

HIDER IN THE HOUSE

an original screenplay

by

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EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

On a very lovely street in a very nice neighborhood, Tom Sykes, THE HIDER, is out for a walk. The Hider is a man who blends in well with his surroundings. A good-looking man in his thirties. To look at him, you wouldn't know

there was anything wrong...

The Hider walks with such strange grace that he could be on a conveyor belt, a variety of neighborhood houses passing him by, one style after another.

Sunlight and shadow play over the Hider's face as he walks, filtered through the lush trees and greenery all around.

Then the hedge he's walking past ends and the next house makes him stop. Because it isn't a house yet. It's a half-house. A house under reconstruction. Part built, part torn down, part finished, part matchstick frame. An evolving house, with a swarm of workmen all over it, hammering, sawing, drilling.

The Hider stands and watches awhile.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - EVENING

The workmen have gone. The Hider enters the house from the back where it's all completely open without doors or windows.

INT. THE HOUSE

The Hider explores in the waning light. There are building materials about. He runs his hand over a pile of bricks. He looks at some wooden boards and planks leaning against a wall. WIND HOWLS through the dark house.

He tries the tap on a newly installed sink. Water gushes out.

Where the main stairway will be is now only a ladder. The Hider climbs it to the next floor. There are a number of rooms; a hallway to more rooms. On a worktable are some plans and blueprints. The Hider looks at them.

Behind a door is a narrow little stairway. The Hider goes up it to --

THE ATTIC

A fairly large attic, with a small window at one end. The attic is a part of the house that has remained pretty much

untouched.

The Hider looks up.

EXT. THE ROOF

A trap door is opened. The Hider climbs out from the attic. He surveys the scene from up here. Below in the backyard there's an empty swimming pool, a partially completed patio, piles of dirt.

Because the house itself has many curves and corners and levels, so does the roof. The Hider jumps down to another section and teeters for a moment where there's a gaping hole (where the skylight will be). He catches himself. The hole goes right through the house all the way to the ground floor.

INT. THE ATTIC

The Hider drops back in from the roof. He goes to the small window and looks out over the front street and neighborhood. The Hider feels tired. He lies down on the attic floor and curls up.

MAIN TITLES BEGIN.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE - EXT./INT. MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE

In which we SEE the gradual progress of the house as it grows toward completion -- juxtaposed with the activities of the Hider as he follows his own secret agenda:

We SEE builders carefully fit a big skylight into place over that hole in the roof.

We SEE how the Hider spends his days -- in a library, studying diagrams in a book on Home Improvements.

We SEE him in the house at night, up in the attic, working on the floor in some way, hunched so we can't see. He's draped a black cloth over the attic window and is surrounded by candles.

We SEE the house taking shape. Carpenters finishing a staircase.

We SEE the Hider eating alone in a simple cafeteria.

We SEE the back of the house at night. The Hider appears over the edge of the roof, rappelling down on a rope, making little footholds in the wall as he goes. CHINK-CHINK with a small hammer, the SOUND MUFFLED by cloth. The house is quite private from the view of its neighbors, and the section of wall the Hider has chosen for his secret ladder is further shadowed by being an indented corner.

We SEE plumbers at work and painters arrive.

We SEE the Hider cashing his disability insurance check at a check-cashing place.

We SEE the house further along. Painters painting. Electricians wiring. Landscape gardeners planting.

We SEE the Hider returning to the house at night, emerging out of shadows. He goes to his special corner, looking around -- and starts climbing. His hands and shoes finding the chinks in the wall only he knows are there. In LONG SHOT, if we see the figure climbing fly-like up the side of the house at all, it's only because we know he's there.

We SEE locksmiths installing locks on doors. Not that it will do any good now.

We SEE the Hider drop silently to the ground at night. Newly planted vines help hide his descent even more and cause natural shadows to move on the side of the house in the breeze of the night. The Hider walks down into the empty pool. He stands in the middle of it. There's a full moon. The Hider spreads his arms as if to float backwards.

SPLASH! We SEE the Hider backstroking off one end of a long swimming pool. He rolls in the water and swims to the other end where he climbs out. The Hider is strong and powerfully built. He retrieves a towel from a bench. The towel says "YMCA."

We SEE the Hider at his YMCA locker, after having a shower. Inside is everything he owns in the world. The locker is packed with stuff.

We SEE the house nearing completion. Two men with clipboards walk around, checking final details.

They go up to the attic. Everything looks fine. They go back down, closing the attic stairway door.

We SEE the Hider at a booth in a coffee shop, sketching a diagram in a notebook while he eats.

We SEE the house is done. And here the MAIN TITLES PAUSE. Because we are almost at the end of our set-up now. Just one more important job to be taken care of.

EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY

It's RAINING. The house is all finished. There are no more trucks parked on the street. No more rubble in the driveway. Nothing abnormal to set the house apart from any others on the street. The house is still and peaceful in the rain and part of the neighborhood.

EXT. BACKYARD

The swimming pool has now been filled with water. And RAINDROPS pound into it.

INT. THE HOUSE

The rooms are stark and empty. White walls. Shiny wood floors. Light reflected off their smooth surfaces. Coming through the bare windowpanes.

RECEPTION HALL

Here by the solid front door, the house is an invitation. The hallway leading deeper in. Doors to rooms. The stairway to the next landing. The skylight over all, RAIN spattering up there on the thick glass.

The only other NOISE, indistinct, is coming from the attic.

THE ATTIC

The Hider has the house to himself now. He's finishing his wall -- a false wall at the far end of the attic. The real wall goes straight for a while then juts off at an angle to form a sort of alcove. The Hider has bricked off this alcove, giving the illusion of one straight wall running the length of the attic.

## THE ATTIC - LATER

The rain has stopped. Now the Hider is plastering his wall.

## THE ATTIC - LATE AFTERNOON

The Hider is taking a breather. He stands looking out of the small attic window as he eats a sandwich. To the right, he sees a NASTY NEIGHBOR yell at some Kids who've come to retrieve their ball from his property. The Nasty Neighbor kicks the ball away as hard as he can. On the left, a car pulls into the driveway of the other neighboring house. A mother (the NICE NEIGHBOR) bringing her kids home from school -- a Boy and a Girl. Another boy comes by on a bike, pausing to talk to the first Boy. At a house across the street, the Hider hears a DOOR SHUT and sees a Cleaning Woman in a white uniform walk away along a path.

## THE ATTIC - NIGHT

The Hider stands back to look over his handiwork. The false wall is now indistinguishable from the real wall. Such a good job that one wonders why the Hider built it, why he's cut off the extra space behind it, apparently without access...

... but wait. He's made a secret panel in the floor. By pushing down in a certain way then sliding away a section of floorboard, a hole is revealed, cut large enough to fit him like a coffin. He lies in it, covering himself up with the sliding floorboard again, which CLICKS neatly back into place, and --

## BEHIND THE FALSE WALL

-- as he rolls under the wall, coming up out of a similar trap on the other side. He slides a floorboard cover into place over it. He pulls down a foam mattress that he's cut to size and blankets from where they've been hooked up. He props up two pillows in place and sits against the front wall beyond which is the street. He looks over his shoulder, pulling the lever of a second vent he's installed in this wall for air and to enable him to look out over the street. Across the way, a mailman delivers mail to houses. A woman walking her dog says hello to the mailman. The Hider looks forward again. He's made a shelf or two for

himself. There are a few books, some snacks, a Thermos and plastic bottles of water. He has a few other things. He has a lantern and a flashlight.

The space here is big enough for him to lie down with his arms at his sides, or to stand comfortably. Like a monk in his cell, it's a room of his own.

THE ATTIC - DAY

Silent. Empty. The Hider behind the wall.

EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY

Oh, and one last thing... a "FOR SALE" sign out in front.

MAIN TITLES END.

CUT TO:

EXT. A KEY - DAY

Turning in the front door.

INT. THE HOUSE

A REAL-ESTATE LADY comes in with a Yuppie Couple.

REAL-ESTATE LADY

-- and it's been done up so beautifully, you're lucky to be the first people to look at it. It's my personal favorite of all of our homes.

They step into the light of the reception area, their heads turning up instinctively to the skylight.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

The Hider looks tense. And displeased. His privacy has been disturbed. There are strangers in his house.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

FOOTSTEPS approaching.

WOMAN'S VOICE

-- then there's the kitchen, which  
has been entirely remodelled.

She comes in and we SEE that it's a SECOND REAL-ESTATE  
LADY -- with an Older Couple this time.

The wife goes to the sink and turns the tap. She jumps  
back in fright as it SPITS violently and no water comes  
out.

SECOND REAL-ESTATE LADY

(going over)

That's strange. I what  
could be wrong here.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Another Couple have tried a tap, and this time the faucet  
has burst -- exploding water at them.

INT. THE HOUSE - DAY

Ouch! A Single Man scratches his arm on a nasty splinter  
as he goes through a doorway.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

As he comes out, the door now comes unhinged, falling on  
him.

INT. MAIN STAIRWAY - DAY

Two Men are led upstairs. Along the way, one of them  
notices a large patch of dampness on the wall and brings  
it to the attention of his friend.

EXT. THE ROOF

Spreadeagled on the roof as he peeks down through the  
skylight... the Hider.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY



A Black Couple are being taken through the house. Suddenly the wife notices something on the floor as they pass -- a "Roach Motel." She and her husband look at each other distastefully.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

The Hider looks over a display of meat. He selects a steak.

INT. THE HOUSE - DAY

The Hider puts the steak away -- underneath the floor of a room.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

A Fat Couple are sniffing the air as they follow a REAL-ESTATE MAN. The Real-Estate Man opens the door to a room -- and a cascade of flies swarms out.

EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY

The Fat Couple hurry out, handkerchiefs over their noses, chased by the upset Real-Estate Man.

REAL-ESTATE MAN  
-- in all new houses there are  
certain kinks to be ironed out.

CRANE UP to that vent in the wall at the very top of the house.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

He watches the Fat Couple leaving. His expression says: "Yeah, that's it, go away, go away, you awful people."

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STREET - DAY

A car approaches the house.

INT. AN UPSTAIRS ROOM

The Hider is lying on the floor in a patch of sunlight. When he hears the CAR PARK and DOORS OPEN, he stands up in one quick movement and goes to the side of the window.

EXT. HOUSE

The original Real-Estate Lady has come out of the car. While from the other side of the car emerges --

JULIE DREYER

A beautiful woman. She gets out of the car with an extraordinary grace.

She smooths her skirt with one light brush of her hand. She turns to look at the house, afternoon sunlight falling on one side of her face.

THE HIDER

His face moving closer to the window, though keeping to the side in shadow.

THE HIDER'S FACE

A look we haven't seen before. A look of fascination. He's smitten.

JULIE DREYER

Walking toward the house now, glancing gently from side to side, almost gliding.

THE HIDER

steps back from the window, instinctively neatening his hair.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS

The front door opens and the Real-Estate Lady and Julie

come in.

JULIE

It's been on the market a while,  
hasn't it?

REAL-ESTATE LADY

Not very long. There have been  
a couple of bids already.

JULIE

Because it caught my eye when it  
was in a higher price bracket in  
the listings.

REAL-ESTATE LADY

Oh, yes, well, you know, when  
developers remodel a house they  
often overestimate their costs at  
first. It's not like it's been  
marked down or anything.

JULIE

(a sly look)

Just reduced.

REAL-ESTATE LADY

(concedes with a  
shrug)

Sometimes they prefer a quicker  
return on their investment.

JULIE

This is a terrific entrance hall,  
What a welcoming feeling.

REAL-ESTATE LADY

Isn't it?

Julie steps on a floorboard that CREAKS, but it doesn't  
seem to bother her. It's clear her first impressions of  
the house are very good.

INT. UPSTAIRS - DAY

Julie and the Real-Estate Lady come up.

REAL-ESTATE LADY

You'll see that there's really  
much more space than the average

three bedroom.

JULIE

Oh, space! -- You said the right thing.

REAL-ESTATE LADY

How large is your brood?

JULIE

Two -- three if you count the husband.

REAL-ESTATE LADY

We must always count the husband.  
By my count there've been... four.  
But I still live in hope.

Julie is looking around, still liking what she sees. She goes into the room the Hider was in.

INT. ROOM

Of course he's not here now. Julie walks around the room.

JULIE

Well, Phil wasn't sure he wanted us to be this far outside the city. But we have friends around here and something told me I should take a look at this house. I want to be somewhere surrounded by green.

The window the Hider was at has been opened, the branch of a tree swaying outside it, and Julie takes a breath, the air fresh and sweet.

JULIE

(continuing)

... I just had a feeling.

She walks around the room, almost a waltz in beauty. She comes to the closet. She opens the door and looks in, left and right. It's quite empty.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

Above the front bedroom that Julie is in. The Hider is crouched on the floor, a look of contentment on his face. his cheek against the wood like a caress.

CUT TO:

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

The Hider is sitting in a chair.

THERAPIST

How's the new place?

