

KILLER DOWN BELOW

Written by

Vicky L. Neal

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

MISSY (16), tattered clothing and somewhat dirty, a recent surgical-type scar over her larynx, huffs as she runs through the wooded area. She grips a tree and catches her breath.

O.S. A stick snaps behind her.

Missy's head pivots back in sheer panic. She takes off running faster than her legs can go and trips to the ground. Somewhat shaken, she drags herself up and flees.

UP AHEAD

Muffled voices and laughter come from an area, where the flickering of a campfire flashes off of trees.

Missy stops to survey the sight so close yet so far away. Her attempts to yell result in a raspy whisper.

MISSY

Help!

She stumbles closer and leans against a tree. She watches...

Two MEN drinking beer by the campfire. A pair of tents is set up near them.

Missy tries again to yell in her raspy whisper.

MISSY

Help me.

The campers are oblivious to the distraught teen.

Someone grabs Missy from behind. She struggles against him. Her attacker reaches around with a knife and jabs it into her chest. The pain paralyzes Missy. She slowly drops to the ground, eyes frozen open.

Her attacker drags her back the way they came by her legs. The rustling of her body sliding across the ground makes a decent amount of noise.

AT THE CAMPSITE

The campers both turn to the sound.

CAMPER #1

Hear that?

They listen. The sound fades away.

CAMPER #2

Probably raccoons. Make sure our food is put up before we hit the sack.

Camper #2 finishes off his beer.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

An SUV drives along the busy interstate. It tows a small U-haul trailer behind it.

The vehicle gets off at the next exit.

EXT. ALLEN HOUSE - DAY

A large two-story house a century old and in need of updates. The peeling paint and many windows give it a dated look. Other houses in the area are similar. A privacy fence separates the backyard from the next door neighbor's house.

The SUV pulls off the road, into the driveway. First out of the car is WYATT ALLEN (12). He focuses on a handheld video game but tears away his attention to look at the house in awe.

WYATT

Whoa.

From the other side of the rear seat emerges MAISIE ALLEN (17). Her reaction to the house is the opposite of her brother's. She scoffs at the sight.

MAISIE

You have to be kidding me.

Their parents, LUKE and MIA ALLEN (late 30s), casual business appearance, leave the front seat. They also study the house, but with pleasantness.

MAISIE

You dragged me out of an awesome house with a pool for this?

MIA

I think it has character.

MAISIE

Some characters are bad, Mom. That's definitely the case here.

WYATT

I love it!

Wyatt takes off for the porch. He tries to open the locked door, then peers into a dirty window.

Mia and Luke come together in front of the car and put an arm around each other.

MIA

I can't believe it's ours.

As Maisie passes by on her way to the porch...

MAISIE

Neither can I.

Luke and Mia exchange a grin. They go to the...

PORCH

Luke uses a key from his ring to unlock the door. He steps in first with his family following.

INT. ALLEN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The home is fully furnished with somewhat older furniture in good condition. It needs a solid cleaning. A staircase inside the room leads to the upper floor. There is a couch, loveseat, and chair in the room.

The downstairs is basically open concept with the family room, dining area, and kitchen all easily accessible. A mantle stands above a fireplace in the family room.

Wyatt marvels at his new home. Maisie frowns.

MAISIE

Wow.

Luke puts an arm around her.

LUKE

It does have that wow factor,
doesn't it?

Maisie rolls her eyes.

Wyatt takes off for the stairs.

WYATT

I'm picking my room!

MIA

The master is off limits!

LUKE

Let's get our stuff inside so the
real fun can begin.

Luke and Mia exit the house, leaving the door open.

Maisie sneers.

MAISIE

It gets more fun than this?

Maisie wanders out of the room, to the...

DINING AREA

A 5x7 area rug lies on the floor with a 4 seat dinette on top. Maisie gives everything a look of scorn as she passes through. She arrives in the...

KITCHEN

A large space with an island and four stools. Maisie goes to the back door and tries to look outside through the glass, only the dirt on it blocks her view.

She wipes at it with her hand. Just a little comes off. Most is on the outside.

LUKE (O.S.)

Kids?

Maisie returns to the...

FAMILY ROOM

Luke sets down a moving box. Mia also carries one that she positions by the first.

Wyatt skips down the steps.

LUKE

Help us get our stuff.

Maisie's brow scrunches.

MAISIE

I have to move stuff, too?

Maisie groans her frustration as she walks to the open door. She steps out.

Wyatt beams at his parents. It's obviously fake.

WYATT
I don't mind helping.

Wyatt lays his video game on the end table and hurries outside.

Luke and Mia watch in amusement.

LUKE
Let's have kids, you said. It will
be a blast, you said.

MIA
It was, until one turned into a
teen.

LUKE
The other will be joining her soon.

Mia grins at him.

MIA
At least Maisie will be in college.
We only have to deal with her part-
time.

LUKE
True.

They walk outside.

INT. ALLEN HOUSE - MAISIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maisie enters the dark room with a box in her hands. She turns on the overhead light and pauses to study her new bedroom. It has a full-size bed, mirrored dresser, a desk/chair, and a closet.

Maisie sets the box on the bed. She curiously opens the closet and finds that it's very roomy. This pleases her.

Mia carries a second box inside. She lays it on the bed.

MIA
What do you think?

MAISIE
It's not horrible.

Mia laughs.

MIA
Come on, admit it. You might grow
to like it.