

"Clive Barker's  
Dread"

An Adaptation by  
Mark Wooden

Disclaimer: This adaptation is in no way an attempt for profit, merely a show of respect for Mr. Barker's work and an exercise in the craft of adaptation. Thank You.

## Clive Barker's "Dread"

RUN PRODUCTION LOGOS IN SILENCE.

When the last logo fades out, we sit on silent black for an uncomfortable amount of time.

Then...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

If it were possible to sit, invisible,  
between two people on any train, in any  
waiting room or office, the conversation  
would time and again circle on one  
subject...

Run the title card for the film - "Dread."

INT. UNIVERSITY PUB -- NIGHT

A beer mug sits on the bar. It's half empty and devoid of head -  
Eventually, a hand reaches for the mug -

...revealing STEPHEN GRACE as he takes a sip from the beer.

Stephen is a male in his early twenties who'd easily disappear  
into the woodwork of any establishment. It's something he's  
inadvertently worked hard to perfect. There is simply nothing  
remarkable about this overworked, under paid college student.

We watch Stephen for a few moments. The world of COLLEGE STUDENTS -  
what, with their fraternities, sororities or other social groups -  
seems to move on without him.

The pub itself isn't much to write home about as it's dark and  
moody... not the best place for socializing, but perfect for  
intellectual debate.

QUAID (O.S.)

The name's Quaid.

Quaid's voice pulls Stephen from his solitude. He looks beside  
him -

QUAID sits - perhaps a little too close - next to Stephen at the  
bar. A glass of brandy is on the bar in front of him. Quaid's  
eyes remain fixed on the brandy.

Quaid is in his early thirties, though he doesn't look a day over  
twenty-five. His clothes are almost those of a beggar - except  
for an expensive black leather jacket that hangs badly off his  
tall, thin frame. He could easily pass as a Eurotrash terrorist -

...if not for his pale skin and the lizard-like eyes behind too-thick, badly framed glasses.

STEPHEN

Sorry. Didn't see you there, mate.

QUAID

I've seen you in the Ethics class. You're -

STEPHEN

Stephen Grace.

QUAID

Right.

Quaid downs the last of his brandy. He still hasn't nor does he look at Stephen.

QUAID (CONT'D)

I don't see you in any of the other Philosophy seminars or lectures.

STEPHEN

Ethics is just my extra subject for the year. I'm on the English Literature track. I couldn't bear the idea of a year in the Old Norse classes.

Quaid nods in acknowledgment. He then silently signals to the BARTENDER for another brandy. The bartender gets to it.

QUAID

What are you having, Stephen?

STEPHEN

Nothing thanks.

QUAID

Yes, you will have something.

STEPHEN

No, really. I know I can't afford another and I don't want to -

The bartender brings Quaid his brandy.

QUAID

Another pint of lager for my friend.

The bartender nods and goes to work.

Stephen is uneasy, but nevertheless works at finishing his beer in anticipation of the next, which comes just as he downs the last drop of the old beer.

Quaid picks up his brandy, stares at it.

QUAID (CONT'D)

Someone should do a thesis on drinking as a social activity.

Quaid downs his drink.

QUAID (CONT'D)

Or oblivion.

Stephen takes the moment to stare at Quaid. There is no mark on Quaid to distinguish him as a member of any group or philosophy.

QUAID (CONT'D)

You should have taken Old Norse. I hear they don't even grade the tests, just through them up in the air. Face up, an A. Face down, a B.

It takes Stephen a few moments to realize that Quaid's deadpan statement was actually a joke. He starts to relax a little -

Quaid remains withdrawn, detached.

QUAID (CONT'D)

You should have taken Old Norse. Who needs Bishop Berkley anyhow? Or Plato. Or -

STEPHEN

Or?

QUAID

It's all shit.

STEPHEN

Yes.

Stephen pauses as if he's had some kind of revelation.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

I guess you could say it is.

Quaid reaches into a coat pocket and pulls out a box of cheap cigarettes. He pulls one out and lights up. After getting the cigarette going...

QUAID

They don't teach true Philosophy here anyway.

STEPHEN

Oh?

QUAID

We get spoon fed a little Plato, or a bit of Bentham - no real analysis. It's got all the right markings of course. It looks like the beast: even smells a bit like the beast to the uninitiated.

STEPHEN

What beast?

QUAID

Philosophy. True Philosophy. It's a beast, Stephen.

Quaid finally turns his gaze towards Stephen. The gaze is very cold, sinister - yet inviting.

QUAID (CONT'D)

Don't you think?

From Stephen's expression we can tell he's never given this topic a thought. However, Quaid is very passionate about it.

QUAID (CONT'D)

The beast is wild. It...

(searches for the word)

Bites. Yes, it bites. I think we should be mauled by our subject. We should be frightened by the ideas we should talk about.

STEPHEN

Why?

QUAID

Because if we were philosophers we wouldn't be exchanging academic pleasantries. We wouldn't be talking semantics or using linguistic trickery to cover the real concerns.

STEPHEN

What would we be doing?

QUAID

We should be walking close to the beast... petting it, milking it -

STEPHEN

What exactly is the beast?

This question throws Quaid for a moment. It takes him a moment to recover his train of thought, but when he does, Quaid seems even more sinister than before - but just as passionate.

QUAID

It's the subject of any worthwhile philosophy, Stephen. It's the things we fear because we don't understand them. It's the dark behind the door.

STEPHEN

So philosophy is -

QUAID

A way to discuss that which we fear. And if we don't discuss it... we risk...

Quaid's gaze turns to his empty glass. Taking a cue from this...

STEPHEN

Would you like another? I mean, my finances are bad but -

QUAID

What do we risk?

Stephen falls silent as he stares at Quaid, who has now retreated into a world all his own.

QUAID (CONT'D)  
I think if we don't go out and find the  
beast...

Quaid slowly turns to look at Stephen.

QUAID (CONT'D)  
...sooner or later the beast will come  
and find us.

FADE OUT:

BLACK SCREEN

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
Certainly conversations might appear to  
be about something entirely different  
than dread; the state of the nation,  
idle chat about death on the roads, the  
rising price of dental care; but strip  
away the metaphor, the innuendo, and  
there, nestling at the heart of discourse,  
is dread.

FADE IN:

INT. UNIVERSITY PUB -- NIGHT

Once again we find Stephen at the bar, but this time he seems agitated. He continues to look to the door as if expecting someone.

CHERYL (O.S.)  
Hey.

Steve turns to see CHERYL FROMM approaching him. She's in her early twenties and is the personification of every male fantasy about sorority girls. She's got a couple of books in hand.

Stephen's surprised that Cheryl's even talking to him; he looks around him just to make sure that she indeed is.

CHERYL (CONT'D)  
You're Stephen Grace, right? From the  
Ethics class?

STEPHEN  
Uh... yes.

CHERYL  
Great! I was looking for a book for  
class at the library and they said you  
had the only copy. I was wondering if I  
could borrow it from you when you're  
done.

