

(Driving)

CROWLEY

Do NOT make me regret bringing you.

JON

You won't.

CROWLEY

And you better damn well believe that you'll be next to me the entire time you're in there.

JON

I got it.

CROWLEY

Bad shit happens when you're alone.

JON

'Bad things happen,' huh? I've heard that recently.

CROWLEY

Because it's true.

JON

And because you said it to (the therapist)?

CROWLEY

This isn't the time or the place.

JON

Yeah, well... Honestly, if anything does go down, I'll be glad to have someone with a gun next to me.

CROWLEY

Someone not trying to shoot you.

JON

Well, yeah.

CROWLEY

Not right now at least.

JON

Funny.

CROWLEY

Come on.

Car doors. Ambulance sounds

JON
Hold up... I'm still... A little
slow.

CROWLEY
You can say that again.

JON
You know what I mean.

MENDEZ
Sheriff.

CROWLEY
Mendez.

MENDEZ
Is this the famous doctor?

JON
Famous?

MENDEZ
You've got the limp - where's your
bottle of Vicodin?

JON
Excuse me?

MENDEZ
You know like... The TV show.

JON
I don't watch TV...

CROWLEY
We're going in. You mind opening
the tape?

JON
So this is it, huh... 662 Smith
Lane.

CROWLEY
You don't have to say it like a
fucking weirdo. Yes. This is the
place. Are you up for going in?

JON
Of course. Why wouldn't I be?

CROWLEY

Just wondering. Rumor has it you're a little skiddish now. That's what something like this will do to ya, though.

JON

I'm fine. Just... Bring me up to speed. (Ugh.)

MENDEZ

Good to go, boss.

CROWLEY

Child protective services was sent here this morning. They arrived and got no response from inside the house. We got here about an hour ago but didn't make it far in.

JON

Why not?

MENDEZ

I've seen some shit, but I haven't seen ANYTHING like this before.

JON

Like what?

CROWLEY

It's fucked up. The usual spooky shit doesn't bother you, but I'm just saying... Go in prepared.

JON

That "spooky shit"?

CROWLEY

Before we go in - did you bring them?

JON

The surgical masks? Yeah. I brought a few.

CROWLEY

Good. Give me two. Put on one. Leave the rest out here in case someone else needs to go in. Here.

MENDEZ

Thank you.

JON

I have Carrion if that's easier.

CROWLEY

It's... Worse than that. It wasn't the smell that was the problem.

JON

That bad?

MENDEZ

You're in for a shock.

CROWLEY

Spacer, you stay behind me, and in front of Mendez. Do not touch ANYTHING without letting one of us know first, you got it?

JON

Jesus christ, what are we walking into?

MENDEZ

I got three EMTs waiting on the side, too. Just need to radio out.

CROWLEY

Sounds good. (On radio) Sheriff Crowley, Jonathan Spacer, George Mendez heading in, copy.

RADIO

Copy.

MENDEZ

Masks up.

CROWLEY

Here we go.

(Intro song)

Creaky door and walking in slowly. This scene will play out slowly with lots of walking, creaking and intense ambiance.

(Muffled slightly due to mask.

Quietly unless otherwise noted.)

JON

Wait, you're closing the door behind us?

CROWLEY

Otherwise, we'll be blinded by that
much light.

Door closes

JON

Jesus christ. It's pitch black in
here.

MENDEZ

That's why we've got these. Here.

JON

Uhh. Thanks.

CROWLEY

Aim it low, otherwise you won't see
shit through all the dust.

JON

Like high beams during fog.

MENDEZ

Heh. You really do say things like
that, huh?

JON

Do I *know* you?

CROWLEY

Shut up, both of you.

CROWLEY (YELLING)

This is the Springfield County
Sheriff's Department giving a final
warning. We have authorization to
enter the premises. If anyone is in
here, present yourself NOW.

MENDEZ

If only it were that easy with shit
like this.

JON

Wait, you guys haven't FOUND anyone
in here?

MENDEZ

Not living, at least.

JON

But you swept the place, right?

CROWLEY

First door on the left here. Across from the entryway. Mendez, can you watch the stairs to our right?

MENDEZ

On it.

CROWLEY

Spacer, here.

JON

What? Like a dog?

CROWLEY

This is not a fucking joke. Get in the room, look around.

JON

There's so much dust. I can barely see...

(Gran is alive, but pretends to be Jeff. Trudy is missing. Mom, Ben, Julie, sissy are dead.)

CROWLEY

(Coughing) The room is still clear. (Pause) Mendez?

MENDEZ (FAR AWAY)

Nothing.

