American Horror Story

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RYAN MURPHY TELEVISION

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TITLES UP: San Francisco, 1978. The words dissolve, and we hold on blackness. Hear soft eerie wind chimes. CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE -- AFTERNOON

PUSH across a leaf-strewn lawn to find a GIRL, eight, with long braids, staring at an abandoned Victorian house that has fallen into grave disrepair. Shutters missing, paint peeling...an ingenue turned dowager by the march of time.

Suddenly, a rock whizzes by the girl’s head and SHATTERS an upper story window. She turns and we finally SEE her face. This is ADELAIDE, and she has Down Syndrome.

TWO BOYS, TEN, bash a gate open with a baseball bat and strut into the yard. This is Troy and Bryan...the Rutger twins.

TROY
Hey, retard.

They head into the empty derelict house, on a mission.

Adelaide suddenly speaks.

ADELAIDE
Excuse me.

They stop, turn.

ADELAIDE (CONT’D)
You’re going to die in there.

They stare at her a beat, the moment is shocking. Then Troy runs to her, viciously pushes her to the ground. He regards her, spits on her, then heads back into the house.

INT. HOUSE -- AFTERNOON

CLASSICAL music plays. FLASHLIGHT BEAMS illuminate stunning Victorian fixtures as they are shattered by the bat. Lead stained glass, intricate moldings...the destruction is horrifying and complete, punctuated by the loud gunshot firecracker sound of SNAP and POPS the boys throw everywhere.

INT. KITCHEN -- AFTERNOON

Troy bashes stunningly beautiful leaded cabinets, shattering the glass. Suddenly, with alarm from another room --

BRYAN
Troy!
INT. LIVING ROOM -- AFTERNOON

We are on Troy’s face as he slowly makes his way across the empty room. All we HEAR is the sound of flies...a faint buzzing, then a cacophony. He finally stops near where his brother is standing and kneels down.

TROY
Awesome.

He is looking at a dead gutted POSSUM...someone, something, has feasted here. The possum’s face is frozen and twisted in fear. ANGLE: the boys crouching reflection in the gray flat dead eye of the animal. Just then, a NOISE. Faint childish LAUGHTER. Adelaide? The boys investigate.

They walk down the hall, when suddenly a BASEMENT DOOR at the other end slowly creaks opens. The boys freeze, then --

TROY (CONT’D)
(afraid)
Go.

BRYAN
You go, shithead.

A dare. Troy moves forward. His brother follows.

INT. BASEMENT -- CONTINUOUS

A murky soup, the flashlights cut a swath.

The beams illuminate the odd stray cobweb, nothing much down here. The boys split up to investigate, Troy throwing the odd snap and pop. Until --

TROY
Check it out.

Bryan approaches and stares with wonder. The flashlights illuminate a wall of dusty SPECIMEN JARS filled with yellow viscous fluid. Within the fluid: monstrosities. Severed deformed hands, feet, a twisted jaw...a horrifying tableau in the style of Joel Peter Witkin.

Next to the jars: a neat line of surgical equipment. Clamps, disembowelers, spreaders...all caked in rusty blood.

A moment of awe from the boys. WE SEE (but they don’t) something move behind them. A flash of white.

Troy picks up one of the jars, studies, it.
BRYAN

Don’t.

But Troy smashes it against a wall, it shatters.

TROY

It stinks down here. It stinks like shit.

(beat)

Last summer, when we had a raccoon stuck in the chimney? That’s what it smells like. Let’s go find it.

BRYAN

No, it smells bad. I’m going.

Bryan starts off. Troy starts investigating, throwing the snap and pops. Bryan is half way up the stairs, when the snap and pops ABRUPTLY STOP.

BRYAN (CONT’D)

Troy?

There is no sound. Then, a faint childish laugh.

BRYAN (CONT’D)

(freaked)

Who’s down here!

Silence. He moves down the creaking steps. Until his flashlight beam finds...

Troy...eyes wide with fear...his throat ripped out.

Terrified, Bryan feels something behind him. He hears a noise: breathing. He slowly turns, his beam ILLUMINATES:

A blonde two year old BOY, wearing a Lindberg-era white christening gown with seed pearls long yellowed. His mouth and face is smeared with blood, his skin is wrinkled like an ancient man. The INFANTATA smiles, gurgles...

Then ATTACKS.

The lightlight falls to the ground.

FADE TO BLACK.

A SINGLE WORD POPS UP: TODAY

INT. DOCTOR’S OFFICE -- DAY

THE SOUND OF RUNNING WATER. Come up on a TRAY of INSTRUMENTS.
A stainless steel SPECULUM, a large SYRINGE with NEEDLE, COTTON SWABS, COTTON BALLS, RUBBER GLOVES. The water stops and the hands of DR. DAY come into view. He towels them off, pulls on the gloves.

DR. DAY
Are your periods regular again?

He messes with the instruments as a WOMAN speaks. It’s VIVIEN HARMON.

VIVIEN
Pretty much. Every other month.

Dr. Day turns. REVEAL Vivien, gowned, on her back, her legs in STIRRUPS. She’s pretty, forty, but she looks thirty five.

VIVIEN (CONT’D)
I’m not complaining. After all of that blood.

Day inserts his gloved fingers into Vivien, beginning his exam. She takes in a sharp breath.

VIVIEN (CONT’D)
Ben hates blood.

DR. DAY
How are you two doing? Sexual relations?

Day is clinical. He’s not looking to get off here.

VIVIEN
Sometimes.

He inserts the speculum. She exhales. It hurts a little.

DR. DAY
You having trouble with arousal?

VIVIEN
A little. Thought maybe it was pre-menopause.

He pulls out the speculum, takes off his gloves.

DR. DAY
Could be. Any issues achieving climax?

VIVIEN
I don’t know, it depends. When I’m alone it’s fine.
He nods.

DR. DAY
Well, things look great from a physical standpoint. Are you anxious about having sex? About something happening?

VIVIEN
You mean like getting pregnant?

DR. DAY
It would be a normal response.

VIVIEN
Well, I would like to go back on my birth control pills.

He takes out her FILE. Writes --

DR. DAY
I want to wait a beat on those. They can cause irregularities in your hormone levels and I think you’re already having some issues in that department. Your cycle, the sexual issues.

VIVIEN
I don’t have sexual issues.
(then)
Maybe I’m just depressed.

Day takes a beat, then keeps writing -- that’s not his field of expertise.

DR. DAY
I’ve recently had some success with women your age using bioidentical hormone treatments. Estrogen, progestin.

VIVIEN
Wait, so I am going through menopause?

DR. DAY
I don’t think so. This is more of a pre-emptive strike. Your body is like a house, you can fix the tiles in the bathroom and the kitchen but if the foundation is decaying, you’re wasting your time.
VIVIEN
Are there any side effects?

DR. DAY
The bHRT’s are great for your skin, your organs. Most of the women I give these to tell me they make them feel ten years younger.

VIVIEN
I don’t let my family use plastic bottles or hold their cell phones to their ears, now you want me to put something in my body and not tell me side effects? Don’t they make those things with horse pee?

DR. DAY
Feel and look ten years younger.

VIVIEN
The arousal issue is mine, not Ben’s. I’m just reconnecting with my body after what happened, I don’t want to give it away again.

DR. DAY
You’re worried about losing control, I’m offering you something to help you get it back.

VIVIEN
I’m not a house.

DR. DAY
Vivien, what are you so afraid of?

Off Vivien, unsure of the answer --

INT. BACK BAY BROWNSTONE -- DAY

Vivien comes home with GROCERIES. Goes into the KITCHEN. Starts unloading. Along with the food is a LITTLE PHARMACY bag. She pulls out the hormone pills and creams, looks at them, thinks, then HEARS A NOISE from upstairs. A piece of furniture being moved? Her eyes go wide. Then, the sound again, longer, louder. She’s TERRIFIED, dials the phone. 911.

OPERATOR
911 operator, what is your emergency?
VIVIEN
(whispering)
There’s someone in my house.

OPERATOR
Are you sure it’s not a member of your family?

VIVIEN
No. My daughter is at school and my husband is at work. I think someone is robbing us. Someone robbed the brownstone next door two weeks ago. What do I do?

OPERATOR
We’re sending a patrol car.

She hears a THUNK -- like a body hitting the floor. She hangs up. Thinks. Grabs a KNIFE and starts upstairs.

INT. SECOND FLOOR -- CONTINUOUS

ANGLE: on the gleaming knife at her side. More sounds. Vivien slowly makes her way to the door, takes a deep breath and CREAKS it open. On her face, the blood rushing out of it.

