

Nemesis

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FADE IN:

INT: MAIN LOBBY - AFTERNOON

A girl walks down the stairs from the science wing and turns the corner. As she walks through the lobby, she oozes confidence and power. This is MARLEY. Students standing in the hallway step out of the way as she passes them, but not because she is popular; rather, they fear her.

INT. LIBRARY

Upon entering the library, she strides over to a computer.

INSERT COMPUTER SCREEN

We see her searching the library database for a book, and she types, "The Art and Architecture of Insects." However, the screen reads that the title is unavailable.

BACK TO SCENE

Visibly annoyed, Marley turns on her heel and briskly walks to the librarian at the front desk. She taps her fingers on the desk, but the librarian does not respond. Irritated, Marley rolls her eyes.

MARLEY

Excuse me.

The librarian looks up at her briefly before returning to her computer.

LIBRARIAN

Just a moment.

MARLEY

Look, I know you're super busy pretending like you actually have to do work, but I need you to help me.

The librarian looks at her and is clearly offended.

LIBRARIAN

Excuse me?

MARLEY

I'm looking for a book, but the computer says that it's unavailable.

LIBRARIAN

What book is it? Would you like me to notify you when it is available again?

MARLEY

No. Can you just tell me who checked it out? "The Art and Architecture of Insects."

The librarian shakes her head.

LIBRARIAN

I'm sorry, I don't think I can do that for you.

MARLEY

(threateningly)

Please.

The librarian stares at Marley with wide eyes for a moment before sighing and turning to her computer. She begins typing, but stops suddenly and furrows her brow.

LIBRARIAN

Is this some sort of joke?

MARLEY

(rudely)

Excuse me? You're wasting my time.

LIBRARIAN

I'm sorry, but as I said before, I can't help you. Can I do anything else for you today?

Marley walks away without saying anything, but an expression of confusion begins to cross her face as she leaves the library.

INT. MARLEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Marley sits in a dark room at her desk, holding a Sharpie. Her room is extremely neat and organized. The only light in the room comes from candles and stringed lights around her walls. A large bulletin board hangs on her wall that has butterflies pinned on it.

MARLEY (V.O.)

I'm not a bad person. I've just done some bad things. But trust me when I say that my actions were justified. I don't mean that I was

(MORE)

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

bullied or anything; actually, most of the time I'm the one doing the bullying. But I have something my classmates don't: ambition. Drive. Desire. I know that I can do better than the small-town nobodies who are satisfied with their legacy being voted "friendliest" in the yearbook. I know I can do more than that.

She has a large stack of biology textbooks on her desk and has one open in front of her. She slides up the hem of her skirt to reveal her bare leg. Uncapping the Sharpie, she begins to copy information onto her thigh.

MARLEY (V.O.)

I'll admit that I'm not proud of what I've done to succeed, but everybody has done bad things to get ahead. Everybody. I know what I want and I get it. Why does that make me a bad person? Maybe a few people get hurt along the way, but you have to crack a few eggs, right?

INT. HALLWAY IN THE MORNING - DAY

We hear the bell ring, and students flood into the hallway. Marley walks briskly down the hallway wearing a backpack as the camera follows behind her.

She holds her chin up high. Her classmates are crowded in the hallway as they stand at their lockers or walk away. But in spite of the busy crowd, she passes through the hallway with ease, as people step out of the way as she walks past them and they watch her go by. She passes two girls, and nods at them as she walks by.

The first girl is wearing a knitted cardigan and scarf who carries herself comfortably with a quiet confidence. This is ELLEN.

Next to Ellen is a girl dressed plainly who is clearly shyer and more insecure than the other two girls. This is HOLLY.

However, as she's walking, she bumps into another student. Anger flashes across her face as she spins around to face the culprit.

MARLEY

Hey, watch it!

She turns to see a girl of similar stature standing in front of her. Unlike the other students (as well as the librarian) who cower upon seeing her, this girl is different. She holds Marley's gaze calmly, and never breaks eye contact. This is LACY.

LACY

Excuse me.

Her voice is soft but steady. Lacy holds eye contact with Marley for a few more beats, and then turns to continue walking down the hall. Marley grabs her arm, stopping her in her tracks.