STEPHEN  
Um, sure.

Stephen's still flustered by Cheryl's beauty. She catches on to this but plays it off.

CHERYL  
I'm sorry. You're waiting for someone,  
aren't you?

STEPHEN  
No! Uh... how'd you - ?

CHERYL  
Caught you staring at the door before I  
walked over. Look; I won't bother you -

STEPHEN  
It's no bother. Really. I was just...  
surprised that you knew me.

CHERYL  
Why?

Stephen can't really come up with anything.

Cheryl grabs a piece of paper from one of her books and a pen.  
She scribbles something on the paper and then hands the paper to  
Stephen.

CHERYL (CONT'D)  
Here's my number.

Stephen looks at the slip of paper as if he doesn't know what to  
make of it. Cheryl catches his confusion.

CHERYL (CONT'D)  
For when you get done with the book.

Stephen understands. He takes the paper.

CHERYL (CONT'D)  
So now I can stop taking up the space of  
your guest.

STEPHEN  
It's just Quaid.

CHERYL  
(contemptuously)  
Quaid?!

Stephen is surprised by the contempt in Cheryl's voice.

STEPHEN  
Yeah. From Ethics class.

CHERYL  
Really? So is he as much of a  
contemptible windbag bullshitter as he  
is in class - that is, when he decides  
to grace us with speech?

STEPHEN  
I didn't know you felt so strongly -

CHERYL

Oh I shouldn't. But there's just something about that guy...

Stephen lets the moment go for a while.

STEPHEN

Honestly I felt the same way... that is, when I could understand what he was talking about. But there's some kind of logic at work in that -

CHERYL

Overly cynical mind of his? I doubt it.

STEPHEN

Hey. If your parents and sister were butchered, you'd probably be a little cynical, too.

CHERYL

What?

STEPHEN

I was asking one of the ladies in the registrar's office about Quaid. Seems that his family was murdered when he was a kid.

Cheryl takes the news in silence. It looks as if her opinion of Quaid is softening.

CHERYL

Either way that guy gives me the creeps. But I'm not going to let the thought of Quaid spoil my fun tonight.

STEPHEN

Oh?

CHERYL

Going to the concert tonight. You going?

STEPHEN

I'm not much into concerts, really. Particularly loud ones.

CHERYL

Too bad.

There's a moment of awkward silence.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

Well, you've got my number.

STEPHEN

Oh. Right.

CHERYL

See ya.



Cheryl walks away. As she does, Stephen stares after her. He gets to thinking. As he does, we hear the sounds of a child at play, a car driving by...

Cheryl - still in Stephen's line of sight - opens the pub door. As she does a pair of headlights shoots into the pub, spotlighting Stephen. He reacts in fear as if remembering something -

FLASH CUT TO:

EXT. STREET (1983) -- AFTERNOON

SIX-YEAR-OLD STEPHEN (for simplicity we'll refer to him as STEVE) is bathed in headlights as he looks up from the ball he ran into the street to recover -

The camera (standing in for the car) zooms towards Steve. We hear screeching tires -

MOTHER (O.S.)

Stephen!

CUT TO BLACK:

NARRATOR (V.O.)

While the nature of God and the possibility of eternal life go undiscussed, we happily chew over the minutiae of misery. The syndrome recognizes no boundaries; in bath-house and seminar room alike, the same ritual is repeated. With the inevitability of a tongue returning to probe a painful tooth, we come back and back and back again to our fears, sitting to talk them over with the eagerness of a hungry man before a full and steaming plate.

There is a long pause, as if the movie's over or something. Then...

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

There is no delight the equal of dread.

INT. UNIVERSITY PUB -- NIGHT

Quaid sits at the bar. He appears totally ignorant (or uncaring) of all around him. Stephen walks up behind Quaid and takes a seat next to him.

Quaid doesn't even notice.

STEPHEN

I think I owe you a drink.

Quaid starts slightly at Stephen's entrance. After a moment...

QUAID

We've been doing this so long I've lost count as to who's turn it is to buy.

STEPHEN

Well my father sent money this week, so  
first round's on me. Brandy, right?

QUAID

Yes, thank you.

Stephen gets the bartender's attention.

STEPHEN

A pint of lager for me and a double brandy  
for my friend here.

The bartender nods and heads off to retrieve the drinks.

Stephen looks to Quaid; the man appears to have retreated to the  
solitary world he was in before Stephen approached.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Sorry about startling you earlier.

QUAID

It was nothing. I was merely thinking.

STEPHEN

No philosopher should be without one.

QUAID

What's that?

STEPHEN

A brain.

Quaid comes out of his world to stare at Stephen. The bartender  
brings the drinks. Quaid lifts his brandy in a salute to Stephen.

QUAID

Cheers.

Stephen picks up his mug and clinks it to Quaid's glass.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. UNIVERSITY PUB -- LATER

There are several empty glasses and mugs in front of Quaid and  
Stephen. Stephen's pretty drunk. Quaid is still at the top of  
his game.

STEPHEN

But law exists to keep the civilized in  
line.

QUAID

You're missing the point. Civilized  
people are not kept in check by law.  
They are kept in check by the fear of  
what will happen if they break the law.

STEPHEN

There you go again with your fear!

QUAID

I fear, you fear, we fear. He, she, or  
it fears. There's no conscious thing on  
the face of the world that doesn't know  
dread more intimately than its own  
heartbeat.

CHERYL (O.S.)

You're so full of shit!

Quaid and Stephen turn to see Cheryl, a book in hand, approach.

QUAID

So we have a new challenger.

Cheryl glares disdainfully at Quaid before standing before the two  
men.

CHERYL

No.

Cheryl sets the book down in front of Stephen.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

I'm just returning a book.

STEPHEN

Be careful, Cheryl. Quaid will say you're  
returning the book because you're afraid  
that -

CHERYL

Oh please. I really don't see why you  
put up with his fear crap. So what if  
you're afraid? I'm not afraid. I feel  
fine.

QUAID

Oh come, now. We all taste dread once  
in a while.

CHERYL

Not me.

QUAID

No fears? No nightmares?

CHERYL

No way. I've got a good family; I don't  
have any skeletons in my closet. I don't  
even eat meat, so I don't feel bad when  
I drive by a slaughterhouse. I don't  
have any shit to put on show. Does that  
mean I'm not real?

Quaid takes this in. His eyes narrow as he goes in for the  
proverbial kill.

QUAID

It means your confidence has something  
big to cover.

Cheryl can't believe this. In fact, she's a little insulted by it. Stephen doesn't know what to make of any of it.

CHERYL

Really? Well what about you, Mr. Quaid?

QUAID

What about me?

CHERYL

What are you afraid of?

Quaid reacts as if this question never crossed his mind. For a moment, it's as if Quaid as finally met his philosophical match.

Quaid eventually turns his attention to his brandy.

QUAID

It's beyond analysis.

CHERYL

Beyond analysis my ass!