HIDER

It's great. It's clean and airy and quiet -- there are trees and flowers. There's still some fixing up I have to do, but it's coming along.

THERAPIST

And the rent is okay?

HIDER

Oh, it's nothing. No problem. I was really lucky to find this place.

THERAPIST

All right then. That's important, isn't it? -- For you to be in an "up" environment. I'm saying you should literally take that as your base, do you know what I mean? It's something positive that you've accomplished -- even if you were forced by circumstance -- something for you to build upon.

HIDER

(nodding)

Right.

THERAPIST

And what about work? Have you had any more thoughts about what you'd like to be doing now?

HIDER

Well, I've been doing a little

independent contracting, some carpentry here and there, y'know, do-it-yourself-type stuff. I still find it very soothing.

THERAPIST

I'm happy that you're working again. As long as it comes naturally, that's terrific. You've always liked working with your hands, haven't you?

HIDER

Yeah, since I was a kid. I had a woodwork class once when I was... in school that time. Then I learned a lot more when I was in the --

THERAPIST

-- hospital.

HIDER

-- institution.

THERAPIST

Right.

(shuffles paper)

So, you have a new place, you've started working a bit -- I'm sure you'll be meeting some new people.

HIDER

Actually, I have met someone. There's a woman I think I like.

THERAPIST

Oh, good -- well, I hope you'll have more to tell me next time.

CUT TO:

INT. ATTIC STAIRWAY - DAY

A twelve-year-old boy, NEIL DREYER, rushes up the steps to the attic.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

The Hider watches through the vent as Neil runs around the attic in a circle then runs out again.

DOWNSTAIRS

Neil runs down the stairs and past Julie, who's with the Real-Estate Lady, and past --

PHIL DREYER

Husband and father, who turns around as Neil zooms past.

PHIL

Neil, calm down.

JULIE

Neil, don't leave the back doors open -- I don't want Holly near the pool.

PHIL

We'd have to get one of those sliding covers for the pool.

The Real-Estate Lady glances with a smile at HOLLY DREYER, five years old, wandering around in the next room.

REAL-ESTATE LADY

Yes -- they're quite inexpensive and easy to install.

PHIL

(taking Julie aside,  
to Real-Estate Lady)

Do you mind if we --

REAL-ESTATE LADY

Please -- take as much time as you want.

The Real-Estate Lady goes to be with Holly while Phil leads Julie into the living room. On the way, Julie happens to notice that the creaking floorboard doesn't anymore.

LIVING ROOM

Phil paces around.

PHIL

Julie, I just don't think we can afford this house.

ZOOM to an air-conditioning vent in a wall behind them.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

The Hider is listening on an intercom he's obviously set up.

HIDER

(mouths the word to himself)

... "Julie"...

INT. LIVING ROOM

Julie remains still and calm as she watches her husband walk nervously around her.

JULIE

I hear what you're saying, but I know what you're thinking.

PHIL

What?

JULIE

You're thinking exactly what I thought when I first saw this house,

PHIL

What's that?

JULIE

This -- is -- the -- one -- for -- us.

PHIL

Stop knowing me so well.

JULIE

I know it's at the high end of our range --

PHIL

High end? Honey, it's a whole new



budget.

JULIE

But it's what we want.

PHIL

You wanted furniture too, didn't you?

JULIE

They don't expect to get what they're asking. Let's make an offer.

PHIL

You want me to bargain at the high end of our range? -- I'll have a stroke. I've got to save all my sweat for my meeting in three weeks.

JULIE

You could have a pool to cool off in.

PHIL

(looks out at pool,  
nodding)

It's a nice pool, isn't it?

JULIE

And it's a shorter commute.

PHIL

It'll be even shorter if I get that new job. Come on.

Phil takes her hand and walk out of the room.

EXT. POOL - DAY

Neil kneels by the pool, splashing his hand in the water.

JULIE AND PHIL

Standing back further in the garden, regarding the house from this viewpoint. Little Holly plays on the grass near them.

JULIE

Let's do it. Take a  
breath and -- and if we're  
over our heads, well, we'll  
sell it. Philip, this is our  
house. You know it is. It's our  
house.

Phil is nodding to himself now, her enthusiasm turning him  
on. Finally he gives in.

PHIL

All right, but look, we can't say  
anything to this shark lady now,  
okay? We have to play it real  
cool.

OTHER SIDE OF FENCE

The Nasty Neighbor, watering his yard, notices them,  
particularly Julie, and stares.

JULIE AND PHIL

Starting back to the house.

JULIE

What if someone else buys it in  
the meantime?

PHIL

Honey, nobody buys a house  
overnight -- if someone else comes  
back at them, well, we might have  
to make a counter offer. But we  
can't look too eager or we'll get  
screwed.

THE POOL

The Real-Estate Lady stands by Neil.

REAL-ESTATE LADY

So you've seen a lot of houses  
then?

NEIL

Yeah, a bunch, but my mom really

likes this one. She was all excited when she saw it and got my dad all excited when she told him about it. He's sick of looking already.

JULIE AND PHIL

Strolling back, trying to look cool.

NEIL

Are we gonna buy this house?

PHIL

Do you have enough money?

JULIE

(to the Real-Estate  
Lady)

We're going to think about it.

PHIL

It's very nice, but it's still a little pricey for us.

REAL-ESTATE LADY

(as they go back  
inside)

Well, Mr. Dreyer, I don't have to tell you what an important investment a house is.

PHIL

Actually, I never recommend property to my clients as merely a good investment. There are bonds that can serve just as well. A house for me is a place I want to live and raise my family in.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS ROOM

There's something shiny on the floor. We HEAR them COMING BACK in. Holly appears, notices the shiny thing, comes to pick it up.

INT. HALLWAY

Holly comes running out of the room.

HOLLY  
Mommy, Mommy, Mommy!

Julie sweeps her daughter up in her arms.

HOLLY  
(continuing)  
I found a cent!

JULIE  
"Find a penny, pick it up, all day  
long you'll have good luck!"

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

Straining to hear the SOFTLY CRACKLING VOICES on his intercom, he's thrilled that she got the point and shares common folklore with him. He goes "Yeah!" to himself.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS

Holly shows the Real-Estate Lady the penny.

HOLLY  
Look at my coin!

REAL-ESTATE LADY  
Must be a good omen, sugar.

As if on cue, some birds alight on a sunny windowsill nearby and start chirping. Julie is delighted, turning Holly to show her.

JULIE  
Must be.

NEIL

tugs his father's arm.

NEIL  
Dad, we can't decide unless Rudolf  
gets to look too!

PHIL  
(to Real-Estate Lady)

Would you mind if Rudolf had a  
look too?

REAL-ESTATE LADY

By all means, let's Rudolf's  
opinion.

Neil flings open the front door -- and Rudolf comes  
charging in -- barking!

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

The Hider's eyes go wide in alarm.

INT. HOUSE

Rudolf races right up the stairs!

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Rudolf rushes toward the attic doorway, his paws sliding  
on the new floor. He barks.

DOWNSTAIRS

Phil shouts upstairs:

PHIL

Rudolf, get down here!

WOOF-WOOF! Rudolf reappears. comes charging downstairs,  
goes running right through the house and --

EXT. BACK PATIO

The stupid dog runs right outside and jumps straight in the  
pool.

HOLLY

Oh, gross!

NEIL

It's okay -- Rudolf likes the  
house!

PHIL

Hey, c'mon now, get him out of there! -- This isn't our house yet.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - DAY

The family is leaving. Phil whispering an aside to Julie.

PHIL

How were we -- were we cool?

JULIE

Paul Newman in "The Hustler."

PHIL

Good -- that's what I was trying to project.

JULIE

takes a last look over her shoulder, noticing more birds at another window. A lyrical scene that charms her.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

Lying looking out his vent at her, the Hider bites his hand with glee.

CAMERA PANS BACK from him to his shelf... where sits a packet of bird seed.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - EVENING

The Hider, walking by again, sees that a "SOLD" sticker has been plastered onto the "FOR SALE" sign.

CUT TO:

INT. APPLIANCE STORE - DAY

The Hider is looking at telephones. He chooses one to buy.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

The Hider is in the house. Doing something at a telephone jack. Then we SEE him unreeling a length of wire into the closet, and we HEAR a DRILL.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM - NIGHT

He's run a wire up here and is now connecting it to the phone he bought.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Now the Hider is relaxing on his mattress, his phone to his ear. His call is answered.

ANSWER SERVICE

Dial Answer Service?

HIDER

Hi, this is Tom Sykes.

ANSWER SERVICE

Mr. Sykes? Let me see... there were two calls for you today. One from Dr. Levine at three o'clock -- he'd like to reschedule next week's appointment, if possible. And the dry cleaners called and said your jacket is ready.

HIDER

Oh, yeah, I forgot about that. I've been real busy. I just got a new phone installed, so I thought I'd test it. Okay, Claire, thanks a lot, talk to you again.

ANSWER SERVICE

Goodbye, Mr. Sykes.

The Hider disconnects his phone.

CUT TO:

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

He's DRILLING again. Stopping, he blows away the dust and presses his face down to the tiny hole he's made, squinting to see if he can see anything through it. He sits up again, wiping his brow,

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM - DAY

He's asleep. Breeze enters through the outside wall vent, rustling his hair. He's awakened by the SOUND of a CAR parking in the driveway. He rolls over and pulls the lever of his vent for a view outside.

EXT. THE HOUSE

Phil gets out of his car, smiling, holding his hand out.

PHIL

Come on, honey -- let's go play  
in the new house.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

He's all excited to see Julie again -- but then his face drops.

EXT. THE HOUSE

Another woman has emerged from the car, taking Phil's hand as he leads her to the front door. A very attractive, toothy young woman. His SECRETARY.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL

They come in. The Secretary looking around. She has a certain air of sophistication that makes Phil want to swoon.

SECRETARY

Ooh, I like.

Phil starts hugging her. They both giggle.

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - DAY



They come in.

PHIL

And this -- is the master bedroom.

SECRETARY

Oh yeah? Where's the bed?

PHIL

Right over here.

The room is still completely empty, but he goes and outlines where the bed will be.

SECRETARY

Is it a king or a queen?

PHIL

It's a double.

SECRETARY

Even better.

PHIL

(starting to nibble  
her neck)

Even cosier.

SECRETARY

That's right -- you got the bill  
this morning. I put it on your  
desk.

PHIL

Thank you -- how efficient of you.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

His face is to the floor, looking through the peephole he made.

THROUGH THE PEEPHOLE

He sees the two of them dropping to the floor, Phil's hand going up under his Secretary's skirt, helping her tug down her pantyhose.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

He recoils. He's disgusted by this. But more than that, he's angry -- angry for Julie. She's married to this bastard. The Hider gets more and more incensed as he thinks about it.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

Phil is on his feet again, buckling his pants. His Secretary is pulling her pantyhose back on.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - LATER

Phil and his Secretary on their way out, Phil pausing to punch in the code on the security box.

PHIL

When we move in, everyone's going to have to learn to work this complicated security system.

EXT. THE HOUSE

Phil and his Secretary come out. Phil double-locks the front door, proudly showing his Secretary the key to his new house. His face flushed with contentment.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

The Hider watches them leave. His face flushed with anger and hatred.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE - INT/EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY

Moving day as the Dreyers move into their new house.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT

There are boxes and things in the entrance hall, and VOICES coming from the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The family cheers as a clear picture appears on a big color TV and Phil emerges from behind it.

PHIL

Okay! We have TV! We can all get stupid again!

NEIL

What about cable?

PHIL

We'll get cable when the cable company is good and ready -- you think you can survive till then?

NEIL

No.

JULIE

Gimme a break, Neil -- your father just spent three hours connecting the VCR.

Neil pushes a button to play a tape -- and we SEE Steve McQueen in solitary confinement in "Papillion" or "The Great Escape."

PHIL

All right, that's enough for one day -- I want everyone up at the crack of dawn. We have the whole weekend to get this place in shape.

Everyone moans, too excited to go to bed, as he turns off the VCR and the TV and everyone upstairs.

CUT TO:

INT. NEIL'S ROOM - NIGHT

He dumps out of a box more cars, guns, soldiers and robots than we've ever seen.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

Phil looks out the window over his new street before hanging up a sheet as a temporary curtain. It falls down.

INT. HOLLY'S ROOM

Julie sits on the bed, reading Holly a bedtime story.

JULIE

"... or I'll huff and I'll puff  
and I'll blow your house down!"  
And inside their new house, the  
three little pigs just laughed -- '

HOLLY

'Who's afraid of the Big Bad Wolf,  
the Big Bad Wolf...'

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Rudolf the dog sniffs at the closed attic door.

EXT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT

The "FOR SALE" sign is gone, of course. The Dreyers' two cars are in the driveway. There are lights on in the house. One by one they go out. And then... up in what seems to be the attic... a single light... comes on.

CUT TO:

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

The Hider is at a perfume counter.

SALESGIRL

Are you being helped, sir?

