deep, forty-two hundred square feet, four floors with a rentable basement apartment, so five altogether, courtyard in back. This is the middle of the house, the entry floor, living room's over there. The kitchen floor's below us and there's two bedroom floors above. It's an enormous amount of space for the money, and the reason is, to be honest, most people don't want to deal with going up and down the stairs so much.

The Boy is deeply suspicious. He's wandered into the living room, looks through the big French doors, which look out over the courtyard area. There's another row of brownstones on the next block, and all the patios back up to one another. It looks tranquil out there, oasis in the city.

He leans up against the door, sighs, his breath fogs the window. Cold outside.

(CONTINUED)

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BROKER (cont'd)

But you get used to it, you do, Rob and I lived in a townhouse for years with three kids and you learn very quickly, do not, under any circumstances, go up or downstairs empty handed, it's as simple as that. You have to plan your day, that's all, so you're not trooping up and down every time somebody decides they don't like their socks...

The Boy catches his mother's eye and makes a "yak yak yak" motion with his hand. The Woman, who's in her early thirties, stifles a smile, swats her kid on the back of the head. The Broker turns, suspects she's being laughed at.

BROKER (cont'd)

Are you sure this isn't too much --
(changing words at the last
second)
-- *space* for just the two of you?

The Boy's no dummy. He knows what she meant.

BOY

We got rich.

The Broker laughs.

BOY (cont'd)

Serious. We got *really* rich.

The Broker stops laughing. The Woman clears her throat. Her son looks at her.

BOY (cont'd)

Before that, everything was fine.

The Woman tries to put an arm around him, but the Kid twists out from under it, wanders away across the empty floor. The Broker looks at the Woman, who just looks back at her, what, you got questions?

The Broker SCREAMS.

BROKER

I almost forgot! Here's the kicker,
check this out.

She opens a door in the wall of the foyer, revealing an old-fashioned cage elevator.

(CONTINUED)

BROKER (cont'd)

Working elevator. How much do you love
that?

BOY

Excellent!

He races over and throws open the cage door.

INT ELEVATOR DAY

The Boy jumps into the elevator and RATTLES the cage door shut. The Woman steps forward, her face framed by the bars. She lowers her voice, for her son only, she is kind, but firm.

WOMAN .

Make it easier. Not harder. Got it?

The Boy looks at her. Knows he was being a brat.

WOMAN (cont'd)

I love you.

The Boy doesn't answer, but hey, she got through to him, and that's what counts. The Woman closes the door. The Boy hits a button and the elevator starts to rise.

IN THE FOYER,

the Boy watches his mother as the elevator rises, bringing him to eye level with her. With the door shut, we can't hear him when he speaks, but we can read his lips -- "I love you too."

With the Boy safely gone, the Broker puts a hand on the Woman's shoulder, it's unwelcome familiarity.

BROKER

Divorce is hard on everyone.

The Woman looks at her. I am *not* going to get personal with you.

BROKER (cont'd)

Except me! I commission it! ACK! I'm
horrible! Let's start at the top.

CUT TO:

INT TOP FLOOR BEDROOM DAY

The Broker and the Woman poke their heads in a series of rooms, one after the other, the tour flying by quickly. First, an upstairs bedroom. Nice, roomy, looks out on the courtyard:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROKER

Top floor. Two bedrooms, one bathroom. Elderly man lived here before, he just passed away in a rest home. Poor thing, he was disabled the last three years, but he refused to move out. Such a recluse, wouldn't even let a nurse move in. Fixed up that ancient elevator and took care of himself.

INT MASTER BEDROOM DAY

Another floor, another empty bedroom. The Broker and the Woman pass through.

BROKER

Third floor, master bedroom. He was very wealthy. Norman Pearlstine?

WOMAN

Sounds familiar.

BROKER

Been in the papers lately.

(moving, through a bathroom)

Master bath. His kids are all suing each other over his estate. He was worth forty-six million or something, now it turns out they can't find fourteen million of it.

(singsong)

Somebody took something that didn't belong to them!

(through a closet)

Master closet.

From the hallway, there is a GROANING METALLIC sound, the elevator, and the delirious laughter of the boy, putting it through its paces. The Broker winces, speaks delicately, as if her mouth moves to hurt it:

BROKER (cont'd)

Very old elevator.

They pass into another room --

INT DEN DAY

-- which is a tiny bit larger than the master bedroom was.

(CONTINUED)

BROKER

Could be another bedroom, a den, an office, what have you. Why *do* you want so much space?

WOMAN

Been in a one bedroom apartment for eight years. I want houseguests. Family. Noise. Tumult.

From outside, the CREAKING of the elevator again. It's a noisy old brute, barely works.

BROKER

You're gonna get it. The minute people find out you live in Manhattan with empty bedrooms, you're practically running a bed and breakfast.

(heading for the door)

And we're walking, we're walking...

WOMAN

Smaller.

The Broker pauses in the doorway, looks back.

BROKER

I *told* you it was too much space.

The Woman is pacing across the room, toe to heel, measuring the width of the room.

WOMAN

No, no, no, this room. Isn't it supposed to be the same as the master bedroom?

BROKER

Yeah?

WOMAN

Well, this one's eleven feet wide...

INT MASTER BEDROOM DAY

The Woman and the Broker stand in the middle of the master bedroom again. The Woman finishes pacing off the width of the room.

WOMAN

... and the master's fourteen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Woman turns, sees the Broker is standing in the doorway smiling.

BROKER

That cute little figure and she's smart to boot.

(off the Woman's puzzled look)

I was waiting to see if you'd notice.

The Woman turns around, studies the dimensions of the room again. She looks at the far wall, the one that borders the house next door. She looks at the wall that corners it, opposite the window wall. She takes two steps back from it.

WOMAN

Three feet disappeared someplace.

The Broker steps forward, grinning mysteriously, and goes to the far end of the wall, near the entrance to the closet. There is a mirrored door that leads to the closet, and a mirror on the wall alongside it. If you look closely, you'll see that the mirrors are raked slightly toward one another, which causes an optical illusion in which the corner of the room appears much closer to the door than it is.

The Broker pushes on the top of the mirror on the wall. It makes a faint CLICK, then glides open a few inches off the wall. She pulls it toward her, opens it all the way, a hundred eighty degrees, and it fastens magnetically to the back of the closet door. There is smooth wall behind it, but if you look closely, there is a faint vertical crack in the wall.

The Woman looks at her -- what in the world? (See diagram on following page, if you're asking the same question.)

The broker pushes again, twice this time, first at the top, then at the bottom, and the smooth wall CLICKS ajar. The Broker pulls it wide open. The Woman steps forward, fascinated.

INT PANIC ROOM DAY

From the opposite end of a long, narrow, windowless space, we see the Broker and the Woman, standing in the open doorway, silhouetted by the sunlight streaming through the bedroom windows behind them.

BROKER

It's called a panic room.

She hits a switch and a row of bulbs flick on overhead.

WOMAN

A what?

(CONTINUED)

BROKER

Safe room. Inner sanctum. Castle keep. It's quite the vogue in high end construction right now, what with all the Internet money floating around the city and everybody freaked out about home invasion. There's whole companies do nothing but build these things.

WOMAN

You gotta be kidding me...

BROKER

Come on in.

WOMAN

I can see it fine.

BROKER

Oh, get in here.

They wander inside. As the Broker talks, the Woman looks left and right, studying the neatly arrayed survival supplies -- water, food packs, batteries, flashlights, tools, rope, clothes, blankets -- you get the idea.

WOMAN

Why in God's name would anyone need this?

BROKER

Think about it. You're a woman, you're living alone now. Your alarm goes off in the middle of the night, or you hear glass break, or your dog starts acting funny, or for whatever reason you think someone's broken into your home in the middle of the night. You know perfectly well what's on their mind, murder, rape, what have you. What are you going to do? Call the police and wait until they get here on Tuesday? Traipse downstairs in your sexy little underthings and check it out? *I think not!*

WOMAN

Okay, what do I do?

BROKER

You bolt out of bed, grab your kid, and make a beeline for your panic room. Reinforced steel core walls.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BROKER (cont'd)

Buried phone line, completely separate, not connected to the house's main line and never exposed throughout the house's infrastructure or outside the house -- you can call the police; nobody can cut you off. Your own ventilation system, complete with oxygen scrubber, so you've got plenty of fresh air while the cops take their sweet time getting here. And a bank of video monitors --

She hits a switch next to a dozen tiny video monitors, revealing a dozen different views of the house.

BROKER (cont'd)

-- so you can take a good long look at the weasels while they slap the cuffs on 'em.

The Woman nods, starting to sweat, and backs toward the doorway.

WOMAN

I hate it.

BROKER

What's to hate?

WOMAN

Ever read any Poe?

BROKER

I don't think so, but I love her album.

WOMAN

No, Edgar Allen.

BROKER

(thinks)

The furniture guy?

WOMAN

(giving up)

What's to keep them from prying open the door?

The Broker reaches past the Woman and pushes a red button on the wall behind her. With a sudden WHANG of steel, a heavy metal door leaps out of a slot in the wall and SLAMS shut, like a submarine hatch. A series of metal latches CLICK into place inside it, from top to bottom, securing it into place.

BROKER

Steel, four inches thick.

(CONTINUED)

The Woman takes a step back. They're now enclosed in the room.

BROKER (cont'd)

Everything's spring-loaded, even if the power's out this baby still works.

WOMAN

Open it.

BROKER

I'm telling you, old Norm didn't miss a trick with this room.

WOMAN

Open the door.

BROKER

And with kids like he's got, no wonder he wanted a place to hide. Did I mention the greedy little bastards are all suing each other?

WOMAN

I said open the door.

BROKER

Sorry...

She hits a green button and the door GROANS slowly open, recoiling its massive spring, and revealing the Boy, standing in the entryway, grinning widely.

BOY

My room. *Definitely* my room.

He bolts in, just as his mother bolts out.

INT MASTER BEDROOM DAY

The Woman stands just outside the door to the panic room, regaining her composure. Not crazy about tight spaces. Which we already knew.

BROKER

I know what you're thinking, the door's a safety hazard --

WOMAN

Among other things.

BROKER

-- but they thought of that too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Broker points. There's a tiny red beam that shines across the doorway, one at shoulder height --

BROKER (cont'd)

Infrared. Like the beam in an elevator doorway. Won't let the door close if something's blocking it.

-- and one at shin height. The Broker bends down, blocks the one at shin height with her hand.

BROKER (cont'd)

Watch.

She reaches up, to push the close button, but with one hand anchored at the floor, she can't quite reach it.

BROKER (cont'd)

(to the Boy)

Push that button for me, will you?

WOMAN

Don't!

BROKER

It's fine, it's fine.

The Boy pushes the close button, nothing happens. The Broker pulls her hand out of the beam, takes a step back. The Boy pushes the button again.

WHANG! The metal door rockets shut, the metallic clang reverberating in the room. Almost immediately, the fake piece of wall HUMS shut, of its own accord, followed a moment later by the mirror, which detaches itself from the back of the closet door and HUMS silently back into place, closing over the hidden door, making the corner of the room look like a corner again.

As the mirrored door closes, it shows the Woman her own reflection. She looks at herself, still rattled. From behind her reflection, a high pitched VOICE shouts at the top of its lungs.

BOY (O.S.)

CAN WE SLEEP HERE TONIGHT?!

The Woman smiles.

CUT TO:

INT TOWNHOUSE - FOYER DAY

The same house, some weeks later. The entry floor is piled high with moving boxes. The Boy lies sprawled out in the middle of the black and white tile, arms and legs splayed wide, exhausted.

The Woman is at the front door, tipping the MOVERS, thanking them. The Movers, all grumbling and complaining, look like coronary cases.

WOMAN

Thanks a lot... I know, lotta stairs, I know... Hey, I gotta live here, think how I feel... Don't smoke, you'll die by Friday...

They leave. She staggers across the room, collapses on the floor next to her son. They stare up at the ceiling, beat.

BOY

We shoulda got an apartment.

WOMAN

Well, I know that *now*...

BOY

478-5050.

WOMAN

I can't move.

BOY

478-5050.

WOMAN

You do it.

The Boy drags himself to his feet.

ON TOP OF A BOX,

the Boy picks up the Woman's cell phone, tries to dial.

BOY

Battery's dead.

WOMAN

Let's see if Bell Atlantic got around to us yet.

INT KITCHEN DAY

The Woman picks up a wall phone in the kitchen, which is on the ground floor of the house, at street level. She gets a dial tone. She's pleasantly surprised.

WOMAN

47...

BOY

8-5050.

The Woman nods, finishes dialing. A VOICE answers.

VOICE (O.S.)

Domino's Pizza, please hold.

CUT TO:

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

Night has fallen. The Woman and the Boy sit at a small table in the middle of the kitchen, surrounded by packing boxes. They eat pizza. They chew, silently. The Boy drinks a diet Dr. Pepper. The Woman finishes a glass of wine.

The Woman's eyes are moist. The Boy notices. She notices him noticing, shrugs. I'm human, what do you want me to do, hide it?

The Boy looks away, goes back to chewing. After a moment:

BOY

Fuck him.

WOMAN

(feebly)
Don't.

Pause.

BOY

Fuck her too.

WOMAN

I agree. But don't.

The Boy nods. Okay, I won't.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Take a few steps back and pick another path. That's all. Happens to everybody.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Now if only she believed it.

The Boy resumes chewing. The Woman picks up her glass, to refill it.

A tear rolls off her nose and PLOPS into the middle of it.

CUT TO:

INT BOY'S BEDROOM NIGHT

The Boy's bedroom is full of unpacked boxes, but his twin bed has been set up and the Boy is in it, hair wet, pajamas on. He reads from a book ("Tom Swift and His Repelatron Skyway") while the Woman, drowsy, lies next to him, listening.

BOY

"Tom's throat felt so dry and tight that it was a moment before he could make any sound come out. "Dad!" he croaked. "I'm - inside - the - machine!"

"Great Scott!" the elder scientist gasped. He dashed across the laboratory and switched off the repelatron's motor. "What happened, son?"

"The Durafoam hardened, Dad. Get a solvent, quick -- you know the formula!"