GIRL’S VOICE (O.S.)
Oh shit.

Vivien backs out into the hallway, almost goes over the railing. She’s going to throw up. Before she can, her husband, BEN comes out, naked. He’s 42, fit, handsome as she is pretty.

BEN
Vivien....

He goes to hug her. She instinctively SLASHES at him with the knife. It SCRAPES his arm. Both of them look at the small, yet real wound, shocked. She drops the knife. He takes her in his arms and keeps repeating with hysteria...

BEN (CONT’D)
I’m sorry I’m sorry I’m sorry...

She lets him hold her for a beat, then breaks away in tears and runs down the stairs. Off a naked, bleeding Ben we SMASH TO BLACK.

INT. CAR -- DAY

DRIVING OVER THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, SIX MONTHS LATER. Hard SUNLIGHT through the windows. Ben’s driving.
Vivien in the passenger seat, staring out the window. Their fifteen year old GOTH daughter VIOLET in the back with six month old DOG, HALLIE.

BEN
Isn’t it beautiful?

VIVIEN
The light is different from Boston. Feels like I can see more. I thought it was supposed to be all foggy.

VIOLET
I need to go to the bathroom.

BEN
It’s just a little while longer.

VIOLET
I need to go.

BEN
Where would you like me to pull over, sweetie -- the Bay or the Pacific?

VIOLET
(re: the dog)
Bet if baby substitute had to shit you’d find somewhere.

VIVIEN
I don’t like that word, Violet.

A beat, then Violet looks out the window. Thoughtfully --

VIOLET
Thirteen hundred people have jumped off of this thing -- at least that’s what they think. They don’t see them all and they stopped counting right before a thousand. I looked it up. Twenty six of them survived. You know what all of them said was their first thought after they stepped off? (then, mischievous)

Oh shit.

Her mother’s discomfort makes Violet grin.
VIOLET (CONT’D)
Kind of how I feel about this move. (then)
I’m not going to like the school. San Francisco is filled with hippies and freaks and drug addicts.

BEN
I’m glad we named you Violet instead of our second choice.

VIOLET
Which was?

BEN
Sunshine.

They all kind of crack up. A fleeting moment of family togetherness. Ben shares a smile with his wife, then reaches out his hand to hold hers, but she PULLS it AWAY.

EXT. OLD VICTORIAN HOUSE -- DAY

They pull into the driveway. Everyone takes a good look — it’s looking better than it did the last time we saw it. New paint, shutters, gutters. There’s a FOR SALE sign on the lawn. All three of them take it in as they come to a stop.

BEN
This is it.

Vivien is unsure. Violet is intrigued. MARCY, the RELATOR greets them from the front porch with a WAVE.

INT. HOUSE -- DAY

Marcy shows them around. The FOYER is epic, beautiful, soaring ceilings and a grand STAIRCASE. House porn.

MARCY
It’s the finest Queen Anne on the market. Venetian chandeliers, original moldings. The stained glass is some of the only of it’s kind that survived the great quake. As you can see the previous owners really loved the place like a child. They restored everything.

VIVIEN
Gay?
MARCY
Sweetheart, it’s San Francisco, they’re all gay.

Light laughter. Except from Violet, who rolls her eyes. Ben sees this and fights a laugh. They head into the KITCHEN.

INT. KITCHEN

It’s beautiful. Looks original except with all of the modern bells and whistles.

MARCY
Do you cook?

BEN
Viv is a great cook. I got her cooking lessons a few years ago for her birthday and she ended up teaching the teacher a few things.

MARCY
Cooking lessons. Romantic. You’re a psychiatrist?

BEN
Psychologist. You said something on the phone about there being a study upstairs that I could use as a home office? I’m planning on seeing patients here so I can spend more time with the family.

MARCY
How refreshing.

Vivien shakes her head.

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

Hallie sniffs around, PEES in a corner, then SENSES SOMETHING. Explores, then -- STARTS BARKING LIKE CRAZY.

INT. KITCHEN

Violet is staring out the window at the BACKYARD.

VIVIEN
Violet, will you go see what’s going on with Hallie?

Violet storms out. Teenager.
INT. HALLWAY

Violet finds Hallie, barking madly at the BASEMENT DOOR.

    VIOLET
    Shut up!

She won’t. Violet looks at the door. It’s BOLTED SHUT. Old school bolted. Two heavy bolts and two HUGE PADLOCKS. Someone doesn’t want to let anyone in -- or maybe out. Violet wiggles the doorknob, trying to pry it open.

INT. BASEMENT -- DAY

From the BOTTOM of the steps. POV of something watching the door move, the knob jiggle. We hear it’s raspy breathing.

INT. HALLWAY

Violet tries the door a few more times, then yanks on the locks. No luck. She stares at the door, oddly drawn to it.

INT. LIBRARY -- DAY

Marcy shows Vivien and Ben the BEAUTIFUL GOTHIC LIBRARY.

    MARCY
    This is my favorite room in the house.

    BEN
    (to Vivien, trying)
    When I saw the pictures of this room online I thought maybe you could use it as your music room.

    MARCY
    You’re a musician?

    VIVIEN
    I was.

    BEN
    She’s a cellist. She played in the Boston philharmonic.

She heads over to the WALL. Something isn’t right.

    MARCY
    Why did you quit?

There’s an answer, but we’re not going to get it.
VIVIEN
This wallpaper is coming off.

She goes to the wall, grabs a tiny PEELING PIECE of seagrass wallpaper and gently pulls it off. It opens a small window to the ORIGINAL WALL, no bigger than a couple of postage stamps.

VIVIEN (CONT’D)
I think there’s a mural under here.

MARCY
The last owners must have covered it up. They were modernists.
(then, with difficulty)
Speaking of the last owners, full disclosure requires me to tell you about what happened to them.

VIVIEN
Oh God, one of them didn’t die in here, did they?

MARCY
Yes, actually. Both of them.
(off their shock)
Murder suicide. I sold them the house, too. Just the sweetest couple. You never know I guess.

BEN
So that’s why it’s half the price of every other house in the neighborhood.

MARCY
I have a very nice painted lady not too far from here but you’re going to get a third of the house for twice the price if you go that way.

Vivien and Ben aren’t sure. Violet comes in carrying Hallie.

VIOLET
Where did it happen?

MARCY
The basement.

Another beat. Violet grins.

VIOLET
We’ll take it.

Off Ben and Vivien --
EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

As MOVERS finish bringing the last boxes in, Marcy pulls the IN ESCROW sign off of the FOR SALE sign and replaces it with one that says SOLD.

INT. HOUSE -- MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Ben comes out the bathroom in his pajamas, happy. Vivien is still unpacking, there are boxes everywhere. He comes in behind her, kisses her, she gently moves away.

BEN
Come to bed, we’ll finish this in the morning.

VIVIEN
I’m worried about Violet. She’s right about kids being different out here. She can’t handle another year of not fitting in.

BEN
You mean you can’t.
(then)
I treat kids like Violet every day. In three months she’ll have lost all of the dark eye make up and combat boots and be walking around in Birkenstocks with unshaven pits smelling like patchouli.

She laughs. He takes her in his arms.

VIVIEN
It doesn’t freak you out at all? What happened here?

BEN
My repulsion is tempered by the fact that this house is worth four times what we paid for it.

VIVIEN
But it’s not like some old lady died in here. A murder-suicide. Gives me the creeps just thinking about it.

BEN
So don’t think about it.
VIVIEN
That’s your professional advice, doctor?

BEN
No place is perfect. No place and no person.
(then)
All I know is that for the first time in months I feel at home somewhere. Moving here, buying this house was the right thing to do for our family. It’s a good thing and frankly, we deserve some good after all the shit we’ve been through.
(then, realizing)
Sorry.

She nods, not sure, but desperate to trust him. He kisses her. Another fleeting moment, this one of marital bliss, but she can’t sustain it. She pulls away, leaves him to go do more unpacking.

EXT. SCHOOL COURTYARD -- DAY

Violet walks through the commons, SMOKING. She surveys the scene -- a few kids reliving their grandparents’ Haight Ashbury fashion mistakes but most are unmemorable. Upper middle class high school in an upscale urban neighborhood.

She passes THREE pretty girls -- seniors dressed like they’re twenty-five -- talking up some boys -- LEAH, BECCA and ABBY. Overhears their conversation --

LEAH
So I let him.