MARLEY

I'm not done.

LACY

Yes?

MARLEY

Why haven't I seen you before?

LACY

I guess you just weren't looking.

MARLEY

What's that supposed to mean?

LACY

I mean, maybe if you weren't so concerned with making sure everyone knows you're better than them, you'd notice us regular people.

Shocked, Marley takes a step back. She quickly scans the hallway, and realizes that everybody in the hallway has stopped talking and is staring at her.

LACY

Now if you'll excuse me.

Giving Marley one long final look, Lacy turns to walk away again. This time, Marley is speechless, and silently watches the strange girl walk away instead of trying to stop her. She does not look entirely shocked; instead, although she tries to hide it, she watches Lacy with a mix of respect and even admiration.

Ellen slams her locker shut and walks up to Marley with

Holly following closely behind her. Upon seeing them, Marley quickly loses her shocked expression and instead looks mildly annoyed.

MARLEY

Oh my God. I can't believe what just happened.

ELLEN

What?

MARLEY

This girl came out of nowhere and just walked right into me like I wasn't even there! Who the hell does she think she is?

HOLLY

(timidly)

Maybe it was just an accident.

MARLEY

You didn't even see it. Trust me, it wasn't an accident.

ELLEN

I'm sure she didn't mean anything by it. Who even was it?

Marley shrugs.

MARLEY

I have to run home first and then I'll come over, okay?

After a brief pause, she leaves abruptly without saying goodbye, and her friends wave halfheartedly; however, Marley doesn't notice, and turns the corner.

INT. HOLLY'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Marley is sitting at a large table with two other girls and a boy. On one side of the table is Marley and the boy—RYAN. He is dressed casually in a flannel and jeans, and is laid-back but confident.

On the other side of the table, we see Ellen and Holly. Holly carves a cat into her pumpkin, while Ellen carves a raven.

MARLEY

Ellen, did you check out the book "The Art and Architecture of

(MORE)

MARLEY (CONT'D)

Insects" out of the library?

Ellen shakes her head.

ELLEN

No, sorry. I'm doing my project on African birds. You know that.

MARLEY

Okay, I just thought it was weird that someone else had already checked it out when we all have different topics.

Holly furrows her brow, struggling to pierce the knife through the skin of the pumpkin. Glancing over at Marley, she notices that her friend is carving through the pumpkin with ease. She sighs and puts down her knife, brushes her hair out of her face, and looks over at Marley.

HOLLY

How do you think the bio test went today, Marley?

A sly smile spreads across Marley's lips – she knows something that her friends don't know.

INT. AP BIO CLASSROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Marley sits at a desk in a silent room. Everybody is working intently on an test. She glances around the room and slowly shifts her gaze to the teacher at the front of the room. The teacher is sitting at a desk and is working on paperwork. In a series of quick cuts, Marley carefully slides her skirt up to reveal the writing on her leg, and switches her gaze between her leg, her test, and the teacher as she scribbles down answers furiously.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

MARLEY

I know I did well.

She smiles confidently, and Ellen and Holly smile awkwardly in return before silently returning their attention to their pumpkins again.

RYAN

Do you guys know what you're going to be for Halloween?

Ellen and Holly look at each other and smile.

HOLLY
We're going to be the twins from
The Shining!

ELLEN
What about you guys?

MARLEY
I'm going as a butterfly, he's
going to be a butterfly catcher.

Ellen snorts.

ELLEN
A butterfly catcher?

RYAN
(sarcastically)
Yeah, I know.

MARLEY
I think it's a good idea! And my
party, my rules.

The girls all laugh. When they begin carving again, we see Marley get up and walk over into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marley quickly glances over her shoulder at her friends. To her relief, they are all concentrating on carving.

We see Marley snatch a tiny trinket off of a shelf in Holly's living room: a nesting doll. Glancing over her shoulder again to make sure that her friends did not see, she slides it into her pocket inconspicuously.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Marley walks back to her seat, picks up her knife again, and stabs it swiftly into the side of the pumpkin. The screen cuts to black.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Marley is sitting at her desk, staring off into the distance with a blank expression on her face. We see that she is bored and under-stimulated. She has a notebook open on her desk, but the page is blank. MRS. O'MALLEY is talking at the front of the room, although her voice is faint and barely audible as a result of Marley's lack of focus.