STEPHEN

Yes, your ass is beyond analysis. But what does that have to do with fear?

Cheryl casts a sideways glance at Stephen, whose head slumps to the bar as if he's about to pass out.

QUAID

What I fear is personal to me. It makes no sense in a larger context. The signs of my dread, the images my brain uses, if you like, to illustrate my fear... those signs are mild stuff in comparison with the real horror that's at the root of my personality.

Suddenly, Stephen is once again wide awake - but still drunk.

STEPHEN

I've got images! Pictures from my childhood that make me think of -

Stephen stops as he realizes he has the full attention of Quaid and Cheryl. It's a humbling moment. He starts to turn away from them and to his beer.

Cheryl places a hand on Stephen's arm, stopping him. He looks to her with surprise.

CHERYL

No. Go on.

Cheryl's contact gives Stephen a little courage.

STEPHEN

I find myself, sometimes, thinking of those pictures. Not deliberately... just when my concentration's idling.  
(MORE)

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

It's almost as though my mind went to them automatically.

CHERYL

Freud wrote about that.

QUAID

What?

CHERYL

Sigmund Freud. You may have heard of him? He wrote about the unconscious and the shadow. He thought it was where all of our fears resided.

QUAID

Mother fixations don't answer the problem. The real terror's in me, in all of us, pre-personality. Dread's there before we have any notion of ourselves as individuals. The thumb-nail, curled up on itself in the womb, feels fear.

CHERYL

Oh, like you'd remember.

QUAID

Maybe.

CHERYL

The womb? Please.

Quaid's sinister expression returns.

QUAID

I have knowledge you don't.

Cheryl and Quaid stand off. Stephen's unnerved by the tension between them.

CHERYL

You're an arrogant lying bastard, Quaid.

Quaid's sinister look is suddenly replaced with a brilliant, friendly smile.

QUAID

Perhaps I am.

Stephen realizes that something's not right here as he looks from Quaid to Cheryl.

Cheryl shakes her head and walks away from Quaid. Quaid quickly leaves his seat and follows her.

Cheryl's not stopping.

Stephen watches Cheryl and Quaid.

STEPHEN'S POV

QUAID (CONT'D)  
Cheryl, just a moment.

CHERYL  
I don't have anything -

QUAID  
I'm sorry.

Cheryl finally stops. As she turns, Quaid catches up to her.

As they speak, their dialogue gets softer. A droning ring slowly rises on the audio.

CHERYL  
Yeah. Uh huh.

QUAID  
Seriously. I can be exactly what you accused me to be. But it isn't often a woman calls me on it... or can even keep up with me.

Cheryl's still got her guard up.

QUAID (CONT'D)  
Give me a chance to redeem myself. Dinner perhaps?

ANGLE ON STEPHEN

The dialogue between Quaid and Cheryl is very faint. The droning ring has increased... and continues to get louder. Stephen reacts to the ring as if it's causing him pain.

CHERYL (O.S.)  
And why would I want to do that?

QUAID (O.S.)  
To appease your ego.

CHERYL (O.S.)  
My ego?

QUAID  
I notice a certain sense of superiority in you. Accepting my invitation to dinner, allowing yourself to be with someone you feel to be beneath you, would be your chance to prove me wrong.

STEPHEN  
No...

INT. SIX-YEAR-OLD STEPHEN'S BEDROOM (1983) -- NIGHT

Six-year-old Stephen (Steve) lies in the bed in the fetal position, his hands tightly covering his ears. He's in pain.

The droning ring that started in the last scene carries over to this one - only now it's quite unbearable, even for the audience.

Steve screams -

We hear nothing but the droning ring, going on and on, getting louder and louder. Steve can't stand it.

The door to the room opens. Steve turns towards it -

STEVE'S POV

Everything is distorted... a nightmarish vision.

There's someone at the door... but it looks like a DEMON.

It slowly moves towards Steve. It appears to be saying something.

That something slowly becomes audible. As it does, the droning ring starts to fade.

As the demon gets closer, we can make out its words -

A lullaby.

The lullaby soon replaces the droning ring.

BACK TO SCENE

We now see that the demon is actually STEVE'S MOTHER, a woman in her early thirties who looks almost as traumatized as her young son. She takes Steve into her arms as she continues the lullaby.

Steve soon calms and slowly falls asleep.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. UNIVERSITY PUB -- NIGHT

QUAID

Interesting.

Quaid sits at the bar with Stephen, who's looking rather downtrodden. Quaid isn't wearing his trademark black leather jacket.

QUAID (CONT'D)

And you say your hearing returned the year after the accident.

STEPHEN

Yes. Right around my seventh birthday. But I'll never forget...

Stephen takes a sip of his beer. For a while, he and Quaid sit in silence. Eventually...

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

So. You still seeing Cheryl?

Quaid doesn't respond.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

I haven't seen you much. But when I do,  
you were always with her.

Still no reaction from Quaid.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

And you look a bit... whipped, I should  
say.

This gets a reaction from Quaid.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You didn't give her your leather, did  
you?

QUAID

Certainly not. She's a vegetarian. So  
damned passionate about it she can't  
even bear to look in a butcher's shop.  
Turned off by my jacket, too.

STEPHEN

Turned off? That mean you're not -

Quaid looks to Stephen as if the comment is beneath him. Properly  
chastised, Stephen turns his attention back to his beer.

QUAID

She says she's so healthy, so balanced.  
Shit! I'll find it -

STEPHEN

Find what?

QUAID

The fear.

Stephen doesn't like the sound of that.

STEPHEN

You're not going to -

QUAID

Harm her? Not in any way. Any damage  
done to her will be strictly self-  
inflicted.

Quaid turns to face Stephen. His stare is hypnotic, which only  
frightens Stephen more than he already may be.

QUAID (CONT'D)

It's about time we learned to trust one  
another. Between the two of us -

STEPHEN

I don't think I want to hear -

QUAID

We have to touch the beast, Stephen!



STEPHEN

Damn the beast! I don't want to hear!

Stephen gets up from his seat and prepares to leave.

QUAID

We're friends, Stephen.

STEPHEN

Sure! Whatever!

QUAID

Then respect that.

Stephen looks at Quaid one final time. There's something in the man's expression that greatly disturbs him.

STEPHEN

Respect what, Quaid?

Quaid menacingly brings a single finger to his lips, suggesting silence.

QUAID

Not a word.

FADE OUT:

NARRATOR (V.O.)

There is no delight the equal of dread...  
as long as it's someone else's.

FADE IN:

EXT. UNIVERSITY LIBRARY -- AFTERNOON

It's autumn. Banners and posters hint at the beginning of a new school year. Not many STUDENTS have returned, evident from the lack of people in this establishing shot.

INT. UNIVERSITY LIBRARY -- AFTERNOON

The library, like the pub, is a rather mood-ridden place. The shelves' maze-like proximity to one another adds a touch of claustrophobia.

Stephen - stack of books in one hand, checklist in the other - moves down one of the aisles. He stops at a particular section and scans the books in front of him.

