

M.I.T. CAN BE MURDER

by

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Based on the novel by the same name by Frank Michael Weyer

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Romantic Murder Mystery

B&W - EXT. M.I.T. CAMPUS - NIGHT

The camera shows a long shot of the M.I.T. Campus. It is snowing. A caption appears on the screen.

CAPTION

The compulsion to work, often at the exclusion of all other activities, can warp the minds and bodies of students, sometimes with tragic results. . . . M.I.T. should include a warning label with its offers of admission -- "WARNING: The Institute May Be Hazardous To Your Health!" Quote from "The Tech," M.I.T. Student Newspaper, May 1988.

B&W - EXT. M.I.T. STUDENT CENTER - NIGHT

A sign on the back door of the M.I.T. student store lists the opening hours as 7 AM to midnight, everyday. A caption says "M.I.T. Campus - Cambridge, Massachusetts - December 1979."

The door opens. MARIA, an attractive 20 year old with long dark hair, dressed in jeans and a windbreaker, appears in the doorway.

MALE STORE CLERK (O.S.)

Maria, you're going to freeze to death in that flimsy windbreaker. It's snowing for Christ's sake! Let me give you a ride home.

MARIA

My apartment is ten minutes away. I'll be fine. See you tomorrow!

Maria shuts the door and walks away down the snow covered walkway.

B&W - EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - NIGHT

Maria walks past the Ashdown House graduate student dormitory. She dashes across Memorial Drive and heads across Harvard Bridge. She notices a male student, wearing a Canadian "toque" wool cap and carrying a backpack, ahead of her on the opposite side of the bridge.

Maria stops half-way across the bridge and looks down into the Charles river. The water is black, cold, uninviting. She shivers. She looks across to the opposite side of the bridge. The male student has disappeared. She continues on.

Maria is almost across the bridge. The camera follows Maria's POV as she looks into a dark stairway on the right.

Out of the darkness, a dark figure jumps out, grabs her, and drags her into the stairway. Sounds of a struggle. A dull thud. The screen goes black as Maria falls unconscious.

B&W - EXT. CHARLES RIVER SOUTH BANK RUNNING PATH - NIGHT

Maria drifts back into consciousness. The camera fades from black to show Maria's POV of the dark night sky, white snow flakes falling into her face. The camera follows Maria's POV as she turns her head side to side. Maria sees that she is lying spread-eagled on her back, her legs tied to stakes in the ground in front of her. Her arms are stretched out on either side, also tied to stakes. Maria tries to shout, but her mouth is taped shut. Maria pulls at the stakes with both arms and legs. They don't budge.

A dark shadow appears against the sky over Maria. It is the male student she saw on the bridge. He stares at her with feverish eyes. He slowly raises his arms over his head. He is holding an ugly, long-handled double-sided ax. He pauses a moment, then swings the ax down, straight at Maria's neck. The screen goes black.

EXT. WHOI QUISSETT CAMPUS - PRESENT DAY - DAY

The camera opens with a long shot of the Quissett Campus, the main building of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI, pronounced "whoey"). It is an institutional looking building set in a hilly rural setting, surrounded by green lawns, parking lots, and trees. The blue shimmer of ocean can be seen in the distance. A barbecue is taking place on one of the lawns. A caption says "Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Cape Cod, Massachusetts - Present day."

The camera has moved in closer to the barbecue. MIKE, a lean six footer, young looking for his 38 years, wearing shorts, sandals, and a T-shirt, arrives on his bicycle. He leans it against a post, and walks across the lawn to a group of students waiting in line to get food from a barbecue. He gets in line behind the last student, MEGAN, a blond, twenty-five year old, wearing glasses. There is a banner up behind the barbecue pits that says "WELCOME NEW MIT/WHOI JOINT PROGRAM STUDENTS!"

MIKE

I hope this is the hamburger line. I'm starved!

MEGAN

Right now its a hot dog-only line, but I hear they've sent out scouts to track down some more hamburger patties.

MIKE

I think I saw the posse head out when I rode in.

Mike grins as he reaches his hand out to Megan.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I'm Mike.

They shake.

MEGAN

Megan.

MIKE

I didn't see you on the Westward trip. I guess you're not one of us new Joint Program students.

MEGAN

Actually I am. I just couldn't get here in time for the cruise. How was it? I hear you ran into some rough weather.

MIKE

We had a couple of stormy days about half way through, and almost everyone got at least a little seasick, but over all it was a great start to the Joint Program. Nothing like 10 days on a tall ship to get you in an oceanography kind of mood! How come you missed the cruise? It's supposed to be the highlight of the first year.

MEGAN

I was finishing up my senior thesis. I was missing some data, so I couldn't quite get it finished on time.

They are close to the end of the line barbecue line. A server brings out a fresh platter of hamburgers.

MIKE

Where did you do your undergraduate work?

MEGAN

UCLA.

MIKE

Really? I'm from LA myself.

MEGAN

Small world! What were you doing in LA?

They finally reach the end of the line. Megan grabs a paper plate and a hamburger

MIKE

Working as a patent attorney, mostly
computer related technologies.

MEGAN

Really? You were a high-tech patent
attorney in LA? That must have been a
pretty good job. Why did you decide to
give that up and come here to be a poor
grad student for five years?

Mike hesitates before answering. He frowns slightly. Then he
grabs a hamburger and a paper plate, and grins.

MIKE

For the hamburgers of course!

EXT. WHOI QUISSETT CAMPUS - DAY

Mike sits down at an empty picnic table with his paper plate,
which now has some salad as well as the hamburger. He stares
down at the plate absentmindedly, poking at the salad with
his fork. He raises the fork to his mouth. He stops short.
KRISTIN, a slim, athletic twenty-eight year old with long
dark hair and lively brown eyes, is suddenly sitting across
from him at the picnic table. She bears an unmistakable
resemblance to Maria.

KRISTIN

(Laughing)

Hi! Just thought I'd come over and surprise
you.

MIKE

It didn't work. Better try again.

They both smile

MIKE (CONT'D)

So what brings you to the Cape?

KRISTIN

I forgot my antidote on the Westward. I
don't want to go all swollen and
unconscious just because of some over-
friendly honey bee, so I came down to pick
it up. Anyway, just wanted to say "hi".

Kristin gets up.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Hi!

Kristin, smiles, waves, turns around and walks away.

EXT. WHOI QUISSETT CAMPUS - DAY

Mike dumps his plate in a trash can and walks over to where Kristin is talking with a group of other students.

MIKE

It was good seeing you again. I'm taking off. Just wanted to say good-bye.

KRISTIN

Bye!

Kristin puts out her hand. Mike, surprised, takes it, looks into her eyes.

MIKE

See you up at M.I.T.

EXT. BOAT DOCK ON THE CHARLES RIVER, CAMBRIDGE - DAY

Mike and PETE, who is roughly the same age as Mike, with military hair cut, are kneeling on the edge of the M.I.T. boatdock on the Charles River. They are steadying a bright yellow, six foot long, teardrop-shaped torpedo-like vessel that is pointing out towards the middle of the river. VIJAY, lean hyperactive, thirtyish, is off-screen.

VIJAY (O.S.)

Five, four, three, two, one. Go!

Mike grabs a boat hook and pushes the yellow torpedo, called an "autonomous underwater vehicle" or "AUV", just under the surface. The propeller starts and the AUV, whose name is "PROMETHEUS", dives and starts moving straight out into the river, towing a bright red styrofoam float behind it. Vijay walks into the picture.

VIJAY (CONT'D)

Looking good so far!

Mike, Pete and Vijay watch as the red float moves crisply out from shore. Vijay looks at his watch.

VIJAY (CONT'D)

Should start to turn left right about NOW!

Mike, Pete and Vijay stare out at the float. It doesn't turn, but keeps heading straight out across the river, towards the other shore. Prometheus suddenly surfaces nose first, jutting up into the air. It flips forward and dives down again. A few seconds later, it juts up out of the water again. The float is now dangerously close to the far river bank.

VIJAY (CONT'D)

Abort, abort! Prometheus is out of control.
She's going to hit the river bottom on the
other side if we don't get to her first!

Mike and Pete jump into a skiff tied to the dock. Mike quickly starts the outboard motor and they race across the Charles in pursuit of Prometheus.

EXT. CHARLES RIVER, NEAR THE OTHER BANK - DAY

The outboard motor noise stops as the skiff glides up next to the red float bobbing on the surface. Pete picks up the float as it comes into range, and pulls on the line. It sticks straight down into the river.

PETE

Looks like she's stuck on the bottom.

MIKE

The mud on the bottom is like a vacuum.
The line will break if we pull too hard.

PETE

You're right. We can't risk it. We'll
have to dive down.

MIKE

I'll go.

Mike pulls off his shirt and shoes, and takes a deep breath.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Don't go away!

Mike dives into the brown colored water next to the red float. Pete stares after him. The float bobs, is still, then bobs again. For several seconds nothing happens. Then the mud-covered nose of Prometheus pops to the surface.

Ten more seconds pass. There is no sign of Mike. Pete is getting nervous. There is a loud metallic clunk. He whirls around. Mike, breathing heavily, hangs from the gunnel. A mud-covered hunk of metal lies in the bottom of the boat.

PETE

What the hell is that?

MIKE

Damned if I know. But it was down in the
mud and tried to take my foot off!

EXT. M.I.T. CAMPUS, OUTSIDE THE M.I.T. HEALTH CENTER - DAY

Mike opens the door of the M.I.T. Health Center and limps outside. He is wearing sandals. His left foot, which he is favoring, is wrapped in bandages.

VIJAY (O.C.)

Hey Mike!

Mike looks left, sees Pete's SUV standing by the curb. Prometheus, still muddy, is sitting on a trailer. Vijay is leaning out of the passenger side window.

VIJAY (CONT'D)

How long does it take to cut off a foot!
You've been gone for hours.

MIKE

That's the problem. I told the doctor my colleagues were in a hurry, so just cut it off, if you please. But no, she wouldn't do it. Kept saying something about not wanting to be sued for malpractice. So she sewed me up instead. Lousy waste of time!

VIJAY

(grinning)

Bloody lawyers! See what this country is coming to? You can't even get a decent amputation these days. Back home in India, that wouldn't be a problem.

Mike climbs up into the back seat. Pete guns the engine and drives away.

EXT. BIGALOW LABORATORY PARKING LOT, WOODS HOLE - NIGHT

Pete's SUV pulls up outside the building. Vijay, Pete and Mike get out and begin unloading Prometheus from the trailer.

INT. J-6 LABORATORY ROOM - NIGHT

Vijay, Pete and Mike wheel Prometheus on a cart into the J-6 laboratory.

VIJAY

There's still a bunch of mud inside Prometheus. We could clean it up now, or we can wait till tomorrow. I've got meetings all morning, so it would have to be one of you two.

PETE

I've got Navy activities all day. A tour by some admiral or other.

MIKE

Guess that leaves me.
(grinning)
I always liked playing with mud.

EXT. BIGELOW LABORATORY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Vijay, Pete and Mike come out of the building.

VIJAY

How's your foot? You going to be able to ride home OK? I could give you a lift.

MIKE

Thanks, but I'll be OK. The cut is in the heel. I'll pedal with my toes.

VIJAY

OK, but I'll be up in my office for another half hour or so. So let me know if you change your mind. See you.

MIKE

Thanks. See you.

Vijay walks away. Pete gets into the SUV and starts the engine as Mike walks over to his bicycle leaning against the building wall. Pete leans out the window.

PETE

Oh, I almost forgot. I saved your sunken treasure for you.

Mike leaves his bike and walks over to the SUV. Pete hands Mike a heavy plastic bag. He gives a wave of his hand, then drives away. Mike, bag in hand, walks back to the Bigelow Laboratory building door.

INT. J-6 LABORATORY ROOM - NIGHT

Mike unlocks the door and comes into the room. He walks over to the sink, and dumps the mud covered piece of metal into the sink. He turns on the water faucet which washes away the mud, revealing a large, ugly, rusty two-edged ax head. Mike turns off the faucet, picks up and inspects the ax head, frowning. He puts the ax head on the counter next to the sink and leaves the room, turning the light off behind him.

EXT. OYSTER POND ROAD TOWNHOUSES STUDENT HOUSING - NIGHT

Mike rolls his bike up to the back porch, leans it against a post. Sounds from a TV are heard through the screen of the porch door. Mike slides open the screen and goes inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF OYSTER POND ROAD TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Two other students, JOHN and CARL are lounging on a couch in front of the TV.

MIKE
Hey.

JOHN
Hey.

CARL
Hey.

Mike walks by and heads up the stairs.

INT. MIKES BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mike comes in and goes over to his laptop on the desk. He taps on the space bar. The screensaver disappears and his e-mail program is displayed on the screen.

The screen shows a list of e-mail messages. One is from "Kristin (krw@uri.edu)." Mike clicks on Kristin's e-mail MESSAGE. The Message appears on the screen.

KRISTIN (O.S.)
Hi Mike, I was happy to hear from you!. I started to write a letter to you about the purpose of pursuing a grad degree in the Joint Program, but once I had written two pages I realized that I would make more sense if I talked to you in person. Briefly, while I think we will continue to contemplate our usefulness indefinitely, I maintain my sanity at this stage by believing the following:

Mike clicks the "Page Down" key on the keyboard.

KRISTIN (O.S.)(CONT'D)
An oceanography degree will open options for me in environmental fields and teaching.

(MORE)

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

While I doubt the ability of any scientist to make an impact individually, cumulatively, I hope this field will be able to guide us in understanding how our actions control the quality of life around us. I think pursuing a career studying the ocean is not only interesting and inspiring, but also fun!! I think that a person who finds a way to pursue a career that they enjoy will have the strength and peace of mind to add a little joy into other's lives.

Mike clicks the "Page Down" key again.

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

Well Mike, I've rambled on a bit, but what I am trying to say: we've got the next five years to figure it out. Take care, and see you in a couple of weeks up at M.I.T. Kristin. P.S. I still have dibs on renting a room from you if you get that house you talked about on the Westward trip!

Mike smiles, gets up, goes into the bathroom and turns on the shower.

EXT. REAR PORCH OF THE OYSTER POND TOWNHOUSE - DAY

Mikes comes out of the back door wearing a backpack. He gets on his bicycle and rides away.

EXT. WOODS HOLE BIKE PATH, OYSTER POND BEACH - DAY

Mike rides along the path along the beach, past some early morning rollerbladers and joggers.

EXT. WOODS HOLE STEAMSHIP TERMINAL - DAY

Mike comes up through the Steamship Terminal parking lot, passes the Martha's Vineyard Ferry, and pedals up into the village of Woods Hole.

EXT. BIGELOW LABORATORY PARKING LOT - DAY

Mike rolls up to the Bigelow Laboratory back door, stops and gets off his bike.

INT. BIGELOW LABORATORY HALLWAY - DAY

Mike walks down the hallway to the J-6 laboratory, removing his keys to the J-6 laboratory door along the way. To his surprise, the door is ajar. He pushes it open and goes in.

INT. J-6 LABORATORY ROOM - DAY

Mike's advisor, DEREK, scraggly hair, fortyish, is leaning over the counter where Mike had left the ax head to dry.

MIKE

Morning!

Derek lifts his head. He pauses for a moment, then turns around. For a second there is a strange intensity in Derek's eyes. Then he grins.

DEREK

So I hear you risked life and limb to rescue Prometheus. We like that kind of enthusiasm from our new graduate students.

MIKE

You know me - any excuse to take a swim!

DEREK

How's the foot?

MIKE

It throbbed a bit last night, but its OK now.

Mike walks over to the counter, next to Derek. He looks down at the ax head.

MIKE (CONT'D)

That's quite an ax head, isn't it? It was down in the mud next to where Prometheus went down. I hit it with my foot as I was pulling Prometheus out of the mud. I couldn't see what it was and was afraid it was some kind of toxic waste container, so I dug it out and took it up to the surface with me. I don't think I've ever seen one that size before. Wonder what it was doing on the bottom of the Charles.

DEREK

Its from an old Alaskan lumberjack ax. I remember seeing them one summer as a graduate student when I went on a research cruise in the Bering Strait.

Derek pauses, seeming to stare at something far away. Then he turns back to Mike.

DEREK (CONT'D)

One of the scientists from the Biology Department is giving a tour to some National Science Foundation officials around ten-thirty this morning. They asked if they could see Prometheus. Will it be presentable by then?

MIKE

I don't think it should take much more than an hour or so. It's 9:15 now, so I should have Prometheus cleaned up by then. And I'll have the hull open so they'll be able to get a good look at the inside.

DEREK

Great. I'll tell them its OK to stop by. Well, gotta run. See you.

Derek leaves the room. Mike drops his backpack on a chair, goes back to the counter and looks down at the ax head.

MIKE

(to himself)

Alaskan lumberjack ax, eh?

Mike goes over to where Prometheus is sitting on its cart. River mud is caked around Prometheus' nose.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Okay girl, looks like the first thing we gotta do is hose you off.

Mike starts wheeling the cart holding Prometheus out the J-6 laboratory door.

EXT. BACK OF BIGELOW LABORATORY BUILDING - DAY

Mike is hosing down Prometheus, washing the mud off of Prometheus' nose. A round hole about six inches in diameter appears from under the mud. Vijay walks by.

VIJAY

How's Prometheus?

MIKE

A lot of mud, but I don't think there's any damage. Looks like there's a chunk of mud still inside, but I'll get that out when I open up the hull. What do you think of that lumberjack ax head I cut my foot on?

VIJAY

Is that what it is?

MIKE

That's what Derek says. He was here looking at it when I got in this morning. He says its like the ones he saw when he was on a research cruise in the Bering Strait back when he was a graduate student.

VIJAY

Well, you know Derek. It could be true, or he could just be pulling your leg.

MIKE

That's for sure! He seemed serious, though. Oh, he also said someone from the biology department is bringing some NSF people around to look at Prometheus at around 10:30. Do you want to be there?

VIJAY

Can't, I've got another meeting, which I'm late for already. You know how Prometheus works, so you won't need me. Gotta run!

MIKE

See you.

Mike hangs up the hose and pushes the cart with Prometheus back towards the door to the Bigelow building.

INT. J-6 LABORATORY ROOM - DAY

Mike removes the last of the two large hose clamps that holds the top half of Prometheus' yellow plastic hull in place and lifts off the top half of the hull. Inside Prometheus are two large glass spheres containing circuits and wires, and a bunch of cables. There is a large chunk of dried mud lying inside the nose portion of the hull. It is cylindrical in shape from having been pushed through the round opening in Prometheus' nose. Mike picks it up, looks at it for a moment, then drops it into the sink. He grabs a spray bottle and some rags and starts cleaning the inside of Prometheus.

INT. J-6 LABORATORY ROOM - DAY

Its a half hour later. Mike has finished cleaning Prometheus and is washing his hands in the sink. There is a knock on the door. He quickly turns off the faucet, wipes his hands on a towel, and walks over to the door. He doesn't notice that he didn't turn the faucet all of the way off. Mike opens the door. TIM, mid forties, wearing glasses, is standing there with a group of two other men and two women.

TIM

These people are from the National Science Foundation. They'd like to have a look at Prometheus. Derek said it was OK.

MIKE

Sure, come on in.

The group files through door and goes over to the still open hull of Prometheus. Mike notices a trickle of water is still running from the sink faucet. He goes over to turn it off. He looks into the sink. The lump of mud has been partially washed away. The top of a yellowish/white piece of a thin stick that could be a bone is sticking out of what is left of the mud. Mike leans forward to take a closer look.

FEMALE SCIENTIST

Excuse me?

Mike looks up and turns to the woman.

FEMALE SCIENTIST (CONT'D)

Could you tell us about the design of your vehicle? For example, why does it use these glass spheres? Wouldn't metal pressure chambers be less expensive?