HIDER

I'm looking for some perfume.

SALESGIRL

Any particular brand?

HIDER

Well, it's for a woman.

SALESGIRL

(laughs, although the  
Hider wasn't being  
humorous)  
Wife, girlfriend or mother?

HIDER  
Oh -- uh -- girlfriend.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Julie turns to her kids, who are finishing breakfast.

JULIE  
C'mon, kids, let's go.

NEIL  
(sarcastic)  
"We don't want to be late for our  
first day of school."

PHIL  
(looking in  
refrigerator)  
All right, who ate the last piece  
of cheesecake?

NEIL  
I didn't.

He jabs his little sister in the ribs.

JULIE  
Now, Neil. Stop teasing your  
sister.

PHIL  
(slams refrigerator  
door)  
Damn.

Holly turns her head, deadpan, as she watches her Dad walk  
out of the kitchen.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Phil walks from the house toward his car -- when he sees  
the Nasty Neighbor kick a paper cup from his drive onto

Phil's.

PHIL

Hey -- uh, excuse me.

He goes over. The Nasty Neighbor turns around and stares at him.

PHIL

(continuing)

I didn't kick this onto your property.

Phil tosses it into a nearby brand-new garbage can on his side of their common border.

PHIL

(continuing; holds out his hand)

Phil Dreyer -- we just moved in over here.

The Nasty Neighbor stares at him.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

I see you have kids -- and a dog.

PHIL

That's right.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

Just keep 'em quiet and away from my property.

He walks away, muttering something under his breath. Phil is stunned by this impoliteness -- as Julie comes out with the kids and the dog, ushering them into her car, then coming over to Phil.

PHIL

Did you hear that?

JULIE

What?

PHIL

Did you hear what he said?

JULIE

What?

PHIL

He made, you know, a remark.

JULIE

Honey, are you okay?

PHIL

-- And keep my kids away from his property -- who the hell does he think he is? Some nice neighborhood.

JULIE

Honey, the meeting today is going to be fine. Don't get in an uproar.

PHIL

I know. It's just having to pass muster with these juniors before the senior partner even agrees to see me.

JULIE

It's just a dumb game they play. You want to be at a bigger firm, get used to the politics.

NEIL AND HOLLY

(in b.g.)

MOM!

Julie gives Phil a hug.

JULIE

Kill 'em.

HIGH ANGLE

A VIEW DOWN on the driveway from, say, the attic of the house. We SEE Phil give Julie a perfunctory kiss. He waves to the kids as he goes to his car but first turns to the garbage can, picks out the paper cup, and tosses it over the Nasty Neighbor's fence.

CUT TO:

INT. JULIE'S CAR - DAY

She parks the car -- and turns to Neil.

JULIE

Good luck, kid,

Neil doesn't find that particular amusing. He looks with a frown at where they've arrived -- his new school. He reluctantly gets out of the car.

JULIE

(continuing)

Hey.

(leans for a kiss)

Have a nice time -- it's a good school.

HOLLY

Bye, Neil!

NEIL

As Julie drives away, he turns around to see --

-- a terrifying, brutish kid staring malevolently at him and making kissing sounds. This is the BULLY.

BULLY

(mimicking  
sarcastically)

"Bye, Mom -- Bye, Mommy."

The Bully has two Goons flanking him, also making kissing noises, and giggling at Neil's expense.

Neil just thinks to himself, "Oh, Christ."

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Alone in the house now, the Hider descends from the attic, coming cautiously out of the attic doorway.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

The Hider, listening for sounds from the driveway outside, pulls a shirt of Phil's from a laundry basket. He starts pouring perfume on it.



CUT TO:

EXT. PLAYGROUP SCHOOL - DAY

Julie takes Holly inside with other small children and their parents.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

Neil leans against a wall, frown on his face, hands in his pockets. Watching a game of kickball he hasn't been invited to join in. Suddenly, the Bully and his Goons are standing in front of him.

BULLY

So, Neil. How's it goin'?

NEIL

Okay.

BULLY

I'm Bernard, by the way. Those are cool Reeboks, Neil. They're real new, aren't they?

The Bully scuffs Neil's new Reeboks with his own shoe.

NEIL

Hey, c'mon.

BULLY

They're really white.

The Bully's two Goons join in, all smearing their shoes on Neil's.

NEIL

Hey, c'mon, you guys, lay off.

He tries to move forward, but the Bully pushes him back against the wall and holds him there while the two Goons continue messing up Neil's shoes.

BULLY

We gotta break 'em in for you.  
You don't wanna go 'round lookin'

like a new dil-wad, do ya?

He points to something on Neil's shirt. Neil looks down and the Bully slaps his face. The Bully walks away, giving Neil a shove. His Goons do the same. Presently, two FRIENDLY BOYS come up to Neil (one is the boy who lives next door to Neil).

FRIENDLY BOY

You met Bernard. Nice guy, huh?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY

Julie's car comes back. She gets out with the dog. She's juggling two bags of groceries. She drops one of them and after bending over to pick it up hears a NOISE, turns to see the Nasty Neighbor leering at her. She goes inside.

INT. THE HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL

Putting the bags down, Julie peeks past the blind at the window next to the door, watching the Nasty Neighbor go back to his house. She sees the Nasty Neighbor's Wife there, giving the Nasty Neighbor a hard time. The Nasty Neighbor ignores his wife, walking past her into their house.

CUT TO:

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

Julie is putting laundry into the washer. We HEAR a SMALL NOISE in the house that she doesn't seem to notice. She sorts out some clothes. Then pauses, pilling out a shirt of her husband's. She holds the collar up to her nose. Something bothers her. She smells the collar again.

CUT TO:

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

The Hider looks pensive.

HIDER

Yeah, things are moving along, but

she's still involved with this other guy and it's a little tricky.

THERAPIST

Listen, no one ever said expressing yourself to the opposite sex is easy, but when the time comes, you have to do it and you hope the outcome will be good for both of you. You come out of solitary and you rejoin the human race, as difficult as that sometimes can be.

HIDER

When I was a child... I got used to the closets. The boxes. The cabinet under the kitchen sink... with that persistent drip. I used to the smell of the boxes. Wood. Cardboard. I got so I was comfortable there in the dark. Even... even that old refrigerator in the yard. That smelled like rust and decay.

(pause)

It was safe in the boxes. It was when they took me out --

You don't want to know what his parents did to him when they took him out of the boxes.

THERAPIST

In the institution... when you were violent... did you want them to put you in solitary confinement?

He watches the Hider.

HIDER

I guess so. I mean, I know I'm responsible for my own actions. It was never because I was angry with anyone. I didn't mean to hurt anyone ever.

THERAPIST

You're responsible for your own

actions and you don't mean to hurt anyone. In other words, you've done your best. I'm saying don't carry the burden of other people's actions on your shoulders, because they're beyond your control.

The Hider nods in agreement. There's a pause.

THERAPIST

(continuing; softer)

Are you still afraid of your parents? Of them finding you?

The Hider shifts uncomfortably in his chair.

HIDER

That was years and years ago. They must be very old now, if they're still alive.

He puts on a brave face.

HIDER

(continuing)

No, my parents don't worry me anymore. I mean, that's why I was ultimately released, wasn't it? I mean, even with the state closing down the hospital and all. Because I'm able to be on my own at last.

(smiles)

I'm cured.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Family life. Holly is playing with toys in the living room with the dog. Neil trails after his mother, who's moving back and forth from the kitchen to the dining room.

NEIL

Why can't you just drive me to my old school every morning?

JULIE

Because you'd have to get up at five a.m., would you like that?

NEIL

I could take a cab on the way home.

JULIE

Here, take this out to the table.

NEIL

But there's this psycho. Really. Mom, there's a psycho I have to deal with every day. I don't know why they let a psycho even go to school!

She pushes him out of the room. She looks at Phil, who's tossing a salad.

JULIE

How was lunch?

PHIL

Huh?

JULIE

How was your lunch with Charlie?

PHIL

Oh -- great.

JULIE

Well, did he hear anything about your prospects for the new job?

PHIL

No. If I hear anything you'll be the first to know, all right?

JULIE

watches him take the salad out to the dining room. We HEAR HIS VOICE from out there, saying the typical kind of thing a parent says in a child-filled house when he's trying to clear the table for dinner:

PHIL (O.S.)

Whose is this? Who left this here?

CUT TO:

INT. NEIL'S ROOM - NIGHT

He's fast asleep. So is the dog on the floor. A mask of a bearded man hangs from a chair.

INT. HOLLY'S ROOM - NIGHT

She's fast asleep. A Disney mobile twirls gently in the air overhead.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Julie and Phil fast asleep. She's turned toward him. He's turned away from her.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

The dog scratches again at the attic door... which slowly starts to open.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - DAY

A Sunday-lunch housewarming party is in progress. Julie is greeting Phil's friend, CHARLIE, who's just arrived with his wife.

CHARLIE

(handing over a  
present)

-- A little something for the new  
house.

JULIE

Oh, thank you, Charlie.

Other guests are in the living room.

EXT. THE POOL - DAY

Some cute teenage girls in bikinis are lounging around the pool. They're giggling as they pass a cigarette of some kind between them, checking over their shoulders that there

are no adults around.

AT THE BACK OF THE GARDEN

Neil and his two Friends from his new school are spying on the girls. Behind them, a rope ladder dangles from a treehouse under construction.

NEIL

God, your sister's really hot.

NEIL'S FRIEND #1

Shut up.

NEIL'S FRIEND #2

She is.

NEIL'S FRIEND #1

Don't look at her. Look at the other ones.

INT. THE HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

The guests are eating now.

JULIE

Well, the neighbors are a little weird -- other than that...

Another couple, the Nice Neighbors, laugh at that. (The woman is the mother next door who the Hider saw come home that day.)

NICE MAN

Thanks a lot.

PHIL

Present company excepted -- it's the neighbors out there to the right who are a bit strange.

JULIE

Yeah, I caught him looking at me the other day.

NICE WOMAN

In all the years we've lived here, I don't think we've spoken a word to them, have we, hon?

NICE MAN

Sometimes when I go to the hospital early in the morning, I've seen him coming home. Maybe he works at night.

NICE WOMAN

You'll probably see the wife once in a while at the supermarket. Truly one of the walking dead.

More easy laughter. A very sensual woman, RITA, smokes a cigarette and gives Julie a wink. Julie smiles back. Clearly they're best friends.

CHARLIE

Sounds like your normal upper-middle-class neighborhood to me.

EXT. THE POOL - DAY

The girls go away. The boys emerge from their hiding place.

NEIL

Let's follow 'em.

NEIL'S FRIEND #1

What for, dickweed?

NEIL

It's fun.

NEIL'S FRIEND #1

Grow up, Dreyer.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Julie is making coffee in here with Rita.

RITA

You've done a really great job with the house. It's great!

JULIE

Yeah. There's still a lot I want to do. It's not quite... the kids aren't really settled in yet.



Even the dog has been terribly high-strung and whines a lot since we've been here. Look, he hasn't even come in for his food today.

RITA

So you don't have anything concrete?

JULIE

No, I told you. A whiff of perfume on his shirt.

RITA

Have you just plain asked him?

JULIE

I've asked him what's wrong.

RITA

And?

JULIE

The same thing -- his business pressures, the whole move and everything. He's frantic about nailing this new job, worried about screwing over his present boss.

RITA

I'm sure that's all it is, honey. Maybe you both just need a vacation.

JULIE

I've tried to get him to agree to one. I just -- I don't know... I'm getting such weird vibes lately.

RITA

Don't drive yourself crazy. It's probably nothing.

The boys come in from the backyard.

RITA

(continuing; flirting shamelessly)

Hi, Neil.

NEIL

Hi. We're going to the mall.

He and his friends go out.

JULIE

Rita, he's only twelve years old,

RITA

(raising her drink)

He'll never appreciate it more.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Julie lifts Holly up into her lap, then engrossed in conversation doesn't pay attention when Holly climbs back down.

NICE WOMAN

... No, not really. We do hear of break-ins now and again, but it's generally a real low-crime area. We've never had any trouble.

JULIE

Is there any kind of Neighborhood Watch or --

NICE MAN

(puts arm around his wife)

You're talking to her.

His wife laughs and gives him a playful slap on the arm. Phil seems to be flirting with Rita. Holly walks out of the room.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Holly comes out from the room.

She starts along toward... the door out to the pool that's been left wide open.

EXT. THE POOL

Holly comes out. She walks to the pool. She walks to the edge and looks over the water, walks further on -- toward the deep end. She crouches there. She picks up a leaf and tosses it in the pool and watches it float. She reaches to bring it back but it's already floated too far out. She reaches further, leaning over the deep water and -- SUDDENLY two big hands lunge at her back -- as if to push her in -- but they grab her to stop her falling in, and lift her up in the air, running back to the house with her, pushing her inside and shutting the door with a definite CLICK behind her,

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Julie and Phil are cleaning up after their housewarming. Julie is looking at a very pretty green vase among other presents.