INT BATHROOM NIGHT

In the master bathroom, the Woman soaks in a bath. She is exhausted. She reaches for her wine glass, finishes the last of it. Again.

She stretches for the bottle, which is on the floor next to her. She refills the glass.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The Woman, dressed in an old Knicks tee shirt and boxer shorts, stands next to the alarm panel in the master bedroom, reading from an instruction manual. She's frustrated. She mutters, slurring, a bit drunk.

WOMAN

Bypass non-ready zones... shunt, enter, zone number...

She tries it, pushing a few buttons, but the alarm panel BEEPS at her disapprovingly. She's doing something wrong.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She sighs, sits on the floor, gets serious about figuring out the instructions.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Bypass non-ready zones... ah, shunt,
enter, shunt *again*, zone number...
wait...

HER FINGERS

dance over the alarm panel, some time later. She seems to have figured it out, and a small red light on the panel lights up.

system armed

The very moment the red light goes on, we cut sharply to --

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

-- the darkened panic room, where the stack of a dozen small video screens all suddenly wink to life, showing a dozen views of the house. Whatever she pushed turned these on too, probably not what she meant to do, but at least she got the alarm on for the night.

The door that leads from the panic room to the master bedroom hangs open. In the middle of the floor in here, somebody has made a small tent of blankets and couch cushions. The Boy must have been playing here before bed.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The Woman puts sheets on her bed in the master bedroom.

She fills a glass of water, puts it on a box she's using for a night table.

She plugs in a battery charger for her cell phone, places the phone in the cradle. It BEEPS. "Charging."

She sets the digital clock, puts it next to the glass of water. It's 12:26.

She gets in bed, her side, the left side.

She lies in the dark, half an acre of empty bed across from her.

She cries.

We drift off her, see the clock again. The time changes, the number one dissolves away, changing the time to --

DISSOLVE TO:

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

-- 2:26. The Woman is in a hard, boozy sleep. We drift out the door of the master bedroom, into the third floor hallway, and down the open stairwell. We glide through the entry floor, still gently falling through the stairwell's airway, dropping even further, all the way down to the kitchen floor, the ground floor.

We drift across the darkened kitchen, serpentine through the canyon of moving boxes, approach the window that looks out on the street.

We move right up against the window, peer through the glass just as --

-- a van pulls up across the street and stops. Can't see through its windows. No movement for a moment, then the driver's door opens and a MAN climbs out. He wears dark clothes.

The Man closes the door, looks both ways, and starts across the street toward us. He's carrying a bag of some kind. He reaches our kitchen window, which is heavily barred, and peers inside, right at us. Can't see anything, it's darker in here than it is out there.

He turns, looks both ways on the street again, then steps up, onto the window ledge. Now we can only see his legs, can't tell what he's doing. He's reaching up, stretching for something. It drops into view with a metallic SCRAPE.

The fire escape.

The Man climbs, his feet disappearing from our field of vision.

We turn around, facing the other way in the kitchen. We start back the way we came, through the canyon of boxes in the kitchen, toward the stairwell.

INT STAIRWELL NIGHT

Back in the stairwell, the exact reverse of the shot we saw earlier. We're drifting up, off the kitchen floor, through the entry floor, and as we rise we notice something all the way up on the roof that we couldn't see before, when we were looking down.

A skylight. We continue to rise, drawn toward it. We move up, through the master bedroom floor, creeping up alongside the stair banister, now reaching the top floor of the house, and just as we near the skylight --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- a figure appears, visible through it. The Man in dark clothes, on the roof now. He stops, peers down through the skylight, looking at us without seeing us again.

He steps across the skylight. This is not the way he intends to enter. We drift again, following his soft footsteps on the roof, which we can hear faintly through the ceiling.

Here in the hall, just outside the Boy's bedroom, a closet door is ajar. We squeeze through the gap and into the closet.

IN THE CLOSET,

it's completely dark. Can't see a thing. But then a sliver of light appears, coming from above. We look up. There is a ladder that's bolted to the wall in this closet, it leads up to a square panel in the ceiling.

Roof access. And that roof access panel is moving, ever so slightly, moonlight spilling in as it twists in its setting. A shiny silver something slides through the crack along the edges of the portal.

It slithers along the edge of the hatchway, searching for something. It finds a small round nub in the crack. The silver something stops. It HUMS with electricity for a moment, then there is a bright spark and a soft CRACK.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

In the master bedroom, a message appears on the alarm panel:

zone 13 defaulted

INT CLOSET NIGHT

In the closet, the silver something withdraws and the roof access panel is removed. A million stars are visible in the night sky above. But we're inside.

And in a moment, so is the intruder. The Man peers down, through the open hatchway, then slips through the opening and climbs silently down the ladder.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

In bed, the Woman stirs. An alcohol sleep is a restless one, and she's suffering.

She sits up groggily, chugs a glass of water. Lies down again.

INT FOURTH FLOOR HALLWAY NIGHT

One floor up, the Man steps into the hallway and starts for the stairs, moving quickly and confidently. Knows where he's going, knows what he wants. He starts down the stairs, happens to glance to the side as he does so.

He freezes. He's looking in the open doorway of the top floor bathroom, staring hard at something that clearly disturbs him.

A nightlight. Plugged into an outlet in the baseboard in the bathroom. (Dexter, for the record, from "Dexter's Lab.") The Man climbs the stairs again, concerned, goes to the door of the bathroom. He looks from the nightlight to the countertop.

There are moving boxes on the countertop. His eyes widen. This is news to him, bad news.

He takes a step back, takes a breath. He turns, looks to the end of the hall. His eyes now adjusted to the darkness, he notices something he didn't see before, something coming from under the door to the fourth floor bedroom.

Light. From inside. From another nightlight.

INT BOY'S BEDROOM NIGHT

In the top floor bedroom, a nightlight burns in another outlet. Nearby, the Boy is asleep in bed, the covers kicked off.

The door to the Boy's bedroom glides open, terribly slowly. The Man stands in the doorway, staring, aghast, at the mountain of moving boxes piled in the room. His gaze falls on the Boy in the bed.

The Man just stares, beside himself. His lips mouth a word, soundlessly. Doesn't take a lip reader to guess it.

Fuck.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

In the master bedroom, the Woman flops over in bed, facing away from the doorway, really having a rough go of it. She slept too hard before, now she's awake, her head is killing her, she's really paying the price of four glasses of wine.

She lies still, on her side, facing us.

Behind her,

the bedroom door moves,

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

silently.

Opening.

The Man stands there, one finger still on the door he's just pushed open. He stares at the sleeping form of the Woman on the bed, whose back is to him. He has no idea she's awake.

The Woman lies in bed, eyes wide open, no idea a Man is standing in the doorway to her bedroom.

Noiselessly, the Man moves away, down the hall. The moment his head disappears down the stairwell --

-- the Woman flops over again, facing the doorway. She closes her eyes, gives sleep another try.

CUT TO:

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

The Man walks across the kitchen, shaking his head in exasperation at the packing boxes all around him. He goes to the front window, peers outside. He reaches for a light switch on his right.

Through the window, we can see the stoop light go on. Then off, then on and off again.

Still through the window, we see the side panel door of the van slide open.

TWO MORE MEN climb out. They are also dressed in dark clothes. They also carry satchels.

They walk calmly across the street, grow large in the window as they approach us. The first intruder (from now on we'll call him ONE) steps over to the kitchen door, runs his silvery strip through its gap. Another HUM and spark.

AN ALARM PANEL

flashes again.

zone 1 defaulted

IN THE KITCHEN,

One opens the kitchen door, letting TWO and THREE slip inside, then closes it again. Two's a big guy, Three isn't. They freeze, staring at the moving boxes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

19.

01/17/00

TWO

Fuck.

ONE

I know.

THREE

What?

ONE

Shhh.

THREE

(seeing the boxes)
Fuck!

ONE

Keep your voice down.

TWO

When did this happen?

THREE

This is my luck.

ONE

Must have been today, it was empty
yesterday.

THREE

This is exactly my luck.

TWO

Fuck *me!*

THREE

They just bought it two weeks ago!

ONE

Tell me about it.

THREE

They *can't* be here already!

TWO

How many?

ONE

Two, a woman and a boy, both asleep.

TWO

Unless Daddy comes back later.

(CONTINUED)

ONE

Daddy's not coming back.

TWO

How do you know?

ONE

Two thirty in the morning on moving day? If he was with them, he'd be with them.

THREE

That's it, we're outta here, we blew it, we waited too long, let's go.

ONE

We can handle this.

TWO

You're fucking A we're gonna handle this.

THREE

Hah?

TWO

I didn't come this far...

ONE

We're okay.

THREE

Exactly when did you guys go insane?

ONE

Forty-five minutes. That's all I need. That's like nothing.

THREE

What if she has a gun?

ONE

Doesn't seem like the type.

THREE

Really? You had a nice conversation, got to know her a little bit, she told you her feelings on gun control?

TWO

Let's just run 'em off, scare the shit out of 'em?

ONE

She'll call the cops, they'll be here
before I get unpacked. Forty-five,
man, I can't do it in less.

THREE

What if she has a gun?

TWO

She has a gun, I got a gun, everybody's
got a gun. Big fucking deal.

They look at him. He looks back at them -- what? He rolls his
eyes, pulls up his sweatshirt, revealing a .38 tucked into his
belt.

Pause.

THREE

Asshole.

ONE

We said...

TWO

(to Three)

A guy shows you a gun, you insult him?
What are you, an idiot?

ONE

We agreed...

TWO

You agreed.

ONE

The fuck did you bring that for?

TWO

You're welcome.

THREE

I'm outta here.

He moves for the door. One, trying desperately to hold this
together, gets there first, blocks the door with his back.

Three stares at him. Two stares at him. One pleads.

ONE

We *can* handle this.

No answer.

(CONTINUED)

ONE (cont'd)

It's still a good plan. It's just... different.

THREE

Yeah. It's kidnapping.

ONE

Not if we keep 'em here. You can't kidnap somebody in their own house.

TWO

Nobody leaves.

ONE

It's breaking and entering, unless we take 'em someplace.

TWO

Nobody leaves. You walk out that door in the middle of the night, a cop sees you, we're all dead.

THREE

I'm not killing anybody.

ONE

Who said kill?

TWO

Who said a single fucking word about killing?

ONE

Nobody's gonna die.

TWO

(to Three)

What the fuck is the matter with you? Jesus, you're an old woman.

ONE

Nobody has to get hurt.

TWO

And nobody gets out.

THREE

You know how many doors and windows this place has? What if she fights, we get distracted, the kid runs off? How are we supposed to keep track of 'em?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

THREE (cont'd)

We look away for a minute, they jump for a window. You telling me --

(points to Two)

-- he's not gonna shoot? Nobody's gonna get hurt? Isn't that what hijackers say right before they kill a hostage?

ONE

(puts a hand on his shoulder)
Do you like your life?

THREE

Let go of me.

ONE

Answer the question.

THREE

You're hurting my arm.

ONE

Do you like your life?! Do you enjoy the intolerable bullshit you listen to every single hour of every single working day? How many times a week do you think about killing yourself?

THREE

Hey, not in front of him...

ONE

How good did you feel every time we talked about this? What about me? If one of us goes, we all go.

THREE

Everything's different...

ONE

Yes, I know, things are different, there's people here, he brought a gun, it was supposed to rain and it didn't. Things changed. But the question is the same. Do you like your life?

Three doesn't answer, just looks him in the eye, moved but terrified. Almost imperceptibly, he shakes his head no.

ONE (cont'd)

Then let's change it.

A FEW MINUTES LATER,

the contents of one of the satchels is spread out over the kitchen counter, every kind of tool imaginable, many that are unfamiliar to us. One's voice comes over as they sort through the pile, choosing the things they'll need -- we're not yet sure for what.

ONE (V.O.)

The house has eight doors -- kitchen entry, front stoop, and the six French doors in back. We're gonna seal 'em up.

INT KITCHEN FLOOR - REAR DOORS NIGHT

At the French doors that lead to the garden, One has a cordless screwdriver and a pile of long screws in his hand. He reaches up, drills a screw through the door, into the corner of the door frame. He does the same at the bottom of the door.

He unlocks the doorknob, tries it. The screws hold the door fast. He moves on, to the next door.

ONE (V.O.)

There's ten exterior windows, the top eight have window guards, you can't get out anyway. The bottom two are vulnerable. We're gonna seal those up, too.

INT LIBRARY NIGHT

In the library, in the front of the house, Two screws shut a window, driving the long screws into its frame.

ONE (V.O.)

They can't get out of this house. They can't even *think* they can get out of this house. That's how accidents happen, that's how people die. We just keep them here and keep them quiet.

Finished, Two looks out at the street, at two CLUBGOERS walking home.

He pulls the drape.

ONE (V.O.)

Nobody leaves. No phone calls.

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

In the kitchen, Three goes to the wall phone the Woman used to call for pizza earlier. He cuts the phone wire with a knife.

ONE (V.O.)

Nobody gets hurt.

Three stands there, staring at the phone, wiping the sweat from his palms on his pants. Not satisfied, he pulls the phone itself out of the wall, cuts the cord for the handset too.

ONE (V.O.)

And in forty-five minutes we're gone.

CUT TO:

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The Woman sits up in bed. She's bleary, her head feels like someone rested a manhole cover on it. She gets up, in the dark, and staggers off toward the bathroom door, feeling her way with her arms, her eyes not adjusted to the dark.

She steps through the door.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

She walks into the bathroom and feels around for a light switch, but can't find it. She blinks, squints, tries to get her bearings. The only light is a harsh white glow that comes from along one wall, from a bank of tiny video monitors.

She finds the light switch, flicks it on, it nearly blinds her. She's not in the bathroom. She's wandered into the panic room by mistake.

She turns around, walks out, leaving the lights on behind her.

We linger for a look at the video screens. If only she'd done the same, she'd see what we see.

ON THE MONITORS,

we see the men with tools, working quickly and quietly, trapping her in the house.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

Using the light that spills from the open door to the panic room, the Woman comes back into the master bedroom and finds the proper door to the bathroom.

INT BATHROOM NIGHT

The Woman SNAPS the cap off a jug of Advil and dumps three into her palm. She pops them in her mouth, searches for a glass for water, finds none, bends to the spout for a gulp to wash them down.

