

Don't Scream

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FADE IN:

**EXT. GEORGIE AND BRAD'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

A full moon reveals itself from under a cover of cloud, highlighting a two-story home in a quiet suburban cul-de-sac.

Perfectly sculpted jack-o'-lanterns illuminate the pathway leading to the front door - against which sits the obligatory human skeleton - an *Enter At Your Own Risk* sign cradled to its boney chest.

The front door flies open to loud exiting PARTYGOERS in colorful Halloween get-up. They spill out onto the porch.

GEORGIE, 30s, dressed as *Catwoman* waves goodbye.

Stumbling to the curb a drunken ROGER, 30s, dressed as *Severus Snape* turns and waves his magic wand.

ROGER  
Wonderful party, darling! And  
thanks for the goodie-bag.

GEORGIE  
Yeah, uh, come back next year!

**INT. LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER**

The interior is a Halloween wonderland, orange hued overhead lights, and thick vapor emitting from a fog-machine.

Decorative bats suspend from the ceiling, faux cobwebs drape from cornices and macabre props add a very realistic ghoulish feel - a severed head, rotting zombie and an evil clown strategically placed in scare zones.

BRAD, 35, doing his best impersonation of *Bela Lugosi's Dracula*, emerges through the dream-like rolling fog to loom over his wife's shoulder.

Georgie startles at his touch.

BRAD  
(mimicking Georgie's  
voice)  
'Yeah, uh, come back next year".  
Such witty repartee, darling.

GEORGIE  
You're drunk.

BRAD

(snorts)

Kind of like when someone wishes  
their friend a 'safe trip', and in  
response they say 'you too'.

Georgie whirls around to retort. But just like a ghost,  
he's.. vanished.

Faking a smile to the last of their departing guests Georgie  
slams the door and stalks inside.

## **FOYER**

Visibility is almost zero. The fog continues to roll in.

GEORGIE

*"Alexa, turn off the fog-machine"*

Nothing happens. She jumps again when Brad thrusts his face  
at her through the mist.

BRAD

Ah, my wife the tech expert.  
*"Alexa, turn the lights to default"*

The room returns to a ambient white glow.

BRAD

Alexa has better things to do.  
Besides some things are best done  
manually. You remember that, right?

The tone of his voice suggests a double-entendre. He reaches  
over to the fog machine and shuts it off. CLICK.

Georgie surveys the mess.

GEORGIE

Nothing like shining a light on  
reality, right?

Grabbing a glass of red wine, Brad exits the room without  
another word.

## **KITCHEN - LATER**

Georgie sifts through post-party detritus: wine glasses, beer  
bottles, ashtrays, candy leftovers.

GEORGIE

(yells)

Brad, did you clean the den yet? I  
could use a hand in here.

She pulls a finger prop out of a plate of dip and groans.

GEORGIE

Ugh! Literally. Help me out!

No reply. Except for the faintest SOBBING from somewhere...

Georgie adjusts her 'cat ears', cocks her head... Can't quite  
make it out.

GEORGIE

Brad, are you okay in there?

No response Georgie sighs, ventures into the darkened hallway  
pokes her head in the doorway of

#### THE DEN

Brad's more than OK. He's busy. Battling a game of *Destiny* on  
a giant wall-mounted smart-TV.

BRAD

*"Alexa, ask Ghost to call for  
backup."*

GEORGIE

Brad, I heard something. You okay?

BRAD

(mutters)

I'd be better if you didn't  
interrupt.

GEORGIE

It sounded like someone crying.

BRAD

Crying? Nuh-uh.

He keeps his eyes glued to the screen. Georgie steps in front  
of it, blocks Brad's view.

BRAD

Honey, I can't see around you.  
After those last fifteen pounds,  
you're a bit of a brick wall...

GEORGIE

I'm going to ignore that remark.

Bloops and groans announce Brad's character bit the dust.

BRAD

Dammit!

GEORGIE

Sorry.

BRAD

(bitter)

Are you really?

GEORGIE

I think tonight went rather well,  
don't you?

BRAD

Compared to what?

GEORGIE

Okay, if you're going to be like  
that I need some help cleaning up  
but before that... We need to talk.

Brad gulps the last of his wine.

BRAD

Marvellous.

(fishing in his pocket)

The four words every guy's dying to  
hear. *We need to talk.* Okay then!

