

Wayne and Monica are in their thirties and excited about moving in together. They found a great apartment in a high-rise a short drive from both of their workplaces. The photos online were beyond all their expectation. They haven't seen it yet, but are waiting in the lobby for the realtor at the moment.

It's a big step for them to move in together. Monica is getting anxious, and decides to call the realtor.

"Sweetie, he said two o'clock—he still has two minutes," Wayne says assuringly.

She has the realtor on the line before Wayne has finished the sentence. "Hello Mr. Thompson," she says. "Yes! We are here. Great, thank you." She hangs up and tells Wayne, "He will be down in a few minutes to get us."

Wayne gloats, "I told you not to worry. We might not even like it anyway."

Monica knows Wayne is nervous and just trying to be cautious. As for her, she is more excited. "It's just such a great location for both of us," she gushes. But after fifteen minutes, even Monica starts pacing.

"It's fine," Wayne tells her.

Monica is not happy. "What if someone else is looking at it?" she asks Wayne.

He hugs her tightly. "If that happens, it wasn't meant for us."

The realtor, Jack Thompson, walks up while they still have their arms around each other. "Sorry for the wait," he tells them. Wayne and Monica notice that he is sweating heavily: He looks as if he just finished a workout, although he's dressed in a dark blue suit.

Monica asks him, "Is everything okay?"

"Everything is good. You two ready to see the apartment?" He leads them briskly to the elevator. He practically runs down the hallway to the door of the apartment, but refuses to enter. "Oh, no, I won't get in your way!" he says, obviously agitated.

*Unusual*, Monica thinks...*but then, so is a man who works out in a suit.* They go through the apartment and everything fits them perfectly. Even though Wayne has reservations about the move, he can't find any negatives about the apartment whatsoever. They agree to sign the lease and Jack says he'd like to show them the lounge, which is very elegant. They're not going to be swayed, because they already agreed to move in, so they go along to please him and get the deal done faster. Jack is so antsy to go that they followed him.

Monica and Wayne don't see Jack give a dead stare into the apartment as he shuts the door. There is something he's not telling them.

While unpacking, Wayne keeps getting glimpses of shadows. Not a superstitious person, he assumes he's just not used to how the light falls in his new surroundings. But he can't completely escape the eerie feeling of being watched. Thinking it might be Monica, he tries to sneak up on her—but she's in the other room, which he discovers when she calls for assistance with a heavy box.

Wayne doesn't mention his feelings, and instead asks her how she's doing. He hopes that she will open up if she is having any strange feelings. Monica says, "A little tired, but couldn't be better." Wayne is also worn down, so he chalks up his paranoia to exhaustion.

Monica spots a small box that she forgot to drop off in the half bath by the entrance. "Can you stick this in the bathroom by the front?" she asks, not giving him time to answer before she tosses it at him. Wayne jumps forward awkwardly to catch the box, afraid the contents are breakable. Monica laughs as he trips over a large box trying to catch the small one.

"It's just the hand towels," she tells him, covering her mouth as she laughs.

"How was I supposed to know?" Wayne asks, irritated. He finally steadies himself.

Monica is disappointed that he thinks she would throw something which could break—or, worse, hurt him. He apologizes and tells her it's been a long day. She has to agree; most of the rooms are still filled with moving boxes. Wayne heads for the half bath at the front of the apartment.

It's dark outside, and Wayne stops to admire the city lights. Their apartment is on the top floor, and the view is stunning. Then, reflected in the big terrace windows, he can see a woman in a white dress standing behind him. He turns around quickly, but no one is there. Wayne feels a sudden chill, so he turns back around to make sure the balcony doors are shut all the way. Everything is locked, so he glances around the room. When he doesn't spot anything, he looks back through the window. He shifts the box to his right hand so he can use his left hand to cover one of his eyes, trying to recreate his angle to see if the strange vision will reappear.

Wayne hears a soft giggle. Startled, he spins around, raising the towel box instinctively. His nerves are tense, but after a few seconds his body relaxes. He closes his eyes and shrugs—his shoulders feel like someone is massaging them.

Monica calls, "I need your help when you get a minute." He snaps out of his reverie and backs away from the window. Shaking his head, he goes to the bathroom. He stands on his tiptoes to slip the towels into the cabinet above the toilet. Again, he feels as if being watched. It dawns on him that the apartment might have hidden cameras, and he starts rummaging through the medicine cabinet for a telltale red light.

When he shuts the mirrored cabinet door, the woman in the white dress is behind him. He jumps and spins around, but she has disappeared. To him, anyway—she's still visible in the mirror.

Her hands reach for Wayne's neck. His goosebump-speckled skin turns warm. His state becomes dazed and relaxed. She grabs his shoulders and turns him to face her. His hypnotic stare turns to a grin as he watches her white dress fade away. Her curvy, perfect figure has him almost drooling in anticipation, and he reaches out for her hips. The sensation of her soft skin runs rampant through his mind. In a frenzy of lust, he picks her up and sets her down on the sink's ledge.

She slowly smiles as she wraps her legs around his waist, knowing he is under her control.

"What the hell?" shouts Monica, who has opened the door to see Wayne's bare butt thrusting toward the bathroom sink. Wayne sees Monica in the mirror and looks down at his exposed, aroused body. Dumbfounded, he turns toward her.

They stare at each other in shock. Monica is waiting for an explanation. Wayne is trying to figure out some sort of excuse, but is clueless. She slams the door. He's relieved to have extra time to think of something to say to her, but still very confused.

An hour after the embarrassing moment, Wayne has a hard time looking at Monica. Confused, he doesn't know what to tell her. Every time he tries to think about what transpired, his mind latches onto the erotic feeling he had with the woman in the white dress.

Finally, the tension becomes too much for Monica. "Please, just be honest," she pleads. "If there is someone else, tell me now. We can at least talk about it."

Wayne runs excuses through his head, but they all sound bad. So he starts with, "It's not what you think." He realizes how that comes off. Desperate to derail her, he asks "You think we should stock up on groceries? They're calling for rain."

Of course, this is even worse. Instead of hurt, she's pissed off.

"Let me guess, you need more lotion for your alone time!" she cries. He should have known better than to try to divert her; they know each other too well.

Wayne tries to confess. "You won't believe me," he warns. "I'm not even sure *I* can believe it."

"Trust me!" she says boldly.

He takes a deep breath and checks on his do-or-die nerves. Finally he blurts, "I think I was hypnotized by a spirit."

Monica is slow to react, letting the information sink in. "You're right, it's tough to believe. But I am trying."

"I'm not making it up!" he swears.

Monica shakes her head, trying to let herself imagine this while mumbling, “A spirit made you violate our bathroom.”

Hearing the words aloud just confirms how ridiculous it sounds. She needs one more confirmation from him. Wayne knows saying “yes” would be harder for her to believe, but he wants to be spared going into detail about the sexual encounter. “I was being controlled!” he cries.

She wants insight into *how*, the one question he can’t answer. Luckily for him, he can honestly answer that he doesn’t know. Wayne tells her how frightening it was to not be in control of himself, eliciting her sympathy.

“I’m sure I’ll never get that image out of my brain, but at least you weren’t with another woman,” Monica says.

Wayne turns away, feigning shame. But the truth is, the image and sensation of the strange woman are still vividly in his mind. He’s afraid Monica might notice his excitement, so he turns away from her. Monica, thinking he’s embarrassed, tries to offer consolation.