She turns to the toilet.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

In the living room, a few grains of sawdust blow across the threshold of the living room French doors, the ones that lead out to the courtyard. The final screw is driven into the base of the door, sealing it off.

One stands. Two and Three are just arriving from other parts of the house, where they've finished their work.

One gestures for Three to put a screw in the top right corner of the last door. Three wipes his sweaty palms again and sets to it.

One scoots over, to put a screw in the bottom corner of that same door.

INT BATHROOM NIGHT

The Woman stands, flushes the toilet.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

One, Two, and Three freeze. They look up, hearing the water rushing through the pipes in the ceiling directly above them.

They stare at the ceiling, following with their eyes as a pair of feet pad across the CREAKY floor. Finally, they hear a SQUEAK of bedsprings as the Woman climbs back into bed.

They hold a moment longer, a silence grows --

-- and they resume their work.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The Woman rolls over, to go back to sleep. She sees she's left the lights on in the panic room. She TSKS, gets out of bed, and walks across the floor toward it.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman steps into the panic room, raises her hand to the light switch --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- and stops, her hand frozen in mid-air. She cocks her head, looking at something she can't understand.

She blinks. Takes a step, further into the room. She stares at the video monitors -- at the three men in dark clothes, working in her living room, sealing up her house.

This can't be. These are just pictures, they have no relation to reality. She drops to her knees, her face inches from the screens, and reaches out to touch them, as if trying to make sure they're really there.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Three's hands are quivering as he works, and those palms are mighty sweaty. Suddenly, the tip of the cordless screwdriver pops out of the head of the screw he's working on. The screwdriver twists in Three's hand, he paws, trying to regain his grip, but it slips from his grasp entirely.

The screwdriver falls.

Three's eyes pop wide, he watches as the screwdriver drops toward the marble floor.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

Watching the video monitors, the Woman stares in horror as the image of the screwdriver hitting the floor is verified by the SOUND of it clattering to the tile, audible through the open door to the panic room.

She GASPS. It *is* real.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

In the living room, One's eyes are wide as saucers, staring at the clattering screwdriver that is rolling to a halt on the marble floor just inches in front of him.

He looks up at Three, a ferocious look. Two looks at him too, enraged. Three is terrified.

One stands. He points at Two, speaks in an urgent whisper.

ONE

Top floor, front room. Get the kid and keep him there. I'll bring her up.

(points at Three)

Base of the stairs. Nobody gets past you.

He heads for the stairs. Two follows close behind him.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman moves. Leaps to her feet and dashes out of the room.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The Woman races across her bedroom, flies out the door, and bolts up the carpeted stairs, headed for the top floor.

INT BOY'S BEDROOM NIGHT

The Woman races into the Boy's room, drops onto the bed, and grabs the Boy by the shoulders, trying to rouse him.

WOMAN

Wake up... wake up...

But he's in a profound child's sleep and won't wake up.

INT THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY NIGHT

One floor down, One and Two reach the third floor landing. Still moving stealthily, One heads down the hall for the master bedroom, where he thinks the Woman is still sleeping. Two heads for the stairs that lead to the top floor.

INT BOY'S BEDROOM NIGHT

The Woman is desperate, still can't wake the Boy.

WOMAN

Wake up... come on, come on...

She sees a plastic cup on his night table/box, half filled with water. She snatches it and tosses the water in his face.

Now he's awake. And pissed off. He SPUTTERS, SHOUTS.

BOY

WHAT?! WHAT'S GOING ON?!

INT THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY NIGHT

Two, at the base of the stairs that lead to the top floor, hears the kid shouting. He starts up the stairs, quickly.

INT BOY'S BEDROOM NIGHT

On the top floor, the Woman is already dragging the Boy out of the room and into the hallway.

INT HALLWAY NIGHT

The Woman and the Boy come out of the Boy's bedroom just as Two reaches the top of the stairs at the other end. They're cut off.

The Woman freezes, thinking, no idea what to do for a second. She looks frantically to her right -- the bathroom, dead end.

She looks to her left.

The elevator.

She yanks open the elevator door, throws aside the gate, and races inside with the Boy.

Two takes off down the hall, lunging for the elevator.

INT ELEVATOR NIGHT

The Woman SLAMS the gate shut and PUNCHES the button for the first floor. The elevator GROANS to life and starts down -- *slowly*.

The Boy looks up at her, terrified.

BOY

What's going on?!

WOMAN

People. In the house.

As the elevator descends, they see Two, through the window in the door, as he drops to his knees, to get a good look at them.

INT TOP FLOOR HALLWAY NIGHT

Two turns from the elevator, SHOUTS to the open stairwell.

TWO

IN THE ELEVATOR! BOTH OF 'EM, HEADED
TOWARD YOU!

INT THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY NIGHT

One turns from the open doorway of the master bedroom and races back down the hall, toward the elevator. He reaches the door, peers through the window.

He sees the bare feet of the Woman and the Boy, dropping toward him. He grabs the door handle, pulls as hard as he can, but it stays locked, with the elevator moving beyond.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He bangs on the button, hoping the elevator will stop. As the Woman and the Boy drop fully into view, he stands there, eye to moving eye with her for a moment. But the elevator doesn't stop, it keeps going down.

INT ELEVATOR NIGHT

The Woman stands frozen, terrified, staring at One as they move past him.

One has another go at the door, pulling as hard as he can, actually *bending* the door, but the elevator is still moving, the catch holds fast and the door won't open.

As they pass, his face suddenly disappears, he takes off.

INT STAIRWELL NIGHT

One flies down the stairs, to cut them off at the first floor.

INT ELEVATOR NIGHT

WOMAN

He's going down.

BOY

Panic room.

WOMAN

What?!

BOY

PANIC ROOM!

She thinks, then punches the three button, to go back up.

But the elevator continues down. She jabs at it, futilely.

BOY (cont'd)

No. You gotta...

He reaches past her, pushes the STOP button. The elevator jerks to a halt. Then the Boy pushes three. Now the elevator starts to rise.

The Woman looks at him, impressed. Loves that kid.

INT ENTRY FLOOR NIGHT

In the foyer, One freezes, hearing the elevator stop and start again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ONE
SHE'S COMING BACK UP TOWARD YOU!!

He takes off up the stairs again.

INT FOURTH FLOOR HALLWAY NIGHT

Two, still on the top floor, heads for the stairs, fast.

INT STAIRWELL NIGHT

One races back up the stairs. They have her caught in the middle.

INT THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY NIGHT

The door to the elevator BANGS open on three, the gate RATTLES aside, and the Woman and the Boy leap out. They take off down the hall, toward the doorway to the master bedroom.

Two flies down the stairs, not twenty feet behind them.

One thunders up the other stairs, not ten feet behind them.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The Woman and the Boy run through the master bedroom and lunge through the open doorway to the panic room.

One and Two burst through the doorway to the bedroom, just a few steps away.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman and Boy trip over each other coming through the doorway, they tumble to the floor of the panic room, the door wide open behind them.

The Woman spins around, hurls herself at the red button on the wall --

-- One leaps, sailing through the air toward them --

-- the Woman SLAMS her open palm on the red button, the massive coiled spring that holds the metal door open is released, the steel barrier leaps forward out of the wall --

-- and WHANGS shut in a split-second.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

One SLAMS into the closing metal door, banging his shoulder into it, and slithers to the ground, too late.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman rolls over and pulls her Boy into her arms, both of them breathing hard, asking each other if they're okay, scared out of their minds.

But safe.

The Woman spots the telephone, the one with the special buried phone line. She lunges for it, snatches it from its cradle, listens for a dial tone.

Nothing.

WOMAN

Damn it!

BOY

It doesn't work?!

WOMAN

Different phone line, I never hooked it up!

She hurls it down, looks back at the Boy. He seems a bit pale, scared. She goes to him, holds him, reassures him.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

One is slumped at the base of the door, livid, in pain, pounding on it with his fists, screaming "NO!" over and over again, crazy with rage.

Two stands in the middle of the room, chest heaving, hands on his knees.

Three finally comes racing into the room and stops in the doorway, looks from Two to One to the door to the panic room, figures out the situation.

THREE

Oh God, don't tell me...

Two, standing in the middle of the room, begins to laugh.

THREE (cont'd)

Tell me they're not in *there*...

We rise up, above them, above the room, looking down on them, the rats-in-a-maze shot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We rise up further still, above where the ceiling ought to be, to look down on this room *and* the one beside it, the room behind the four inches of reinforced steel, the panic room in which the Woman and the Boy kneel in the middle of the floor, holding each other tight.

Standoff.

CUT TO:

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

Very close on the metal door, from inside the panic room. An ear moves slowly into frame, presses up against the cold steel. Listens.

The Woman pulls away from the door, shaking her head. A short time has passed, she and the Boy are composed.

WOMAN

Can't hear a thing.

BOY

What do they want?

WOMAN

I have no idea. Maybe the read in the paper about your Dad's company selling and they think we have a lot of cash or jewels or something. They're in for a rude surprise.

She settles back on the floor, tries to make herself comfortable.

BOY

What are we gonna do?

WOMAN

We're staying right here. They're probably more scared than we are, *if* they're even still here.

The Boy crawls over to the bank of video monitors, studies them.

BOY

They're still here.

WOMAN

Forget about 'em. We're just gonna wait. Let 'em rob us, it's only stuff.

BOY

What if they find my wallet?

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

They're not gonna find your wallet.
You can't even find your wallet.

BOY

They're gonna try to hurt us, aren't
they?

WOMAN

They can't hurt us.

BOY

What if they get in here?

WOMAN

Dude, they *can't* get in here. Hey.
Look at me. There is no possible way
they can get in here. How do you feel?

BOY

I'm okay.

WOMAN

Shaky?

BOY

Nope.

WOMAN

Chills?

BOY

Huh uh.

He checks his wristwatch for some reason.

BOY (cont'd)

I'm three digits, I'm fine.

WOMAN

Okay, okay.

He looks back at the video monitors.

BOY

Mama mia, quesadilla.

WOMAN

What?

CONTINUED: (2)

BOY

They're pissed off.

(quickly)

Mad. I mean mad.

She crawls over to join him, scans the screens.

ON THE MONITORS,

there are a dozen different views of the house. Front stoop. Kitchen. Dining room. Entry floor. Living room. Master bedroom. Den. Top floor bedrooms, both of them. Top two floor hallways. Even one with a shot of the inside of the elevator.

The three intruders are gathered in the living room, standing in a tight little circle, having a hell of an argument. Lots of gesturing, fingers jabbing in chests, but we can't hear a word.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman and Boy can't resist a nervous giggle. The Woman furrows her brow, noticing something interesting to the right of the video monitors.

She slides over, studies a panel there with sixteen different buttons and a small grilled area.

WOMAN

Ah ha...

The Boy joins her, looks at the buttons. Each one is labeled with a different room name -- den, kitchen, master bedroom, etc. Up in the corner there is a button that says "ALL PAGE," down in the opposite corner there's a button marked "TALK."

The Woman looks at the Boy, can't resist a smile. He knows what she's thinking.

BOY

Do it.

She leans forward, clears her throat.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

One, Two, and Three are standing in the half-darkened living room, in the middle of their argument, when a VOICE booms around them.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Attention shitheads.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They practically jump out of their shoes, looking around for the source of the voice.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Yes, you, that's right.

Only One has remained relatively calm. After he gets over the initial shock, he walks toward the tiny camera that's hidden in an upper corner of the living room wall and stares up at it.

WOMAN (O.S.)

The police are on their way. I suggest you get out of here.

ON THE MONITORS,

One looks up at the camera and shakes his head, wagging a finger from side to side. He raises a hand, makes a gesture like a telephone, then wags his finger again. The message is clear -- you don't have a phone.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman is puzzled.

WOMAN

How'd he know that?

She presses the talk button again.

WOMAN (cont'd)

(into speaker)

Hey, it's your life. But it's my house. Take what you want and get out.

She looks at the monitor again.

ON THE MONITORS,

the three of them have an urgent, whispered conference, then they all start patting their pockets for some reason, turning in circles, looking for something.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman and Boy watch them, confused.

WOMAN

What a bunch of...

BOY

Bozos.

ON THE MONITORS,

One holds up a finger to the camera -- wait a second -- while Two and Three rush off screen, looking for something. Three returns a moment later holding something and the three of them hunch over a box, working on something.

After a moment, they break apart and One steps up to the camera, holding a pad of paper. He shows it to the camera. On the top page, in big block letters, they've written

WHAT WE WANT

After a suitable pause for reading, he turns to the second page, where four more words are written.

IS IN THAT ROOM.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Boy GASPS, the Woman sits back.

WOMAN

"What we want is in that room."

BOY

They're coming in here, aren't they?

WOMAN

No, I told you, they can't. Not a possibility.

Angry, she sits forward and jabs the talk button.

WOMAN (cont'd)

(into speaker)

What do *you* know about this room?

ON THE MONITORS,

there is more frenzied writing, more arguing, and a first draft of a response torn up. Finally, One steps forward with another sign:

MORE THAN YOU.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman's confidence is ebbing, but she doesn't want to show it. She hits the talk button again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN

(into speaker)

We're not coming out. We're not letting you in. So why don't you do us all a favor and get the fuck out of my house.

She releases the button, turns to the Boy immediately.

WOMAN (cont'd)

You still can't say fuck.

The Boy looks at her, eyes wide and admiring, terrified but enjoying this in a way. Actually, enjoying this in a *big* way. She manages a smile, proud of both of them, seeing herself such a hero in his eyes.

BOY

Answer.

She follows his eyes back to the screen, where another message is being held up for them.

ON THE MONITORS,

the notepad says

WE WILL LET YOU GO.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman and Boy speak at the same time.

WOMAN

Oh, puh-leeze.

BOY

Give me a break.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

In the living room, her voice booms from the speaker.

WOMAN (O.S.)

The conversation is over. Enjoy Attica.

(soft and mocking)

Good night, Boys.

With an audible CLICK, she signs off. One, Two, and Three stand arrayed beneath the camera, staring up at it, dumbfounded. Three looks back and forth from One to Two, terribly afraid they're blaming him for this predicament. Which they are.