LACY (O.S.)
 (whispering)
 Marley.

Marley snaps out of her daze and turns around. In the desk behind her is Lacy. Marley pulls a confused expression, her brow furrowed as she examines the other girl. The two girls speak in hushed voices.

MARLEY
 Why have I never seen you in this class?

LACY
 I think you already know the answer to that.
 (beat)
 Look, I think we might have gotten off on the wrong foot. I'm Lacy.

LACY smiles at her, and Marley returns the smile hesitantly.

MARLEY
 Marley. Are you a senior?

LACY
 Yes, are you?

Marley is taken aback at the thought that somebody does not know who she is, but regains her composure.

MARLEY
 Yeah. I am.

MRS. O'MALLEY
 Hey, Marley. Let's get back to work, okay?

Marley turns back around, looking slightly embarrassed as she faces her blank notebook. When Mrs. O'Malley turns her back, Marley glances over her shoulder at Lacy, who is staring right back at her.

Mrs. O'Malley grabs a stack of tests off her desk, and begins to distribute them back to the students.

MRS. O'MALLEY
 Some of you did very well...

She looks at Marley, who smiles.

MRS. O'MALLEY (CNT.)
 ... but most of you did not.

She hands Marley back her exam, and Marley smiles confidently at the "100" on the top of her exam.

LACY (O.S.)
Wow, good job.

Marley turns around, smiling proudly.

MARLEY
Thanks.

LACY
But it's a little weird, isn't it?
I mean, most people in the class
failed but you still pulled off an
A. 100, no less.

MARLEY
I guess it just comes naturally to
me.

LACY
Yeah, I guess. Weird, though.

Lacy stares at Marley with an accusatory look on her face. She raises an eyebrow, expecting an explanation.

The bell rings, and Marley quickly gets up, shoves her notebook into her backpack, and heads to the door at the same time as Lacy. Marley pushes her way into the flow of the crowd, shouldering Lacy gently as she walks past her.

INT. MARLEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Holly is sprawled out on Marley's floor with a large sheet of poster board spread out in front of them. They are surrounded by an array of markers and various office supplies. Holly is working hard on the poster, while Marley is sitting on her bed and is on her laptop.

HOLLY
Can you believe it's almost
Halloween already? It feels like we
just got back to school.

Marley nods and makes a sound of agreement, but does not look up from the computer screen. Holly looks slightly annoyed, but not enough to confront her friend. Holly sighs and gets up.

HOLLY
I'm going to take a break before my
hand falls off.

She walks over towards Marley's bed, but stops by Marley's bureau and picks up a framed photo. We see that it is a picture of Marley and Ryan.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

I've never seen this picture before!

Marley glances over at her.

MARLEY

Oh yeah, that was from last Christmas.

HOLLY

Your life is perfect, you know that? You have perfect grades, a perfect relationship with your perfect boyfriend...

INT. EMPTY HALLWAY - FLASHBACK

In quick cuts, we see Marley and an anonymous BOY standing b

HOLLY

Perfect friends...

The girls laugh. Holly puts the photo back on the bureau and sits down again.

HOLLY

Back to the causes and effects of the rise of Italian fascism, I guess. Ugh, anyway, did I tell you my mom is pissed because she can't find one of her weird old nesting doll things? She was taking it out on us last night. I'm just like, sorry, it's not my fault that you lost your creepy family heirlooms.

Marley shifts uncomfortably and her eyes dart towards her bureau, where the nesting doll is sitting against the mirror. She swallows.

MARLEY

Yeah, that's weird. I wonder what happened to it.

HOLLY

I bet it'll turn up somewhere.

MARLEY

It better, or else you won't have
to use fake blood for your
Halloween costume.

Marley laughs, but her friend looks slightly horrified.

HOLLY

That's terrible!

MARLEY

Chill, Holly, I'm just joking.

HOLLY

Anyway, do you think we should
split the poster into causes on one
side and effects on the other? I
think it might be easier if we...