MIKE

Well, you're half right. If the spheres had to be custom manufactured, they would probably be more expensive and difficult to make than metal chambers. These spheres, though are actually off-the-shelf items. They're made by a company right here in Falmouth that mass produces them for use as instrumented descent buoys commonly used on oceanographic research ships. The spheres are really quite amazing. They've been pressure tested to six thousand meters in depth, and are surprisingly inexpensive. In fact, the use of the spheres is a big reason why the cost of Prometheus is much lower than similar vehicles being developed by other research institutions.

The woman nods her head. A man looks up from inspecting Prometheus.

MALE SCIENTIST

There seems to be a computer of some kind in one of the spheres. What else do the spheres contain?

MIKE

Well, one of the spheres contains the control electronics, the other the batteries and power system. Here, let me show you.

Mike walks over to Prometheus, points to different items. The clock on the wall shows that it is 10:40. Tim is hovering in the background with his arms folded.

INT. J-6 LABORATORY ROOM - DAY

Tim looks at his watch impatiently as Mike and the NSF group continue their discussions about Prometheus.

MIKE

You're absolutely right. Communications under water are so uncertain and so unlimited that any kind of untethered underwater vehicle has to have enough intelligence to deal with whatever operational challenges might occur while on a mission. There is just no way that enough information can be exchanged between the vehicle and the surface when it is thousands of feet under the surface.

Tim comes over.

TIM

Sorry to break up the party, but we have two minutes to get to lunch. Ladies and gentlemen, if you will please follow me.

FEMALE SCIENTIST

Can I ask just a few more questions? It should only take a few minutes.

TIM

No. I'm afraid not. We have a tight schedule. We have to go.

The NSF group look at each other in silence. A short pause. The female scientist shakes Mike's hand.

FEMALE SCIENTIST

Thank you very much for your informative explanations. I wish you success with Prometheus.

She follows the rest of the NSF group out of the door. Mike stands there a moment, staring after them. Then he digs his lunch bag out of his backpack and also leaves.

EXT. MAIN STREET WOODS HOLE - DAY

Mike walks past the quaint buildings and shops of Woods Hole, turns down a street, and sits down on a picnic table next to the ferry terminal to Martha's Vineyard. The ferry terminal is bustling with activity. An incoming ferry blows its fog horn. Mike spots ALEXANDRA in the crowd. He waves.

MIKE (CALLING)

Hey Alexandra!

Alexandra looks around, spots Mike, waves her hand and comes over.

ALEXANDRA

So, is this where you eat lunch? Nice.

MIKE

I like watching all the hustle and bustle of the ferry traffic. Everyone's always in a good mood. Helps me think.

ALEXANDRA

Helps you think, eh? What are you thinking about that you need help with? Hey, and what happened to your foot?

MIKE

I cut it on an old ax head that was in the mud in the bottom of the Charles yesterday when we were doing some tests with Prometheus. She got stuck in the mud, and when I dove down to pull her out, my foot slipped and hit the edge of the ax head. No big deal. And what I was thinking about is looking into buying a house like I talked about on the Westward. Prices are still low, and I think I can still qualify for a mortgage based on my last year's lawyer earnings. I got an e-mail from Kristin reminding me that she wanted first dibs as a roommate if I really did get a house. Have you seen her recently?

ALEXANDRA

I saw her last weekend. She just got back from a trip to Nova Scotia.

MIKE

So what brings you into town from Quisset?

ALEXANDRA

My advisor is giving a presentation about our sea floor geology research this afternoon to a group from NSF, and he strongly suggested it would be a good idea for me to be there too.

MIKE

I met that group this morning. They came by to look at Prometheus. What's the deal with them?

ALEXANDRA

I don't know exactly, but NSF has funded a lot of WHOI research projects, and I think they've come to see whether their money is being well spent. Anyway, I'm running late. See you!

MIKE

See you.

INT. BIGELOW BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

Mike walks down the hall to the door to the J-6 laboratory. The door is partially open. Mike pauses a beat, then pushes the door further open and steps inside.

INT. J-6 LABORATORY ROOM - DAY

Mike looks around, but J-6 is empty. He shrugs and walks over to a desktop computer sitting on one of the counters.

The screen shows Kristin's e-mail message. The cursor clicks on the "Reply" button. Mike starts typing.

MIKE (O.S.)

Hey Kristin! Thanks for your e-mail! It got to me just at the right time. I was about to hang it all up and go back to L.A. (only partly kidding). Anyway, thanks for the pep talk! Now that I've been in the joint program for a couple of months, I feel a lot better about the whole thing. Working with Prometheus is turning out to be real interesting, though we're still having some problems with the control system. A math professor from MIT was also down for the summer, so I took one of his classes. It was tough getting back in the coursework frame of mind, but I got by. Being up at MIT taking classes full time, though, is going to be tough!

(MORE)

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

You're lucky you only have to spend the first semester at MIT, unlike the rest of us joint program slobs. The summer off, back doing research in Woods Hole after only a semester at MIT, I wish I could charm my advisor like you did yours. Of course, I fully understand how he would be charmed by you;-). Anyway, I guess I'll see you up at MIT in a couple of weeks. Take care, Frank. PS. Don't have that house yet, but I'm going to do some serious looking this weekend.

The cursor moves over and clicks on "Send."

Mike walks over to the ax head lying on the other counter. He looks into the sink. The lump of dried mud has been mostly washed away. A yellowish/white chicken bone-like object is sticking up out the remains of the mud. Mike grabs the object and pulls it out of the mud. As it comes free of the mud, a shiny round object falls off and rolls down the drain. Mike looks down where the shiny object has disappeared down the drain. Then he holds up and examines the chicken-bone. There is a loud clunk as something hard hits Mike on the back of the head. The screen fades to black.

INT. J-6 LABORATORY ROOM - DAY

Screen is still black.

VIJAY

Hey Mike! Wake up! Are you all right?

The black screen dissolves into Mike's POV of Vijay's face looking down at him.

INT. J-6 LABORATORY ROOM - DAY

Mike lies on his back on the laboratory floor. One of the overhead lights is hanging down from the ceiling by its electrical cord. Mike sits up groggily. He touches a growing lump on the back of his head.

MIKE

Ow! What happened?

VIJAY

Looks like one of the overhead lights came loose and hit you on the head.

Vijay points at the light fixture dangling above Mike.

VIJAY (CONT'D)

You've got a nasty bump on the head. How are you feeling?

Mike gets up slowly, a little unsteadily.

MIKE

I'm OK.

Mike looks at the light fixture.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What hit me sure felt a lot more solid than the light fixture.

VIJAY

Maybe you should go lie down.

Mike looks a bit dazedly around the room.

VIJAY (CONT'D)

Didn't you hear me? I said maybe you should go lie down. You look pretty groggy. I can finish up closing up Prometheus.

MIKE

Yes, maybe I should go home.

Mike still looks a bit dazed. He glances around the room again, then walks over and picks up his backpack.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Thanks for finishing up with Prometheus.

INT. MIKE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mike comes into the room. The alarm clock says 3:25 PM. Mike tosses his backpack on the desk. Without changing clothes, he plumps down on the bed and falls asleep.

INT. STEVE'S BEDROOM IN NEEDHAM - NIGHT

Kristin dressed in a spaghetti strap tank top and panties is sitting at a desk with her laptop.

STEVE (O.C.)

Hey babe! Coming to bed soon? I've got to work tomorrow, you know.

KRISTIN

Be right there hun! Just finishing up checking my e-mail.

The screen shows the last lines of Mike's e-mail.

Kristin shakes her head a little and smiles. She shuts the e-mail program and turns out the desk lamp.

DREAM - EXT. UNDERWATER IN THE CHARLES RIVER - DAY

Mike is underwater in the murky water of the Charles, struggling to free Prometheus. He is running out of air. Suddenly, Prometheus pops free and heads up to the surface. Mike tries to follow, but can't. He looks down. A thin white hand is sticking up out of the mud, holding on to his ankle. A big gold class ring is on one of the fingers. Mike struggles desperately, but the hand won't let go. He looks up at the surface, where he can see the sun through the murky water. The sun dissolves into the face of Kristin.

INT. MIKES BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mike wakes up. The room is filled with moonlight. He looks at the alarm clock. Its 2:17 AM. He's still in his street clothes. He gets up.

EXT. OYSTER POND ROAD HOUSING PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Its a full moon. Mike walks his bicycle over to his old Mercedes station wagon, leans the bike against the car and opens the rear hatch. He rummages about in a tool box, pulls out a pipe wrench, puts it in his backpack. He closes the hatch, gets on the bike, rides away.

EXT. BIGELOW LABORATORY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Mike arrives outside the Bigelow Laboratory Building. The parking lot is lit by the full moon, but is deserted. Mike leans the bike against the wall, takes out his keys, unlocks the door.

INT. J-6 LABORATORY ROOM - NIGHT

The laboratory is dark. There is the sound of a key in the lock. The door opens, and Mike comes inside. He walks over to the counter where the ax head used to be. He nods his head. He looks up. The light fixture is back mounted firmly in place. He stands there, thinking.

Through the windows, Mike sees a flash of headlights from a car pulling into the parking lot. Mike quickly steps over to the wall switch and turns off the lights. There are sounds of a car door closing in the parking lot. A minute later, Mike hears footsteps coming down the hallway. Mike quickly ducks behind Prometheus, which is sitting on a cart at the rear of the room.

The footsteps stop. There is the sound of the key in the lock, then the door opens. A figure steps inside and turns on the light switch. The figure is Derek.

Mike, relieved that it is only Derek, is about to come out from his hiding place. Then he stops. Derek goes over to the sink, leans over, staring down. Derek puts his hands into the sink and moves them around, as if he is washing them, but there is no water coming out of the faucet. He raises one hand out of the sink to turn on the faucet. Although the hand is covered in mud, one can see that Derek wears a thick class ring.

Mike watches as Derek washes his hands and dries them with a paper towel. Derek steps away from the sink and looks up at the light fixture. He frowns. Then he turns back to the door, turns out the light, and leaves.

Mike waits until he sees the car leaving the parking lot. He goes over and turns on the lights, then looks into the sink. It is empty, the mud all washed away. Mike takes the pipe wrench out of his backpack, bends down under the sink, and detaches the drain trap. He turns it upside down. A shiny metallic object rolls out and drops to the floor. Mike picks it up with his fingers. It is a muddy woman's gold class ring. Mike rinses it off under the faucet.

The ring has a red stone in it. On the crown, it says "Cambridge High School." On the side it says "Class of 1979." Mike turns the ring so that the inside of the band is visible. The inside is inscribed with the initials "M.E.R."

EXT. M.I.T. CAMPUS, MEMORIAL DRIVE - DAY

Mike's Mercedes pulls into a parking space. Mike gets out, pulls out his duffel bag, and starts walking towards campus.

EXT. FRONT LAWN OF ASHDOWN HOUSE - DAY

Mike walks up the walkway to a ten-story brick graduate student dormitory. There is a banner over the entrance that reads "Welcome to Ashdown House." Tables are set up next to the walkway with plates of donuts and cups of orange juice. Mike grabs a Boston creme donut and a cup of orange juice, and walks in the front door.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE FOYER - DAY

Mike walks up to the front desk, which is being manned by RANDY, a feisty, attractive 25 year old Australian redhead.

MIKE

Hi. I'm a new graduate student and

RANDY
 (interrupting)
 You're here to check in.

Randy flashes Mike a brilliant, intelligent looking smile.

MIKE
 Exactly. What's your name?

RANDY
 Hey, that's my line! I'm Randy. And you are?

MIKE
 Michael Werner. Thats W E R N E R.

Randy punches some keys on her computer keyboard.

RANDY
 Here you are. Room 205B. Right down the hall from me.

She gives Mike another smile.

RANDY (CONT'D)
 With those beautiful green eyes of yours, I'd trust you with my life. But I can't give you your key until I see your ID.

Mike smiles, a little embarrassed. He hands Randy his MIT ID.

RANDY (CONT'D)
 OK. Here are your keys. This one is for the front and side outside doors. This one is for the door to your room. Your roommate's name is Patrick. He hasn't checked in yet. Here's a brochure with some information about Ashdown House. There are kitchens on every floor. There is a gym down in the basement. If you want to use it, you can check out the key here.

Mike takes the keys and brochure.

MIKE
 Thanks. See you around.

Randy gives Mike a brief smile, then turns to the next approaching student.

RANDY
 Don't tell me, you're a new incoming graduate student and want to check in. What's your name.

Mike smiles and walks towards the stairway leading up to the second floor.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Mike comes up the stairs and walks down the hallway looking at room numbers. He stops in front of a door, tries first one of the two keys, then the second. The door opens and he steps inside.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - DAY

Mike steps into the room. It is square, about twenty feet by twenty feet. There are two big windows along one side that look over Massachusetts Ave. There are two beds, two desks, two bookshelves, and two free-standing wardrobes. One of the beds is by the windows.

MIKE
(to himself)
First come, first served.

Mike drops his duffel bag on the bed by the window.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE FOYER - DAY

Mike comes down the stairs. He looks over at the front desk. Another student has taken Randy's place. Mike walks over to a wall that is full of photographs. The photos are group pictures of the residents of Ashdown House from years past. The year and the names of the students are listed below each picture. The oldest one is from 1979. There are about 40 students in the photo, only two women. The men have a lot of long hair, sideburns, beards and mustaches. A few wear Canadian toques. Mike's finger runs along the names listed below the photo. His finger passes the names James Bartley, Thomas Burns, Tim Cannery, then stops on Derek Cartright.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mike is at his desk. His alarm clock shows 10:43 PM. Books and papers are strewn on and around the desk. Mike, head leaning wearily on his arm, is staring down at a legal pad filled with scribbled equations. He looks at his laptop screen, which shows a homework problem from his "Linear Control Systems" class. Mike shakes his head wearily. He looks over to where PATRICK is working at the other desk.

MIKE
I've got to do something to clear my mind.
I think I'll go check out the gym. Have
you been there yet?

PATRICK

No. Working out's not really my thing.

MIKE

So what do you do when you need a break from studying?

PATRICK

I can't afford to take any breaks. I can barely keep up studying full time.

MIKE

Tell me about it! But I have to go do something. I just can't think anymore.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE FOYER - NIGHT

Mike comes down the stairs, dressed in sweats and a T-shirt. He goes up to the front desk. It is manned by someone other than Randy, a nerdy looking guy with glasses.

MIKE

Hi. How do I get into the exercise room?

DESK CLERK

Show me your ID, fill in your name and room number in the sign-out book, and I'll give you the key.

Mike writes his info in the sign-out book. The desk clerk hands him a key with a tag that says "Exercise Rm".

MIKE

And where is it?

DESK CLERK

Take the elevator to the basement, turn right, then left, then your first right, and it'll be the first door on your right.

MIKE

Great. Thanks.

DESK CLERK

Just make sure to return the key when you're done.

MIKE

Will do.

Mike starts walking away. Then he turns back.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Oh, by the way, do you know when it's Randy's turn at the front desk?

DESK CLERK

She has her generals next week, so she's off studying. She probably won't be back at work for another two weeks. Tuesdays and Thursdays are her usual nights.

MIKE

OK, thanks, see you in about an hour.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE BASEMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

The elevator door opens, and Mike steps out. He is in a short hallway with cement walls, painted white. A bare bulb hangs from the ceiling. To the left, some old dorm-sized refrigerators are piled against the wall. Mike turns right. After about ten feet, the hallway dead ends into another hallway. This one is fairly long. Mike hesitates, then turns left. After about 30 feet, he hits another long passage that heads left. It slopes down for about 100 feet or so, then it looks like it starts sloping up again. It is more poorly lit. Exposed pipes and wires hang from the ceiling. Mike sees a door on the left about halfway down the incline. He walks down to the door. It is unmarked, dirty, looks like it hasn't been used in ages. Mike puts the exercise room key in the lock. It doesn't move. Mike isn't surprised. I's probably the wrong room. He gives the key a last jiggle. To his surprise, it turns a little. He jiggles some more. The door unlocks. He opens the door.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE BASEMENT ROOM - NIGHT

Light from the hallway spills into the room as Mike opens the door. He gropes for a light switch, finds one, flicks it on. A dim overhead bulb goes on. The room is definitely not the gym. It is a basement storage room that obviously hasn't been used in years. Old cardboard boxes sit on rickety shelves lining the walls. More boxes lie on the floor. Everything is covered in a thick layer of dust. An old desk stands in the shadows at the back of the room.

Curious, Mike walks over to the desk, leaving footprints in the dusty floor. Several plastic bottles are strewn around the desk. Mike picks one up. The remains of a label can be seen under a layer of dust. Mike blows on the dusty label. He coughs and closes his eyes as a cloud of dust erupts in his face. When he opens his eyes, he reads the old faded label. It says: "M.I.T. MICROBIOLOGY LABORATORY, PHENOL, 1000ML. MAY 1979." Mike picks up another bottle. This time he rubs the dust away with his fingers. The label says "M.I.T. MICROBIOLOGY LABORATORY, 10% BUFFERED FORMALIN, 1000ML, FEBRUARY 1980." Mike picks up a third bottle, this one small and brown. It has no label. He shakes the bottle. He unscrews the top, takes a sniff. He jerks his head back, leans his arm on the desk for support. The desk collapses, Mike falls on his butt.

He sits there, shakes his head, trying to clear it. He looks at the desk. A white plastic bag is wedged under the desk debris. It is covered in reddish-brown stains. As Mike starts to reach for it, the hallway door slams shut. Mike looks at the door, puzzled. Then he again starts reaching for the plastic bag. Before he touches it, the room's single light bulb flickers, then goes out. The room is plunged into darkness.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE BASEMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

There are sounds of things being hit and exclamations as Mike tries to find his way through the darkness to the door. There is rattling at the door, finally it is pulled open, and a dust covered Mike stumbles out into the hallway, breathing heavily. He heads back down the hallway in the direction of the elevator. At the elevator, Mike notices a small faded sign that says EXERCISE ROOM with an arrow pointing in the opposite direction from which he has come. Mike pushes the elevator button.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE FOYER - NIGHT

Mike, dirty and dusty, goes up to the front desk. The desk clerk is studying a book, not looking up as Mike plunks down the Exercise Room key.

DESK CLERK

Just leave the key and put the return time next to your name on the sign-out sheet.

MIKE

So how come the exercise room key opens the old storage room?

The clerk looks up, notices Mike's disheveled appearance.

DESK CLERK

What happened to you?

MIKE

I thought I followed your directions, but made a wrong turn and went down that long sloping hallway. I put the key in the door that I thought would be the Exercise Room. The key worked, but the room was an old storage room that doesn't look like its been touched in decades.

DESK CLERK

Don't know what you're talking about. There should have been a sign by the elevator showing the direction to the exercise room.

MIKE

I didn't see it at first. So I went the wrong way. Don't you think its odd that the exercise room key fits the old storage room lock as well?

DESK CLERK

Dunno. Never heard anything like that. But I'm pretty new here.

MIKE

Maybe I'll ask Randy. Anyway, good night.

Mike turns and walks to the second floor stariway.

INT. M.I.T. CAMPUS, SEMINAR ROOM IN GREENE BUILDING - DAY

A group of about a dozen graduate students are sitting in a loose group in the room. One of the students is Kristin.

FIRST STUDENT

Come on, you can't really believe that pelagic plankton can have any effect on benthic organisms that live thousands of feet deeper in the water column! If you had a little more experience, you'd know that there is no interaction between the benthos and pelagic regions.

KRISTIN (FUMING)

Experience! This has nothing to do with experience! I may only be a first year PhD student, but that doesn't mean I can't think! There may be a time delay, but plankton carcasses and excretions do sink to the bottom, and they certainly have an effect! And certain benthic excretions rise to the surface. Just because no one has been able to prove any connection yet doesn't mean there isn't any. And, after all, isn't the whole purpose of this seminar to stimulate new ideas?