CUT TO:

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

A few minutes later. The Woman is sitting on the floor, leaning against a wall, but the Boy is in motion, sorting through shelves, opening drawers. Every drawer has something in it, sealed under plastic. He opens and closes, sorts and lifts, finds the following:

Waterproof matches and lighters.

Flashlights.

Unopened packages of batteries.

Sealed water bags stamped "PURE FIVE YEARS FROM DATE."

Tinned food.

Flares.

Pillows, fireproof blankets (we know because the bags are stamped FIREPROOF BLANKET).

A complete tool kit.

The Woman tosses a pillow and blanket in a corner, makes a bed.

WOMAN

Hey. Lie down.

But the Boy is having a great time, loading batteries into the flashlights, opening a tin of rations, etc.

WOMAN (cont'd)

I mean it, lie down. You get yourself worked up you know what happens.

He looks at her. She's right. He crawls over to the bed she's made up for him, climbs under the blanket. She tucks it under his chin, gives him a kiss on the forehead.

She sits next to him, lets her head fall back against the wall. He rolls over, looks up at her.

BOY

Weird, man.

His eyes are wide and white. She looks at him.

WOMAN

Why did the chicken cross the road?

(CONTINUED)

BOY

What am I, a five year old?

WOMAN

Why did the chicken cross the road?

BOY

I don't know, why?

WOMAN

To prove he wasn't chicken.

CUT TO:

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

They're taking stock in the living room too. One is on his knees on the floor, laying out all their tools, assessing what they've got and what they wish they had. They've got hammers, three kinds, a series of graduated metal picks, and a variety of odd tools we don't recognize.

While One works, Two and Three mill around nervously behind him.

THREE

What if she called the cops?

TWO

She didn't.

THREE

She said she did.

ONE

She lied.

TWO

Cops woulda been here by now if she called 'em.

One stands, goes to the window, and stares outside. Two and Three, behind him, look at his back.

TWO (cont'd)

What are you doing?

ONE

Thinking.

TWO

How the fuck are we gonna get into that room?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ONE

Yep.

TWO

"Yep?"

THREE

We *can't* get into that room, okay?

At the windows, One laughs, covers his face.

TWO

What the fuck is funny about this?

ONE

God.

TWO

There is not one thing funny about this.

ONE

Who else but God could think this shit up? I spend fifteen years building these fucking rooms to keep people out, now I've got about fifteen minutes to figure out how to get in. God, man, He just looooooves the irony.

THREE

We *can't* get in, okay? It's impossible, we know that. Face reality, guys, she won, we lost, I'm going home.

He takes a step toward the stairs, but Two steps in front of him, cuts him off.

TWO

Nobody leaves.

They look into one another's eyes, measuring their mettle. Two calls out to One, threatening.

TWO (cont'd)

Can we get in or not?!

At the window, One notices something sitting just outside the French doors, on the balcony. It's a large outdoor barbecue grill. He thinks, takes a step closer. He sees a white five gallon tank of some kind underneath the grill. He's got an idea.

(CONTINUED)

TWO (cont'd)

CAN WE GET IN?!

ONE

Of course we can't.

THREE

Finally...

ONE

So we'll make her come out.

CUT TO:

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

It's quiet in the panic room. The Boy is lying on the floor, under the blanket, his head on the pillow. Naturally, he can't sleep. He's toying with something in the far wall at the end of the room, down on the floor at eye level.

It's a small round portal, about eight inches across, with a four-pronged cloverlike seal. The portal is closed tight, as the Boy pokes and scrapes at it idly with a finger or two, it resists his attempts to crank it open.

He sits up, looks at it more closely. Feels all along the edges. He gets up on his hands and knees, feels along the wall, looking for some kind of hidden switch.

The Woman notices.

WOMAN

Relax, okay Kiddo? Try to sleep.

BOY

Sleep? Mom, please.

WOMAN

Lie down, then. Don't get your adrenaline up.

BOY

I'm just-

BANG! A deafening POUND comes from the outer wall of the room, the one it shares with the master bedroom. They both leap to their feet, frightened.

BAM! Another one. BAM! A third. The pounding continues, like somebody trying to smash their way right through the wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOY (cont'd)

THEY'RE COMING IN! THEY'RE COMING IN!

WOMAN

They can't! They can't get in, okay?!
Not through these walls, never, they're
steel-cored!

BAM! BAM! BAM! The sound is deafening. The Boy throws both hands over his ears. The Woman tries to stay calm, over the deafening, echoing pounding.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Doesn't matter. We're safe, you hear
me?! It doesn't matter! They can't
get in!

But he stands there, hands over his ears, terrified. She turns her head, sneaks a look at the funny wristwatch he wears, tries to look without him knowing. It's not an ordinary watch, it only has one number, a tall, flashing digital display:

120

The Woman nods, as if reassuring herself.

WOMAN (cont'd)

We're fine. We're fine.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

BAM! A claw hammer CRUNCHES into the sheetrock on the outer wall of the panic room. The intruders are in the master bedroom now, and One is like a man possessed, tearing at the sheetrock with the sharp end of the tool while Three shines a flashlight into the hole.

As the sheetrock tears away, we see the skeleton of the wall behind it. There's a latticework of two by four studs, and beyond those the dull shine of the wall's metal core.

But that's not what he's after. He continues tearing, reveals an air duct running through the wall, feeding into the panic room through a welded hole in the steel. One tears away with the hammer, exposing a short section of the duct.

CLANG! The claw hammer drops into an opened toolbox. One drops to his knees, rips open another tool case. This one has a sophisticated looking power drill in it, along with a couple dozen specialized bits. He selects one, twists it into the drill.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

At the wall, One puts drill to metal and hits the switch. A horrendous METAL SCREECH fills the air and the drill bit tears into the duct, opening up a jagged hole about the size of a quarter.

Two hurries through the doorway of the bedroom, carrying a coiled garden hose. One snaps his fingers for it, Two tosses it to him, holding one end, and the hose uncoils in the air as it snakes across the room.

One shoves the end of the garden hose into the hole he's just drilled in the air duct.

RIP! He tears off a length of duct tape and seals the connection, makes it airtight.

SLIT! Using a large hunting knife, Two hacks a ten foot section of the garden hose off the coil. He stretches it out, across the room, to the white five gallon tank we saw before, which is now sitting on the floor up here. We move in close as One snugs the cut end of the garden hose over a spigot at the top of the tank. Red block letters are easy to read on the side of the tank:

PROPANE
CAUTION - FLAMMABLE

Along with a number of other dire warnings.

Three chews a fingernail. Doesn't like this. Doesn't stop it either.

One raises his hand to the knob, hesitates --

-- then spins it open. Halfway. Doesn't have the heart to go further.

TWO

Open it.

ONE

I did.

TWO

Open it.

ONE

She'll get the point.

Gas HISSES through the spigot and into the hose. We follow along the length of the hose, across the floor of the room, through the hole in the sheetrock, into the hole that's been drilled in the air duct --

INSIDE THE WALL

-- *through* the wall itself, where we see the horizontal lines of an air vent up ahead. We squeeze between two of the horizontal lines --

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

-- and come out in the panic room. Three red streamers, tied to the air vent, flap to life as the gas HISSES into the panic room.

Directly underneath the vent, the Woman is hunched up against the wall, her arm around her Boy.

She sniffs.

Again.

The Boy sniffs.

They look at each other.

She looks up. Sees the streamers floating above her.

She leaps to her feet, steps up onto a shelf, and stretches her nose toward the streamers. Just as she does --

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

Near the tank, Two shoves One out of the way.

TWO

We ain't playin', here.

He cranks the valve handle of the grill open all the way. The gas pours into the hose with an audible WHOOSH.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman, at the vent, falls back, two lungfuls of propane, and drops to her knees on the floor.

BOY

What, what, what is it?!

WOMAN

On the floor! Get on the floor!

Now the Boy coughs. The gas is pouring into the room.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

Two is standing guard over the tank, to make sure no one messes with the valve.

THREE

This is wrong, this is very, very wrong.

One has his head pressed against the door to the panic room, trying to hear any sounds from within.

TWO

Shut up.

THREE

I started this, it's on my head if you kill those two people...

TWO

Will you *shut up!*

THREE

They're gonna *die* in there!

ONE

Nobody is going to die, think about it, what would you do if you were them, stay in there and choke to death, or come out?! Huh? We're just getting them to come out for forty-five minutes, *forty-five fucking minutes!* The worst that's gonna happen is they pass out, we drag 'em out here into the fresh air, and they'll be fine.

THREE

And how are we supposed to get into the room if they pass out?

Pause. One turns to Two.

ONE

Cut it back a little bit.

TWO

No fucking way.

ONE

He's right, we can't get into the room if they're dead!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THREE

Brilliant idea, it's working great,
you're a fucking murderer, we got
Joseph Goebbels over here.

ONE

I DON'T HEAR ANY FUCKING SUGGESTIONS
FROM YOU!!

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman and the Boy are down on the floor, rags covering their mouths, trying like crazy to filter the air, but it's not working. The Boy is crawling around at the base of the wall, near to where he was before, clawing at that strange portal thing again.

Finally, he finds a small metal handle, folded back into the clover-leaf seal on the portal. He unfolds it, twists it.

The portal cranks open, revealing it to be at the end of a tube, about a foot long, an emergency ventilation source directly through to the exterior of the house. He bends down and looks through it.

It's covered by a metal mesh at the opposite end, but he can see and smell the outside through it.

He sits up, gestures to his mother to bend down next to him. She does, and they both jam their mouths up near the end of the tube, gulping fresh air greedily.

She looks at him, nods, good job, and they both drop to the floor at the portal and suck air. It's temporary, but it works.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

In the master bedroom, the debate has turned physical. Three lunges across the room at Two, to get his hands on the valve, to turn off the gas. But Two catches him and hurls him aside easily.

Three SLAMS into the wall and crumples to the floor, SCREAMING at Two, who SCREAMS right back. One leaps into the middle, trying to break it up, to get them to shut up, keep their voices down.

Bedlam.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

In the panic room, the Woman knows this can't go on forever. She turns away from the portal, looks up at the vent, where the streamers still stream.

She looks to the other side of the room, to where the Boy found the waterproof matches and lighters.

She thinks. Takes a deep lungful of fresh air from the tube and crawls over to the lighters. She selects one, snatches up a screwdriver.

The Boy looks at her, has a vague idea what she's thinking, but can't believe it. He shakes his head vehemently.

In response, she picks up two or three of the fireproof blankets and piles them over him, right up to his disbelieving eyes. She bends down, takes another gulp of air. But she's getting woozy. This can't go on much longer.

She staggers across the room, hoists herself back up onto the shelf she stood on before, and gets right up next to the vent. Holding her breath to avoid breathing the toxic gas, she unscrews the vent cover.

The duct is wide enough to put your arm in. She reaches in, past a bundle of multicolored wires that run down through the wall. She reaches all the way in, lighter in her hand.

INSIDE THE DUCT,

we see her hand crawl in, lighter clenched between her fingers. She raises a thumb to the flint wheel, cranks it once.

Too slow. Not even a spark.

Her hand shakes. She tries again. Still no spark. But with the effort and the angle, when she thumbs the lighter it makes her hand twitch, banging up against the sides of the duct with a hollow BOOM.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

One, who is still mediating the dispute between Two and Three, turns abruptly.

ONE

Quiet!

He turns around. They all freeze, listening. He hears it again. The hollow BOOM, coming from inside the wall. Now a third time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He walks forward, slowly, toward the wall.

BOOM.

He moves closer, gets right up next to the wall. He leans *into* the wall, putting his ear right up next to the air duct. This close, he hears the sound in more detail, realizes it's *two* sounds.

SCRATCH. BOOM.

He arches an eyebrow.

INSIDE THE DUCT,

the Woman's hand is trembling, tiring. She tries again, thumbs the flint wheel. It SCRATCHES as it rolls, her hand twitches, BOOMS against the side of the duct.

Still, the gas HISSES through.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman's face is turning color, she's running out of air. Her feet tremble on the shelf, she's about to lose her footing.

INSIDE THE DUCT,

she tries again. SCRATCH. BOOM.

IN THE BEDROOM,

One's eyes suddenly pop wide as he identifies the sound.

ONE

Oh.

He tears himself away from the wall --

INSIDE THE DUCT,

-- the Woman's thumb tenses for one good hard turn --

IN THE BEDROOM,

-- One leaps through the air, hurling himself toward the propane tank --

INSIDE THE DUCT,

-- the Woman cranks the wheel, a spark sparks, a flame flames, and a hot blue cloud shoots out in two directions, one toward the panic room, the other toward the bedroom.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman jumps off the shelf, throwing herself as far away from the vent as she can, her arm engulfed by licking blue flame. She drops to the floor of the room, covering her son's body, just as the entire ceiling of the panic room turns into a lake of fire with a deafening WHOOMP.

IN THE BEDROOM,

the blue flame shoots out of the wall, into the hose, *through* the hose, backing up toward the tank.

One CRUNCHES to the floor next to the tank, knocking the other end of the hose away from the spigot just as the blue flame erupts from the end of the hose.

The flame engulfs his entire body, his hair starts on fire, his chest, his arms. Two lunges forward, Three tears the blankets from the bed and throws them over him, One HOWLS and rolls on the floor in pain.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the blue cloud on the ceiling suddenly evaporates with another angry WHOOMP, leaving a few little pockets of flame that the Woman extinguishes by swatting with a blanket.

She stands in the middle of the still-smoky panic room, breathing hard. She shouts, SCREAMS incomprehensibly in triumph, throwing her arms in the air, jumping up and down, making no sense whatsoever.

She stops, noticing the look the Boy is giving her. Wide-eyed, admiring, frightened, you are an insane woman.

She looks at herself. Her arm is singed, the hair burned off. The sleeve of her tee shirt is burned back to the shoulder. Her face is sooty, blackened.

She GRUNTS, half frightened by herself.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

Out in the bedroom, it's worse for One, who has lost most of his hair and shirt. But his skin isn't badly burned, which is something, I guess.

Still, he's in a rage. He POUNDS the metal door of the panic room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ONE

I'M COMING IN THERE, BITCH, I AM COMING
IN THERE! *I AM COMING IN THERE!*

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman whirls, goes to the door herself, SCREAMS right back.