QUAID (O.S.)

Early to work...

Startled, Stephen drops his books. He turns to pick them up and finds that Quaid has beaten him to it.

Stephen also notices that Quaid has grown a mustache.

Quaid hands the book to Stephen.

QUAID (CONT'D)  
I'm impressed, Stephen.

STEPHEN  
With what?

QUAID  
Your enthusiasm for the job.

STEPHEN  
Oh.

Stephen stares at Quaid for a moment, but soon returns to his search for books. Quaid watches in silence until...

QUAID  
What are you looking for?

STEPHEN  
Something on Bentham.

QUAID  
I've got "Principles of Morals and  
Legislation." Will that do?

Stephen looks suspiciously at Quaid.

QUAID (CONT'D)  
Come to think of it, I believe it's the  
library copy I've got. I'll give it to  
you.

STEPHEN  
Thanks.

Stephen looks back at his list and then heads down the aisle on another hunt. Quaid follows at a short distance.

It kind of feels like Quaid's stalking Stephen.

QUAID  
Good holiday?

STEPHEN  
Yes. Thank you. You?

QUAID  
Very rewarding.

Stephen looks to Quaid. Quaid doesn't look at Stephen, as if he's remembering something with great pride.

There's something in Quaid's expression...

QUAID (CONT'D)  
I've got some wonderful photographs and  
video.

STEPHEN  
Of what?

Quaid's sinister demeanor disappears as quickly as it appeared. He looks to Stephen.

QUAID  
Holiday snaps.

Stephen is still wary of Quaid. Then something dawns on him.

STEPHEN  
You were with Cheryl, weren't you?

QUAID  
Well...

STEPHEN  
That's what's so strange about you! The mighty Quaid has been tamed by Cheryl Fromm! Which explains that ridiculous mustache!

Quaid self-consciously touches his moustache.

QUAID  
It's nothing like that. But you won't believe these snaps.

STEPHEN  
Really? Never figured you for much of a photographer.

QUAID  
Oh... it's become a passion of mine.

Quaid beams with pride.

This only serves to remind Stephen that he should be frightened.

QUAID (CONT'D)  
You've simply got to come see them.

STEPHEN  
I -

QUAID  
Tonight. When you come for the book.

Stephen merely stares at Quaid.

QUAID (CONT'D)  
I've got a house all to myself these days. Round the corner from the Maternity Hospital, in Pilgrim Street. Number sixty-four. Some time after nine?

Stephen manages a nod.

QUAID (CONT'D)  
Remember. Number sixty-four.

Quaid gives Stephen a friendly pat on the arm and then heads away.

Stephen isn't so sure about this.

EXT. PILGRIM STREET -- NIGHT

We catch the street sign and then see the rest of the street. Most of the houses are nearly rubble or in the process of being knocked down. It's as if the area were already dead and the people - all but Quaid - have been wise enough to get out.

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Two wine glasses clink together.

Quaid and Stephen - both pretty far drunk - are the holders of the wine glasses. Both sit in chairs, the only furniture in the room save a table between them. On this table is a half-empty bottle of red wine and a lamp.

Several other bottles of wine lie on the floor.

The house interior is bare to the point of being Spartan. No pictures on the walls; no decoration of any kind. Quaid's books - and there are quite literally hundreds of them - are piled on the floor in no particular order.

QUAID

So the door opens wider. The girl's little sister stands there and says, "Dad says that either you have to blow him, mom will or I have to. But could you please get off the damned speaker?"

Stephen breaks into hysterical laughter. Quaid joins him.

After a time...

STEPHEN

I can't believe it!

QUAID

It was a joke! I never said it really happened!

STEPHEN

No, dammit! I've been here for hours... and not one peep from you about dread, fears, and all that other crap!

Quaid smiles at Stephen... and then becomes stone cold sober as his smile fades.

QUAID

I was simply waiting until you were ready.

Stephen tries to act sober, but with the onset of paranoia he simply can't do it.

Quaid leaves the room. Stephen doesn't know what to do.

After a few moments, Quaid reenters, pushing a rolling nightstand in front of him. On the nightstand is a TV/VCR combo. An envelope and the remote control rest on top of the TV.

The TV's power cord, attached to an extension cord, drags out of the room from which Quaid grabbed the nightstand.

Quaid positions the nightstand in front of the two chairs. He then takes the remote and the envelope and returns to his chair. Once there, he turns out the lamp, plunging the room into darkness.

QUAID (CONT'D)

Tell you the truth, Stephen, I'm not sure I should show this to you.

STEPHEN

Why not? It's just holiday snaps... right?

Quaid turns on the TV. The blue screen's light bathes Quaid, making him appear even more sinister.

QUAID

I'm into serious stuff, Stephen.

Stephen's paranoia rises.

STEPHEN

And you don't think I'm serious enough, is that it?

Quaid allows himself a slight smile. Stephen suddenly wishes he could take his words back.

QUAID

You remember Cheryl.

Stephen manages a nod.

QUAID (CONT'D)

She won't be coming back this term.

STEPHEN

Oh.

QUAID

She had a... revelation.

STEPHEN

What do you mean?

QUAID

She was always so calm, wasn't she. Calm, cool and collected. And all she wanted was a good fuck.

Quaid's unexpected vulgarity breaks some of the tension.

STEPHEN

Ah Ha! The magnificent Quaid isn't above the carnal sins of the flesh! And here I thought you were afraid of -

QUAID

Please!

(MORE)

QUAID (CONT'D)

Cheryl Fromm was an ignorant cow. She was pretentious, weak and stupid. But she wouldn't give. She wouldn't give a fucking thing.

STEPHEN

Wait a minute. You said she wanted a good fuck.

QUAID

Oh she'd drop her knickers as soon as look at you. It was her fears she wouldn't give...

Quaid is silent. Stephen doesn't know what to make of this.

Soon Quaid's sinister smile returns.

QUAID (CONT'D)

But I persuaded her, in the fullness of the time we spent together here.

Stephen doesn't like this one bit.

Quaid hands the envelope to Stephen.

QUAID (CONT'D)

Open it.

Hesitantly, Stephen does as told. Inside he finds a stack of photograph printouts. He struggles in the blue light from the TV to see the photographs' content.

These grainy, black and white printouts reveal a small, featureless room. There's a bare lightbulb hanging from the ceiling.

QUAID (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I locked her away, you see.

A sleeping bag lies along the wall. A small bucket with a towel haphazardly thrown over it is next to that.

QUAID (O.S.) (CONT'D)

In a room upstairs.

A table and chair rest across the room from the sleeping bag.

QUAID (O.S.) (CONT'D)

That's why I chose to live in this neighborhood.

On the table, on an unpatterned plate, is a slab of appetizing beef. A jug of water rests next to the beef.

QUAID (O.S.) (CONT'D)

No neighbors to interfere with my experiment.

At the bottom corner of the image is a date and time stamp, labeling the image as from the previous summer.

