

"THE PEOPLE"

Written by  
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FINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. HOUSE - EARLY MORNING 1

A large family house in the suburbs. Quiet. Dawn is beginning to break.

1a INT. HOUSE - EARLY MORNING 1a

The hallways are sparse and cold but the photos on the mantel piece tell us that somebody lives here. A family.

2 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING 2

A digital bedside clock clicks over to 7:00AM. ROY and NANCY GROGAN are both fast asleep. They are in their early forties, attractive, middle-class.

3 INT. HALLWAY - EARLY MORNING 3

Early morning shafts of light have found their way in between the blinds. It is eerie and still. There is movement near the window and the blinds throw a disturbing shadow. We HEAR the sound of people WHISPERING.

4 INT. BIANCA'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING 4

A typical teenager's bedroom. Posters of boy bands. Clippings from Dolly. A signed photo of Brittany Spears. There is a large wooden wardrobe near the door. The drawers are neatly closed.

Fifteen year-old BIANCA is fast asleep. She turns in her sleep -- her deep breathing reverberates, dominating the SOUNDTRACK. We HEAR more whispering as BIANCA senses something. Her eyes snap open.

BIANCA

Amy?

(a beat)

Amy? Are you playing in my room?

Not hearing a response, BIANCA turns. The wardrobe doors are open and ALL of the drawers have been pulled out. Some of BIANCA'S underwear has spilt onto the floor -- but no one is there.

BIANCA (cont'd)

Amy?

5 INT. HALLWAY NEAR STAIRS - EARLY MORNING 5

The stairs are empty but we HEAR the faint whispers again: soft, overlapping whispers.

6 INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

6

Six-year-old AMY is asleep. A quaint DOLLHOUSE rests on her bedside table, a pair of fluffy pig slippers on the floor beside her bed. We HEAR the SOUND of movement on the floorboards outside her room -- it wakes her. The door creaks and we HEAR footsteps on the carpet inside the room. AMY sits up and turns towards the door -- but there's no one there.

7 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

7

NANCY and ROY are still fast asleep. Suddenly the light switches on and shorts out, seemingly by itself. All is still, THEN...

NANCY opens her eyes, not noticing the bedroom door gently close. She hears FOOTSTEPS outside the door and sits up, looking about. She nudges ROY, asleep next to her.

NANCY

Roy.

(firmer)

Roy!

He wriggles about, mumbles against a pillow.

ROY

What?

NANCY

They're here.

ROY looks up at her with a half-closed eye.

ROY

What time is it?

NANCY glances at the bedside clock.

NANCY

Ten past seven.

ROY

They don't come this early. It's probably Amy. Go back to sleep.

NANCY

It wasn't Amy. Amy has little footsteps. These were heavier.

ROY rolls on his side.

ROY

They don't come this early.

She gives him a piercing look.

NANCY

Somebody walked along the hallway,  
Roy. Right past the door. And it  
wasn't Amy.

8 INT. BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING

8

AMY's pig slippers are the first things we see as she enters the bathroom, clutching her TOY DOLL. She flips the waste paper basket upside down and stands on top so she can see her reflection in the mirror.

She turns on the hot and cold taps as far as they'll go. Steam fogs up the mirrored-door of the medicine cabinet above the basin.

She plucks a bright pink toothbrush from the holder and reaches for the toothpaste, squeezing as hard as she can with her tiny fingers. Nothing comes out.

She opens the medicine cabinet and, for just a second, we see a FIGURE in the fogged-up reflection -- a WOMAN IN A GREEN CARDIGAN is standing in the doorway, motionless. Her stare is fixed and her apparition drifts in and out the rising steam.

AMY doesn't notice -- she closes the cabinet door.

9 INT. BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

9

NANCY is peering out the bedroom door.

NANCY'S POV - HALLWAY OUTSIDE BEDROOM:

There's no-one there.

BACK TO SCENE

NANCY closes the door, locks it. Looks over at ROY.

NANCY

You need to call him.

ROY is still on his side, trying to get back to sleep. NANCY sits on the edge of the bed, turns to him.

NANCY (cont'd)

Roy?

ROY

(groaning)

What?

NANCY

You should call him.

He gives up trying to sleep, sits up to meet her stare.

ROY

We knew what we were getting into.  
He warned us.

NANCY

He never said it'd be like this.  
That's not what we agreed.

Suddenly there's a THUMP at their bedroom door and the handle turns ever so slowly. ROY and NANCY stare at it, frozen.