Thinking quickly, he asks, “You think we should get the apartment blessed?” This lends some validation to his story, because Monica knows he’s not a religious person. She begins to talk about ghost stories she’s heard from friends and relatives. He doesn’t really want to listen, but he stays quiet, as it diverts her attention from him and warms her to the possibility of a ghost. Monica tells him she’s heard of seeing things out of the corner of the eye and misplaced things in the house, none of which compare to his encounter. Wayne pretends to be listening, but he is musing about the naked ghost woman and their sexual encounter. It was so vivid and real that he can’t help but wish he were back in the bathroom.

After talking to Wayne for a while, Monica starts to feel that she’s being watched. She moves closer to Wayne, who is still a little spacey from what is still playing in his mind. They go to bed; both have a hard time sleeping, but manage to make it through the night without incident.

Monica took a few days off from work to get the apartment set up. Wayne was planning to work from home, figuring he could help her during his breaks. Both are moving slowly and getting little done, jumpy at every noise, calling to one another to make sure the sound is accounted for.

Monica is startled when her cell phone rings, but her mood drastically lifts when she learns that it’s a local priest who can come by the same day to bless the apartment. She tells Wayne that she needs to run out and something to eat to offer their guest. Promising to return shortly, she bolts out the door.

Wayne tries to return to work. Sitting at a small desk in the corner of the breakfast nook, he starts rolling his neck to loosen it. Suddenly his eyes close and

his body warms. Something, or rather *someone*, is relaxing him. He finds himself reaching down to unbutton his pants.

A knock at the door makes him to jump out of his seat. He looks around, almost confused as to where he is. Bewildered, he checks to make sure he has pants on before going to the door to see who's there. He buttons his pants and shakes his head as he goes the door. When he looks through the peephole, he sees that it's the priest.

Wayne invites the man in, and he introduces himself as Father Keith Chalabi. "I spoke to your wife, I believe?"

Although he and Monica aren't even engaged, Wayne goes along with the statement, as he doesn't want to risk the man disapproving of them "living in sin" and perhaps refusing to help them. He says that Monica will be home soon and asks about the process of the sacrament.

"I will bless each room individually, and by the Lord's power give you both peace in this new journey of your life," he assures Wayne. Wayne is somewhat skeptical, but he knows it will please Monica, and hopefully get him off the hook for his bizarre behavior the previous night, so it's a win-win in his mind. He invites the priest to begin, and tells him that he'll stay out of the way and work on his laptop. Wayne walks to the study as the priest goes into the kitchen to begin his blessing.

As Father Keith enters the room, he finds a comely young woman wearing a white T-shirt and a tight miniskirt.

"You must be Mrs. Adams," he says as she turns toward him.

"You can call me Denise," she says followed, then purrs "Father." She leans over the island counter. "It's so good of your to come and help us in our hour of need. This really deserves a special reward."

"It's a reward in itself," he says lightly. His cheerful demeanor turns to embarrassment as he notices Denise's substantial cleavage are directly in his view.

"Like what the Lord gave me?" she asks.

"Ma'am I am here to help."

"Good, because I have things you can bless."

The priest is at a loss for words.

She stands up straight and tosses her hair back. "What's that, you want me to take off my skirt?" She reaches for its zipper.

Father Keith throws his hands in front of his face. "I didn't say anything!"

She smiles. "No, but you were thinking it," she says in a low, seductive voice. Her skirt slips down her legs to her ankles.

"This is inappropriate," he says nervously.

She steps out of her skirt. “You better sprinkle me with some of that holy water if you really want me to stop,” she says, coming towards him.

Desperate to get himself out of the situation, he turns and grabs the door handle, but it won't budge. Puzzled but determined, he pivots to search for another exit.

Denise whips off her tight shirt and playfully tosses it at his head. When the shirt slides off, she is face-to-face with him. “So, Father... or would you prefer ‘Daddy’?”

Now panicking, the priest finds himself trapped between her and the other doorway. He doesn't want to touch her, but there's no getting around her. She places her hands on either side of the doorway, enjoying how he squirms at her close proximity.

“My daughter, you need help for this illness,” Father Keith sputters.

She blows him a kiss. His eyes close, and moments later his discomfort melts away and a lovely smile light up his face.

“That's nice!” he murmurs, now under her spell.

“It gets better,” she tells him, kneeling down in front of him.

Wayne hears voices in the kitchen. “Is everything okay?” he calls. When the priest doesn't reply, Wayne gets up to check on him. The doorknob is jittering, and Wayne hesitates to touch it. As he summons the courage to grab it door, Monica comes in the front, startling him.

“The priest is here,” he informs her.

Monica says, “Oh, good,” looking around for him.

Wayne grabs one of the grocery bags from her arms. “Father Keith is in the kitchen.”

“Oh. Should we...not go in?” Monica wonders.

“Huh. Well, I don't think God minds if we put away groceries,” Wayne jokes, trying to dispel the tension.

On the other side of the door, heavy beads of sweat stand out on Father Keith's brow. He's leaning against the door, trying to pull himself together. Pulling up his pants, he makes an excuse that he is doing delegate work to give him a few more moments.

Monica and Wayne look at him expectantly as he comes out of the kitchen. He looks rundown and a mess.

“Uh, hello, Father, I'm Monica. We spoke earlier.” He regards her with an absent look on his face, as if he has no idea what she means.

“I'll just slip by you and put these away,” she says awkwardly.

“No! I mean, not yet. You, uh, need to wait.”

“Um...why? Will it disturb the blessing or something.”

“You just need to cooperate, so I can move all the bad energy out of the apartment,” he stammers.

Monica is no more religious than Wayne, but she doesn't argue. The priest asks to be shown the rest of the apartment. Wayne and Monica set the groceries down on the dining room table and Monica leads him down the hallway,

“So you do sense an energy here? Are you sure you can exorcise it or whatever?”

Dodging the question completely, Father Keith asks, “What prompted you to call me?”

Wayne immediately gets uncomfortable. They didn't discuss how to answer that. He isn't sure if Monica will diverge the reason they called the priest, and he's horrified she'll go into detail about how she found him in the bathroom. The few moments she glanced at him and hesitated felt like hours.

“Just something odd that happened. I got very nervous. Isn't that right, honey?”

Wayne practically yells, “Yes!”

Father Keith is about to inquire who was in the kitchen when he entered. However, his thoughts are completely derailed by her face peeking down the hallway at him, winking behind Monica and Wayne.

“And it's just the two of you in the apartment?”

“Yes, that's right,” Wayne confirms.

Father Keith is having trouble piecing together the puzzle of Denise. He realizes that this couple has a big problem. But he's also second-guessing himself because Father Keith has never met someone so *real* as Denise.

*If she was even real*, he thinks to himself. He's suddenly struck by the uncontrollable urge to touch himself.

Frantic again, he tells them brusquely that he has other duties to attend to and must be on his way. He adds that they can now enter the kitchen.

Monica and Wayne, baffled, follow him as he practically sprints to the door, and as he strides down the hallway to the elevator they don't even have a chance to ask if the apartment is clear. The priest is in the elevator and its doors are closing.

“So...that was odd,” she says as she and Wayne lean out the doorway.