BECCA
Do coke off of your nipples?

LEAH
They were numb for like two days.

They all crack up. Violet tries to disappear into her sweater as she passes, but --

LEAH (CONT’D)
Hey! Student council passed a rule against smoking in public spaces.

The girls step in front of her.

BECCA
Second hand smoke kills.
Violet puts the cigarette out.

VIOLET
I didn’t know. I’m new.

Violet nervously flicks her butt into a planter. Leah flips.

LEAH
What the hell is the matter with you? People sit here. They eat here.

VIOLET
You don’t know me. Why are you doing this?

BECCA
Leah’s grandma died of lung cancer. She takes this stuff pretty seriously.

Leah holds the butt out to Violet.

LEAH
Eat it.
(off Violet’s shock)
Eat it. Or I’m going to kick the shit out of you.

ABBY
Come on, Leah, it’s enough.

LEAH
No, I want to see her eat it.

She grabs Violet’s face.

BECCA
Seriously, Leah, she’s like twelve.

Leah starts trying to shove the cigarette into Violet’s mouth, but Violet resists, then instinctively SPITS in Leah’s face. That stuns everyone. Abby and Becca can’t help but laugh. A beat, then Violet takes off running.

LEAH
(calling after her)
You’re dead! DEAD!
INT. HOUSE -- MUSIC ROOM -- DAY

Vivien drops the NEEDLE on an old record player. Classical cello plays as she sets out her INSTRUMENTS -- a large bowl of water, scraping tool, small knife. Slowly and carefully, she starts removing the old wallpaper.

As she does, the GOYA-ESQUE MURAL begins to reveal itself. She can’t quite make out the first image -- until she pulls off one more sliver or paper to see -- A WOMAN, her face bent in pain, her body twisted and tortured.

Vivien stares at the image, transfixed and disturbed when suddenly a HAND touches her shoulder. She jumps out of her skin, turns, sees ADELAIDE, the child with Down Syndrome we saw earlier, now a woman in her forties.

ADELAIDE
You’re going to die in here.

CONSTANCE (O.S.)
Adelaide!

Constance, Adelaide’s mother enters from the kitchen carrying a BOX. Constance is a chain smoker, and she sounds like it.

CONSTANCE (CONT’D)
Adelaide. I put that “Dora the Explorer” on for you so you would sit and watch it.

ADELAIDE
It was “Go Diego Go.” I don’t like it.

CONSTANCE
Brown cartoon characters -- you can’t tell the difference.

Vivien doesn’t know what to make of this. Finally --

CONSTANCE (CONT’D)
Hi. Hi. I’m Constance your neighbor -- the tear down next door. This is my girl Adelaide. Go home Addy. Now!

Adelaide storms out.

CONSTANCE (CONT’D)
That girl is a monster. I love her and I’m a good Christian but Jesus H.

(MORE)
CONSTANCE (CONT'D)
Christ, if they’d invented some of those tests a few years earlier...

VIVIEN
How did you get in my house?

CONSTANCE
You left your back door open, though I have to warn you Addy seems to always find a way in. She’s got a bug up her ass for this place, always has. You got a dog?

VIVIEN
Yes. Is that a problem?

CONSTANCE
Better for me. I run a little kennel out of my house. Doggy day care kind of thing. Don’t bother calling the cops on me -- I’m in with one of the city managers and he always looks the other way.

VIVIEN
Look, it’s very nice to meet you but I wasn’t really prepared for company.

CONSTANCE
I’m gone. Brought this for you, housewarming. Addy wanted to cook you a pie but she tends to spit in the cooking so I figured this was better -- should help you get rid of some of the bad ju-ju.

She hands Vivien the box.

CONSTANCE (CONT’D)
Those homosexual boys were nice enough and I say live and let live, but I can’t help but think that that lifestyle drove them to do what they did.

(then)
I can’t remember your name.

VIVIEN
I didn’t tell you. I’m Vivien Harmon.
CONSTANCE
Anyway, enjoy, relax, let me know
if you need help with your pup.
Glad you’re getting rid of that
wallpaper. Thought those people
were supposed to be stylish.

She exits. Vivien can’t help but laugh a little at their
oddity. She shakes her head, opens the box to see a TIGHTLY
WOUND BUNCH OF SAGE. A beat, then -- through the window she
sees Constance walking back to her house.

CONSTANCE (CONT’D)
(calling back)
It’s Sage. For cleansing the
spirits in the house. Too many bad
memories in there.

INT. HOUSE -- SAGE MONTAGE -- NIGHT

Vivien moves through the house, the burning sage bundle in
her hand. She’s not sure if she buys this whole cleansing the
spirits thing, but she’s committing. She moves into an
UPSTAIRS HALLWAY --

She hasn’t spent much time in this part of the house yet.
It’s barely decorated and there are even a few EMPTY BOXES
stacked at the dead end. Suddenly, the flame in the sage
bundle is BLOWN OUT. Odd. She looks UP for the source and
discovers a DRAFT coming from a TRAP DOOR IN THE CEILING.
The attic.

She puts down the sage, pulls over a chair. Standing on it,
she pulls the DRAWSTRING.

INT. THE ATTIC -- LOOKING DOWN ON VIVIEN

The DOOR opens and STAIRS extend into the hallway. Common in
these old houses. She climbs in. DARKNESS, SILENCE. Her eyes
adjust. Miraculously, she finds a LIGHT CORD, pulls it.

The single bulb turns on and she’s standing face to face with
a BLACK RUBBER MAN.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Ben is on the bed, reading when he hears his wife SCREAM.

INT. ATTIC

Ben rushes up the stairs, finds Vivien sitting on some STACKS
of old newspapers.
BEN
What happened? Are you okay?

She points to the rubber man -- he’s actually just a large rubber suit -- known as a RUBBER ASPHYXIATION SUIT hanging from a hook. The suit is black, covers the entire body and has a mask with two small eye holes and two tiny breathing straws that can be pinched to temporarily suffocate the wearer.

BEN (CONT’D)
Guess those guys were into the kinky stuff.
(then)
Should I try it on?

VIVIEN
Stop it. It’s not funny.

But they laugh. A beat, then Violet peeks her head in.

VIOLET
What happened?
(seeing the suit)
Holy shit.

VIVIEN
Get it out of here.

EXT. HOUSE -- NIGHT
Ben tosses the suit in the GARBAGE.

INT. BEN’S HOME OFFICE -- DAY
TIGHT on various items as we hear a therapy session. Ben’s diploma from Yale; psychiatric books he has written.

BEN’S VOICE
These fantasies started, two years ago, three years ago...?

MALE VOICE
Two years.

We see Ben, very calm and professional in his shrink chair.

BEN
Is there a structure to the thoughts...a pattern...

MALE VOICE
It’s always the same, it starts the same way.
BEN

How?

MALE VOICE
I prepare for the noble war.

We REVEAL TATE LANGDON...17, handsome, charismatic as hell...he could be a cult leader or a movie star.

TATE
I get a taste for the bloodletting...and I pack up my weapons of mass destruction.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. VIOLET’S BEDROOM -- SIMULTANEOUS
Violet neatly unpacks razor blades, raises one, examines it.

INT. OFFICE -- SIMULTANEOUS

BEN
Guns?

TATE
Obviously.

BEN
And then?

INT. HIGHSCHOOL HALLWAY -- DAY
Tate walks through a crowded hallway, smiling sweetly, wearing a trenchcoat and holding a duffel bag.

TATE’S VOICE
I’m walking through the halls, I’m calm, I have the secret, I know what’s coming and I know no one can stop me, including myself.

BEN’S VOICE
Do you target people who have been mean to you? Unkind?

TATE’S VOICE
No. I kill people I like.

In the hall, a SWEET INNOCENT 16-YEAR-OLD GIRL smiles at him. He smiles back.

BEN’S VOICE
Do you feel sympathy?
TATE’S VOICE
No. I’m helping them.

INT. CLASSROOM -- DAY

Typical algebra tedium. Until Tate enters.

TEACHER
Can I help you?

TATE
No.

He RAISES HIS GUN, shoots the teacher. She instantly goes down. Tate looks at the shocked students, who are paralyzed. He starts roaming the aisles and just shooting.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

TATE
Some of them beg for their life, but I don’t feel sad, I don’t feel anything. Its a filthy world we live in, a filthy goddamned helpless world, and honestly? I feel I’m taking them away from all the shit and piss and vomit that runs in the streets, you know? I’m helping to take them somewhere clean and silent and kind.