Marley looks relieved as the conversation changes subjects,
and the scene fades out.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Marley walks into class just as the bell rings and hurries
to her seat. She drops her backpack beside her before
turning around. Lacy is staring at her.

MARLEY

Hey.

LACY

Hi, Marley.

MARLEY

Look, I just want to tell you that-

The teacher walks by the girls' desks, and places a sheet of
paper on Marley's desk.

MARLEY

What's this?

TEACHER

The quiz.

MARLEY

(panicked)

Quiz?

TEACHER

I told you about it yesterday,
weren't you paying attention?

Marley swallows and focuses her attention on the quiz in front of her. She answers the first couple of questions with ease, but gets stuck on Question 6.

Tapping her pencil on her desk in thought, Marley slowly glances over at the quiz of the person sitting next to her, raising her chin slightly so that she can see.

With a BUMP, Lacy swiftly kicks Marley's chair, causing her to quickly return back to her own quiz.

INT. HALLWAY AFTER CLASS - DAY

The bell rings, and the class exits the room. However, Marley grabs Lacy's arm as she starts to walk down the hallway.

MARLEY

Hey! Why did you do that?

LACY

Do what?

MARLEY

Kick my chair during the quiz.

LACY

You shouldn't be cheating. It's not right.

MARLEY

It's not your business, actually. Thanks for the life lesson, but I can worry about myself, thanks.

LACY

You're going to get in trouble if you keep acting like this, you know.

MARLEY

Who the hell even are you? It's my life, and I'll do as I damn please. Excuse me.

Marley shoves Lacy and storms off into the hallway.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Marley is sitting on one side of the table with Ellen sitting across from her. The two are chatting idly.

ELLEN

So I went to the library and the only book about African birds was checked out. Weird, right?

MARLEY

Yeah, that is weird.

ELLEN

Hey, I'm going to go grab a fork.

Ellen gets up and crosses the cafeteria. A complex expression crosses Marley's face, and she watches Ellen briefly before leaning across the table and picking up Ellen's cell phone.

She quickly unlocks the phone, and then proceeds to go into Ellen's messages and read through them.

Suddenly, Lacy walks past the table and stops abruptly in front of Marley.

LACY

Hey, what are you doing?

MARLEY

Nothing. Leave me alone.

LACY

Is that Ellen's phone?

MARLEY

I told you to leave me alone!

We see that Ellen is heading back to the table, but Marley is unaware.

LACY

You shouldn't be doing that, you know.

Lacy walks away, and Ellen approaches from the other direction. A look of confusion spreads across her face.

ELLEN

What are you doing with my phone?

MARLEY

I- I just- I was just-

Ellen snatches the phone out of Marley's hands.

ELLEN

What the hell is wrong with you
today?

Marley is speechless. She looks desperately across the cafeteria for Lacy, who is nowhere to be found. Ellen sits back down, but there is an extremely palpable tension between the two girls.

INT. MARLEY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Marley enters her house through the front door.

MARLEY

I'm home!

As she closes the door, her dog runs up to greet her. However, she disregards her pet and pushes past the dog. We see her trudge up the stairs, turn the corner, and enter her bedroom.

INT. MARLEY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Once in her room, she drops her backpack by the door, walks over to her bureau, reaches into the pocket of her jacket, and pulls out another small trinket: a watch. She places the watch on her bureau in line with a series of other objects, including the nesting doll, an old bottle of nail polish, a tube of lipstick, and a glass figurine. The trinkets are all lined up on top of a book about African birds.

She looks up at the mirror, examining her reflection intently. Unbeknownst to Marley, a small spider crawls up the frame of the mirror.

As she watches her reflection, she sees a flash of another face for a brief second: Lacy. Startled, she stumbles backwards and looks over her shoulder; however, she is alone in her room. She draws a deep, ragged breath and forces out a laugh as if to convince herself that she isn't afraid. She shakes her head and then sees the spider on the mirror frame.

She brings her finger towards it and allows it to crawl into her palm. She then gently releases it onto the bureau before swiftly killing it. The screen cuts to black.

