

MANNESKIN

Written by

Vicky L. Neal

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

MARY (23) runs through the area, making frequent glances behind her. Something follows her and she's terrified. She stumbles a few times in her hurry, falls to the ground, bounces back up and continues on.

Wham! She runs into a larger body, face unseen. Mary screams. A pair of hands reaches out and grabs her head, twisting it harshly 180 degrees. A sickening SNAP of her neck accompanies the movement. Mary drops to the ground, eyes frozen open in terror.

INT. UNDISCLOSED BASEMENT HALL - DAY

Someone unseen, except for their body which is covered by a large rubber apron, drags Mary's corpse down the hall by her feet.

WORKROOM

The body is dropped onto a lab table and the clothing removed.

A pair of hands puts on rubber gloves. One raises a scalpel, ready to cut into Mary's jugular.

O.S. The killer WHISTLES a happy tune as he works.

Mass blood rains down from the table to the floor, where it flows into a drain, placed there for this very purpose.

The woman's legs are shaken as something is done to her upper body out of sight. We hear the sounds of a scalpel CUTTING flesh, the kind of eerie noise you might hear in a butcher shop when getting the meat ready to display.

A human heart, dripping with blood, is dropped into a large container on a stand next to the table. Next, it's Mary's lungs, then her kidneys, liver, brain, etc. until all major organs along with her intestines are in the container.

The chilling sounds of a bone saw REV to life, followed by the horrid noise of the saw CUTTING through bone. Slivers of the hard substance fly into the air.

THUNK, THUNK. Chunks of human bone are tossed carelessly to a table. A few slide off to the floor.

The woman's body is flipped over onto its side, facing us.

It seems to collapse as the saw cuts up the bones inside and they are removed. Soon, only her outer shell remains, looking like an inflatable doll with the air let out.

INT. MAPLEWOOD - MACREADY'S - DAY

A mid-sized Ma & Pa-type store in a small sort of town. A variety of merchandise - clothing, general tourist-type souvenirs such as mugs, glasses, spoons, etc. Many have the name "Maplewood" imprinted on them. A good deal of the items look outdated. Possibly a decade or more.

A large vacant area is clear in the front window. An unseen employee stands up a mannequin, wearing a short skirt, buttonup blouse, and heels, in the spot. Only this isn't just any mannequin. It's identical in likeness to Mary from the opening scene. Her hair done nicely and make-up applied, she looks very real.

EXT. MACREADY'S - DAY

A very quaint atmosphere, like something out of the 1950's. Few cars on the street. Lots of PEOPLE walk. Shops of various kinds on both sides of the road.

SIERRA THOMAS, a bubbly, extremely wealthy 18-year-old dressed to kill, starts to pass by the store. With her is KAREN ADKINS, same age, somewhat plain but a heart of gold. Sierra spots the lifelike mannequin and backtracks for another look.

SIERRA

Wow. How does she stand so still like that?

Karen studies the mannequin for a moment.

KAREN

It's a mannequin, Sierra.

Sierra takes a longer look, cocks her head to the side in puzzlement. No way that's fake.

SIERRA

Are you sure?

KAREN

Yeah, I mean... look. She's not breathing.

SIERRA

That's awesome.

SIERRA (CONT'D)

I bet my uncle would like to have
some of these for his stores.

Sierra enters the store.

Karen is displeased with the decision.

KAREN

Sierra--

But Sierra is already inside, studying the mannequin.

Karen sighs, then goes to join her friend.

INT. MACREADY'S - CONTINUOUS

Sierra looks over the mannequin closely. She pulls out a digital camera from her purse and snaps a close photo, getting the mannequin's front as well as she can from the side.

Karen joins her. Just as Sierra reaches out to touch the display--

CHARLES

Can I help you?

Sierra turns to find--

CHARLES MACREADY (50s), a man who looks older than his age, but has that friendly small town sort of look about him with a hint of slyness, walking up to her.

Sierra sticks the camera back into her purse.

SIERRA

Oh, I was just admiring your
mannequin. She looks so real.

CHARLES

New technology. Maybe you should
get with the times.

Sierra looks to Karen, who shrugs.

SIERRA

I AM with the times, Mr.--

CHARLES

Macready. Me and my wife Martha
own this store.

SIERRA

My uncle owns a chain of clothing stores. I think he would love to have mannequins that look real,
 (gestures to mannequin)
 like that one.

Charles's friendly demeanor fizzles into seriousness as the remark offends him.

CHARLES

She's not for sale.

Sierra reaches into her purse.

SIERRA

I could pay you a good deal for it.

CHARLES

Put it away, young lady.

Sierra looks up.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I said she's not for sale... not at any price.

KAREN

Would you tell us where she was made? We could go straight to the manufacturer.

CHARLES

He only makes them for me.

SIERRA

I'm sure your "friend" would be interested in a business proposition.

Before Charles can respond, MARTHA MACREADY, same age as her husband, snow white hair, charming yet innocent appearance, leaves a back room and walks over to the group. She illuminates over seeing the girls.

MARTHA

Customers. How nice. Are you girls out-of-towners?

SIERRA

We--

Martha pinches the material on Sierra's blouse, awed by the feel and style.

MARTHA
Of course you are. Local folks
don't dress this snazzy.

CHARLES
They're not customers, Martha.

Martha looks dumbfounded.

MARTHA
I don't understand.

CHARLES
They want to buy Mary.

Martha is shocked by the news. She passes a look over at the mannequin, then turns to Sierra with an uneasy grin.

MARTHA
Goodness, no. We couldn't sell
Mary.

She's like part of the family.

SIERRA
But she's just a mannequin.

CHARLES
She's a lot more than that to us.

Now if you don't intend to buy anything, I think you girls should go.

Sierra thinks about arguing but decides better of it.

SIERRA
Come on, Karen.

As the girls move to the door:

SIERRA (CONT'D)
(under breath)
So much for small town hospitality.

They leave.

Charles goes to the mannequin. He straightens her clothing with tender loving care, even though it's already perfect. It's obvious he really cares for the object.

CHARLES
There, there, Mary. Don't you
worry none. You're safe here with
us.