JON

I'm seeing... Inches of dust on the floor and walls... There's what looks like a mattress against this back wall.

CROWLEY

Shuffle along to the far wall.

JON

I'm going.

Jon stepson a child's toy. It starts to play a creepy mechanical tune.

CROWLEY

Jesus Christ; watch your step. All this is evidence.

JON
I'm trying! I think... There's.
What is that?

CROWLEY
You tell me.

JON
There's... Something in this
corner. It's a person... Or was a
person. Curled up into a ball.
Their skin is tight around their
bones.

CROWLEY
Looks like a skeleton with hair.

JON
It's a woman. She appears to have
been at least past adolescence by
the size of her bones, but...
Jesus. She must have starved.

CROWLEY
How long ago?

JON
What?

CROWLEY
How long ago did she die?

JON
I'm not sure... Rough estimate, at
least six months. That's a lot of
decomposition.

CROWLEY
This was the room my guys came into
earlier today.

JON
If you knew there was a body, why
didn't you say anything?

CROWLEY
Because they weren't sure what they
saw. I only glanced in here before
we taped off the area. Do you think
you can move her?

JON

I don't...
Bone breaks

JON (cont'd)

Shit! I definitely can't now - not
without damaging the remains.

CROWLEY

Here. Put a marker down. Carefully.
There's a lot more house to get
through.

MENDEZ

Still no sign of anything out here.

CROWLEY

Good. We're moving forward down the
hall. Stay here.

MENDEZ

Got it.

JON

The wallpaper in this hallway is
falling off the walls... It looks
like old family photos, but... I
can barely see them through the
dust.

CROWLEY

Spacer, eyes forward, flashlight
up. You're my light.

MENDEZ

Aww, that's so sweet.

JON

See? I knew she didn't hate me.

CROWLEY

I swear to the Lord above, you two.

MENDEZ

Gotchu, boss.

CROWLEY

If anyone is in here, this is your
last chance to show yourself. I am
armed.

JON

There's barely any dust on the floor down this hall.

CROWLEY

There was a trail from the stairway leading this way.

JON

And no one's been in this far?

CROWLEY

None of our people, at least.

JON

Shit...

CROWLEY

Someone had to be living here with that kid. He couldn't have been on his own for six months.

JON

If the woman died that long ago, you mean?

CROWLEY

Exactly. Someone else was here.

JON

A few people...

CROWLEY

How do you figure?

JON

Oh. Uhhh... Watch that floorboard. It's sticking up.

CROWLEY

Good eye. We're coming up to a corner. Step back, but keep your eyes peeled.

Children whispering and singing.

JON

So you hear that?

CROWLEY

I hear you breathing loudly in my ear.

JON
Nevermind; sorry. I'm seeing... A
small kitchen table straight ahead.

CROWLEY
Clear on the right.

JON
Boarded up windows by a breakfast
nook.

CROWLEY
Jon!

JON
Sorry. (Pause) nothing straight
ahead. Dirty dishes piled high on
the counters and sink. Old style
fridge.

CROWLEY
Kitchen's clear. (Yelling) I've got
a door over here.

MENDEZ (YELLING)
Good on my end.

CROWLEY
It's unlocked.

JON
Jesus Christ. That's a padlock and
chains on the floor.

CROWLEY
And wall locks attached. You said
it looked like the kid was held
somewhere.

JON
Yeah; a basement would certainly
fit the bill.

CROWLEY
I don't want to imagine the kind of
shit we'll find down here. You
ready?
Children whispering intensifies and stops suddenly after a
creak on the floorboard.

JON
I don't see anything at the
landing. Cement floor from what I
can tell.

CROWLEY
There's no railing.

JON
It's going to take me a minute to-

MENDEZ (YELLING)
I've got movement! Sheriff.

CROWLEY
Shit. Move!

JON
I- (ack) ow!
Jon slips down some stairs. He pulls his mask off to yell.
Silence and then quick movement.

JON (cont'd)
Crowley! There's something down
there, too! Crowley? (Mask off)
Shit! Ah. My hip... Fuck. (Pause)
Who's down here? Hello? (Pause)
Jesus. I know someone is down
here...

JEFF
You're too late...

JON
I'm with the Sheriff's Department.
Please show yourself.

JEFF
That light is too bright. Turn it
off and I'll show you.

JON (COUGHING)
I can't do that.

JEFF
I'll come to you if you turn it
off.

JON
Crowley! Crowley I need help down
here!

JEFF
Don't leave. You need to see this.

JON (COUGHING)
Stay where you are. I'll get the
cops and come back.