FIRST STUDENT

Not all new ideas, just plausible ones. Marine microbiologists have been studying nutrient exchange mechanisms in the water column for eons, and anything separated more than a couple hundred meters is just too far apart, even in places where there are only weak currents. Anyway, we're out of time for today. Maybe we'll have some better ideas next week. The topic will be the effect on iron seeding on surface plankton growth and carbon sequestration rates. See you all next week.

Kristin glares at him, grabs her backpack and leaves.

INT. M.I.T. CAMPUS, GREENE BUILDING, MICROBIOLOGY DEPT - DAY

Kristin storms out of a door marked "MICROBIOLOGY SEMINAR ROOM," past a sign saying "GRADUATE STUDENT OFFICES", and unlocks the door to her office. She tosses her backpack in a corner and angrily hits the spacebar on her computer keyboard. Her screensaver disappears, replaced by her e-mail inbox. She stares at it gloomily. She clicks on a message.

INT. KRISTIN'S OFFICE - DAY

C.U. of Kristin sitting in front of her computer screen.

MIKE (O.S.)

Hey Kristin! Sorry I haven't been in touch, but I was on a secret mission for the president tracking down where socks disappear to when you lose them in the dryer. Turns out they don't disappear at all. Instead, sock manufacturers have devised a way to weave subliminal messages into the socks, making us think that they're missing, when in fact they're not. That way, they get us to keep buying socks, even though our closets are full of them. The president has asked me to look at the disappearing pen problem next.

KRISTIN

(to herself)

Socks and dryers? Mike, you're a kook!

Kristin, with a hint of a smile, hits the page down button.

MIKE (O.S.)

I know what you're thinking. And you're right. I'm weird. Anyway, hope your first week at M.I.T. hasn't been too bad. Mine has been OK, except that I can't figure out how after one week I am already two weeks behind. Must be one of those advanced calculus things I'll learn next semester. Hey, guess what? I qualified for the mortgage for the house! The closing is in two weeks. I won't be able to move in until next semester, but at least I'll have a place to escape to on weekends. I'll be renting out the upstairs, which has an open living area, a master bedroom, and a bath. You've still got dibs on it, if you want it. If you ever head down to the Cape, I'll give you the key and you can check it out.

Kristin hits the page down button again.

MIKE (O.S.)(CONT'D)
 Hope your apartment is working out OK.
 How's living with Alexandra? My roommate
 Patrick is OK, though we don't seem to have
 much in common. Ashdown House is OK, too,
 though its got some strange parts. Speaking
 of strange parts, I seem to remember you
 saying that you worked in a forensic lab
 one summer. If that's the case, I need to
 ask you something. Well, I better get back
 to the books. Text or call me sometime when
 you have some time, and maybe we can grab
 lunch or something. My cell is 508-257-
 2334. Ciao! Mike

Kristin clicks Mike's e-mail message shut and stands up. She is shaking her head, but has a smile on her face. She picks up her backpack and leaves her office.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE SECOND FLOOR KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mike, looking spent, is sitting at a table finishing the last bite of his dinner. He looks at his watch, sighs. He gets up, washes his plate in the sink, puts it in a cardboard box with the rest of his meal utensils, and leaves the kitchen.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Mike walks down the hallway towards his room. Suddenly the door to one of the rooms he is passing bursts open. A figure rushes out, slamming into Mike, knocking the box out of his arms. Dishes and condiments fly everywhere.

MIKE
 Hey! Take it easy!

Mike bends down and starts picking up the spilled items. He hasn't looked at the figure that knocked into him.

RANDY (O.C.)
 (forlornly)
 I, I'm sorry.

Mike looks up in surprise at Randy's voice.

Randy looks awful. Her hair is scraggly. Her skin has a sallow, bluish tint. She looks at him with dark, sunken eyes.

RANDY (CONT'D)
 I fell asleep. I'm late for my geophysics
 general!

She raises her hands in a helpless gesture and runs away down the hallway. Mike stares after her in startled disbelief.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mike enters carrying the box. Patrick is sitting at his desk.

PATRICK
Your phone rang a few minutes ago.

MIKE
Thanks.

Mike dumps the box on the window sill and digs his cell phone out from under textbooks and papers strewn on his desk. He looks at the screen and presses some buttons.

KRISTIN (O.S.)
Hey Mike, its Kristin. I stupidly forgot my cell in my office, but you can call me on my apartment land line. Its 508-556-8876. Talk to you soon.

Mike, punches in Kristin's number.

ALEXANDRA (O.S.)
Hello?

MIKE
Hi, Alexandra?

INT. KRISTIN AND ALEXANDRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alexandra is holding a kitchen wall phone in one hand, a wooden spoon in the other. A stove with steaming pots is behind her. A shower can barely be heard in the background.

ALEXANDRA
(hesitant)
Yes?

MIKE (O.S.)
This is Mike Werner.

ALEXANDRA
Oh. hi Mike! How are you doing? Are you up here in Cambridge now?

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

MIKE
Yeah. Living in the dorms, pretending to be a graduate student and all that.
(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

So far no one has seen through my disguise. I figure I'll be able to keep it up till my first mid-term. How about you, how are you doing?

INT. KRISTIN AND ALEXANDRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ALEXANDRA

(laughing)

Keeping busy. I'm still finishing up a paper on the research I did over the summer, I've got four classes, and my advisor has me analyzing a ton of seismological data. But its not as bad as it sounds. I still have nearly two hours a day left over to eat and sleep.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

MIKE

Ouch! I was going to complain about being so busy that I've had to cut my Monday through Friday golf routine down to Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, only. But I think now I'll keep that to myself.

INT. KRISTIN AND ALEXANDRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ALEXANDRA

Yes, you certainly wouldn't want some poor slaving exhausted graduate student to be burdened with troubles like that as well.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

MIKE

Right. That would be insensitive. Is Kristin around?

INT. KRISTIN AND ALEXANDRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ALEXANDRA

Yeah, hold on. She's in the shower. Hey Kristin! You've got a phone call!

KRISTIN (O.S.)(MUFFLED)

Who is it?

ALEXANDRA

It's Mike!

KRISTIN (O.S.) (MUFFLED)
OK. Be right there.

Sound of shower in background stops.

ALEXANDRA
She'll be right there. I've got some pasta that's about to boil over, so I've got to go. But it was good talking to you.

A pot boils over in the background.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)
Damn!

Alexandra drops the phone and runs to the stove. Kristin, hair wet, wearing a towel, rushes in and picks up the phone.

KRISTIN
(a bit breathless)
Hi!

The camera switches back and forth between Kristin and Mike during their telephone conversation.

MIKE
Hi yourself.

KRISTIN
I got your e-mail. You're a nut.

MIKE
Yes, but don't tell anyone. It's my secret weapon for getting through my classes. So how are you doing? Suffering from any summer-withdrawal symptoms?

KRISTIN (LAUGHING)
I think I have a terminal case. I hate all my classes, and I think my classmates are jerks. All I want to do is get out of here and go down to Woods Hole to start doing some real research.

MIKE
Yeah, I know how you feel. But at least you have to be up here full time only for one semester, unlike the rest of us slobs who have to stay here a whole year.

KRISTIN
Well, I don't even know if that's going to happen now.
(MORE)

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Tim, my advisor, has started dropping hints that maybe it would be a good idea for me to take a whole year of classes up here after all before working in his lab. But no way am I going to stay up here a whole year! I came into the Joint Program only because Tim promised I could do research full time after one semester at MIT. I even brought my own research grant! I'm not going to let him renege now!

MIKE

Damn right! And if he doesn't keep his promise, I'll sue the pants off the bastard!

KRISTIN

(giggling)

I may just take you up on that!

MIKE

So, do you want to do lunch sometime?

KRISTIN

How about tomorrow?

MIKE

You want to meet over by the lunch trucks, say about twelve-thirty?

KRISTIN

Can we make it one o'clock instead? I've got a twelve o'clock class.

MIKE

I've got a class at three. So one o'clock is good for me.

KRISTIN

Great! See you tomorrow at one.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

MIKE

One it is. Lunch wagons ho!

Mike hangs up the call with a grin.

INT. KRISTIN AND ALEXANDRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Kristin looks at the phone a minute, shakes her head, then hangs up the phone, smiling.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

The alarm clock shows 11:45 PM. Mike is sitting at his desk, wearing earphones, working on a "Circuits and Systems" homework problem set. He scribbles equations on a notepad, crosses them out, tears off the page, throws it in the trash. He stops, sighs, exasperated, leans back in his chair, and takes his earphones out of his ears. He looks over at Patrick, who is also at his desk, studying.

MIKE

Patrick?

Patrick looks up.

PATRICK

Yeah?

MIKE

You know that red-headed girl Randy that sometimes works at the front desk?

PATRICK

The one with the Australian accent?

MIKE

Right.

PATRICK

What about her?

MIKE

I saw her when I was coming back from the kitchen. She actually ran into me coming out of her door. She looked awful, all stressed out, dark eyes, really scary. She practically ran away, saying something about having overslept and missed one of her Generals.

PATRICK

Missed a General! That's pretty serious. Don't know what department she's in, but in Physics, you only get one shot at your Generals. If you don't pass, good-bye PhD.

MIKE

Wow, I didn't know Generals were such a big deal. I thought they were just a formality after you finish your required course work.

PATRICK

From what I've heard, they're actually harder than defending your PhD dissertation.

(MORE)

PATRICK (CONT'D)

In the dissertation, at least your dealing with your own research. In Generals, you need to be prepared to answer almost any question in your field, so you have to study everything. Its crazy. I'm not looking forward to them at all.

MIKE

Luckily we've got a year before having to go through that ordeal! Boy, I feel sorry for Randy. I hope she didn't blow it by oversleeping. That would be just too cruel.

Mike and Patrick both turn back to their books and continue their studying.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - DAY

Mike is sleeping. A loud truck horn blast jerks him awake. He looks at the alarm clock. The time is 5:45 AM. he leans back and groans, covering his head with his pillow. Then he tosses the pillow aside and reluctantly sits up. He gets up groggily, and heads to the shower.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE SECOND FLOOR STUDY ROOM - DAY

Mike is alone in the study room. Laptop, notebooks, textbooks, and pieces of paper are strewn on the table. Mike stares at the equations he has written and shakes his head. He looks at his watch. It is now 8:40 AM. He grabs one of the textbooks and flips through some pages. He stops, glances at the problem set on his laptop screen, down to his notes, and back at the textbook page.

MIKE

(Triumphantly)

A ha!

He grabs a clean sheet of paper, looks back at the textbook page, and starts scribbling equations.

Mike finishes writing and raises his arm in a "yes!" gesture. He looks at his wristwatch. It is now 9:50 AM.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(Surprised)

Shit!

He leaps up and quickly gathers up his study materials.

INT. M.I.T. ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING LECTURE HALL - DAY

There are about 75 students, half male, half female sitting in tiered seats. Mike is sitting about halfway up.

His laptop is perched on a swing-out desktop. He is typing notes on his laptop as the professor on the lectern finishes his lecture. The graduate student assistant, JIM, carries some equipment onto the lectern platform and starts connecting it together.

PROFESSOR

OK. That ends today's lecture. Today's problem set is on the class web page. As you can see, Jim is setting up an inverted pendulum to demonstrate some of the feedback concepts we talked about today. We should be ready to go shortly.

Mike watches as Jim sets up apparatus consisting of a small metal car on a three foot track of rails. The bottom end of a two-foot long rod is attached to the car with a pivot.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

OK. Here we go.

The Professor tries to balance the rod in an upright position, but it keeps falling over.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

As you can see, this rod, which acts as an inverted pendulum, is an inherently unstable system. But what Jim has done, he has connected a potentiometer to the pivot shaft. The potentiometer provides a means to measure the angle of the rod. The potentiometer provides feedback to a proportional controller that generates a voltage proportional to the angle of the rod. The voltage is applied to the motor on the cart so as to move the cart in the direction in which the rod is leaning. If you've ever balanced a broom stick in your hand, you'll know what I'm talking about.

The Professor points to a dial mounted on a circuit board next to the cart.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

This is a gain control. It controls the voltage supplied to the motor. Lets start with a low setting and see what happens.

The Professor tilts up the rod until it is more or less vertical, and nods to Jim. Jim flips a switch, and the Professor lets go. The rod starts leaning to the right. The cart moves to the right, trying to correct the rod's tilt. But the cart is too slow. The rod keeps tilting further. The cart reaches the end of the three-foot track and abruptly stops. The rod falls over with a bang. The students laugh. Mike turns to the student next to him.

MIKE

That's me trying to catch up with my homework!

PROFESSOR

Now lets see what happens at a high gain setting.

The Professor pushes the cart with the attached rod back to the center of the track. He twists the control knob to its maximum setting. He lifts up the rod, and lets go. This time the cart weaves wildly side to side, keeping the rod from falling down, but moving too quickly, causing the rod to swing wildly, first one way, then the other.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

As you can see, at too high a gain setting, the control system keeps the rod from falling down, but it overcontrols.

The Professor adjusts the control setting. The cart gradually slows down, the back and forth oscillations decrease. Finally the cart stands almost still, the rod balanced perfectly in a vertical position. The Professor looks up triumphantly.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

The trick with a proportional feedback controller, like the one we have here, is to have just the right amount of gain, to achieve just the right amount of balance.

The class ends. Mike gathers up his laptop and gets up to leave. He turns to the student next to him.

MIKE

That's what I need. Just the right amount of balance.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - DAY

Mike comes into the room. Patrick is studying at his desk.

MIKE

Hey.

PATRICK

Hey.

Mike drops his backpack on his bed, removes the laptop, and sits down at the desk. He digs out his Hydrodynamics textbook from the pile on the desk, finds the right page, and starts reading. The alarm clock says 11:45 AM.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - DAY

Mike is still at his desk. He is trying to work out some hydrodynamics equations on a note pad. The alarm clock says 12:43. Mike looks up, notices the time.

MIKE

Shit! I'm going to be late for lunch with Kristin!

Mike quickly gathers up his books, laptop, and papers and stuffs them into his backpack. He starts to leave, then stops. He goes back to the desk, opens the top drawer, rummages around, pulls out the real estate agent's description of his new house. As he is shutting the drawer, he notices a glint of gold inside. It is the old class ring. He puts it into his pocket, and rushes out of the room.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE RANDY'S ROOM - DAY

Randy is lying nude, curled up in a fetal position, on her bed. She is crying uncontrollably. She struggles up from the bed, lurches unsteadily to her dresser mirror. Her ghoulissh figure, with straggly hair, swollen red eyes, and sallow skin stares morosely back at her.

RANDY

(loathingly)

What a loser!

Randy stumbles over to the open bedroom window. Sunlight is streaming in. The window sill is low, coming up to just above her knees. She walks over, stands in front of the window, sunlight bathing her body. She closes her eyes.

EXT. ASHDOWN HOUSE LAWN - DAY

A group of students are throwing a Frisbee on the lawn. An errant throw sends the Frisbee into a bush next to the building. A student jogs over to retrieve it. As he reaches for the Frisbee, a shadow blocks out the sun. He looks up, startled, and jumps back, horrified. Randy's nude figure topples silently out of her window. Slowly, gracefully, she does a half somersault before crashing headfirst into the ground with a terrible, sickening thud.

EXT. M.I.T. LUNCH WAGONS - DAY

Mike and Kristin are sitting on chairs facing each other across a metal outdoor dining table, sharing a pepperoni pizza. Kristin takes an enthusiastic bite out of a slice.

KRISTIN

And St. John's was great! Of course it was cold and windy, even in midsummer. The water was freezing, but a beautiful dark blue, and the waves were fantastic! The locals thought I was crazy, but I think they're crazy, not going in just because its a little cold. We met the greatest people. I've got to show you my photos.

Kristin pauses for a second to take another big bite out of her pizza.

MIKE

So who is the other part of "we"?

KRISTIN

Steve, of course. My boyfriend. I told you about him on the Westward.

MIKE

Well, you told me you had a boyfriend. You didn't tell me his name.

Mike hides his disappointment by taking a sip of iced tea.

KRISTIN

(oblivious)

So you got your house! That's great! Tell me about it.

MIKE

Well, the closing isn't for another two weeks. But it's great! It's on a little cul-de-sac called Cranberry Lane on a half acre of property overlooking a cranberry bog.

Mike digs the realtor's spec sheet out of his backpack.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Here's a picture. Its got two stories, a full basement, and floor to ceiling windows overlooking the cranberry bog. The upstairs is like a whole separate apartment. The house isn't huge, but not tiny either.

Kristin looks at the spec sheet.

KRISTIN

Where is it? Is it close to Woods Hole?

MIKE

It's a little further away than I originally wanted, about 7 miles from Woods Hole proper.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

A bit too far for a daily bike ride. But its less than a mile from a beautiful lake that's great for swimming.

Mike points to the drawing of the lot on the spec sheet.

MIKE (CONT'D)

And here, it borders on conservation land.

KRISTIN

It looks like a great place for a dog.

MIKE

It is! Last time I was there, a big golden lab was running around. I think he came from the neighbors behind the house. There's no traffic on Cranberry Lane, so it's pretty much perfect for a dog.

KRISTIN

(eyes sparkling)
I love golden labs!

MIKE

Me too.

They lock eyes for a moment. Kristin looks down and takes another bite of her pizza. Mike takes a bite of his.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You know, I wasn't kidding about you having first dibs on sharing the house, if you want to.

Kristin looks up.

MIKE (CONT'D)

It's probably a bit further from Woods Hole than what you were thinking, but it's a really cool place.

KRISTIN

How much are you thinking of charging for rent?

MIKE

Something like \$500 a month, plus half the utilities, for the whole upstairs.

KRISTIN

I'm going down to the Cape next month some time to start looking around for a place. Maybe if you haven't rented it out by then, I'll stop by and take a look.

They munch on their pizza slices in silence for a moment.

MIKE

So how come you hate your classes?

KRISTIN

It's not all of my classes. Just one. And it's not the class itself, but the students. It's a marine biology seminar class. Most of the students are second and third years, and they just trash or ignore everything I say. Anyway, I had enough classes as an undergraduate. I just want to get out of the classroom and start doing research.

MIKE

What's the deal about you not going down to Woods Hole next semester? I thought that was all set.

KRISTIN

So did I! But suddenly Tim thinks it would be better for me to take some more classes up here before working in his lab. But the classes I'm supposed to take won't help me do his research. They're just general biology classes. The lab work involves trace nutrient analysis, for which there aren't any classes. So it's all a bunch of BS. I don't know what happened. I worked with Tim a couple of summers ago as an undergraduate intern, and he was great. Now he's a jerk. Like Jekyll and Hyde, or something. I don't get it.

Kristin glares at Mike with suddenly blazing eyes.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

But there's no way I'm staying up here for two semesters, no matter what Tim says!

MIKE

Hey, don't get angry with me! Remember, I'm just another poor slob grad student. But you're right. Hotshot scientist or not, Tim can't promise you one thing to entice you to come here and then renege after you've relied on his promise. That's not only unprofessional, it's an illegal breach of promise, and just downright dishonest. It's hard enough to deal with the normal stress around here without having to deal with petty politics, too.

KRISTIN

So will you be my lawyer when I take Tim to court and sue him for millions?

MIKE

Absolutely! You can count on me.

Mike pauses for a beat.

MIKE (CONT'D)

For a fifty percent contingency fee.

KRISTIN

Fifty percent! That's outrageous! I can get tons of other lawyers to do it for twenty five! I'll give you thirty, but no more.

MIKE

Sure, you could get some random attorney to do it for that. But no one else will have the special insight about the case that I have, as a Joint Program student myself. You just can't buy that kind of experience.

Mike sighs dramatically.