Wayne responds, “He's a busy man, so at least he made time for us.” He turns to go back into the apartment. Monica notices the neighbor's apartment door cracked open. She takes a step to see if someone is peeking out. Suddenly the door slam shut. Monica has an eerie feeling and turns back into the apartment. She closes the door and puts her eye to the peephole.

“Everything okay?” Wayne asks.

She continues to gaze into the hallway and mumbles, “Nosy neighbors.”

Later that night, Wayne is sitting on his side of the bed, setting the alarm on his cell phone.

Monica comes out of the bathroom in a pink nightgown. “So, I feel good about today,” she says, in reference to unpacking.

He agrees with her; the place does have a better feel now. But one negative he notices is how dry the room is. “I am going to get some water, do you want some?” She declines, but tells him to hurry back. Wayne is encouraged; maybe she is ready to overlook his embarrassing behavior, and they can finally break in the new place properly.

As soon as he steps into the living room, he senses a change in the air that makes him stop and debate whether the water is absolutely necessary. He rubs his dry lips together. The eerie feeling of being watched makes him turn to go back...at least, that’s his intention until he hears her voice: “I know you are thinking about me.”

Wayne turns back around to see Denise, dressed in the same type of nightgown Monica is wearing. “You’re not real!” he says.

Denise smiles as she takes a step closer, putting herself within arm’s reach of him. “I’m not?” She pushes him back and he falls onto the couch. “Huh? Tell me this doesn’t feel real,” she mocks, climbing onto his lap.

Wayne grabs her hips to push her off, but the touch of her smooth warm skin intoxicates him. His mind can see only her. The room fades away. Denise reaches down into his pajama pants.

“See, I knew you were thinking of me,” she says before lifting up her gown to reveal her breast, to which his face is drawn magnetically.

Meanwhile, Monica is in bed, trying to pose in a casually seductive way so Wayne will be attentive when he returns. After about four different tries, she finally just spreads out across the bed. The late night starts to take a toll on her. She yawns and glances at the clock on her dresser, then starts twiddling her fingers and patting the bed in frustration.

Wayne finally returns. He looks a little messy; one side of his shirt is untucked, and his hair is wild. He doesn’t have a glass of water, she notices.

“Everything okay?” Monica ask as he heads straight for his side of the bed, avoiding her eyes.

“Everything’s good,” he replies curtly as he climbs into bed. He leans over and kisses her before quickly leaning back.



Monica is a little stunned. She looks down at how her body is displayed and can't imagine him not getting the hint. Monica is a little insulted that he's not all over her. She understands that they've both been under a lot of stress because of the move, so she decide to initiate the romantic interlude she is craving. She crawls over to him and drapes herself on top of him, pressing her lips to his neck. To her frustration, he doesn't return the kisses and she gets frustrated.

"What's your problem?" she demands.

"It's not that I don't want to," he says hastily. "Um, the priest said we should...abstain...so we don't dirty up the clean energy."

This irritates Monica even more than the way he ignored her. "So, that's it for our sex life until we move out?" she asks incredulously.

"No, of course not, sweetie," he assures her. "I'm just as eager as you are, I just think we should wait one night. Just one. The place will be in better shape, we'll be well-rested." The truth is, he doesn't know if he'll be able to perform after his encounter with Denise.

Monica rolls his eyes, but sees no point in pressing the argument. She snuggles up against his chest and they both finally start to drift off. Watching from the corner of the room, Denise's face is a furious grimace as Wayne holds Monica.

The next morning, Monica doesn't feel Wayne beside her. Still half asleep, she rolls over to hug him, but hits the side of the bed. Confused, she opens her eyes and realizes she's lying on the floor. Unwilling to believe her eyes, she sits up. Peering up onto the bed, she sees Wayne curled up in the middle of the mattress. Blowing it off as a strange but humorous moment, she stretches and stands up. She heads to the bathroom, not realizing she is being followed. Yawning and blinking, she misses that the sink is full of water...and that her hair dryer is submerged there. She digs under the sink for the towels that she knows were unpacked yesterday.

Somehow, they got pushed to the back of the cabinet. She's not tall enough to reach them, so she places her hand on the countertop for balance as she stands on her tiptoes. Her hand slides around the counter for better leverage. Her fingertips dip over the edge of the sink, narrowly miss the water, and keep sliding toward it.

Her reaching hand finally pinches a towel, but the extra reach causes her to come off one foot. Her free hand comes off the counter and dangles over the sink. Clenched between two fingers, the towel starts to come forward. Monica's palm lingers over the water; if her fingers bent, they would dip into the water. The towel suddenly stops, as if someone is holding it from the otherside. Monica gets a few more fingers around it and pulls harder. Just as she is about to give it one last

yank, Wayne's alarm goes off and Monica, startled, jumps back. Landing on both feet, she looks down to see the water and hairdryer.

As she reflects on what could have happened, she holds her hand in front of her. A towel falls from the cabinet onto her head. She yells for Wayne, who jumps up frantically to see where she is calling from. As he charges into the bathroom, she tells him to be careful, pointing to the sink.

Monica and Wayne study the scene silently for a moment. Wayne assures her the breaker most likely blew and it's not dangerous. Perhaps the drain clogged and the water backed up. He tosses as many commonsense possibilities he can think of to dispel her fear, because they both knew how badly this could have ended. He even tries to put a positive spin on it; now they'll know where the fuse box is once they find it. They find the breaker panel in the pantry off the kitchen.

"So, is it off?" she nervously asks him.

Wayne flicks the switch. "It is now," he replies confidently.

Monica is still nervous, because not only could she have been electrocuted, but she wonders if they are labeled right. Her concern is now for Wayne's safety. Wayne sees her logic and turns all the breakers off. The morning daylight through the windows is more than enough for them to see their way around the apartment.

To be on the safe side, Wayne gets a thick oven mitt from the kitchen. When they make their way back to the bathroom, they find the water has drained. Monica's mouth drops open in shock.

"Whatever was clogging it has passed, simple as that," he states.

Wayne reaches for the dryer plug. He stops a few inches short and turns to Monica. "I love you," he says gravely, like an action hero off to certain death. He's obviously mocking her for making a big deal out of the incident.

"Not funny," she says, swatting his arm.

With one quick swoop, he unplugs the cord of the hair dryer. She hugs him, relieved that the ordeal is over, and goes to the bedroom to get dressed for the day. Wayne looks around. He doesn't want to worry Monica, but his confidence was just an act. Monica is anything but careless, and she'd never leave her hair dryer next to the sink.

Monica calls to him to please turn the breakers back on so she can get ready for work. He leaves the bathroom still deeply unsettled.

Later, he walks into the kitchen to see Monica cooking.

"Oh! I thought you were running late," he says.

But it's not Monica.

"I'll do anything for my man," Denise smirks, holding a plate out to him.

The plate hits the floor as Monica enters the kitchen. "That was a sweet thought, but I told you I'm running late," she says as she grabs paper towels to

clean up. Wayne kneels to help her clean up the food and suggests that they both leave so they aren't too late.

Once at work, Wayne ducks into the bathroom and calls his friend Ralph, a licensed psychologist. "Hey, I really need to see you today, it's important," he says. "Okay—lunch then—thanks, buddy."

Ralph and Wayne are eating at a restaurant. Ralph explains to Wayne that in his professional opinion, these incidents are all triggered from the major life change of moving in together. Ralph tells him most people don't realize the hidden stress that comes with the increased commitment and sharing personal space. Wayne can't explain to Ralph how vivid and real Denise is. He explains that when he touches her, she's warm and smooth.

