

Beware the Dortches

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FADE IN:

A high definition television. A commercial comes on.

DAWN DORTCH

Hey. It is that spooky time of year
again.

DAWN DORTCH, 40s, comes on the screen. Her skin is blue because of methemoglobinemia. Her long hair is dark black, cheaply dyed that color.

She stands in front of a rickety wooden building cheaply made up to be a haunted house. The building has strange angles, broken and boarded-up windows, cobwebs, bats, jack-o-lanterns, eerie green light, skulls and gargoyles. Above the single door entrance is a massive sign with "Beware the Dortches" written in bloody script.

DAWN DORTCH

I am here to invite you all to the
4th Annual Beware the Dortches
Haunted House!

Dawn walks towards the haunted house and opens the front door and goes inside.

A shaky hand-held camera follows her.

DAWN DORTCH

We have been providing the best
fright house in the state for more
than three years now. And this year
we have our scariest haunted house
ever.

Inside the house, she walks down a hall and stops in front of a side door. Signs on the door say "Dangerous Path" and "Do Not Enter."

DAWN DORTCH

Bring your friends, bring your
family and experience the best
Halloween tradition in all of
America. The Beware the Dortches
Haunted House. Tickets only \$15. Be
there or do not be scared!

The commercial ends.

INT. AHMED'S HOUSE - DAY

Six teenagers sit on couches and chairs watching the television. All of them are 17 or 18 and are mostly high school juniors. They are all dressed fashionably. None of them ever wears the color red.

Their parents all have money. Their clothes and Ahmed's house show it.

AHMED

We HAVE to go!

AHMED BIN TENGGU is a Malaysian-American teen who is built like a college quarterback.

JEFFREY

Tonight!

JEFFREY MARTIN is a black teen who is a little younger than the others. He is thin but fit and is perfectly dressed and manicured.

SARAH

No way, I hate those things!

SARAH WILLINGHAM is a 6' tall white teen. She is conventionally pretty and is built like the potentially professional basketball player she might be some day.

HIMARI

Looks like it would be fun!

HIMARI ITO is an Japanese-American girl who has dyed her hair a subtle pink. She is skinny. Not in a healthy way.

ROSA

I need a stress release, this could hit the spot.

ROSA MARTIN is an African American teen who resembles Jeffrey, her brother. Her hair is natural and she is dressed in conservative clothes that reflect her position as student body president.

GORDON

You know I'm down.

GORDON STEVENS is a white boy who is a little overweight, wears glasses and has a cute face and scruffy hair.

Ahmed switches off the TV.

AHMED

What else are we going to do? Watch more Degrassi?

ROSA

I'm bored.

JEFFREY

Me, too.

HIMARI

C'mon, Sarah. I'm dying for something new.

SARAH

I'll ride with you guys, but I'm not going in.

GORDON

Boo!

They all get up and start to leave.

AHMED

At least she's going, this is gonna be sweet!

Himari stays behind with Sarah, who moves as slowly as she can.

HIMARI

(only to Sarah)

It's okay, you don't have to do anything you don't want to.

SARAH

I... I know. I guess.

Himari holds her hand as they walk out the door.

INT. GORDON'S CAR - LATER

Gordon drives his new BMW down a lonely forest road. Few cars appear on the road.

GORDON

So this haunted house is "Beware the Dortches"? Like Brandy Dortch?

JEFFREY

Wait, Brandy Blue's real name is Dortch?

AHMED

Holy shit, I didn't even make the connection!

HIMARI

How did you miss it? The lady in the commercial was blue!

AHMED

DK. Maybe I'm racist against Smurfs?

Everyone laughs except Sarah.

SARAH

I really don't want to do his.

Sarah rides shotgun because of her size.

ROSA

C'mon, it'll be fun!

GORDON

Yeah, these things are never that scary, it's just kind of a fun thing.

Sarah rolls down her window to get some air.

HIMARI

Can't you see she doesn't want to go?

AHMED

Yeah, but why not? It'll be a blast.

GORDON

And this is supposed to be the best one in the area!

JEFFREY

How do you know that? You been reading "Haunted House Monthly"?

GORDON

Well, actually...

Everyone laughs except Sarah.

SARAH

It's not funny.

ROSA

This sounds pretty serious. What's going on?

SARAH

I...

FLASHBACK TO:

SUPER: 13 years earlier.

YOUNG SARAH holds her mother NATALIE's hand, standing outside a haunted house attraction called "Dr. Satan Spalding's House of Horrors." Natalie is in her early 30s, blonde hair, 5'6", a former model.

They stand in line to go inside.

A COUPLE in front of them enters the haunted house as the ATTENDANT dressed in a skeleton costume closes the door behind them.

ATTENDANT

Two at a time. Two at a time.

Two TEEN BOYS are next to go inside after handing waivers to the attendant. Sarah and her mother are at the front of the line.

ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

You got your waiver?

Natalie hands the waiver to the attendant.

Sarah pulls on her mother's hand.

SARAH

This is scary, I don't want to go.

The attendant opens the door and Natalie pulls Sarah's hand and they go inside.

NATALIE

C'mon!

The attendant closes the door and puts a padlock on the outside.

ATTENDANT

That's it folks, we're closed down for the night!

The remaining crowd groans.

INT. DR. SATAN SPALDING'S HOUSE OF HORRORS - MOMENTS LATER

Natalie holds Sarah's hand as they walk down a dark and cobwebby hallway. No one else is near them.

They come to a fork in the hallway and stop.

SARAH

Which w...?

A panel opens in the wall and two men, the HILLBILLY HORROR TWINS, in bloody overalls and boots, jump out roaring at them. One wields a chainsaw, the other a machete.

Natalie and Sarah get separated and the twins chase Natalie down one hallway while Sarah runs blindly down the other.

She quickly runs through a room filled with giant spider props and a spider web. As she gets to the far side of the room, Sarah trips over one of the spider webs.

She cries out. She stands up and dusts herself off.

A man, EVIL CLOWN, steps out of the shadows. He wears a disgusting, rotting clown suit and poorly-applied clown make up. He stands behind Sarah, uncomfortably close.

CLOWN

How are you, little girl?

He hugs her from behind and she screams.

END FLASHBACK.

Sarah cries as she stares out the window.

AHMED

That is totally fucked up.

ROSA

Did you call the cops?

JEFFREY

If he would've touched me there, I would've cut off his damned hand.

Sarah wipes away the tears.

SARAH

Fuck it! Let's do it.

The boys erupt in cheers.

ROSA
You sure?

SARAH
Yeah, I'm tired of being afraid.

HIMARI
This is very brave of you.

GORDON
I'm impressed.

SARAH
Shut up and let's just get it over
with.

The car pulls onto the Dortches property. The only thing anyone can see through the deep forest is a wooden sign, with sloppy white paint that reads "Beware the Dortches."

EXT. THE DORTCHES' HOUSE - LATER

The exterior of the Dortches' Haunted House looks identical to the commercial. It stands next to the Dortches actual house, which looks a lot like the haunted house without the sign and Halloween-style decorations.

The real house looks a LOT scarier than the "haunted house."

The teens walk up to the entrance, where only a few people wait outside. Standing in front of them handing out clipboards is MISTY DORTCH, who is medium height and build for a woman her age, early 20s. She has the Dortch blue skin and has long blonde hair. She wears a pair of white overalls with blood splatter on them.

GORDON
(under his breath)
Dude, look, it's Goth Smurfette!

The group tries to stifle their giggles. They fail.

ROSA
(quietly)
Cut that crap out!

Misty walks over to them holding six clipboards.

MISTY DORTCH
What's so funny?

ROSA
Nothing.

SARAH

Gordo here... uh... showed us a video on his phone?

MISTY DORTCH

What phone?

None of them had or has their phones out.

AHMED

We would like to pay money to visit your haunted house, please.

He hands her five twenty dollar bills.

Misty takes the money and counts it awkwardly while trying not to drop the clipboards.

MISTY DORTCH

We ain't got no change.

AHMED

(generously)

Keep it.

Misty pockets the money and hands Ahmed a clipboard.

MISTY DORTCH

You all gotta sign these waivers.

She continues handing clipboards to each of the kids. Ahmed takes the pen from the clipboard and starts signing.

ROSA

What are these for?

MISTY DORTCH

They're waivers.

JEFFREY

She means what are they FOR for.

Misty turns and looks at the haunted house.

MISTY DORTCH

They're for the haunted house.

Giggles and laughs from the group.

HIMARI

But why do we have to sign them?

Misty pulls a scrap of paper from her pocket.

GORDON
(whispering to Ahmed)
Five dollars says she starts
singing the Smurfs theme song.

Ahmed giggles along with Gordon. Misty flinches, subtly.
She reads from the slip of paper.

MISTY DORTCH
This waiver is to in... in...
(to Rosa)
What's that word?

Rosa looks at the scrap of paper.

ROSA
Indemnify.

Rosa tries to hand the paper back to Misty. Misty shakes her head.

MISTY DORTCH
You read it if you're so smart.

Rosa frowns and looks at the others.

ROSA
Uh... it says that the waivers...
are to indemnify the Dortches from
any lawsuits that clients may
engage in against the proprietors
of the haunted house.

SARAH
What?

JEFFREY
It's a trick. They're trying to
pretend that the haunted house is
so scary that people sue them.

GORDON
Yeah, like they used to do with the
old horror movies. They'd use these
to drum up business because their
haunted house is supposed to be so
scary you could get hurt inside.
Hilarious!

Sarah turns and walks back to the car. Himari rushes after Sarah and puts an arm around her shoulder.

GORDON (CONT'D)
 (towards Sarah)
 What? I was kidding.

AHMED
 Great job, nimrod.

Rosa catches up to Sarah and stops her.

ROSA
 It's all part of the gimmick. It'll
 be okay. Trust me.

Sarah drops her head and pauses.

SARAH
 Okay.

Gordon wipes the sweat off his brow.

GORDON
 Whew.

They walk towards the haunted house.

Gordon hums the Smurfs theme song.

INT. THE DORTCHES HAUNTED HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Once the kids all walk inside the haunted house, Misty locks the door behind them and puts the key in her pocket.

MISTY DORTCH
 Follow me. If you dare.

Misty starts walking down the hallway, which is covered in cobwebs and is only lit by candles mounted on realistic-looking skulls hung at long intervals.

JEFFREY
 (under his breath)
 Somebody needs some acting classes.

Giggles from the others.

They come to a door to the left. The door is covered with a sign that says "Dangerous Path" and "Do Not Enter."

GORDON
 Let's go that way!

HIMARI
 Ugh.

Sarah crosses her arms and frowns.

MISTY DORTCH
Can't. That way is closed. It'll be
back next year. Come back.

ROSA
Yeah, I'll start saving my money
now.

Misty continues down the hall, which has webs, spiders, bats
and skull candles.

They come into a room that looks like a Halloween party for
kids. Cheap dollar store Halloween decorations fill the room.

JEFFREY
You've got to be kidding me.

AHMED
(in redneck accent)
Somebody done bought out the
Walmart.

Giggles.

Misty turns and looks at them with a frown.

MISTY DORTCH
This room is for kids.

GORDON
(under his breath)
No shit.

Ahmed laughs.

They walk by a table that has several bowls, labeled with
various body parts. One is a bowl of cooked spaghetti noodles
that have been colored grey and labeled "Brains." Another has
several cut up hot dogs labeled "Fingers." Another is a bowl
of grapes painted to look like eyeballs.