JULIE

Do you remember who gave us this?

PHIL

No.

JULIE

There's no card or anything.

CUT TO:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Julie and Phil in bed.

JULIE

I hear things in this house,

PHIL

All new houses have noises.

JULIE

How long does it have to be a new house?

PHIL

One day before we know it it'll

be an old house and we'll be old  
in it -- and I'll still be paying  
for it.

JULIE

Neil's still having a bad time at  
school. I feel terrible seeing  
him so upset all the time.

PHIL

He's made some friends, hasn't he?

Julie is starting to give Phil little nibbles on his neck.

PHIL

(continuing)

I mean, he's a smart kid, he'll  
get by -- he takes after me.  
You're too sensitive.

JULIE

(seductively)

I know someone else who's  
sensitive.

She's rubbing him under the covers.

PHIL

(had enough of this)

Honey, I have a lot of meetings  
in the morning.

He turns away.

PHIL

(continuing)

You never know when, do you.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT

All quiet.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

He wakes up. He's restless. He's hot. He reaches for one  
of his water bottles, but it's empty. He licks his lips.  
Now that he's thought about having a drink, he can't get

the idea out of his mind. He lies down again, but soon sits up. He's starting to feel a little trapped.

INT. THE ATTIC - NIGHT

The Hider emerges out of his secret panel in the floor. He's holding an water bottle.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

The door from the attic stairway slowly opens. The Hider carefully steps out. He looks one way -- all clear -- looks the other -- and stops dead in his tracks.

Holly is standing at the other end of the hall looking at him. She rubs her eyes sleepily. When she looks again, the Hider is gone.

Holly turns around and walks to her parents' door where she knocks.

Julie opens the door, looking down at Holly.

JULIE

Baby, what is it?

HOLLY

I'm thirsty.

JULIE

Aw, okay.

She starts to lead Holly down the main stairs.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

He's back in hiding, and hitting himself for his carelessness, sweating more than ever, desperately afraid that he almost blew the whole deal.

INT. MAIN STAIRS

Julie holds Holly's hand as they descend the dark stairs.

JULIE

It's the middle of the night,  
sweetie.

HOLLY

A man scared me.

JULIE

A man? Was it a dream?

HOLLY

Uh huh.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

The family have breakfast. Phil reads the "Wall Street Journal," not even looking at his toast as he lifts it to his mouth. Julie feels ignored.

NEIL

(looking around)

Has anyone seen Rudolf? I don't think he came in last night.

JULIE

No, honey, I haven't seen him. Didn't you feed him this morning?

NEIL

(screams)

RUDOLF!

PHIL

Neil, do you mind?

NEIL

(softer)

Rudolf? C'mere, Rudolf!

Holly is drawing a picture.

HOLLY'S PICTURE

A dark silhouette of a man's shape.

NEIL (O.S.)

Rudolf!

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Phil cradles Holly on the couch. She's crying. The family watch TV.

PHIL

Don't cry, honey, Rudolf knows how to take care of himself. I'm sure he's okay. Maybe he just went on a trip.

HOLLY

Like our vacation? Are we still going?

Phil looks at Julie.

PHIL

Yeah, I guess it would be good for us to get away for a while. Maybe Rudolf got the same idea. Dogs need a change of scene, too, from time to time.

JULIE

(strokes Holly's hair)

Someone nice will find him if he gets lost.

Neil gets up to leave.

NEIL

I hate it here! I hate it!

He runs out and upstairs. Julie and Phil look at each other.

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The Hider sits at the counter, eating a simple meal. It's late. There are a few other lonely people at the counter or in booths. A faded WAITRESS. It's an American scene.

WAITRESS

(flirting slightly)

You didn't finish your greens, but I'll let you have some dessert.

HIDER

(picking up check)

No, thank you.

WAITRESS

Come on, you know you want some.

HIDER

No, not tonight, I have to be getting on home.

He leaves enough money on the counter and turns away. The Waitress's hopes go with him.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT

The Hider, like the human fly, crawls up the side of the house using his toeholds, shielded by the vines and shadows.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - DAY

Neil is walking away from his dad.

NEIL

All right then, if I have to go to school then I'd better go.

PHIL

Why? I just read your report card. What's the point? Stay home, watch some television, we'll get "Mad" magazine delivered.

(waves report card)

What kind of report card do you call this?!

NEIL

I've been going through a lot of personal crap, all right?

PHIL

Oh really? You've been going through a lot of personal crap.



You, Princess Di and Madonna?

Neil coughs.

PHIL

(continuing)

If you want that baseball jacket for your birthday, Neil, learn to cough a little more realistically.

NEIL

I have a cold.

PHIL

What did the thermometer say?

NEIL

The thermometer's broken.

JULIE

He doesn't have a temperature.

NEIL

I can't help it if my homework is torn to shreds three times a week by someone much bigger than me.

PHIL

Y'know what? I'm ready to cancel our trip. I really am. I've had it.

NEIL

And I can't help having a cold.

PHIL

What d'you want me to do, Neil? I've told you we'll get another dog. What does EVERYONE want me to do? You want to move back? Huh? Would you like that? Should we all just pack up again and MOVE BACK?!

This yell resounds throughout the entire house.

CUT TO:

EXT. A STREET - DAY

Neil is walking home from school. He HEARS something and looks back nervously. Suddenly, the Bully and his Goons come out of some trees, surrounding Neil.

Immediately they start shoving him around a bit, taking his bag.

NEIL  
Give it here, Bernard.

BULLY  
Whoa, check it out.

A new fountain-pen set he finds in Neil's bag.

NEIL.  
Put it back!

BULLY  
Nice pen, Neil.

He shakes it at Neil, spraying ink all over the new baseball jacket he's wearing -- then stabs the nib into a tree.

NEIL  
Fucker!

The Goons hold Neil back. The Bully hits Neil.

BULLY  
Don't call me a fucker, you little asshole.

He yanks a pocket of Neil's jacket until it tears. Neil tries to get him again but one of the Goons trips him.

BULLY  
(continuing)  
Hey, you're really clumsy, Neil.  
Look at the mess you made.

He dumps the rest of the contents of Neil's bag over Neil's head and walks away laughing cruelly with his Goons. Neil looks at his jacket and calls after them.

NEIL  
FUCKERS!

CUT TO:

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY

Now the Bully is walking home. Alone. Suddenly he stops. There's a dollar on the ground in front of him. He bends to pick it up -- and a hand CLAMPS over his face and pulls him into some bushes.

IN THE BUSHES

The Bully is dragged deeper in. He struggles in sheer panic. He's twisted around momentarily. His face is filled with fear as he glimpses his attacker.

BULLY

Please -- please --

The Hider's big hand muffles him again.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT

Julie flattens the baseball jacket out to have a look with Neil. It looks all right. We HEAR a PHONE RING and PHIL ANSWER it.

NEIL

Thank God.

JULIE

I think we got it just in time before the ink dried.

NEIL

Whew.

JULIE

The pocket's a cinch -- I'll sew it up for you after dinner, okay?

NEIL

Thanks, Mom.

INT. KITCHEN

Phil is about to hang up. Holly sits at the kitchen table.

PHIL  
(into phone)  
Oh, gee, well, thanks for letting  
us know. Goodbye.  
(there's a double  
click)  
Hello?

He hangs up. Julie and Neil come in.

PHIL  
(continuing)  
Oh boy, I just heard something  
horrible. That was Audrey next  
door. Neil, do you know a boy  
named Bernard Gunther?

Neil looks up in alarm.

PHIL  
(continuing)  
He lives on the other side of the  
hill, I guess, so don't get too  
scared, but it looks like he was  
just, I don't know, attacked on  
his way home from school. Audrey  
heard that he was...  
(catches himself with  
a sigh)  
... well, apparently he's in the  
hospital now. One of his legs  
was... They don't know if he'll  
ever walk properly again.

In the silence and dread that follow, no one notices the  
great big beaming smile of sheer God-given good fortune  
that breaks out on Neil's face.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Phil has a grin on his face.

PHIL  
Really?

Across the table from him is his Secretary.

SECRETARY

Really.

Under the table she's slipped off a shoe and is running her stockinged foot up his thigh.

PHIL

Promise?

SECRETARY

Promise.

In the b.g. the Hider sits at another table alone.

PHIL

I'd like that.

SECRETARY

Would you?

PHIL

Uh huh.

The Hider takes a book of matches from the ashtray on his table and plays with it.

SECRETARY

Really?

PHIL

Really.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - EVENING

Phil comes upstairs looking for something. Neil walks by wearing his bearded-man mask and goes downstairs.

PHIL

Honey! Was the paper delivered today?

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

Julie is for their trip.

JULIE

I think so! Didn't you take it in?

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

The Hider isn't here. But more stuff is. A cork bulletin board has been put up. On the bulletin board are all sorts of pictures, clippings, bits and pieces. Things that interest the Hider. There's a calendar with "VACATION!" marked prominently. And underneath on his mattress lies the newspaper. Folded to the movie-listings page.

INT. WALK-IN CLOSET - MASTER BEDROOM

Julie takes one of Phil's jackets and something falls out of the pocket. She bends to pick up whatever it is.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Neil, wearing his bearded-man mask, joins his sister on the couch to watch TV. She pays no attention to him.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

Phil is trying to look stunned.

PHIL

The old incriminating matchbook!  
Are you kidding me?! The oldest  
cliche in the world!

Julie is looking mad.

JULIE

No, I'm not kidding you, Philip.

PHIL

What next?! -- A strange bra  
under my pillow!

INT. MOVIE THEATRE - EVENING

The Hider munches popcorn slowly as he watches a romantic scene. He's quite swept up by it.

INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - EVENING

Phil tosses the incriminating matchbook onto the bed.

JULIE

I remember what day you wore that jacket. It was Monday. The day you were all day in meetings again? And had to send out for sandwiches?

PHIL

Honey, you know what I've been like lately... I've been a total zombie. I have no idea what that was doing in my pocket.

JULIE

Well, what about these?  
(taking something else out)  
Do you usually put your carbons in your pocket, too?!

Her wild card. She flings them in his face and storms into the adjoining bathroom. Phil stares at the torn-in-half carbons. He can't believe it. Didn't he leave them in the restaurant? Is he getting absent-minded?

INT. BATHROOM

Julie packs more things as Phil comes in.

PHIL

Sweetheart, this is a very risky time for me right now. Maybe you don't appreciate that.

JULIE

I don't care, Philip. You want to go chasing Barbara Zelman, go ahead. Just watch out for those buck teeth.

PHIL

Barbara Zelman? I don't believe this!

JULIE

Do you usually pay for Charlie?  
At "Trattoria Valentino"?

PHIL

Honey, I can't track of all the meals Charlie and I have been having. This is a delicate time. If it leaks out that I'm jumping ship before I'm set up someplace else I could be out on my ear before I'm ready with nothing. With nothing.

JULIE

(going back to the bedroom)

There are people who do things because they want to get caught.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

Phil comes out of the bathroom.

PHIL

Who told you that -- someone on the radio?

JULIE

Fuck you, Philip.

CUT TO:

EXT. A LIVELY STREET - NIGHT

The Hider strolls along, drinking a soft drink through a straw. He passes a flower stand and pauses to look at the arrangements. He turns a reel of seed packets, and pulls one of the packets out to look at. Just then he hears a NOISE and turns to witness --

A MINOR ACCIDENT

A car cuts off a bicyclist. The bicyclist falls off his bike -- scraping his knee quite severely. Other onlookers go to his aid. We SEE where his trouser leg was torn and the bloody kneecap.

THE HIDER

thinks it's funny. The Hider laughs.



CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Julie is crying softly in the aftermath of the argument, pouring herself a cup of tea. Phil is consoling her.

JULIE

I thought we'd be happy here.

PHIL

(holds her)

Honey, I'm sorry, I think the vacation will be a good break for both of us. You'll see.

She nods, taking her tea, and they go out. Phil shuts the light as they leave -- and we SEE the Hider's face at the window.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - DAY

Vacation time. Phil tries rounding everyone up.

PHIL

The cab's waiting!

JULIE

Where should I hide the car keys?

PHIL

I don't know -- put 'em in the drawer with all the Chinese take-away menus.

JULIE

(goes to do so)

Did you lock the garage door?

Neil thinks he's taking along a gigantic plastic Rambo machine gun. Phil discourages him by grabbing it out of his hands and putting it somewhere.

EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY

Phil makes sure the front door is double-locked, then joins the others in the cab.

The cab doors SLAM. The cab drives away.

PHIL (O.S.)

Did you set the timer switches for the lights?

The house stands alone.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Room in shadow. Then CLICK -- a lamp comes on. Illuminating the Hider sitting on the couch. Here in the silent house.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Whistling, the Hider strolls in, opens a cabinet, takes out a box of Raisin Bran, then finds a bowl for himself.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Hider watches a sporting event on TELEVISION, keeping the SOUND LOW.

INT. NEIL'S ROOM - DAY

The Hider plays with Neil's train set.