BLACK SCREEN

We hear an alarm clock going off for a few beats, echoing loudly.

INT. MARLEY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Marley hits the alarm clock groggily and rolls over in bed. After laying in bed for a moment, she sits up and yawns. She then gets out of bed and gets dressed. She stands in front of the mirror and frowns at her reflection.

MARLEY
(yelling)
Mom, can you come here for a second?

Marley's MOM opens the door and runs in the room, looking worried.

MOM
What is it? Is everything okay?

MARLEY
How do I look? Do I look okay in this?

Her mom sighs.

MOM
Marley, you look fine. Is that all?

MARLEY
Yeah. Sorry.

Her mom exits, and Marley stares at her reflection again, tugging on her clothes and tilting her head as she watches her reflection.

INT. HALLWAY IN THE MORNING - DAY

Marley walks through the hallway, noticeably less confident than before. Everything from her posture to her expression is far more defeated than earlier.

LACY
Hey, Marley!

Marley turns around and sees Lacy standing up against a locker. Unlike Marley, she looks confident and collected.

LACY
Did you get dressed in a rush this morning or something?

Marley does not respond, and instead hurries down the hallway with a hurt look on her face. She approaches her locker, slams the door open, and drops her backpack on the floor with a thud. Looking slightly frazzled, she begins dumping books into her locker without looking.

Holly and Ellen approach her, looking concerned at her frantic actions.

ELLEN
Hey, are you okay?

MARLEY
I'm fine!

HOLLY
Do you need to ta-

MARLEY
No, I don't need to talk about it,
I told you that I'm fine!

Marley slams her locker shut and speeds down the hall, bowing her head slightly as she weaves through other students.

Ellen and Holly watch her with concern, share pitying glances with each other, and continue down the hallway.

INT. AP BIO CLASSROOM - DAY

Marley is sitting at her desk, scribbling notes halfheartedly.

MRS. O'MALLEY is standing in front of the room by the board. The bell rings, and she gets up out of her seat, grabs her backpack, and heads towards the door.

MRS. O'MALLEY
Hey, Marley, can I talk to you for
a second?

MARLEY
I guess.

Marley walks over to Mrs. O'Malley's desk.

MARLEY
What's up?

MRS. O'MALLEY
I found this on my desk after
school yesterday.

She hands Marley a piece of paper. Marley unfolds it. The paper reads, "Marley Collins was cheating on our last test. She wrote answers on her leg and hid them under her skirt." An expression of horror floods Marley's face, and she grows pale.

MARLEY

I- who- who wrote this?

Mrs. O'Malley shrugs.

MRS. O'MALLEY

I don't know. But Marley, I'm afraid I can't just pass this off as a joke. I went back and looked at your test, and your answers are the same as the book, word for word. That's not a coincidence.

MARLEY

Mrs. O'Malley, I didn't-

MRS. O'MALLEY

Save it. I'm giving you a zero for the exam, I'm revoking your college recommendation, and we're going to have a little chat with Mr. Imbusch on Monday. I wouldn't be surprised if Ms. Kay catches wind of this and kicks you out of National Honors Society as well. I take cheating very seriously, Marley.

MARLEY

I-

MRS. O'MALLEY

You're free to go. I'll see you right after school on Monday.

Marley exits the room.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Marley is walking down the hallway and looks ragged and upset. She slouches as she walks, and has a bewildered and broken expression on her face.

MARLEY (V.O.)

Who the hell does Lacy think she is? I've never said a word to the girl in my life and all of a sudden, she's dead set on screwing me over. But I can't let her win. I can't. Maybe she won't be so sure of herself if she knows what it feels like to be humiliated in front of everyone you've ever tried

(MORE)

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

to impress. Except it's a lot
easier to fake a smile than it is
to wash punch out of your clothes.

Marley spots Lacy at the end of the hallway, and hurries
after her, plastering on a fake looking smile.

MARLEY

Hey!

Lacy looks up.

MARLEY

Hey, I just want to apologize for
whatever's been going on between us
lately. I've just been in kind of a
bad mood lately, you know? I never
meant to take it out on you.

LACY

It happens.