INT. CLASSROOM -- DAY

The entire classroom has been massacred, the walls are blood smeared. The sweet girl from the hallway has been badly wounded, but she’s not dead. He stops in front of her, aims the gun. She raises her shaking hand, we SEE him through a gaping bullet hole.

INNOCENT GIRL
Please...

He shoots her dead.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

TATE
There’s something about the blood, man. All that blood. I drown in it.

INT. SCHOOL -- DAY

Tate is bounding down the stairwell, to escape. He hears something, stops turns.
A TORRENT OF BLOOD, A WALL OF IT, races down the stairwell at him. He spreads his arms, to welcome it. It envelopes him, he is obliterated.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

Ben shows no emotion, writes SOCIOPATH on his tablet.

TATE
The Indians believed that blood holds all the bad spirits, they would cut themselves once a month in ceremonies, let the spirits go free. There’s something smart about that. Very smart. I like that.

INT. VIOLET’S BEDROOM -- SIMULTANEOUS

Violet cuts herself with the razor blade. She stares at the crimson gash on her arm with no emotion.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

TATE
You think I’m crazy?

BEN
No. I think you’re creative, and I think you have a lot of pain you’re not dealing with.

TATE
My mother’s worried about me.

BEN
Yes.

TATE
She’s a cocksucker. I mean, literally, she’s a cocksucker. She sucked the guy off next door all the time, my dad found out, he left. He left me alone with a cocksucker, can you imagine? How sick is that?

Tate for the first time shows vulnerability.

TATE (CONT’D)
I’m not crazy, dude. Don’t you think it’s interesting? The idea of letting the bad blood out? The worlds a filthy place. A goddamned horror show. So much pain. So much.
INT. VIOLET’S ROOM -- DAY

Violet makes another cut.

MALE VOICE
You’re doing it wrong.

She whirs around, revealing --

TATE
If you’re trying to kill yourself, cut vertically. They can’t stitch that up.

VIOLET
(freaked)
How’d you get in here?

TATE
If you’re trying to kill yourself you might also try locking the door.

He leaves. She stares.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Middle of the night. So quiet you can hear the buzz of the DIGITAL CLOCK. Ben and Vivien in bed. Suddenly, from above we see BEN’S EYES SPRING OPEN. There’s no life behind them though. He gets up, SLEEPWALKING.

INT. HOUSE -- STAIRWELL -- NIGHT

Ben, NAKED, walks down the stairs. The house CREAKS, GROANS.

INT. HOUSE -- LIBRARY -- DAY

IN THE SHADOWS we can make out some more of the mural. It’s a HELLSCAPE. QUICK CUTS as Ben KNEELS down, turns on the GAS in the fireplace, LIGHTS a ROLL OF NEWSPAPER, tosses it on the logs, IGNITING A HUGE FIRE.

He stands, watches the fire. The room and his naked form GLOWS. As if he was reaching for a long lost love he reaches out to the fire, closer. Then --

VIVIEN (O.S.)
Ben!

Ben pulls his hand back, turns to see his wife. He’s still not with it.
VIVIEN (CONT’D)
What are you doing? You’re naked.
Come back to bed.

BEN
Am I in a dream?

Vivien softens, goes to him, starts leading him back.

VIVIEN
No, you’re sleepwalking.

She leads him out, turns to look at the fire as she does and catches a glimpse of the MURAL as we...

END ACT ONE
EXT. BACKYARD -- DAY

Vivien hangs BEDSHEETS up on clothes lines, drying them. It’s peaceful, golden light, an easy breeze. A TALL WOMAN, in her sixties comes around into the backyard.

VIVIEN
Can I help you?

MOIRA
I’m Moira O’Hara, I’m the housekeeper.

VIVIEN
I didn’t know the place came with one.

MOIRA
Why are you hanging your sheets? Perfectly good electric dryer inside.

VIVIEN
I don’t like the chemicals in fabric softener and the organic ones don’t work. This is the only way to dry them without static cling.

Moira’s impressed.

MOIRA
I work Monday through Thursday. Four hundred a week. If you have a dinner party and you want me to serve or straighten up, it’s extra. Thanksgiving on, Christmas off. That was the deal with the last fellows.

VIVIEN
I’m sorry, I’m just not sure if we need a maid.

MOIRA
What have you been using to clean the floorboards?

VIVIEN
Murphy’s oil soap.
MOIRA
No. White Vinegar. Oil soap kills the wood. Have you ever owned a house this old?

VIVIEN
No.

MOIRA
It has a personality, feelings. Mistreat it and you will regret it. Trust me, madam, you need me.
(then)
May I come in? My cab’s left and I’d like to call another.

Off Vivien --

INT. KITCHEN

Vivien brings Moira some TEA.

VIVIEN
You worked for the previous owners?

MOIRA
And the ones before that. I’ve been the housekeeper here for years. They come, they go, I stay. My husband has been ill for some time so I’m the breadwinner.
(then)
They were both nice boys, the ones before you. I found the bodies.

VIVIEN
What happened? I mean, I hate to gossip.

MOIRA
I don’t know. They fought a lot. Money I think. Who can know when something so horrible happens? Sometimes people just go mad.
(then, hushed)
I cleaned the mess. You’d never know.

Ben enters.

VIVIEN
Ben, this is Moira O’Hara, she’s the last owner’s housekeeper.
(MORE)
Moira turns to greet Ben. Ben’s POV -- she’s a STUNNING TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR OLD. Tiny waist, succulent breasts.

BEN
Nice to meet you, Moira.

They shake. Moira smiles, so hot. Her eyes cry sex. There’s the sound of a CAR HORN.

MOIRA
That’s my cab. I’ll use the lavatory first if you don’t mind.

She exits.

VIVIEN
What do you think?

BEN
Wait, you want to hire her?

VIVIEN
She’s a bit of character but she’s also the first person I’ve met since we moved here that I actually like.

BEN
(a beat, confused)
How long has she been working here?

VIVIEN
I don’t know exactly. The point is that she knows the house, she seems honest and I could use the help.

Ben is baffled. She smiles as Moira comes back in. Vivien talks to her so Moira is old again.

VIVIEN (CONT’D)
Can you start tomorrow?

MOIRA
Thursday’s better but I’ll make it work.

She nods to both of them -- they both see different Moira’s -- and leaves.
VIVIEN
(noticing something)
What?

Ben takes her in his arms.

BEN
Nothing. You just always surprise me.

She likes that. He kisses her. Things get passionate. She so wants to give in, but can’t. She pulls away.

BEN (CONT’D)
You know, you’re going to have to forgive me one day.

He’s hurt, exits. She shakes her head, disappointed in herself. How long does she have to hold on to this?

INT. BATHROOM -- LATER

Vivien digs through the VANITY, finds the old PRESCRIPTION BAG. Tears it open, removes the HORMONE REPLACEMENT MEDS Dr. Day gave her. She fills a cup with water, SWALLOWS A PILL.

EXT. BASEMENT -- DAY

TIGHT on bolt-cutters slicing through the locks.

INT. BASEMENT -- DAY

Ben and Violet enters to investigate. There’s really nothing here now but dust and an odd piece of unloved furniture.

VIOLET
Crap.

BEN
What?

VIOLET
This is where those dudes killed themselves, right? I thought maybe we’d find a body or something.

Ben looks at her, laughs. So does she. A beat, he puts his arms around her shoulders. Brightly --

BEN
Okay! I’ve really enjoyed this father daughter bonding time.

He leaves. Violet takes a beat, then follows.
INT. LIBRARY -- LATE AFTERNOON

Vivien carefully works the WALLPAPER off the wall. The mural is becoming more clear. A WOMAN is dragged into HELL by a GRINNING DEMON. A BEAUTIFUL MAIDEN is splayed out on a bed with a MONSTER sitting on her chest. She tries not to take the images in, she has a job to do.

THE RUBBER MAN appears in the doorway behind her. SOMEONE has put on the suit. He slowly moves towards her.

POV -- from within the mask. His BREATHING. He’s almost upon her. She’s oblivious -- Jesus fucking Christ, turn around!

Finally, she does --

VIVIEN
Violet! Can you take Hallie out?

He’s gone. Nothing. She senses something odd, but then brushes it off, goes back to her work.

INT. BEN’S HOME OFFICE -- DAY

Tate is in session, Violet spies through a partially cracked door.

BEN’S VOICE
Are you taking the medications?

TATE
Yes.

He is aware of Violet, turns and looks at her. She takes in a little gasp, he’s so handsome.