WOMAN

YOU FUCKING BRING IT ON! COME ON,
BRING IT ON, YOU CANDY ASS MOTHER F-

Suddenly, she stops, hearing something else. Outside the door, One continues to rant, but there's a second sound, a sound coming from the long wall of the panic room, the wall that's shared with the brownstone next door.

It's a faint -- very faint -- POUNDING sound, along with a high pitched, complaining voice, so faint it can hardly be heard.

The Boy hears it too.

BOY

Neighbor!

The Woman and the Boy leap as one, facing the common wall, SHOUTING at the tops of their lungs -- get help, call the police, please, call the police, that sort of thing.

They shout and shout, but the soft pounding continues, and if their voices are as soft on the other side as the COMPLAINING VOICE is on this side, they have no hope.

Their voices crack and they begin to cough, too irritated by the gas to shout for very long. Long after they stop, the soft POUNDING from next door continues.

Their pleas are not heard.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The Intruders have stopped their racket too, and are listening carefully at the common wall. Eventually, the soft POUNDING stops, the complaining voice complains no more.

One stands there, in pain. Things are falling apart. Two stands in the doorway, silhouetted by the hallway light. He draws himself up to his full, bulky height. He's big.

TWO

(to One)
We're gonna talk. Downstairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

One nods and starts out. Two lets him pass, but when Three tries to follow him, Two puts a big hand in his chest, stopping him.

TWO (cont'd)

You stay. Make sure she don't come out.

Three swallows. But Stays.

Two turns, follows One downstairs. As he descends, he looks up, making eye contact with Three. And holding it. Something on his mind, that's for sure.

CUT TO:

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

THUNK. The Woman's head falls back against a wall; she sags to the floor, legs folded in front of her, completely drained.

But the Boy's not drained, the Boy's full of nervous ingenuity, rustling around through the stuff in the panic room, an idea forming in his head. He finds a powerful-looking flashlight and loads it up with batteries. He tries it, flashing around the room.

Halogen bulb, very powerful, hurts his mother's eyes as he flashes it past her. She watches him. What's he up to?

He lays on the floor in front of the ventilation tube he discovered earlier. He squints through it.

THROUGH THE TUBE,

he can see out of the house, into the courtyard behind the brownstone. About thirty yards away he can see the backs of the brownstones on the next block. And *directly* across (because the tube doesn't leave much room for lateral vision) he can see straight into somebody's bedroom.

There's a light on. A SLEEPING MAN is in bed, an open book on his chest.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Boy sits back.

BOY

"The boy scientist smiled to himself,
an idea forming in his head."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He grabs the flashlight, looks for a little button on the top, the kind you can flick the flashlight on and off with. Shining it on the wall of the panic room, he flashes it at a wall, three times, on and off. Satisfied, he turns back to the tube.

The Woman, curious, crawls across the floor to join him. The Boy shoves the flashlight all the way into the tube, leaving enough room on either side of it for them to see through. The Woman lays down flat, squints into the tube, the Boy alongside her. She looks at him, curious -- your plan?

The Boy reaches into the tube, finds the little flash button on the top of the flashlight.

THROUGH THE TUBE,

the piercing halogen beam begins to flash, across the courtyard and into the bedroom of the Man in the bedroom. The light flashes on the wall over his bed.

The flashes are in a rhythm. Short. Short. Short. Long. Long. Long. Short. Short. Short.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman turns to the Boy, impressed.

WOMAN

Morse code?

BOY

(nods)

Dot dot dot, dash dash dash, dot dot dot.

WOMAN

Where'd you learn S.O.S.?

BOY

"Titanic."

THROUGH THE TUBE,

the flashes continue -- dot dot dot, dash dash dash, dot dot dot. But the Man continues to sleep, the light on the wall behind him has no effect.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Boy is frustrated. He adjusts the flashlight.

THROUGH THE TUBE,

the beam of light lowers jerkily from the wall until it is shining directly into the Sleeping Man's eyes.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Boy strains to keep the light in that perfect spot. He's starting to sweat. The Woman leans over, sneaks a peek at the watch he wears on his left wrist. The readout:

114

THROUGH THE TUBE,

the Sleeping Man stirs. Opens his eyes. Winces from the light, which is flashing directly in his eyes.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

WOMAN

Got him!

BOY

Come on, come on...

THROUGH THE TUBE,

the Sleeping Man sits up. Raises a hand, trying to block the light, which keeps flashing on him.

He gets up, out of bed. He comes to the window.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

WOMAN

Yes, yes, yes, yes...

The Boy keeps it up, flashing faster.

THROUGH THE TUBE,

they see the Man come all the way to his window. He leans against it, cups his hands so he can see better. The flashes continue, right on top of him now.

Clearly, the Man is reading the flashes! He takes a step back from the window --

-- gives them the finger --

-- and angrily yanks shut his drapes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A moment later, the light goes out and the room is black.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman and the Boy drop their heads to the carpet, defeated.

The Boy rolls over, knocks the flashlight away from him, stares up at the ceiling.

The Woman puts a hand in his hair. It was a good idea.

BOY

We're never getting out of here.

WOMAN

Shhh...

She looks at the wristwatch again.

103

She's concerned.

CUT TO:

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

Three is concerned as well. He's still in the master bedroom, but barely, he's standing in the doorway, straining like hell to hear a conversation that One and Two are having in the foyer, one floor down.

They're trying to keep their voices down, but stray words float up through the open stairwell -- words like "him" and "warning" and "dangerous."

Three chews a fingernail. If only he could get closer. He throws a look back at the door to the panic room. He looks back out the bedroom door. Listening.

INT FOYER NIGHT

One and Two are huddled together in the foyer. They're keeping their voices low, but their conversation is heated.

ONE

Do about him? We're not gonna do anything about him, he's fine.

TWO

If you think I'm gonna let my half of fourteen million bucks slip away because of-

(CONTINUED)

ONE

"Half?" What did you, take a nap in math class? Three people, three shares, one third. Four point six six six repeating.

TWO

I'm just saying, the man is a problem. And he's *your* problem. Wasn't my idea to bring his sorry ass along.

ONE

That's right, it wasn't your idea, because *none* of this was your idea, *nobody* figured out where that money is but *him*, okay, not the cops, not the lawyers, not the paranoid old bastard's family who don't even *know* he's got a safe in there, it wasn't nobody but our little buddy up there, so how about a little fucking gratitude?!

TWO

Step back, man, you got onion breath.

ONE

Just look at him, man, he's pathetic, he sits in that office all day and just, just, just *endures* the bullshit Paul lays on him, all that miserable fucking abuse every day, every *single* day, and finally the poor bastard has an idea. One genius idea in his whole miserable life, and *you* want to cut him out of it. Shit, the only reason I'm even here is because he's a chicken shit and couldn't pull it off alone, and *you*, you fucking clown, *you're* only here because he couldn't keep his big mouth shut, so just sit back, relax your crack, and let me think.

TWO

Don't take no tone of voice with me, homes.

ONE

What *is* this shit you're talking all of a sudden? You're a carpenter, "Homes," you live in Flatbush, so please don't start spouting some Elmore Leonard shit you just read because you sound ridiculous.

ON THE VIDEO MONITORS,

One and Two are visible, still arguing in the foyer.

On the next monitor over, Three is visible, standing in the master bedroom doorway, listening.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman is watching the monitors, thinking. She notices something, sits forward abruptly, looking at the monitor that covers the master bedroom. She squeezes right up close, staring at the screen.

ON THE MONITOR,

we peer closely at the box next to her bed, the one she was using for a night table. On top of the box, still cradled in its charger, is her cellular phone.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman sits back, eyes alive. If only she could get to that phone. She looks back at the monitors, at Three lingering in the doorway to the room.

WOMAN

Damn.

She turns away from the monitors, to check on the Boy, who's settled into a corner of the room, looking pale.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

In the bedroom, Three is desperate. The argument downstairs is entering round two, and he's got to hear what they're saying.

He takes a few steps out of the bedroom --

INT THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY NIGHT

-- and comes into the hallway. He leans over the stairwell. Where he's standing, he is directly *under* the camera that covers the hallway --

ON THE MONITORS,

-- and can't be seen on the monitor that covers the hallway.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman turns back from the Boy, to look at the monitors again. She sees Three is no longer in the bedroom. And doesn't appear to be in the hallway, either.

WOMAN

Oh yes, yes...

She looks at another monitor.

ON THE MONITOR,

she sees One and Two in the foyer.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman sits back. That leaves Three unaccounted for.

WOMAN

... the hell is he?

IN THE HALLWAY,

Three is still lingering under the camera.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Boy has come forward to the monitors as well.

BOY

Do it.

WOMAN

Yeah, but where's the little guy?

BOY

Not in the bedroom. *Do it!*

The Woman goes to the door, raises a hand to the green "open" button. Hesitates.

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM,

we see Three, lurking in the hallway, just about six feet from the door to the panic room. Don't open that door!

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman wipes sweat from her palm.

WOMAN

Okay. Be ready to close it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Boy nods, looks back to the monitors.

The Woman raises her hand to the button.

IN THE HALLWAY,

a shouted CURSE rises up from downstairs. Three takes a step toward the stairs.

ON THE MONITORS,

he suddenly appears, in the hallway.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Boy sees it.

BOY

WAIT!

The Woman freezes. She looks at the monitor, wide-eyed. Close one.

IN THE HALLWAY,

Three can't take it anymore.

THREE

Oh, *hell...*

He turns and takes off down the stairs, shouting ahead.

THREE (cont'd)

If you guys are gonna talk about me at least have the decency to do it to my face!

ON THE MONITORS,

Three flies down the stairs and appears in the foyer, next to One and Two.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman and the Boy see all three men accounted for, downstairs.

BOY

GO GO GO!

The Woman leaps up, runs to the door, and punches the green button.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The door begins to crank open, the Woman slips through the gap sideways before it's even all the way open. She darts across the room --

-- snatches the cell phone from its cradle --

IN THE FOYER,

the three men hear her, they look up in unison.

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM,

she darts back across the room, lunges through the open door --

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

-- and the Boy SMACKS the red button. The steel door closes with a deafening WHANG.

Safe.

IN THE FOYER,

the echo of the metallic WHANG reverberates through the house. Slowly, One and Two lower their eyes from the ceiling --

-- and stare at Three.

THREE

Sorry.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

In the panic room, the Woman punches 9-1-1 on her cell phone with trembling fingers.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The big empty charger cradle is in the foreground when the three men burst into the room. One goes straight to it, touches it, figures out what she did.

ONE

Cell phone.

TWO

Shit!

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman raises the cell phone to her ear --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- and gets a rapid busy signal.

WOMAN

Oh, no. No, no, no no no no...

She looks at the phone. It's showing just one signal bar, and even that one is flashing on and off.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Oh come on, come on, come on...

She walks around the room, raises the phone high and low, trying crazily to find a signal.

But can't.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

In the bedroom, One stands just outside the door, fingertips lightly resting on it, the ghost of a smile on his face.

ONE

(softly)

I don't think we'll be talking on our cell phone from in *there*...

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

Inside the room, the Woman doesn't seem upset. Rather, she's staring at the cell phone in her hand, thinking. Remembering something.

WOMAN

Wires...

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

At the same moment, One is having the same thought. He's still at the door, fingertips still resting there.

ONE

Phone...

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

WOMAN

... wires.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

One looks down, at the baseboard below. What is he looking at?

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman steps up, onto the shelf she climbed earlier, and comes up next to the vent.

BOY
What are you doing?

WOMAN
I saw something, I saw...

In the vent, alongside the duct, she sees the bundle of multicolored wires she saw earlier.

WOMAN (cont'd)
... phone wires!

She jumps down off the shelf, goes to the tools, starts searching for something.

WOMAN (cont'd)
I may not have hooked up the phone in here, but I hooked up the main line, and there's a jack at the base of this wall outside, I saw it!

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

Yes, that is correct, there is in fact a jack in the base of the wall outside the door to the panic room.

One bends down into frame, studying it, thinking the same thing she is. He clears his throat.

ONE
Say, while we're on the subject of phones...

He turns, looks up at Three.

ONE (cont'd)
When I said cut the line, did you cut the main line at the junction box in the basement like I said, and which I repeated, or did you just cut the cord on the phone in the kitchen?

Pause. Swallow.

THREE
I, uh, I...

Shit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THREE (cont'd)

... couldn't find the one in the
basement.

Pause.

And then, as if a starting gun had been fired, One leaps to his feet and races out of the bedroom.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

That same starting gun has been fired in the panic room. With a strong RIP, the Woman pulls the whole bundle of multi-colored wires out of the wall and drops onto the floor with it. She thrusts it at the Boy, finds a wire cutter in the assorted tools, and gives him that too.

WOMAN

Strip 'em, expose the ends, do the blue
ones first, blue is phones.

BOY

Blue is phones?

WOMAN

God, I hope so.

While the Boy goes to work on the wires, the Woman turns to the phone itself, the one with the buried phone line that isn't working yet. She rips the phone out of its housing, tears free the wire on the end of it.

INT ENTRY FLOOR NIGHT

One flies down the stairs from the third floor, races across the foyer, flies down the stairs to the kitchen floor.

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

One races across the kitchen floor, whips open a door and heads down another, narrow, darkened stairway.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman and the Boy are like animals, clawing and tearing at the ends of their respective phone cables, foregoing tools and stripping the wires with fingers and teeth, it's faster.

With the phone receiver cradled on her shoulder, the Woman starts twisting the ends of wires onto the exposed ends of the wires from the phone unit. First wire -- nothing. She tries a second wire.

INT MECHANICAL ROOM NIGHT

One SLAMS open the door to a dark room, pulls the string on a bare bulb. Burned out.

ONE

God *damn* it!

Without light, he can't see a thing. He SMACKS the bulb, it swings wildly, SMASHES on the cement wall. He turns and races out of the room.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman tries another wire. Still no dial tone. The Boy shoves another wire at her. She tries again. Nothing. She moves on.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

One slides to his knees, snatches a flashlight from his duffel, leaps up and takes off again.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

Another wire. Nothing. Another wire. DIAL TONE!