JEFF

I thought you were a cop... Are you hurt?

JON

I'm (ack). I'm fine. I... Just need to climb back up here.

JEFF (ANGRILY)

Come down here and look!

JON

Stay back. I'm keeping the light on. And when I get to the (ack) top of the stairs... I'm closing this door.

JEFF (YELLING)

Don't leave me down here!

Jon grunts and closes the door. He locks it.

IT'S EERILY QUIET. THERE ARE NO SOUNDS LIKE BEFORE. HE STAGGERS BACK THROUGH, PARANOID, AND MAKES HIS WAY TO THE FOYER AGAIN.

JON

Crowley...? ...Mendez? Guys!
Anyone? What is going on...

Scuffling sound above

JON (cont'd)

Shit. They're upstairs... At least I hope it's them. (Pause) The front door is still closed.

Jon ascends the stairs slowly

JON (cont'd)

I'm coming up...

EERILYwalking up stairs. Creepy music and sounds. Sounds of ghost children echoing.

JON (cont'd)

Hello...? Damnit. Don't tell me the kids are...

Chains rattling and sawing.

CROWLEY (FAR AWAY)

Hurry up.

MENDEZ

I've almost got it.

JON
Crowley?
Ghost child runs by

CROWLEY
You're supposed to be watching the
door.

JON
You left me down there.

CROWLEY
Yeah, well. We've got something to
deal with. Loon for yourself.

GRAN (MEEKLY)
Please... Help me.

JON
Wow... Hes shackled to the wall.

MENDEZ (OUT OF BREATH FROM SAWING)
Oh, really? Hadn't noticed.

JON
Jesus, the stench.

CROWLEY
Spacer, for fuck's sake.

JON
Sorry. I -

GRAN
It's okay... He hadn't let me out
in some time...

CROWLEY
Put your mask back on.

JON
I dropped it down the stairs when -
holy shit.

CROWLEY
What?

JON
There was someone down there.

CROWLEY
In the basement?

JON

Yeah. I heard him after you left.

GRAN

There shouldn't be anyone else in here...

CROWLEY

Did you see him leave?

GRAN

No... I meant... (Coughing meekly)

I'm safe though, right?

CROWLEY

Absolutely. Getting you out of here alive is our main priority. Soon.

MENDEZ

I'm going as fast as I can.

CROWLEY

Does he have any sort of hiding place here? Or a room of his own.

GRAN

I don't know... He... Please. I don't want Jimmy to come back.

JON

Gran?

Gran gasps

CROWLEY

What did you call him? The guy we're after is Jimmy Hooper, age forty at least. We couldn't find any information on the purchase of this house. It wasn't in his name.

Chains break and unravel

MENDEZ

Got it!

GRAN

Oh god. Thank you! Thank you! Get me out of here.

MENDEZ

Whoa. Shouldn't you take it slow?

GRAN

I'm...

CROWLEY

Spacer, when we all get to the landing, you escort ... What did you say your name was?

GRAN

Jeff Limmon.

CROWLEY

Escort Jeff back to the paramedics.

JON

Me?

CROWLEY

Yeah you.

JON

You have a dozen EMTs outside. Can't they take him?

CROWLEY

Stop arguing and do what I say.

JON

No.

CROWLEY

What?!

MENDEZ

You two really wanna get into it out?

JON

Listening to your passive advice was what got me shot before.

CROWLEY

And not listening to it is going to get you shot now.

MENDEZ

Sheriff...

CROWLEY

Not by me. I meant Jimmy, if he's got a gun-

JON

You've got dozens of doctors out there, and one coroner in here. You brought me in for a reason, so let's go.

CROWLEY

Fine. Mendez open it up and take the door again.

MENDEZ

Got it.

GRAN

Daylight... It feels so good...

CROWLEY

Flashlight up. We're going back into the kitchen.

JON

I forgot it was on still...

CROWLEY

A quick sweep of this room again. Clear.

JON

The door is still closed.

CROWLEY

You locked it?

JON

Hell yes I locked it.

CROWLEY

Good. Cover me.

Crowley unlocks the door.

CROWLEY (WHISPERING)

Slowly.

JON

Not going to announce yourself this time?

CROWLEY

Shh!

They descend the stairs slowly. Another ghost child laughs and runs by. Jon gags as they go.

JON
It smells like piss and decay...

CROWLEY (WHISPERING)
Shut up. Grab your mask off the ground.

JON
Jesus christ!

CROWLEY
What? Where?

JON
Thought I saw something.