Ralph asks Wayne the most important question: "Is she real?"

Wayne has to confess that she can't be. Ralph articulates that Wayne's mind might have doubts about Monica, but overlooks them because of his affection for her. Now, with the new chapter in their relationship, he may unconsciously be trying to end things, or at least slow them down a little.

"And you get paid for this kind of advice?" Wayne says jokingly.

"More than you make," Ralph fires back.

They joke around until Ralph puts things into perspective. "You know yourself better than anyone. You have to be imagining her for a reason, your job is to figure out why."

He excuses himself to get back to his office and informs Wayne that he can pay for lunch since he isn't being charged for a session.

Wayne can't help getting in the last word. "But you make more money!" he calls, waving the check at Ralph.

When Monica comes home from work, the apartment is cold. She's carrying a grocery bag; she picked up dinner, since they are still unboxing. She sets her purse on the couch and, still carrying the food, goes to the thermostat to check the setting. Suddenly her purse spills off the couch, as if someone has pushed it violently. She hears it fall, but is still focused on adjusting the temperature. The thermostat is digital, but no matter which buttons she pushes, the temperature setting won't change.

"What the hell?" she mumbles to herself. She smacks it lightly, thinking that one of the buttons stuck. Then the screen goes completely blank and dark.

"Great!" she says. Abandoning it, she walks into the kitchen and flips on the light. In the middle of unbagging the food, the room suddenly goes dark. She's about to scream in frustration when she hears the front door open.

“Wayne, is that you?” she calls.

“Who else would it be?”

“Could you come into the kitchen, please?”

He enters turns on the light. “Why are you standing in the dark?” he asks.

“You might want to ask your girlfriend about that,” she says sarcastically.

“What?” He’s hoping that she’s taking him seriously about what’s been happening.

“I’m just playing,” she sighs. “But I do think that realtor go the better of us. I might have been in too much of a rush with this place. First the plumbing, now today the thermostat and the lights have been misbehaving.” She promises she won’t make anymore fuss after dinner. The apartment was her idea, so she is still determined to make the best of it, but she does need to vent.

Pressing her hand, Wayne tells her, “We are in this together.”

Monica adds, “We fix it together.”

She ask him to clean up the kitchen while she takes a shower. Her plan is to get a little unpacking done when it’s Wayne turn in the shower. After that, she’ll relax with Wayne and hopefully convince him to christen the apartment.

In the kitchen, Wayne starts gathering the dishes, but senses that Denise is there. “Okay, I feel you, just come out,” he says, peering under the table. When he stands up, Denise is draped over the kitchen table.

“I knew you were waiting for me,” she says, reaching for his fly.

“Stop!” he says, pushing her hands away. “I have a *real* relationship with a *real* woman.”

Denise sits back and gazes at him determinedly. “And if you didn’t?”

“What is that supposed to mean?” he demands, but she fades away in front of him. Fearing for Monica, Wayne runs to the bathroom and tries the handle, but the door is locked or stuck. Monica has music playing and can’t hear him pounding on the door. She is rinsing her hair out when she starts to feel the water getting hotter.

Wayne rams his shoulder into the door. When it doesn’t budge, he backs up a few steps and kicks it forcefully.

Monica throws open the shower door. “What are you doing?!” she screams, naked and dripping wet.

Wayne hesitates. He doesn’t want her to know he’s been talking to Denise. He pans around the room and sees the radio.

He tells her, “It must have been the music! I thought I heard you screaming.”

Monica can't be mad when he showed such concern. "One more thing to fix in the apartment!" she jokes. She gives him a kiss. "Careful in there, it gets hot!"

Wayne shower as fast as he can. Every time he hears a noise, he peaks out to make sure it isn't Monica.

He knows he should probably get Monica out of the apartment...but he still half believes that Denise is just a figment of his imagination. He thinks about what Ralph said and admits to himself he was nervous about moving in.

As he comes out of the shower and towels off, something catches his eye in the bedroom. There's a bottle of wine and a plate of chocolate-covered strawberries on the nightstand. As he walks further in he notices a woman's bare legs peeking out of the sheets. He stops in his tracks, afraid of who it might be.

Slowly creeping forward, he sees lace red panties. He stops moving to take a few deep breaths, calming his nerves and admiring the view. Finally, he steps forward and, gratefully, sees that it's Monica. She is wearing a matching satin camisole and is laying seductively across the bed waiting for him.

"This is a surprise," he says.

"Not really," she says. "We haven't been intimate since we moved in."

Wayne drops the towel off and strides to the bed. Monica laughs and sits up to grab him as he comes toward her. She pulls him down on top of her and wraps her legs around him, and the world disappears from him. There's only her and him, mouths and hands searching as if they can't get close enough.

Out of breath and in a daze, they roll to either side of the bed. Staring at the ceiling, Wayne exhales loudly and blurts, "That was incredible!"

Monica rolls over to him and smiles at him dreamily. But it's Denise's voice that says, "I knew you would like it."

Wayne jumps out of the bed, horrified. "What the hell?" he yells.

Monica, on the other side of the apartment, calls that she'll be there in a minute. Denise blows him a kiss and tells him, "Until next time, my love," and she fades away.

He hears Monica coming. The sheets are wet with sweat and suspiciously rumpled. Wayne grabs the wine and pours it on the bed.

Monica walks in, just as the liquid is pouring out over their good sheets.

"I'm so sorry, honey! I didn't see it there, and my elbow caught it."

"I could have sworn I put it on the nightstand," she says as she rushes to help him try to contain the spill.

Together they pull off the sheets to see if it got to the mattress. Wayne's not surprised, because he did upend most of the bottle. Monica is upset about her

ruined plans for romance, and the mess he's made of the bed. Wayne, on the other hand, is very happy, but tries to hide it. He assures her that an evening is never ruined if they are together. The sweet words, and his complete lack of clothing, makes her realize that the bed isn't the only place they can be romantic. But Wayne diverts her attention to the cost of a new mattress.

She realizes Wayne's frustration. The issues and bills are piling up.

"You're right. This isn't quite what I had in mind when we moved," she sighs.

"It will be fine, Monica. But we're never going to fully enjoy the place until we get settled in. And I'll start with fixing the door I broke, before anyone notices!"

She smiles. "You might want to put some pants on first." As she grabs the sheet to go to toss them into the wash, she remarks, "With all the stuff breaking around here, you need to protect your assets," gesturing below his waist.

Denise appears behind him. "I'll keep them safe," Denise says. Wayne scampers out of the room.

The next morning Wayne, dressed for work, sees Monica in the living room drinking coffee in her pajamas. He takes her face in her hands and looks deeply into her eyes. He wants to believe he can tell whether it's really her or not. He pauses for a strangely long time before kissing her.

"What are you up to?" she asks.

"I just wanted to look into your beautiful eyes before I go to work today," he explains. She melts at the sweet comment and wraps her free arm around him. Holding her hot drink away, she pulls him in for a big kiss.

Wayne gets his bag and tells her to have a great day. He starts heading for the door and it dawns on him. "Wait!" he says, slamming the brakes on his exit. He spins on his heel and goes back to the living room. "Why aren't you dressed?" he asks her.

She's confused by his question. "I'm staying home today. I told you last night, remember?"