The Woman SHRIEKS and punches 911.

INT STAIRWELL NIGHT

One flies down the stairs, flashlight beam bouncing crazily in front of him.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The phone is ringing. An operator picks up.

OPERATOR

911 emergency-

WOMAN

I'm at 10 West-

OPERATOR

(continuing)
-please hold.

It's a mechanical voice, which gives over to MUZAK.

WOMAN

You gotta be fucking KIDDING!

INT MECHANICAL ROOM NIGHT

One BANGS through the door again, starts searching the darkened mechanical room, shining harsh light around its dingy walls.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

MUZAK continues to play.

WOMAN

Damn it!

No more time to hold. The Woman hangs up the phone, dials another number, a seven digit one she knows by heart.

BOY

Call Dad!

WOMAN

On it!

INT MECHANICAL ROOM NIGHT

In the mechanical room, the bouncing flashlight beam falls on a metal cabinet across the way. One runs to it, flings it open. Circuit breakers. SLAMS it shut.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman listens as a phone rings on the other end. And rings. And rings again.

This is torture.

INT MECHANICAL ROOM NIGHT

One turns, sees another, smaller metal box, this one clearly labeled:

PHONES

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

On the other end of the phone, a husky MALE VOICE answers; clearly he's been awakened.

VOICE

Hello?

WOMAN

Listen to me! There are three-

INT MECHANICAL ROOM NIGHT

With a subhuman ROAR of anger, One rips the entire phone panel off the wall with his bare hands.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

With an abrupt SHRIEK, the line goes dead. The Woman pauses, can't believe it.

WOMAN

Hello? Don't... are...

She looks up, sees the Boy looking at her, his eyebrows arched, his face all hope. She keeps her cool, but it takes a hell of an effort.

The Boy reads her face. He turns away.

She hangs up the phone.

The Boy goes to a corner of the room, faces away from her.

The Woman doesn't know what to say.

WOMAN (cont'd)

He'll do something.

BOY

Uh uh.

WOMAN

He'll know we're in trouble. He heard me, I said "There are three..."

BOY

He won't even know who it was.

WOMAN

What would *you* think, in the middle of the night? I mean, three what, three bears? He'll call the police.

BOY

Stop it.

WOMAN

He lives two blocks away, this is why we got places so close to each other, in case we *needed* each other, we're still a family, he'll help us...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

67.

01/17/00

BOY

He-

WOMAN

He *will*.

This was practically shouted. The Boy drops his head into his arms.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Sorry.

He looks up at her, guiltily, like a little kid embarrassed to tell her he's peed himself.

BOY

I'm sorry.

WOMAN

Why?

BOY

I was trying not to tell you...

WOMAN

What?

BOY

I'm dizzy and thirsty.

This is very bad news.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

Tired, One drags himself back up the stairs and into the doorway of the master bedroom. Two and Three stand there, staring at him.

There is a long pause.

THREE

She's never coming out.

ONE

Hey.

THREE

And we're never getting in.

ONE

Do me a favor and don't talk.

(CONTINUED)

THREE

I don't even want the money any more.

TWO

We do.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman has torn open one of the water packets and is trying to get the Boy to drink, but he's gone completely pale and seems to have lost some of the strength in his neck, he's having trouble holding his head up. Most of the water runs down his chin.

WOMAN

Come on, come on... stay with me... you gotta drink...

She takes his hand, checks his wristwatch thing. The readout is now

82

She swallows. She grabs him by the face.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Okay, listen, Buddy, you went double digit on me here, you must have been shooting out adrenaline like crazy, we gotta bring your blood sugar back up, okay? Can you hear me?

BOY

I'm dizzy, not deaf.

WOMAN

Hey, he's still a smart ass, excellent sign. Did you see any sugar in here? Any candy bars, anything sweet?

BOY

Huh uh.

WOMAN

Okay, you just gotta calm yourself down, that's all, just stay calm and your adrenaline will go back to normal and you'll be fine.

BOY

What if I keep dropping?

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

Not an option.

BOY

What if I do?

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

In the bedroom, Three screws up his courage.

THREE

I'm leaving.

ONE

Nobody leaves.

TWO

Nobody leaves.

THREE

Observe.

He heads for the door, expecting Two to block him, but as he draws close --

-- Two just steps out of the way. Three passes through and heads for the stairs.

ONE

Come on, man, don't do this, please
don't do this, you're putting us in
danger, man, if somebody sees you go
and we're still in here...

THREE

Good bye.

And they disappear, down the stairs, One still pleading with him.

TWO

(to himself)
Nobody leaves.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman rifles the foodstuffs that are stored in the room.
The Boy, in the corner, is starting to tremble.

BOY

What if I spazz out?

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

(forced calm)

No biggie, we've been through it a dozen times, I just jab you with the Glucogen.

Pause. She keeps looking.

BOY

Where is the Glucogen?

WOMAN

Oh, you know, it's, uh... it's in the little fridge in your room.

BOY

(pause)

I'm sorry, Mom.

WOMAN

Hey, quit apologizing, you're starting to sound like Grandma. You're not gonna have an attack. Okay?

BOY

Okay.

He lays back, oddly passive, his lips changing color. He stares at the monitors.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Three strides into the living room, purposefully. He tosses some tools into his duffle bag and heads for the stairs down to the kitchen.

One is behind him.

ONE

Would you wait? Would you please just wait a minute?

But Three heads down. One follows.

Two is just coming down from upstairs.

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

Three reaches the door of the kitchen, takes out a screwdriver, and starts unscrewing the screws. One stops at the stairway.

(CONTINUED)

ONE

You walk out that door and I can't guarantee your share of the money. Fair's fair, and that isn't.

THREE

Keep it.

ONE

I mean it!

THREE

I don't care!

He gets the last screw out, throws open the door, a BLAST of wind gusts in, it's a blustery night out there, he takes a step into the doorway --

-- and with a quiet PFFFT from right behind One, a bullet whizzes across the kitchen and hits Three in the back of the head. He crumples, right in the open kitchen doorway.

One SHOUTS incoherently and turns. Two is standing there, two steps up, a silencer twisted onto the barrel of his gun.

TWO

Nobody leaves.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Boy is staring at the video monitors, eyes wide. He raises one trembling finger, points at the kitchen monitor, tries to mouth the words, can't.

The Woman looks up.

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

One is freaking out, but trying to stay calm.

ONE

Oh God... oh, my God...

Two walks past him calmly, grabs Three by the ankles, and drags him back into the house. He turns, looks at One, whose jaw is dropped in horror.

TWO

You should see the look on your face.

ONE

The fuck did you do that for?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TWO

You think you know me? You work next to me, we have a couple beers, you think you know thing *one* about me?

While One stares down at the body in shock and Two stares at One, his back to the outside, a small, thin VOICE comes from the still-open doorway.

VOICE

What the h-

They turn. A man (the HUSBAND) stands there in hastily thrown-on clothes, staring down at the dead body in mute shock.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman, now watching the monitors with the Boy, throws her hands over her mouth as she sees her ex-husband. While she and the Boy watch --

ON THE MONITORS,

-- they see the silent image of the Husband, set upon by Two, who grabs him roughly and drags him inside. One hurries to the door --

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

-- and SLAMS it shut. He puts his back to it, thinking, terrified, things are spinning out of control, fast.

Two, in the middle of the kitchen floor, is venting some more of his rage on the Husband, whom he has hurled to the floor. He lands a solid boot in the side of the Husband's head, leaving him GROANING in pain, completely disoriented.

The Husband rolls groggily into the spreading pool of blood coming from underneath Three.

ONE

Stop it! Stop it!

TWO

Who's the clown now? Huh?! *Who's the fucking clown now?!*

He pulls his gun, shoves it into One's eye, hard.

ONE

Me. I am.

(CONTINUED)

TWO

That's right.

ONE

Burning me. It's burning my eye.

TWO

I have the gun.

ONE

Yes.

TWO

Remember that.

ONE

Please...

Two pulls the gun back, just an inch. The skin around One's eye is an angry red. His eyes dart, strain to look over at the Husband, MOANING on the floor. And at Three, dead.

ONE (cont'd)

What? What do you want me to do?

TWO

What do you think? Get us into that room.

ONE

I can't.

Two pushes the gun barrel back into One's eye socket, we can hear the faint SIZZLE of skin burning.

TWO

You can. You're full of ideas. You just need to squeeze one out.

ONE

I can't...

TWO

You got till the count of three. Then you end up like him.

He tilts his head over to Three, whose brains are spreading out on the kitchen floor.

TWO (cont'd)

One...

ONE

This is ridiculous...

TWO

Two...

ONE

I can't just...

TWO

Th-

ONE

Okay, okay! Okay.

TWO

You got an idea?

ONE

Yeah. Yeah, I got an idea. I gotta check something.

Two GRUNTS, satisfied. Pulls the gun back. He looks at One disdainfully, shakes his head.

TWO

Thinks he knows me.

One slides away, shaking. He bends down, to the floor. He looks at the Husband's left hand. At his index finger.

He sees a white strip of skin, where the Husband wore his wedding ring, until recently.

CUT TO:

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The Husband, still semi-conscious, is hurled against the metal door of the panic room. He collapses at its base. One bends down next to him.

ONE

Okay, look. I know you can hear me. Your wife and kid are in there. You're gonna get 'em to come out. Or --

He looks up at Two, hulking overhead, gun in hand.

ONE (cont'd)

Or I can't stop what he's gonna do. Do you understand?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Husband, regaining some semblance of consciousness, nods feebly.

ONE (cont'd)

Good.

One stands up, turns to the video camera, and SHOUTS.

ONE (cont'd)

OPEN THE GOD DAMN DOOR!

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Boy and the Woman see the horrifying sight on the video monitors.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

One SHOUTS at the door to the room.

ONE

OPEN UP!

ON THE MONITORS,

they see One, standing over the Husband; they faintly hear him call to them to open the door.

And then they hear another VOICE, calling back to them. The Boy sits up, recognizes his father's voice.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The Husband is SHOUTING against the closed door.

HUSBAND

DON'T DO IT! NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS,
DON'T OPEN THE DOOR! DON'T O-

He's silenced by a vicious kick to the ribs. Two begins to beat him.

One stands by, powerless, horrified, watching as Two savages the Husband, who continues to call out, as long as he has strength, telling the Woman not to open the door, no matter what.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The Woman and the Boy SHOUT in horror, she covers her son's face, turns him away from the screen, SCREAMS in incoherent anger of her own.

But she doesn't open the door.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

One SHOUTS at Two, pleading.

ONE
STOP IT, MAN, STOP IT, THAT'S HIS KID
IN THERE, HIS KID IS WATCHING THIS!!

But Two whips the gun up, into One's throat, backing him off, shutting him up.

He resumes his pounding of the Husband.

One turns, looks up at the camera in the corner of the room.

He can't stand it anymore. He turns, looks up at the light bulb that's illuminating the horrible events.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

While the Woman watches, the lights in the master bedroom abruptly go out, mercifully sparing them the sight of the Husband's beating.

She holds the Boy, who's sobbing, shaking.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The Husband finally lapses into unconsciousness. Two stands over him in the dark, chest heaving.

One stands in the doorway, neither in nor out of the room, a silhouette, head hung, powerless.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

On the bank of twelve monitors, one is nearly black, illuminated only by a sliver of light from the door to the hall. In that tiny sliver, the Woman can see the outline of the Husband's body as it's tossed onto the bed.

A sudden BEEPING sound tears her attention away. Still holding the Boy, she pulls him back, off her shoulder. His face is completely white, his lips blue, his eyes rolled back into his head. The BEEPING sound grows louder, she checks his wristwatch, the reading is dire:

57

The Woman GASPS, horrified.

WOMAN
Oh God, oh my God...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Boy begins to convulse, he bucks right out of her arms and falls back onto the floor of the panic room. She clears everything away from him, tries to make room for him.

The convulsion worsens. She searches through the piles of supplies, comes up with a plastic-handled screwdriver. She opens his jaws, wedges the plastic handle between his teeth.

She helps him ride out the convulsion. Finally, his eyes roll back into his head, he slowly re-orientes himself. He reaches over, turns off his still-BEEPING wristwatch/monitor himself.

She sighs, immensely relieved, but he is nowhere near normal. His skin has passed through white and is turning a sallow yellow color. He moves his lips, she can't hear him, she bends down:

BOY

You gotta jab me, Mommy...

She turns, looks back at the monitors. What she sees is good news --

ON THE MONITORS,

the lights are back on in the master bedroom. The only person there is her Husband, who lies slumped on the far side of the bed.

She looks quickly over at the monitor for the living room, where she sees One and Two having an urgent conversation, One sitting in a chair, Two pacing in front of him, ranting.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Woman's face lights up, she practically laughs, she's so overjoyed at this turn of events.

She turns, looks back at the Boy, who is starting to tremble again.

That does it. The Woman leaps up, hits the button that controls the steel door, and it starts to crank open, almost impossibly slowly.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

The Woman steps out of the panic room, into the master bedroom. She starts to go to the Husband, on the bed. With his back to her she can't even tell if he's alive or dead, but first things must be first, so she turns and races out of the room.

INT HALLWAY NIGHT

The Woman flies up the stairs, bare feet on padded carpet.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

In the living room, Two looks up, hearing the pitter-pat of her feet on the stairs above.

He smiles.

Coming around behind him, we see One sitting in the chair. Except it isn't One at all, it's the Husband, unconscious, wearing One's shirt.

And if the Husband is the person in the chair, that means --

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

-- the person on the bed in the bedroom is One, wearing the Husband's shirt. His eyes pop open, he turns and looks, sees the wide open door to the panic room.

INT BOY'S BEDROOM NIGHT

The Woman races into the Boy's bedroom and tears open the door of a mini-fridge. Inside are dozens of little bottles of insulin and something called Glucogen.

She grabs a bottle of Glucogen and a black leather pouch and takes off.

INT HALLWAY NIGHT

As the Woman nears the bottom of the stairs, she sees a horrifying sight. It's Two, standing in the doorway of the master bedroom, a vile grin on his face.