EXT. ROOF - DAY

The Hider peers through the skylight. We HEAR the SOUND of a VACUUM CLEANER.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL

A Cleaning Woman goes through the house.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Mail has been neatly put on the table. Out in the entrance hall, we SEE the Cleaning Woman leave, locking the front door after her. The Hider steps INTO VIEW from the kitchen. He sits at the table to go through the mail. He opens a letter that's addressed to "OCCUPANT."

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

He plants some flower seeds using a gardening trowel.

INT. BATHROOM - EVENING

The Hider has a bath. He smells a bar of soap,

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

The Hider gets into the bed. He strokes her pillow. He smells it. He puts his head gently on it. He's happy.

CUT TO:

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

The Hider looks quite content today.

THERAPIST

And how are things with your lady friend, if I may call her that?

HIDER

Oh, fine. She's gone away for a little while and when she comes back I've sort of resolved to really tell her how much I care for her.

THERAPIST

That's terrific. Don't be afraid to be demonstrative. You're sounding a lot more confident than when we last spoke.

HIDER

I am. I'm really feeling pretty good. I have a much stronger sense of how far I've come.

THERAPIST

As long as you keep remembering why.

HIDER

Well, we talked about the whole disapproval thing.

THERAPIST

(nodding)

The whole disapproval thing. If you allow yourself to get into a situation where someone else's potential disapproval becomes the focal point of your life -- then you're back to a life of fear, aren't you? -- You're a prisoner to that again, and that isn't much of a life.

HIDER

I understand that.

THERAPIST

And please, don't for God's sake misinterpret that as being the voice of discouragement in any way --

HIDER

No, no, no, no.

THERAPIST

On the contrary -- this is tremendous. I mean, we're all frightened to death of disapproval and we're constantly hiding behind these layers we manufacture for ourselves -- and I'm not saying we should, you know, declare ourselves unhesitatingly to our fellow human beings in the interests of total openness and honesty --

HIDER

That would be stupid.

THERAPIST

That would be monumentally stupid. All I'm saying is --

HIDER  
-- a sense of proportion.

THERAPIST  
(nods emphatically)  
A sense of proportion.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - BY THE PATIO DOORS - NIGHT

A SCRATCHING at the glass. Then a TAP. And a CLINK. And a CLICK. And the curtain stirs -- and a Burglar slips in. He crouches by the floor a moment, listening and getting accustomed to the dark.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The Burglar opens the drawers of some cabinets in here. Looking for loot. It's after midnight and the lights are out.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The Burglar comes in. He goes over to the TV and crouches down to look at the VCR in the trolley underneath. He runs his hand over its smooth surface, then suddenly leans forward to unscrew cables at the back. This abrupt movement probably extends his life by a few minutes -- because when a hammer comes down on his head, the blow is only a glancing one.

The Burglar groans and turns -- the Hider was thrown off-balance by his miss -- and the Burglar has enough time to put an arm up for protection -- the second blow shattering his elbow. He cries out in pain, but he's a strong man himself. He's a match for the Hider! He manages to grab the Hider's ankle at the same time and pull him completely off-balance -- the Hider throwing his arm out to stop himself falling, knocking to the floor the vase he bought for Julie -- landing on the floor himself as it SMASHES alongside him -- and with a great gasp the Burglar pushes the big television off the trolley onto the Hider.

The Hider has the wind knocked out of him as the big TV lands heavily onto his chest, nearly squashing him like a bug. The Burglar is already running away, clutching his

broken elbow -- but the Hider's powerful arm shoots out to catch his leg, pulling the Burglar back, while with an almost superhuman effort the Hider heaves the TV off his chest.

The Burglar struggles with all his might. The two men wrestle on the living room floor. The Burglar tries to gouge out the Hider's eyes. Craning his face out of the reach of the Burglar's flailing, frenzied fingers, the Hider tries to get a firm grasp on him. He grabs wildly at the Burglar's hair, finally getting a good hold. He smashes the Burglar's head onto the glass-topped coffee table. BANG, BANG, BANG -- the glass cracks -- BANG, BANG, BANG, the Burglar's face into the glass until the glass breaks completely.

The Burglar won't give up. He's beyond pain. He's only trying to survive. His hand is at the Hider's throat, squeezing. They throttle each other. The Burglar is on his back, his legs kicking at the Hider. His shoe catches the Hider a kick to the ear. They both cough and gasp as a release is forced, both struggling for a better position, the Burglar trying to slide out from under again, the Hider keeping him down -- and now the Hider is able to seize the Burglar's arm again and jam the fingers in a door jamb and pull the door back. We don't hear the Burglar scream because the Hider's other hand is in his mouth, but the Burglar bites down so hard on it the Hider is the one who lets out a roar of animal agony and the Burglar's good hand punches at his face, the Burglar somehow on his feet again, trying to make it to the dining room.

The Hider catches hold of the Burglar's shirt, tearing it. but pulling the Burglar back to the floor -- and the Hider's foot slips in some blood and he lands hard on his back, hitting his head, the Burglar's torn shirt in his hand. The Burglar is crawling on all fours to get away, but his knees slip in the blood, too, and the Hider's legs grapple him like a pair of pythons, pulling him back, and the two of them struggle on the slippery floor, out of breath, near exhaustion.

There's a tall plant in the hall. The Hider stuffs the Burglar's face in the pot, suffocating him in the soggy earth. The Burglar's body twists and turns and kicks as he's smothered in the damp dirt, the tall plant shaking above the two of them, casting horrible shadows around the entrance hall in the moonlight cast from the skylight.

The Hider can barely hold the Burglar's head in place, every muscle tensing as the Burglar's body shudders in

rebellion -- and then the tremendous surge as the Burglar's body breaks free! -- Tall plant tipping as the Burglar pushes back against the Hider with unbelievable strength -- tall plant falling -- the Burglar knocking the Hider back flat on the floor, the Burglar on top, but the Hider still hugging him in a death grip, then getting a full-nelson hold on the Burglar's shoulders and neck, the two of them struggling to a standing position again, the Hider again smacking the Burglar's head again and again and again, into the front door this time, the Burglar sinking back to the floor, still resisting, still breathing, his good hand still madly feeling for a grip on the Hider, but this time the Hider's hold is too strong and when he's got the Burglar on the floor again, he's able to get a knee into the small of the Burglar's back and with the knee as leverage and the full nelson on the Burglar's neck, the Hider pulls back with every last ounce of strength, pulling, pulling, moaning with the sheer effort of it until -- the Burglar's neck BREAKS.

The Hider rolls off, gasping for breath. He pulls himself to a sitting position against the front door. He sits here in the entrance hall under the moonlit skylight with the shadows and the dead Burglar and the blood and the earth all over the floor and he breathes air into his lungs as if he'll never get enough.

CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

The Hider enters, carrying over his shoulder a giant-sized black Hefty trash bag with the body of the Burglar in it. From his pocket he takes -- the keys to Phil's car. He lays the body bag on the floor in the back and gets in the front. He adjusts the driver's seat to suit him.

CUT TO:

EXT. DINGY DOWNTOWN STREET - NIGHT

The Hider, driving Phil's car, turns into a filthy alley. Halfway along it he parks, gets out, pulls the body bag out, dumps it callously on the ground, and drives away.

CUT TO:

INT. DESIGNER STORE - DAY

The Hider buys a green vase identical to the one that smashed in his burglar fight.

STORE MAN

(wrapping vase)

I knew you'd be back for another one of these.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRASS LAWN - DAY

The Hider walks along a path with a man named BERT.

HIDER

You test each one thoroughly?

BERT

You better believe it, buddy. Your average Rolls Royce doesn't have to pass as many tests. You want consistency? You want dependability? You want safety?

HIDER

Safety?

BERT

Listen, you can kick 'em, hit 'em, pour water all over 'em -- nothing. I'm telling you, under ordinary conditions they're quiet, they're nice to have around, they're completely harmless -- but when you blow this whistle...

(holds up a whistle)

... then look out.

A VICIOUS, SAVAGE KILLER DOG

LUNGING directly AT THE CAMERA! Snarling fiercely.

This is the "product" under discussion -- attacking a Man who's wearing considerable protective, padded clothing. It's a simulated "mugging" demonstration. The Man in the clothing and face mask is playing the part of the mugger, while a Woman Dog Trainer is the victim -- with a whistle in her mouth.



BERT

Look at that. You can't buy better protection than that. That there is your Man's Best Friend.

HIDER

How are they with kids?

BERT

They're great with kids. They love 'em. They eat 'em up.

(gives the Hider a friendly slap)

I'm kidding.

HIDER

(looking at whistle)

So this really does the trick, eh?

BERT

Friend, that animal will go after whoever's approaching the sound of that whistle. And God help whoever it is. Because that dog will not let up until there's dead meat on the ground. Put your faith in that, pal.

The padded Man is indeed on the ground, the Killer Dog attacking him viciously.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - EVENING

The family comes back in. The kids immediately dropping their bags and rushing upstairs.

PHIL

Kids, don't leave your bags in the hall -- take them upstairs.

He and Julie have a look round. Everything looks fine.

PHIL

(continuing)

Did the cleaning woman come?

JULIE

(in the living room)  
Yeah -- she did a good job. This  
glass looks brand-new.

(And the green vase is back in place on the mantelpiece.)

PHIL  
The floor has a nice shine to it.  
(going into kitchen)  
Oh God -- we have twenty-two  
messages on the machine.

JULIE  
(coming from living  
room)  
Did she water this plant? It  
looks a little bent out of shape.

The kids come rushing in excitedly from the back.

NEIL AND HOLLY  
Mom! Dad! Mom! Dad! Come look,  
come and look, come and look!

Julie and Phil are dragged outside.

EXT. BACKYARD

The kids pull Julie and Phil out the back door.

PHIL  
All right, all right -- what?

HOLLY  
Look!

They look. The savage Killer Dog is sitting here --  
looking like the friendliest, cuddliest lost thing you ever  
saw, tongue hanging out, the sweetest Disney image of  
doghood imaginable.

HOLLY  
(continuing)  
He was lying asleep at the back  
of the yard like it was home!

NEIL  
-- And there's no collar or tags  
on him or nothin'!

HOLLY

Can we keep him, Mom, oh, can we?  
Can we keep him?

Julie and Phil laugh. They crouch down with the kids to pet the Killer Dog, too. The Killer Dog is happy.

PHIL

Hiya, sport. Where'd you come from, huh?

NEIL

Can we keep him?

The Killer Dog licks Phil's face.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - EVENING

The kids are watching MTV in the living room. The Killer Dog strolls out, wearing a collar. In the dining room Phil is pacing nervously as he talks on the kitchen phone, stretched in here on the super-long flex cord.

PHIL

Sensational. Wednesday is fine, no problemo. One o'clock at the Somerset Grill -- yes, I know it well. Okay then -- looking forward to it. Ciao.

(again a double click)

Hello? Hello?

He goes into the kitchen to hang up, punching the air triumphantly.

INT. KITCHEN

Julie is preparing dinner. The Killer Dog walks to the dog bowl to munch his chow.

PHIL

He wants to see me!

JULIE

Philip! The senior partner?

PHIL

His secretary just confirmed.

JULIE

Oh baby.

She hugs him, giving him a kiss.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

He presses the redial button on his phone extension.

HIDER

Oh, hi, this is Phil Dreyer again. Stupidly, I just looked at my calendar and I'm going to have to cancel Wednesday. Please apologize to him for me and I'll call back to reschedule -- is that all right? No problemo? Sensational. Thanks -- I'm really sorry. Ciao.

INT. KITCHEN

Julie and Phil hugging and kissing. The MUSIC coming from the living room. Julie starts dancing slowly with Phil -- but he wants to break it up now.

PHIL

What -- what are you doing?

JULIE

I think you should feel like dancing at a time like this.

PHIL

(trying to break away)

C'mon.

Julie lets him go, pissed off now.

JULIE

You can never bring yourself to do anything spontaneous or romantic, can you?

Now Phil is pissed off that she's pissed off.

PHIL

I bought the house, dear heart --  
we took the vacation. I deliver  
your dreams from time to time.

He starts walking out.

JULIE  
A dance is for free.

He's gone. With a sigh she turns back to her cooking.

CUT TO;

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM - DAY

He wakes up suddenly from sleep. He hears something. He smells something. He sniffs. He crawls over to look through the vent in the false wall.

INT. THE ATTIC

Neil and his friends are here. The attic is full of all kinds of junk. Neil and his friends are playing with matches -- melting a naked "G.I. Joe."

NEIL'S FRIEND #1  
Oooh, look at him burn.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

The Hider is appalled by this sadistic game. Suddenly, he almost hits the ceiling -- as his PHONE RINGS! He instantly disconnects it, and waits with horror to see if it's given him away.

INT. THE ATTIC

The PHONES are still RINGING in the rest of the house.

NEIL'S FRIEND #2  
You guys have a loud phone.

INT. DINING ROOM

Julie answers it.