BEN’S VOICE
Thoughts of suicide?

TATE
Not lately. I met somebody.

Off Tate and Violet, eye-locked --

INT. VIOLET’S ROOM -- LATER

Post session. Music by The Smiths plays. Tate and Violet sit on the floor, their sleeves rolled up. He’s showing her his cutting scars.

TATE
This one I did when my dad first left. I was ten I think.
(points to another)
(MORE)
TATE (CONT'D)
This one a year later. New school.
Got beat up.

Violet shows him her most recent cutting.

VIOLET
Last week, first day at my new
school which sucks.

TATE
Westfield?

VIOLET
Yep.

TATE
The worst. I got thrown out of
there.

VIOLET
I hate it here. I hate everyone.
All their bougie designer bullshit,
the east coast was much cooler. At
least we had weather.

TATE
I love it when the leaves change.

VIOLET
Me too.

They stare at each other, wildly attracted.

TATE
Why’d you move here?

VIOLET
My dad had an affair. My mom
literally caught him in the act.

INT. BOSTON HOUSE -- DAY -- FLASHBACK

Vivien climbs the stairs. She pushes the door open with the
knife, we see what was withheld from us. HER POV: Ben fucking
a blonde GIRL in her earlier 20s. Ben looks at her, we see
the pain in his face. The regret and self-loathing.

INT. VIOLET’S ROOM -- DAY

TATE
That’s horrible. If you love
someone you should never cheat on
them, or leave them. Never.
VIOLET
Right? I know. And the worst part is that six months earlier my mom had, like, this brutal miscarriage. The baby was seven months old, we had to have this macabre funeral.

TATE
I’m sorry.

He takes her hand. She’s thrown at being touched.

VIOLET
Why are you seeing my dad?

TATE
Don’t ask questions you already know the answer to. You’re smarter than that.

She nods, it’s true. She looks down at her hand in his, she feels self-conscious. The song ends on her iPod player.

VIOLET
You like Craven? It’s a new band.

TATE
I’ve never heard of them.

She gets up to play them.

VIOLET
They’re really cool, they’re from Oregon, the lead singer is dyslexic and a vegan...

She turns. Tate has left the room.

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Vivien comes in, is shocked by Moira’s OLD LADY ASS. She’s on her hands and knees, SCRUBBING THE FLOOR.

VIVIEN
Um...Moira, you don’t need to do that.

MOIRA
These old floors are finicky. You have to treat them right.

The SPIDER VEINS are showing through Moira’s panty hoes. Vivien tries not to look.
VIVIEN
Ok, well, Ben’s in the shower.
While I’m gone will you finish unpacking the guest room and make up the bed?

MOIRA
Expecting company?

VIVIEN
No, just want to finish settling in.

She exits. Moira stares after her, smiles tightly.

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY

Ben, wearing a robe and towel drying his hair --

BEN
Vivien? I can’t find my razor blades.

No answer. Where’d she go? He sees the door to the guest bedroom OPEN -- someone is in there. He approaches, CREAKS open the door.

IN THE BEDROOM --

Young, beautiful Moira is on the bed, MASTURBATING. It looks like she’s climaxed a few times already and is on her way to another.

Ben watches. Breathless. She opens her eyes, sees Ben and GETS EVEN MORE TURNED ON. Beckons him. He almost goes to her. Desperate not just for sex but for some kind of affection. Then, he steps back, closes the door on the temptation.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Ben comes in, locks the door, opens his robe and starts masturbating himself. He’s OUT OF CONTROL. He finishes quickly, catches his breath. After a beat, a tear falls down his face.

Ben sits on the bed. Things are starting to fall apart again. Before he can ruminate, he looks out the window. There, amongst the FLOWING, DRYING SHEETS is an OLD MAN, his face covered in HIDEOUS BURN SCARS. He’s looking RIGHT AT Ben.

Ben jumps up, heads out --
EXT. HOUSE -- BACKYARD -- DAY

Ben runs out, searches for the man through the sheets, but he’s gone. It’s like he was never there.

INT. HOUSE -- KITCHEN -- DAY (LATER)

The kitchen, gleams, spotless. Vivien enters with a bag of groceries, takes a second to appreciate her ordered home.

She sets the bag on a counter, takes out a jug of orange juice. There is the sudden firecracker sound of SNAP and POPS. Vivien jumps out her skin, turns and SCREAMS.

ZOOM WIDE: every cabinet door and drawer HAS BEEN OPENED.

Reveal Adelaide, giggling maniacally at the screen door. As she covers her mouth, amused by the horror we...

END ACT TWO
ACT THREE

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Adelaide sits quietly with her mother, looking intensely at Hallie, who is eating her dinner in a corner. Vivien and Ben sit across from them. Vivien leans in, intense.

VIVIEN
I want you to stay out of my house, do you understand?

CONSTANCE
Can I smoke in here?

VIVIEN
No.
(then)
Adelaide, answer me please.

Adelaide suddenly looks up at them, like an innocent child.

ADELAIDE
Can I pet your dog?

VIVIEN
No. I want you to stop coming into my house and opening things and telling me I’m going to die.

BEN
She said that?

CONSTANCE
She says that to everybody. Addie, say you’re sorry.

ADELAIDE
No. I didn’t do anything wrong. They did it.

VIVIEN
Who?

ADELAIDE
The Mischief twins.

Constance takes a beat, this lands. She quickly covers by twirling her finger around her ear, the universal symbol for crazy.

ADELAIDE (CONT’D)
Can I pet your dog?
Vivien snaps. She takes Adelaide’s face in her hands and focuses her.

VIVIEN
Adelaide, listen to me. I want you to stop coming in my house without permission, am I clear?

BEN
(she’s gone too far)
Vivien.

VIVIEN
Am I clear?

ADELAIDE
(quiet)
Yes.

VIVIEN
Thank you.

She releases her. Adelaide goes to the door to leave, but then suddenly races over to pet the dog. Hallie, eating and territorial, bites her.

BEN
Hallie!

VIVIEN
(frantic)
Are you okay?

Adelaide stands there for a beat, her face darkens.

ADELAIDE
She shouldn’t have done that.

She exits. Constance quietly gets up, heads for the door.

CONSTANCE
Sorry about all this.
(then, to Vivien, matter of factly)
Touch my kid again, I’ll break your goddamned arm.

She leaves.

INT. HOUSE -- OFFICE -- DAY

Ben, in his chair. Into his TAPE RECORDER, about Tate --
Patient shows numerous signs of sociopathic behavior -- grandiose sense of self, lack of remorse. High intelligence makes it difficult to determine if symptoms are actual or created as a front for deeper psychosis...

Young, sexy Moira comes in with her BUCKET.

May I clean in here?

Ben shifts, uncomfortable --

It’s not a good time, Moira.

It’s Thursday and I’m off in twenty minutes. If I don’t do it now, it’s not getting done until Monday.

She enters, starts cleaning. A beat, then Ben grabs his things, starts out.

(wanna fuck?)
Am I distracting you?

These dictations are confidential.

She moves to him, predatory.

Why don’t you touch me a little?

Get out.

What are you afraid of? I won’t tell. I didn’t tell when you saw me playing with myself the other day. Did you touch yourself after you saw me?

(reading his face)
You did. Do it again, show me.

She’s right up against him. He’s tempted. It’s been so long. He looks up -- sees Violet at the door. Fuck.
From Violet’s POV -- **OLD MOIRA** is coming on to her dad. She flees. Ben pushes past a grinning Moira.

**INT. HOUSE -- HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER**

Ben grabs Violet, spins her around.

**VIOLET**
You are so sick! Will you just stick your dick in anything?

**BEN**
Hey! Do not talk to me like that! Nothing happened in there. She was coming on to me -- I was rejecting her.

**VIOLET**
So fire her. Get her out of the house. She creeps me out anyway.

**BEN**
I can’t do that.
(off her confusion)
I’ll have to tell your mother why I’m letting her go. After all that’s happened she’s not going to believe I was totally innocent.

**VIOLET**
(confused)
With her? Yes she will.

**BEN**
Your mom and I are walking a tightrope right now -- but we’re making progress. I don’t want to do anything to screw it up.

He’s so emotional. Violet gets it. Still --

**VIOLET**
I don’t want that bitch cleaning my room anymore.

**EXT. SCHOOL -- COURTYARD -- DAY**

Violet, smoking, minds her business when she’s SHOVED from behind. She stumbles, drops her cigarette. Turns to see Leah and her bitch friends.