Misty leads the group past the table and towards the exit.

ROSA
This is stupid. A waste of time.

As they walk by the table, Gordon grabs an eyeball and pops
it in his mouth.

HIMARI
Gross!

Gordon grabs another and pops it in his mouth.

GORDON
What? They're grapes.

He bites down on the grapes, squirting juice. Himari dodges it.

HIMARI
Gross!

Laughs as they exit the room.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE, PIRATES OF PERVERSITY ROOM - LATER

They enter a room with a pirate theme.

MISTY DORTCH
Welcome to the Pirates of
Perversity.

GORDON
Okay, gotta say I LOVE the name.

JEFFREY
You would.

ROSA
And you wouldn't?

Laughter.

The room is covered in various pictures of pirates. Not particularly scary ones, for the most part. You can even find Johnny Depp if you look closely enough. Other pirate-related paraphernalia fills the room: chests, gold coins, a flag with the skull and crossbones.

Along the back wall is a row of pirate statues of various scary types, the one at the end is massive, over 6'5" in height and is by far the most realistic one of the collection, despite the mask that completely covers his face.

Jeffrey walks down the row of statues checking them out.

JEFFREY
Not a single one of these pirates
is perverse.

He arrives at the tall pirate statue. It comes to life, it is CAGE DORTCH, 20s, he leaps off the stage and roars. Cage is massive, with muscles on his muscles.

Jeffrey falls to the floor in fear.

Everyone else is startled or cries out.

Cage lumbers out of the room as everyone starts laugh at Jeffrey.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)
Okay, that was good.

ROSA
(laughing)
Yeah it was.

Sarah stands with her arms crossed, frowning and breathing heavily. Himari looks at Sarah with concern.

HIMARI
Let's move on.

They follow Misty to the next room.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE, WEIRD & WILD WEST ROOM - LATER

They enter a room with a Western theme.

MISTY DORTCH
Welcome to the Weird and Wild West.

ROSA
Wait, what?

The room looks like the stereotypical Western saloon. Barrels and wooden chairs and tables and a long bar across the back wall.

Sitting on a stool at the end of the bar is a large man, even larger than Cage. This is BUCK DORTCH. He wears a cowboy hat and he sits motionless with his back toward the teens.

AHMED
Looks pretty authentic, but nothing scary here.

SARAH
If this is bad as this place gets...

JEFFREY
Who's that guy at the bar?

Misty grins.

MISTY DORTCH
Why don't you go find out.

HIMARI
No thank you.

SARAH
Not on a good day.

ROSA
I got this.

She walks over to the bar and puts her hand on Buck's shoulder.

He falls off of his stool and lands on the floor with a thud. Rosa jumps back.

Jeffrey and Himari rush over to her to help her up.

Gordon crouches down and turns Buck over. His face is made up in zombie make-up. It's hard to tell if he's a Dortch with the blue skin or is a zombie made up that way.

Gordon stays crouched down and turns to talk to the group.

GORDON
I don't think it's real. It's just...

Buck roars to life and Gordon falls on his ass. Sarah screams.

Misty chuckles.

Buck gets up and menaces Gordon who scrambles backwards to get away from him.

Buck pulls out a machete and walks towards Gordon, raising it to strike.

He brings it down and buries in with a thunk into the ground.

Gordon opens his eyes to realize he's not dead.

Buck pulls the machete out of the ground and walks away.

Gordon laughs nervously. Misty laughs a bit louder.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Well THAT was scary as shit.

SARAH
Same old stuff. Just jump scares.

She gets up and dusts herself off.

JEFFREY

Like, seriously, pick a theme.

GORDON

Yeah, cowboys vs. zombies works,
cowboy zombies, not so much.

ROSA

And why would a cowboy zombie have
a machete?

JEFFREY

Lame.

They follow Misty out of the room.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE, CURIOSITY SHOPPE ROOM - LATER

They enter a room filled with various strange items in glass cases.

MISTY DORTCH

Welcome to the Curiosity Shoppe.

Gordon walks into the room and starts looking around.

GORDON

Now we're talking.

Himari walks up to the first glass case. It is filled with what appear to human fetuses floating inside some kind of liquid.

HIMARI

Disturbing.

Gordon stands at another of the glass cases. Inside is a two-headed goat, taxidermized, but somewhat badly so.

Sarah and Jeffrey walk up to a glass case that holds a mechanical man in a turban. Across the outside of the box it says "Misfortune Teller." The figure has an evil, but subtle grin.

SARAH

What is this thing?

MISTY DORTCH

Why not try it out?

SARAH
Thanks. That famous Dortch
helpfulness.

She looks down at the front of the Misfortune Teller and sees
a slot for dollar bills.

SARAH (CONT'D)
It costs a dollar. Anybody have any
singles?

Gordon reaches into his pocket and pulls out several ones. He
hands them to Rosa.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Thanks.

She bends down and slips the dollar into the slot. The
Misfortune Teller movies, lights flash and he laughs in a
deep, booming laugh that no one finds funny.

A card slides out of a slot in the box.

JEFFREY
Time to learn about your future!

Sarah picks up the card and looks at it.

SARAH
What the hell?

JEFFREY
What is it?

She shows him the front of the card. It simply says "Sarah."

JEFFREY (CONT'D)
Okay, that is freaky.

HIMARI
Flip it over.

Sarah does. The color drains from her face.

SARAH
It says "You're going to die."

AHMED
What?

He walks over and takes the card and looks at it?

AHMED (CONT'D)
Is this some kind of joke?

Misty doesn't respond.

HIMARI
It's not funny.

Ahmed takes a dollar from Sarah and sticks it in the machine.

He picks up the card and looks at it. He frowns and then flips it over.

AHMED
Apparently, I'm gonna die, too. And these freaks know my name as well.

He holds up the card and shows everyone.

ROSA
That's enough of this room. Get us out of here.

Misty chuckles and walks them through the door and they are outside again.

MISTY DORTCH
That's our tour.

JEFFREY
Wait, what?

GORDON
That's it?

MISTY DORTCH
You came late. We will be back next year. Our scariest Haunted House ever.

The group express disappointment and start to leave. As they walk away, Misty hands them tickets.

MISTY DORTCH (CONT'D)
These tickets will get you in for only \$10 next year.

Ahmed takes the tickets and stuffs them in his pocket.

MISTY DORTCH (CONT'D)
Come back now, you hear?

She waves at them as they leave, shutting the door as she walks back inside. They hear Misty lock the door from inside.

INT. GORDON'S CAR - LATER

Gordon is driving. Everybody is happy.

JEFFREY
That was terrible.

GORDON
Yeah, I've seen scarier stuff on
the WB.

ROSA
(to Sarah)
See, we told you it wouldn't be
that bad.

SARAH
(frowning)
It wasn't bad.

AHMED
I loved it! It was so stupid I
laughed my ass off.

HIMARI
It was so cheap. Nothing in it was
scary.

GORDON
That's the Dortches for you.

ROSA
Okay, who wants to help me plan
homecoming?

The entire group groans.

EXT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Starlin High School is a single, long red brick building with
the name in a brass plaque over the front door.

Kids walk into class, most are wear jackets, but only a
handful wear hats or gloves on this brisk, cool fall morning.

INT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

The class bell rings and students scramble to get to their
desks. At the head of the class, MR. SAM TESSEL, 60s, sits at
his desk.

MR. TESSEL

Okay, everyone, sit down, sit down,
it's time for the morning
announcements. Pay attention, there
will be a quiz on the announcements
immediately after.

The whole class groans except Rosa, who pulls out her
notebook and pencil.

The speaker above the chalkboard squawks to life. The voice
of PRINCIPAL VALENTINA CASIANO, a Puerto Rican woman in her
50s, begins speaking.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (V.O.)

Good morning students and welcome
to the beginning of another
Maverick Morning!

GORDON

Ugh.

Ahmed and Sarah laugh.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (V.O.)

Today's lunch will be...

The kids ignore the announcements.

GORDON

Check out the stain on Mr.
Testicle's pants.

Ahmed laughs.

SARAH

You guys are gross.

ROSA

Shhh... I'm trying to listen.
There's a quiz!

AHMED

He always says that. When was the
last time he really quizzed us?

ROSA

Tuesday.

AHMED

Dammit.

A girl sitting next to Ahmed, REGINA, with medium-length brown hair and pale skin, grabs his hand to get his attention. She wears a red ribbon in her hair.

REGINA
Hey, you got a pencil I can borrow?

AHMED
Ummm... DK... I don't think I do?

Rosa reaches into her purse and pulls out an extra pencil, handing it to Ahmed.

ROSA
Here you go, lover boy.

AHMED
(quietly)
Shush.

He hands the pencil to Regina.

REGINA
Thanks, I'll give it back later.

AHMED
Don't worry about it.

Regina smiles.

ROSA
Hey?!

Regina never takes her eyes off Ahmed. She smiles at him. He smiles back.

INT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL GYM - NIGHT

A few dozen spectators are on hand to watch the girls' basketball team. The floor is emblazoned with red and white Mavericks logo, which incorporates a charging horse.

Ahmed, Rosa and Gordon sit in the stands.

Sarah stands in the center of the court as the game is about to tip off.

The crowd cheers.

The ref holds up the ball.

The players crouch into position.

The shot switches from live action to animation. The animation is somewhat abstract. It's larger than life with characters growing and changing shape, backgrounds that are nonrepresentational and action that is exaggerated.

Sarah, who is already tall, becomes gargantuan.

Her jersey changes from that of the Starlin Mavericks to that of the UConn Huskies women's team.

The ball flies up in the air into the sky beyond the gym.

The opposing team are the Tigers and the players all transform into tigers.

Sarah continues to grow as the Tigers attack her.

The giant Sarah grabs the basketball from the sky while dozens of Tigers attack her.

Sarah smashes the ball down into the hoop, shattering not only the backboard, but the entire hoop and the building around it.

The Tigers grab the ball and use their mouths to throw the ball back and forth, but Sarah swats it away from them.

One of the Tigers grabs the ball and tries to pass it to a teammate, but Sarah steps in front of the pass and grabs it.

She starts to shrink back down human size as the animation transitions back to the gym, but still animated.

Sarah takes the ball to the hoop and throws down a thundering slam as the endless crowd goes crazy and the backboard shatters again.

CUT TO:

Return to real life with a shot of Sarah surrounded by her teammates and fans. Cheers fill the gym as the game's outcome was HOME 68, VISITOR 32.

INT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Ahmed stands at his locker looking in a mirror and combing his hair.

Regina walks up and taps him on the shoulder. He turns and sees her. He smiles.

She perks up at seeing Ahmed smile and grins.

REGINA
Hey, Ahmed. What are you doing
tomorrow?

AHMED
The gang and I were going to the
movies. Were gonna catch that new
Eli Roth flick.

REGINA
(unconvincingly)
I love Eli Roth.

Ahmed is impressed.

REGINA (CONT'D)
Do you mind if I... tag along?

AHMED
I don't mind at all.

He closes his locker, holding the one book he needs.

REGINA
I mean... I meant as a...

Beat.

REGINA (CONT'D)
Date.

Ahmed is a little taken aback.

A bead of sweat rolls down Regina's face.

Ahmed smiles.

AHMED
That would be awesome.