MARLEY

Anyway, I was wondering if you
wanted to go to a party with me
tonight.

LACY

I thought your Halloween party was
tomorrow.

MARLEY

No, not my party. This is
different. It's pretty hard to get
invited, but I can get you in. No
hard feelings, right?

Lacy smiles.

LACY

Right. No hard feelings.

MARLEY

Awesome, meet me at this address at
7:00. I'll see you there. Make sure
to come in through the back.

Marley slips a small piece of paper into Lacy's hand, and
walks away with more confidence in her step than before. She
has a determined but eerie smile on her face.

INT. PARTY IN BASEMENT - NIGHT

Marley is sitting on a sofa in a crowded basement. She is greeted by flashing lights, thumping music, and a crowd of people who are all talking or dancing. She glances at her phone to look at the time: 7:30PM. She then glances at the back door, where we see a plastic bucket filled to the brim with red punch.

She sighs, puts her phone down on the table, and gets up and joins the crowd. Through the flashing lights, we see a boy walk up to her and tap her on the shoulder: the BOY FROM THE FLASHBACK.

She turns around and smiles, and the two begin dancing. Gone is the insecure, flustered Marley we had seen earlier; instead, she is now back in control and loving it. She grabs the boy by the neck and pulls him closer to her, a smile spreading across her face as she closes her eyes.

The scene is chaotic and loud: we struggle to see exactly what is going on due to the flashing lights. As the two dance, Marley catches the eye of a girl from across the room: Lacy.

The two girls hold eye contact for a moment before Lacy – wide-eyed and shocked – rushes out the back door and into the night. However, the bucket does not fall.

Breathing heavily, Marley pushes away the anonymous boy and shoves through the crowd after Lacy. She swings open the back door and steps out into the cold night, but the bucket poised on top of the door frame tips over and spills the dark red liquid all over Marley.

The guests stop and stare at her momentarily, so Marley slams the door behind her, utterly humiliated. The backyard is empty. Marley stands still for a moment, her shoulders moving up and down as she breathes deeply. The punch soaks through her clothes, and she is still in shock as she stares into the dark night.

A butterfly flutters past her.

MARLEY (V.O.)

She can't win. She can't.

A dark, emotionless expression overtakes her face.

EXT. MARLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Still stained from the punch, Marley is standing outside on the balcony of a house. She has a pair of scissors in one hand and a flashlight in the other. Although we can't tell,

she is at her own house. She opens the sliding glass door, steps into the house, and crosses the hall to a closed door.

MARLEY (V.O.)

I know it seems crazy. I know it looks like I'm overreacting. I mean, you don't break into someone's room over a playground scuffle. But you don't understand. I have no other choice.

INT. MARLEY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marley opens the door, and the room is dark. Although Marley does not notice, we see the faint light coming from her tiny flashlight catching on a few familiar items such as the trinkets on her bureau. Marley creeps across the room, and we see a girl sleeping in bed, presumably Lacy.

However, Marley trips over a book, and we see it slide under her feet. The thumping sound echoes through the silent room. The title of the book reads, "The Art and Architecture of Insects:" the book Marley was trying to check out. Marley stops dead in her tracks, watching as the other girl shifts in bed.

Once Lacy stops moving, Marley opens the closet doors and sifts through the racks of clothing.

She pulls a dress off of a hanger, and holds it up in front of her. Opening her scissors, she begins to snip holes in the garment.

Suddenly, she hears footsteps coming from the hall, so she frantically slides into the closet and gently shuts the door. From her point of view, we see a sliver of the bedroom from the gap in the door. The footsteps stop, and all we can hear is Marley's labored breathing.

LACY (O.S.)

(whispering)

I know you're in here.

Marley's breathing stops.

LACY (O.S.) (CNT.)

(whispering)

And I would stop if I were you because just like last time... You're going to get caught.

Marley sits in complete silence. A few seconds pass, but it

feels like an eternity. Finally, she slowly opens the closet doors. After a beat, we see Lacy standing right in front of the closet.

The doors slam shut.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. MARLEY'S BATHROOM - DAY

Marley, Ellen, and Holly are standing in front of the mirror and getting ready for the party. Marley looks tired and frazzled, but continues to put on her makeup as if nothing is wrong.