MIKE (CONT'D)

OK. I wouldn't do this for anyone else. But for you, I'll take forty percent, and that's my bottom limit.

KRISTIN

I'll give you thirty-five.

MIKE

Done!

They both smile and munch on their slices of pizza.

KRISTIN

So what did you want to ask me about that has to do with working in a forensics lab? That sounded mysterious.

Mike hesitates before answering. He suddenly looks serious.

MIKE

This is going to sound a bit strange. It happened about a month ago. At the time it seemed it might be something important.

Kristin looks at Mike, waiting for more.

MIKE (CONT'D)

OK. I think I told you on the Westward that I was going to be working with an AUV, an autonomous underwater vehicle?

Kristin nods.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Its called "Prometheus." We brought it up here to do some testing in the Charles. The idea was to test it in the relative safety of the Charles before going out into the ocean. We were running simple tests, telling Prometheus to go out in a simple box pattern, you know, go out straight 200 feet, turn left for 100 feet, come back. Trouble was, there was a bug in Prometheus' software. It just wouldn't do what it was supposed to do. It veered violently off course, dove way too deep, then came up and popped out of the water nose first, like a dolphin jumping. Vijay, the post-doc who is the main guy responsible for Prometheus, had a heck of a time trying to get Prometheus to behave. But no matter how much he fiddled with the software, Prometheus had a mind of its own.

KRISTIN

Sounds like my kind of robot!.

MIKE

Anyway, Pete, he's one of the Navy guys from the Westward trip, and I spent the whole day chasing Prometheus down in a motorboat and dragging it back to the dock.

KRISTIN

This is all very interesting, but when do we get to the mysterious part?

MIKE

I'm getting there. I just wanted to give you a little background. So, one test run, Prometheus goes really haywire. Instead of going out a little ways, and turning back, like its supposed to, Prometheus just keeps going, straight across the river, jumping nose first out of the water, then plunging straight back down. Pete and I raced after Prometheus in the boat, but we were too late. By the time we got to Prometheus, it had burried itself into the mud at the bottom of the river.

KRISTIN

How did you know where Prometheus was, if it was underwater?

MIKE

We had tied a float to Prometheus with about a fifteen foot long piece of line. The float was still on the surface, about five feet from the riverbank.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

So we knew Prometheus was no more than fifteen feet down under the float. We tried pulling on the line, but Prometheus didn't budge. The only way to get Prometheus up was to dive down and pull her out of the mud.

Kristin raised an eyebrow.

KRISTIN

Her?

MIKE

All boats are "hers".

KRISTIN

You called Prometheus an "it" before. How come now its a "she"?

MIKE

Do you want to hear the story or what?

KRISTIN

Are you ever going to get to the mysterious part?

MIKE

Yes. So I dove into the water, and swam down to Prometheus. SHE -

Mike pauses. Kristin stays innocently quiet.

MIKE (CONT'D)

- she was indeed down at the bottom, her nose burried nearly two feet into the muddy ooze. And I tell you, that stuff was dark, slimy, really gross. The water was dirty, too. I could hardly see. I had to stick my legs down into the mud to get enough leverage to pull Prometheus free. Just as Prometheus popped free, my left foot slipped and hit something hard and sharp. It hurt like the dickens. I was out of breath, but I was scared that I might have cut my foot on some toxic waste container. So I stuck my arms down into the mud and dug out what had cut me. It was big, flat, pointed, and hard. Then I kicked hard to the surface. It wasn't until after we got back to Woods Hole and I washed the mud off that I found out what it was.

KRISTIN

What was it?

MIKE

I huge old, rusted, double-sided ax head.
The kind Alaskan lumberjacks used to use.

KRISTIN

(disappointed)

Well, that's not very mysterious! There must be all kinds of old junk on the bottom of the Charles. I thought you were going to tell me you found a body or something.

MIKE

I haven't gotten to the mysterious part.

KRISTIN

Oh, sorry. Just more background?

Mike pauses in mock anger, then continues.

MIKE

The next morning, I was back in the lab, cleaning out the insides of Prometheus. She had scooped up quite a bit of mud, some of which got pushed through a hole in the nose and dried into a hard, cylindrical chunk. I dumped the chunk of mud in the sink, and started to wash my hands. Just then, there was a knock on the door. A biologist, I don't know his name, was there with a group of people from NSF, who he was showing around. After I let them in, I remembered I'd left the water running in the sink. I went over to turn it off, and noticed that the chunk of mud had started to dissolve, exposing what looked like the end of a round, white stick. The NSF people started asking questions about Prometheus, so I gave them the run down on how Prometheus works. Right in the middle of a question, the biologist guy suddenly butts in and says times up, everyone has to go, even though the NSF people wanted to ask more questions. Typical biologist!

Mike grins at Kristin.

KRISTIN

Sounds like Tim in his "Mr. Hyde" mode. What did he look like?

MIKE

Oh, I don't know. Medium height. Skinny. Brown hair, glasses, a beard.

KRISTIN

I bet it was Tim!

MIKE

In that case, I'll do it for thirty percent! Anyway, I forgot about the chunk of mud until I got back to the lab after lunch. I went over to look at it again. The chunk was now a gooey pile of mud, with what looked like a chicken bone sticking out one side. I grabbed the end of the chicken bone or whatever it was and pulled it out of the mud. As I did so, something shiny that had been hidden in the mud fell off its bottom end and rolled down into the drain. I stood there looking at the bone, wondering what the metal thing was, when, wham, something smacked me in the back of the head and knocked me out cold.

KRISTIN

Wow! What hit you?

MIKE

When I came to, one of the fluorescent light fixtures was dangling by one end, swinging back and forth right about where my head would have been when I got hit. Vijay found me unconscious, with the light dangling, so he assumed that the light was what knocked me out. But I'm not so sure.

KRISTIN

Why not? Do you think it was too much of a coincidence for the light to come loose while you were standing under it? I agree the odds of that happening are pretty low, otherwise people would be getting beamed by lights everyday. But people do get hit by bricks coming loose from buildings while walking down the street, so if you're unlucky enough, it could happen.

MIKE

Whatever hit me felt a lot harder than a sheet metal light fixture. But if that had been all, I don't think I would have given it a second thought. The thing is, though, that wasn't all.

Mike paused, looking at Kristin thoughtfully.

KRISTIN

Well?

MIKE

Two things. No, three. You remember that piece of what I thought might be a chicken bone that I was holding when I got bonked?

Kristin nods.

MIKE (CONT'D)

When I came to, I didn't see it anywhere around. That, too, was no big deal. Who knows where it landed when I fell down. And my head was hurting pretty good, so I didn't look around much. Something else seemed out of place, too, but with my head pounding I couldn't think straight. Vijay told me to go home and lie down, which seemed like a good idea, so I did.

KRISTIN

What you should have done is gone to a doctor!

MIKE

No, it wasn't that bad. Anyway, I rode home and went to bed. It was only about three in the afternoon, but I just zonked out. I had a weird dream, and then woke with a start about two in the morning.

KRISTIN

What was your weird dream about?

MIKE

Well, the part I remember was being back in the Charles. I was down on the bottom. Prometheus was already on its way to the surface. I was running out of air, but my leg was being held by something in the mud. I looked down to see what was holding my leg, and saw this ghostly white hand sticking up out of the mud, with long bony fingers, wrapped around my ankle. There was a thick gold ring, like a class ring, on one of the fingers. At that point, I just couldn't hold my breath any longer. I opened my mouth and sucked in water. Then I saw your face in front of me, and woke up.

KRISTIN

(objecting)

Hey! If you want to go around having crazy dreams, go ahead. But keep me out of them!

MIKE

Like I can control what I dream about. Anyway, you weren't actually in the dream. Just your face, just for a second, as I was waking up. Sorry I mentioned it.

They look at each other for a second in silence.

KRISTIN

So what happened next?

MIKE

Well, when I woke up, I remembered two things. First, seeing that ring in my dream reminded me of the shiny object that rolled down the drain just before I got konked on the head. Second, I realized what in the lab had seemed out of place. The ax head that I had been lying on the counter next to the sink was gone. At least I didn't remember seeing it when I came to. Anyway, I had slept almost ten hours, my head wasn't hurting anymore, and I was wide awake. I decided to go back to the lab. I grabbed a pipe wrench from my car, jumped on by bike, and rode back to Woods Hole.

KRISTIN

And? Did you find anything?

MIKE

Well, when I got to the lab, I found I was right about the ax head. It was gone. I wanted to check out the light fixture, too, to see if I could tell how it had come loose, but someone had already reattached it to the ceiling. I was about to remove the drain trap from under the sink to see if I could find the metal object that had fallen off the bone, when I saw lights from a car pulling into the lab parking lot. I quickly turned off the lights, locked the lab door, and hid in the back of the lab behind Prometheus.

KRISTIN

Why on earth did you do that?

MIKE

I don't know. I guess I was still a bit spooked from being hit in the head. Anyway, I barely ducked down behind Prometheus when someone unlocked the door and came inside.

KRISTIN

Who was it?

MIKE

This is the weird part. It was Derek Cartwright, my advisor.

KRISTIN

What's so weird about that? It's his project, his lab, right?

MIKE

Yeah, but he didn't come in to look at Prometheus. He went right over and stood under the light fixture, and stared up at it for a while, inspecting it. Then he went over to the sink and put his hands inside. I couldn't see what he was doing from where I was hiding, but after a minute or so I caught a glimpse of his mud-covered hand as he reached up to turn on the water faucet. The water ran for a while. Then he turned it off, and wiped his hands with a paper towel. He looked slowly around the room, then turned out the lights and left.

KRISTIN

Jeez, you're paranoid! He probably heard what happened to you, was working late, and came down to see what went wrong with the light on his way home. I would probably have done the same thing.

MIKE

Yeah, but what about going through the mud in the sink with his hands, like he was looking for something?

KRISTIN

He probably saw the mess you had left in the sink and decided to do you a favor by cleaning it up. Anyway, what would he be looking for in a pile of river mud?

Mike pulls the ring out of his pocket and holds it out to Kristin.

MIKE

This.

Kristin takes the ring and looks at it carefully. Then she hands it back to Mike.

KRISTIN

Yeah, so?

MIKE

Don't you see what it is?

KRISTIN

Sure, it's an old class ring. Big deal.

MIKE

Don't you see how it all fits together? My dream, the ax head, the bone, the ring? The light? Derek's visit to the lab?

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

And, I forgot to tell you, when I first got into the lab the morning after finding the ax head, Derek was standing by the counter, staring at it, like he'd seen it before. He was the one who told me it was from an Alaskan lumberjack ax.

KRISTIN

(incredulously)

Don't tell me you're thinking that there's some connection between the ring, the bone you think you saw, the ax, and Derek?

MIKE

(defensively)

It's not so farfetched. Look at what it says on the ring. "Cambridge High School, Class of 1979". Derek was at M.I.T. then. I saw his picture on an old photo in Ashdown House. Who knows? Maybe the ring belonged to his girlfriend. Maybe they were out in a rowboat. Maybe they got into a fight, she fell out and drowned. I don't know. But why else would Derek have looked for the ring in mud in the sink?

Kristin stares at Mike for a moment, then bursts out laughing.

KRISTIN

Well, no one can accuse you of lacking imagination! You find an old ring, an old ax, and a chicken bone, and conclude that your PhD advisor is a deranged killer! Are you sure you were a lawyer back in L.A.? You sound more like a bad screenwriter!

Mike starts to protest. Then he stops, and laughs too.

MIKE

You know, you're right. When you put it like that, it does all sound pretty farfetched. My mind must be getting fried or something.

Mike sighs.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Maybe its because I'm not getting enough exercise. With classes and hitting the books all day, I build up all this nervous energy. I can't seem to find a time or place to exercise, so it just messed with my mind.

KRISTIN

I know what you mean! I haven't been getting near enough exercise either, though I try to run a couple of miles at least every other day.

MIKE

Really? Where do you run?

KRISTIN

Along the Charles. There's a really good three mile run. I start on Memorial Drive, run across the bridge down by the Science Museum, run along the riverbank on the other side, then come back across Harvard Bridge to Cambridge. I try to run between five and six in the afternoon. Its not so hot then. You should try it.

MIKE

I'm not really into jogging. Tennis is really my sport. But maybe I'll give jogging along the Charles a try. I've got to do something.

Kristin looks at her watch.

KRISTIN

Oh my god! It's almost two-thirty! I've got to go.

MIKE

Me too.

They get up quickly and start walking side by side towards the center of the M.I.T. campus.

EXT. M.I.T. CAMPUS, OUTSIDE THE GREEN BUILDING - DAY

When they get near the Green building, Kristin points upwards.

KRISTIN

That's where my office is.

She stops, looks Mike in the eyes.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

It was good seeing you again, even if you are crazy.

Kristin smiles to show she is kidding.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

If things work out with Tim, I'll be going down to Woods Hole to look at places to stay. Maybe I'll check out your house, if you still need a roommate.

MIKE

I'm pretty sure I won't have it rented by then. It was good seeing you too.

KRISTIN

See you around.

MIKE

You too.

Kristin takes a step towards the Green Building. Then she stops, and turns back to Mike.

KRISTIN

Just out of curiosity what did you want to ask me that had to do with forensics?

MIKE

Well, it sounds silly now. I was going to ask you if a human hand was burried in mud for thirty years, and if a ring had been on one of the fingers before the hand was burried in the mud, if the ring could end up still being around the finger's bone after all the flesh had decomposed.

Mike looks directly into Kristin's eyes.

MIKE (CONT'D)

But, like you said, that kind of thinking is crazy.

Kristin thinks a moment.

KRISTIN

Yes.

MIKE

Yes?

KRISTIN

Yes, the ring would still be on the bone. And you could probably find out whose those initials are from the 1979 Cambridge High School yearbook, which they probably have at the Cambridge Public Library.

Kristin smiles, gives a little wave and walks away. Mike stares after her, confused.

INT. M.I.T. CAMPUS, INFINITE CORRIDOR - DAY

Mike walks down a long corridor that connects and passes through several of the M.I.T. buildings. He approaches the exit onto Massachusetts Ave, across the street from Ashdown House, and walks out the double doors.

EXT. ASHDOWN HOUSE FRONT LAWN - DAY

Mike is surprised to see nearly a dozen fire trucks, police cars, and other emergency vehicles, red lights flashing, lined up in front of Ashdown House. Spectators are standing on the sidewalk, peering around the West corner of the building. Barricades with police crime scene tape are set up on the right side of the lawn, sealing off the lawn on the West side. One of the vehicles parked haphazardly by the curb bears the words "Cambridge City Coroner." Mike goes over to one of the spectators, MAGNUS, a tall Hungarian grad student.

MIKE

Hey, what's going on?

MAGNUS

Someone fell out of one of the windows. She was nude. Supposedly she didn't utter a sound. Just fell out of the sky, smashed headfirst into the ground.

A pair of paramedics appear from around the side of the building carrying a stretcher with a black plastic body bag. The paramedics place the stretcher into one of the rescue vehicles. Red lights flashing silently, it drives away.

MIKE

Any idea who it was?

MAGNUS

I heard someone say it was that redhead who worked at the front desk. I think her name is Sandy or something like that.

Mike's face goes white with shock.

MIKE

(quietly)

Randy. Her name was Randy.

EXT. MEMORIAL DRIVE, CHARLES RIVER SIDE - DAY

Mike, dressed in shorts and a T-Shirt, is exhausted as he runs along the Charles River. He stumbles, slows down a bit.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE FOYER - DAY

Flashback to the day Mike first came to Ashdown House, when he first met the smart and feisty Randy.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Flashback to Randy looking lost and forlorn after she ran into Mike in the hallway.

EXT. MEMORIAL DRIVE, CHARLES RIVER SIDE - DAY

A look of determination appears on Mike's face. He starts running faster. His strides become long, powerful. By the time he reaches the corner of Memorial Drive and Massachusetts Ave, 150 yards away, he is running at an all out sprint. The light is green and he races across to the sidewalk next to Ashdown House. He slows down, nearly collapses. He bends over, hands on thighs, lungs heaving.

INT. M.I.T. HYDRODYNAMICS CLASS ROOM - DAY

Mike, with 25 other students, is sitting at a desk. He has a blue test book in front of him. The test questions are being passed around. GEORGE, the graduate assistant, stands at the front of the class. The wall clock shows 10:04 AM.

GEORGE

OK, you should now all have a copy of the quiz. There are ten questions in total, and you will have 90 minutes to complete the test. I will keep the time. At the end of 90 minutes I will say stop. You will immediately stop writing and put down your pen or pencil. I will come around and collect your booklets. Anyone who continues writing after I say stop will get an automatic F. If you finish early, bring your test booklet to the front of the room and hand it to me. You may begin.

Mike reads the first question. He stares at it blankly, while the other students immediately open their blue test booklets and start scribbling furiously.

The wall clock shows it is now 10:41 AM. Mike is sitting with his head in his hands, his open test book in front of him. The two pages that are showing are filled with crossed out equations. The other students are all writing at full speed.

The wall clock now shows 11:15 AM. Several students have left, evidenced by a pile of blue test booklets on George's desk. Mike is writing, crossing out, writing.

The wall clock now shows 11:33 AM. Only Mike and two other students are still working on their tests. Otherwise the class room is empty except for George looking up at the clock at the front of the room. Mike is just now finishing his answer to question 7. With a desparate glance at the clock, starts on question 8.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

OK, stop. Time's up. Put your pens down and bring your test booklets to me.

Mike stops, dejected. He gets up, grabs his backpack and test booklet, and brings it down to George. He silently hands the test booklet to George and leaves the room.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - DAY

Mike is sitting at his desk, laptop and books open, spinning a pen in his hand. Outside the window its a beautiful, bright late September day. The alarm clock says 12:25. Mike idly opens the desk drawer. He stares at the class ring.

KRISTIN (O.S.)

You could probably find out whose initials those are from the 1979 Cambridge High School yearbook, which they probably have at the Cambridge Public Library.

Mike looks over to where Patrick is studying.

MIKE

Do you know how to get to the Cambridge Public Library?

Patrick looks up.

PATRICK

No idea. Why would you want to go there? M.I.T. has the most complete technical library in the world.

MIKE

I'm not looking for something technical. I can't study all the time. This is something different.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

Mike coasts up on his bicycle, dismounts, and locks his bike to a bike rack. He walks through the library's front door.

INT. CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

Mike walks up to the reference desk. It is manned by a fortyish woman LIBRARIAN.

MIKE

Hi. I'm looking for an old Cambridge High School yearbook, from 1979.

LIBRARIAN

Let me check if we have that year.

She types on her keyboard, looks at her computer screen.

LIBRARIAN (CONT'D)

According to our database, we do have it, and it should be on the shelf.

She points to the back corner of the reference room.

LIBRARIAN (CONT'D)

The yearbooks are in the back corner of the reference room, next to the phone books.

Mike looks to where she's pointing.

MIKE

Thanks.

Mike scans the shelves next to the phone books, which contain various high school and college yearbooks. He finds the Cambridge High School section, runs his fingers along the bindings to the one that says "1979." He pulls it out and opens the front cover.

C.U. of the dedication on the first page.

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

As we, the class of 1979, go forth into a new decade, we look forward to the as yet unwritten story that is our future. We are confident that with the skills we have learned in our four years here, and those we will acquire in the future, we will help shape the future into a better world for all. But wherever we go and whatever we do, our roots, our beginnings, are here. And we will always cherish the memories of that special time, and those special friends, of which this yearbook is but a small memento. Elizabeth Washington, Senior Class President.

Mike studies the picture of Elizabeth Washington, a pretty and intelligent looking African American.

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Not bad Elizabeth Washington. I wonder
 where you are now.

Mike flips forward to the senior class picture section. He
 flips pages until he gets to the beginning of the "R"'s. He
 scans the names on the first page. He turns the page.