Stephen looks worried, but tries to cover this. The alcohol isn't helping. Quaid appears to be in his own, sinister element.

QUAID (CONT'D)  
I concealed a video camera in the room.  
Those pictures are from the videotape.

STEPHEN  
This looks like... a cell.

Quaid doesn't care for Stephen's description.

QUAID  
I gave her all the amenities she needed  
to survive. I didn't intend for her to  
turn into an animal.

STEPHEN  
Intend?

Quaid ignores the remark.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)  
But she's a vegetarian. The beef wouldn't -

QUAID  
That, dear Stephen, is where the  
experiment begins.

Quaid raises the remote control and presses play. We can tell the blue screen disappears, but not what's on the TV.

Stephen's fear mounts.

On the TV, the blue screen is replaced with a shot similar to that of the photograph, save this time Cheryl lies on the sleeping bag. The time stamp reads five A.M.

A visual indicator on the screen shows that Quaid's turning up the volume.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1

We are now fully in the world of the video - and still in grainy black and white footage. Cheryl wakes up, looks at her surroundings.

CHERYL  
What the...

Cheryl looks across the room.

The meat sits there in all its splendor.

Cheryl reacts with both anger and revulsion. She rushes to the door and hammers against it, tries the doorknob.

The door doesn't budge.

CHERYL (CONT'D)  
Quaid! Goddamn you, you bastard!

With a final, unsuccessful pull on the doorknob, Cheryl turns back to look at the room. Again she sees the meat. She's revolted.

Cheryl returns to the sleeping bag and sits down in a huff. There's a fierce look of determination in her eyes.

QUAID (V.O.)

I do believe she thought she could outwait me.

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT -- MOMENTS LATER

STEPHEN

You locked her in there!

QUAID

Carried her across the threshold myself. Quite romantic, actually.

STEPHEN

But she had no idea -

QUAID

We'd talked of dread often enough. She knew what I wanted to discover. Knew I needed a guinea pig. She soon caught on.

Quaid motions for Stephen to return his attention to the videotape. Stephen does as commanded.

We skip from image to image.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1

Cheryl sits patiently. She happens to look up -

The meat just sits there.

Cheryl angrily turns away from the meat.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl sleeps peacefully, fully extended on the sleeping bag.

She sweats.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl drinks from the jug of water, careful to keep her back to the meat on the table.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl, naked to the waist, uses the bucket of water and the towel to wash herself.



INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl asleep again - but this time she's balled up in the fetus position.

STEPHEN (V.O.)  
How long has she been in there?

In a closer shot of Cheryl, we can see she appears to be whimpering. She doesn't look very good at all.

QUAID (V.O.)  
About fourteen hours. No windows, no change in light... I'd say her body-clock is pretty fucked up right now.

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Stephen looks suspiciously at Quaid.

STEPHEN  
How long was she in there?

Quaid returns Stephen's gaze. He then pours himself another glass of wine.

QUAID  
Until my point was proven.

Stephen looks back to the TV.

On the TV screen we see Cheryl sitting up on the sleeping bag, her arms around her legs, which are pulled close to her chest. She's buried her face in her knees.

The time stamp lets us know that a full day and a half has passed.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

We get a closer shot of Cheryl. Her head slowly rises so that we can see her eyes. They look very haggard, desperate. She looks over at the table.

The meat is starting to look a bit ripe.

Cheryl violently turns away from the meat.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl greedily drinks from the jug of water. As she finishes, she looks up -

The meat, looking a bit dark and hardened, rests nearby.

Cheryl drops the bucket of water and rushes back to the comfort of the sleeping bag, doing her best to bury herself in its folds.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl is once again asleep. She's so folded up it looks as if she's trying to swallow herself.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl stands before the meat. It's looking rather inedible.

NEW ANGLE

Cheryl gingerly extends a hand towards the meat.

The image freezes.

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

From over Quaid's shoulder we see the frozen image on the TV. As Quaid speaks we slowly move around him.

QUAID

This is where the cracks start to show.

We can see more of Quaid. He's enjoying this way too much. It's a sadistic pleasure...

QUAID (CONT'D)

This is where the dread begins.

Stephen looks to Quaid as if the man has gone insane. He then holds up one of the photographs.

It's a shot of the image we saw frozen on screen, save this image has been enhanced so that we can see the dread on Cheryl's face. It is most definitely not a pretty sight.

The picture lowers and we can see the static that glosses over the TV. The next image that comes up reveals Cheryl at the door, beating furiously upon it.

The time stamp shows us that another day has passed.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1

Cheryl, now physically a shadow of her former wet-dream self, beats on the door, screaming nothing in particular.

Cheryl eventually tires of her assault and backs away from the door. She breaks into sobs, falls to her knees and cries.

Behind her we can see the meat on the table. It's starting to rot.

Cheryl, still in tears, turns to look behind her and sees the meat.

It only causes her to cry more violently.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl sits in the middle of the room, her back to the meat. But she can't help looking over her shoulder at it.

Just as quickly as she looked, Cheryl looks away. Her entire body tenses in an effort to never look at the meat again.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl huddles in the corner asleep. She shakes.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl is on the sleeping bag trying to sleep. But she continuously slaps at her hair as if something's in it.

STEPHEN (V.O.)  
What the hell is wrong with her?

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Quaid drinks from his wine as if nothing is at all the matter. Stephen is visibly shaken by the Cheryl video.

QUAID  
She's beginning to hallucinate.

STEPHEN  
Because you're starving her!

QUAID  
She can go ten days without eating rather easily. Fasts are quite common in most countries, actually. She was too fat anyway.

Stephen simply cannot believe this.

Yet he can't tear himself away from the TV...

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl washes again. She happens to look over her shoulder and catches a glimpse of the meat.

Cheryl stops washing, just stares at the meat.

The meat is starting to ripen. Flies flitter around it.

Cheryl turns and slowly and, after wrapping the towel around herself, walks towards the meat.

The meat is still there.

Cheryl is almost at the meat.

The meat just sits there.

Until it leaps at Cheryl.

Cheryl scrambles away from the meat. It's all she can do to crawl over to the far side of the room and bury herself in the folds of the sleeping bag, away from the meat -

...which rests as it always has on the table.

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Stephen has gathered enough courage to become indignant.

STEPHEN

This has gone on long enough!

Quaid laughs.

QUAID

This isn't a live feed, Stephen. It's already over for her. Or are you not up to the more serious stuff?

Stephen doesn't know what to say.

Quaid picks up the remote control and tosses it to Stephen.

QUAID (CONT'D)

You can end your suffering if you like.

Stephen blankly looks at the remote control.

QUAID (CONT'D)

The interesting fact is that the longer Cheryl waits to eat, the more the meat will rot. Thus the more disgusted she will become with what she thinks she has to do to survive.

Stephen looks to Quaid, who looks like he's divining some ancient mystery to no one in particular.

QUAID (CONT'D)

Our dear Cheryl is trapped with her own horror of meat on the one hand, and her dread of dying on the other.