ROY

Amy? Is that you? Amy..?

The handle stops turning. ROY and NANCY share a glance. Now concerned, ROY throws off the bedcovers and heads for the door.

10 INT. HALLWAY - EARLY MORNING 10

AMY is walking along the hallway back to her room. She stops, hears the haunting SOUND of her music box playing. There is a girlish giggle.

She moves towards her room with hurried steps.

11 INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING 11

As she enters her room, we see a YOUNG GIRL in pigtails standing near AMY'S dollhouse. She has her back to us. The music box finishes its cycle.

AMY stops dead in her tracks. The YOUNG GIRL turns slowly to face AMY.

12 INT. BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING 12

ROY is standing near the door, listening.

NANCY

Why are you waiting?

ROY

We're not supposed to confront them.

NANCY

For God's sake, Roy. They shouldn't be here.

A CRASHING SOUND echoes throughout the house, followed immediately by AMY'S voice.

AMY (V/O)

Mummy! Mummy!

ROY and NANCY lock eyes. ROY flings the door open and rushes out, NANCY right behind him.

13 INT. HALLWAY - EARLY MORNING 13

We follow ROY and NANCY as they race towards AMY'S room.

14 INT. AMY'S ROOM - EARLY MORNING 14

AMY is sitting on the bed, crying. Her dollhouse is broken on the floor. NANCY rushes to her, checking her over as she searches for breath.

AMY

She knocked it over.

NANCY

Who, darling? Who knocked it over?

ROY surveys the damage, takes a concerned look out the window.

AMY

The little girl.

(a beat)

She said her mummy and daddy were here too.

ROY

You spoke to her?

ROY and NANCY share a glance. NANCY puts a comforting arm around AMY.

NANCY

(rattled)

I told you never to speak to them.  
Didn't mummy tell you that?

BIANCA has heard the commotion and bursts into the room.

BIANCA

They've been in my room too.

AMY

She said they were just visiting.

NANCY eyes ROY.

NANCY

If you don't do something, I will.

ROY stares back at her, pensive.

15 EXT. POOLSIDE - EARLY MORNING

15

We are close on a RINGING mobile phone, resting next to the morning paper on a table by the pool. There are croissants, a glass of orange juice and a black coffee served in the finest white china. The hand of HARVEY BRILLSTONE picks up the phone and speaks into it but his face is obscured -- we see him only from behind. A black leather briefcase is open on a second chair.

HARVEY

Hello?

17 INT. GROGAN KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING

17

ROY is on the phone, standing inside the doorway to the kitchen. His eyes are wide and he is unsettled.

ROY

Yeah...It's Roy Grogan here.

We move around ROY to REVEAL the kitchen before him. Cupboards are open, drawers pulled out and the tap is running. The microwave door swings a little on its hinge.

ROY (cont'd)

We have a bit of a problem.

18 INTERCUT POOLSIDE AND GROGAN KITCHEN

18

HARVEY looks like he was expecting the call. He is a bald man in his forties and his business shirt is unbuttoned at the top.

HARVEY

Morning, Roy. How are you doing?

ROY

I'm angry, Harvey, and you know it. What are they doing here? They're not supposed to --

HARVEY finishes stirring his coffee, taps the spoon against the side.

HARVEY

I warned you about that.

ROY turns off the running tap.

ROY

No, you didn't. You didn't say it was going to be at all hours of the day and night. That wasn't the deal.

HARVEY does up his tie as he speaks.

HARVEY

With respect, Roy, it's not all hours of the day and night. Besides, we have an agreement.

HARVEY reaches across and takes some documents from his open briefcase, careful not to spill his coffee.

ROY

You bet we have an agreement...

HARVEY

Which is why you got the house so cheap in the first place.

ROY

But the agreement doesn't say anything about them scaring the hell out of my kids at seven o'clock on a Monday morning and --

We see the FIGURE OF A MAN standing in a doorway behind ROY -- motionless, staring dead ahead. ROY senses a presence and turns but the FIGURE is gone.

HARVEY (cont'd)

Let's just calm down for a second.

19 INT. BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING 19

BIANCA enters the bathroom with cautious, tentative steps. She checks to see that nobody is there, closes the door and flicks the LOCK closed.

20 INTERCUT BRILLSTONE BEDROOM AND GROGAN KITCHEN 20

HARVEY is delicately turning the pages of a crisp white document, laid out on the table in front of him.

HARVEY

...I'm reading from the bottom of page seven, Roy. Clause 28b, paragraph 6, sub paragraph 9...the purchaser agrees...