The camera centers on a picture of a young woman in the lower
 left-hand corner. Although she is clearly hispanic, the
 woman bears a striking resemblance to Kristin. The name
 "Maria Elena Rodriguez" is written below the photograph.

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Maria Elena Rodriguez. M. E. R.

INT. KRISTIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Kristin sits at her desk, phone in hand. She is angry.

KRISTIN
 The only reason I came here is because you
 promised I would be doing hands-on research
 after the first semester!

TIM (O.S.)
 I never promised any such thing. I said if
 you showed you had the right skills, then I
 didn't see why you wouldn't be able to come
 down to Woods Hole after the first
 semester. But things have changed. The NSF
 is now requiring a much more rigorous
 analysis of experimental data before
 renewing their funding. Your background in
 analytic chemistry is a bit light. I can't
 risk you messing up in the lab because you
 don't have the necessary training.

KRISTIN
 That's B.S.! More classes aren't going to
 help me operate your lab instruments! Only
 hands on experience will do that, and you
 know I come up to speed quickly!

TIM (O.S.)
 This is not negotiable. Its my project. I
 decide how and by whom the lab work is
 done. I don't feel comfortable having you
 do crucial trace nutrient measurements
 without more training, especially with the
 project funding being up for renewal.
 Getting research funding is a tough enough
 as it is. I can't afford any slip ups.

KRISTIN

Spending more time in a classroom is not going to help prevent slip ups in the lab!

TIM (O.S.)

I don't have time for this. I have to go.

Tim abruptly hangs up. Kristin stares at the phone. She slams it down, grabs her backpack, and storms out of her office.

INT. KRISTIN AND ALEXANDRA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Kristin, still fuming, storms into the apartment.

KRISTIN

(calling)

Alexandra? Are you home?

No answer. Kristin stomps around restlessly for a while, then disappears into her bedroom. There are sounds of drawers being opened and slammed shut. A minute later, Kristin reappears, dressed in running attire. She puts on her iPod's earphones and heads out the door.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - DAY

Mike, head in hands, is hunched over his desk staring down at a textbook.

MIKE (O.S.)

At each level in a hierarchical analysis/synthesis process, we seek to combine functional descriptions of subsystems and structural information as to how the subsystems are interrelated in order to derive a functional description of the larger system, which in turn can be combined with functional descriptions of other systems and structural information about their interrelations to derive a functional description of a still larger supersystem, and so on.

Mike shakes his head, blinks his eyes. He looks up at the corkboard above his desk, on which are pinned a calendar and various clippings. One is an old "Far Side" cartoon. It shows a chubby student with a dumb but serious look on his face sitting in a classroom with his arm raised. The caption says: "May I please be excused? My brain is full."

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

Tell me about it! My brain is full, too.

Mike looks out the window. It's late afternoon, but the sun is still bright. Mike gets up, digs out a pair sweatpants, throws them on his bed, starts unbuttoning his Levis.

EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - DAY

Mike jogs across Harvard Bridge, which is filled with bumper-to-bumper traffic. He descends the stairs on the Boston side of the bridge to the running path that runs along the Charles to the Longfellow bridge, about a mile to the East.

EXT. CHARLES RIVER BOSTON SIDE RUNNING PATH - DAY

Mike has stopped. He is standing at the river bank, looking solemnly at the river.

KRISTIN (O.S.)

You're going to catch pneumonia in that sweaty T-shirt if you don't get a move on.

Mike turns around. Kristin is standing behind him on the jogging path. Her cheeks are flushed. She's panting a bit from her run. She looks stunning in her running outfit. She grins at him.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Don't they teach you engineers common sense?

MIKE

That's an old wife's tale. You don't catch pneumonia from cold. You catch it from pneumonia germs. As a biologist, you should know that.

KRISTIN

They're not germs. Pneumonia is a virus.

Kristin comes over and stands next to Mike.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Thinking of going for a swim.

MIKE

Not today.

Mike turns away from Kristin back to the river.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I found her.

KRISTIN

Congratulations! I knew your day would come.

Kristin pauses, looking at Mike.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)
Found whom, exactly?

Mike turns to Kristin.

MIKE
M.E.R. The initials on the ring. I found her in her high school yearbook, just like you said. Maria Elena Rodriguez. M.E.R.

KRISTIN
Well, did you give her her ring back?

MIKE
No, I didn't find her in person, only her picture. I haven't had a chance to track her down yet. Some of us have to work at this grad school thing, you know. Anyway, I don't think I'll find her.

Mike looks back at the river.

KRISTIN
(laughing)
You and your crazy theories!

Kristin points down into the river.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)
This where you found the ring?

MIKE
Close as I can remember.

EXT. INSIDE A CAR SITTING ON HARVARD BRIDGE - DAY

The camera shows the traffic on Harvard Bridge from an unseen driver's POV. The driver's hand, with a thick M.I.T. class ring, punches the horn. The HORN sounds. The camera maintains the driver's POV as he sweeps his gaze to the right, through the front passenger window. The camera abruptly stops its sweep and focuses on where Kristin and Mike are standing, 50 yards from the bridge. Kristin is pointing at the river.

EXT. CHARLES RIVER BOSTON SIDE RUNNING PATH - DAY

Kristin shivers from a sudden chill. She hugs her arms.

KRISTIN
Hey, I'm going down to Woods Hole tomorrow to look for a place to stay next semester. That room in your house still available?

MIKE

So Tim gave in, eh? Great! Yes, the room is still available if you want to take a look.

KRISTIN

I thought I might as well check out this supposed great house of yours. To answer your question, though, no, Tim hasn't given in yet. But he will!

Mike suppresses a grin at Kristin's suddenly defiant look.

MIKE

I can drop the key and directions at your office tomorrow morning after my Structures class. It ends at nine-thirty. Or is that too late?

KRISTIN

No, that'll work.

Kristin starts flapping her arms.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Well, you can freeze to death, if you want. But I've got a run to finish.

Kristin walks back to the jogging path. Mike follows her.

MIKE

Maybe I shouldn't tempt this pneumonia thing after all. Which way are you headed?

Kristin points towards Harvard Bridge, fifty yards away, filled with bumper to bumper traffic.

KRISTIN

How about you?

Mike points the other way. They both grin.

MIKE

OK. See you tomorrow morning.

KRISTIN

What are you asking for rent again?

MIKE

I was thinking \$500 a month, plus half the utilities, for the whole top floor.

KRISTIN

That's a bit steep for a poor grad student.

Kristin bends down, stretching, getting ready to run.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)
 We'll have to talk.

She gives him a devious little smile and runs off, heading in the direction from which Mike had come. Mike stands for a moment, watching her run gracefully towards Harvard Bridge. Then he turns, and runs the other way.

EXT. INSIDE THE CAR SITTING ON HARVARD BRIDGE - DAY

The camera shows the driver's POV as he watches Kristin jog up the running path towards the bridge. She disappears from view, then reappears a few seconds later, coming up the stairway onto the bridge, almost directly next to the car. The camera ducks down out of sight. The camera creeps back up, looking out the passenger window. Kristin, oblivious, exits the stairway and runs with long fluid strides past the stopped traffic. The driver's white-knuckled hand gripping the steering wheel comes into view as his gaze shifts forward following Kristin's receding form.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mike sits at his desk studying. Muffled music comes from his earphones. The alarm clock says 8:10 PM. Mike's cell phone rings. The caller ID says "Kristin." Mike answers.

MIKE
 Hey, how was Woods Hole?

KRISTIN (O.S.)
 That's what I want to talk to you about.
 I'm just over at the Student Center. Can I
 come by now?

MIKE
 Absolutely. I'll come down and let you in.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE FOYER - NIGHT

Mike opens the door. Kristin is wearing a stylish brown leather jacket over a soft, white, woolen sweater, skin-tight Levi's stuck into calf-high black leather boots, long dark hair slightly windblown, pink glow from the cool evening air on her cheeks, eyes shining. Mike stares at her, dumbstruck.

KRISTIN
 Well, are you going to ask me in or what?

MIKE
 Er, sorry, come on in.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mike and Kristin enter. Patrick isn't around. Kristin takes a look around and matter-of-factly throws her jacket on Mike's bed. She takes off her boots and sits down cross-legged next to the jacket on the bed. She takes a daytimer and a pair of eyeglasses out of her purse. She flips open the daytimer, and looks up at Mike in a very business-like manner.

KRISTIN

So lets talk about the house.

Mike, still awestruck by Kristin, is a little slow to react.

MIKE

Er, OK.

Mike pulls his chair over next to the bed and sits down facing Kristin.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Shoot.

Kristin, looks down at her daytimer.

KRISTIN

OK. I spent the day down in Woods Hole, looking at different places from a list I got from the WHOI student housing office.

Mike nods.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

There were a couple of places I liked. They were close to Woods Hole, and the rent was pretty reasonable.

Mike nods again, face expressionless.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

I also looked at your place. The setting is great, and I like the idea of having the whole upstairs to myself.

Mike nods again, his face starting to look hopeful.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

I clocked the drive from your house to Woods Hole. It's a bit over seven miles. It took about twenty minutes, which is longer than I really want for a daily commute.

The hopeful look on Mike's face vanishes.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Also, I really can't afford the rent you're asking, especially paying for half the utilities. I shared a house last year in Dartmouth, and one month the heating bill was over \$300. That plus the rent is more than I can afford.

Mike nods, bowing his head dejectedly.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

On the other hand, in the other places, I'd be sharing the house with people I don't know. I'm very particular about who I can live with, and I don't know if I would be comfortable with the other roommates.

Mike raises his head, a bit more hopeful.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Bottom line: I can't afford more than \$450 a month, including utilities. I know that's a lot less than you said, and I understand if you say no. But that's really the best I can do.

Kristin looks up at Mike with suddenly liquid dark brown eyes. Mike, not believing his good fortune, sits there, mesmerized. Kristin misinterprets his silence.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

If you need some time to think it over, I understand.

Mike shakes his head, snapping out of his stupor.

MIKE

No, that's OK. I was just working through some calculations. It'll be a little tight, but \$450 a month should be OK.

KRISTIN

Are you sure?

MIKE

Yes.

KRISTIN

Great!

Kristin pauses a little awkwardly.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

How do you feel about ... visitors?

MIKE
Visitors?

KRISTIN
You know, would you mind if Steve stayed
over sometimes, on weekends?

Kristin blushes a little.

MIKE
No, of course not. It would be your home,
too. You could have anyone over you'd like.

Mike pauses, then frowns a little.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Well, within reason.

Kristin smiles at Mike's sudden frown.

KRISTIN
Don't worry, I'll make sure anyone I invite
over is house-broken.

Mike's phone rings. He looks down at the caller ID.

MIKE
It's my sister. I have to take this.

Kristin nods. Mike takes the phone call.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Hey!

Kristin leans back, stretching out on her back on the bed.
Her head ends up under the bookshelf mounted to the wall.
Mike, distracted by Kristin's pose, continues the phone call.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Wow, that's great! Congratulations.

Kristin gazes up at the bottom of the bookshelf.

MIKE (CONT'D)
No, that won't be a problem. I'll be there.
Just let me know when.

Mike pauses, listening.

MIKE (CONT'D)
OK. Give my congratulations to John, too.
See you Thanksgiving.

Mike hangs up, then turns back to Kristin, who is still lying
on her back on Mike's bed.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Sorry. That was my sister. She just got engaged.

Kristin doesn't seem to hear him. She is staring intently at the bottom of the bookshelf.

KRISTIN

What are you hiding behind your bookshelf?

MIKE

I'm not hiding anything. What do you mean?

Kristin raises an arm, pointing.

KRISTIN

There's a piece of paper pushed up between the back of the bookshelf and the wall.

Mike leans over next to Kristin to see where she's pointing.

MIKE

Hold on.

Mike gets a knife from his box of kitchen gear. He goes back and lies on his back next to Kristin. He slides the knife into the crack between the wall and the back of the bookshelf, and slowly extracts an old yellowed and brittle-looking folded piece of paper.

KRISTIN

What is it?

MIKE

It looks like an old piece of newspaper.

Mike sits up and carefully unfolds the piece of newspaper and spreads it out on the bed between himself and Kristin. They both look at it curiously.

C.U. of the front page of an old Boston Post newspaper lying on Mike's bed. The date is May 16, 1980. The main headline, in big bold characters, says "JOGGER BRUTALLY MURDERED IN RIVERSIDE PARK." A slightly smaller subheading says "HEADLESS CORPSE FOUND ALONG POPULAR CHARLES RIVER JOGGING TRACK."

Kristin looks at Mike suspiciously.

KRISTIN

OK. This is starting to get a little weird. You put that newspaper clipping up there, didn't you?

MIKE

Come on, you know I didn't do that. Why would I? Look at it. It's obvious its been up there for ages, probably since 1980.

KRISTIN

I don't buy it. Its just too much of a coincidence. You find an old ax head and ring in the bottom of the Charles, concoct some bizarre theory of your advisor ax-murdering his girlfriend and dumping her in the river, and the next moment newspaper articles about beheaded corpses start dropping out from behind your bookshelf.

MIKE

Hey, you found the clipping, not me. I had no idea it existed. Anyway, its a different corpse from mine. I mean, from the one I concocted.

KRISTIN

Different? How do you know?

Mike points to the paper.

MIKE

Look. It says "Police late last night discovered the headless, blood-covered, still warm corpse of a young woman, dressed in jogging clothes, lying on a bench in a riverside band shell in Back Bay." That band shell is up by the Science Museum bridge, at least a mile downstream from where I found the ring. There is no way the ring could have worked its way upstream to where I found it. The murderer could have walked a mile upstream, and then tossed it in the river, but why would he do that? And even if he did, that wouldn't explain the bone that the ring was attached to. No, this murdered woman is not M.E.R.

KRISTIN

Then who is she? And why did someone hide the clipping behind the bookshelf?

MIKE

I bet we could find out who she is by checking the newspaper's online archives. And obviously it was put here by someone who lived here at the time. It could even have been Derek. He lived here then.

Kristin gets up starts putting on her boots and jacket.

KRISTIN

Well, you can waste your time looking through old newspaper archives, but I've got a ton of homework to catch up on.

MIKE

Yeah, I know. Me too.

The door opens. Patrick comes in. He sees Kristin, and stops.

PATRICK

Oh, sorry, didn't know you had company.

Kristin sticks out her hand.

KRISTIN

I was just leaving. Hi, I'm Kristin.

PATRICK

Patrick.

KRISTIN

Nice to meet you. What's it like rooming with a crazy ax-murderer groupie?

PATRICK

Ax-murderer groupie?

Mike follows Kristin past Patrick and out the door.

MIKE

Don't mind Kristin. She's a biologist.

PATRICK

(still puzzled)

Oh. OK.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE SECOND FLOOR STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Kristin and Mike walk down the stairway.

KRISTIN

"Don't mind Kristin, she's a biologist." What's that supposed to mean?

MIKE

Nothing.

KRISTIN

What do you mean, nothing? You said it like biologists are feeble-minded or something.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE FOYER - NIGHT

They emerge into the first floor foyer.

MIKE

You called me a crazy ax-murderer groupie.

KRISTIN

Well you are.

MIKE

And you're a biologist.

KRISTIN

Hmph.

Kristin notices the photos on the wall and walks over. Mike points to the picture from 1979.

MIKE

See, here's the one with Derek.

KRISTIN

Geez, look at those clothes and hairstyles!
How can you tell its him with that hat and
mustache?

Mike points to the list of names under the picture. Kristin points to the figure next to Derek, also wearing a toque.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Hey, that's Tim!

MIKE

What, your advisor, Tim?

Kristin points to the list of names. Mike studies the photo.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Hm, so Derek and Tim were both here in
1979. Odd.

KRISTIN

Great, now you'll be accusing Tim of being
an ax-murderer too.

MIKE

Okay, okay. Point made. No more ax-murderer
talk.

Mike walks Kristin to the front door, opens the door for her. She stops and digs into her purse.

KRISTIN

Almost forgot. Here are your house keys.

MIKE

Thanks. When do you think you'll decide?

KRISTIN

I won't be moving down until the end of the semester, so there's no real hurry. I'll let you know in a couple of weeks.

MIKE

OK. No hurry on my side either.

KRISTIN

OK. See you later.

MIKE

See you.

Kristin starts walking away.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Patrick says they are by far the most attractive grad students at M.I.T.

Kristin turns back, perplexed. Mike grins her.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Biologists.

KRISTIN

Biologists?

MIKE

He might even be right.

KRISTIN

What do you mean, "might"?

Mike, still grinning, closes the door.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Patrick turns around at his desk as Mike enters.

PATRICK

What did she mean about you being an ax-murderer groupie?

MIKE

Nothing. It was just a joke.

Patrick turns back to his studying. Mike goes to his desk. He stares for a moment at the old piece of newspaper. Then he sighs and puts it into the drawer. He reluctantly picks up his hydrodynamics textbook and gets back to studying.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE - DAY

Mike sits with his laptop at the dining room table, which is strewn with books, papers, immersed in his studying. Music blares in the background. Late afternoon sunlight shines in through the floor-to-ceiling windows. The sunlight fades. Mike looks up and out the window at the setting sun. He gets up, stretches, and disappears into the kitchen. He comes back with a cup of tea. He sits back down, stares at his laptop.

MIKE

(to himself)

A fifteen minute internet break can't hurt.

The screen shows Google's search page. Mike types "Maria Elena Rodriguez" and hits search. He gets over 500,000 search results. He scrolls down a page. Nothing relevant. Mike pauses, thinking. Then he types on the keyboard.

The screen shows Google's search page. Mike has added "cambridge" and "murder" to the search terms. He clicks the search button. This time, the search retrieves only 56 results. Mike scrolls down a page or two. Nothing looks relevant.

Mike digs into his backpack on the floor next to the dining room table. He pulls out a folder. He opens it up to reveal two pieces of paper. One is a photocopy of the picture of M.E.R. from the 1979 Cambridge High School yearbook. The other is the yellowed newspaper from behind his bookshelf. He studies them a minute. Then he types again on keyboard.

The home page of the Boston Post newspaper appears on the laptop screen. Mike clicks on a button marked "Archives". A search page appears. Mike types in "bandshell" "murder" and "1980" and clicks on "search". A list of about 20 newspaper articles appears. The first one has the same headline as the newspaper article, and is dated the same day, May 16, 1980. The next articles are dated May 17, 18, 19 and 20. A few more articles are dated later in 1980. Then there is a five year gap, with the last five articles dated August and September 1985. Mike clicks on the May 19th article, entitled "Police Release Name of Murdered Jogger." The article appears, together with a photograph of a young woman. The woman is dressed in a tennis outfit, and has long dark hair and brown eyes. The caption under the photo says "Judith McGregor, a twenty-five year old investment banker, was sedated with chloroform and then brutally murdered while jogging along the Charles River on May 16th."

Mike holds the photocopy of the picture of M.E.R. from the Cambridge High School yearbook up to the picture of Judith McGregor on his computer screen. Judith is definitely not M.E.R., but there is a resemblance. Mike frowns.

Mike clicks the "print" command. A printer is heard starting up in the background. Mike clicks the "back" button on his browser to again bring up the list of articles. He clicks on an article from August 1985. An article titled "Hikers Discover Headless Corpse on Cape Cod" appears, again with the picture of a young woman. She too has long brown hair, and striking eyes. The caption under the picture says: "Barbara Meyer, a twenty-two year old Brown University co-ed, was reported missing July 11th." Mike clicks the print button. The printer starts printing in the background.