CROWLEY
Damn it! Get get down here. Back to the wall. This corner is clear. (Yelling) I know you're down here. Where are you?

JEFF (DISTANCE)
Please...

CROWLEY
I'm not seeing anyone.

JON
Shh. I hear him.

CROWLEY
Where, damn it?!

JON
Under the stairs...

CROWLEY
Come out with your hands up. NOW. This is your last warning.

JEFF
Turn that flashlight off...

JON
Stay where you are!

CROWLEY
Spacer shut the fuck up. Whoever is here needs to COME OUT. NOW.

JON
You don't see...?

CROWLEY
Shit... A body...

JEFF
Yeah... A few of them. Here.

JON
Oh god... I need to -

CROWLEY
Don't move yet. We still don't know
if there's anyone else down here.

JEFF
There isn't. Not alive at least.

JON
You're sure?

CROWLEY
Yeah, I need to do a full sweep.

JEFF
It's just me now... And my
daughter, but she... Doesn't know.

JON
My god...
Jon runs to the bodies and crowley does a sweep.

CROWLEY
Spacer! Damnit. Stay down.

JON
I've got... Three bodies over
here...

CROWLEY (FAR AWAY)
Son of a bitch. More kids?

JON
Two adults... One kid - a girl.

JEFF (EMOTIONLESS AND COLD)
That's my sister Julie and her
husband Ben. And then my
daughter... Alyssa.

JON

Sissy?

JEFF

How did you know?

CROWLEY (FAR AWAY)

Fuck. The room's clear, but I've got shackles and ropes over here.

JON (YELLING)

There's a mattress on the floor by me.

JEFF (EXCITED)

Keyton told you all about this place, didn't he?

JON (WHISPERING)

Are you... Jimmy?

JEFF

Hell no. Fuck that bastard.

JON

Then who are you? Where is your body?

JEFF

My name's Jeff. I died... A long time ago. I've been here watching over as much as I could but... Fuck this place is fucking terrible.

JON

I'm so sorry.

JEFF (MAD AND EMOTIONAL)

Save it. I don't want it. Just tell me that Keyton made it out okay.

JON

What?

JEFF (CRYING AND ANGRY)

Did he make it? I saw him run and I hoped that he'd be safe. But then... That bastard came down here and...

CROWLEY (CLOSE)

Shit. What happened?

JEFF (CRYING AND ANGRY)
He slit my baby's throat. And
Julie's. Ben was already... Well he
died and moved on.

JON
The two female victims died
recently... Maybe a few hours ago.

JEFF
You could have gotten here sooner.
You should have.

CROWLEY
We were too late...

JON
They're just piled here... Tossed
like garbage.

CROWLEY
Can we move any of them?

JON
Yeah... I think so. The two female
victims have barely started rigor
mortis... The male victim is
decaying, though.

CROWLEY
Here. Put three markers and let's
head up for some bags.

JON
O-okay...

JEFF
You're just leaving again?

CROWLEY
Come on.

JON
I need to...

CROWLEY
Here. Put three markers and let's
head up for some bags.

JON
O-okay...

JEFF
You're just leaving again?

CROWLEY
Come on.

JON
I need to...

JEFF
Tell me that Keyton made it out.

JON
Wait. We're missing bodies...

JEFF
Tell me he made it.

CROWLEY
Huh? How do you know that?

JON
I just know. I can't...

JEFF
TELL ME!

JON
He didn't make it. He died.

CROWLEY
Spacer, what the hell is happening to you? Get it together.

JEFF
Keyton died...

JON
Keyton died in the hospital... But his body showed us that he was being abused and malnourished. We were supposed to make it here in time.

CROWLEY
Spacer, that's not...

JON
We were supposed to make it...

JEFF
Keyton died... Trying to save his sister and his cousin. At least... My children are at peace now.

JON
Where is Trudy?

CROWLEY
Who?

JON
Trudy...

JEFF
Trudy Fischer. You didn't find her
body?

JON
Trudy Fischer. Keyton's cousin. He
was being kept with her in another
room.

CROWLEY
Did he say that in the ER before he
died?

JON
No. What?

CROWLEY
Then what are you talking about?
There are no more rooms.

JON
We're missing something.

CROWLEY
Put your damn mask back on. You're
breathing too much of this crap in.
Let's head up.

JEFF
Julie isn't here. I looked. Jimmy
must have taken her with him when
he fled.

JON
Jimmy?

CROWLEY
Yeah. We saved someone today. That
counts for something.

JON
Oh... Fuck.

CROWLEY

What now?

JON

Oh fuck.

Jon runs the rest of the way up the stairs.