Regina squeaks and hugs him.

EXT. CENTRAL CINEMAS - NIGHT

The gang waits in line outside the Central Cinemas movie
theater.

Ahmed and Regina are on their first date. Ahmed wears his
letterman jacket over a plaid shirt and jeans. Regina wears a
flowery dress over leggings and a small jacket to cover her
shoulders.

Jeffrey is fashionable, but reserved. He walks beside CLAY, a 6'2" wide receiver for the school team. He wears his letterman jacket over a red t-shirt. The two subtly make eye contact.

ROSA

Why do you always talk us into going to these terrible movies.

SARAH

(laughing)

Yeah, seems like your life goal is to make sure we're all little fraidy-cats like you.

Gordon is giddy as they go into the theater.

GORDON

Man, I love horror movies. I've seen them all.

HIMARI

Like the Cabinet of Dr. Caligari?

GORDON

What?

The last of them heads into the theater.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - MOMENTS LATER

Gordon sits in the exact middle seat of the theater, about three-quarters of the way back. He doesn't care who sits around him.

The others are line up on either side of him.

Regina and Ahmed sit together. He shares his popcorn with her.

At the other end of the row, Jeffrey and Clay sit together. When no one notices, Jeffrey carefully brushes the side of Clay's hand on the arm rest.

Clay lightly rubs Jeffrey's finger back as the lights go down.

GORDON

This is gonna be great!

HIMARI

Have you seen it already?

He shakes his head at her like she's crazy.

GORDON

No, but I do love Eli Roth movies.
They always get me revved up.

Sarah sinks lower into her chair as the film starts.

The lights of the movie flicker on and we switch to animation. Similar to before with abstract backgrounds and exaggerated action and violence.

Sarah sinks down into her chair further. She continues to sink so low, she falls into a pit of blackness.

Gordon leaps out of his seat. From his hip, Gordon pulls out a sword that bursts into flames.

The blackness from the pit begins to expand further and further.

Gordon leaps into the pit of blackness, lighting it up with his flaming sword as he leaves the theater and goes into the darkness.

Ahmed wields a flaming broadsword. Jeffrey two flaming daggers. Rosa a flaming battle axe.

They all leap into the pit to follow Gordon.

Inside the pit Gordon walks through darkness that seems to be alive with demons and spirits. He can't see anything else despite the brilliance of his sword.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Sarah? Where are you?

He gets bumped from the other side, as the demons begin to solidify and take form.

Gordon swings his flaming sword and cuts two of the demons in half, they dissipate.

Ahmed steps up next to Gordon, holding his flaming broadsword, which is much bigger than Gordon's flaming sword.

Gordon gives Ahmed side eye.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Show off.

The demons attack.

Jeffrey and Rosa arrive and join the fight.

The demons are no match for the flaming weapons.

Gordon steps away from the battle.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Sarah!

He begins fighting his way past another group of demons. The others follow.

Finally, he finds Sarah, huddled up in a ball while being attacked by demons, darkness on all sides.

Gordon rushes to Sarah's side, cutting through demons and standing tall in front of her. The others join and form a perimeter around Sarah, fighting off demons as they protect her.

Sarah finally stands up and allows herself to be protected by her friends, who make quick work of the demons.

CUT TO:

The group walks out of Central Cinemas laughing and celebrating the movie they just saw.

INT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

In class, the students are listening to MS. VERTUNO, a woman with dark hair in her 50s. On the chalkboard behind her is the word "phobia."

MS. VERTUNO
Who can tell me what the word
"phobia" means.

She underlines the word on the chalkboard.

SARAH
Isn't that a Korean noodle soup?

MS. VERTUNO
Not exactly. Please raise your
hands.

A few students raise their hands.

MS. VERTUNO (CONT'D)
Rosa!

Rosa puts her hand down and she perks up.

ROSA

A phobia is an irrational fear of something.

MS. VERTUNO

Yes! Can anyone name any phobias?

JEFFREY

Like claustrophobia? When you're afraid of small spaces?

MS. VERTUNO

Correct. Any others?

GORDON

Is there a stupid one about being afraid of the number 13?

Ms. Vertuno frowns at him.

MS. VERTUNO

Yes, but we don't say "stupid" in class. It's "triskaidekaphobia."

SARAH

So we should say triskaidekaphobia instead of stupid?

Laughs.

GORDON

Ahmed, you sure are triskaidekaphobia!

Big laughs.

MS. VERTUNO

Calm down, calm down. Anybody in class have any phobias?

JEFFREY

Rosa's afraid of snakes.

Rosa slaps him on the arm.

GORDON

Like Indy!

MS. VERTUNO

Yes. Fear of snakes is called ophidiophobia. What else?

ROSA

Well, Jeff is afraid of being by himself.

More laughter.

JEFFREY

Don't call me that name. It's so meh.

GORDON

Spiders are super creepy.

MS. VERTUNO

Arachnophobia. Okay, take these handouts...

GORDON

(to himself)

Hey, I didn't say I was afraid of them...

She starts handing stacks of paper to the first person in each row.

MS. VERTURNO

There is a list of common phobias on the paper. There is a VERY good chance this will be on your exam.

The class groans.

EXT. MAVERICK STADIUM - NIGHT

Maverick Stadium is off campus. It's a 10,000-seat structure made largely of concrete. The sign on the outside says "Maverick Stadium. Home of State Champs 1967, 1973, 1975, 1986, 1990, 1991, 1992."

It's a cold night with light flakes of snow falling. Kids are bundled up as they head into the stadium.

INT. MAVERICK STADIUM - LATER

It is halftime and the band is walking off the field. The game is tied 17-17 and there are still 8 minutes until the second half begins.

The loudspeaker comes on.

ANNOUNCER

Please turn your attention to the
video screen in the south end zone.

The screen is of very good quality, as is everything else in
the stadium. Starlin High School has a lot of money.

Jeffrey comes onto the screen with a super close-up. He backs
out of the shot and everybody in the crowd recognizes him and
cheers.

JEFFREY

Hey friends, it's me, Jeffrey
Martin, your "unofficial"...
(he uses air quotes)
...school spirit coordinator!

More cheers.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

And now. The world premiere.

The cheers grow.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Of my brand new video, "School
Spirit."

Wild applause.

Jeffrey pulls out a small tape recorder and an old school 808
boom bap beat comes on.

Jeffrey starts clapping to the beat.

The crowd joins in.

Jeffrey stops clapping and starts rapping. Fast.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

OKAY, YEAH YEAH/
DON'T YOU DARE CALL ME LAMAR
LATRELL/
OR YOU'RE GONNA NEED A CARD THAT
SAYS GET WELL/
MORE MAVERICK THAN MCCAIN AND
PALIN/
WHETHER I'M SKATING OR I'M SAILIN'/
I'M ONLY HERE TO RAP ABOUT ONE
THING/
FRIDAY WE'RE GONNA BRING THE PAIN/
THE NUMBER ONE TEAM IN THE
DISTRICT/

DON'T LOOK TOO FAST OR YOU'RE GONNA
MISS IT/
OOPS YOU LOOKED AWAY, WE ALREADY
SCORED/
OOPS WE SCORED AGAIN, WE'RE GETTING
BORED/
TRY TO STEP UP AND WE'RE NOT GONNA
HAVE IT/
THAT'S WHY YOU DON'T MESS WITH THE
STARLIN MAVERICKS!

As Jeffrey continues, the crowd chants along.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)
Go Mavericks! Go Mavericks! Go
Mavericks! Go Mavericks!

INT. MAVERICK STADIUM - LATER

It is the third quarter and the Mavericks are now leading 31-17. They have the ball and Ahmed is lined up at quarterback, his team at the 50-yard-line.

Regina sits with Sarah, Rosa, Gordon, Himari and Jeffrey in the stands.

Clay is lined up at wide receiver. He looks at the short defensive back lined up against him. He smiles.

CLAY
Whoop!

Hearing the signal, Ahmed lifts up his right foot and puts it back down on the ground.

AHMED
Hut! Hut! Hut!

The ball is snapped. The movie changes to the same abstract animation as earlier.

The center snaps the ball. The offensive line turns into a brick wall.

The Mavericks are playing the Raiders. The Raiders players turn into pirates and begin to scale the wall.

Ahmed begins to grow until he's tall enough to see over the wall. He doesn't get as big as Sarah did, but he's still the biggest player on the field.

His jersey transforms into that of the Stanford Cardinal briefly before turning back into Mavericks jersey.

As Ahmed looks down field, he sees that the Raiders multiply so that there are many more of them than there are Mavericks. Each receiver is swarmed by dozens of Raiders.

The first of the Raiders are over the wall and running directly for Ahmed, who sidesteps them and scans the field.

A giant Raider comes barreling down on Ahmed and that's all he can see.

Ahmed does a spin move worthy of a ballerina to get out of the Raider's way.

He scans the field again and spots an open receiver near the goal line on the opposite side of the field from where he now stands. It is Clay.

Ahmed cocks his arm back and launches the football like a cannon.

The ball flies down the field, knocking down Raiders that try to intercept it or get in between the ball and the receiver.

Clay jumps about 30 feet into the air to catch the pass and hits the ground running full stride.

A wall of Raiders is between Clay and the goal line and they rush at him, providing him no escape.

Clay squats, leaps into the air and flips over the wall of defenders.

He walks into the end zone for a touchdown as the crowd cheers and Ahmed runs down the field to congratulate him.

CUT TO:

Ahmed walks off the field, side-by-side with Clay and three other teammates. Each player carries his helmet in his hands. Ahmed and Clay also carry game balls. Clay's ball is smeared in red paint from the logo on the field.

The scoreboard behind them reads: 54-20.

EXT. MAVERICK STADIUM - LATER

Jeffrey walks away from the entrance to the stadium and towards the back of the parking lot, where his car is parked.

He looks around. He's alone.

When he gets to his car, Clay waits for him. Football player Clay.

Jeffrey hits the button on his keychain and the car honks twice and unlocks.

Clay climbs in the passenger side, never taking his eyes off of Jeffrey.

They lean in and kiss passionately. A lot.

JEFFREY

That was one hell of a game. Seems like somebody got a touchdown or two.

Clay kisses him.

CLAY

You know damned well I got five touchdowns. And a two-point conversion!

They kiss once more.

JEFFREY

Drive you to the party?

Clay looks down.

CLAY

You... you know I can't.

JEFFREY

(bravely)

I can always hope?

Clay gets out of the car and slams the door.

CLAY

See you there.

He runs off.

JEFFREY

Buy me a drink?

INT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The stage is set up for Romeo and Juliet. We are in Act II, Scene 2.

Juliet, played by Sarah, is at the window as Romeo, played by a short white teen, DANIEL, who speaks up to her. Daniel wears red pants and has dark brown hair.

DANIEL
 (as Romeo)
 Shall I hear more, or shall I speak
 at this?

SARAH
 (as Juliet)
 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.
 Thou art thyself, though not a
 Montague. What's Montague? It is
 nor hand, nor foot, nor arm, nor
 face, nor any other part belonging
 to a man. O, be some other name!
 What's in a name?

Sarah is killing it.

CUT TO:

Sarah is still on stage as Juliet. Rosa has joined her as the nurse from Act II, Scene 5.

SARAH (CONT'D)
 (as Juliet)
 Say either, and I'll stay the
 circumstance: Let me be satisfied,
 is't good or bad?