Quaid's focus returns to Stephen.

QUAID (CONT'D)

Don't you want to see which is going to give first?

Stephen looks to Quaid, then back at the remote control.

After a moment, Stephen puts the remote control back on the table. Quaid picks it up and aims at the TV.

QUAID (CONT'D)

I'll spare you some of the boredom and cut to the really good part.

We see the tape in fast forward; more images of Cheryl sleeping, swatting imaginary objects, staring at the meat, all with noticeable jump cuts between each.

The tape returns to normal speed with Cheryl standing a few feet away from the meat, staring at it as if trying to hypnotize it.

The time stamp tells us that this is day five.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1

Cheryl stares intently at the meat. She slowly shuffles over to it, continues to stare.

She extends a tentative hand, pokes the meat.

Flies hover around the meat. It's rather ripe, complete with some maggots starting to develop.

Cheryl finds an area of meat that is ripe, but not covered in fly eggs. She gingerly tears a piece of meat away.

She holds the torn piece of meat up in front of her. And then...

Cheryl gingerly takes a bite of the meat.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl vomits in the bucket.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl rushes the table. She grabs the plate on which the meat sits and throws it - meat and all - against the far wall. She grabs the bucket of water and throws that, too.

Cheryl ends her tirade by overturning the table.

She then stands in the center of the room, still very agitated.

But then Cheryl starts to break down. The tears come; she crumples to her knees, then curls into a fetal position.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl, still in her fetal ball, stares defiantly at the meat on the floor. Note that the meat is little more than a ball of rot and slime complete with budding maggots and flies.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl has finally fallen asleep. She has placed the table on its side so that the table top is between her and the meat.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl beats her head against the door in a futile fit of rebellion and frustration.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl leans heavily against the door.

CHERYL

Please...

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Cheryl sits in the shelter of the table. The rancid meat is in front of her. She stares at it...

Cheryl picks up the meat and casually eats.

CUT TO BLUE:

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

The tape has ended; the screen is once again blue, bathing both Quaid and Stephen in its light.

QUAID

It startled me how suddenly she gave in.

Quaid looks to Stephen.

Stephen turns from Quaid and promptly vomits. The envelope with the photograph printouts falls to the floor.

It takes Stephen a few moments to gather himself. When he does, he turns to look at Quaid -

Quaid is gone.

Stephen peers through the darkness, but can't make anything out. He switches on the lamp -

But just as the lamp comes on, both it and the TV turn off.

Stephen is left alone in the silent dark.

He tries the lamp again - no luck there.

After what seems like a lifetime...

QUAID (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You're probably curious what happened to Cheryl.

Stephen doesn't answer. He's busy scanning the dark for a trace of Quaid, but coming up empty.

QUAID (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I brought her some vegetarian food, some water. She was very quiet. Just drank and ate. And then she packed her things and left.

STEPHEN

I'm surprised she didn't kill you.

Stephen stumbles over one of the chairs. He tries his best to conceal this from Quaid - wherever he is.

QUAID (O.S.)

She knew what I'd done, and why I'd done it. It was actually quite an education for her.

STEPHEN

So you're a teacher now?

QUAID (O.S.)

Yes. I guess you can say I am. I'm teaching people to confront the beast that is dread.

Quaid's gloved hand clamps over Stephen's mouth and nose. Stephen's hands go to battle this new threat but Quaid's other arm holds Stephen at bay.

Stephen becomes weak... as if gassed by something in the glove.

QUAID (CONT'D)

And I'm just getting started...

Stephen slowly loses consciousness.

FADE OUT:

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #2

Stephen lies unconscious on a grill of some kind. His ankle is chained to the grill.

Stephen lies unconscious for several more moments... and then his hand moves. Slowly he wakes. Stephen looks around him.

The room is dark, the only source of light coming from a lamp on the wall. If the first experimentation room looked like a cell, this one most definitely is a cell.

The room is actually a round shaft, about twenty feet wide, and made of steel. Four latches keep the grill balanced to the wall.

Stephen sits in one spot on the grid. He looks down -

He can't see a thing below him.

Stephen reaches through the grid and grasps at the air beneath him. Stretch as he does, he can't feel anything.

Stephen continues to stare down into the darkness.

STEPHEN

Nothing goes on forever...

Stephen pulls his arm back up and looks skyward. The same darkness that met him below meets him above.

Worry clouds Stephen's face.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Help! Can anybody hear me?!

Nothing but an echo of Stephen's own words.

Then Stephen notices something on the wall above him -

A video camera, complete with an antenna.

Stephen's worry turns to anger.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Damn you, Quaid! Damn -

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

On a TV set we see an image of Stephen, still cursing at the camera, in experimentation room #2. On top of the TV set is a hi-tech satellite receiver.

Quaid sits in one of the chairs in front of the TV. He intently watches the image in front of him.

QUAID

Just a word, Stephen. One word will do... let me know what you dread...

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #2

Stephen yells in frustration. His screaming gives way to tears and sobs. Eventually, these subside as well.

STEPHEN

He wouldn't... wouldn't leave me here to die... but that... that's the limit, isn't it? That's the point at which I confront...

Stephen grips his head as if it's hurting.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

No!

Stephen lays back down on the grid and tries to be as calm and rational as he can.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

If he wants to see dread, he'll have to see his own.

Stephen suddenly stops as if struck with an epiphany.



STEPHEN (CONT'D)  
That's it! That's it, isn't, Quaid?

Stephen looks up to the camera.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)  
You can't face your own fears, so you  
find it in others! That's your secret,  
isn't it?

Defiance starts to press away Stephen's fear.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)  
Well not this time, Quaid! You will  
lose!

Stephen turns away from the camera and lies down.

Soon, he falls asleep.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #2 -- LATER

Stephen wakes - and immediately feels pain, a headache. He reaches  
up to his head -

A vise-like contraption has been placed on his head. It effectively  
covers his ears. Stephen moves -

He realizes that he can't hear a single thing.

Neither can the audience.

Stephen rattles the chain around his ankle - nothing.

He screams -

Not a sound.

Panic overtakes Stephen. He grapples with the contraption, but is  
unable to get the thing off his head.

Suddenly, Stephen stops moving. He consciously wills himself to  
be calm. After a while, it seems to be working.

And then we hear the beating of Stephen's heart and breathing -  
barely audible at first, but growing louder.

Stephen struggles to maintain control.

Then another sound begins... the droning ring from Stephen's  
childhood. It gets louder, competing with the sound of Stephen's  
heart and breathing for dominance in Stephen's mind.

Stephen's hands involuntarily go to his ears in an attempt to block  
out the sounds, but the droning ring just gets louder, drowning  
out the heartbeat and breathing.

Stephen screams, but the scream is not heard.

Stephen collapses face down on the grid. The droning continues,  
becoming the only sound we hear.

Stephen passes in and out of consciousness as the droning continues at an irritating volume.

MONTAGE (MIXED WITH IMAGES OF STEPHEN GOING INSANE)

Quaid, when he first met Stephen.