## LIVING ROOM

Georgie counts down on her fingers three, two, one -

Brad enters the room, slaps an email printout on the coffee  
table with official looking letterhead: Dr Lowenstein MD.

BRAD

I was going to ignore this, but -

He throws a days-of-the-week Ezy-dose pill dispenser onto the  
table next to the printout.

BRAD

Care to explain why you haven't  
taken your meds for five days?

Georgie's eyes bug - she backs off. Offence quickly turns to defence.

GEORGIE

That's just not true... I -

BRAD

I suppose the good doctor's lying,  
about you cancelling your refills  
too, huh?

Georgie picks up the box, examines it, puzzles at the 'days  
of the week' pills still in their blister packs.

BRAD

Honey, God knows I love you, but...

GEORGIE

Don't say it, Brad.

BRAD

(soft)

I have to honey... if we're really  
going to talk we have to be honest.  
Cancelling your appointments -

GEORGIE

- Cause you couldn't even be  
bothered coming with me!

BRAD

- and now your meds. You have to  
look after yourself, honey. The  
nightmares, the pre-occupation with  
-

GEORGIE

I said, don't -

BRAD

Death. There, I said it. She's been  
gone three years, baby. This is  
about self-respect, about looking  
after yourself.

GEORGIE

Respect? You hypocritical ass! You  
think I didn't see you hitting on  
that Nurse tonight?

BRAD

Hmm, just as I feared... coming off  
meds too fast can result in  
paranoia. I can help you but only  
if you let me.

Georgie's face contorts with anger.

GEORGIE

Help me? You never even lift a  
finger anymore, except to help  
yourself to another drink.

Georgie storms back into the -

### KITCHEN

Funneling her anger into washing the dishes.

GEORGIE

(muttering)

I should've listened to my mom.  
This marriage died long ago -

That CRY again. Followed by a child's anguished WHIMPERS.  
unmistakably real.

Georgie's trembling hands tighten against a drinking glass.  
CRACK. It breaks clean in two. Slicing into her skin. A nasty  
gash. Blood, and quite a lot of it. She cries out.

Brad rushes in, sees it.

BRAD

Oh, Georgie, you didn't...

He grabs her, pulls her hard towards him. She shrugs him off  
but he won't let her go. He grabs a dish-cloth presses it to  
staunch the bleeding, reaches for a a towel -

Holds her like a prisoner. Nuzzles his head in her neck.

BRAD

Darling, I know how bad things seem  
right now. But tomorrow, we'll talk  
to Lowenstein - together...

GEORGIE

You think I meant to... I broke a  
glass that's all.

BRAD  
So where is this glass?

Georgie follows Brad's gaze to the sink. The broken tumbler is no longer there.

GEORGIE  
That's impossible.

BRAD  
Get some things together. I'm taking you to the clinic now.

GEORGIE  
That glass was there. I swear.

Almost on cue, a low WAILING sound.

GEORGIE  
Okay, you heard that, right? I mean you *have* to have heard that?

Brad shakes his head.

GEORGIE  
No. No. You must have heard it!

Georgie rips away from Brad's embrace, stumbles out into the

#### **HALLWAY**

Shadows dance on walls

GEORGIE  
*"Alexa, lights up!"*

The lights blink on for a second, then dim, the power whines and the hallway is plunged into darkness once more.

Georgie creeps along following the sound of the WAILING, but the direction of the sound keeps changing

#### **UP THE STAIRS**

Stumbling...

Brad calls up to her from below.

BRAD  
Honey, you need to lie down.



She plows on, howling in frustration. Pushes open the door to

#### CHILD'S BEDROOM

A name plaque above the door reads: "Suzie".

Pink painted walls and a wallpaper strip of *Disney's Frozen* suggest this was a toddler's room. Empty, except for a thread-worn teddy-bear in an old rocking chair.

A night-light, its cord unplugged and dangling. It suddenly springs to life - a jangled first verse of *Brahm's Lullaby* plays - the music whines off-key, then dies.

WHIMPERING now comes from the adjoining wall.

Georgie spins around, puts her ear to it then runs out of the room and into

#### THE MASTER BEDROOM

So quiet you could hear a pin drop.

Brad appears behind her. She jumps.

BRAD

You're chasing ghosts, darling.

Georgie whips past him into the hallway, the sound now coming from the lower story.

#### IN THE LIVING ROOM

Doors slam and crashes echo throughout the house as Georgie continues with her macabre game of hide and go seek.