**LEAH**
I told you not to smoke out here.
Violet stands tall, no fear.

**VIOLET**
What is your problem, bitch?

**LEAH**
She just call me a bitch?

**ABBY**
Sounded like bitch.

**VIOLET**
Seriously. Mommy drink too much? Daddy love your brother more? Your uncle play with your titties when you were a kid? I’m not scared of you.

**LEAH**
You should be.

Staredown. Then Violet sees it: a twitch in Leah’s face -- Violet might not be scared, but Leah is. Violet CHARGES her, grabs Leah around the waist linebacker style and DRIVES her into the concrete. OTHER STUDENTS notice, form a circle.

**STUDENTS**
Fight, fight, fight!

Violet gets two punches in before Abby and Becca attack. Three on one -- not very good odds for Violet. She gets the shit beaten out of her, but she still puts up a pretty good fight. Leah gets her down, punches through Violet’s raised hands. Violet reaches out, grabs her STILL LIT CIGARETTE from the ground and pushes it into Leah’s arm. Leah SCREAMS, jumps off. Violet scurries to her feet.

**LEAH**
She freaking burned me!

Kids disperse, there are teachers coming. Violet sees them. Takes off.

**INT. HOUSE -- LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT**

Vivien works on her wall. She’s making progress, more images are being revealed -- all of them depicting some form of PAIN, some of them with a strangely SEXUAL component. PULL BACK to reveal Ben, standing behind her, looking.

**BEN**
My professional opinion is that whoever painted that wall had some deep psychological issues.
She turns, surprised to see him.

VIVIEN
I thought you had a patient.

BEN
They bailed. You want some help?

She motions to her tools. He grabs one. Starts working. They steal looks at each other.

BEN (CONT’D)
This thing doesn’t freak you out?

VIVIEN
It’s weird -- I know it should but for some reason I find it kind of comforting.

BEN
One of my psych professors told me that people tell stories to cope with their fears. All art and myths are just creations to give us some sense of control over the things we’re scared of. Afraid of dying? Create reincarnation. Afraid of evil? Create a benevolent God who sends evil doers to Hell. I’ve treated soldiers with PTSD by having them draw pictures of what happened over there.

VIVIEN
I think I just like that I don’t have to think while I do it.

He stares at her, smiles. She doesn’t understand.

BEN
I always thought you were the prettiest like this -- no make up, hair in a messy braid.

VIVIEN
I’m old.

He puts down his scraper, moves in close --

BEN
Violet won’t be home for an hour.

VIVIEN
No, Ben. Okay? No.
She pulls away. A beat, then he SWEEPS all of her tools and water off the table. He’s in a RAGE.

BEN
How long, Vivien? How long are you going to punish me?

VIVIEN
I’m not punishing you, you narcissistic asshole -- I’m having trouble forgiving you for sleeping with one of your goddamn patients! You want me to have sex with you? When I can’t even look at your face without seeing the look on it when you were pile driving her in our bed?

BEN
I screwed up! I’m sorry! I was hurting too!

VIVIEN
I’m sorry, did the life you were growing die inside of your belly and did you have to carry that corpse inside of you? Did you have to go into labor? Give birth to your dead baby?

BEN
My baby died, too! He was my son, too!

VIVIEN
And you buried your sorrow in some twenty-year-old’s pussy.

BEN
I can show you statistics on how many men cheat after a miscarriage. I was there for you. I was patient and understanding and caring and I put your feelings first.

VIVIEN
My hero.

BEN
(so frustrated)
I don’t know how to say this without coming off like an asshole.
VIVIEN
Never stopped you before.
(then)
You’re angry at me -- fine, yell at me. Six months in therapy of you crying and apologizing was all bullshit. Give me the real story now.

A beat, and then it comes out --

BEN
You got a dog! I needed you and you got a dog! It was me you should have been curling up with at night! I needed you. I was suffering and you weren’t there.

VIVIEN
Now it all makes sense. She was revenge.

BEN
We haven’t had sex in almost a year.

VIVIEN
You’re keeping track?

BEN
October 20th. And we had great sex, Viv. It was loving and sexy and personal and even a little...weird.

She laughs lightly through her tears.

BEN (CONT’D)
I love you. I moved across the country for you because in all my life the only thing I’ve been truly scared of is losing you. Losing this family.
(then)
Something horrible happened to us. More horrible than anything on this wall and then we handled it even more horribly. But this place is our second chance. It’s not supposed to happen overnight but it’s like this wallpaper, a little bit at a time. I just need to know that you want it, too.
She looks up at him, her eyes wet. She can’t move. Wants to run to him but she’s paralyzed by the fear of being vulnerable to him again.

He makes his move, kisses her. She’s overwhelmed. His touch, finally letting herself feel it after so long.

Both of them crying as they fall to the floor. Kissing. Clothes coming off. Buckles and zippers fumbled with.

There, on the floor, they make love again. As they both reach climax, we CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY -- LATER

On the floor, post coitus. Him behind her. She’s looking up at the wall.

VIVIEN
Thanks.
(off his look, smiling)
Not for the sex, idiot.

BEN
(kissing her neck)
For what, then?

VIVIEN
Giving up your practice, moving us out here, finding this house.

BEN
I want you to feel chosen.

She pulls him close.

VIVIEN
I always wanted a house like this growing up. You’ve been to my parents house out on the Island. Post war prefab hell. The whole place rattled when you walked down the hall. I used to dream about old places like this. A place with a soul.

BEN
What do you want to do about this wall?

VIVIEN
I know it’s disturbing...like, deeply disturbing.
(MORE)
But I don’t know...something about it inspires me.

BEN
To pillage a small hamlet?

VIVIEN
To make art again...to play again.

That gets his attention. Forget the sex, her playing music again would be a true breakthrough.

BEN
Your cello is up in the attic. You want me to get it down for you?

VIVIEN
Relax, cowboy. If I want it, I’ll get it down myself.

They share a smile, kiss.

BEN
I really think we’re going to be happy here.

VIVIEN
Me too.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT (LATER)

Vivien straightens up, hopeful for the first time in a long time. Violet tries to sneak by unseen, fails.

VIVIEN
What happened to your face?

VIOLET
I fell down.

Vivien stops her, takes a good look. She’s a mess.

VIVIEN
(kind)
Sit down.

VIOLET
I’m fine.

VIVIEN
If you don’t clean those up properly they’ll get infected.
Fine. Vivien grabs a FIRST AID KIT, runs hot water on some hand towels, sits. Tends to Violet.

VIVIEN (CONT’D)
Was it a girl or a boy?

VIOLET
Girls. Three of them.

VIVIEN
Hope they look worse.
You know their names?

VIOLET
I’m not narcing.

Vivien just keeps at the cuts and scrapes. A quiet beat. Just a mother taking care of her daughter’s boo-boos.

VIVIEN
You want dad and I to look into switching schools? There are some good private schools in the area.

VIOLET
I’m not running away -- I’m not scared of them.

VIVIEN
You’re not scared of anything. When you were in kindergarten you had me come pick you up from a sleepover party because the other girls insisted on keeping a night light on.

Violet almost smiles.

VIVIEN (CONT’D)
You got the short end of the stick with this one, kiddo. The move. Dad and I have been pretty hard to live with for a while now.

VIOLET
I just don’t get why you guys won’t get divorced if you’re so miserable.

VIVIEN
We still love each other.
VIOLET
Really? Could have fooled me. I thought you hated each other -- well, at least you hated him. I don’t blame you. He was a shithead.
(realizing)
Sorry.

VIVIEN
It’s all right -- he was a shithead.

Shared smiles. Vivien finishes up. Violet starts out, turns.

VIOLET
What are you scared of?
You said I’m not scared of anything. But what scares you?

VIVIEN
Everything.
(then)
That’s why we’re not getting a divorce. You’re dad’s the only one who keeps me from feeling afraid all the time.

Violet gets it, exits. Off Vivien --

INT. VIOLET’S ROOM -- DAY (LATER)

Violet is pacing, in a teenage rage. Tate quietly watches as she spews.

VIOLET
I hate her. I want to kill her.

TATE
Then do it. One less highschool bitch in the world making the lives of the less fortunate more tolerable is, in my opinion, a public service.

Violet pauses, then laughs. He breaks her mood. She lights up a joint, inhales, hands it to him.

TATE (CONT’D)
No thanks. I like to stay pure.

VIOLET
Why?
TATE
I want to feel what I’m feeling.