Cheryl beating against the door.

Steve, screaming for his mother.

Cheryl, several days into her ordeal, staring at the meat like a woman gone mad.

The demonic mother image that approached Steve.

Cheryl eating the meat.

Steve paralyzed with fear and pain.

END MONTAGE

Eventually Stephen, totally exhausted, passes out.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #2 -- LATER

Stephen slowly wakes. The droning ring never left him.

Stephen looks as if he's gone over the edge in a big way.

He looks down at his shoe and notices that it has nearly come off his foot. Stephen slowly moves to correct the problem -

The shoe comes off his foot and rolls a few inches away, precariously balanced on the grill. Stephen panics. He reaches for the shoe -

The entire grill starts to lean with the direction of his weight. The shoe nearly falls.

Stephen pulls back to where he was. He looks back at the shoe and his feet - the chain is still attached to his ankle. Stephen looks to the four latches that held the grid in place -

One of them is gone.

Stephen looks back to the shoe, pleading with it not to fall. He stretches ever so carefully.

The grill teeters.

Stephen pulls back.

After taking a moment to gather some courage, Stephen lunges for the shoe -

The grill tilts too far. The shoe falls through the grill.

Stephen barely holds himself on the grill. He looks through the grill and down after the shoe, which quickly disappears into the darkness below.

Stephen looks as if his dog had just died.

He closes his eyes in frustration. Again, the tears come.

Stephen suddenly looks after the shoe. He crawls forward and sticks his hand through the grill as if to dig after the shoe.

The grill teeters again. Stephen starts to slide. He pulls his hand back up and uses both hands to support himself. He happens to look back at his feet -

The chain is still around his ankle, but the chain is not attached to the grill.

Panic grips Stephen. He tries to climb back towards the center of the grill, but only upsets its balance more.

A second latch breaks away. The grill end with Stephen on it buckles, bouncing Stephen towards the grill edge.

Stephen struggles to hang on.

The droning ring becomes louder.

Stephen uses one hand to cover his ear. His other hand starts to lose its hold on the grille.

The look on Stephen's face is that of his terrified, younger self.

STEPHEN

Mama! Mama!

We actually hear Stephen this time.

But in his crying out he loses his grip and slides away into the darkness.

FADE OUT:

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #2 -- LATER

Silence.

A door opens; light shines across Stephen, who lies on the ground in a state of near unconsciousness. He has no idea what's going on as he looks to the light.

A man steps into the light, his silhouette making quite the sinister impression. As he steps towards Stephen, we see that the man wears a Mickey Mouse mask (we'll call him MICKEY MOUSE MAN).

Mickey Mouse man grabs Stephen by his ankles and drags him towards the entrance. Stephen looks back above and behind him -

He sees that the grill, now hanging precariously by two latches, was only eight feet off the ground.

Stephen passes out again.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION ROOM #1 -- LATER

Stephen wakes on the floor in this room. The contraption has been removed from his head.

The room is much cleaner than when we last saw it on the video; the table is back with a single chair. On the table is a pitcher of water, a glass and some sandwiches.

Stephen lies on the floor for some time.

The door to the room opens; Stephen barely acknowledges it. Mickey Mouse man enters. He lifts Stephen up and into the chair.

STEPHEN

I want my mama.

MICKEY MOUSE MAN

Drink something. Then everything -

STEPHEN

I want my mama!

Stephen swings his arm and knocks the pitcher to the floor. Before Mickey Mouse Man can react, Stephen upends the table and bolts for the door.

Mickey Mouse man looks after Stephen. He slowly remove his mask.

It's Quaid.

From the look on his face we can tell he's quite pleased with himself. Quaid replaces his mask and heads after Stephen.

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT -- MOMENTS LATER

Stephen tears into the room. He stumbles on one of the chairs, which had been placed near the entranceway. Stephen fights it away and struggles to his feet -

Only to be shoved over by Quaid.

Stephen falls into the table, scattered a stack of papers that lay on top of the table. Something about the papers catches Stephen's eye. He is suddenly calmed (somewhat) as he looks at them.

The papers are all pictures, some with writing, most not. There is a common theme among the pictures - ax murders. The victims are a FORTY-ISH MAN AND WOMAN, and a TEEN-AGE GIRL.

Stephen is completely fascinated by the pictures. He looks behind him, sees Quaid in the Mickey Mouse mask.

STEPHEN

Axes. You collect...

Stephen turns back to the pictures.

Behind him, Quaid picks up the chair. He then prepares to hit Stephen. As the chair comes down we -

CUT TO BLACK:

EXT. ALLEY -- NIGHT

This area actually makes Pilgrim Street look like splendor in comparison. Stephen, unconscious, lies in a pile of trash.

And then someone unseen kicks him.

It takes Stephen a few moments to wake, but when he does he looks up at the person agitating him. All he can see is a silhouette standing in the streetlight.

STEPHEN

No!

Stephen does his best to scuttle away from his attacker, but the trash and debris trips him up. What was supposed to be a run turns into a pathetic tumble and crawl.

POLICEMAN (O.S.)

See here, son! I'm not gonna hurt you!

The calm nature of the voice stops Stephen. He looks behind him and sees a uniformed POLICEMAN. The policeman pulls out a flashlight and shines it at Stephen, who holds up a hand to block the light.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ! You're in a right fucking state, aren't you? Where do you live?

Stephen can't think of anything to say.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)

Blast. At least get on your feet.

Stephen struggles, but he's having a time of it. Frustrated, the policeman steps in and helps Stephen up.

Stephen stands for a moment, but quickly loses his footing and falls against a nearby wall.

The policeman is disgusted with Stephen's appearance and attitude.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)

Can you at least give me your name?

Stephen looks as if that's an impossible question.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)

Your name, lad.

Stephen can't handle the interrogation. He starts to slide down the wall. The policeman grabs him.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)  
Get a hold of yourself! Now what's your  
stinking name?

It's all too intense for Stephen.

STEPHEN  
Home.

POLICEMAN  
I'll get you home if... are you high on  
something?

Stephen doesn't know what to say or do. This only makes the  
policeman angrier.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)  
You are aren't you?

The policeman shoves Stephen against the wall.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)  
You're one of those rich pretty boys  
from the university. Came slumming to  
find something to shove into your veins,  
didn't you?

The policeman kicks Stephen in the stomach.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)  
Didn't expect a bull to stop you, did  
you?

The policeman kicks Stephen again. The boy tries to move away,  
but doesn't have the energy to do it.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)  
Well this is going to be an education  
you can take back to -

STEPHEN  
I want my mama!

This surprises the policeman. He halts his assault and stares at  
the pitiful boy in front of him.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)  
I want my mama.

Sympathy replaces the anger on the policeman's face. Shaking his  
head, he reaches down and helps Stephen up.

POLICEMAN  
Come on, son.

EXT. NIGHT HOSTEL -- NIGHT

The place doesn't look much better than the alley in which the  
policeman found Stephen.