HOLLY

Hey, do you have another hairbrush?

MARLEY

Yeah, I think there's one on the bureau.

Holly exits the room.

HOLLY (O.S.)

What the hell?

Marley glances over at the door with a confused expression on her face, but realization dawns on her moments. Ellen glances over at Marley, but does not say a word. Realizing that Ellen is looking at her, Marley attempts to conceal her worried expression and instead furrows her brow in confusion.

MARLEY

Holly, is everything okay?

Marley and Ellen walk into the bedroom to see Ellen standing by the bureau holding the nesting doll. She is visibly angry, and stares at Marley with an intensity. She is no longer the shy, complacent sidekick that Marley can push around as she pleases; instead, she finally has agency.

HOLLY

When did you take this? WHY did you take this?

MARLEY

I-

HOLLY

You LIED to me about it, too! I told you my mom was looking for it and you lied to my face!

ELLEN

Is that my book?

Ellen walks over towards the bureau and picks up the book. She turns around and faces the girls again, shocked and angered.

ELLEN

This is mine. I told you I needed it!

MARLEY

I just—

Ellen and Marley begin to gather up their belongings.

HOLLY

I think we're going to finish getting ready back at my house. See you tonight.

ELLEN

(sarcastically)

Wait, make sure she doesn't take your hair spray on your way out.

The two girls exit, and Marley stands still and watches them go, paralyzed with fear.

INT. MARLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

From the point of view of an anonymous guest, we are standing in front of Marley's front door. We ring the doorbell, and Marley greets us at the door and leads us inside to the crowded house. She is dressed in a dress with big butterfly wings, and her elaborate makeup matches the coloring of her costume.

The house is decorated lavishly: orange lights strung around, spooky decorations in every corner, plates full of Halloween-themed treats, carved pumpkins glowing maliciously.

We walk into the dining room, looking around at the room, and Marley smiles broadly at us (although she does not look like usual confident self).

MARLEY

Thanks for coming!

She turns her back and disappears into the crowd. We see that the back of her dress has holes in it, and the POV ends.

Marley rushes over to Ellen and Holly, who are dressed as the twins from *The Shining*. They are wearing light blue dresses splattered with fake blood and white knee socks. They are talking to a small group of people. Slightly out of breath, Marley forces a big smile.

MARLEY

Hey guys!

Her friends ignore her, and Marley frowns.

MARLEY

Hello...

Ellen and Holly turn around, clearly annoyed.

ELLEN

(bored)

What is it?

MARLEY

How is it?

HOLLY

How is what?

MARLEY

The party...

ELLEN

Oh. It's good.

HOLLY

Yeah. Just like your bio test.

Marley's jaw drops, but she attempts to regain her air of confidence and ignores her comment.

MARLEY

Um, anyway, have you seen Ryan anywhere?

HOLLY

Nope.

ELLEN

Sorry.

Frustrated, Marley sighs. However, she forces a bright smile.

MARLEY

Okay, thanks!

Marley disappears into the crowd again. As soon as she turns her back on her friends, her smile is replaced by the dejected, broken look that has become the new norm for her. We see that the back of her dress is all cut up.

She looks through the sea of people, and we see a girl who appears to be Lacy in the crowd. Marley rushes after her, but the girl is gone by the time she gets to her.

Frustrated, Marley continues to move through the crowd. Unlike in the beginning of the movie, she struggles to make her way through the people. Another face catches her eye: her own. She stops dead in her tracks, horrified. A body bumps into her from behind.

She turns around, and sees Ryan. A relieved smile spreads across her face, and she walks towards him.

As she approaches him, she puts her hands on his chest. However, she notices he is in a clearly last-minute Halloween costume: a black t-shirt with a street made out of masking tape and a plastic fork taped on it. He also looks extremely displeased to see her. Marley's smile fades.

MARLEY (CONT'D)

Hey, babe, where's your costume?

RYAN

Jesus, Marley, don't call me "babe."

MARLEY

What's up with YOU tonight?

RYAN

Leave me alone. What the hell is wrong with you?