JULIE  
Hello? Hi, Rita.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

He finishes writing a note to himself and posts it on his bulletin board: "ALWAYS REMEMBER TO UNPLUG THE PHONE!!!" Then he turns over the phone to turn the "ring" dial to low.

INT. DINING ROOM

Julie on the phone with her friend.

JULIE  
Uh huh... uh huh... You didn't even have dinner with him first?

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

Keeping one eye on the antics of the kids in the attic, the Hider reconnects his phone so he can listen in on Julie's conversation, holding a cloth over the mouthpiece.

INT. DINING ROOM

Julie hears PHIL COMING HOME. CAR DOOR SLAMMING.

JULIE  
Uh huh... uh huh... Well, Rita, if he's that big a slob, why are you even bothering?

Phil comes in, head down, goes straight upstairs.

JULIE  
(continuing)  
Rita, I'm going to have to call you back.

INT. THE ATTIC

Suddenly Neil or one of his idiot friends drops a match and accidentally sets on fire a roll of carpet lying against the Hider's wall. The roll of carpet is wrapped in brown paper.

NEIL

Shit!

NEIL'S FRIEND #1

Put it out, man!

The boys frantically try to put out the fire.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

Oh Christ, Oh God, Oh Jesus, Oh Christ, Oh God -- the Hider puts the phone down and pulls the ventilator lever shut and backs off as far as his terribly limited space allows.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

Phil is lying on the bed as Julie comes in.

JULIE

Honey? How did it go? You didn't call me.

PHIL

He wasn't there.

JULIE

What?

She comes to sit on the bed. She tries putting a hand on him, but it's like putting a hand on a corpse.

PHIL

I get to the restaurant and he's not there. I waited for forty-five minutes. When I called his office, his secretary said they thought I had cancelled. I had cancelled! Then I get back to my office and Aranson is waiting for me and he knows everything.

JULIE

Oh, honey.

PHIL

Everything -- that I've been talking to other people behind his back -- that's what he called me

-- a back-stabber and a deceiver.  
To him and to the company.  
He called me a traitor in front  
of everybody and told me if I  
wanted to be a VP over at  
Lowenthal I might as well pack up  
and go -- only Lowenthal never  
showed up for our lunch! It's  
like everybody got an anonymous  
poison-pen letter or some --  
                  (sits up)  
Do you smell smoke?

INT. THE ATTIC

Phil comes running up as Neil was rushing down.

NEIL

Dad! Dad!

The carpet is blazing! Noxious smoke pouring off it!

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

He can't stop the smoke coming through his vent. His  
little cell is quickly flooding with smoke. Choking,  
gasping, he throws himself down on his mattress, sticking  
his face to the second vent in the street wall, sucking the  
real air from out there.

INT. THE ATTIC

Phil slaps at the fire with another rug.

PHIL

Neil, go get some water! Now!

EXT. THE HOUSE

That small vent up by the attic -- smoke coming from it.  
UP CLOSE, a man's hideously distorted and desperate face  
pressed against it.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

He lies there gasping for air, more smoke filling his small



space.

INT. THE ATTIC

Neil and Julie rush back up with buckets of water. After a lot more screaming and yelling and exertion, the flames are put out.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRANCE HALL DOWNSTAIRS - DAY

Phil shouts at Neil and his friends.

PHIL

What the fuck did you guys think you were doing?!

They all have their heads down. Phil opens the front door to get rid of Neil's friends.

PHIL

(continuing)

You two get out of here, go on.  
Your parents are going to be hearing from me.

He slams the door. Neil glances embarrassedly at his little sister, who's crying fearfully in the next room.

NEIL

A man started the fire.

PHIL

(hits Neil)

Neil, goddamn it, you're not five years old!

JULIE

Neil, you could have burned the house down!

NEIL

I don't know how it started!

PHIL

You knew a second ago. Who started it?

NEIL

-- A man.

WHAM! He gets hit again. Hard. He holds his arm and looks about to cry.

PHIL

A man started it? Oh really? You wanna show me, Neil? Right, okay, here we go, Neil's gonna show me the man.

He grabs Neil's arm roughly and starts pulling him toward the stairs.

INT. THE ATTIC

The Hider emerges with a cloud of smoke from under his secret panel in the floor. He lies here, gasping desperately for air.

INT. MAIN STAIRWAY

Phil dragging Neil up.

PHIL

We're going to go see the man.  
Here we go, Neil's gonna show his dad the man. Come on, let's go see the man.

INT. THE ATTIC

The Hider has practically passed out from his ordeal. But then he hears them coming back up.

ATTIC STAIRWAY

Phil drags Neil up, pushes him forward into the attic.

THE HIDER

Standing stiff in the shadows behind some old bookcases. He didn't have time to go back under his false wall. He's here in the attic with them!

PHIL

spins Neil around the center of the floor a few times.

PHIL

Do you see a man?

NEIL

No.

PHIL

No man!

(WHAM!)

Go to your room.

He pushes Neil back downstairs and turns with a sigh to look at the charred mess up here. He goes closer to the burnt carpet and bends over it.

THE HIDER

Alone with the person he hates most in life. His fists start to clench.

PHIL

gingerly touches bits of the carpet, making sure the fire is completely out. SUDDENLY, he jumps -- the attic door has swung shut. He turns toward it -- and a shadow moves somewhere behind him. He opens the door again -- and there's a little CREAK. He bends over again, putting something at the bottom of the door to keep it open. Then he thinks he hears something -- turns around again -- but JULIE distracts him, CALLING from downstairs:

JULIE (O.S.)

Honey -- I can't find those large-size Hefty trash bags!

PHIL

(goes downstairs)

There might be some extras in the garage.

INT. THE ATTIC - LATER

Neil is pushed back in, followed by his parents.

NEIL

I thought I was supposed to stay  
in my room.

PHIL

(pushing him)

Get on the other side of that.

Holly comes up to watch, too.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

Hider has made it back in here. As the last vestiges  
of smoke clear, he lies back on his mattress, breathing  
slowly.

INT. THE ATTIC

They're cleaning up the mess, trying to put trash bags over  
the burnt carpet roll.

JULIE

Neil, lift up your end.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

Here on the other side of the false wall. Lying on his  
mattress.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE POOL - EVENING

Phil is sitting in a deck chair, looking shell-shocked.  
Julie is still trying to comfort him.

JULIE

Honey, it's not the end of the  
world. You'll call Lowenthal  
tomorrow and find out it was just  
a mix-up. And if he's not  
interested anymore, then you'll  
find another company to go to  
maybe even your own. You are free  
now, you are independent.

PHIL

I'm fired. I'm unemployed. Is that your idea of negotiating from a position of strength? Clearly any potential employers have been warned to back off!

JULIE

That's not the case.

PHIL

(head down again)

Someone blew the whistle. Someone hates me.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ROOF - DAWN

The Hider looks at the sky, daylight about to break. He goes over the top.

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE

Nearing the bottom, he slips and falls the rest of the way, hurting himself as he scrapes his hands and legs. He picks himself up off the ground, brushing himself off, stumbling slightly again. Looking around, worried in case his fall was heard, he sneaks away around the corner of the house...

... leaving behind the dog whistle that's fallen out of his pocket, that he accidentally stepped on and kicked to one side. Dented slightly, but shining temptingly in the grass.

CUT TO:

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

The Hider looks intense.

HIDER

Things are beginning to come to a head. I can feel it. And I want everything to be perfect.

THERAPIST

Who doesn't?

HIDER

I've cultivated her interests so that now we have even more in common than ever.

THERAPIST

Well, now, don't go creating some artificial environment for yourself.

HIDER

Oh no -- I mean, she's genuinely made me more fulfilled in many ways -- and I hope eventually to be able to teach her a few things, too. What I mean is, I guess I'm still waiting for just that right -- synthesis between us -- where everything will be understood between us without even the need for words.

THERAPIST

It's not going to happen unless you make it happen, my friend. You're going to have to assert yourself a little bit more. Show your affection.

HIDER

Yeah, maybe you're right. Everything else is just an excuse. I'm treating the situation with kid gloves because I'm afraid of losing her.

THERAPIST

Ask her how she feels.

HIDER

I should.

THERAPIST

You have to put yourself out there a bit more.

HIDER

Right.

THERAPIST

Because life isn't about playing

it safe. Life is about taking risks.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Phil is packing a suitcase. Julie has her arms folded and is looking grim.

JULIE

Boy, you really buckle under a little pressure, don't you?

PHIL

This is for the best, you know it is.

(slams a drawer)

Why do my socks keep disappearing!

JULIE

(mimicking him)

"Honey, I'm a zombie, I don't know whether I'm coming or going."

CUT TO:

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Phil comes out of the house, followed by Julie. He stuffs his suitcase in his car.

JULIE

You're even sadder and more burnt-out than I thought.

PHIL

I am so sick to death of hearing your opinion of my state of mind, what you think is for my own good. Without me you'd still be twirling a baton at U.C. Santa Barbara. You're the final straw on this back, baby!

As he gets into his car he has a little fit, readjusting the seat.

PHIL

(continuing)  
Why the hell is this seat never  
right!

INT. THE HOUSE - MAIN STAIRWAY

POV of someone coming down the stairs slowly, toward the front door that stands half open, the SOUND of Phil's CAR DOOR SLAMMING out there.

It's Neil. Looking unhappy as children do at such moments. He glances into the living room where Holly, too young to understand, is watching TV with the Killer Dog. Neil looks forward again as he hears his DAD'S CAR DRIVING AWAY -- and his mother comes back inside. She puts an arm around him.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

Julie has breakfast with her children.

JULIE

Your daddy and I are kind of mad  
at each other right now, so we  
have to spend some time apart.

HOLLY

Why are you mad at each other?

JULIE

You know how sometimes Neil bugs  
you and you just get up and walk  
away from him?

HOLLY

Uh huh.

JULIE

Well, that's what happens with  
grownups, too.

HOLLY

Did Daddy tease you?

JULIE

Yes, he did, and I don't like it  
any more than you do.



NEIL

Where'd he go?

JULIE

(sighs)

He's staying with a friend.

(stands)

Hurry up now, you'll be late for school.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - MORNING

The kids get in the back of Julie's car. She helps Holly with her seatbelt, then shuts the door and goes to the front. As she's about to get in, a CLANKING NOISE makes her jump. She turns -- seeing the garbage cans of the Nasty Neighbor's house -- and then the Nasty Neighbor himself, standing up from behind one of them. He looks at her. She instantly looks away, getting into her car.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - MORNING

As we HEAR Julie's CAR DRIVING AWAY outside... The Hider appears at the top of the stairs. He strolls down as if he owns the place. The Killer comes wandering in. The Hider crouches down to pet him. The Hider looks around his house, and starts to laugh.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

The Hider comes in. His euphoria is building. He opens a drawer -- to check that Phil has cleared his stuff out and really gone.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

The Hider opens the medicine cabinet to see that there's no shaving gear. He notes an empty towel rack -- and sees that there's only one toothbrush now.

INT. JULIE'S CAR - MORNING

Driving away from the house -- when suddenly Holly bursts out crying.

HOLLY

Daddy's gone where Rudolf went and  
isn't coming back!

JULIE

Holly -- that's not so.

Holly has a plastic container of orange juice with a spill-proof lid. In her hysteria she flings it, the lid coming off, juice splashing all over Julie.

JULIE

(continuing)

Oh, Holly!

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

The Hider falls onto the bed, laughing, rolling over, pulling the comforter around him like a shroud. It's all his now, he's the man. He sits up with a start when he hears SOMEONE COMING up the stairs.

INT. MAIN STAIRWAY

Julie runs up and goes into her bedroom.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

She hurries in and immediately starts to take off her orange-juice-stained dress.

INT. WALK-IN CLOSET

The Hider is hiding in here. Peeking out at her. Watching her undress.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

Julie goes into the adjoining bathroom, washing out the orange juice. She comes out of the bathroom and goes to the closet. She takes out another dress and starts to put it on.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - MORNING

Julie comes back down to where her kids are waiting. Holly

isn't crying anymore, but looks sulky.

JULIE

All right, now come on,  
everything's going to be just  
fine.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

Neil is sitting at an outdoor table, reading a comic book, when he hears an OMINOUS SOUND -- a kind of limping SHUFFLE coming toward him. He dare not turn around, but he doesn't have to, because the Bully, walking with the help of a crutch, appears and sits down next to Neil.

BULLY

(very matter of fact)  
My friends have been expelled.  
(pokes Neil)  
You're gonna be my friend now.

The Bully gets up awkwardly and we HEAR his limping SHUFFLE moving away. Neil just sits here and wonders why God despises him.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Julie is watering plants. Moving deeper into the garden, reaching to spray water at out-of-the-way bushes, she comes upon a little hidden patch of flowerbed that she certainly never noticed before -- because now it boasts a lovely group of roses that have only recently bloomed.

INT. THE HOUSE - LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

The washing machine is going. Julie is folding clothes that are already done. Abruptly the washing machine stops with a GRINDING CLANK.