INT. NIGHT HOSTEL, OBSERVATION ROOM -- NIGHT

Two HOSTEL WORKERS stand outside the two-way mirror that looks into the observation room. Stephen, in a state of near catatonia, sits in a chair in the observation room.

HOSTEL WORKER #1

No identification, no sense of who he was. Just kept crying for his mother.

HOSTEL WORKER #2 (CONT'D)

There's a good chance he is on something - not like we can do a tox screening here or anything.

HOSTEL WORKER #1

I don't think that's it. Seen many a junkie in my day and he's way beyond that.

The hostel workers look back at poor, pitiful Stephen.

INT. NIGHT HOSTEL, DORMITORY -- LATER

The room is set up much like a barracks with several bunk beds lining either side of the long room. The room is badly lit. All types of DERELICTS - coughing, muttering - wander about.

Stephen, dressed in mismatched clothes that are some parts too big and some parts too small, shambles amongst the derelicts. He tries his best to avoid them as he moves to a bed.

Stephen eventually finds a bed and pulls himself in, holding his blanket as if it were a security blanket.

STEPHEN

Gentle Jesus, meek and mild, look upon this little child. Pity my...

Stephen draws a blank for a moment.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Pity my... simplicity.

Stephen looks pleased with himself.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Suffer me to come to thee.

With that, Stephen smiles for the first time in a long while. He settles down to sleep.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Like the other room in the apartment, the bedroom is sparsely decorated. The furniture consists of nothing more than a bed, nightstand and small lamp.

The door to the room is open and we can see the stairs from across the hall.

Quaid sleeps quietly.

And then we hear someone whistling.

The stairs creak, as if someone were dancing up them.

Quaid is unmoved.

We look past Quaid and to the stairs. Someone - we'll call him DANCER - makes his way up the stairs, whistling all the while. There's something in his hands -

An ax.

Dancer whistles and dances up the stairs, across the hall into the room with Quaid. Moonlight catches dancer; he appears to be wearing a clown costume.

We can also see his malevolent smile...

Quaid hasn't woken.

Dancer approaches Quaid, raises the ax -

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Quaid wakes screaming. Now he's wide awake and rigid with fear, listening for the slightest sound.

He starts as he thinks he hears something. Quaid flips on the light -

Nothing. He's alone.

Quaid takes a look through the open door, sees that there's nothing at the top of the stairs across the hall.

Quaid laughs, shakes his head. He then flips off the light and settles into bed.

Note the bottle of brandy next to the lamp.

Before he closes his eyes, Quaid takes one last look at the stairs.

Still nothing.

Content, Quaid closes his eyes.

INT. NIGHT HOSTEL, DORMITORY -- NIGHT

Stephen wakes to shouting. Groggy, he sits up and looks about.

Four beds down from him two derelicts are in a knockdown, drag out fight. However, they fight like two girls, using tactics like hair pulling and clawing.



FIGHTING DERELICT

I will not go to Finchley Road! You  
will not make me! Don't strike me! I'm  
not your man! I'm not!

This only makes the other combatant angrier.

A crowd gathers to watch the fight.

The non-speaking derelict then picks up his opponent and slams him down hard on the ground.

In the process, the fallen derelict's shoe comes off and rolls away from him - right towards Stephen.

Stephen is captivated by the shoe. As he watches it roll, he remembers the grill and his own shoe, the shoe falling...

Stephen closes his eyes, thinks.

In his mind's eye he sees his shoe fall.

Stephen thinks harder.

In his mind's eye Stephen sees Pilgrim Street.

Stephen opens his eyes -

They are the eyes of a total psychotic with a mission.

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Quaid wakes with a start and immediately flips on the light. He looks to the stairs -

Nothing.

Quaid takes a moment to get a hold of himself. He grabs the bottle of brandy and takes a long swig.

QUAID

Never had the dream twice in one night...

Quaid takes another swig of the brandy and then sets it back on the nightstand. He turns off the light and tries to go back to sleep, but all he does is toss and turn.

INT. NIGHT HOSTEL, DORMITORY -- CONTINUOUS

Stephen, suddenly full of purpose, climbs out of bed. He strides past the group watching the fight and heads for the door.

Before he leaves the room, something catches Stephen's eye. He turns, looks... and smiles a malevolent - yet familiar - smile.

Stephen walks towards whatever it is he's seen.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- LATER

We look towards the stairs.

Again we hear the whistling. Then movement up the steps as if someone is dancing their way up.

Quaid wakes with a start. In his hurry to turn on the lamp he knocks it to the floor, shattering it.

Quaid listens.

Nothing.

Quaid closes his eyes and puts his hands to his head.

QUAID  
Dammit man! Get a fucking hold of  
yourself!

And then the whistling continues.

Quaid quickly glances towards the stairs -

He sees nothing.

Now we hear the dancing up the stairs.

Apprehension grips Quaid as he continues to stare at the stairs.

Dancer dances his way up the stairs. He's brought his ax.

Quaid is paralyzed with fear.

With dread.

QUAID (CONT'D)  
No! This is just a dream!

Dancer is at the top of the stairs, still dancing and whistling.

QUAID (CONT'D)  
I know only fragile minds that shatter  
and crumble when confronted with their  
darkest fears!

Dancer moves across the hallway.

QUAID (CONT'D)  
There are no murderous clowns!

Dancer moves into the room with Quaid. The moonlight hits him.

In his night hostel clothes and pale, bloodied face, dancer indeed looks like a clown.

But it's not a clown.

It's Stephen.

And he has a fire ax.

Quaid's fear turns to surprise.

QUAID (CONT'D)

Stephen.

Dancer - Stephen - stops at the door to the room. He looks to Quaid.

Quaid is speaking, but Stephen - nor the audience - can't hear a single word.

Stephen's malevolent smile gets even meaner. He raises the ax in the air and charges straight at Quaid.

Quaid screams -

We hear nothing.

Stephen brings the ax down -

It tears through the flesh of Quaid's arm.

All we hear is the swing of the ax and its cutting of flesh. We hear none of Quaid's screaming or pleading.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

There are worse things in the world than  
dread. Worse than death itself.

Quaid tries to move out of the way, but Stephen swings the ax again, tearing into the flesh of Quaid's thigh.

Quaid stumbles out of the bed and falls helplessly to the ground.

Stephen swings again, connects.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

There is pain without the hope of healing.  
There is life that refuses to end, long  
after the mind has begged the body to  
cease.

Quaid looks back at Stephen; all he sees is a wall of blood - his blood - flying into the air. And there's Stephen behind it, the ax always swinging, still dancing around.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But the worst thing of all?

Stephen moves back, prepares for the final swing -

CUT TO BLACK:

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Dreams that come true.

Silence for a long moment. Then -

INT. QUAID'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

In a quick flash we see Quaid - horrified - as the ax comes down once more. Just before it hits we -

CUT TO BLACK:

Just in time to hear the sickening thunk of ax into flesh.

THE END