Mike frowns again. He hits the back button twice to get back to the search page. He types in "Maria Elena Rodriguez" and clicks "search." A single article appears, dated June 26, 1985. The title is "Where have all the young women gone?" Mike clicks on the title. An article appears with the pictures of two young women. One is the yearbook photo of M.E.R. The other is a photo of a young blond woman. The caption under M.E.R.'s photo says: "Maria Elena Rodriguez disappeared in December 1979 while walking from the M.I.T. student store to her apartment in Back Bay. She has never been found." The caption under the other photo says: "Sarah Jane McCarthy, 17, an honor student at Braintree High School, disappeared on a five-minute walk to a corner store for butter for baking Christmas cookies." Mike again clicks on "print" to print out the page.

Mike gets up and goes over to the printer. He glances through them while walking back to the dining room table. Mike sits down and studies the articles.

Mike rhythmically taps his pen as he reads the article about the May 1980 murder of the jogger. The tapping stops. Mike circles the word "chloroform" and writes a question mark next to the word. Then he writes down the names and dates of the three young women's murders in the margin: M.E.R., December 1979. Jogger, May 1980. Brown Co-ed, July 1985.

Mike's cell phone lying on the table in front of him rings. The screen shows a picture of Kristin Mike took while they were on the Westward cruise. Because of the way the phone is lying on the table, the picture of Kristin appears next to the picture of the murdered jogger. He stares for a minute, noticing the resemblance. He answers the phone while still staring at the picture of the murdered jogger.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(distracted)

Hey.

KRISTIN (O.S.)
Hey! Where are you?

Mike puts the pictures of the murdered jogger, M.E.R., and the murdered Brown co-ed next to each other on the table.

MIKE

Where am I? I'm at the house in Cape Cod.

KRISTIN (O.S.)

Great! I was hoping you might still be there. I didn't want to have to drive back to Cambridge.

Mike taps some keys on his laptop to bring up the same picture of Kristin he has on his phone. He holds the picture of M.E.R. next to the laptop's screen.

MIKE

You know, you look a lot like M.E.R.

KRISTIN (O.S.)

What?

MIKE

You look a lot like M.E.R. And the murdered jogger and the Brown co-ed, too, for that matter.

KRISTIN (O.S.)

What Brown co-ed?

MIKE

The one that was beheaded on Waquoit Island in 1985.

There is a pause on line.

KRISTIN (O.S.)

I thought you said you were going to your house on the Cape to study for your mid-terms next week.

MIKE

I've been studying.

KRISTIN (O.S.)

Searching the web for headless murder victims is not the kind of studying that is going to help you pass your mid-terms.

MIKE

I have been studying. Really. I just took a little break to clear my head.

KRISTIN (O.S.)

Mike, I know you've been struggling with some of your classes. And, hey, studying all the time is a bitch.

(MORE)

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

But if you need to clear your head, filling it with more of your murder conspiracy is not going to help. You should go for a run or something. That's what I do.

MIKE

Really, it was just a fifteen minute break.

There is an awkward pause. Mike looks out the window at the fading sunset. Then back at the books on his desk.

INT. STEVE'S APARTMENT IN NEEDHAM - DUSK

Kristin, dressed in a t-shirt and sweatpants is sitting at the kitchen table with her phone. She has a concerned and apologetic look on her face.

KRISTIN

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that. That was out of line.

A pause.

MIKE (O.S.)

No, its O.K. I know I have to hunker down on my studying.

Another pause. Kristin fiddles with the end of her ponytail.

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

So, what were you calling about?

Kristin hesitates before answering.

KRISTIN

I.... Tim just e-mailed me that he wants to meet with me in Woods Hole tomorrow morning. I'm at Steve's in Needham, and instead of having to get up early and fight traffic tomorrow morning, I was hoping maybe I could come down and stay at your house tonight, and then head back to M.I.T. after I meet with Tim in the morning.

MIKE (O.S.)

When were you thinking of getting here?

KRISTIN

Pretty late, like 11:30 or so.

MIKE (O.S.)

I have to leave here about 9, because I have one of those mid-terms tomorrow morning. But sure, I can leave the key under the doormat.

KRISTIN

Are you sure that won't be a problem?

MIKE (O.S.)

Not at all. I can get the key back from you when you get back to Cambridge.

KRISTIN

Thanks. I, I really appreciate it.

MIKE (O.S.)

No problem. I should get back to studying.

KRISTIN

OK. Bye.

MIKE (O.S.)

Bye.

Kristin, still twiddling her pony tail, stares at the phone and sighs. There is the sound of the front door opening and closing. Steve comes into the kitchen carrying a pizza box.

STEVE

Hey babe, d'ya miss me?

Kristin looks up at him. She forces a smile.

INT. M.I.T. HYDRODYNAMICS CLASS ROOM - DAY

A blackboard at the front of the room says "Hydrodynamics Mid-Term. 30% of final grade. 4 Problems. Start time: 9:00 AM. End time: 11:00." Mike, like the other two dozen students, sits at a desk, furiously writing in his test booklet. He stops, stares at what he's written. He crosses it out. He looks at the clock. 10:40. He starts writing again.

Mike finishes writing a long equation with an emphatic period at the end. He writes the number "4." on the next line. Camera shifts to show problem 4 of the quiz. It says something like:

"Problem 4: Assuming non-viscous, irrotational flow, prove that the Reynolds Equation can be reduced to a linear second order differential equations if τ is less than one."

Two students pass Mike on their way to the front of the classroom to hand in their completed test booklets. Mike stares at problem 4, trying to figure out where to even start. He looks up at the clock. 10:55. He pounds his hand on his forehead, trying to get himself to think. He tentatively writes down some equations and draws some figures. He stares at them. He crosses out part of the equation, and writes down a different one. He stares at it. Suddenly, his face lights up. He starts writing again.

GRADUATE ASSISTANT (O.S.)
 OK, times up. Put down your writing
 utensils and bring your test booklets to
 me.

Mike reluctantly stops writing. His shoulders sag.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE EXERCISE ROOM - DAY

Mike, barehanded, wearing earphones, viciously pounds a heavy punch bag. He has been hitting it for a while. His face is red and he is sweating. Lincoln Park's "What I've Done" blares in the background. As the song ends, Mike stops, leans forward, hands on knees, breathing heavily. He looks at his hands, surprised to see his knuckles raw and bleeding.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE BASEMENT HALLWAY - DAY

Mike comes out of the exercise room and closes the door. A sign on the door says "Please Lock the Exercise Room after use." Mike locks the door with the exercise room key. He walks down the hallway. He passes a door that says "Janitorial Supplies." He stops and tries the door. It is locked. He puts the exercise room key in the lock, and turns. The key works. Mike locks it again. He tries another door further down the hall marked "Electrical Supplies". Again the exercise room key fits. Mike opens the door. The room contains various electrical items. Mike holds the key up and nods. Mike starts to close the door, then stops. He steps inside emerging a minute later with a light bulb.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE BASEMENT ROOM - DAY

The room is dark. The hallway door opens. Mike comes in, reaches up and replaces the burned out light bulb. The new bulb lights up the room. Mike looks around. Same mess as before. Mike's footprints from his first visit form a trail dusty floor. Mike walks to the back of the room. He spots the small brown plastic bottle lying next to the crumpled desk. He picks it up, unscrews the top, and takes a careful whiff. He grimaces and quickly screws the top back on. He leaves.

REDFIELD LABORATORY PARKING LOT - WOODS HOLE - DAY

Kristin bursts out of the laboratory building door and runs to her car. She jumps inside, picks up her cell phone, and excitedly punches in a number.

STEVE (O.S.)
 You have reached Steve Broccoli at
 extension 448. I am away from my desk ...

Kristin hangs up, and punches in another number.

STEVE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
This is Steve. Leave a message and I'll
call you back.

KRISTIN
Damn Steve! Where are you?

Kristin hangs up and punches in a third number.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - DAY

Mike steps out of the shower and grabs a towel. His cell
phone rings. He quickly wraps the towel around his waist,
walks over and picks up his cell phone from the desk.

MIKE
Hey.

KRISTIN (O.S.)
You'll never guess what happened!

MIKE
NASA's discovered the moon really is made
of cheese afterall?

KRISTIN (O.S.)
Cheese? Moon? No, Tim wants me to come down
to Woods Hole! Right now!

MIKE
That's great! What happened?

KRISTIN (O.S.)
He said the funding for his research
project is going to be reviewed next month,
sooner than expected, and he needs help
finishing his experiments and compiling the
data. He asked me to come down ASAP.

MIKE
What did you tell him? Aren't you still in
the middle of classes? And what about you
needing more classes before doing research?

KRISTIN (O.S.)
That was a bunch of bull, anyway! I guess
he's running into a deadline on the
research project, and he needs an extra
body. But that's fine with me! The earlier
I get to go down to Woods Hole the better!

MIKE

So what about your classes? Don't tell me you're done already! I've still got a couple of weeks left, and then finals."

KRISTIN (O.S.)

I'm taking two of my classes at Harvard, and they have finals next week. In my other two classes, we have term papers instead of finals. One I've already finished, so I only have one left. I can finish that one down in Woods Hole. So I can head down after my Harvard finals next week. Would it be OK for me to move into the house then?

MIKE

Sure, no problem.

Mike glances over at his calendar on the wall above his desk. It shows the month of November.

MIKE (CONT'D)

So you'd want to move in when?

KRISTIN (O.S.)

The weekend after next. The sixteenth. Though I was hoping I could start to move my stuff down earlier.

MIKE

Sure, that'd be OK.

Mike notices the brown bottle he retrieved from the basement sitting on his desk.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Listen, if I brought you a bottle, would you be able to tell if it had chloroform in it?

KRISTIN (O.S.)

Chloroform? What are you doing with a bottle of chloroform?

MIKE

Its a bit of a long story. But could you tell?

KRISTIN (O.S.)

I think so. I used enough of it in my undergraduate biology labs.

MIKE

Great! When are you coming back here?

KRISTIN (O.S.)
I should be in my office by two or so.

MIKE
Can I come over about 2:30?

KRISTIN (O.S.)
Sure.

MIKE
OK, I'll tell you all about it then.

INT. M.I.T. CAMPUS, GREENE BUILDING, HALLWAY - DAY

Kristin's muffled is heard talking on the phone inside her office. Mike comes up and knocks on the door.

KRISTIN (O.S.)
Come in!

Mike opens the door. Kristin is sitting at her desk talking on her office phone. Kristin waves him inside.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)
OK hun, Love you. Talk to you tomorrow.

Kristin blows a kiss into the handset and looks up at Mike. Mike pauses a beat, then forces a grin.

MIKE
You really shouldn't talk to your advisor that way, even if he did just invite you down to Woods Hole. Its not very professional.

Kristin makes a face at him.

KRISTIN
So what's this mysterious bottle you were babbling about on the phone?

MIKE
I don't remember doing any babbling.

Mike slips his backpack off his shoulder, and digs out the brown plastic bottle. Kristin takes the bottle and gives it a shake. She holds it up to the light.

KRISTIN
It feels empty.

Kristin starts to unscrew the cap.

MIKE

Careful! It may be empty, but the vapors are still pretty strong.

Kristin, more carefully, loosens the cap and holds it up to her nose. She wrinkles her nose and quickly tightens the cap.

KRISTIN

Yuk! It's chloroform all right. And really old stuff by the smell of it. So where'd you dig this up?

MIKE

In Ashdown House. In an old storage room in the basement.

KRISTIN

So? There must be tons of old bottles lying around in old storage rooms all over M.I.T. What's so special about this one?

Mike hesitates, realizing Kristin is probably right.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

It's your murder theory again, isn't it?

Kristin leans back in her chair, gives an exaggerated sigh. Then she suddenly leans forward.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Oh my god! What happened to your hands?

Mike looks at his bloody knuckles.

MIKE

I screwed up on my Hydrodynamics mid-term. I took it out on a punching bag. Forgot to wear gloves. It looks worse than it is.

Mike flexes his hands to show they're OK. He winces in surprise at the pain.

KRISTIN

OK my foot! Those hands need to be taken care of, or they'll get infected.

Kristin gets up and walks to the door.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Stay here.

Kristin's footsteps are heard receding down the hall. A door opens and shuts. Kristin's footsteps return. Kristin comes back into her office carrying a first aid box.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Now sit.

Mike obediently sits. Kristin kneels down, takes a critical look at his hands, opens up the first aid kit, and starts administering antiseptic to his right knuckles.

MIKE

Ow!

KRISTIN

Don't be such a baby! So tell me about this basement room.

Kristin continues to work on Mike's knuckles as he talks.

MIKE

There's not that much to tell. It's just an old storage room in the basement of Ashdown House. I stumbled across it looking for the exercise room.

KRISTIN

What do you mean "stumbled across?"

MIKE

The basement of Ashdown House is a bit of a labyrinth. I followed the directions the desk clerk gave me, at least I thought I did. I went down this dingy old corridor to the first door on the left, which is where the exercise room was supposed to be. The door was pretty decrepit, which was odd, and there was no sign or anything identifying it as the exercise room, but when I put the key in the door, it worked.

KRISTIN

What key?

MIKE

The exercise room key. The one the desk clerk gave me.

KRISTIN

The exercise room key unlocked the door, but it wasn't the exercise room?

[Mike's dialog as he describes the storage room are interspersed with flashbacks of his visit.]

MIKE

Like I said, it was an old storage room. Well, I didn't know that at first. When I opened the door, it was dark inside.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

I groped around for the light switch, and flicked it on. That's when I saw it wasn't the exercise room, but an old storage room. It looked like it hadn't been used in years.

KRISTIN

Didn't you think it was odd the exercise room key fit the storage room door?

MIKE

Yeah, I thought that was a bit strange. But since I was there anyway, I decided to explore the room. There were shelves along the walls, loaded with old cardboard boxes and paint cans. At the back of the room, I could see an old wooden desk with big plastic bottles on the ground next to it. I walked to the desk and picked up a couple of the bottles. They had labels from the Microbiology Department, and were dated 1979 and 80. One was formalin. I don't remember the other one. Then I saw this smaller bottle, and picked it up. It wasn't labeled. I unscrewed the top to look inside. I took one whiff and almost fainted. I screwed the top back on, and was going to check out a plastic bag that was on the ground next to the desk, when the light bulb burned out. The back of the room, where I was, got real dark. I forgot about the bag, let go of the bottle, and started walking back to the hallway door, which was still partly open. I had only taken one step when the door slammed shut, leaving me in total darkness. It took me forever to find my way back to the door. And even when I did, the door was stuck. I had to push really hard to finally get it open. Boy, I was sure happy to get out of there. That room was starting to give me the creeps.

Kristin finishes putting a gauze dressing over Mike's right knuckles. She points to Mike's other hand. He obediently stretches it out to her. She starts working on it.

KRISTIN

OK, I can see that was a bit weird. But that was six weeks ago. So how come you brought the bottle to me today?

Mike hesitates, then continues.

MIKE

One of the newspaper articles I found last weekend said they found traces of chloroform in the murdered jogger.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

That reminded me of the bottle in the storage room, and today, after working out in the real exercise room, I went back to get it.

Kristin stops working on Mike's hand and looks up at him in disbelief. She picks up the brown bottle and holds it up.

KRISTIN

And you think this bottle of chloroform just happens to be the one used by whoever murdered that poor jogger over twenty years ago? Come on Mike! That's crazy!

MIKE

(defensively)

Its not just the bottle. There's also the plastic bag.

KRISTIN

(exasperated)

What plastic bag?

MIKE

The one in the storage room. Next to the desk. It has dark red stains on it. Like dried blood.

KRISTIN

Or more likely red paint! Come on Mike! You're letting yourself get way to caught up in these old murders! Look at what happened today - you messed up on another test because you spent too much time thinking about what happened decades ago, and not enough time thinking about where you are now. You know how tough classes are here! There're only a couple of weeks left before finals. If you keep screwing around with these stupid old murders, you might not even make it to the next semester.

Kristin angrily returns to bandaging Mike's left hand.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Mike, you've got to focus. At least until you finish your finals. Whatever happened twenty years ago will keep.

Kristin finishes with Mike's left hand.

MIKE

I don't spend that much time on the murders. Only when I'm burned out from studying and need a break.

Kristin looks up at him.

KRISTIN

It's more than that, Mike. You came all the way here just to show me that bottle. And there was the ring, the newspaper clipping, everything else. It's becoming an obsession. You need to stop.

MIKE

I don't spend much time on it. Really. Just a few minutes here and there.

KRISTIN

A few minutes here and there is too much right now!

Kristin pauses. Mike is subdued. Kristin sighs.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

If I prove to you that there is no blood on any plastic bag or anything else in that old basement room, will you promise me to stop doing web searches, looking for secret rooms, or doing anything else murder related at least until you're finished with finals?

MIKE

How are you going to do that?

KRISTIN

Don't you watch CSI? I'll take some Luminol from the lab and spray it on any spot you think is blood. If it's blood, it glows green. Do we have a deal?

MIKE

Kristin, you don't have to prove anything. You're right. I'll stop.

KRISTIN

No, I want to do this. Do we have a deal or not?

MIKE

Deal.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE BASEMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Mike and Kristin walk up to the basement room door.

MIKE

This is it.

Kristin stares at the door dubiously.

KRISTIN

How could you have possibly thought this was the exercise room?

Mike unlocks the door with the "Exercise Rm" tagged key.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE BASEMENT ROOM - NIGHT

Mike steps into the room and flicks on the light. Kristin follows. The room is a mess. The boxes from the shelves have been tossed onto the floor, their contents strewn about.

MIKE

What the?

KRISTIN

Jeez! This place really is a dump!

MIKE

It wasn't a couple of hours ago.

KRISTIN

What do you mean?

MIKE

When I was here getting the bottle, it wasn't like this. All these boxes were on the shelves. Someone's trashed the place.

Mike steps over the debris and navigates his way to the collapsed desk at the back of the room. He digs around.

MIKE (CONT'D)

They're gone!

KRISTIN

What's gone?

MIKE

The two big plastic bottles with phenol and formalin, or whatever. The plastic bag, too. They were here. Now they're gone.

Kristin looks around.

KRISTIN

Are you sure they were here?

MIKE

Of course I'm sure!

Mike digs around in the remains of the collapsed desk. He pulls the pieces of the desk aside, and points at the floor.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Here. Spray here.

Kristin looks at where Mike is pointing. There are some faded dark stains on the floor where the desk had been. Kristin takes a spray bottle out of her purse and sprays some of the contents onto the stains. Nothing happens.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Are you sure that stuff works?

KRISTIN

Absolutely. But you have to look at it under ultraviolet light. Wait.

Kristin looks into her handbag and brings out an ultraviolet flashlight. She presses a switch.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Turn off the light.

Mike walks to the wall switch and turns off the light. The basement room is plunged into darkness. Kristin points the ultraviolet flashlight at the floor where she just sprayed. The floor erupts into an explosion of overlapping patches of bright green light.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Wow.

Mike comes back next to Kristin. He gives a low whistle. He Kristin looks up at him.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

You were right about the blood. I'm sorry I didn't believe you. I just wanted you to concentrate on your studies. I thought this would help. Now I've made it worse.

MIKE

No you haven't. Don't worry. You had me back at your office. You're right. I need to concentrate on the last two weeks of classes, and then finals. That's the priority now. Whatever happened here twenty years ago can wait.

INT. M.I.T. HYDRODYNAMICS LECTURE HALL - DAY

Mike sits with the other students in the lecture hall. The professor is finishing his lecture.

HYDRODYNAMICS PROFESSOR

OK. That wraps it up for this semester. The final is scheduled for a week from Monday.

(MORE)

HYDRODYNAMICS PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

It will be three hours, and count for 50% of your grade. Enjoy your Thanksgiving, and good luck on your finals.

Mike and the the other students get up and leave the room.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - DAY

Mike comes into the room, dumps his backpack on his bed. He goes over to his laptop on his desk. He skims his e-mail, then clicks on "compose a new message." The laptop shows the message as Mike types.

LAPTOP SCREEN

Hey Kristin! Just finished my last lecture, and am heading down to the Cape to study over Thanksgiving. Don't know if you'll be around next week, but if so, see you there.