"And why is that?" he presses.

"It was your idea," she says, laughing quizzically

"I'm confused," Wayne tells her.

"So am I. You said we wouldn't be happy until everything is done."

This, Wayne does remember—but he doesn't want to leave her alone. She convinces him she will be fine and starts to walk him out.

She drains the last of her coffee, as they reach the door, but she's still yawning. "I'll probably be drinking a lot of this today."

"Didn't you get much sleep?"

“I was up half the night unpacking and the other half talking to you,” she says before gently herding him out. The door shuts behind him and he is now in the apartment hallway. He knows he didn’t talk to her for very long last night. It dawns on him that if Denise can disguise herself as Monica, she might very well be able to manifest as him as well. Wayne tries to come back in, but the door won’t open. He panics and starts kicking it. Monica opens the door and Wayne falls into the apartment.

“I was just trying to make sure my key works. Can’t be sure, with the state this place is in.”

“Did you forget something?” she asks as he gets up off the floor.

“Yeah, my manners,” he says sweetly. “It would be completely unfair for you to do all the work.”

She tries to argue he should go to work but when he says “We are in this together,” her heart melts and she sees the sweet guy that she fell in love with.

“And we’ll finish it together,” she says before hugging him close.

They go to work at unpacking. Wayne keeps an eye out for Denise, ducking his head into each room as they go. There’s no way he’s going to let her hurt Monica. After a few productive hours, things are moving along well.

Denise appears behind him in the bathroom while Wayne is relieving himself.

“Are you ready?” she asks.

Irritated at her advances, he bellows, “I TOLD you–!”

She disappears.

But what if she meant something else?

Wayne bolts to find Monica. Yelling her name, he sprints down the hallway. He hears her voice; it's faint, which makes him believe she is in the hallway. Running through the living room, he catches a glimpse of her out on the balcony.

“I’m out here,” she says.

Wayne reaches the balcony door and throws it open. “What are you doing?” he yells.

“Oh my GOD!” she screams as she almost falls off the chair that she was using to hang the plants.

“Why are you yelling?” she says.

“Monica, get in here!” he cries.

She scowls. “Screw you! I’m not a dog, you don’t talk to me like that.”

Wayne tells her if she wants to fight about it she needs to come in. He would rather have her angry than in danger.

"There is no fight. You can apologize or you can leave." She walks past him into the apartment. Wayne shuts and locks the door behind her.

When he turns to face Monica's wrath, he sees her hanging from the ceiling. Her body dangling as she gasps for air.

Horrified, he charges at her.

Monica sees Wayne, running at her, red-faced and wide-eyed. Terrified, she flees.

Wayne hands reach for her neck, still trying to save her. While the real Monica brandishes a lamp, wondering what the hell is wrong with Wayne. She calls his name over and over again, but he doesn't hear her. She slaps his hands away but he pushes her back. Monica falls to the floor, and the lamp shatters. Wayne sees demons and he yells out Monica's name.

She clammers up from the floor runs out of the apartment, nearly slamming the door on his fingers.

Wayne's image of Monica disappears, leaving him confused and disoriented.

Denise comes out of the kitchen, carrying a pair of drinks. "Celebration time," she says as Wayne tries to clear his head.

"What just happened?" he demands.

"We have been freed," she tells him, taking a drink from her glass.

Wayne looks around, still trying to piece the puzzle of his mind, but still he knows enough not to touch the drink.

She throws his glass of wine down. "Now we can make love."

Wayne might be unclear of what transpired, but he knows Denise. "No!" he says firmly.

Unfastening a single button, she lets her dress fall to the floor.

"No!" Wayne says again.

Denise gets closer and tells him "There is no *no!*" She tries to kiss him. "There is only *yes*, and *more*, and *again*."

He hits the drink out of her hand, but this turns her on even more. "Oh, I didn't know you were into the rough stuff." She throws the drinks aside and wraps her arms around his waist. The living room becomes the bedroom.

Monica runs back into the apartment. Two police officers were directing traffic around an accident on the street in front of the entrance, and she quickly commissioned them for backup. They're in tow as she enters, but Wayne isn't in the living room.



They hear him yelling in the bedroom: "You want it rough, I'll give it to you rough!" He is unaware that Monica and two officers are seeing him naked, arguing loudly with an invisible person.

One cop says, "Yeah, I think this guy needs some help."

Monica breaks down in tears and looks away as the officers try to subdue Wayne. She hears one of them say, "Dude, get that out of there."

When Wayne tells them, "If I don't finish, she won't be safe!" Monica runs into the living room, humiliated beyond belief.

After they've removed Wayne from the apartment, an officer comes into the kitchen, where Monica is holed up with a cup of tea. He explains that Wayne will be detained in a mental health facility for observation and evaluation by a psychiatrist.

"Call this number tomorrow," he says. He looks at her awkwardly for a moment. Denise appears behind him and touches his head. Suddenly, he says, "You're too beautiful to have a psycho for a boyfriend. This is my cell phone number, and you can call day or night."

Monica, oddly, feels herself responding to this. "I really appreciate that, I just need time to think right now."

"I understand." He leaves as if nothing unusual has just happened.

Standing in the hallway, Monica looks through the door at the apartment. "Okay, bitch. You want to play, we'll play," she announces. "You think I'm just a pushover, but the game changes when you screw with my man. I am gonna give you a hell that you have never seen before."

Across the hall, an old lady witnesses Monica's monologue.

"So, you know she's there," the old woman says.

"I have a pretty good feeling. It is the only thing that makes sense."

The lady unlocks her door. "What's your plan?"

Monica has to think for a moment. She's finally admitted to herself that Denis is real, undeniable, and malevolent. "Research the apartment, find its past owners."

The old lady tells her, "You won't get far with that. All her relatives are dead. Come on in to my place."

Monica is not about to turn down the help. She looks around the lady's apartment. The walls are heavily covered with photograph of a middle-age couple, clearly the woman and her husband in younger days.

"You've been at this a long time." Monica observes in awe.

The old lady barely makes it to her recliner before flopping down from the exertion of her walk. She tells Monica, "My husband and I lived in that apartment over twenty-five years ago." The old lady describes her life story and how she

knows what Monica is dealing with. She says "I ran from this place and went halfway around the world, but after time I realized you can't fight something that can't be stopped."

Monica sits on the couch next to her chair and says, "I don't believe that."

"Oh to be young," the old lady laughs softly. She turns to Monica. "What do you believe, that GOD created all of us equally? Look, life's not fair, and that tends to be true of the afterlife as well. You ever wonder why some people get haunted or visited by love ones and others don't?" After two attempts, she's able to get to her feet. "Same in life as death; nothing is fair, my dear."

Monica understands her bitterness, but informs her, "I can't stand by and do nothing." She stands up quickly to steady her friend, who is wobbling.

"Of course not. What you should do is move on," she says. She pats Monica's arm, which Monica tucked under hers to provide balance. "Don't waste this life. You don't get a second chance at it. I wasted my life crying and moaning and wanting revenge. Look at me; my time is almost over, and what do I have to show for it? Listen to me, I'm trying to help you. Is he worth your whole *life*? This isn't a fairy tale. There are a lot of good men out there. Chalk it up to bad timing. Pretend he died in a sudden accident. Let him go."

"I can't," she says, beginning to cry. "The only way I could do that is if...I had one answer..." With tears streaming down her face, she looks at the old lady. Monica says, "I just need to know one thing."