ROSA
 (as nurse)
 Well, you have made a simple
 choice. You know not how to choose
 a man: Romeo! no, not he; though
 his face be better than any man's,
 yet his leg excels all men's; and
 for a hand, and a foot, and a body,
 though they be not to be talked on,
 yet they are past compare. He is
 not the flower of courtesy, but,
 I'll warrant him, as gentle as a
 lamb.

CUT TO:

The audience gives a standing ovation. Sarah stands between Rosa and Daniel. They bow as a group with the rest of the cast.

CUT TO:

Backstage where no one else can see, Daniel is going down on Sarah.

SARAH
God dammit, Romeo!

EXT. CAPTAIN CIRCLE'S GO CART TRACK - NIGHT

The kids are in line to get on the carts. Gordon is eating a pretzel, the others have various sodas.

SARAH
I'm going to kick all of your asses!

JEFFREY
No way, I'm definitely the best driver you know.

SARAH
Eat me!

JEFFREY
Only in your dreams.

They run for the go carts. Ahmed steps to the side.

HIMARI
Aren't you going to ride?

AHMED
Nah.

HIMARI
Why not?

AHMED
Coach'd kill me if he saw me on one of those things.

Sarah gets into a go cart.

SARAH
Wimp!

Himari laughs and joins the others on the carts.

Ahmed shrugs.

AHMED
I'm definitely not getting myself hurt on those death traps.

Two 17-year-old twin boys, MARK and MITCHELL WILLIAMS, tall and thin, get in line for the next carts. They both wear red hats that have the logo for the San Francisco 49ers.

Out of nowhere, Brandy Dortch walks up to Ahmed.

BRANDY DORTCH
(almost like a animal
barking)

Hey!

He turns towards her.

Beat.

BRANDY DORTCH (CONT'D)
(softer)

Hey.

AHMED

Ummm...

BRANDY DORTCH
Do you want to go out with me?

Ahmed looks around for someone to save him. The Williams twins are quietly pointing and laughing.

Or not so quietly. Brandy hears them. She almost snarls.

BRANDY DORTCH (CONT'D)
You hear me.

It's not a question.

Ahmed looks at the Williams twins again, barely holding in his own laughter.

Brandy casts an eye back at the twins without turning her head.

Ahmed cracks a little in response to the Williams twins' antics.

Brandy looks back up and catches the hint of humor in his face.

She changes from hopeful to angry.

AHMED
I... uh...

The go carts speed by.

AHMED (CONT'D)
I'm seeing someone.

BRANDY DORTCH
I see that.

AHMED
She's not here.

BRANDY DORTCH
I see that, too.

AHMED
It's... uh... it's Regina. I'm
going out with Regina.

BRANDY DORTCH
Oh.

She's actually hurt.

AHMED
Yeah, it's a new thing, but it's...

Brandy walks away. The Williams twins crack up out loud.

INT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL SGA OFFICE - DAY

Rosa presides over the SGA meeting. She sits at a table with the other officers, looking out at the rest of the room, which is filled with students and teachers. Gordon also sits at the table at the far end. The meeting is already in progress.

ROSA
(banging her gavel)
Okay, thank you Sherry for last
week's minutes.

SHERRY, a white girl, 15, nods with a smile at Rosa. Sherry wears a red dress with white polka dots. She sits.

ROSA (CONT'D)
Next up, let's have Gordon give us
the Treasurer's Report.

Gordon stands up and holds up a piece of paper.

GORDON
Last month, we brought in \$20,143.
We spent \$4,599. Our remaining
balance is \$107,355, not counting
the prom fund.

Gordon sits down.

ROSA

Thank you, Gordon. Next up we will move on to club reports. First up is the Gay-Straight Alliance. Jeffrey, you are up.

Jeffrey stands up and begins to give his report.

EXT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

Rosa, Jeffrey and Gordon walk outside with Sarah, who was also at the SGA meeting. They walk towards their parents who are standing outside their cars chatting.

Sarah's mother Natalie is talking to Rosa and Jeffrey's father, NORMAN, who is a black man in his early 50s with greying hair at his temples.

NATALIE

So you'll send the check on Friday?

NORMAN

Sure, just text me a reminder.

NATALIE

(grinning)

I thank you and the Parents' Club thanks you. Sarah, come along now, we have to get going.

Sarah is already standing next to her.

SARAH

Already here, mom.

Sarah gets into the car after waving goodbye to her friends.

NATALIE

Rosa. Jeffrey.

They nod.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

I hope I'll see you in church on Sunday?

ROSA

I will definitely be there, Ms. Willingham.

Jeffrey doesn't respond.

NATALIE

Hmmm...?

He still doesn't respond.

NORMAN

Jeffrey.

Jeffrey crosses his arms.

JEFFREY

I can't make it. I have practice.

Natalie raises an eyebrow in suspicion.

NATALIE

Okay, well I REALLY hope you'll be there NEXT Sunday.

JEFFREY

I'll try.

NATALIE

Hmmm...

INT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - DAY

The auditorium is set up for Quiz Bowl. On the Starlin team are Rosa, Gordon, Himari and AINSLEY, 17, a white girl. Ainsley sits at the end of the row and wears bright red shoes over her white socks.

In the audience, Ahmed and Sarah watch.

The other QUIZ BOWL TEAM is from Michelle Obama High School. The contest is already in progress. The Obama team has two boys and two girls, with only one white person (a boy) on the team.

Principal Casiano moderates the Quiz Bowl.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO

Himari, Rosa got the toss-up, so the next three question are for your team. Each member of your team must answer one of the following questions. If you get all three, your team will win. If you miss two, Obama High will win. Are you ready?

HIMARI

I am.

Himari looks over at Rosa and smiles. Rosa returns the grin.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO

Each of these questions is 10 points each and will deal with the topic of East Asian bodies of water. First question: The ports of Qingdao and Inchon are on this colorfully-named sea, which separates Korea from China. Name it.

Himari answers with no hesitation.

HIMARI

The Yellow Sea.

Her teammates clap her on the back.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO

Correct! Two more two go. Next up is Gordon.

Principal Casiano picks up another card and begins to read.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)

To the northeast of the Yellow Sea is another sea that separates the Korean Peninsula from the islands of Kyushu and Honshu. Name that sea.

Gordon thinks for a few seconds.

GORDON

The Sea of Japan.

Himari rubs his shoulders as the crowd applauds.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO

That is also correct! Your last question is for Ainsley. This is for the win. If not, we will go into overtime.

Principal Casiano picks up another card.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)

Further northeast, this sea separates Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula from the mainland...

In the audience, Sarah smacks Ahmed on the leg.

SARAH
 (quietly)
 Oh shit, this is easy! It's in
 Risk!

PRINCIPAL CASIANO
 The island of Sakhalin lies at the
 southern part of this sea.

Ainsley thinks for a moment.

SARAH
 C'mon, c'mon.

AINSLEY
 The Sea of Okhotsk?

She pronounces the name with a long "o."

PRINCIPAL CASIANO
 Judges?

The judges confer.

JUDGE
 Repeat the answer.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO
 (to Ainsley)
 Can you say that again?

AINSLEY
 The Sea of Okhotsk.

This time she pronounces it with the proper "ah" sound for
 the first syllable.

The judges nod.

Principal Casiano smiles.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO
 That is correct, we have a winner!

The Starlin team leaps up from their chairs in excitement.
 The small crowd also cheers.

Himari turns to Rosa and hugs her a bit too hard.

Rosa pulls back and looks at her for a second and then they
 hug again.

Rosa moves on to hug the other two members of the team while
 Himari watches her closely. She is attracted to Rosa.

EXT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL TRACK - DAY

The Starlin High track sits behind the main building and it is surrounded by steel bleachers. A few fans and parents sit in the stands. Rosa, Ahmed and Sarah sit in the front row.

Himari is stretching at the starting block, a race about to begin.

Her friends call out her name. She looks up and waves back at them.

She turns back to the task at hand.

She puts her feet on the starting blocks.

She gets set.

The film shifts to abstract animation. Himari's opponents turn into the animals of their team: a Tiger, a Lion, an Eagle and a Jaguar.

Himari transforms into a tall, lithe bird-human.

The others get ready to race, Himari steps off the track and a mirror appears. She takes a few seconds to regard her new form. She is much taller than she was before, but even skinnier.

She frowns.

She squeezes her body and shrinks to an even skinnier form.

Himari smiles in the mirror and sets herself on the starter blocks.

The referee fires off the starter pistol.

Himari shoots off of the blocks, but she quickly falls behind the other racers. She flies forward, low to the ground.

The Eagle shoots out in front of the pack, but the cats are quickly catching up.

Himari starts to struggle to keep ahead of the cats while the Eagle pulls further and further ahead.

Himari exhales and her body regains some of its size. She is less skinny than she was before.

As she returns to her normal size, she stays a bird. But she quickly flies past the cats into second place.

The Eagle looks back at her and Himari starts to swerve towards the Eagle. The Eagle panics and over-reacts, trying to push Himari off the track.

Himari smiles and shifts around the now off-balance Eagle.

Her arms, stronger than ever before, sweep her wings backward and Himari flies across the finish line in first.

CUT TO:

Himari is surrounded by her teammates who congratulate her for her victory.

INT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

The teens sit around the cafeteria table, each holding their report cards.

ROSA

The streak continues!

SARAH

What streak?

JEFFREY

Don't you know? Madame President here has never gotten any grade other than an "A."

GORDON

Seriously?

Rosa shows everyone her report card.

ROSA

Harvard, here I come!

HIMARI

You're applying to Harvard? Me, too.

JEFFREY

She already applied. She's already in.

Himari smiles.

SARAH

Who needs all those A's? I just need to stay eligible. I hate class.

HIMARI

But you're going to college?

SARAH

Of course. I have scholarship opportunities from a dozen schools. So far. My top choice is UConn. I've always wanted to play for Auriemma.

Ahmed frowns at his report card.

SARAH (CONT'D)

How 'bout you, Ahmed?

He looks up.

AHMED

My father isn't going to be happy, but coach won't mind.

SARAH

No, I meant college? Where you going?

AHMED

Still not sure yet. I've got some good offers, but I kinda want to go to the east coast. Like an ACC or SEC team.

GORDON

You want to play in the south?

AHMED

Yeah, never been. Always love watching those games on Saturdays, the schools love their damned football.

GORDON

Not me, can't handle all those rednecks. I'm going to play at USC.

Regina walks up to the table with a tray of food.

REGINA

Play? I didn't know you played anything.

GORDON

I do love futbol.

Regina frowns as she sits down.

REGINA

But I go to all the games, I've never seen you play.

JEFFREY

Nerdboy plays soccer.

GORDON

Eww.

JEFFREY

He can't bring himself to use the dreaded "S" word.

The group laughs.

Brandy Dortch walks into the cafeteria.

SARAH

Oh, shit, Ahmed, here comes your girlfriend.

The kids laugh again.

Ahmed looks over and sees Brandy. He turns away quickly and ducks.

AHMED

Oh, Jeez, hide me!

Brandy is close enough that she hears him.

She pauses and stares at them.

ROSA

That was mean, Ahmed.

HIMARI

She can't help herself.

GORDON

She can't help anyone.

A few snickers. Himari frowns.

SARAH

What are you staring at Brandy? Don't you have some people to scare?