MENDEZ

Jesus christ, doc. You almost gave me a heart attack stomping up here like that.

JON

Let me out.

MENDEZ

What's going on?

CROWLEY

Not a clue. I think he's hallucinating.

MENDEZ

Well shit. That's not good.

JEFF

Boo. Haha.

Jon busts through the door

JON

Where is he?

CROWLEY

The fuck are you doing Spacer?

JON

Where is Gran?

EMT

The guy from the house?

JON

Yes the guy from the- where is he?!

JEFF

You found Jimmy... IN the house?

EMT

He was transported back to the hospital as soon as he came out. Is everything alright doctor Spacer?

CROWLEY

Jon! Get your ass over here.

JON! GET YOUR ASS OVER HERE.

Jon grumbles and coughs over.

CROWLEY (WHISPERING)

What in the fuck do you think
you're doing?

JON

That guy we found wasn't Jeff
Limmon. That was Jimmy Hooper.

CROWLEY

What? Why do you think that?

JON

I just know it. You have to trust
me.

JEFF

He was the only male alive...

CROWLEY

So you're telling me that the
sickly looking man we found
shackled to the walk was actually
the abuser?

JON

Yes... I do.

CROWLEY

But you don't have any evidence to
back that up?

JON

Not yet, no.

CROWLEY

Right, because you looked at a pile
of bodies for a minute in the near
pitch dark.

JON

The dark... That's it. The
flashlight!

CROWLEY

What about it?

JON

That's the evidence: Gran never said the flashlight bothered him, but Jeff-

CROWLEY

Jeff what?

JEFF

Uh... I don't think I'm the best example to use here.

JON

If he were actually trapped in there for months or more, his eyes would have started burning from the sudden amount of light from the flashlight. Both Mendez and I had them on the whole time and it didn't bother him.

CROWLEY

So your evidence is the fact that his eyes didn't hurt?

JON

Yes. It's proof. Just because you don't like it -

CROWLEY

Then what is it you're asking me to do?

JON

I don't... I don't know. Just don't let him go.

CROWLEY

Let him go? Spacer, this is the shit I've do been talking about. You don't know anything about how these things work, but you think you do. That man will be treated at the hospital for whatever injuries he may have, and then he'll be questioned. Thoroughly. And we'll compare his records to any records that exist: blood, fingerprints, photos, whatever we have.

JEFF

I'm sure he destroyed those.

JON

What if the records were destroyed?

CROWLEY

We will find a way. I don't need to explain our process to you.

JON

I'm just saying... You have to at least consider this as a possibility.

CROWLEY

This is a case of child abuse and human trafficking. If you think I won't do every single thing in my power to make sure we find the truth here, then you don't know as much about me as you think you do. (Pause) Now go home.

JON

What?

CROWLEY

I said go home. You're done for today.

JEFF

Jon?

JON

You can't just -

CROWLEY

Mendez, get him off of the crime scene.

MENDEZ

You got it, chief. Come on, doc.

JON

But the-

MENDEZ

Let's go...

JEFF

Jon, what the hell? What am I supposed to do?

JON

We... I don't.

MENDEZ

Come on, man. I'm sorry. But you seem like this shit got to you real bad today.

JON

Mendez... I can't just leave.

MENDEZ

We'll sort it out. Once the crime scene is secure, I'm sure Crowley will need you to come back to get the bodies if we can't. Come on.

JON

But...

MENDEZ

Come on. Trust me. It's better we get you out of here now before it gets worse.

JON (YELLING)

I'm sorry.

Sitting in silence for a moment. Jon is clicking the flashlight on and off.

MENDEZ

Did you catch the Sasquatch game yesterday?

JON

The what?

MENDEZ

The Springfield Sasquatches... You're not a fan?

JON

No.

MENDEZ

Read any good book lately?

Jon is silent, still clicking

MENDEZ (cont'd)

This is going to sound weird, and it's probably not the best time to ask, but... You were investigating that Springfield facility explosion, right?

JON
No. Not any more.

MENDEZ
But you were. Did you find anything?

JON
Like what?

MENDEZ
Heh. I guess I should just spit it out. My brother, Alex, was a janitor there... Well, custodial engineer, ha... But he went missing the same day as the accident. I always wondered if anyone ever found his body...

JON
I'm... So sorry to hear that. No... I - I don't know anything.

MENDEZ
It's cool. Sorry to ask. (Pause) So you really think that guy was Jimmy, huh?

clicking

JON
He was.

MENDEZ
The Sheriff knows what she's doing. If it's him, we'll find out.

JON
Hmph...