EXT. CAPE COD SANDWICH ROAD - NIGHT

The Camera shows Mike's POV through the windshield as he turns his Mercedes onto Cranberry Lane and turns into his driveway. The light over the front door is on. There are two cars in the driveway. One is Kristin's old brown Plymouth. The other is a newer Toyota. Mike stops his car, and for a beat, stares at the Toyota.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE FOYER - NIGHT

The camera shows the front door as it opens. Mike comes in backpack over his shoulder and carrying his duffel bag. He looks up. Kristin is lying on the couch, snuggled up with Steve, watching a movie on TV. She looks back at Mike.

KRISTIN

Hello!

Mike dumps his duffel bag and backpack on the floor.

MIKE

Hello yourself.

Steve turns his head back to look at Mike.

KRISTIN

This is my friend Steve.

Mike and Steve give each other the once over as they shake hands. Steve lays back down on the couch, pulling Kristin down with him. He puts his arms around her possessively, looks away from Mike at the TV.

STEVE

Kristin rented My Best Friend's Wedding. I think she's trying to give me ideas. It's already half over, but you're welcome to join us for the rest.

MIKE

I think I'll grab something to eat first. Maybe I'll join you later.

Mike turns and heads for the kitchen.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike returns from the kitchen with a sandwich and a glass of orange juice. He sits down in a rocking chair next to the couch on which Kristin and Steve are lying. He eats his sandwich in silence. The video ends. Steve gets up.

STEVE

You staying for the weekend?

MIKE

And the rest of the week, too, except Thanksgiving. Studying for finals. You?

STEVE

We're heading back to my place in Needham tomorrow, spending Thanksgiving at my folks. My mom cooks the best Thanksgiving turkey, doesn't she babe?

Steve heads towards the stairs leading up to Kristin's room in the second floor.

KRISTIN

Yes, your mom cooks a great turkey. But I told you, I can't spend all week in Needham. I have to come back and run Tim's experiments.

Steve is at the stairway, looking back.

STEVE

We'll see. Are you coming upstairs or not?

KRISTIN

Coming!

Kristin gets up from the couch and heads towards the stairs. As she passes Mike, she turns to him.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

(quietly)
Good night.

Kristin disappears up the stairway, closing the stairway door behind her. Mike stares at the closed door.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mike, wearing earphones, sits at the dining room table, engrossed in studying. Music from his earphones plays in the background. A clock on the wall says 7:36 AM. Behind him, the stairway door opens and Kristin appears, dressed in a bathrobe. She watches Mike silently for a moment. She walks over and taps him on the shoulder. Mike, startled, looks up. He takes out his earphones. The music stops.

KRISTIN

Well, you're hitting the books early.

MIKE

My brain works best in the morning. Hope I didn't wake you.

KRISTIN

No.

Kristin turns towards the kitchen.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Would you like a cup of tea?

MIKE

Sure, thanks.

Kristin disappears into the kitchen. Mike turns to his textbook.

Kristin comes back from the kitchen with two steaming mugs of tea. She puts one on the table next to Mike, then sits down in the chair next to him and looks out the dining room windows, sipping her tea. Mike picks up his mug.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Thanks.

He takes a sip.

MIKE (CONT'D)

How do you like the house so far?

KRISTIN

Great! I thought I'd mind the drive to Woods Hole, but the scenery is so beautiful I actually enjoy it. When it warms up, it should be a nice bike ride, too.

MIKE

What are those lab tests you're running for Tim?

KRISTIN

They're plankton nutrient response tests. Tim is trying to prove that bottom dwelling bacteria influence plankton that live near the surface. He needs data showing that the surface plankton responds to nutrients released by the bottom bacteria. So for each test I fill 40 test tubes with different amounts of bottom nutrients, add plankton, then put the rack of test tubes in an incubator. After 36 hours I take them out to see how much the plankton has grown.

MIKE

Why do you have to do tests over Thanksgiving? Can't Tim give you a break?

KRISTIN

His funding is up for renewal the week after Thanksgiving. He needs to show his theory has some merit before then. He's pretty wound up about it. He could lose all his funding. He doesn't have tenure, so if his funding is cut, he's out of a job.

Kristin gets up.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

Well, I'd better get back upstairs before Steve wakes up. See you later.

MIKE

See you.

Mike watches Kristin walk back up the stairway. He stares out the window. Then he puts his earphones back on, and goes back to studying.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

It is two hours later. The clock on the wall shows 9:40 AM. Mike is still at the table studying. He leans back, takes out his earphones, gets up, and stretches his arms. The stairway door opens and Steve appears, carrying an overnight bag, followed by Kristin, carrying her backpack.

STEVE

I tell you, there won't be any traffic. It'll take an hour, an hour fifteen, tops. Then you can sleep in in the morning. That's much better than coming back here.

KRISTIN

It'll be late, I'll be tired, I won't want to drive another hour. I can drive back to Needham during the day Tuesday. You'll be at work anyway.

MIKE

You guys leaving already?

KRISTIN

I've got to go down to the lab and get the next set of tests started. Its a bit of a hassle having to go back every 36 hours, but its only a couple of hours each time, and there's only three more tests to do.

Steve says nothing. He continues on and out the front door.

MIKE

Will you be back?

Kristin pauses on her way to the door.

KRISTIN

Not today. But probably tomorrow night, after setting up the next set of tests. And Friday definitely, to compile the data and give the final results to Tim.

Steve's car starts outside. Kristin looks at the open door.

MIKE

OK. Well, see you maybe tomorrow.

KRISTIN

See you.

Kristin leaves, closing the door behind her. Mike walks over to the living room windows, looks outside. It's a bright, sunny, fall day. He watches as Steve's car leaves the driveway, followed by Kristin's.

INT. KRISTIN'S CAR - NIGHT

Kristin pulls into the empty Renfield Lab parking lot. She is talking into her cell phone.

KRISTIN

(angry)

I'm here. It's already almost ten. It'll be after midnight by the time I get done. I'm not driving back, and that's that.

STEVE (O.S.)

I really don't like the idea of you staying at the house alone with Frank.

KRISTIN

Well then, why don't you drive down? It's just as far for you as it is for me.

STEVE (O.S.)

You know I can't do that. I have to work tomorrow.

KRISTIN

Well, I have to work now!

Kristin hangs up, tosses her phone into the backpack in frustration. Then she takes a deep breath, grabs her backpack, and gets out into the deserted parking lot.

EXT. WOODS HOLE RENFIELD LAB PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Kristin walks up to the lab building door. She fiddles with her keys a moment, then unlocks the door and steps inside.

INT. RENFIELD LAB - NIGHT

Kristin's footsteps echo loudly as she walks down a deserted hallway. She opens the door to a dark lab room. The room is cold. Kristin shivers as she steps in and turns on the light.

INT. RENFIELD LAB TIM'S LAB - NIGHT

Tim's lab is full tables crammed with test tubes, papers, computer monitors, scientific apparatus. Some cylindrical gas tanks are stacked against one wall. A clock on the wall reads 10:05. There is a low-level but constant humming sound from all the equipment. Kristin dumps her backpack on a table and takes a white lab coat from a hook on the wall. She walks over to an apparatus that looks a bit like a microwave. It has a readout that says "Incubation Complete".

KRISTIN

Well, lets see how you babies are doing.

Kristin takes out a rack with several rows of test tubes, about 40 total, out of the incubator. Each test tube has a paper label. She carries the rack over to another table that has a computer monitor, keyboard, mouse and some other apparatus. Kristin sits down on the stool in front of the monitor. The screen shows a program called "BioMass Scanner." Kristin places the first test tube into the "biomass scanner," a white cube about 8 inches per side with a hole in the top for the test tube.

Kristin clicks on a "Start Scan" button displayed on the computer screen. A red light flashes and a table of numbers appears on the screen. Kristin studies the figures and raises an eyebrow. She clicks on "Save Scan Data". She puts the first test tube back in the rack. She puts the second test tube in the scanner and clicks on the "Start Scan" button again.

45 minutes later. The clock now says 10:58. Kristin finishes scanning the last test tube. She puts it back in the rack. She carries the rack to a large refrigerator at that back of the lab. The refrigerator contains a dozen or so racks of test tubes like the one Kristin is holding. Kristin puts the new rack onto one of the upper shelves. She takes out a different rack. It looks just like the first one, except that the test tubes don't have any labels.

INT. RENFIELD LAB HALLWAY - NIGHT

The camera shows the POV of an observer in the hallway outside Tim's lab, looking through the window in the lab door. Kristin comes into view on the far side of the lab carrying the new tray of test tubes. She puts the tray on her table then disappears out of view. There are sounds of a cabinet opening. Then suddenly Kristin passes right by the hallway door window. The camera ducks out of sight.

INT. RENFIELD LAB TIM'S LAB - NIGHT

Kristin walks back to her table, places a beaker, a sheet of stick-on labels, and a large syringe on the table next to the rack of test tubes. She carefully fills the syringe with a greenish liquid from the beaker, and then deposits it into the first test tube. She puts a sticker on the test tube, refills the syringe, and fills the second test tube.

INT. RENFIELD LAB HALLWAY - NIGHT

The camera is again looking into the laboratory, focussing on Kristin's back as she intently and methodically continues to fill each of the test tubes. The camera pans back and forth, searching around the visible part of the laboratory. It focusses on one of the cylindrical gas tanks that are just visible next when the camera is all the way to one side. The label on the tank says "Carbon Dioxide."

The camera pans back to Kristin. Her attention is still focussed on filling test tubes. The camera pans down to show the door handle of the lab door. A hand appears, and slowly and silently pushes down the door handle. The hand is wearing an M.I.T. class ring. The camera swings back up to make sure that Kristin's full attention is still on the test tubes. The camera shows the door slowly opening.

INT. RENFIELD LAB TIM'S LAB - NIGHT

Kristin has filled and labelled about half the test tubes in the rack. She is about to empty the syringe into another test tube when there is a very quiet click. Kristin pauses, looks behind her.

The camera shows Kristin's POV as she looks across to the shut hallway door. The wall clock now reads 11:22 PM. Kristin listens intently for a while. Total silence. She turns back to the test tubes and continues her work.

The camera shows the bottom of the table in the middle of the laboratory. It slowly pans up and over to get a glimpse of Kristin once again engrossed in her work. The camera swings around to where the carbon dioxide gas tank is standing next to the hallway door. The camera stays low and out of Kristin's line of sight as it approaches the tank. The camera pans up to the knob of the valve at the top of the tank. The hand with the class ring appears and slowly turns the knob. There is a quiet hiss of escaping gas. The camera moves back to the hallway door, still low. The hand grasps the door handle and slowly pushes it open.

Side view of Kristin at the lab table. There is the barely perceptible sound of hissing gas in the background. Only one tube remains to be filled. Kristin yawns. She suddenly feels very tired. She puts the tip of the syringe in the beaker, which is now almost empty.

INT. RENFIELD LAB HALLWAY - NIGHT

The camera watches through the lab door window as Kristin slowly moves the syringe over to the last test tube. She is moving very slowly. She yawns, shakes her head, trying to clear her drowsiness. She barely manages to finish the last test tube. She gets up from her chair and stumbles out of sight. The camera pans to show the observer's hand reaching up to once again open the door.

INT. RENFIELD LAB TIM'S LAB - NIGHT

Kristin stumbles over to a sink, and barely manages to turn on the cold water. She leans on the sink with both arms. Her head sinks as she passes out, bending slowly forward, head first, into the sink. As she falls forward, her head ends up under the stream of cold water coming out of the faucet. Kristin jerks awake, looks wildly, disoriented, around her. There is the sound of a door closing, but it is muffled by the sound of the running water. Kristin shakes her head again. The cold water has woken her up a little.

Kristin walks back to the test tube rack on the table, still shaking her head, trying to clear her drowsiness. She manages to carry the rack over to the incubator and place it inside. In a daze, she sets the incubator controls for a 36 hour incubation period. She starts walking towards the hallway door. She stumbles, almost falling over, but catches herself on a cabinet. She fumbles for the door handle.

INT. RENFIELD LAB HALLWAY - NIGHT

The lab door opens, and Kristin stumbles out into the hallway. She stands there for a while, leaning against the wall, breathing hard. She looks up and down the hallway. It is empty. She shakes her head again, trying to clear it. She takes a couple of shaky steps down. Her steps get firmer. She starts running.

EXT. RENFIELD LAB WOODS HOLE - NIGHT

The outside door to the Renfield lab opens and Kristin bursts out, still wearing her white lab coat. She runs to her car, fumbles with her keys, finally unlocks the door. She gets inside, puts the key in the ignition. The engine turns but doesn't start. Kristin pounds her hand on the steering wheel, turns the key again. The engine fires.

INT. RENFIELD LAB - NIGHT

The camera shows the hand with the ring making an opening in a window blind. Through the opening, Kristin's Plymouth is seen roaring out of the parking lot.

OBSERVER

You were lucky this time, dear Kristin.
Next time, you won't be.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike has fallen asleep on the couch. Letterman is doing his top ten on the TV. Behind Mike, the front door opens. Kristin comes in, wearing her lab coat and looking tired and disheveled. Mike wakes up at the sound of the door, raises up and looks back at Kristin. He is concerned by her appearance.

MIKE

Hey, are you alright?

Kristin walks into the living room.

KRISTIN

(tiredly)
I don't know what hit me.
(MORE)

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

I just suddenly became exhausted and now I have this massive headache.

She walks over to the stairway.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

I just need some sleep. Good night.

Kristin heads up the stairway, leaving the door open.

MIKE

Good night.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE - DAY

It is the next morning. Mike is sits at the dining room table eating a bowl of cereal. Mike's cell phone rings. Mike glances at the display, doesn't recognize the caller ID. He answers the phone.

MIKE

Mike Werner.

VIJAY (O.S.)

Hey Mike. It's Vijay. Hope I didn't wake you.

MIKE

No, I'm eating breakfast. What's up?

VIJAY (O.S.)

Where are you?

MIKE

I'm at my house in Falmouth.

VIJAY (O.S.)

Great. Could you do me a favor?

MIKE

Sure.

VIJAY (O.S.)

Derek just e-mailed me. He's on a research cruise exploring volcanic vents off the coast of Mexico. One of the accoustic modems on Deepdiver has a glitch, and he needs the circuit diagrams. He asked me to e-mail them to him, but I'm down in Virginia visiting Shanti's parents, and I don't have a copy on my laptop. Could you run down to my office and get them from my office computer? He's pretty desperate.

MIKE

No problem, I'll go right now.

Mike hangs up. He gets up to go, then stops, picks up a pen and a notepad. He writes a quick note, tears off the page. He leaves it on the table, then leaves.

A minute later, Kristin comes down from the stairway, dressed in jeans and a tight sweater. She looks around.

KRISTIN

Mike? Are you here?

Kristin walks over to the dining room table. She picks up the note, smiles. She picks up the pen and notepad, writes another note, puts it on the table on top of Mike's note. She walks over to the front door and leaves.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

The front door opens and Mike returns. He walks over to the dining room table, sees Kristin's note. He picks it up.

KRISTIN (O.S.)

Hey Mike! Sorry I missed you. I left my backpack at the lab last night, so I'm heading back there to pick it up, and from there to Needham. I'll be back Wednesday for the final test results. Hope to see you then. Kristin.

EXT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE - DAY

It is another Indian summer-like afternoon, the day before Thanksgiving. Kristin pulls into Mike's driveway and parks next to Mike's Mercedes. She is on the phone with Steve.

KRISTIN

No, I told you, I'm not driving back now. I drove two hours down here this morning, I've been at the lab all day. I need a break.

Kristin pauses, listening to Steve on the other end.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

I don't care. Anyway, I don't believe the traffic will be any worse this evening.

Kristin listens again.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

I'll give you a call when I leave.

Kristin signs off, and sighs. She sits in the car a moment, closing her eyes, enjoying the warmth of the sun shining in through the windshield.

She opens her eyes, looks out over the cranberry bog in front of Mike's house. On the other side of the bog a boy and a girl dressed in shorts and t-shirts, are running around, enjoying the unseasonably warm weather. She opens the door and gets out of the car.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mike sits at the dining room table, hunched over a textbook. Rock music is playing on the stereo. Kristin comes in. She stands for a moment watching him. Mike rubs his eyes, sighs, hunkers back down. He stops, raises his head, and in one continuous movement turns his head around, straight at Kristin. For a moment, his face has a tired, dejected look. Then it instantly lights up at the sight of Kristin.

MIKE

Hold on!

Mike bounds over to the stereo and turns the volume down.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Sorry, didn't hear you come in. So are you done with your experiments?

Kristin stares intently at Mike's smiling face, remembering his sad look when he first turned to her.

KRISTIN

Yes, thank God! The experiments are finally done. All that's left is compiling the results. To celebrate, I'm taking a bike ride down to the beach. You wanna come?

MIKE

Wish I could, but I've still got a lot of studying to do. Thanks for the invite though. I'll take a rain check.

KRISTIN

You're sure? I'm only going for an hour.

Mike shakes his head regretfully.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

O.K. Suit yourself. I'm going upstairs to get changed. You've got two minutes to change your mind.

Mike watches as Kristin disappears up the stairs. He sighs, hunkers back down over his textbook and starts reading.

Five minutes later Kristin comes down the stairs wearing a skin tight deep v-neck tank top and stretch pants and holding a sweatshirt in her hand. Mike hasn't seen her yet.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)
Last chance to change your mind!

MIKE
Thanks, but -

Mike turns around while answering. He stops, mouth open, at the sight of Kristin. She smiles coquetishly as she puts on the sweatshirt, covering the v-neck top.

KRISTIN
Come on! You could use a break! And I don't want to go alone.

Mike recovers, finds his voice.

MIKE
Um. Sure. Okay. You're right. Some fresh air would do me good.

Mike gets up from the table, trying not to stare at Kristin.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Let me just get my sweats.

Mike steps towards his bedroom, stumbles, almost falls, catches himself, continues on, disappears into his bedroom. Kristin watches him, a bemused smile on his face.

KRISTIN
(quietly, to herself)
Guys are so predictable!

EXT. CAPE COD ON THE WAY TO THE BEACH - DAY

Mike and Kristin ride side by side down the road. It winds through wooded areas and cranberry bogs, with here and there a house or two. Kristin pulls to a stop. Mike stops beside her. Kristin points at a small lake in the distance.

KRISTIN
That's Tim's house.

Mike looks at where Kristin is pointing. The roof of a house is barely visible through the trees.

MIKE
I guess he likes his privacy.

EXT. FALMOUTH SHORE LINE - DAY

Mike and Kristin ride along a road next to the shore. The inland side of the road is lined with summer houses that look out across Vineyard sound. The road takes a turn inland. A small unmarked dirt road leads off to the right.

KRISTIN

Lets see where this goes!

Mike follows Kristin down the road. It winds behind a house, then dead ends at some bushes. A footpath leads between the bushes. Kristin drops her bike and disappears down the path. Mike drops his bike and follows.

EXT. SMALL HIDDEN BEACH - DAY

Mike emerges from the bushes onto a small sandy beach. Kristin kneels at the water's edge, feeling the water.

KRISTIN

Hey! It's not that cold.

Kristin looks up at Mike challengingly.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)

I've never been in the ocean this late in the year. Are you up for it?

Mike looks at the water dubiously.

MIKE

You mean, going in? Now?

Kristin walks a few steps up the beach, away from the water line. She sits on the sand and starts untying her shoes.

KRISTIN

Yes now! When did you think?

Mike watches her uncertainly as she takes off her shoes and socks and stands back up.

MIKE

I, ah, I didn't bring a swim suit.

Kristin drops her sweat pants, revealing the body-suit-like bottom of her stretch tank top.

KRISTIN

Neither did I silly. Just go in your boxers. I promise, I won't look!