MARLEY

(confused)

What do you mean?

RYAN

Why are you acting like things are

(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)

back to normal? I already told you:
it's over. Do I have to say it
again?

MARLEY

Ryan, what are you talking about?

RYAN

You're cheating on me! What part of
"I'm breaking up with you" didn't
you understand?

Shocked, Marley stumbles backwards a bit. The sound floods from the room, and all we hear is Marley's heartbeat. She is speechless.

Ryan pushes past her into the crowd, and disappears.

Marley stands in place, still unable to process what had just happened to her.

MARLEY (V.O.)

There is only one person on this
earth who knew the truth. One
person. And she told him. She told
him.

All of a sudden, Marley is no longer fragile and broken-looking. An animalistic fierceness overcomes her, and she begins to shove through the crowd, looking frantically from side to side.

MARLEY

(yelling)

Lacy! LACY!

The guests all watch her with confusion as she stumbles past them.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Marley approaches a table filled with carved pumpkins. We see the pumpkins that the girls and Ryan were carving earlier.

Marley spots a heavy duty pumpkin carving knife of the table, stashed out of sight behind the large pumpkins. She grabs it, and rushes back into the crowd.

MARLEY

LACY!

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

She turns the corner, and sees Lacy sitting on the stairs, dressed identically to Marley. The girls stare at each other for a beat, and then Marley surges towards her.

Marley grabs the front of Lacy's dress, pulling her to her feet.

MARLEY
(hysterically)
Why the HELL would you do that to me?

LACY
(calmly)
I didn't do anything.

MARLEY
You KNOW what you did! You told Ryan about the party. Why would you do that to me? Why?

LACY
I didn't say anything to him.

Marley shoves Lacy, forcing the other girl to fall backwards onto the stairs.

MARLEY
Don't you DARE lie to me. You're ruining my life! Why are you doing this to me?

LACY
I haven't done—

MARLEY
STOP! Just stop!

Lacy gets her feet, and Marley keeps moving towards her, forcing Lacy up the stairs. Lacy keeps stumbling as she's moving backwards, but Marley relentlessly drives her forward up to the second floor and around the corner.

INT. MARLEY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marley, breathing heavily, swings open the door to her bedroom, pushing Lacy inside and slamming the door behind her. Marley drops the knife and pushes Lacy against the wall, and the mirror hanging on the wall falls to the ground and shatters.

MARLEY
(screaming)
(MORE)

MARLEY (CONT'D)

YOU RUINED EVERYTHING! But you're
not going to win.

The two girls struggle amidst the broken glass, and we see the "Art and Architecture of Insects" textbook, kicked under the bed after Marley tripped on it before.

Marley pins Lacy down on the ground, and Lacy writhes beneath her.

MARLEY

I win! I WIN!

Lacy twists violently and removes herself from Marley's grip. She quickly reaches up and grasps her hands around Marley's neck, choking her.

Marley gasps for breath and moves her hands violently, feeling the ground for the knife. Her hands search the ground clumsily, but she quickly grabs the knife.

Lacy screams, but Marley swiftly brings the knife down and drives it into Lacy's abdomen.

MARLEY

I WIN!

Lacy's hands immediately fall to the ground.

Marley looms above Lacy, breathing heavily. Her face is completely drained of emotion or sympathy. Instead, she is taken over by carnal, violent passion.

Trembling, she musters up the strength to reach over and pull off Lacy's mask. As the mask slowly slips past Lacy's eyes, she is horrified to see her own face underneath the mask.

She rolls off of the girls body and onto the floor beside her.

She closes her eyes for a moment, and then opens them. From the remaining shards of the mirror, we see only Marley in the room, covered in blood.

Confused and frightened, she looks beside her: the other girl is gone. Marley is alone. She gasps raggedly.

She slowly moves her hands down to her torso, and she gasps again when her fingers feel the wet blood soaking through her dress. She lifts up her shaking hands and stares at them in horror.

She did not stab Lacy; instead, she stabbed herself.

As she lays on the ground dying, she sees the textbook under the bed. We see in her face that she is putting the pieces of the puzzle together. But it is too late.

Her eyes shut.

FADE OUT