The old lady gently wipes a tear from Monica's face. "What is this question, dear?"

Monica stops crying and smiles. "Why do you want him so bad, Denise?"

The old lady cocks her head. "Excuse me?"

Monica shoves the old lady down onto her recliner. "I told you, you don't know who you're fucking with," she says forcefully. She slams the door on her way out.

The old lady watches Monica leave. In a jolly, sinister voice, she almost sings, "Neither do you, my dear." She disappears.

Monica is in the hallway, dazed and shaking her head. The door she just exited dissolves into the wall. There was no apartment there. She smirks at the verification that she was right about the old lady. "Well played. That was round one," Monica says softly.

Next to her, the elevator doors slide open. There is no one inside. There's also no one on the floor who could have pressed the button to call it. She raises her foot to step inside, but stops before her foot touches the floor.

"And round two begins," she says. She steps back and heads for the stairs.

Wayne is still undergoing mental evaluation when an officer enters and states, "His wife is here."

Wayne is massively relieved to hear that Monica is safe. The doctor notices Wayne's mood suddenly improve and asks if he'd like to see his wife.

"I would like that very much," Wayne says. But he mumbles, "If it really is her" under his breath.

The doctor tells him that he needs to hear the truth about why Wayne was screaming that his wife was in danger. Wayne starts off with, "I did, but I—", but he decides that the truth is not going to do him any favors.

He rubs his head pensively as if trying to articulate his thoughts. "Look—the truth is, my wife almost caught me with my mistress. I, uh, had to do something outrageous to sway the focus," Wayne tells him.

"Wayne, you said a ghost was trying to kill your wife," the doctor says, clearly irritated at the idea that Wayne has faked his symptoms.

"You're a psychologist! Think about it!" Wayne lowers his voice a bit, as if telling the doctor a secret. "Women would rather believe the most ridiculous crap than that their husband is unfaithful. But I can't go keep up this charade and mess up my career."

The doctor doesn't have a high opinion of Wayne, but he can't legally divulge any of this information to Monica.

"Do you want your wife to come in for a visit?" he asks.

"Please," Wayne says. But he's so nervous about who will walk into the room that he's squirming in his seat.

The door cracks open, but someone stalls the woman outside with last-minute questions. Wayne is sweating, but keeping a fake smile on his face for the doctor.

The woman's leg takes another step in, but Wayne still can't see her face. He hears them ask her to sign something. Seconds feel like minutes to Wayne, who is staring at the door then back to the doctor.

What will happen if Denise walks through the door?

But it's Monica...at least, it looks like her. Maybe he really *is* crazy, if he can't even tell.

Monica looks at him sadly. "How is he?" she asks the doctor.

The doctor responds, "Ask him yourself."

Monica sits down on the couch near Wayne, and the doctor leans up against the wall, observing the couple.

"Baby, are you okay?" Monica asks. "You scared me so much."

Wayne takes a deep breath. "I'm so sorry about that," he says. There's a long pause. "Look...this is hard for me to admit. You know that I love you, right?"

Monica smiles reassuringly. "I love you too." She reaches her hand out to him.

Wayne glances to the doctor, then reaches out for her hand. Slowly, he says, "You know that girl at my work, Denise?"

Monica yanks her hand away. "You didn't!" she shrieks. "You cheated on me *again*!?"

Wayne realizes that Monica is playing along. "*She* came after *me*!"

Monica jumps up from the sofa, and the doctor steps away from the wall, preparing himself to break it up if things get physical.

Monica is yelling now. "That's what you always say!" She clenches her hands into fists. "This whole crazy act was just to hide the fact that you were sticking your dick in that slut?" She jumps up from the couch, glaring down at Wayne menacingly. The doctor catches her and holds her back, as Wayne stands up and retreats.

Now being pulled to the door by the doctor, Monica cries, "Rot in here. We are *through*."

As the doctor closes the door firmly behind her, she yells, "Asshole!"

Wayne looks at the psychiatrist with a downcast expression. "Happy?"

They both sit down again. "No! But I think you are finally telling the truth."

An hour later, Wayne is released. Monica's car is waiting for him in the parking lot.

"What took so long?" she asks.

"That guy had quite a lecture to give me," he tells her. He leans over to kiss her, but she pushes him back.

"Whoa, buddy! you aren't off the hook yet. We need to take care of your girlfriend."

Wayne is shocked that she is willing to jump back into the fray. "Are you crazy? We can't go back there. Let the bitch have the apartment."

Monica puts her seat belt on. "It is not about the apartment," she informs him. "She came between us. We have to deal with her together, or things will never be the same."

Wayne can see Monica is as determined as she is pissed off, but he brings up the obvious. "How do you know others haven't tried?" Wayne asks her.

"Oh, I'm counting on it. Once we find out what *hasn't* worked, we'll be closer to knowing what does," Monica says.

Teasing her, Wayne announces, "Oh yeah! We look like two great detectives."

She rolls her eyes at him, smiling, as she starts the car. "My dear, always go to the beginning to piece the puzzle together."

Dark has long since fallen when the doorbell chimes at Jack Thompson's house.

Hair awry, he opens the door and is baffled to see Monica and Wayne. "This is highly unusual and very improper," he tells them.

Monica announces, "So was what you did with that Denise in our apartment."

A jolt of adrenaline wakes him up faster than he thought possible. He steps onto the porch comes out and shuts the door behind him softly, placing them out of his wife's earshot. "She told you?! I didn't know why she was there!" he whispers defensively. "I didn't even think she was real at first!"

Monica snaps her fingers in front of his face. "Focus! We need you to do something for us."

"I'm guessing I don't have a choice," Jack says grimly.

"Welcome to my world, buddy," Wayne chimes in.

"Wayne, hush. *You*, tell your wife you need to go to the office. We need the names of everyone who ever lived in that apartment."

"Oh, is that all?" Jack laughs drily.

Monica and Wayne stare at him levelly.

"She's serious?" Jack asks Wayne.

"Afraid so pal, and she's not about to take no for an answer." Wayne gazes at Monica, admiring her courage. "Another thing I love about her." He tries to hug her, but she pushes him back again.

"Save it for when this is all over," Monica tells Wayne.

The realtor slips back in the house to tell his wife he needs to leave.

"What's with the cold shoulder?" Wayne asks her.

"You should have trusted me, jackass. You should have told me she was still there! We could have been fighting her together instead of allowing her to keep terrorizing us."

Wayne realizes, smartly, that he should keep his mouth shut, and just nods.

At the Jack's office, they get a printout of the previous residents. Monica is a little less angry and more optimistic now that they have something to go on.

"We'll need to get some help piecing the story together," she tells Wayne.

"Let me guess, you have someone in mind?" Since she started digging her heels in, she's been very assertive and fierce, and Wayne doesn't mind a bit.

“As a matter of fact, I do.” She pulls out the cell phone number of the police officer who showed a sudden interest in her.

Monica uses the low, seductive voice that always succeeds in making Wayne very susceptible. “Derrick, this is Monica. You remember, my husband was the naked fool you arrested this afternoon. I’m so sorry to call you this late at night, but I really need your help. I don’t know who else to turn to.”

Wayne raises his eyebrows. Monica winks at him and continues. “I don't know why you gave me your number, either but since you did maybe we can help each other. I need a man of your particular talents, and you wouldn't want your wife to find out that you tried to hook up with a vulnerable woman you met on duty.”