ROSA

(to Sarah)

That's uncalled for.

HIMARI
Yeah, cut it out.

Brandy stares daggers at Sarah. She clenches her fists and unclenches them.

BRANDY DORTCH
You guys are fuckers.

She runs off. The crowd is laughing throughout the cafeteria.

Principal Casiano stands behind them wearing a flowered-print blouse and casual slacks. She is angry.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO
You two...

She points at Ahmed and Rosa.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)
My office. Now!

She storms away.

Rosa glowers at Sarah as she follows the principal.

INT. PRINCIPAL CASIANO'S OFFICE - DAY

Principal Casiano sits at her desk across from Ahmed and Rosa.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO
I'm very disappointed in both of you.

Ahmed stares out the window.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)
You are two of our top students. You are future leaders. And you're engaging in this type of behavior?

AHMED
But we didn't...

Principal Casiano holds up her hand to silence Ahmed.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO
I don't want to hear any excuses. Look, we all know that the Dortches are... strange.

(MORE)

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)
And while I know the two of you are
far from the worst offenders, I
expect more from you.

ROSA
I have never said anything negative
about Brandy.

Principal Casiano frowns at her.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO
Are you aware what the kids... what
your friends call her?

Ahmed and Rosa can't help but smile a little. Ahmed giggles
quietly.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)
That's my point exactly. I don't
care how weird the girl or her
family are, I will not accept
students calling her Brandy Blue.
That name is disgusting.

Ahmed looks out the window again. The humor fades from Rosa's
face.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)
As captain of the football team and
student body president, I am going
to require the two of you to
apologize to Brandy Dortch.

Ahmed can't hide his disappointment. Rosa stays straight-
faced.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)
And if you don't, you will not be
going to Homecoming this year.

Rosa gasps.

AHMED
You can't be serious?

PRINCIPAL CASIANO
(smiling)
Try me.

INT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Brandy stands at her locker putting away books from her
previous class.

Rosa and Ahmed walk up to her.

ROSA
Hey, Brandy.

Brandy turns around with an angry look on her face.

BRANDY DORTCH
What the hell do you want?

ROSA
I just wanted to apologize...

Brandy slams her locker shut.

BRANDY DORTCH
Didn't ask for your apology and
don't want it.

Ahmed steps forward, protective of Rosa.

AHMED
Hey, we're trying to be nice here.

BRANDY DORTCH
No one asked you to.

AHMED
As a matter of fa...

Ahmed begins moving towards Brandy, but Rosa steps between them and pushes him back.

ROSA
(with a disarming smile)
What my friend here is trying to
say is...

Brandy slams her hands on the lockers and walks away. Ahmed and Rosa flinch. The rest of the hallway goes silent. Everyone turns to stare.

BRANDY DORTCH
I don't give a crap what the hell
you have to say! Leave me alone!

She storms off.

Principal Casiano walks up and puts her hand on Rosa's shoulder.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO
Well. You tried. I'll allow it. Get
on to class.

The principal stares after Brandy with a look of concern.

INT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL GYM - NIGHT

Everyone is dressed in their finest and dancing in the gym for homecoming. The gym is decked out with a theme of "Brightest Futures," with sunny horizons, graduation caps and gowns, diplomas and other decorations that celebrate the potential of the room full of kids.

Ahmed and Regina dance near the center of the floor. It's a slow dance.

Clay stands at one end of the room. Jeffrey at the other.

Gordon dances with Ainsley, but not too seriously.

The rest of the students are dancing with various dates.

The music shuts off.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO

Okay, everyone, it's about that time!

The crowd switches from conversation and dancing to facing the stage. Murmurs rush through the crowd.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)

Calm down! Calm down! I am now about to announce the Homecoming King and Queen. Can we have the court assemble in front of the stage?

A dozen students move towards the stage, among them, Ahmed, Rosa, Sarah and Jeffrey.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)

Let's hear it for all of our Homecoming Court members, selected by YOU, the Mavericks of Starlin High!

The crowd goes a bit crazy.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)

And now, the moment you've all been waiting for. Your Homecoming King is...

She opens an envelope and reads it.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)
 ...Ahmed Bin Tengku!

The crowd cheers as Ahmed walks on stage to get his crown.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)
 No surprise there, Mr. All-American. And, get ready ladies, your Homecoming Queen is...

She opens up another envelope.

PRINCIPAL CASIANO (CONT'D)
 Amy Buckley!

The crowd goes really crazy for AMY O'BUCK, 18, the blonde girl next door, who happily accepts her crown and hugs Ahmed. She wears a perfectly-tailored emerald dress and matching jewelry.

EXT. STARLIN HIGH SCHOOL GYM - LATER

Students get into various cars and limos.

Gordon drives his car with the kids that went to the dance solo: Himari, Clay and Jeffrey.

Ahmed and Regina run outside towards his car.

AHMED
 After party at my place!

Everyone cheers.

INT. AHMED'S HOUSE - LATER

Ahmed's parents aren't home, but they're the only ones missing. This after party is the biggest student blowout of the year.

Gordon walks through the room with a red solo cup and arrives at a table of people playing beer pong, including Ahmed, Sarah and the Williams twins. Jeffrey and Himari follow him.

Mitchell tries to bounce, but Sarah swats that shit so hard it bounces off the wall. Ahmed catches it she and Sarah high five.

Mark smacks his brother in the back of the head.

Ahmed nails the shot to win the game.

INT. AHMED'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A dozen or so of the kids are sitting around watching a football game on the HD TV.

A commercial comes on.

DAWN DORTCH

Hey. It is that spooky time of year again.

Dawn comes on the screen.

She stands in front of the haunted house, which looks exactly the same as the previous year.

DAWN DORTCH (CONT'D)

I am here to invite you all to the 5th Annual Beware the Dortches Haunted House. Our scariest house ever.

Dawn walks towards the haunted house and opens the front door and goes inside.

A shaky hand-held camera follows her inside. This footage isn't the same as the first commercial, but it looks almost the same.

DAWN DORTCH (CONT'D)

We have been providing the best fright house in the state for more than four years now. And this year we have our scariest haunted house ever.

Inside the house, she walks down a hall and stops in front of a side door. Signs on the door say "Dangerous Path" and "Do Not Enter." This time the door is cracked open.

DAWN DORTCH (CONT'D)

We've even updated the really scary way. Try it out. Bring your friends, bring your family and experience the best Halloween tradition in America. The Beware the Dortches Haunted House. Tickets only \$15. Be there or do not be scared.

The commercial ends.

INT. AHMED'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ahmed jumps up and runs out of the room. The other kids are laughing and joking about the commercial. In addition to the main six characters, Regina, the Williams twins, Ainsley, Clay, Sherry and Daniel. None of them wears anything red.

REGINA

Is that Brandy Blue's mom?

ROSA

That or her sister.

GORDON

We went to that thing last year.
Mostly crap, but had a few good
scares.

JEFFREY

Yeah, they said it was supposed to
be much scarier this year.

Ahmed runs back into the center of the room. He is ecstatic.

AHMED

What do you say? We already have
tickets!

He flashes the tickets Misty gave them last year.

GORDON

Absolutely!

ROSA

It can't be worse than last year.

HIMARI

If Rosa's in, I'm in.

JEFFREY

I'm in if Sarah is.

They all turn and look at Sarah expectantly.

She doesn't respond at first.

SARAH

Okay. Last time wasn't terrible,
I'll go.

The group explodes with applause.

ROSA

Okay, let's go Saturday?

HIMARI
That okay, Sarah?

Sarah isn't excited.

SARAH
I guess so.

INT. THE DORTCHES' HOUSE, THE AXE ROOM - NIGHT

The Dortches sit around the family dinner table. LOVIE DORTCH, 70s, sits at the head of the table. She has white skin and white hair.

Around the table are the rest of the family, with Dawn sitting next to her. The other women sit close except for the one white-haired daughter, LEANNE, 17, who sits at a smaller separate table, alone.

LOVIE DORTCH
Eat up, everyone. You need to have your strength up for the haunted house.

DAWN DORTCH
It's finally time.

LOVIE DORTCH
After all these years, our time has finally come.

The rest of the family sits around the main table, eating food that is barely recognizable as edible.

The furniture, fixtures, decorations and other items in the room are all made from what appear to be human bones. Chairs and tables are constructed from leg and arm bones. The only light comes from candles sitting atop skulls.

The walls are covered with every type of axe you can imagine. All shapes and sizes. Hand axes, hatchets, fire axes, battle axes. In the middle of the back wall is a large battle axe. By far the biggest in the room.

The battle axe sits upon the crest of the Dortches. The crest is woven into an ancient tapestry: a shield pattern made up of severed human heads, all male, surrounding an image of a the exact large battle axe that rests upon the wall in front of it.

Lovie holds her knife and fork, as if ready to eat. Her plate is untouched.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)
My first thought once they came
after us, after they came after my
beloved Winston. Was payback.

Nods and affirmations.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)
He was nothing more than a simple
man. A simple man who wanted to
help his community. And they
accused him of touching young
girls.

Hisses and condemnation. Lovie spits on the floor.

DAWN DORTCH
How could they? He had many
daughters. He never hurt us.

LOVIE DORTCH
They don't care. It was never about
any of that stuff. Those lies were
for their television. We say no to
lies here.

The family starts to cheer and get excited.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)
And we forget no sin, no matter how
minor. The time is finally here for
them to pay. The time for the
sinners to pay the wages for what
they did to our beloved Winston
Dortch.

She reveals a big semi-toothy grin. The family cheers and
says Winston's name as they hold up and spill glasses that
could be wine, could be blood.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)
And they will never forget the
Dortches. They will be aware of our
power.

She bangs the knife and fork in her hands onto the table as
the rest of the family erupts. She tosses down the silverware
and stands up.

Lovie walks to the wall with the large battle axe and pulls
it off the wall. It is a bit too heavy for her, so she can
barely keep it up.

She holds it above her head. Then she lets it smash, head first, to the floor between her feet.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)
Dinner bell has rung.

She yells.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)
Come and get it!

The family members all rush to the walls and pick out their weapons while screaming with joy.

INT. POLICE STATION - LATER

In the bullpen of the local police station, three cops sit. Two are typing on computers, the other is on the phone.

OFFICER MALLOY, a white man in his 20s, hangs up the phone.

OFFICER MALLOY
Another one.

CAPTAIN CHARLES, a white woman in her 30s, responds.

CAPTAIN CHARLES
From the haunted house?

OFFICER MALLOY
Yes ma'am.

CAPTAIN CHARLES
That's the third one.

A third cop, DEPUTY MURDOCH, a white man in his 40s, listens in.

OFFICER MALLOY
Yeah, this one was also about a missing person.

CAPTAIN CHARLES
Were they willing to file a report?

OFFICER MALLOY
No, ma'am. Just wanted it us to do something about it.

Captain Charles leans back in her chair and frowns.

CAPTAIN CHARLES
What do we know about these people?
They're called the...

DEPUTY MURDOCH
...the Dortches. Aren't they the
blue family?

OFFICER MALLOY
Not all of them.

CAPTAIN CHARLES
Yeah, some of them are white? Hmm,
what else can you tell me about
this family? The Dortches.

Officer Malloy walks over to a filing cabinet and digs through until he finds a file on the Dortches.

OFFICER MALLOY
Okay, from what I know...