A moment of connection, then --

TATE (CONT’D)
Look, you want her to leave you alone? Stop making your life a living hell? Short of killing her, there’s only one solution: scare her. Make her afraid of you, that’s the only thing bullies react to.

VIOLET
How?

TATE
It’s simple. You simply walk up to her and say --

EXT. HIGHSCHOOL -- DAY

Leah is whirled around by a calm Violet.

VIOLET
Here’s the deal. I need you to stop harassing me. I’ve got what you want. Drugs. Come to my house tomorrow, get your free sample. I’m a dealer, and a good one. I’ve got the best shit in town.

Violet smiles darkly, leaves. Leah is intrigued.

INT. VIOLET’S ROOM -- DAY

VIOLET
She’s a cokehead. I don’t have coke.

TATE
You won’t need it. That’s just an excuse to get her here. She’ll leave empty handed and terrified and I promise you, you’ll never be bothered by her again.

VIOLET
How am I gonna terrify her?

TATE
That’s where I come in.

He smiles sexily. She laughs. It’s a plan.
INT. HOUSE -- KITCHEN -- NIGHT

QUIET. The clock on the wall TICKS from twelve-ten to twelve-eleven AM. MOVE THROUGH THE HOUSE --

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Dark.

INT. LIBRARY -- NIGHT

Lit by a single LAMP. The silence broken by Vivien’s excessive SCRAPING. She peels off the LAST SCRAP of wallpaper. Stands back to take in the WALL.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Ben has fallen asleep reading. His eyes OPEN. The same unconscious zombie-like awake he was the night of the fireplace.

INT. LIBRARY

SLOW PULL BACK to finally reveal...The WALL -- if the Anti-Christ had a Sistine Chapel, this is what would adorn the ceiling. It’s a painted prayer to PAIN. Vivien is oddly undisturbed by the images of torture, murder, RAPE.

As she loses herself in the mural we see Ben SLEEPWALK behind her, unseen, into the KITCHEN.

INT. KITCHEN

Ben, at the stove. TURNS ON THE BURNERS -- all of them.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A TOILET FLUSHES and Vivien, in her pajamas, comes out of the bathroom, rubs lotion on her arms. Ready for bed.

She looks up, jumps when she sees THE RUBBER MAN standing silently in the doorway. A beat, then a smile --

VIVIEN
Hot. I thought I told you to throw that thing away.

The Rubber Man is silent.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Ben leans down. Eye level with the BLUE FLAMES. They HISS. He reaches his hand out.
INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The Rubber Man just stands there. Vivien laughs.

    VIVIEN
    I have to admit, I’m giving you
    points for creativity.
    (then)
    You were pretty hot this afternoon.
    Wanna go for a two-peat?

She gets into bed. Pulls off her pajamas. Rubber Man moves towards her.

    VIVIEN (CONT’D)
    You going to take the suit off?
    (off his head shake “no”)
    Okay, whatever, I can be kinky.

The Rubber Man approaches, RIGHT INTO CAMERA.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Ben lowers his hand, into the flames. It BLISTERS, CRACKS. No response. Like it’s happening to someone else.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The Rubber Man, on top of Vivien. FUCKING HER. It feels so good, but it HURTS -- not just physically. She can feel the darkness of the Wall inside of her. Her head is back, a tear rolls down her cheek. He FINISHES and stops moving.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Ben’s hand is being burned by the flames. His flesh bubbles.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The Rubber Man is gone. Vivien pulls up her pajama pants. She’s emotional, vulnerable. Gets under the covers, turns out the light as Ben enters, still SLEEPWALKING. He gets into bed. She rolls over. On her face.

    VIVIEN
    Good night. I love you.

Ben stares off into space.

    BEN
    Love you, too.

    END ACT THREE
ACT FOUR

EXT. HOUSE -- AFTERNOON (LATER)

A hand pushes open the gate. REVEAL Leah, who stops and stares at the house.

INT. LIBRARY -- DAY

Vivien takes her cello out of its case, looks at it. She hesitates, sits with it, slowly begins to play a John Cage solo. It’s passionate, full of all her unexpressed feelings. An exorcism. INTERCUT the dramatic bowing of her cello with --

INT. HOUSE -- BASEMENT

From the bottom of the stairs, looking UP at the door. The sounds of muffled talking. The locks being UNLOCKED. The door opens. Violet and Leah look down from above.

LEAH
What’s down there?

VIOLET
My stash. My parents toss my room every week.

Leah’s not sure. Violet, playing it cool, starts down.

LEAH
If you’re screwing with me...

Violet disappears down the stairs. Leah does NOT want to go down there. Violet reaches the bottom -- turns --

VIOLET
It’s just a basement.

Fuck it. Leah comes down. Leah’s POV, following Violet.

VIOLET (CONT’D)
I found the best hiding place.
This is great shit, too. A lot of the coke coming into the US from Central America is smuggled in on lobster boats in Gloucester. I used to show my boobs to one of the lobsterman in return for a key or two before they cut it.

They come around a corner, find TATE, sitting on a RUSTED MEAT FREEZER.
LEAH
Who the hell are you?

TATE
So this is the coke whore.

SLOW MOTION -- Leah looks eyes with Violet. She can see it in Violet’s face -- things are about to get scary for her. She flees. Too slow. Tate grabs her.

TATE (CONT’D)
(to Violet)
Get the light!

Violet TURNS OFF the light.

INT. LIBRARY
Vivien’s solo moves toward a crescendo. The bow almost burns.

INT. BASEMENT
Now it’s just sounds. Leah fighting. Tate laughing.

VIOLET
It’s enough, Tate.

Violet’s BUMPED to the ground. We can hear the wind being knocked out of her. Leah’s screams become more desperate.

LEAH
Oh, God! Get it off of me! Please God get it off of me!

VIOLET
What’s happening? Tate it’s enough!

Violet fumbles for her cell phone as screams continue. Turns on her NIGHT VISION APP. SEARCHES for Leah with the phone. Finds her. There’s something on attacking her. The thing turns. It’s the INFANTATA. It HISSES at Violet.

Violet SCREAMS, shocked, the phone falls to the floor, we see her kick her way to the wall. Turns on the light. Nothing is here now. It’s all happened in milli-seconds.

Leah scampers to her feet. Her face is slashed. CLAW MARKS.

She runs up the stairs, out of the house.

TATE
I don’t think she’ll be bothering you anymore.
He goes to Violet. She backs away.

VIOLET
What was that? Something was on her. What did you put on her?

TATE
What are you talking about? She kneed me in the balls and got away. She must have run into a wall or something.

VIOLET
I saw something. With my phone. It was like a monster or something.

TATE
You’re talking crazy. Violet, this is cool. We just showed that bitch.

VIOLET
Get out. I don’t want to see you again.

He tries to hug her. She backs away, moves up the stairs, never taking her eyes off of him. She’s going to CRY.

TATE
(deadly)
I thought you weren’t afraid of anything.

She doesn’t like this guy anymore. She TRIPS backing up the stairs, gets her footing and runs out. Off Tate, a devilish grin on his face....

INT. LIBRARY

Vivien finishes. She’s flushed and smiling, this was a personal triumph for her. She hears the front screen door slam -- Leah exiting. Off Vivien, enjoying a moment of rare happiness --

INT. SAN FRANCISCO DOCTOR’S OFFICE -- DAY

TIGHT on blood filling a syringe. As the draw continues --

FEMALE VOICE
Agitation, difficulty sleeping...anything else?

REVEAL Vivien, having her blood drawn, talking to a new physician, DR. EMILY FLEMING.
VIVIEN
A little trouble sleeping, yes.

DR. FLEMING
Any hallucinations?

VIVIEN
I’m sorry?

DR. FLEMING
The hormone cocktail you are on can sometimes cause hallucinations, euphoria...

VIVIEN
No. No hallucinations.

DR. FLEMING
How long have you been taking it?

VIVIEN
A couple of weeks?

DR. FLEMING
Any sexual activity?

VIVIEN
Yes. Finally. It’s helped with that.

Another laugh. The doctor finishes the blood draw.

DR. FLEMING
Okay. Well we’ll do a blood panel, see what’s going on.

The doctor calms Vivien, who nods. Everything’s going to be okay.

EXT. SCHOOL -- COMMONS AREA -- DAY

Violet enters, apprehensive. Abby and Becca -- Leah’s buddies -- come up and surround her.

ABBY
What did you do to Leah?

Violet is ready to rumble.

VIOLET
I didn’t do anything.
BECCA
Bullshit. Something happened to her at your house.