Wayne is bent in half laughing as quietly as possible. “You’re pretty good at this blackmail thing,” he whispers.

She covers the receiver. "It's not that hard. All you guys ever do is think of how to get away with putting your penis where it doesn't belong."

Wayne takes offense to that statement. "Hey in my defense—"

The realtor cuts Wayne off with, "Don't even say a word; you know she's right."

Monica points to the realtor and nods.

The officer must have also have agreed with Monica, because she says, “Okay, I'll be there,” before hanging up.

“Are you guys done with me?” the realtor asks.

"Yes. Thank you so much, we'll leave you a great review on Facebook," Monica says sarcastically as she and Wayne walk away.

As they open the door, Jack says, "And Denise...you'll take care of her, right?"

“You better hope so,” Monica calls over her shoulder.

They meet up with the Derrick in the parking lot of an all-night diner. He is sitting in his police car, his face displaying agitation.

“What the hell is he doing here?” Derrick asks when he recognizes Wayne.

Wayne has to take advantage of the nervous cop. “They let me out of the psych ward. I'm sure you're familiar with how great things go for cops who falsely accuse innocent citizens?”

Derrick’s eyes go wide. “What kind of game are you playing?” he asks Monica.

Monica elbows Wayne in the ribs to shut him up. “It's all good, he's better now,” she tells Derrick.

But Wayne isn't about to let him off the hook so easily. "But I did want to thank you for trying to nail my girl after you locked me up."

Derrick starts backpedaling. "Look, I know how it sounded but—"

Wayne isn't having it. "But what? *Call me at home day or night?*"

"Leave it alone, Wayne," Monica orders. He has a tendency to push things too far, and this isn't the time. "Look, Derrick, help us out and this will all go away."

"What do you want?" he asks.

Monica hands him the paper. "This is a list of all the former residents of our apartment. We need to find out what happened to these people, where they are now."

Derrick eyes the list warily, then takes it from her. He is reluctant to help, but doesn't have any other good options.

Pulling out his work laptop, he enters the first name into the department search engine. "Deceased."

He clears the search and enters the next name, then glances up at Monica. "Deceased..."

The third name. "Deceased."

"How?" Monica asks him.

"Overdose. Suicide. Murdered. What the hell?" Derrick looks at them suspiciously.

"Who is left?" Monica asks.

Derrick ignores her question. "What are you guys into?"

"It's not us," Wayne tells him.

"Well, obviously, considering that some of these cases go back twenty years."

Monica still believes that the answers are at the beginning. "Who died first? And is any mention of a Denise?"

Derrick reads aloud from his screen. "Blanche Underwood's daughter Denise, and her boyfriend Ray, jumped out the window in 1995. Listed as a lovers' suicide."

"They both jumped?" Wayne asks.

"Can't ask the dead, but that's what the mother thought."

"Please tell me the mother is still alive," Monica begs.

Derrick looks her up. "She's currently at Sun Forks, a retirement home on Oak Street. Get in."

Wayne is surprised. "You are going to help?"

"You gave me a list of ten names," Derrick says. "Seven are dead. *Something* is going on."

When they pull up, Monica tells Derrick, "If Blanche lied to the police before, you might not be any help to us in there."

"Then I'll look into the other survivors...if there are any, and grab some coffee. Call me if you need backup."

"Thank you," Monica says with a smile.

This doesn't sit well with Wayne. "Why did you smile like that?"

"What are you talking about? Feeling jealous?"

"You have that guy completely under your thumb. You don't have to get all flirty."

"Wayne, all I did was smile. You banged a ghost, for God's sake."

"Are you *never* going to let that go?"

Curiously, Monica asks, "How did you even feel anything?"

Stupidly, Wayne smiles as he says, "Oh, I felt quite a bit."

Monica glares at him. "You are back to zero, buddy."

Fortunately, they've arrived at the front desk, and between the realtor's office and corralling Derrick, the night has passed into morning.

"Hello," Monica greets the receptionist, "I'm here to see my Aunt Blanche."

Derrick is still in his car but on his cell phone talking to someone related to the list. "Ma'am, I really need the truth, no matter how crazy it might sound."

The nurse takes Wayne and Monica to Blanche's room. Denise's mother is looking at Wayne and Monica as the nurse describes them as her relatives. She smiles but when the nurse leaves she tells them, "I'm old, but I know who my family is. Why are you here?"

Monica comes straight out with, "Help us with Denise?"

Blanche puts her head down and says sadly, "She's dead."

"But not gone," Wayne points out.

Monica adds, "And we are guessing you know that."

The old lady tells them sternly, "She is dead to me. And whatever else she is, that's your problem. There's the door, now use it."

Monica turns to Wayne. "Well, so much for that."

"We should never go back to that place. We're lucky we escaped with our lives."

Monica stares into Wayne's eyes devotedly. "We need to get away from here. Just me and you, let's go."

Wayne squeezes her hand, and together they leave the old woman with her ghosts.



Blanche looks over to the side of her bed, to the real Monica who is still there with her. Monica, shaking her head in disgust, lashes out at Blanche. "The day she decides to come after *you*, you might regret standing by and letting her hurt innocent people."

Monica strides towards the door.

"Wait. Wait," Blanche says. "Help me get my cane and my purse."

When they are making their way out of the building Monica mentions they might need Father Michael. She leaves him a voicemail asking him to meet them at the apartment.

When Monica and Blanche return to Derrick's car, he is hanging up his cell phone. Monica helps Blanche into the backseat and tells Derrick, "Let's go."

"Where's your boyfriend?"

"Heading back to the apartment."

"That takes balls," Derrick admits, shocked.

"He is not doing it on his own free will," Monica tells him. She then turns to Blanche. "Tell me what I need to know."

Blanche whimpers, "Denise is a good girl."

Monica isn't buying it. "A good girl who seduces and murders. Sure. Just give me the facts."

Derrick is driving but breaks into the conversation. "I'll start you off with some. Denise's boyfriend was in love with another woman."

"Is this other woman still alive?" Monica asks.

"No. And she was locked up for year before dying, telling everyone that Denise's spirit was torturing her every night."

"Sounds like a guilty conscience to me," Blanche says bitterly.

Monica is well and truly tired of Blanche defending her daughter. "We both know she was telling the truth. Have you seen her since she passed?"

"No," Blanche tells them. "We were barely speaking when she died. It was Ray she loved."

"So one day I came over to visit her as a surprise. I heard them arguing when I came in. He told her it was over between them; he was in love with someone else, and he couldn't lie to her anymore. She looked into his eyes and told him, 'You will always be mine.' And then she pushed him over the balcony. I screamed then. I said, 'Denise what did you do?'"

"She was so calm. She just smiled and told me their love will last forever." Blanche begins to weep. "And then she jumped."

Derrick flashes the squad car's lights and passes a slower car. "So she wants forever with your guy," he says to Monica. "Prepare to be single."

“What do you mean?”

“Good news for you, bad news for Wayne. The only survivors of that apartment are women. Either the men died of ‘natural causes’, or were murdered by their women.”

“Yeah, well, the buck stops here,” Monica says. They pull up to the building. Monica is still trying to figure out a game plan. “She seduced the realtor too. But she didn’t kill him. Why?” she muses aloud.