DEPUTY MURDOCH
How do you know about them?

Malloy looks annoyed at Deputy Murdoch.

OFFICER MALLOY
My family had a farm up near them
up until I was about... oh, I don't
know 17 or 18.

DEPUTY MURDOCH
You meet 'em?

OFFICER MALLOY
Here and there. They aren't exactly
outgoing.

CAPTAIN CHARLES
Let's move on, I don't have all
day.

Malloy opens the file.

INT. THE DORTCHES HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Malloy's voice continues to describe the various members of the Dortch family. The camera focuses on Lovie, the oldest of the family and the only one with white skin. Her hair is gray and she shows wrinkles beyond her age.

OFFICER MALLOY (O.S.)
First up we have Lovie. It's likely she's the mother of all these other women. There aren't any other records.

The camera pans over to Dawn, who is the oldest of daughters. Her hair is also gray and she is dressed more nicely and is cleaner than the younger women and girls.

OFFICER MALLOY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Then we have Dawn. She's the one from those TV commercials. After her, there is a big gap and the rest of them are under 30.

The camera pans to Misty, the only member of the family with blonde hair.

OFFICER MALLOY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Misty is the one that used to go to Starlin High a few years back. She got kicked out because she was having sex with several of the male students.

CAPTAIN CHARLES (O.S.)
Classmates?

OFFICER MALLOY (O.S.)
Yes, apparently it was part of a "sex game" the seniors played. You got extra points if you slept with one of the Dortches.

CAPTAIN CHARLES (O.S.)
Disgusting.

OFFICER MALLOY (O.S.)
She dropped out once word got out about the game.

The camera pans to the twins, Peggy and Tammy. They are dressed in identical black clothes and have black-ish hair.

OFFICER MALLOY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Not quite the youngest are the twins, Peggy and Tammy. I call them the terror twins.

INT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Deputy Murdoch looks quizzically at Officer Malloy.

DEPUTY MURDOCH
That's a strange name. Why?

OFFICER MALLOY
They were caught back in the day
after having gone on a spree of
attacking and killing animals
around the town.

CAPTAIN CHARLES
They get in trouble?

OFFICER MALLOY
Not much. They stopped doing it
after we paid them a visit. They
were scared enough to quit.

INT. THE DORTCHES' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The camera pans to Brandy.

OFFICER MALLOY (O.S.)
Then you have Brandy, who the kids
have affectionately taken to
calling 'Brandy Blue'. She's the
youngest of the group and is always
in trouble at school.

The camera pans to LeAnn. She's older than anyone except for
Lovie and Dawn. She doesn't interact with the others during
dinner.

OFFICER MALLOY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
There's one other daughter we know
of, LeAnn.

INT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Charles swivels in her chair to face Malloy.

CAPTAIN CHARLES
One more? I hadn't heard of
another.

OFFICER MALLOY
That's because she appears to be
the black sheep of the family.
She's quiet, stays home and doesn't
seem to be a true believer like the
others. She's no trouble.

Charles stares at Officer Malloy.

CAPTAIN CHARLES

No men?

Malloy shakes his head.

OFFICER MALLOY

No, there was Lovie's husband,
Winston Dortch. But he's long dead
now. Nearly a decade.

DEPUTY MURDOCH

I remember him.

OFFICER MALLOY

Yeah, he dressed up as a clown for
funhouses and parties. Was always
kinda dirty and gross, but there
wasn't exactly much competition in
the clown circuit.

Deputy Murdoch chuckles.

Malloy closes the file and puts it on his desk.

OFFICER MALLOY (CONT'D)

He was accused of molesting a bunch
of young girls. Mostly out of town,
but one of his victims was Natalie
Willingham's daughter, Sarah.

DEPUTY MURDOCH

(frowning)

The basketball player?

CAPTAIN CHARLES

That's a damned shame.

OFFICER MALLOY

That's the one.

INT. THE DORTCHES' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The officers continue to talk as the camera switches back to
the Dortches house.

Cage and Buck walk into the room with plates and sit at the
small table next to LeAnn.

CAPTAIN CHARLES (O.S.)

And that's it? We're sure there
aren't any other daughters running
around that place?

OFFICER MALLOY (O.S.)
That pretty much sums up what I
know and what's in the files.

Buck takes a huge bite out of some kind of unidentifiable
meat on a bone.

INT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

The shot focuses on Captain Charles, who is frowning.

CAPTAIN CHARLES
Okay, I guess you two should head
out there and check it out.

OFFICER MALLOY
Probably a waste of time.

DEPUTY MURDOCH
We're on it.

Officer Malloy grabs the car keys and walks out. Deputy
Murdoch follows.

EXT. THE DORTCHES HAUNTED HOUSE - NIGHT

Misty stands next to the doorway in the haunted house with
the signs that say "Dangerous Path" and "Do Not Enter." The
door is open and each of the 13 teens that were at Ahmed's
house walk through sheepishly.

MISTY DORTCH
That's right. Don't be scared. That
comes later.

Sarah looks at her with disgust as she passes by. Misty
returns the stare, but her eyes are malevolent.

MISTY DORTCH (CONT'D)
Keep moving.

She follows after them.

In the dark, she sees Clay and Jeffrey secretly holding
hands.

She spits on the ground.

After the last kid walks through the door, Misty closes it
and locks it behind them. She runs deeper into the haunted
house.

INT. THE DORTCHES HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

The hallway is dark. No one can see.

ROSA
What the hell?

HIMARI
(softly)
I think she locked the door.

The sound of Ahmed trying to push the door open.

AHMED
Yeah, it's locked.

SARAH
I hate this, I hate this, I hate
this.

GORDON
This is the part where they get us
extra scared by separating us and
putting us through our own frights.

SARAH
Separated?

JEFFREY
How do you know that?

GORDON
They put videos of all these places
on YouTube.

ROSA
You watched video of this place
before we got here?

Gordon laughs.

GORDON
No, not this place. This one has no
web presence.

SUSAN
You are a particularly useless
idiot, aren't you?

From somewhere deeper in the haunted house, something roars.

HIMARI
(quietly)
What was that?

ROSA
No idea, but we can't just wait
here, let's get moving.

Several of the kids pull out their phones and flick on their flashlights.

The hall is quiet, nothing but black curtains line the walls.

Ahmed tries to push the door open again, but it won't budge. Suddenly, a bolt of electricity surges through the metal door and Ahmed jumps.

AHMED
Dammit!

The group looks back at him.

AHMED (CONT'D)
The damned door is electrified.

Standing next to him is Regina. She wears nothing but flip flops on her feet. Suddenly she jumps a bit.

REGINA
It's on the floor, too!

Rosa starts heading down the hallway.

ROSA
We'd better move on, then.

Everyone reluctantly starts to follow her. Ahmed brings up the rear, rubbing his hand.

As they walk along the black curtained passage, they come to an intersection. In every direction, the black curtains eat the light.

The group stops.

GORDON
Which way do we go?

Rosa takes a step forward and shines her phone's light down each of the hallways.

ROSA
Every direction looks exactly the
same.

She turns back to the group, shining her light at the passage behind them.

GORDON
Let's just pick one.

The entrance passage is now filled with the hulking figures of Buck and Cage in dirty, bloody clown masks.

Everyone screams and runs. In the chaos, characters run down different passages.

Buck and Cage roar as they shove Gordon and some of the other kids. Gordon is banged into a wall and falls to the ground.

Cage smashes him upside the head and he passes out.

Buck picks Gordon up and the two giants carry him back down the passage.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

Ainsley walks down one of the corridors. She comes upon a dead end that is a stone wall with a thick wooden door set in the middle. Above the door is painted "The Gate to Hell."

From the way she came, Ainsley hears the barking of dogs.

She grabs the big metal ring on the door and pulls it open.

We never see what's inside, but Ainsley does. She looks afraid.

The dog barking comes closer.

Ainsley steps through the door and closes it behind her.

The movie turns into the abstract animation, but only briefly.

Flames lick the outside of the door as it burns away as if it were never there.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

Gordon wakes up. He is confined in a tight wooden coffin.

He works his phone out of his pocket and up near his head. He turns on the flashlight.

A cockroach scutters across his chest.

He screams and starts kicking.

A dozen more run across his body, including his face.

One crawls into his mouth and he spits it out with a "waaaaaah!"

He thrashes and smashes around in the coffin.

His phone cracks and it starts flashing, but the roaches are gone.

He flicks once more at his ankle.

He twitches the leg again and shines the light at his feet.

In the strobe of the phone comes a big crunchy spider.

Gordon screams.

More and more of the big hairy spiders crawl up his body. As they do, the film switches into animation.

If possible, the inside of the coffin grows darker, but the darkness is no longer a single object. It shatters into various shards of blackness.

The few spiders crawling up Gordon's leg turn into a virtual torrent of all kinds of spiders, some real, some fantastic. They all crawl up Gordon's body coming for his head.

Gordon begins to grow larger as he hulks out. He swings his arms outward and shatters the wooden coffin into millions of shards.

He rips his skull open to have an identical Gordon climb out. He literally escapes his own skin to get away from the spiders.

He falls to the floor as he escapes the coffin and his skin.

Gordon screams as the room itself turns into more and more spiders.

No matter where he looks, there they are.

They begin to overwhelm him and cover every bit of his body except for one remaining eye.

They eye closes, a spider covers the last of his flesh and he passes out.

CUT TO:

Gordon lies in the coffin, passed out.

There are no spiders.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

Jeffrey and Clay walk down a corridor with wooden walls. They are holding hands.

CLAY

You've gotta stop taking me on dates where you try to scare me.

JEFFREY

I had nothing to do with this one.

CLAY

(laughing)

Well I didn't invite you...

Clay stops as a thin line of blood runs down his face. He falls to the floor.

JEFFREY

Clay? What...

Jeffrey stops talking and falls to the floor.

Rising up behind the two unconscious teens are Dawn and Misty Dortch. Each holds a bloody, dirty old bowling pin, the weapons they used to knock Clay and Jeffrey out.

EXT. THE DORTCHES HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

A police car pulls up outside the haunted house.

OFFICER MALLOY

This looks pretty stupid.

DEPUTY MURDOCH

We wouldn't be here if it didn't.

They slam the car doors shut loudly and loudly lock the car doors with a loud beep.

Officer Malloy and Deputy Murdoch start walking towards the front door of the haunted house.

They hear a door slam from the side of the building.

Each officer unsnaps his service revolver and is prepared for whatever comes out of the building.

Another slamming sound. And another.

Daniel comes running around the side of the building. His hands are tied and he is splashed with blood, but it doesn't appear to be his. Hard to say.

Both officers pull out their revolvers and aim at Daniel as he comes running at them.

DANIEL
Help! Help! Help!

Officer Malloy holds up his hand in Daniel's direction. They lower their weapons.

DEPUTY MURDOCH
Stop right there.

OFFICER MALLOY
What's going on, son?

DANIEL
What are you doing? Do something!

Daniel tries to push past them, but they try to hold him back. He breaks through and runs.

DEPUTY MURDOCH
Stop!

He raises his revolver and aims at Daniel who stops. He whirls around towards the cops, who now have their backs to the haunted house.

DANIEL
We have to get out of here!

Deputy Murdoch looks over to Officer Malloy.

OFFICER MALLOY
Why? What's happening?

DANIEL
I don't...