Kristin grins at him as she steps out of her sweatpants.

MIKE

Um, O.K. I guess that will work.

Mike bends down, takes off his shoes and socks. He stands there uncertainly. Kristin has taken off her sweatshirt and is standing by the waterline dressed in her tank top body suit, which could pass for a one-piece bathing suit. She looks back at him.

KRISTIN

Well, are you coming or not?

MIKE

Coming.

Mike quickly steps out of his sweatpants and pulls off his sweatshirt and t-shirt. Dressed only in his boxer shorts, he walks over and stands by Kristin. He tries not to shiver.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Having second thoughts?

KRISTIN

No way! I'm just being polite, waiting for you. Are you ready?

MIKE

Ready as I'll ever be.

KRISTIN

O.K., lets go!

Kristin grabs Mike's hand. Together they run into the water, yelling at the shock of the freezing water. They run until they are waist deep in the water, then duck down, completely submerging. They burst to the surface, yelling and laughing in exhilaration. They duck under an oncoming wave, then a second one, jump up and down. Laughing and yelling, they turn back and run back onto the shore. They wipe the water off themselves with their hands, then start putting on their sweats over their wet undergarments.

MIKE

That water was freezing! I was starting to lose the feeling in my arms and legs.

KRISTIN

Oh come on! We were only in for a minute.

MIKE

Any longer, and we would be ice cubes.

EXT. END OF HIDDEN DRIVE - DAY

Mike and Kristin emerge from the path between the bushes.

WOMAN

Are you all right?

Mike and Kristin look up. A woman, about sixty, stands by the open door of the house next to the drive.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

We heard screaming.

Mike and Kristin look at each other sheepishly. They walk over to the woman.

MIKE

We're fine. The water was just a little colder than expected.

KRISTIN

I'm sorry if we startled you.

The woman looks at Mike and Kristin in their wet clothes. Then she smiles.

WOMAN

That's O.K. If I were ten years younger, I'd be right out there with you.

The woman pauses a moment.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

You're welcome to use our shower if you want to rinse off and get into some dry clothes.

KRISTIN

That's very kind of you! But we didn't bring any dry clothes. We'll be OK. We came on our bikes, and the bike ride home will warm us up.

WOMAN

Well, next time, bring some. Just knock on the door before you head to the beach, and I'll have some hot chocolate waiting when you get back.

KRISTIN

Thank you very much! I'm sorry, but we better get moving.

Kristin heads back to her bicycle. Mike sticks out his hand.

MIKE

I'm Mike, and that's Kristin. It was nice to meet you.

The woman shakes Mike's hand.

WOMAN

Abigail Swanson. It's always nice to meet a fine young couple.

Mike smiles and walks over to Kristin waiting on her bike.

KRISTIN

What did she say?

MIKE

She said her name was Abigail Swanson, and that it was nice to meet a fine young couple.

KRISTIN

We're not a couple.

Kristin starts peddling away. Mike smiling, follows her.

EXT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE - DAY

The sun is going down as Kristin and Mike roll into the driveway. They leave the bikes by the front porch and go inside.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

The last rays of the sun are shining through the windows as Mike and Kristin come inside.

KRISTIN

Do you mind if I take a shower first?

MIKE

There should be enough hot water for both of us at once, if we don't overdo it.

Kristin points to her wet scraggly hair.

KRISTIN

I need to overdo it.

MIKE

OK. Go ahead. I'll make a pot of tea.

KRISTIN

Great, thanks.

Kristin heads to the stairs. Mike heads to the kitchen.

The sun goes down. Mike sits at the dining room table in his wet sweats, studying his notes and sipping a cup of tea.

KRISTIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
O.K., I'm done! You can go now.

Mike looks towards the stairway.

MIKE
O.K., thanks! The teapot is on the table.

Mike gets up and heads to the downstairs bathroom.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike emerges from the bathroom freshly showered wearing jeans and a t-shirt. Kristin, dressed in jeans, t-shirt and a brown leather jacket, gets up from where she was sitting at the dining room table. Her car keys are in her hand.

MIKE
Leaving?

KRISTIN
I need to get back to Needham. We're driving down to Steve's parents early tomorrow morning. When are you heading down to your parents'?

MIKE
Tomorrow morning, coming back Friday morning.

KRISTIN
Then I might see you Friday. I'll be coming down to finish compiling the test data for Tim. If I don't see you, good luck on your finals. When is your first one?

MIKE
Monday morning. Start right off with the toughest one, hydrodynamics.

Kristin gives Mike a quick peck on the cheek.

KRISTIN
For good luck.

She walks to the front door.

KRISTIN (CONT'D)
Happy Thanksgiving, and drive safely.

MIKE
You too.

Kristin leaves. Mike stares after her, touching his cheek.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Kristin sits at the dining room table, working on her laptop, papers strewn around her. The clock says 1:35 PM. Music plays in the background. Her phone rings. She looks at the number, then answers.

KRISTIN
This is Kristin.

TIM (O.S.)
I need the test data now. I'm at my house.

KRISTIN
I'll be done in half an hour. I can bring over a memory stick with the data then.

TIM (O.S.)
You should have brought it over already.

Tim abruptly hangs up. Kristin sighs.

KRISTIN
Jerk!

EXT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE - DAY

Kristin comes out the front door, grabs her bicycle from next to Mike's, and pedals away.

A few minutes later, Mike drives into the driveway. He parks behind Kristin's Plymouth. He grabs his overnight bag and backpack and bounds up the porch stairs to the front door.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

The door opens and Mike comes inside, hoping to see Kristin. He sees Kristin's laptop and papers on the dining room table, but the room is empty. He drops his bags and walks over to the stairway, looks up the stairs.

MIKE
Kristin! Are you here?

EXT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE - DAY

Mike comes out the front door, looks over at Kristin's Plymouth. He looks down at his bike standing by itself next to where Kristin's was. He nods and goes back inside.

EXT. CAPE COD TIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Kristin pedals up to Tim's house, parks her bike, and goes to the door. It immediately opens. Tim, dressed all in black, stands in the doorway. There is an intense look in his eyes.

TIM
Did you bring the data?

KRISTIN
It's on my memory stick.

TIM
Come inside.

INT. CAPE COD TIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Kristin follows Tim into his kitchen.

TIM
Give me the stick.

Kristin takes it out of her pocket and gives it to him. He takes it and points to the kitchen table.

TIM (CONT'D)
Sit down while I copy the data.

KRISTIN
That's OK. You can keep the memory stick.

TIM
It'll only take a minute. Have some coffee.

The clock on the kitchen wall reads just after 3:00 PM. Tim pours coffee into a mug and puts it on the table. He stares at Kristin, waiting for her to sit down. Reluctantly she does. He leaves the kitchen. Kristin sits for a moment, uncomfortable with Tim's odd behavior. She takes a sip of the coffee, makes a face. She picks up the sugar bowl on the table and puts two teaspoons of sugar into the mug. She takes another sip. She gets up, mug in hand, and walks around the kitchen. She stands by the window, looking at the lake about 50 yards away. She takes another sip. The camera shows her POV as she looks at a rowboat tied to a small pier about 100 yards further along the shore. The view goes a bit fuzzy.

KRISTIN (O.S.)
(in a slurred voice)
What the . . .

The fuzzy picture of the pier fades to black. There is a thump as Kristin collapses on Tim's kitchen floor.

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mike sits at the dining room table, across from Kristin's materials, studying. The sun disappears behind the trees. He looks at his watch. It is 4:30. He looks concerned. He takes out his phone and dials Kristin's number. A second later a musical ring tone comes from the dining room table.

MIKE

What the?

Mike digs under Kristin's papers, extracting Kristin's ringing phone. Mike looks at the screen. He pushes a button. A list of recent calls appears. Mike's name is at the top. The next name is "Tim." The list shows that it was an incoming call that came in at 1:35 PM. Mike hesitates a moment. Then he presses the button for Tim's number. The phone rings. On the sixth ring, Tim answers.

TIM (O.S.)

Hi Kristin. Did you forget something?

MIKE

Hello Professor Cannery. This is Mike Werner, Kristin's roommate.

TIM (O.S.)

Yes Mike. Kristin has mentioned you. You have the house on the cranberry bog.

MIKE

I'm sorry to bother you, but I'm looking for Kristin. She left her phone here, and I noticed there was a call from you. I know she was working on some experimental data for you, and I was wondering whether you might have seen her.

TIM (O.S.)

Yes, she was here. She dropped off the data. She left on her bicycle, oh, about an hour ago. She said she was going to take a ride to the beach before heading home.

MIKE

Oh, O.K. That explains it. I was worried because it will be dark soon, and she doesn't have a light on her bike.

TIM (O.S.)

I expect she'll be home any minute. I wouldn't worry. She's a tough girl.

MIKE

Yes, she is. Well, thank you. Good bye.

Mike hangs up the phone. He looks back out the window. The sun has gone down, the sky is a deep red and gray. Mike flicks on the dining room light. He sits back down in his chair, staring aimlessly down at the desk. He taps his pen on the desk nervously. He picks up one of Kristin's documents.

It's an article titled "The Effect of Pelagic Nutrient Concentrations on Benthic Pelagic Interactions." The author is Tim Cannery. Mike turns the article around. On the back is a picture of Tim and a short biography. Mike reads aloud.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Tim Cannery received his PhD in Marine Microbiology from M.I.T./Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in 1985. Hm. Same year as Derek.

Mike sits, thinking. He flips to an empty page on his notepad and starts writing things down.

Mike writes down "PhD Microbiology 1985" on the left side of the page, about halfway down. Then he writes down "Ashdown House photo 1979." He thinks a bit. Under "photo 1979" he writes "Final Exams Dec. 1979." He counts off on his fingers, then writes "Generals May 1980." Just above "PhD Microbiology 1985" he writes "Thesis Defense ??? 1985." He stares at what he's written. Then, in an increasing frenzy, he writes down "M.E.R." next to "Final Exams Dec. 1979," "Jogger" next to "Generals May 1980," and "Brown co-ed" next to "Thesis Defense ??? 1985."

FLASHBACK OF PREVIOUS SHOTS

1. Tim with the NSF scientists in the J-2 lab after Mike had cleaned out Prometheus.
2. Tim staring at Mike after barging into him in the elevator in the Green building when Mike was going to see Kristin.
3. The photos showing the resemblance of Kristin and the murdered women.
4. The labels on the bottles in the basement room at Ashdown house that say "M.I.T. Microbiology Dept."

INT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DUSK

MIKE

(to himself in shock)
Shit! Its not Derek, its Tim!

Mike jumps up from the table.

EXT. CAPE COD MIKE'S HOUSE - DUSK

Mike runs out of the front door and jumps into his car. He starts the engine and squeals out of the driveway.

EXT. DEER POND - DUSK

The camera shows Kristin's POV. The shot starts with a black screen. There are sounds of footsteps on wood, a chain rattling, water lapping. The black screen fades to show a darkening blue-black sky. There is the sound of rattling chains as the camera follows Kristin's POV as she moves her head from one side to another. Kristin is stretched out on a bench seat of an old wooden rowboat. She looks down at her feet. They hang over the side of the boat. Her ankles are tied together with a chain. She strains but can't lift them. Her arms are stretched the other way, above her head. She struggles, but can't move them either. There is a thump, and the boat shakes as someone steps into it. A shadow appears in the dark sky. A muffled sound is heard as Kristin tries to speak through her duct-taped mouth. The shadow bends down towards her face.

TIM

So you're awake. You should still be out.
Well, it won't really matter.

EXT. CAPE COD TIM'S HOUSE - DUSK

Mike's Mercedes skids to a stop in Tim's driveway. Mike jumps out. He sees Kristin's bike still leaning against the wall. He runs to the door, rips it open, rushes inside.

INT. CAPE COD TIM'S HOUSE - DUSK

MIKE

Kristin! Kristin! Are you here?

The house is silent. Mike rushes through the kitchen and the other first floor rooms. No one is there. He rushes up the stairs, looks in the bedrooms. Again, empty.

EXT. DEER POND - DUSK

The camera again shows Kristin's POV as she is lying tied on the seat of the rowboat. She looks down and across towards the back of the rowboat, where Tim has an oar in his hand, which he uses to push the boat away from the pier.

TIM

Interesting thing about these ponds, Kristin, is how steeply the bottom drops off. Just ten feet from shore, the bottom drops off to fifty feet, with three feet of muddy bottom. Anything that sinks to the bottom gets stuck in the mud. Becomes part of the benthos, so to speak. Somehow appropriate, don't you think?

Tim puts down the oar. He picks up a long handle of some kind. Kristin, from her position can't see what the handle is attached to. Then Tim lifts it into view. It is a big, ugly, double-sided lumberjack ax. Tim walks towards Kristin, holding the ax in both hands.

TIM (CONT'D)

When I was five years old. I spent a summer on my uncle's farm in Ohio. The day I was going to leave to go back home, he took me out to the hen house. "So tomorrow you start the first grade," he said. "I was a little afraid of my first day of school, are you?" I nodded. "What you need is a little confidence builder," he said. He went over to a chicken pen, grabbed a chicken, and walked over to an old tree stump. "Go get my ax from the shed," he told me. When I came back with the ax, he was holding the chicken, feet in one hand, head in the other, neck stretched over the tree stump. "Nothing builds confidence like having the power over life and death," he said. I raised the ax, and with all my strength brought it down on the chicken's neck. The head popped off like a cork. Warm blood spurted out, ran over my face and chest. The chicken's life was mine. I was high for a week.

INT. CAPE COD TIM'S HOUSE - DUSK

Mike rushes back down the stairs, comes back into the kitchen. He looks out the window. In the distance, he sees the dark shadow of a boat in the lake just moving away from the pier. He pounds his hand on the window.

MIKE

Kristin!

The boat is too far away to hear Mike's yell. Mike runs out the door.

EXT. DEER POND - DUSK

The camera again shows Kristin's POV from where she is lying tied up on the bench seat of the row boat. Tim is standing over her, a dark shadow against the darkening sky.

TIM

Unfortunately, chickens don't do it for me anymore. I need something bigger.

Tim bends down closer to Kristin's face.

TIM (CONT'D)

Its too bad it has to be you. You would have made a great microbiologist.

Tim straightens up. Kristin struggles and tries to shout through her duct-taped mouth. But all she can produce are muffled sounds. Tim slowly lifts the ugly ax over his head. He pauses there a moment, staring into Kristin's eyes. Then he starts to swing he ax down, straight at Kristin's neck. The screen goes black as Kristin closes her eyes.

There is a sudden bellow of rage. The camera shows Kristin's POV as she rips open her eyes at the sound and sees a dark shadow streak through the air from the side of the boat hitting Tim in mid-ax blow and knocking him clear over the other side of the boat. There is a loud splash, the boat, and the camera's view, rock violently side to side. There is another cry of rage, sounds of a struggle in the water, a loud thud, then the sounds of quickly approaching splashes and hands gripping the gunwale of the boat. The boat rocks. Mike's wet face appears over the side of the boat. The concern in his eyes quickly turns into relief.

The camera shows Mike's POV as he looks down at Kristin looking up at him with blazing eyes. He reaches down with one hand, and gently pulls off the strip of tape covering Kristin's mouth.

KRISTIN

(indignantly)

Ouch!

MIKE (O.S.)

I'm happy to see you too.

INT. M.I.T. HYDRODYNAMICS LECTURE HALL - DAY

Its the following Monday. Mike is sitting at a desk, writing in his test booklet. He stops. Looks back a page. He frowns. He looks up at the clock over the blackboard at the front of the lecture hall. Writing on the blackboard says "Hydrodynamics 13.010 Final. 10:00 - 12:00".

The clock says it is 11:45. Mike looks down at his test book, back up at the clock. Then he decisively crosses out what he has just written and starts writing again furiously, a determined look on his face.

GRADUATE ASSISTANT

O.K. Time's up. Stop writing and bring your test booklets to me. Your final grades will be posted outside my office on the third floor of Building 1 Wednesday after 10:00 AM.

Mike stares down at his test book, his pen still in hand. He closes the test booklet, picks up his backpack, and with a solemn look on his face, heads towards the front of the room.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - DAY

Mike comes into the room carrying his backpack. Patrick, at his desk studying, looks up as Mike comes in.

PATRICK

Hey.

MIKE

Hey.

PATRICK

How'd it go?

MIKE

Well, this time I almost finished the last question. Hopefully I'll get some partial credit. But at least Hydro is done. One down, four to go. No rest for the wicked.

PATRICK

Tell me about it.

Patrick turns back to his studying. Mike sits down at his desk. Patrick turns back to him.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Have you heard from Kristin?

MIKE

No, not since, well, you know. She's at her parents in Concord.

PATRICK

You think she'll be O.K.?

MIKE

I'm sure she will. She just needs a couple of days to work things out.

Patrick turns back to his studying. Mike shoves his Hydrodynamics books to the side, pulls out his Controls textbooks and notes. He sighs, then starts studying.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE MIKE'S ROOM - DAY

It is Wednesday morning. Mike sits at his desk studying. Outside the window, snow is falling. Patrick is gathering books and notes into his backpack. Patrick puts on a jacket, picks up his backpack. Mike turns to him.

MIKE

Heading out to your Physic's final?

PATRICK

Yeah, it starts at 10, so I better get a move on. Can you believe this weather? Last week it was like summer, now it's snowing.

MIKE

First hand climate change. Good luck on your final.

PATRICK

Thanks. I'll need it.

Patrick leaves. Mike looks at the clock. It is 9:45.

Mike sits at his desk studying his notes. He looks at the clock. It is just about 10:00 AM. He taps his pen on the desk, looks out the window, where snow is still falling.

MIKE

Time to face the music.

Mike gets up from his desk.

EXT. ASHDOWN HOUSE SIDE DOOR - DAY

Mike, wearing a jacket, comes out the door and scoots through falling snow across Massachusetts Avenue. He enters the door to Building 1.

INT. M.I.T. BUILDING 1 THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Mike comes up into the third floor hallway from the stairs. Melting snowflakes are still on his head. He walks down the hallway towards the graduate assistant's office. He slows down as the bulletin board comes into view. He can see a blue sheet of paper with rows of numbers and grades attached to the bulletin board. He stops, closes his eyes, then steps up to the bulletin board.

The camera shows Mike's POV as he looks at the grade sheet on the bulletin board. There are two columns of numbers under a heading that says "Hydrodynamics 13.010 Final Grades." The left most heading says "Last 4 Nos. Of SSI." The right heading says "Final Grade."

Mike runs his fingers down the rows of 4 digit numbers until he finds his number, "9856." He runs his finger across to the column of grades. Before his finger reaches the grade column, a melting snowflake runs into his eyes. The camera goes out of focus, fades to black twice as Mike blinks, then slowly focusses back on where Mike's finger is pointing on the grade column. The grade is "A-". The camera follows Mike's POV as he runs his finger back to last 4 digits of SSI column, then back to the "A-" grade.

Mike stares at the bulletin board in disbelief.

MIKE
A-minus. Holy shit!

Mike turns away from the bulletin board and literally skips down the hall, then bounds down the stairway.

EXT. M.I.T BUILDING 1 - DAY

The door opens and Mike, jubilant, skips out. He runs across Mass. Ave., making little excited jumps along the way.

INT. ASHDOWN HOUSE SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Mike, still full of energy, bounds out of the stairway and runs down the hall and around the corner. He nearly collides with a figure standing outside his door.

MIKE
(in surprise)
What are you doing here?

Kristin doesn't say anything. She slings her arms around Mike and gives him a long, hard, warm kiss on the lips.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(out of breath)
What was that for?

KRISTIN
Saving my life.

Kristin kisses him again, not quite as hard, a little longer.

MIKE
(even more out of breath)
And that one?

Kristin smiles up at him.

KRISTIN
No reason. No reason at all.

THE END