ROY is leaning against the kitchen bench, frantically flicking through a coffee-stained mess of pages. Frazzled.

21 INT. BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING 21

BIANCA turns the taps on in the shower and puts her head under the water, closing her eyes.

22 INTERCUT BRILLSTONE BEDROOM AND GROGAN KITCHEN 22

ROY thumbs through the pages of the document as he holds the handset between his neck and his shoulder. He stops, runs his finger down the mish-mash of fine print.

HARVEY

...the purchaser agrees to the following conditions in the fair purchase...

ROY has found the right spot and reads. Stunned.

ROY

Hold on! This is not what we discussed.

HARVEY

It's there in black and white, Roy. Shall I read it again?

ROY

I never agreed to that!

HARVEY

Then I think we should turn to the last page, Roy.

ROY

What?

HARVEY

The last page. Turn to the last page.

ROY angrily turns to the last page.

23 INT. BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING 23

BIANCA is working conditioner into her hair.

The bathroom door CLICKS open. Steam escapes through the opening.

AS BIANCA continues washing her hair, we see a FIGURE emerge from the rising steam, staring through the glass at her. His features are indistinguishable.

24 INTERCUT BRILLSTONE BEDROOM AND GROGAN KITCHEN 24

ROY has turned to the last page of the document. His SIGNATURE is on the dotted line.

HARVEY

That's your signature, isn't it?

We see the SHADOW of a hand reaching for ROY'S shoulder.

ROY

You bastard. You never said anything about that. You said all we'd have to put up with was --

The hand reaches up and grabs ROY'S shoulder. He spins around, shocked. It is NANCY, holding AMY in her other arm.

NANCY

They're in the lounge room now.

Before ROY can respond, we HEAR a horrifying SCREAM coming from the bathroom upstairs: BIANCA. NANCY and ROY share a glance and ROY bolts out of the kitchen, NANCY picking up AMY and following close behind.

25 INT. HALLWAY - EARLY MORNING 25

ROY flies up the stairs, panic in his eyes. NANCY, holding AMY, is behind.

As ROY passes, a door along the hallway slides shut.

ROY darts into the bathroom.

26 INT. BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING 26

BIANCA, a towel hastily wrapped around her, is crouching on the floor between the bath and the basin. She is in shock, tears streaming down her face.

BIANCA

He was staring at me, daddy. He was just staring at me! It was horrible!

ROY stands before her, stunned. NANCY, carrying AMY, comes bursting in, horrified. She casts a concerned look at BIANCA, glares at ROY. He looks back at her, now suddenly decisive.

27 EXT. HOUSE - EARLY MORNING 27

The front door of the house flies open. ROY comes hurtling through, clutching suitcases, his family in toe. NANCY, now dressed, drags AMY by one hand and holds a makeup bag with the other. BIANCA, also dressed, is last.

The family piles into the car. ROY starts the engine, crunches it into gear.

AMY (OS)

Are we staying at Grandma's forever?

ROY turns as he finds reverse and hits the accelerator.

ROY

Just for a few months.

The car reverses out onto the street. As it speeds off, we notice a big colourful SIGN on the front lawn:

ANOTHER QUALITY HAVEN DISPLAY HOME

There's a photo of a smiling HARVEY BRILLSTONE in the bottom corner. A MAN IN OVERALLS is pasting a brightly-coloured strip across the sign where it says OPEN WEEKENDS 12PM - 2PM. The coloured strip says:

NOW OPEN 7 DAYS - 7AM TO 7PM

A WOMAN comes bursting through the front door: she is NOELENE, a middle-aged woman in her forties wearing a GREEN CARDIGAN. She is pulling seven year-old CHARLOTTE by the hand. CHARLOTTE's hair is in pigtails.

NOELENE

That's the last time I'm taking this family house-hunting.

Her teenage son, CRAIG, a pimply teenager wearing an ANNA KOURNIKOVA t-shirt, is lagging behind. NOELENE turns to him.

NOELENE (cont'd)

You should be ashamed of yourself, Craig. You pervert. You almost scared that poor young girl to death.

CRAIG

It's not my fault the lock on the bathroom door's stuffed.

NOELENE'S husband, GEORGE, forty-something and wearing an ill-fitting tracksuit, is the last out the door.

GEORGE

Plumbing's no good either. They just don't make them like they used to.

They all walk out of FRAME as more people exit the house behind them.

As we pull back, more cars arrive and more PEOPLE make their way up to the house.

FADE OUT