He sees Cage and Buck coming from out of the building. Buck carries his machete. Cage carries an aluminum baseball bat covered in splotches of blood. Both still wear the clown masks.

Daniel screams. He tries to turn and run, but stumbles and falls to the ground.

As he falls, the movie shifts to abstract animation. Daniel's body hits the ground, he transforms to blood and splashes out of existence.

OFFICER MALLOY

What the...

He turns to see what Daniel was looking at. Buck's machete slices into his shoulder and cuts to the bone.

His revolver fires uselessly at the ground until it is empty.

Officer Malloy looks at Deputy Murdoch who stares back in disbelief. Murdoch rejects what he sees.

DEPUTY MURDOCH

But... But it's... It's just
Halloween?

Malloy falls to the ground.

Murdoch fires his gun, hitting Buck in the shoulder.

Buck barely flinches.

Murdoch fires again. And again.

Cage's baseball bat crushes into the side of Murdoch's head, flattening his skull.

Officer Malloy bleeds rivers as he watches Deputy Murdoch fall to the ground. When he hits, the rest of Murdoch's body flattens to the same width as his crushed skull and he dissipates.

Buck pulls the machete out of Malloy's shoulder.

He holds it high like the Statue of Liberty.

He brings it slashing down at an angle, taking off Malloy's head.

The head falls to the floor and bounces and rolls until it stops, face forward, back against the wall.

Malloy's eyes open one more time and look directly into the camera.

OFFICER MALLOY

Fuck.

CUT TO:

Cage and Buck stand triumphant over the bodies of the two police officers and Daniel. Each has been severed in half and their limbs and heads have been cut off.

Blood is everywhere.

Officer Malloy's head rests against the wall of the haunted house, lifeless eyes open, mouth agape.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

Ahmed, Rosa, Himari and Sherry walk down a stone hallway light by skull-candles. Sherry leads the way and she stops next to a closed wooden door.

SHERRY

Look.

She points down the hallway.

Brandy stands at the end of the hall. She has two big dogs on leashes. The dogs are large, covered in wounds and blood and very, very hungry. They growl and pull at their leashes.

Brandy laughs an inhuman laugh and lets go of the leashes.

BRANDY DORTCH

Get 'em, girls.

The dogs rush forward with snarls and slobber. As the dogs run, the movie flips to abstract animation.

The dogs grow in size and menace. They are black and the blackness grows beyond the bodies of the dogs.

Their teeth multiply, when the dogs snarl, they show row after row of razor-sharp teeth.

The first dog leaps onto Sherry and sinks it's teeth into her face. It tears flesh.

The second dog rushes at Ahmed and prepares to leap at him.

The wooden door opens and LeAnne pokes her head through. She tosses two large steaks on the ground, but both land pretty close together.

She closes the door and leaves.

The dog that was rushing at Ahmed stops and begins devouring the meat on the ground. As it eats, it grows to look less and less like a dog and more like some kind of beast.

Ahmed lifts up his foot, he wears heavy boots, and brings it down on the dog's head, cracking the skull against the stone floor.

Rosa and Himari rush at the dog attacking Sherry.

Himari strikes the dog in the head and it stops tearing at Sherry's mostly-gone face and turns towards her.

Rosa tackles the dog, grabbing it around the body. The dog struggles to get away, but can't.

It turns and bites Rosa on the arm. It doesn't let go, shaking it's head back and forth.

Himari kicks the dog really hard and it lets go of Rosa to attack her.

Ahmed smashes into the dog, knocking it to the ground.

AHMED

Get out of here!

ROSA

We can't....

Ahmed smashes his fist repeatedly into the dog's body, it tries to bite him, but each time his fist smashes into it, it flinches. It struggles to get away from him.

AHMED

Get out!

Himari and Rosa run down the hall.

Ahmed grabs the dog's leg and tries to snap it in half.

The dog yelps and savagely bites Ahmed's arm, drawing blood.

Ahmed twists the dog's leg and it lets go, falling to the ground.

Ahmed scrambles to his feet and starts stomping on the dog.

CUT TO:

Laying on the ground is Sherry's body, ripped to shreds by the dogs. The dead dogs lay on either side of her, their skulls caved in.

Ahmed, whose boots are covered in blood walks away quietly. He goes the opposite direction of Rosa and Himari.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

Gordon wakes up with a scream.

He is still in the coffin, but the spiders are gone.

He starts shaking the coffin, but finds that it is now open.

He pushes up the coffin's lid and peers out.

He doesn't see anyone, so he tries to get up, but he knocks the coffin over and he and the coffin crash to the floor.

Gordon pulls himself out from under the coffin.

He stands up, dusts himself off and looks around.

He doesn't see anything, so he walks down the hallway. He stops and goes back and goes the other direction.

Once he leaves the room, LeAnn steps out from the shadows and runs her hand over the askew coffin. She stares after Gordon.

INT. THE DORTCHES HAUNTED HOUSE, HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Jeffrey opens his eyes. He's strapped to a table in a room made up to look like a hospital operating room. A disgustingly dirty operating room. It's mostly dark, with only a single skull candle lighting the room.

He struggles with his restraints and looks around as his eyes focus.

He sees Clay strapped to a table next to him.

Further down are the Williams twins and holy fucking shit they've been carved up into little bits. Their severed heads stare at Jeffrey.

Lovie stands over Clay with a scalpel and a steel needle. She pokes and prods at him while he screams.

LOVIE DORTCH

Hmmm... I was certain that tendon
would produce the results I wanted.

She frowns and the movie goes into the exaggerated animation from before.

Lovie grows in size in menace, somewhat resembling Ursula from the Little Mermaid. Her fingers grow knives and needles.

She wiggles the new blade/needle fingers at Jeffrey.

Jeffrey screams.

Lovie goes to work on Clay. She pokes him with the needles and he screams.

Lovie looks over at Jeffrey with a smile that has way too many teeth.

She switches over to the blade fingers and she starts carving into Clay as if he were a Thanksgiving turkey.

She is actually able to carve pieces of him off as he screams.

Lovie takes one strip of meat and eats it. She cackles.

Clay stops moving.

Jeffrey continues screaming.

Lovie stands up and walks over to Jeffrey.

LOVIE

Your turn.

JEFFREY

You really don't want to do this.

Lovie leans in and does it anyway. She starts poking him with the needles.

Buck shambles into the room.

LOVIE

Buck, grab this one and let's try something new. Let's scare the shit out of his sister.

Jeffrey passes out.

Buck picks Jeffrey up and tosses him over his shoulder and he follows Lovie out of the room.

CUT TO:

Clay's body lies on the table. He is not only dead, but he has been poked and prodded with hundreds of needles and knife cuts.

His blood runs down a drain in the floor.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

Ahmed walks alone down a stone hallway and turns a corner. He bumps into Regina. She screams then sees that it is him. She throws her arms around his neck.

REGINA

Oh my god, I'm so glad to see you!

He hugs her back. Tightly.

As they release, Ahmed leans in and kisses Regina deeply.

They keep kissing and don't see Brandy step into the hall behind them.

She runs at them with a kitchen knife in her hand. As she runs, the movie shifts into abstract animation.

Brandy starts spinning. Like a fan at a slow speed. But with real blades.

She is nearly silent.

Regina and Ahmed kiss deeper. They don't hear Brandy.

She spins faster and faster.

Brandy becomes a blur as she approaches the couple.

Her blades start ripping the couple to shreds. All the shreds. Blood flies everywhere. Everything goes red, but Ahmed and Regina never stop kissing. Never.

CUT TO:

Ahmed lies on the ground, with Regina on top of him. Ahmed's face and arms have been stabbed multiple times and blood actively flows from the wounds to the ground.

Regina's back is covered in dozens of stab wounds. Her white shirt is so bloody no white shows.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

Sarah is alone as she walks through a doorway that takes her into the old, safe haunted house. She walks into the Weird and Wild West room.

Behind the bar, Sarah sees Dawn wearing a clown mask. It's the mask that used to belong to her father Winston, the evil clown that molested Sarah as a child.

Dawn lurches from behind the bar towards Sarah and the movie slips into abstract animation.

SARAH

I'm not afraid of you.

Sarah shrinks in size.

DAWN DORTCH
You will be.

Dawn moves in her direction. As she stumbles forward, she grows in mass without growing much in size. Every step she takes makes the whole room shudder.

Sarah backs up.

DAWN DORTCH (CONT'D)
I know what you are afraid of.
Shall I tell you?

Sarah turns to run, but Dawn is there when she turns around.

DAWN DORTCH (CONT'D)
You are grotesque.

As Dawn speaks, her features shift and move in and out of humanity, incorporating monsters, animals and things unliving.

DAWN DORTCH (CONT'D)
You are alone.

Sarah backs away from her and tries to find another exit to the room.

DAWN DORTCH (CONT'D)
Nothing you do matters.

Sarah spots the other exit and runs towards it. She looks back at Dawn, but Dawn isn't there any more.

Sarah turns back to face the other exit, and Dawn stands before her. This time, Dawn holds a butcher's cleaver. It already has blood on it.

Dawn swings the cleaver and it lands in Sarah's shoulder. Dawn leaves it there.

Sarah stumbles back and grabs at the cleaver. She can't pull it out. She looks up at Dawn, who holds another identical cleaver.

DAWN DORTCH (CONT'D)
No one will ever touch you. You
will die alone.

Dawn swings the cleaver and it lands in Sarah's other arm. Sarah starts to cry.

DAWN DORTCH (CONT'D)
You were always afraid that no one
could ever love a monster like you.

Dawn now holds a third cleaver. The other two are still
lodged in Sarah's body.

Sarah whimpers.

DAWN DORTCH (CONT'D)
You were right.

She brings the cleaver down into Sarah's skull.

Sarah falls back and crashes into a wooden table, breaking
it.

Dawn laughs.

CUT TO:

Sarah's bloody and lifeless corpse lays on the floor staring
out the doorway of the Weird and Wild West room.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

Himari and Rosa come across a normal-sized wooden door in the
hallway. Rosa checks the knob and it opens.

ROSA
I don't think that is still part of
the haunted house.

HIMARI
Then let's go.

They quickly walk through the door and shut it behind them.
They find themselves in a hallway in the main Dortches house.

They walk slowly down the hallway and come upon another door.

Somewhere close, they hear a door slam shut.

They open the door and rush inside, shutting it closely
behind them.

They turn and look about the room.

It is the Dortches' dining room/axe room.

ROSA
What the fuck is this?

HIMARI

They should've charged admission to this, this is much better than the haunted house.

No one laughs.

Rosa sits on a velvet-lined bench in the middle of the room.

ROSA

This isn't really happening is it?

Himari walks over and sits down next to her. Close.

HIMARI

It has to be. No one could fake that stuff, right?

ROSA

We need to find a way out of here. And call the cops. We can't handle this by our...

Himari puts her hand on top of Rosa's.

HIMARI

Hey.

Rosa doesn't move.

ROSA

Yeah.

HIMARI

Are you scared?

ROSA

Of course I am.

HIMARI

I'm scared a lot of the time.

Himari takes her hand and puts it back on the couch.

ROSA

There are a lot of reasons to be scared.

Rosa smiles. She puts her hand on Himari's hand.

Himari looks up with a smile.

LOVIE DORTCH (O.S.)
Well isn't this just the cutest
fucking thing you've ever seen.