She SCREAMS, he SLAMS the door, she takes off down the hall, reaches the end, throws the door open --

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

-- and races into the master bedroom, where Two is motoring, fast, headed for the panic room, where she can already see One, standing in the middle of the open doorway, in front of the Boy, wearing the Husband's shirt and a grim "tricked you" expression.

The Woman hurls herself at Two, lands clinging to his back. She claws and wrestles with him --

-- his gun slips from his fingers, falls to the floor --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- and caroms off his boot, spinning across the floor away from them.

Two flips her off his back violently, she CRUNCHES to the floor. He makes a move toward his gun, but she's faster, she's already pawing herself frantically across the hardwood toward it.

Two measures the distance, knows he'll lose, and sprints for the panic room instead. The Woman turns, looks down at the medicine in her hands, then at the door to the panic room, where Two is right now reaching up to push the button that controls the steel door.

She makes a fast decision and lunges, hurling the plastic bottle of Glucogen and the black leather pouch through the gap just before --

-- the spring-loaded steel door SLAMS shut with tremendous ferocity.

And then it's silent. The Woman WAILS in agony, POUNDS on the door.

She stands back, chest heaving, sobbing.

A loooooong moment goes by.

Finally, a VOICE comes over the house's intercom system.

ONE (O.S.)

(calmly)

If you leave the house, we'll kill him.

The Woman sobs.

ONE (O.S.)

If I see a uniform in the house, we'll kill him.

WOMAN

Oh... oh...

ONE (O.S.)

Do you understand?

ON THE MONITORS,

the Woman looks up at the camera in the master bedroom. She nods, terrified.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

One leans forward, to the speaker panel, approaching exhaustion.

(CONTINUED)

ONE

(into speaker)

I just... I just need forty-five
minutes.

ON THE MONITORS,

we see the Woman's face, agonized, as she lunges toward the camera, SCREAMING something up at it, the same thing, over and over. But in here her voice is nearly muted, what bleeds through the walls isn't enough to be heard.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

Two looks at her image on the monitor, irritated.

TWO

Shut up.

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM,

we abruptly hear her voice, full-throated.

WOMAN

(shouting into the camera)
-cine, he needs the MEDICINE! GIVE HIM
THE-

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Boy shivers in a corner, knees pulled up to his chest, staring at the intruders, scared out of his wits, and looking very, very sick.

One looks at him, musters the most reassuring face he can come up with under the circumstances.

ONE

It's gonna be cool, kid. Be outta here
before you know it.

No response from the Boy. One cocks a head, really looking at him.

ONE (cont'd)

Are you okay?

TWO

Hurry up, for Christ's sake!

One turns, grabs his satchel, and drops to his knees in the middle of the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Over his shoulder, we can see the face of the Woman on one of the monitors, shouting into the camera, begging them to give the Boy his medicine.

Using his hand like a tailor, One measures six hand lengths in from the wall, then digs his fingernails into the weave of the carpet, looking for a seam.

He finds one, gets hold of it on one edge, and runs his other hand along the seam till he finds a place where it seems to turn a corner. He stands, hovering over the carpet, and pulls back evenly with both hands.

The concealed carpet flap pulls back neatly, with the soft sound of tearing VELCRO. Underneath the flap --

-- is the smooth metal door of a floor safe.

One unsnaps his satchel and gives it a shove. It rolls out and opens up onto the floor, revealing a neat array of safecracking tools.

He begins his delicate work, but is suddenly jarred by a POUNDING on the metal door. He turns, annoyed. The Woman is still SCREAMING outside the door.

ONE

The hell does she want?

TWO

I don't know, she keeps screamin' the same thing over and over.

One turns, looks at the monitors.

ON THE MONITORS,

the Woman is staring up at the camera, miming the act of giving herself an injection in the arm.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

Two laughs.

TWO

Drugs. She wants drugs?

But One thinks. His eyes fall on the bottle and the leather pouch she hurled through the door, then whip over to the Boy, who sags over into a fetal position on the floor. His lips are moving.

ONE

Oh, man...

(CONTINUED)

He crawls over to the Boy, puts his ear down next to the Boy's lips.

ONE (cont'd)

What is it?

The Boy tries to summon enough strength to speak, but his breath comes hard.

BOY

I need...

ONE

Yeah?

BOY

... 'jection...

ONE

An injection?

The Boy nods. One points to the pouch and the Glucogen, on the floor nearby.

ONE (cont'd)

That stuff?

The Boy nods again.

ONE (cont'd)

Can you do it yourself?

The Boy shakes his head no.

ONE (cont'd)

Well, I don't know how.

The Boy looks at him, eyes pleading. Two stands behind One.

TWO

I don't fucking believe this.

(to the Boy)

You gotta wait.

The Boy just looks at One. Please.

ONE

Yeah, just like a half hour, maybe a little more, and your mom'll give it to you. You can wait a half hour, can't you?

TWO

Yes. He can. He's fine, he's just like, tired, he's gotta rest. You rest, Kid. Half an hour.

The Boy looks terrified, shaking his head no.

TWO (cont'd)

Come on.

He starts to pull One away, but One shakes his hand off, violently. He bends down, very close to the Boy's lips.

ONE

Tell me the truth, okay? What's gonna happen if you don't get this?

The Boy swallows, licks his cracking lips. When he speaks, it's breathy, almost inaudible.

But the words are clear.

BOY

Coma. Die.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

Seen from overhead, the Woman paces in the master bedroom, out of her mind with worry, no idea how to communicate to the people in the room the desperate situation.

Suddenly, a VOICE comes over the intercom speaker.

ONE (O.S.)

I understand. I'll give him the shot.

The Woman practically sobs with relief.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

A HAND comes down into frame and picks up the Glucogen and the leather pouch. One stands, looking down at them. Two grabs him, pulls him to the far end of the room.

TWO

You're wasting your fucking time, man, you're wasting *my* time. You don't know how to do this, and the longer we stay in here, the more likely she's gonna lose it and call the cops!

(CONTINUED)

ONE

I never killed anybody. I'm not startin' now.

TWO

Yeah, well, I got news for you, that ain't how the judge is gonna see it, okay? You're here with me, you're already on the hook for one, you know they give you two for the same price.

ONE

Are *you* gonna open the safe?

Two looks at him.

ONE (cont'd)

Then shut up and get out of my way.

Two shakes his head.

ACROSS THE ROOM,

One drops to his knees next to the Boy and unzips the pouch.

ONE (cont'd)

Okay, kid, all I know about this is what I've seen on TV, you gotta talk me through it.

The Boy tries to form words, but he's too weak. One swallows.

ONE (cont'd)

Okay. No talking. No problem. TV don't lie, right?

He reaches into the pouch, takes out a syringe, a sterile pad, and a length of rubber tubing. He takes the Boy's arm, stretches it out, exposing the underside of his forearm.

ONE (cont'd)

You seem like a good kid. Your mom... she's beautiful, isn't she?

No answer. One ties the rubber tubing around the Boy's arm, pulls it tight.

ONE (cont'd)

Hey, nod or something, show me you're still alive, will ya?

The Boy nods.

(CONTINUED)

ONE (cont'd)

Attaboy. That too tight?

The Boy shakes his head no. One takes the syringe, starts to fill it from the Glucogen bottle.

ONE (cont'd)

You guys are pretty rich, huh? Have this whole house, right in the middle of Manhattan?

The Boy shrugs. While One goes through the process of finding an exposed vein and giving the injection itself, he goes on, as much to comfort the Boy as to comfort himself:

ONE (cont'd)

Yeah, you don't think about that stuff. Good for you. Man, there's so much money in this world, and all the wrong people got it. No offense. They treat you like shit. The richer they are, the more they grind you on the price. Why is it that the people who have the least to complain about always do the most complaining? Half of 'em just inherited their money. That makes me sick. I went to college. I'm smarter than they are, most of 'em. I mean it, Kid, I'm *smart*, ever since I was your age, everybody told me so. Everybody told me how far I was gonna go, how good my life was gonna be, and then it just... never... fucking... happened. I just wanted what everybody always told me I was gonna get. The bare minimum. All my life, it's like I'm on hold, waitin' for it, and it's like somebody just forgot about me. I never did anything like this before, I never broke into somebody's house, not even close, but... I had to do *something*. I'm almost forty years old, I don't even *have* a house. I don't even have a wife any more. I'm human, I want those things, I want to have a nice kid like you, and now I know I'm never gonna, 'cause tonight...

(leans in close)

... I fucked it up, Kid. I really screwed the pooch this time.

The shot successfully given, he pulls the Boy's sleeve back down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ONE (cont'd)

Feel better?

The Boy nods, and he seems better already. One helps him to sit up, to lean against the wall.

ONE (cont'd)

First thing I did right in years.

He starts to turn away.

BOY

(softly)

Hey.

One turns back.

BOY (cont'd)

Sometimes you gotta go back, pick the other path. Happens to everybody.

One smiles at him, at this unsolicited advice. He leans in, gives the Boy a kiss on the hair, and whispers to him.

ONE

Only one path left for me.

CUT TO:

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

A VOICE comes over the intercom in the master bedroom. It's Two.

TWO (O.S.)

He's okay. Now sit down and wait.

He CLICKS off.

The Woman is hugely relieved. And extremely pissed off. She goes to the corner of the room and picks up the gun, the one that Two dropped.

She heads downstairs.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

Sparks fly as One goes to work on the floor safe with a small, specialized drill.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

The Woman is in the living room, with her Husband, who is still slouched in the chair. He's in awful shape, barely conscious.

HUSBAND

I'll kill them... if they hurt him...

WOMAN

What about you?

HUSBAND

Hospital be nice...

Out of the silence, a sudden, deafening sound.

The DOORBELL.

Her eyes go wide. She darts a look over to the door (the one that leads to the stoop, not the bloody kitchen door downstairs), then back at the Husband.

HUSBAND (cont'd)

Police.

She GASPS.

WOMAN

You called the *police*?!

He nods.

HUSBAND

You... scared...

Shit. This is exactly what she prayed for him to do, now it's the worst thing that could happen.

She stands, thinking, desperate. She walks toward the door, stops, thinks some more.

The doorbell RINGS again.

She comes up with a plan. She goes back to where her Husband is in the chair, pulls the chair back a few feet, out of view of the door. She puts the gun in his lap, puts his hand over it to steady it.

She leans down, WHISPERS to him.

WOMAN

Don't. Say. A word.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He nods.

The Woman takes a breath, walks across the foyer, tousling her hair as she goes.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

Two is staring at the monitors, aghast.

TWO

Holy shit... holy shit...

One races over, looks over his shoulder. One monitor covers the front stoop, and on that monitor they can clearly see TWO UNIFORMED COPS.

TWO (cont'd)

She's fuckin' crazy, she killed him!
She just killed her own kid!

ONE

It's not her fault, it's not her fault,
the guy must have called them. Look,
look, look, she's telling us.

He points to another monitor, the one in the foyer, where the Woman is looking up at the camera, miming to them -- don't worry, I'll take care of this.

ONE (cont'd)

She's gonna handle it.

TWO

She better.

INT ENTRY FLOOR NIGHT

The Woman's shaking hand rises up to the doorknob and pulls open the big front door. On the stoop, the two Cops turn to look at her. She acts as if she's just been awakened. She looks it, too, still in tee shirt and boxer shorts. The wind is gusty and cold outside.

WOMAN

Yeah?

COP 1

Everything okay?

WOMAN

Huh?

(CONTINUED)

COP 2

Are you all right?

WOMAN

What are you guys -- what time is it?

COP 1

'Bout four o'clock.

WOMAN

I don't get it.

COP 2

We got a call...

Cop 1 looks at him. Cop 2 stops talking.

WOMAN

Somebody called you?

COP 1

Can we come in?

WOMAN

What do you want?

COP 1

We'd like to come in.

WOMAN

No, you can't come in.

COP 2

Are you okay?

WOMAN

I'm fine.

COP 1

Can we come in?

WOMAN

Stop asking me that. I'm fine. Who called you?

COP 1

You don't look so good.

WOMAN

You wake me out of a sound sleep at four in the morning and then tell me I look like hell?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WOMAN (cont'd)

Of course I look like hell, you don't look so hot yourself, Jack. I'm freezing here, thank you for checking, can I go?

Cop 1 studies her, notices the burned sleeve of her tee shirt, the black smudges still on her face.

COP 1

Your husband says you said "There are three..." right before you got cut off.

WOMAN

Oh, *that* phone call...

Cop 1 takes a step forward and lowers his voice to just above a whisper, unconsciously making her lean forward in order to hear him.

COP 1

Ma'am, if there's something you want to say to us right now that maybe you *can't* say to us right now, maybe you just want to make a signal, by blinking a few times, something like that.

She just looks at him. Wow, this guy's intuitive. She is sorely tempted. But she can't.

COP 1 (cont'd)

That's something you could do. Safely.

She thinks, thinks --

-- and bursts out laughing.

WOMAN

Man, you are good! You mean, like, if somebody was in the house or something? That's great, they really *train* you guys these days, don't they?

Cop 1 looks at her, not sure if he believes her or not.

WOMAN (cont'd)

No. I'm fine. Cross my heart.

Cop 2 turns to go, but Cop 1 lingers.

COP 1

May I ask what the rest of that sentence was going to be?

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

(stalling)
Huh?

COP 1

The one that started "There are three."
What was the rest?

Pause. She stares at him.

WOMAN

Okay, look. My husband and I just broke up. It's my first night in the new house, and I was feeling a little lonely and a little drunk. The sentence, if you insist on knowing, was going to be "There are three things I'll do for you if you come over here right now and get in bed with me."

Cop 2 stifles a laugh.

WOMAN (cont'd)

But thank *God* I came to my senses before I said all that, and I hung up instead, so nobody would ever know what I was thinking, unless, of course, two policemen showed up to interrogate me about it.

That was good. Cop 1 is embarrassed. Cop 2 thinks it's funny.

COP 2

You want her to show you which three things, Bobby, or should we just go?

ON THE MONITORS,

we see the video image of the Cops as they turn and head away down the front steps. The Woman closes the doors, looks up into a camera, right at us.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

One and Two breathe a sigh of relief.

One goes back to work on the safe. He's making progress.

Two looks at the Boy. Stares, actually. He's thinking too.

Bad thoughts.