Julie looks at it. She tries pushing its buttons and making sure that the door is properly closed, but it seems to be broken.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Julie looks sad. She doesn't know what to do with herself. She pets the Killer Dog. She hears a COMMOTION outside and goes to look out the window.

JULIE'S POV

She sees the Nasty Neighbor and his Wife shouting at each other -- and the Nasty Neighbor's Wife getting into a car with another man and driving off. The Nasty Neighbor just makes some crude gesture at the departing car and goes back into his house.

BACK TO SCENE

JULIE

(to Killer Dog)

Must be something in the air.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Julie, alone, on the phone.

JULIE

No, Rita. No. No, I don't want to meet him. No, Rita. Yes, I'm fine. No, I don't want to meet him, either. Absolutely not, Rita,

INT. KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Julie opens the refrigerator, but the light doesn't come on. She checks the plug. The refrigerator is broken now, too. She can't stand it. She slams the door, having a fit, starting to cry,

INT, UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Julie puts away some boxes of Kleenex in a linen closet. The front DOORBELL RINGS. Julie turns to go downstairs.

MAIN STAIRWAY

Julie comes down the stairs to the front door. The Killer Dog joins her. She opens the door. Standing outside is --

THE HIDER!!

SEE the handyman's clothes he's wearing. SEE the handyman's business card he's holding out. SEE the pleasant smile on his face.

HIDER

Hello, my name is Thomas Sykes,  
I'm a handyman. If there's any  
work you need done, please give  
me a call,

JULIE

She looks at his card.

JULIE

Oh, well, do you fix  
refrigerators?

HIDER

Sure.

JULIE

Well, can I make an appointment?

HIDER

(looks at his watch)  
Maybe I could take a look at it  
now.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

BLINK! The refrigerator light pops on and the whole thing starts HUMMING again.

JULIE

Oh, great.

HIDER

Yeah, that was easy.

JULIE

Do you do washing machines, too?

HIDER

Just show me the way.

She takes him into the --

LAUNDRY ROOM

The Hider, with his toolbox, starts investigating the broken washer. Julie watches him.

JULIE

Everything breaks at once.

HIDER

Isn't that always the way?

JULIE

So, you're just kind of a roving --

HIDER

-- General handyman, yeah. I do carpentry, too, painting, almost any odd job around the house. I do housesitting while the owners are away. In fact, that's why I've been in the area. I've been living very close by.

(he stands up)

Here's the part that's giving you trouble, but I won't be able to get a replacement till the stores open tomorrow morning.

JULIE

Oh, that's fine.

The Hider puts the part in his toolbox.

HIDER

I'll call you when I have the part.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK PATIO - NIGHT

Holly is playing with the Killer Dog. Julie is reclining

in a deck chair, talking to Rita on the phone.

JULIE

Well, of course I'm upset, Rita.

No, I don't want to go out.

Neil climbs out of the swimming pool, notices something glistening in the grass not far away. He goes toward it.

Holly giggles as she twists the Killer Dog's face into various grotesque expressions.

HOLLY

Look, Mommy, look at Edgar.

Neil picks up -- the whistle.

Holly pulls the Killer Dog's gums apart.

HOLLY

(doing dog voice)

"Hi. I'm Mr. Edgar!"

(turns to Julie)

Look, Mommy, it doesn't even hurt him.

JULIE

(on phone)

Well, what do you want me to do, Rita -- I can't just forget fifteen years of marriage. Well, of course I know you can. No, Rita, I -- what was that? -- oh, I thought I heard something on the line.

Neil starts cleaning the whistle on his towel.

NEIL

Look what I found.

He puts it to his mouth. Holly is spreading the Killer Dog's jaws playfully. Neil's cheeks start to puff out as he blows. Holly giggles. Neil blows the whistle with all his might -- but nothing comes out but PHFFT. The dent in it has ruined it. Neil throws the whistle back down on the ground and goes to play with the dog, too.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

The Hider returns home. He notices the whistle on the ground. He picks it up and looks at it, alarmed at himself for being so careless. He puts it back in his pocket.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Julie is showing the Hider a section of the floor that seems to be damaged.

HIDER

Well, I'll tell you -- the only way of making sure this doesn't spread is to double-coat it with sealant before putting the varnish on top.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Humming to himself, the Hider washes some rags in the sink. He rinses them and walks breezily out of the kitchen, bumping smack into --

THE BULLY!

Who's coming in with Neil. The Bully almost loses his balance but the Hider catches him.

HIDER

Excuse me.

THE HIDER

Walking past -- his face suddenly covered with a film of sweat. Jesus, that kid is the one person who's seen him before.

THE BULLY

continues into the kitchen with Neil.



BULLY

Was that your dad?

NEIL

Nah, that's some guy fixing the  
living room floor.

Something nags at the Bully. He looks over his shoulder.

EXT. FRONT DRIVEWAY

Julie is pruning some hedges. She's startled by the  
appearance of the Nasty Neighbor, carrying some flowers to  
present to her.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

Hello there.

JULIE

Oh -- hi.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

(handing her flowers)

I've been cleaning up my yard, too  
-- I noticed you do some  
gardening. Thought you might like  
these.

(The flowers are not very nice.)

JULIE

Oh -- well -- thank you, Mr.  
Stone.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The Hider works on the floor.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL

Julie comes in, followed by the Nasty Neighbor.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

Yeah, I've been meaning to drop  
by -- just in case you needed  
anything.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The Hider looks over his shoulder at the Nasty Neighbor.  
The Hider seethes with territorial jealousy.

INT. DINING ROOM

Julie reaches for a tall glass container on a high shelf.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

Here, lemme get that.

Damn it, thinks the Hider in the b.g., he's acting like a man.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

(continuing)

Because, you know, I couldn't help noticing that we have a lot in common.

He's leaning in the kitchen doorway while she fills the container with water.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

(continuing)

Yeah, y'know, both of us with recent spousal disappearance.

JULIE

(how can she get rid of this guy?)

Ah.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The Hider turns away and hunches over the floor as he sees Neil and the Bully come back out of the kitchen, walking this way. A chill runs through the Hider.

BULLY

So where are all your toys?

NEIL

Let's watch some TV.

BULLY

Where are these toys of yours?

NEIL

A lot of my stuff hasn't been  
unpacked yet. Here's the TV.

BULLY

What toys do you have?

The Hider has to turn away even more. The Bully keeps  
looking over at him.

NEIL

(turning on TV)

Hey, look -- the new Pretenders  
video.

The Bully glances over at the Hider. Something preying on  
the Bully's mind. He tries to get a better look. The  
Hider tries to hunch out of the way even more, sweat  
breaking out again on his forehead.

He feels the eyes of the Bully on his back. Now it's his  
turn to be scared -- of this kid. Also, he's anxious to  
keep track of what his rival from next door is doing with  
Julie. It's a horrible situation from any angle.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL

Julie tries to show the Nasty Neighbor to the door.

JULIE

Well, thanks again.

But the Nasty Neighbor steps into the living room.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

Say, this is a nice den.

Without looking, he backs into the Hider's work area by the  
doorway, accidentally kicking the Hider.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

(continuing)

Whoops. Excuse me, pal.

The Hider might as well be invisible. He doesn't notice  
the Hider's look of hatred.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

(continuing; coming  
out to entrance hall

again)  
Okay then, you have my number,  
gimme me a call sometime.

JULIE

Yeah, right.

She closes the door on him, sighs, and goes off into the kitchen.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The Bully, with his crutch, is struggling closer to the Hider.

BULLY

I don't wanna watch TV.

He's trying to see the Hider's face.

NEIL

Hey, look what's on cable,  
Bernard!

The Bully turns to see a woman undress on TV. This interests him. The Hider, drenched in sweat, seizes the moment and stands up to walk out.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL

The Hider comes out of the living room breathing a sigh of relief. He keeps his back turned as Neil and the Bully now come out.

BULLY

Show me your room now.

They go upstairs. But now the Hider is scared by the front door suddenly opening! Phil has come back.

PHIL

Oh, uh -- hi... I --

The Hider just gestures Phil in and escapes through the dining room to the kitchen -- passing Julie, who's coming out again. She's expecting to see the Nasty Neighbor again, doesn't know whether she's relieved to see her husband instead.

PHIL

Who was that?

JULIE

I'm having the floor fixed,

PHIL

And what was that neighbor guy  
doing here?

JULIE

Philip, what are you doing here?

PHIL

Look, I think we should work  
things out.

INT. KITCHEN

Hider has his back against a wall, breathing hard. He  
can hear them.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL

Julie folds her arms as she listens.

PHIL

I was having a bad day -- I lost  
that job, I was dependent on other  
people, I was let down --

JULIE

There's always an excuse, isn't  
there?

PHIL

I think it's time I came home now.

JULIE

That's not a decision for you to  
make on your own.

INT. KITCHEN

Yes! Overhearing that brightens the Hider's spirits. He  
hugs the Killer Dog. Everything's going to be okay, after  
all.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL

Phil pretends to be shocked.

PHIL

What?

JULIE

No, Philip, I don't want you coming back here. And if you want to talk to me -- call.

PHIL

(storms out angrily)

This is my house.

INT. KITCHEN

As he hears the DOOR SLAM, the Hider leans back against the wall with a happy sigh.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Julie watches the Hider work.

JULIE

I apologize for that scene with my husband. You must have overheard.

HIDER

An occupational hazard, I'm afraid.

JULIE

I bet. Going into people's homes.

HIDER

It's a living.

Julie tilts her head slightly, studying him. There's certainly something compelling about this quiet man. He's leaning forward, muscles rippling in his strong arm.

JULIE

Do you have a family?

HIDER

Uh, no -- I've never really found the time to settle down.

JULIE

You must value your independence.

HIDER

Yeah, I've always been able to make my way in the world. I don't like having to rely on other people.

JULIE

It's nice that you can make that choice.

HIDER

I was alone a lot as a child. No one to compete with. My parents ensured that I found happiness in the smallest things. When you're all alone it's your own world, you don't have to take orders from anybody. You don't necessarily believe the stories people tell you.

JULIE

(laughs)

Not me, I fell for it right down the line. Be a good girl and believe all the fairy tales.

(faraway look out the window)

He married me because I was pretty.

HIDER

Because you were pretty?

She looks back at him. Smiles at the compliment. He looks back at her again and could almost die from the pleasure of her smile.

CUT TO:

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

The Therapist looks happy for the Hider.

THERAPIST

Well, these are good signs -- she's broken up with him and the two of you seem to be developing quite a rapport.

HIDER

I know. I just feel that the relationship has reached that delicate stage where the slightest little thing could wreck the careful groundwork I've laid up till now.

THERAPIST

I can't help you if you don't help yourself. It's really up to you. Brooding endlessly isn't going to help matters any.

HIDER

There's so much I want to say to her, it's all jumbled up in my mind, and I don't want her to misunderstand --

THERAPIST

Well, you'll just have to make her understand.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Lights off. Street quiet.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Julie is asleep. Alone in her bed. In the dark room.

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

The Hider approaches his special part of the wall. In the shadows, his face is intense. This is it. He knows what he has to do. He starts climbing the wall. He's halfway up it -- when a FLASHLIGHT BEAM hits his face!!



VOICE

Come down here.

The Hider climbs back down, shielding his eyes against the flashlight. The voice laughs, the beam lowering. It's the Nasty Neighbor.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

Well now, what do we have here?

(chuckles nastily,  
glancing up wall)

You got a pretty good deal goin'  
here, buddy.

The Hider is looking more desperate by the second.

NASTY NEIGHBOR

(continuing)

I believe I've seen you hanging  
around here before, haven't I?  
Correct me if I'm wrong.

(suddenly his eyes  
bulge)

OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

And the Hider's face is wild with madness -- as he jams something against the Nasty Neighbor's stomach -- again and again and again -- stab after stab -- the strength of the Hider's arm lifting the Nasty Neighbor up off his feet -- as the Hider eviscerates him with -- a steel gardening trowel, the sharp point ripping the Nasty Neighbor's guts open, tearing upwards; the Nasty Neighbor's mouth gaping with the shock of it.

CUT TO:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

The Hider stands over Julie's bed. Watching her sleep. His eyes are completely crazy now, completely obsessed. His clothes are splattered with blood. He's snapped and their time together has come.

And yet, for a moment, something still holds him back. She's so beautiful. Tears come once more to the Hider's eyes. We SEE that he's building to a kind of crescendo of emotion. It's now or never. He begins to breathe quicker, he begins to move, to reach for her -- but suddenly the bedroom door is pushed all the way open -- the Hider

managing to dart behind it just in time -- as Neil comes rushing into his mother's bedside.

NEIL

Mom, Mom, wake up, Mom --

Julie wakes up. Neil is holding a baseball bat,

JULIE

Neil -- what --

NEIL

Mom, there's somebody in the house!

JULIE

(sitting up)

Honey --

NEIL

Mom, I heard someone downstairs!

Julie quickly gets out of bed, reaching for the bedside phone and the emergency pad she keeps there.