She sweeps the severed head aside, checks under the fireplace, knocks Killer Clown over. It squeaks.

The couple face each other in the middle of the room. Tears streak greased makeup down Georgie's face.

Another CRY

Georgie turns to Brad, eyes pleading. He shakes his head.

BRAD

Honey, feeding a delusion - just makes it stronger.

GEORGIE  
I'm not delusional.

BRAD  
I'd like to believe you but at this point, you've searched every inch of every room in this house, the only place left is...  
(he shakes his head at her bloodied hand)  
I'm going to get you a Valium, okay?

GEORGIE  
The basement. Of course! Suzie's favourite hiding place.

Another CRY. Georgie's eyes light up.

BRAD  
Okay, maybe I heard that...

GEORGIE  
Yes!

Georgie races to the

BASEMENT DOOR

Tears it open to reveal -

A yawning, dark flight of stairs.

From somewhere in the dark, a child's WHIMPERS...

GEORGIE  
Suzie...? Sweetheart?

Behind Georgie, Brad leans in close, so close his lips graze her cheek -

BRAD  
Georgie...

Georgie turns -

GEORGIE  
What?

BRAD  
(whispering in her ear)  
Whatever you do... Don't scream.

- And gives Georgie a massive SHOVE.

Georgie doesn't utter a sound, the wind knocked out of her.

She tumbles down the stairs like a broken doll. Bones break, CRUNCH. Splinters pierce flesh.

She hits the bottom floor with a dull THUD, lands on her back. Not dead yet, but paralyzed.

BRAD

Good girl.

From the top step a crooked grin on Brad's face. He laughs.

BRAD

Sweetie, you should see yourself.  
You look like Tweety-Bird flattened  
by Sylvester.

GEORGIE

(gasps)  
Suzie...

BRAD

Honey, when are you going to get it  
through your thick skull? Suzie's  
gone. Kaput.

(rage building)

I tried to tell you that so many  
times. I tried and I tried and I  
tried. And I *really* wanted us to  
stay together. But for the love of  
God! I just could not compete with  
your grief. You had to drag both of  
us down.

GEORGIE

(croaks)  
But you heard her, didn't you?

Brad grins, a sickly smile.

BRAD

Actually, I did. You're right.

He points to a corner of the basement. Georgie rolls pain  
filled eyes towards:

THE ALEXA UNIT, its circular light-beam turning.

Brad retrieves a remote-control from his pocket, holds it up in triumph, presses the button. A child's scream in various incarnations echoes over and over in surround sound.

BRAD

A Halloween gag. A cinch to program with Alexa.

(he laughs)

I concocted the email from your doc and I sabotaged your Medi pack. You cutting your hand was the cherry on top. Of course Houdini couldn't have done a better vanishing act with the glass, even if I do say so myself.

Georgie moves her hand, wiggles her fingers.

BRAD

Everyone knows you've been: 'oh, boo-hoo', so depressed. When I tell them you threw yourself down the stairs in a fit of despair no-one will question it.

Brad turns to leave.

Turns back.

BRAD

You know what's great? I'm betting that *Naughty Nurse* is going to be the first to leave a casserole on my doorstep. You women are such suckers for grieving widowers especially when they come with nice little life insurance nest-eggs.

Georgie gurgles... desperately trying to drag herself closer to Alexa.

BRAD

Shhh, honey. Time to let it all go. Tonight's Halloween after all, when make-believe comes to life. Go. Join our daughter.

Brad walks off, a spring in his step, towards

## THE DEN

From behind the door the sounds of *Destiny* fire up.

**THE BASEMENT**

Georgie blinks once. Blood trickles from her mouth.

**INT. ROGER'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Roger - disheveled but still dressed as *Severus Snape* gathers with a few HALLOWEEN-COSTUMED FRIENDS in front of a monitor.

ROGER

Wait till you see how Candice  
looked in her Little Devil's  
leotard. Cute and twisted at the  
same time!

A guy in a SCREAM costume pipes up.

SKELETON

It's all recorded?

ROGER

Between the security cameras, and  
Alexa? Video and audio live  
streaming to Facebook. Though I  
should do some edits, for  
playback...

Roger rewinds. Hits play. Hears static, then Brad's voice...

BRAD (O.S.)

...When I tell them you threw  
yourself down the stairs in a fit  
of despair no-one will question it.

Roger and his friends gawk at the screen.

ROGER

Oh my...

FADE OUT.