CUT TO:

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

The Woman is back in the living room, holding her Husband close, their foreheads touching. She's terrified, exhausted, wants to collapse in his arms.

Instead, she starts to pull the gun from his fingers. He tightens his grip, what are you doing? Wants to hold onto it. She looks at him.

WOMAN

They killed. They'll do it again.
After they've got whatever they came
for. They're gonna kill us. Even if
we have the gun, when they walk out of
that room with our little boy, we'll do
whatever they say. And we'll end up
dead.

He still tries to hold onto the gun, but she pulls his fingers off it, takes it away from him.

HUSBAND

What are you gonna do?

She stands.

WOMAN

Get him back.

CUT TO:

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

In the panic room, the Boy has his hands clamped over his ears, his mouth is wide open, and a hideous METAL SHRIEK seems to be coming out of it.

But the SHRIEK is actually coming from the safe, where One continues work, another drill, a bigger bit. The noise is deafening.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

In the master bedroom, the Woman pulls on a pair of jeans that are hanging over a chair.

She steps into a pair of boots.

She shoves the gun into her belt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Here in the bedroom, she can hear the drill. From the house next door, she hears POUNDING again, more MUFFLED CURSES. Apparently the neighbor can hear the drill too.

The Woman looks from the walls of the bedroom to the walls of the panic room. Her eyes light up with an idea.

She goes to the front wall of the bedroom, stands with her back against the exterior wall (street side), with her left shoulder against the common wall that's shared with the neighbor's brownstone.

She begins to step off the distance, heel to toe, measuring with her feet until she reaches the metal door that is the entrance to the panic room.

WOMAN

Fourteen.

She hurries out of the bedroom. What's she doing?

INT ENTRY FLOOR NIGHT

The Woman flies down the stairs, goes into a room in the front of the house.

INT LIBRARY NIGHT

The Woman comes into a small room full of empty bookshelves, a library. There is a window that looks out over the sidewalk, one floor up, same level as the stoop.

She looks up, into the corners of the room.

WOMAN

No camera, no camera, no camera...

They're bare, no video cameras. Good.

She goes to the window, tries to open it. Screwed shut, of course.

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

The safe is almost cracked. Two is watching the monitors carefully.

ON THE MONITORS,

we see the Woman as she searches through the tools in the living room, finds a screwdriver, a sledgehammer.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

Two furrows his brow. Now what?

INT LIBRARY NIGHT

The Woman is back in the library, hurriedly unscrewing the window. She gets the last screw out, shoves the window up.

The wind BLASTS in, it's a hell of spooky night out there.

She leans out the window. We lean with her. The sidewalk is empty (we see it only from our vantage point inside the house). She's one floor up. To her right is the house's front stoop.

She tosses the sledgehammer over, onto the stoop. Climbs up onto the window ledge, and slithers out herself.

We lean further, watch her as she edges along the ledge, hops down onto the stoop, and freezes, staring in horror --

-- at the *video camera* that covers the front stoop.

ON THE MONITORS,

we see her staring straight up at the camera, clearly standing on the front stoop, outside the house, where she was specifically told not to go.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Boy sees the image of her on the stoop. Two happens to be looking away at the moment, at the safe, but he starts to turn around, to look at the monitors again --

-- and the Boy kicks him, hard, in the ass.

TWO

Hey!

He turns, away from the monitors.

BOY

Sorry. Can't control it sometimes.

Two scowls at him. Behind him --

ON THE MONITORS,

the Woman darts down the front steps and disappears from view on the monitor.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

the Boy sees his mother go.

BOY

(to Two)
Won't happen again.

INT LIBRARY NIGHT

Still leaning out the window, we can see the Woman from here as she reaches the sidewalk and runs up the front steps of the neighbor's house, which is contiguous.

Straining to see (yet stay in the house), we see the Woman all the way at the right edge of the frame, as she shifts the gun to the back of her pants and knocks on the neighbor's door, sledgehammer held slightly behind her leg.

After a long moment, we hear the neighbor's front door open. The conversation begins. The wind is gusting right in our faces, we can't make out the details, but the gist is clear -- let me into your house, and don't ask me a lot of questions.

The NEIGHBOR -- and by the tone of the voice it sounds like an old woman -- is slow to respond, grumpy.

Losing patience, the Woman just pulls the Neighbor out of the way and shoves her way into the house. The Neighbor stumbles out onto her front stoop, and we were right, it is an old lady in a nightgown, but she's no shrinking violet. In fact, she's royally pissed off and not at all intimidated.

NEIGHBOR

What the hell do you think you're
doing, young lady?!

She storms back into her house, following the Woman. As both of them disappear from the frame, we move out of the library, into the foyer, and move along the common wall, the one shared with the neighbor's brownstone.

From the other side of the wall, we can hear muffled voices, arguing, the Woman and the Neighbor shouting at each other.

We drift up, up the stairs, and hear the THUNDERING of footsteps on the stairs next door. We keep pace with them, from inside this house. We pass right through the floor --

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

-- and rise up out of the floor in the master bedroom, and now we can hear the conversation on the other side of the wall in here, the Neighbor's fearful, angry tones, the Woman's firm, urgent declarations.

We move with the Woman, even though we can't see her, we know what she's doing, she's stepping off the paces on the other side of the wall. We drift down that well, fourteen steps, until we reach the metal door to the panic room, then we pass *through* that door --

INT PANIC ROOM NIGHT

-- and arrive inside the panic room, where One is *this close* to getting the safe open, when all of a sudden --

WHOMP.

CRUNCH.

One and Two freeze, alarmed. It's coming from the long wall, the shared wall.

They look at each other.

WHOMP.

CRUNCH.

They look at the wall.

Somebody is on the other side, pounding like hell.

TWO

The walls are steel, right?

ONE

Not that one.

TWO

NOT THAT ONE?!

ONE

Hey man, it's the neighbor's house, who breaks in through the neighbor's house?!

WHOMP! CRUNCH!

Louder. Closer. One turns, SCREAMS at the wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ONE (cont'd)
WHO THE FUCK BREAKS IN THROUGH THE
NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE?!

TWO
We've got the Kid!
(shouting at the wall)
WE'VE GOT YOUR KID!! What the fuck is
she thinking?!

WHOMP! CRUNCH!

ONE
She's got your gun, that's what she's
thinking! The FUCK you had to bring a
gun for?!

One throws himself back on the floor, goes back to work on the
safe. Fires up the drill again, it SCREAMS into the metal.

ONE (cont'd)
Almost there...

The POUNDING keeps up from next door. We hear sheetrock torn
away on the far side. Bricks, SCRAPING out of place.

The Boy, in the corner, is energized, excited. While One and
Two are distracted, he grabs the leather pouch, palms the three
syringes that are left in there.

ONE (cont'd)
ALMOST THERE...

Finally, the door to the safe CRUNCHES in on one side, yielding
to the drilling --

-- at the very moment that the head of a sledgehammer CRASHES
through the wall of the panic room. Two grabs hold of the Boy,
One maintains his focus, throwing open the safe, revealing --

-- nothing.

CRUNCH!

The sledgehammer head strikes again, opening up a hole about a
foot across. Light spills through from the other side, as well
as the voice of the hysterical Neighbor.

NEIGHBOR (O.S.)
I CALLED THE POLICE!

Two hurls the Kid against the far wall, leaps over to the side
of the hole, and waits, poised above it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

At the safe, One doesn't lose his cool, just opens a false bottom in the safe, revealing a manila envelope.

He snatches it up, RIPS it open, and his eyes dance as he holds up fourteen individual one million dollar U.S. Treasury Bearer Bonds. He fans them out, eyes drinking in his Holy Grail.

BANG!

A gunshot whizzes right through one of the bonds, setting it aflame before it SLAMS into the far wall, sending up a little cloud of plaster dust.

ONE

JESUS!

He whirls, sees an arm poking through the hole in the wall, gun extended.

But Two is standing just above the hole, and already has his boot raised, over the hand. He brings it down, a CRUNCHING blow that stomps right on her wrist.

The Woman SCREAMS, loses her grip on the gun, and it CLATTERS into the space between the houses.

BETWEEN THE WALLS,

the gun falls, into oblivion, the space between the walls, it bounces two stories down, where no one can get to it.

IN THE PANIC ROOM,

One shoves the rest of the bonds into his jacket, stands, SCREAMS.

ONE

I GOT THE MONEY, LET'S GO!!!

Two grabs the Boy and turns, jabs the green button to open the door.

Behind them, the Woman SCREAMS in anger and wriggles through the opening. Before she's even all the way through, she gets hold of Two's leg and pulls herself into the panic room, scraping and bloodying herself on the edges of the too-small hole.

ONE (cont'd)

GO, LET'S GO, OUTTA HERE!!

But Two is deep in a violent rage. Still holding the Boy with one hand, he bends down, grabs the Woman by the hair, and drags her toward the doorway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TWO
YOU KNOW HOW THIS IS GONNA GO! YOU
KNOW HOW IT GOTTA END!!

ONE
FUCK YOU, I'M GONE!

He bolts out of the room, through the metal door, which is just finishing its slow crank open, its heavy spring coiling in the wall.

Two drags the Woman across the floor by the hair, right into the track of the open steel door.

She looks up, sees the infrared safety beam over her head, and realizes with horror what his intention is.

Still with one arm holding the Boy, who is kicking and struggling viciously, Two holds the Woman's head down on the floor, below the safety beam that would prevent the door from closing. He reaches for the "close" button.

The Boy raises his arm, stuffed with three syringes, and jabs them into Two's neck. Two SCREAMS in pain.

The Woman manages to raise her head, breaking the beam.

INT HALLWAY NIGHT

On the stairwell, One stops, frozen, his face twitching with indecision. He hears the murder taking place just above him.

He runs down three steps.

Stops again.

Runs down the rest of the stairs.

INT MASTER BEDROOM NIGHT

Two stretches to push the red "close" button for the door, but he has to hold the Woman's head down, out of the lower beam with one hand, all with the Boy savagely attacking him at the same time, and three syringes hanging out of his neck.

Finally, he gets her head all the way down, onto the floor.

Looking up, the Woman sees the red beam become complete again.

Two jabs the button --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- just as the Boy throws his hand into the *upper* beam, the one at shoulder level. The Boy's hand turns red, the beam is broken, the door will not close.

Two ROARS in anger and twists violently, sending the Boy flying across the room.

The Woman strains, gets her head off the floor again, breaking the beam. Two starts jamming the close button, over and over again, the beam completes, then breaks, completes, then breaks, never the button and the beam at the same time.

But it can't go on forever. The Woman's tiring, she can't keep it up, her head trembles --

-- and collapses onto the floor.

The beam completes --

-- Two SMACKS the red button --

-- and One appears on the other side of the door. He reaches in, grabs Two by the hair, pulls him forward into the gap, and Two's head is crushed by the spring-loaded steel door that SLAMS forward just as the Woman draws herself back.

The Woman falls across the panic room, grabs the Boy, and holds on tight.

Slowly, the door opens again, detecting an obstruction. Two's body slumps to the floor, dead.

One stands there, looking down at the Woman and the Boy.

They stare at each other, wordless, their first face to face contact. She sees the bonds protruding from his jacket.

He zips it up. Hesitates.

ONE

Couldn't go back. One-way plan.

She just looks at him. There will be no understanding here. He turns and hurries away.

INT ENTRY FLOOR NIGHT

One races down the steps, hurries to the entry door, throws it open --

-- and is flooded with brilliant spotlights. He freezes, silhouetted in the doorway. Wind and leaves blow into the house, a real gale outside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cops SHOUT, all at once, must be a half dozen of 'em out there, but he can't see anything in the stinging light, and can't hear much either, over the ROARING wind.

One SHOUTS back, deranged, not even words. The Cops keep shouting, now everybody's shouting and nobody's saying anything, but they all know what they mean.

One turns, takes a step toward us, to come back into the house, but the SHOUTING from outside stops him, he knows it's futile anyway.

ONE

(softly)

One-way plan...

He puts a hand in his jacket, conspicuously --

-- then whirls around and SCREAMS.

ONE (cont'd)

I GOT A GUN!!

He whips the hand out of his jacket, inadvertently bringing the bundle of treasury certificates at the same time.

The shots seem simultaneous, a cannon round of them, half a dozen in all. They SLAM into his chest and he falls to his knees. He turns, silhouetted again, on his knees, puts one hand to the entry wall for support.

He lowers his head, like a man in prayer. He falls over, onto his back, eyes open. Dead.

The wind gusts, picks up the stack of bonds, blows them back into the house, as if they were never meant to leave.

We back away from the doorway, further into the house, among the stacks of moving boxes, as the police come up the steps.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT ENTRY FLOOR DAY

Dissolve to that same position in the foyer, but now it's daytime. All the moving boxes are gone. The house is completely empty again.

The Woman comes down the stairs with the Boy, each carrying a few odds and ends, the last of everything.

They head for the door. She opens it. It's a gorgeous day outside, the sun shining, kids playing, traffic trafficking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Woman looks back at the place, the place they lived in for all of one night.

She turns toward the sidewalk, looks at how gorgeous it is outside. She turns to the Boy.

WOMAN

An apartment, then?

BOY

Well, we know that *now*...

WOMAN

You got any idea how much I love you?

BOY

I think you're about to tell me.

She smiles, puts an arm around him, and they walk out, down the steps. We start to follow them, but since we haven't left the house for a single shot yet we're *certainly* not going to start now, and --

-- BAM. The heavy front door closes right in our face. We turn and drift away, across the foyer, toward that picture that still hangs on the wall, the big cityscape of New York, with this house in the foreground.

We drift up, toward the picture, *into* the picture --

IN THE PICTURE,

-- and as it occupies the full frame, we notice it's not a photograph any more, it seems to be coming to life, there are things moving in it.

We see the Woman and the Boy, coming down the front steps of the townhouse, this townhouse, number 26. As they start off down the sidewalk, we rise up, and the rest of the picture starts to animate as well -- the cars in the street start driving, picking up where they left off.

We rise up still higher, to look at the whole city, at the skyscrapers that tower watchfully over the people below. The clouds that were frozen in mid-air start to drift, the helicopter that was just hanging there begins to fly again.

Life resumes.

FADE OUT.