BLOODY HIDER BEHIND THE DOOR

Horrificed. Frozen. Not daring to breathe.

JULIE

speaks softly into the phone.

JULIE

Hello -- can you please help me -- I think there's an intruder in my house. Yes, we heard someone moving downstairs. I live on Coral Avenue -- number five eleven.

BLOODY HIDER BEHIND THE DOOR

OhmyGod, OhmyGod, OhmyGod -- he tries to melt even more into the wall as he hears Julie HANG UP and grab Neil and move out of the room.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Julie and Neil go into Holly's room -- and the Hider darts out -- and into Neil's room as he hears JULIE COMING OUT again.

JULIE

(quietly)

Edgar! Edgar!

INT. NEIL'S ROOM

Edgar, the Killer Dog, moves placidly past the Hider in answer to Julie's call. The Hider, desperate, is scared by his own reflection in Neil's mirror. He brings a hand to his face, realizing -- Jesus, if she sees it's me! He looks around -- and sees Neil's full-head mask of a bearded man.

INT. HOLLY'S ROOM

Holly sits up in bed. Neil shushes her, staying by her side protectively with his baseball bat. Julie ushers the Killer Dog into the room with them and shuts the door, though not all the way so she can still watch and listen.

JULIE

(holding Killer Dog)

You stay with us, Edgar.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

The Hider has the bearded-man mask stretched grotesquely over his head. He peeks first, then darts out of Neil's room and straight downstairs.

INT. HOLLY'S ROOM

Julie couldn't see him from here, but she does hear the CREAKS on the stairs.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS

The Hider pauses at the bottom of the stairs, looking back up, then turns in the darkness toward the front door and -- HOLY SHIT! -- runs smack into Phil! Phil was the intruder downstairs! And he's just as shocked to run into

the Hider. Immediately, the Hider clamps a hand over Phil's mouth -- and Phil starts fighting for his life.

INT. HOLLY'S ROOM

Julie and the kids hear the COMMOTION downstairs, sounds that are all the more frightening because they don't know what they are. For all they know it's one maniac down there destroying the house. Then they hear a CRY in the night:

VOICE

Get out of my house!

But is it the husband or the Hider? The Killer Dog barks.

INT. LIVING ROOM

CRASH! -- the two men come tumbling in here -- and in the air above them, gripped by both of them in their struggle -- the shiny gardening trowel. Phil's eyes are wild with fear as he battles his unknown assailant, the hideous expressionless bearded-man mask looming above him.

INT. HOLLY'S ROOM

The SAVAGE NOISES from downstairs continue. Holly starts crying, Neil comforting her.

HOLLY

Mommy!

JULIE

(joins them in a  
scared huddle)

It's okay, baby, the police are  
coming.

EXT. THE STREET

Distant SIRENS pierce the quiet of the neighborhood.

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

The Hider's fingers lose the gardening trowel. Phil manages to keep hold of it, ramming it against the Hider's

rib cage. The Hider shrieks in pain -- then slams his fist across Phil's head. The gardening trowel goes skittling across the floor. The Hider is out of control, on the rampage, insane with fury -- he punches off the mantelpiece the second green vase, SMASHING it into a million pieces.

INT. HOLLY'S ROOM

Julie and the kids jump at the scary NOISE from downstairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The Hider advances on Phil, who's groggily trying to get up, shaking his head.

EXT. THE STREET

The police car comes around the corner.

INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

The Hider is kicking Phil. The gardening trowel is on the floor near Phil's hand. The Hider looks up as the FLASHING RED LIGHT of the police car starts swirling around the room from the street outside, and he hears the STATIC CRACKLE of the POLICE RADIO.

Phil grabs the trowel and slams it into the Hider's leg, With a groan muffled by his mask, the Hider staggers out of the living room.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL

Limping, the Hider stumbles through to the dining room. Phil comes after him, throwing open the front door and punching the appropriate button on the security box that sets off the ALARM BELL!

INT. HOLLY'S ROOM

Julie shoots to her feet at the SOUND of this.

INT. KITCHEN

The Hider runs in, heading for the laundry room and the back door there. He's the intruder trying to escape now, Suddenly, he's hit on the head from behind. He falls. It's Phil trying to stop him, clubbing him again with the phone. The Hider wrestles it away from him, wrapping the super-long flex cord around Phil's neck, strangling him, wrapping it tighter, pull it harder, and Phil is choking and the masked Hider is out of his mind -- and then the SOUND of POLICE RADIOS -- and the Hider has to run again. Phil still trying to hold onto him, but the Hider gets hold of the phone and beats Phil's head with it. Then the Hider escapes outside, still staggering.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL

TWO COPS come in, guns drawn, looking around -- hearing the NOISE from the kitchen, running that way.

INT. KITCHEN

Getting rid of the cord around his neck, Phil stumbles onward in the darkness toward the back door -- as the Cops appear behind him, pointing their guns.

COP #1

Hold it!

PHIL

(turning)

I'm the owner, I'm the owner!

(pointing outside)

He's out there -- he's out there!

Cop #1 keeps his gun on Phil as his partner goes out. Phil is shaking with fear and exhaustion. He manages to extract his wallet from his pocket to show the Cop his ID.

PHIL

(continuing)

Look -- I live here -- I live here.

COP #2 (O.S.)

Frank!

Cop #1 and Phil go out.

EXT. BACK PATIO

Cop #2 is standing over the pool. The body of the man in the bearded-man mask floats in the pool.

PHIL

(sinks to his knees)

I got the son of a bitch.

(calls out)

JULIE!

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Neighborhood people have come out of their homes to see what the trouble is. There is more than one police car outside the house now -- and an ambulance.

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

While the body in the pool is being fished in and pulled out, Phil and Julie talk with the police officers. One of the police officers holds up the gardening trowel. Phil is being tended to Paramedics.

PHIL

Yes, I used that first of all -- then I just kept hitting him.

COP #1

And you were upstairs the whole time, ma'am?

JULIE

Yes -- I didn't know what was going on.

She looks at Phil. He looks back at her with a little pleading look of understanding in his eyes.

PHIL

Yeah, we were upstairs when we heard the intruder. My wife called the police and I went downstairs.

THE BODY IN THE POOL

is now laid dripping on the ground. Someone starts to peel off the mask.

JULIE AND PHIL

don't really want to look, but have to.

JULIE

Oh God.

PHIL

Yeah -- we know him. He's been hanging around the house.

THE BODY

It's the Nasty Neighbor, his face still looking shocked as it was when the Hider first killed him.

CUT TO:

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM - NIGHT

He splashes water on his face. He rips his sheet to bandage his hurt leg. He flings clothes around, finding new ones to change into. He's acting like a crazed, cornered animal -- he's acting like there'll be no need to come back to this room.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - HOLLY'S ROOM - NIGHT

The Nice Neighbor Woman is comforting the kids.

EXT. THE HOUSE - FRONT STREET

A COP is getting rid of the neighborhood onlookers.

COP

All right, people, there's nothing to see here. Let's go back to bed now, shall we?

INT. ENTRANCE HALL



Phil is about to go off with the Paramedics and the Cops.

COP #1

We can get the rest of the details at the hospital, Mr. Dreyer.

JULIE

Philip, I'll be fine, really.

PHIL

(privately to Julie)  
Should I come home when I'm finished there?

JULIE

(nodding)  
We'll talk in the morning.

EXT. THE HOUSE - FRONT STREET

Phil goes into the ambulance. It drives away, The crowd has dispersed

INT. ENTRANCE HALL

The last of the police leave.

VOICE

Julie?

Julie turns around. It's the Hider.

HIDER

(breathless)  
I was driving by -- I saw all the cars. Are you all right?

JULIE

Yeah, I'm okay -- it's been a long night.

HIDER

(seeing all the mess)  
What happened?

JULIE

Can I tell you tomorrow? I think

I...

She suddenly puts a trembling hand to her head. The Hider grips her arms reassuringly.

HIDER

Look, you don't have to say another word... You should have some tea, it'll make you feel better. And I'll clean up a bit.

She nods -- as the Nice Neighbor Woman comes down the stairs with Neil. Neil still holds his baseball bat. He's clearly being the little man of the house.

NICE WOMAN

Holly is asleep.

JULIE

Oh, Audrey, thank you.

Neil glances in the living room where the Hider is neatening up.

NEIL

Hi, Mr. Sykes.

HIDER

Hi, Neil -- you've had quite a night.

NEIL

Yeah, but I'm okay.

JULIE

Honey, do you want some hot chocolate?

NEIL

No, thanks, Mom -- I'll go up to bed now.

JULIE

Do you want me to come up and tuck you in?

NEIL

(brave)

That's okay, Mom.

Julie realizes how protective Neil is being, gives him a

hug and a kiss.

JULIE

You were very brave tonight.

Neil, cool, turns to go back upstairs.

NEIL

'Night, Mr. Sykes.

HIDER

Goodbye, Neil.

Julie shows the Nice Neighbor Woman to the door.

JULIE

Audrey...

(gives her a hug)

... you've been wonderful. Good night.

She leaves and Julie shuts the front door.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN

Julie and the Hider are here. Julie puts the kettle on. Then she gives the Killer Dog some food.

HIDER

I was thinking about our conversation the other day -- what you said about choices.

JULIE

(preoccupied)

Uh huh.

HIDER

Yeah, you know, that in life you really have to choose what you want to do.

JULIE

(sensing a big discussion)

Listen, I'm sorry, but it's really late -- you don't have to come tomorrow to work on the floor.

HIDER

It is tomorrow.

The kettle is starting to percolate.

JULIE

Yeah, right -- I really have to go to bed.

HIDER

I think we should talk first.

The water is starting to boil. The cap of the kettle gives a little BLOW. The jaws of the Killer Dog savagely munch his food.

JULIE

About what?

HIDER

About us.

JULIE

Mr. Sykes, I think you should go home.

The Hider gives a little smile, but doesn't move.

JULIE

(continuing)

I think you should leave.

The Hider tenses. Julie sees that he's had two totally different reactions to what she thought was the same statement in each case.

JULIE

(continuing)

Don't you understand?

The Hider moves a step closer.

HIDER

(gently)

Yes, I do understand...

(beginning to repeat himself)

... I was thinking about our conversation the other day -- what you said about choices.

The kettle begins a LOW WHISTLE. The Killer Dog's ears perk up. He's been activated.

HIDER

(continuing)

You decided that Philip should stay away. You made your choice.

Julie, sensing real danger now, glances at the kettle of boiling water. The WHISTLE continues to get HIGHER IN PITCH.

HIDER

(continuing; carried away by his own internal logic)

Now things are the way they're supposed to be. I fixed things in this house.

As the WHISTLE BUILDS the Killer Dog turns. Nobody is approaching the kettle at the moment, so the Killer Dog doesn't know what to do.

JULIE

I don't know what's going on with you --

Now she notices -- blood starting to seep through his trouser leg.

JULIE

(continuing)

-- I don't know who you are, I don't know anything about you.

She measures the distance between her and the WHISTLING KETTLE. The Killer Dog goes into a crouch.

HIDER

I have to show my feelings. I have to take action.

THE KETTLE

The WHISTLE reaches its HIGHEST PITCH.

JULIE

rushes toward it.

THE KILLER DOG

springs at Julie!

THE HIDER

throws himself in front of the Killer Dog. As the dog starts to tear him apart --

HIDER

-- Julie --

JULIE

drops the kettle, starts backing out of the kitchen in terror.

INT. DINING ROOM

Julie comes backing out from the kitchen, the kitchen door swinging closed after her. She keeps backing away, her hand to her mouth in horror as we HEAR the HORRIFIC MAULING, SNARLING, GROWLING from the kitchen.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL

The AWFUL SOUNDS continue as Julie in a daze keeps backing further and further away.

EXT. THE HOUSE

The street is empty, the neighborhood quiet -- except for the SOUNDS we HEAR of the Hider in the house being torn to bits.

And the CAMERA STARTS CRANING UP once more... up to the top of the house, moving in on that small vent up there.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

All his stuff still here. And his PHONE... which starts

to RING.

INT. KITCHEN

The PHONE RINGING in here, too, and OVER the savage MAULING SOUNDS the ANSWER MACHINE CLICKS on.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL

Julie backing away.

JULIE (V.O.)

(on machine)

Hi, we can't come to the phone right now -- please leave your message after the beep.

BEEP.

INT. KITCHEN

There's blood splashed on the walls. The SNARLING is starting to subside, CHEWING SOUNDS continuing.

PHIL (V.O.)

(on machine)

Hi, hon, I'm still at the hospital, but everything's fine.

INT. HIDER'S SECRET ROOM

We PAN around the Hider's belongings, his shelf, his bulletin board...

PHIL (V.O.)

... I really do think it's time for me to come home.

... his sign that says: "ALWAYS REMEMBER TO UNPLUG THE PHONE!!!"

PHIL (V.O.)

You and the kids should have a man around the house.

GROWL.

FADE OUT.

THE END