

ABDUCTED - A PET SITTER'S STORY

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Cloudy skies make the dark forest even eerier. The sound of someone huffing grows near. CINDY (19), dirty clothes with scrapes and bruises to her visible skin, runs into view. She checks behind her often in a panicked manner.

She trips over a log and crashes to the ground. Dazed, it takes her a few moments to get her bearings. Her eyes suddenly look upward and widen over something alarming she sees.

CINDY

No!

A MAN, face unseen, drops down on top of Cindy and wraps a cord around her neck. Squeezes hard.

As she chokes, Cindy attempts to pry the cord away from her throat. When that fails, she claws at her attacker's face. The attacker flinches with a yelp of pain and squeezes even harder.

Cindy drops still. Her attacker releases his grip on the cord.

EXT. WOODS - NEARBY - NIGHT

The man drags Cindy up to a grave two feet deep. A mound of dirt is to the side, along with a shovel. He drops Cindy into the hole. Grabs the shovel and begins piling dirt on top of her.

Cindy stirs. She coughs with the dirt being thrown into her face. Attempts to sit up.

CINDY

(choked)

No, please.

Wham! The shovel strikes her in the head. She drops back with a head wound. Dirt rains down on her, quickly covering her face.

LATER

The grave is now completely filled in. The man flattens the top with his shovel. He disappears into the woods.

## INT. JOSH'S HOUSE - LIVING AREA - DAY

A two bedroom ranch in a remote area. The living area contains a walk-in kitchen, a nook for a four person dining table, and a modest living room. It is open with three doors down a hall. A back door is at the very rear of the living area.

A wood burning fireplace is to the side, along with a set of fireplace tools. A digital lock is on the inside of both doors. A small area rug is carefully placed over the cellar door built into the living area's floor.

On a table against the wall, a few pictures stand of Karen (early 20s), beautiful smile, very similar in appearance to Cindy. A man with short hair is in a few of the photos with Karen, his face clean-shaven. He looks very happy while there is misery in Karen's eyes. Her clothes are very conservative and downright ugly. She wears a pretty cross necklace in most pictures.

The man in the photos is JOSH MAYER (30), a creepiness behind his shoulder-length hair and short beard. He fixes a sandwich at the counter. A scratch is visible to his face.

He takes his sandwich on a plate to the table and starts to sit down. A knock at his door. Wearing a curious look, he walks to the door and opens it to DETECTIVE AVA SANCHEZ (30s), female, her long hair put back in a ponytail. She flashes her badge.

AVA

I'm Detective Sanchez with the  
Twelfth Precinct. I'd like to ask  
you some questions about a missing  
woman if I may.

Josh remains calm and collected.

JOSH

I don't know anything.

AVA

I'd like to make that determination  
if you don't mind. May I come in?

Showcasing heavy reluctance, Josh opens the door further. Ava enters. Josh closes the door. He goes to the table and sits. Ignores Ava as he eats his sandwich.

Ava scans the home with professional scrutiny. She moves closer to the table.

AVA

A young woman, Cindy Harris,  
disappeared a couple of weeks ago.  
A neighbor thought he spotted her  
in this area right before she went  
missing.

JOSH

I haven't seen any strangers around  
here.

AVA

You're sure?

JOSH

Of course I'm sure. I know when I  
see someone new. It doesn't happen  
much around these parts.

Ava pulls a business card holder out of her pocket and  
removes a card. She hands it to Josh and puts away the  
holder.

AVA

If you think of anything, give me a  
call.

JOSH

Sure.

Ava goes to the door. She studies the digital lock.

AVA

I don't think I've ever seen one of  
these on the inside.

JOSH

My niece sleepwalks so I put those  
in for when she visits.

AVA

I see. Have a good day.

Ava exits.

Josh returns to his sandwich.

EXT. JOSH'S HOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Ava stands on the porch for a lengthy moment, thinking. She  
walks down the steps and heads to her car parked at the end  
of the driveway.

INT. JOSH'S HOUSE - LIVING AREA - DAY - SAME

Josh stands to the side of the front window, carefully watching Ava get into her car and drive away. He turns to the table of photos.

He picks one up of Karen and studies the image with emotion. Gingerly touches her image with his fingertips. Suddenly grows bold and sets the picture down. He walks out of sight.

O.S. The main door closes.

EXT. LANDEN HOUSE - DAY

A nice house in the suburbs. A somewhat older blue sedan in pretty good condition stands in the driveway.

INT. LANDEN HOUSE - KITCHEN AREA - DAY

Immaculate. A large island with stools. An overhead pot rack. Beautiful cabinets. A dining table is off to the side. The area is open to an impressive living room.

DEBRA LANDEN (40s), a light on any dreary day, cooks breakfast at lightning speed. The table is set for four. The food is nearly done.

Her husband, JEFF LANDEN (40s), executive type with his nice suit and clean-shaven face, hurries in. He goes straight for the coffee maker and finds the pot empty. Picks it up and turns it upside-down.

JEFF

No coffee?

DEBRA

(playful)

I was getting to it.

Jeff fills the pot with water and sets it in place. Adds coffee grounds to a filter and gets the pot brewing.

JEFF

I suppose I can do it myself, but don't get used to it.

Debra smiles at him. He returns it.

Their youngest daughter MEGAN (12), dressed casually, texts on her phone as she walks in. Focused on the device, she fails to notice she's heading straight for the counter.

Jeff rushes around and grips the top of her head with his hand, turns it toward the table. Megan changes course just in time to avoid the collision.

JEFF

Thanks, Dad.

Megan stops just short of the table to look back, unaware that she almost walked into it, too.

MEGAN

For what?

Jeff stares at his daughter.

Megan surrenders and sits down. Debra brings a plate of food over and sets it before Megan, who fails to notice. She smiles at a text she receives.

DEBRA

What have we told you about that phone?

Debra snatches the phone out of Megan's hands.

MEGAN

Hey!

DEBRA

Your friends can wait until after breakfast.

Debra returns to the kitchen and lays the phone on the counter. She fixes another plate of food.

MEGAN

With school being out, it's the only way I can keep up with gossip.

Jeff pours a cup of coffee. Adds cream and sugar.

JEFF

I think you need something around here to keep you busy. I know! Chores.

Megan's jaw drops.

MEGAN

Really? I don't see you making Emily do those while she's home.

JEFF

Give us time.