Violet tenses her fist. It’s about to go down.

VIOLET
So?

BECCA
So it was awesome! She totally dropped out of school, you terrorized her! Great job.

The girls are laughing.

VIOLET
I thought you were her friends.

ABBY
We hung out with her because her parents were always away so we could party at her house.

BECCA
Killer pool.

ABBY
She was a total bitch.

BECCA
Hard core.

ABBY
Anyway. We’re hitting up The Bagel after school. It’s a pretty cool deli down in the Mission if you want to come. A lot of the kids from here go there.

BECCA
Serious dude-age.

VIOLET
Sounds all right. Should I meet you?

ABBY
No, I got my dad’s car. We’re be out front at three.

Violet nods. The girls heads off. As they go --
BECCA
You think I could pull off that Taylor Momsen black eye shadow thing?

Violet takes it all in, smiles. Holy crap -- she has friends.

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Ben stretches. Ready for a RUN. Senses something. He covertly turns. Spies the BURNT MAN in a car, lurking. A beat, then Ben starts his run. The car pulls out, following him.

EXT. PARK -- DAY

Ben runs into GOLDEN GATE PARK. The Burnt Man follows. Parks. Continues on foot. He’s slow, but he cuts through the TREES to keep up.

Ben SPEEDS UP. Runs out of frame. We’re with the Burnt Man now. Out of breath. Searching for Ben. He’s lost him, then -- Ben grabs him. Spins him around violently.

BEN
Who are you? Why are you following me?!

The Burnt Man cowers. We can see how old he is now, vulnerable, afraid.

BURNT MAN
Please. Your family is in danger.

Ben calms. Backs off. After a beat we CUT TO:

EXT. PARK -- DAY (LATER)

A bench underneath the Bridge. Ben sits beside the Burnt Man. We get a good look at him now -- his face is mangled, so are his hands. Burns that severe can’t heal. The Burnt Man notices Ben’s hand.

BURNT MAN
What happened to your hand?

BEN
What happened to your face?

BURNT MAN
It’s not just my face. Seventy percent of my body. You don’t survive something like that -- and this was the sixties.

(MORE)
(then)
I’m Larry Harvey -- and you have to get out of that house.

BEN
I could have you arrested, you know? Peeking in peoples’ windows is a crime -- even in San Francisco.

LARRY
They’re not going to put me back in jail. I have brain cancer -- terminal and inoperable.

BEN
I’m sorry.

LARRY
Don’t be. That’s the only reason they let me out. (a beat)
Homicide. Triple homicide. San Quentin for forty-two-years without a cold then two months ago they diagnose me with these tumors in my head. Some people would call that fate.

BEN
God gave you cancer so you could get out of prison and tell me to move?

LARRY
Maybe. I don’t know. I’ve seen stranger things.

BEN
Sounds more like a man who is searching for a chance at redemption for the awful things he’s done.

Larry chuckles. There’s no redemption for him. He pauses, then looks at Ben directly.

LARRY
I made it six months in the house you live in now before I started hearing the voices. My wife thought I was working too hard. My daughter Angie -- she was six. The older one Margaret was ten.

(MORE)
Looked like her mother. Funny how it skips a generation like that.

BEN
Look, I get that you’re lonely and you’re struggling. Getting out of prison after all of those years. I’m sure...

LARRY
I killed them all.

Off Ben, shocked we FLASH TO:

INT. THE HOUSE -- NIGHT -- FLASHBACK

A CAN OF GASOLINE. Larry’s carrying it up the stairs. In a trance.

LARRY
Lorraine was ill that night. My wife. She took a pill and went to bed early. I put the girls down. Then the voices started.

We see him enter his children’s room --

INT. KIDS’ ROOM -- NIGHT

He pours the GASOLINE.

LARRY
They told me what to do. I was like an obedient child.

We’re on his face. His eyes are BLACK. DEAD. He lights a match. TOSSES it. Stay on his face as the FLAMES illuminate the room.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Larry gives his wife the same treatment. He watches her BURN. Then, suddenly, she SPRINGS UP. Engulfed in flames. SCREAMING. She grabs him. He snaps out of it. Realizes what he’s done. It’s too late. He throws her off but now he’s ON FIRE.

INT. HOUSE -- STAIRWAY -- NIGHT

SLOW MOTION as Larry, a ball of fire, runs down the stairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

And through the living room, past the MURAL.
FLASH BACK TO --

EXT. BENCH -- DAY

Ben is shocked. Larry is crying. He takes a beat.

LARRY
I don’t know how I put the myself out. I remember the night, but it’s like a movie. Have you been sleepwalking?

The question hits Ben hard.

LARRY (CONT’D)
I’ve seen your family. Pretty wife. You seem like good people. If you don’t get out of that house you’re all going to die in there.

BEN
There are some pretty serious side effects to brain tumors. People hallucinate, act strangely, invent whole worlds in their heads.

LARRY
Look up my case. Read the transcripts.

Ben gets up.

BEN
I’m a doctor. They might not put you back in jail but I could certainly get you committed to a state mental institution. Trust me, those places make prison look like Club Med. Leave my family alone.

Larry jumps up, desperate.

LARRY
Please. Please get out of there. That place is evil.

BEN
Get off of me! I’m not kidding, leave us alone.

Ben starts off. A beat before Larry calls after him --
LARRY
You never answered me -- what happened to your hand?

Ben looks down at his hand. Fear plays across Ben’s face before he jogs off -- speeding up as he goes.

INT. BEN’S HOME OFFICE -- DAY

A LOCK is picked. Reveal Violet, on a mission. She feverishly goes through a drawer, looking for a patient file.

She finds Tate’s, pulls it, exits.

INT. VIOLET’S ROOM -- DAY

Violet pours over the information. She is riveted by words her father has used to describe his patient. TIGHT ON THEM:

SOCIOPATH...MURDER FANTASIES...VIOLENT.

Violet pauses. She goes to her computer, types Tate’s name in Google search. A beat. Her eyes go wide.

REVEAL a flurry of headlines.

“Student, 17, Kills Fifteen in San Francisco Bloodbath.”

“Shooter described as ‘Charming’ and ‘A Loner.’

There are several photos of grieving parents, and a school ID picture of Tate. Finally, Violet gasps.

Another headline:

“Student Takes Own Life After High School Massacre.”

REVEAL the year of the shootings: 1994.

Tate died seventeen years ago.

Off Violet --

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Ben sits at the table, stunned, shaken. Vivien enters, comes up behind him, kisses him. It comforts him. He hides his burnt hand under the table.

VIVIEN
What do you want for dinner?

BEN
Whatever Violet wants.
VIVIEN
She’s going out with some friends.

They share a look -- really? Ben smiles.

BEN
What do you want?

VIVIEN
I’m kind of in the mood for Indian.

BEN
You only like Indian food when you’re pregnant.

She smiles, tears forming in her eyes. He’s stunned.

BEN (CONT’D)
Really?

She nods, emotional. She’s pregnant.

Her face opens up in a huge grin, the first time we’ve seen her truly happy. He bolts up, hugs her, kisses her. Finally, after all this effort, they’re back.

MOVE off them. Out of the kitchen. Into the LIBRARY. We look at the wall for a beat before The RUBBER MAN appears, a jolt. Off his face, looking right through us, we SMASH TO BLACK.

Over credits, Prodigy’s “Firestarter.”

END PILOT
American Horror Story. 201118+ 3 SeasonsSeries. This twisted Emmy-winning drama plays upon the power of supernatural fears and everyday horrors, exploring humankind's unsettling capacity for evil. Starring:Evan Peters,Sarah Paulson,Jessica Lange. Creators:Ryan Murphy,Brad Falchuk. Murder House American Horror Story. Critics Consensus. Convoluted yet effective, American Horror Story is strange, gory, and twisted enough to keep viewers hooked. 72%. TOMATOMETER.Â Bostonians Ben and Vivien Harmon (Dylan McDermott, Connie Britton) and their teen daughter, Violet (Taissa Farmiga), move into a haunted LA. mansion in the series premiere of a violent, erotically charged horror story about a troubled family. American Horror Story (sometimes abbreviated as AHS) is an American anthology horror television series created by Ryan Murphy and Brad Falchuk for the cable network FX. Each season is conceived as a self-contained miniseries, following a different set of characters and settings, and a storyline with its own "beginning, middle, and end." Some plot elements of each season are loosely inspired by true events. Many actors appear in more than one season, but often play a new character. Evan Peters, Sarah