The two girls jump to their feet to see Lovie, hands covered in blood, walk into the room. With her is Buck, still wearing the bloody clown mask. He carries an unconscious Jeffrey over his shoulder.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)
How did you girls get in here?

She gestures towards another velvet couch and Buck tosses Jeffrey down.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)
Go help your sisters.

Buck walks back out of the room.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)
You two shouldn't be here. You
haven't earned it.

Rosa takes a step forward.

ROSA
What are you talking about?

Lovie raises a gnarled, bloody hand and the girls jump back.

LOVIE DORTCH
This is a place for Dortches. And
you don't belong.

HIMARI
We will gladly take the exit if you
point us in the right direction.

Lovie walks over to the family crest and caresses the battle axe.

LOVIE DORTCH
It's too late now. There are rules.

She pulls the axe down, again letting it fall and hit the ground with a thunk. Himari screams.

Lovie gestures at the axes around the room.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)
Choose your weapon.

ROSA

What?

Lovie roars with laughter.

LOVIE DORTCH

You are girls. You found this room.
You earned a chance to fight your
way out.

Lovie hefts the large battle axe.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)

I've chosen my axe, choose yours.

They start walking around the room looking at various axes.

Himari takes a look at a battle axe. She looks over at
Lovie's giant axe.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)

Haha, you have to be mighty strong
to wield an axe like that. Are you
a mighty strong girl?

Rosa pulls down a standard size fire fighter's axe.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)

Not excitin', but she'll do in a
pinch.

Himari continues looking around the room. She stops in front
of a small, but stout, hand axe.

She takes it down from the wall.

Lovie laughs.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)

A stout axe for one with such a
stout frame.

Himari looks down at her body. She shrinks even more.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)

You have your axes. Time to get
started. Guests go first.

Rosa shakes her head.

ROSA

You must think we're as batshit
crazy as you are.

HIMARI

We aren't.

Lovie feints in their direction and they flinch.

LOVIE DORTCH

I didn't make the rules. Guests go first.

ROSA

We're not going to attack you lady.
You're crazy.

Lovie stops moving and stands tall. She drops her axe to her side and gestures towards Jeffrey.

LOVIE DORTCH

I liked torturin' your brother.
Hell, I fuckin' LOVED it.

She laughs. Barely sounds human.

Rosa brandishes the fire axe.

LOVIE DORTCH (CONT'D)

And I'm going to love killing him,
too.

Lovie takes a step towards Jeffrey's passed out body.

HIMARI

(screaming)

Shut up!

She rushes at Lovie.

Lovie raises her axe and steps towards Himari. As she does the movie shifts into abstract animation.

Lovie starts to grow, almost into the shape of a mountain. Himari appears smaller and smaller, thinner and thinner.

Lovie swings her giant axe at Himari, but while the axe is powerful, it is slow. Himari easily evades it. She is the bird woman again.

Himari lands on the ground and Lovie slowly lifts the axe above her head.

She emits a howl-cackle as she brings it crashing down. Even with the additional boost of gravity, the axe falls too slowly to catch Himari.

Himari slips under the axe and behind the older woman.

She transforms back into her real self, holding the hand axe.
She buries it in Lovie's skull.

HIMARI (CONT'D)
I AM a mighty strong girl.

CUT TO:

Himari stands above Lovie, dead on the ground.
She pulls the hand axe out of Lovie's head.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

Gordon looks down the hall with the strobe lights and sees the twins, Peggy and Tammy. Each carries a knife in each hand.

They run at him.

GORDON
Fuck.

He turns to run and as he does, the movie goes into abstract animation.

The animation incorporates the strobe lighting, so it quickly alternates between the action and a completely black screen. Seeing what is happening is challenging.

Peggy and Tammy transform into four-legged creatures that scurry like spiders.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Fuck!

They start scurrying towards him, brandishing four knives in their four arms.

Gordon starts to run. Behind him, the twins crawl up the walls and cross back and forth behind him. They are toying with him.

Gordon comes to the end of the hall. A door with a big glowing red exit sign.

He reaches for the door handle.

And that's when he gets stabbed for the first time.

He looks over his shoulder to see Peggy's face. Her eyes look like those of spiders. Her smile is the last thing Gordon sees.

She stabs him. Again. Again. Again.

The shot widens and we can see Peggy and Tammy in their spider-human forms.

They are stabbing Gordon over and over again with knife after knife.

Blood flows heavily enough that everything runs red.

CUT TO:

Gordon lies on the ground, dead. He has been stabbed in the chest and arms dozens of times.

His blood flows down a drain in the ground.

INT. THE DORTCHES' HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Dawn walks into the dining/axe room.

She walks over and finds Lovie's body on the floor.

She stares at the corpse for a moment.

Dawn gets down on her hands and knees and kisses Lovie on the forehead.

Dawn stands up. She lifts the battle axe, which weighs heavy in her hands.

She walks forward with no emotion on her face.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

Himari walks with a flashlight down one of the corridors of the haunted house.

HIMARI

We shouldn't have come back here.

Rosa helps Jeffrey walk along. He limps.

ROSA

We have to find the others.

HIMARI

We have to get out of here.

ROSA
I'm not leaving anyone behind.

JEFFREY
(in pain)
Besides those big fuckers were in
the house. We need to get away from
them.

They continue walking down the hallway and turn a corner.
They see Gordon's dead body. Himari screams.

Then they see the Dortch twins.

The twins scream and run at the group with their bloody
knives ready.

As they run, the movie transitions into abstract animation.
Peggy and Tammy transition back into their spider-forms.

Peggy scuttles towards Himari. Tammy follows.

As Tammy passes by, Rosa sticks out her leg and trips the
girl, who stumbles to the ground.

Rosa brings down her axe, killing the Dortch girl, who turns
to blood and drains away.

Peggy, meanwhile has cornered Himari. Himari is not scared.
She steadies herself as Peggy scurries at her.

Himari holds up her axe, ready for Peggy.

Peggy leaps at her, but Himari easily dodges her. Peggy turns
to try again and Himari buries the axe into her face.

Peggy melts away.

CUT TO:

The hallway is filled with the bloody remains of Tammy and
Peggy. Intact, but dead.

Himari and Rosa help Jeffrey limp towards the exit.

HIMARI
Let's get out of here. They just
keep coming.

Jeffrey points.

JEFFREY
I think the exit is that way.

ROSA
You sure?

JEFFREY
No.

HIMARI
Let's go!

They walk down the hall and see strobe lights.

They turn the corner.

HIMARI (CONT'D)
Stop!

She puts her hands up to keep her friends behind her.

Before them stands Cage, who wears the dirty, bloody clown mask.

HIMARI (CONT'D)
(quieter)
Run.

They slowly back away from Himari.

Cage roars and comes running at her, he is carrying a mace with massive spikes coming out of it.

He lumbers down the hall towards them and Rosa and Jerry run as best as they can.

But not Himari. She stands her ground with the hand axe.

As Cage moves, the movie slips into the abstract animation. The hall elongates into nothing but blackness.

Cage raises his mace as he runs.

Himari falls to the ground as she turns into the bird-woman.

Cage ignores her and chases the two bigger kids.

Himari swings the hand axe with all her might, hitting Cage in his ankle. The axe sticks in his leg and is wrenched from Himari's hands.

She falls back and hits her head on the wall, but not hard enough to do any real damage.

Cage's foot is nearly severed at the ankle.

He falls forward and lands on the mace, spikes poking through his body and out the other side.

Himari stands tall as the bird woman and then transitions back into her actual self.

CUT TO:

Cage's body lays impaled on the mace.

Himari motions for the siblings to follow her and they walk down the hall.

Himari reaches down and picks up the hand axe.

JEFFREY

Damn.

ROSA

I know, right?

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - LATER

Himari leads Rosa and Jeffrey into a hallway that is lit by strobe lights that are bright and distracting.

DAWN DORTCH

You scum almost made it.

They look up and see Dawn blocking a door. Dawn is holding Lovie's giant battle axe.

DAWN DORTCH (CONT'D)

Time to die!

ROSA

God dammit, do they ever stop coming!

She rushes at them, but the movie does NOT shift into animation.

Dawn lifts the heavy axe to chest level. She grins. The axe is heavy.

Himari throws the hand axe accurately.

It lands in the middle of Dawn's forehead.

HIMARI

Enough!

Dawn falls to the ground, dead.

They walk out the exit, into the night air.

EXT. THE HAUNTED HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jeffrey, Rosa and Himari stand outside the haunted house, out of breath.

JEFFREY

Oh my God, I can't believe we made it.

Himari cries.

ROSA

What the hell WAS that?

HIMARI

Let's get out of here. I don't feel safe anywhere near this place.

Off in the distance police sirens can be heard.

ROSA

Yeah...

Buck bursts through the door and grabs Rosa. She screams. He roars.

JEFFREY

What the...?

Buck takes Rosa back inside, pulling the door closed behind him.

Jeffrey and Himari can only watch.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Rosa!

Himari runs towards the door yanks it open and runs inside.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Fuck!

He chases after them.

INT. THE DORTCHES HAUNTED HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Himari cautiously walks down the hallway, the strobe lights are still flashing.

Jeffrey's hand lands on Himari's shoulder, she wheels around and punches him in the nose. It starts bleeding.

JEFFREY

Dammit, Himari, it's me!

Himari turns fully to see him and puts her fists down.

HIMARI

Don't sneak up on me next time.

She runs down the hall. He follows.

They get to the end of the strobe hallway and turn the corner and find Buck choking Rosa with one hand. She is starting to pass out. Buck holds the machete in his other hand.

Jeffrey runs to help her. Himari comes a little slower, still carrying the hand axe.

Jeffrey smashes his body into Buck and bounces off, falling to the ground.

The violence is not animated, it's live action.

Buck lets go of Rosa and punches Jeffrey in the chest with the force of a sledgehammer. He passes out.

Buck turns back towards Rosa, raising the machete to kill her. As he does the hand axe swings from off screen and is buried in his face.

Himari stands, exhausted and lets go of the hand axe. Buck falls to the ground, dropping his machete.

Himari looks at Rosa and sees that she is stirring and seems okay.

She tries to pull the hand axe out of Buck's face, but it is stuck good.

She gives up, looks around and grabs the machete.

Himari walks over and kneels down to check on Jeffrey. She checks his pulse.

She lets out a sigh.

From behind her, Himari hears a scream.

She whirls around to see Misty holding two knives. She is nearly upon Rosa, who hasn't gathered her wits yet.

Rosa is going to die.

Himari springs into action, using her quickness to get to Rosa.

Misty brings down the knives to kill Rosa.

Himari dives forward, and both of Misty's knives sink to the hilt in Himari's chest.

As her last action, Himari swings and buries the machete in Misty's neck.

Both fall to the ground. Dead.

EXT. THE DORTCHES HAUNTED HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Rosa and Jeffrey help each other stumble away from the haunted house. Both are sobbing.

Several police cars pull up with sirens blaring. More sirens can be heard in the distance.

Brandy hides off to side of the haunted house. She watches the brother and sister walk towards the cops.

Brandy runs off into the woods.

LeAnne walks out of the house and towards Jeffrey and Rosa.

They are wary at first, but they relax as the first cop car arrives.

LeAnne puts her hands up in surrender.

FADE OUT.

SPECIAL THANKS

Aubri O'Connor

Shawn Fisher