The three of them make their way into the building. When they reach the apartment, Father Michael is talking to the door, which seems to be bolted shut. Monica tries her key, but it melts away in the lock.

Derrick is horrified. “I’m starting to think you this ghost crap might be a little too real,” he says, drawing his service pistol.

Father Michael places his hand firmly on Derrick’s arm. “If you start shooting, more police will come, and none of us will have a chance to explain what’s going on before we’re all arrested.”

“We have to do *something*,” Monica insists.

“I can’t believe this is happening to me,” Derrick complains. He aims his gun. “Cover your ears.”

When Blanche, the priest, and Monica have all braced themselves, Monica nods to Derrick.

He pulls the trigger as they all flinch. The door still isn’t moving.

“Now let’s try it my way.” The priest presses his rosary to the door, and it swings open jauntily.

“Looks like your weapon is mightier than mine,” Derrick quips, holstering his gun.

The priest, Blanche, and Monica step through the doorway warily. But the door slams closed before Derrick can follow.

“I wasn’t coming in anyway!” he calls.

Inside, the trio immediately start shivering in the frigid apartment.

“Denise, stop this!” Blanche calls, though her daughter isn’t to be seen.

There’s no sign of Wayne, either, and living room lights are flickering.

“Denise, this can’t go on!” her mother says, trying to sound stern, but her voice wavers. With shocking speed, her body is dragged forcefully into the kitchen.

Father Michael holds up his cross and begins to pray in Latin. His rosary is yanked down the hallway toward the bedroom, dragging him with it.

Monica, now alone, looks back to see the front door is open again. Derrick gestures frantically for Monica to get out. She shakes her head; she knows if she backs down now, Wayne won’t make it.

“Bring it on, lady!” Monica challenges. She finds herself being pulled up and dragged into the kitchen. She rolls off the table and painfully stands up. The knife drawer jerks open, and a butcher knife levitates out and points menacingly at Monica.

Blanche jumps in front of her. “Denise, don’t do this!”

“The bitch doesn’t have the guts!” Monica yells.

“Shut up, I’m trying to help you!” Blanche hisses.

“Help, my ass,” Monica scoffs. “You’ve been defending her since this started.”

She raises her voice to Denise. “Alive or dead, I win unless you can come between us. Otherwise OUR love will last forever.”

The kitchen starts shaking with Denise’s rage. Plates and cups rattle out of the cabinets. The draws bang open and closed, harder and harder.

Blanche grabs Monica. “What are you doing?!”

Monica pushes Blanche away. “She wants what I have, and there’s only one way she’s gonna get it.” Determined, she charges through the kitchen door. A large gust of wind whips around the living room like a tornado. Unfazed, Monica grabs the wall to keep her balance and inches her way through the debris flying through the air.

Reaching the hallway that leads to the bedroom, she finds the priest crouched down, sobbing. His cross is gone and his spirit is crushed.

“She’s too strong, she’s too strong,” he whimpers.

Monica looks ahead to the bedroom. “I’m not buying it.”

Blanche grabs her from behind, but Monica’s adrenaline high lets her throw off the older woman with ease.

Blanche tries to reason with her. “I’m her *mother*, and he’s a priest. If we can’t beat her, how do you expect to?”

Monica grins fiercely. “This isn’t up to her, or me, and has nothing to do with you or him.” Monica musters up all her strength and runs into the bedroom.

Blanche and Father Michael clamber to their feet. The priest mumbles that he can’t live with himself if he doesn’t at least try. He and Blanche fight their way through the punishing gusts of wind to make it in.

Wayne is in a trance, standing stark still against the wall.

“Honey, can you hear me? Open your eyes!” Monica pleads.

Denise materializes over the bed. “He’s mine now, and I’ll kill anyone that gets in the way. You, Mother, the priest.”

“*My strength is made perfect in weakness,*” the priest begins. He’s cut off when Denise pulls down his pants, humiliating him.

“Father, you gave into temptation even faster than most men,” Denise laughs.

Monica yells, “Enough is enough. Let’s see who the real woman is.” She slaps Wayne lightly on the chest, but still can’t get a response. She yells to him “You go, I go because everything we do, we do it—” Wayne mumbles the word “Together...”

Monica jumps onto the bed. "Wayne, *now!*"

"Now what?" he slurs, uncomprehending.

Monica yanks off her shirt awkwardly. "Give it to me, baby," she commands him.

Wayne shakes his head, baffled, and opens his eyes to see the priest and an old woman he doesn’t know also present. "This isn't the time, and everyone is here." He breaks one arm free of the invisible hold to point at their audience.

Monica, half naked, tells him, "They can’t stop her. Only *you* can. We have to show our love is stronger than her power. You love me or not?" she asks him.

Wayne smiles before saying, "Oh, it's on!" He tries to get his shirt off and is thrown across the room.

Monica screams, “Never mind your shirt, get your pants off!"

Wayne's body is tossed into one wall after another before he falls to the floor. He gets up, shaking his head but determined now. “Lady, you’d have to be a lot scarier than that to stand between me and my woman!" he yells at Denise.

The priest is throwing the last of his holy water around the room. "Are you guys crazy?! She’s a demon."

"No she isn’t, she’s just a pissed-off spirit that can’t handle rejection!" Wayne calls.

Monica is holding onto the headboard for dear life as the bed shakes like a lifeboat on choppy waters. “Get ready!” Wayne says, fighting to make it to the bed.

The priest is trying to cast Denise out. Blanche is pleading with her daughter to move on. But Denise still seems too strong for all of them.

Suddenly, a glowing light shines into the window. Ray, the object of Denise’s first desire, appears. Denise turns toward him, taken aback, and Wayne makes it onto the bed. He and Monica embrace and lock their bodies around each other.

"Denise, this way," Ray says gently. Denise is shocked to see that Ray wants her. She runs through the window without a backward glance, and she and Ray disappear. The pressure from the energy bursts the glass.

Then the room grows calm. Monica looks at Wayne, who is on top of her. "We still need to finish, just in case," Monica tells him, winking.

“Give me a minute, I have glass in my ass.” he says.

Monica start laughing uproariously. "Now this is how you break in a new apartment!"

"Not funny!" he grouses.

But Monica can't stop cackling.

"Okay, maybe it's a *little* funny." Wayne looks over to the priest and Blanche, who are standing there stunned.

"You two mind giving us a few minutes?"

Denise's mom leaves and the priest does the sign of the cross as he walks out.

"Don't worry father, I'm already blessed," Wayne calls after him, kissing Monica.

After a few seconds she pushes him back to say, "I feel the same way."

They smile at each other then she squirms out from under him and climbs on top. "It's drafty up here!" she says. They start laughing.

"I'll put it on the to-do list right after you," he says.

On the street below, a couple is walking down the sidewalk. The guy looks over his shoulder as if someone is passing. He smiles and his girlfriend asks him, "What are you looking at?"

She trips on the curb without warning. Her boyfriend keeps walking, leaving her behind.

"Thanks for your help," she says sarcastically. But he's still walking away, seeming to have forgotten her utterly.

"Where are you going? Dan?" she calls.

His elbow is raised oddly, as if his arm is slung around an invisible someone's shoulders.

"You jackass!" she cries, to no avail.

With a strangely blissful expression, he ignores her. All he can comprehend is how happy he is to be walking down the street with his new girlfriend, Denise.

The End....