

Black Cat Moon

An Original Screenplay

by
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FADE IN:

EXT. STATE UNIVERSITY - DAY

A modern sprawling complex. Men and women of various ages meander in and out of the double glass doors.

INT. STATE UNIVERSITY, PROFESSOR'S STUDY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Modern small library size room. Thick vinyl padded chairs. Mahoney tables and desk.

A distinguished man, PROFESSOR JOHNS, late fifties, wears wire rim eye glasses, stands and stares at one of the ceiling high book shelves. The Professor pulls a book from the shelf.

The title of the book reads, 'DWELLING WITH THE SUPERNATURAL'

KNOCK AT DOOR

PROFESSOR JOHNS

Please enter.

An appealing, youthful woman, CONNIE MAR, late twenties, wears fashionable eye glasses, enters the room.

CONNIE MAR

Professor?

PROFESSOR JOHNS

Miss Mar. It's a pleasure.

Professor Johns thoughtfully motions to a vinyl padded chair.

PROFESSOR JOHNS (CONT'D)

Please sit down. I am anxious to hear about your experience.

Connie sits on the vinyl padded chair.

Professor Johns reclines behind his desk and places the book down in plain view. Connie peers curious at the cover of the book.

PROFESSOR JOHNS

I have been waiting in anticipation of your arrival, since our last phone conversation. How long have you been attending our university?

Connie pulls her attention away from the book and at the Professor.

CONNIE MAR

Two years since that amazing encounter.

PROFESSOR JOHNS

Wonderful. You have told no one?

CONNIE MAR

You are the first.

PROFESSOR JOHNS

Wonderful. Would you like something to drink before we get started?

CONNIE MAR

No thank you Professor. I'm quite anxious to get this all out.

PROFESSOR JOHNS

Wonderful. Than by all means lets begin.

CONNIE MAR

It all began more than two years ago.

The Professor eyes Connie with engaged anticipation.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE TO:

EXT. COLONIAL HOME/RAY CORNELL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A small car rolls into the driveway. SHANE DUGAN, early thirties, likeable, rugged built man, wears denim overalls, slips out of the car holding an envelope with a handwritten word that reads, RENT. Shane strolls to the front porch.

Murmurs carry from the backyard. Shane sneaks to the side of the house, behind a large white beat up van and views,

BACK YARD

The full moon illuminates the ground, a 5 foot high wood fence runs across the back yard and a well kept hulking jagged CRENATE ROCK juts out of the ground close to,

RAY CORNELL, late fifties, short potbellied man wears hand-me-down shirt and slacks, stands to the side of,

Ray Cornell's son, BARRY CORNELL, mid thirties, tall slender man wears shirt and denims. Ray and Barry look on tense as,

Another man, EPA MAN, late forties, shines a flashlight on the ground. The EPA Man stops abruptly, his flashlight reveals, an OILY SUBSTANCE pools on the dirt.

The EPA Man stoops down. He squeezes strands of wet dirt between his fingers and sniffs it. The EPA Man straightens up and turns to Ray.

EPA MAN

You've been warned Cornell. I'll
have to turn you in.

Barry defensively strides up to the EPA Man.

BARRY CORNELL

Sir, can't you let this go? We'll
have it cleaned up in no time.

(MORE

BARRY CORNELL (CONT'D)

My father is a church elder. We
can't afford this kind of
publicity.

The EPA Man sneers at Barry unconcerned.

EPA MAN

I've warned your father long
enough. The neighbors are
suspicious of my indifference. I
could give a hoot about your
church. This is plain hypocrisy.

Barry's eyes narrow. He perches his lips.

BARRY CORNELL

How dare you talk about the church
in that manner.

EPA MAN

You holier than thou people try to
get away with murder.

The EPA Man points to the oil soaked ground.

EPA MAN (CONT'D)

This is what your church teaches?

Barry tenses. His fists clinch.

BARRY CORNELL

That has nothing to do with it.
Just an oversight of my father's.

The EPA Man smiles with contempt at Barry and steps a few
feet in front of the CRENATE ROCK. He turns back to Barry.

EPA MAN

Oversight? Not likely. Some church.
Filled with the likes of your
father.

Ray watches Barry's mounting temper with concern and steps closer to Barry.

RAY CORNELL

I promise. I'll take care of it.

It's too late. Barry steps toward the EPA Man with inflamed eyes.

The EPA man steps back too close to the rock and stumbles. His head strikes the large jagged CRENATE ROCK.

RAY CORNELL (CONT'D)

Damn you Barry. Look what you did.

BARRY CORNELL

I'm sorry dad. He mocked the church. You know how that makes me feel.

Ray stoops down and checks the EPA Man's motionless body. Ray stands up. He shoots Barry a stern gaze.

RAY CORNELL

I've got enough troubles. Now this.

Ray shakes his head and lumbers to the beat up white van.

FRONT YARD

Shane backs out of the driveway in his car and motors away.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT - HOURS LATER

The moon brightens a small field surrounded by dense forest.

After Ray and Barry finish digging a casket size hole, they plant an elongated wrapped object in the hole. Ray looks around stressed while catching his breath with heavy huffs.

Barry shovels dirt into the hole. His face wet with perspiration. Barry stops, stretches his tired back. He peers up at the Moon.

MOON

Dark clouds drift past the face of the moon.

FOREST EDGE

Shane watches from a massive oak tree. He clutches a special night camera and snaps pictures of Ray and Barry's activity.

EXT. FIELD - DAY - NEXT DAY

Several police vehicles dot the field. Lights flash from atop of the patrol cars. Police officers swarm the grounds. They enter and exit the forest.

HOLE IN GROUND

The EPA Man's upper, pale body is partially unwrapped.

Detective RYKER (40's) a tall, tough wiry man stoops over the lifeless body. He scrutinizes a strip of cloth that appears to be a piece of clothing.

A POLICE OFFICER stands to Ryker's side. He stares down at the shallow hole.

RYKER

(stares at cloth)

The man's identity?

POLICE OFFICER

One of the Environmental Agencies.

Ryker stands up and circles the hole in the ground.

RYKER

Any record of his destination?

The Police Officer lifts his head and stares at Ryker.

POLICE OFFICER

Apparently he told no one.

RYKER

How far away is Ray Cornell's
house?

The Police Officer strides closer to Ryker.

EXT. RANCHER - EVENING

Small rancher house sits on a sizable lot in a quiet suburban development. Shane Dugan's car is parked in the driveway.

FRONT OF HOUSE

A large SLEEK BLACK CAT eats from a bowl by the front door.

INT. RANCHER, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Modest, clean, and orderly room.

Ceiling high bookshelf covers the back wall, filled with book titles on history, science, paranormal and the supernatural.

SIDE WALL - MANTEL

Brochures lay on top from the University, of study courses on history and science scholarships. Next to the brochures, two framed photos, one of a very young Shane Dugan with a slim pretty WOMAN in her late twenties.

The other photo is a more recent one of Shane Dugan and another pretty WOMAN about the same age as Shane, both dressed in work overalls.

Shane Dugan sits at an oak desk against the opposite wall, busy writing on a tablet. Photos lay on the desk reveal,

Ray and Barry digging a hole in the small field. Something the size of a man lays wrapped next to the hole.

A CEDAR CHEST with pad lock, sits on the floor beside the desk. The SLEEK BLACK CAT lays by Shane's chair.

Shane stuffs the photos and paper in an envelope and seals it. He places the envelope inside, shuts the chest and snaps the pad lock.

Shane grabs a small MEDICINE bottle from the desk, opens it and pulls a tiny pill out, than swallows it. He reaches down and pets the cat.

SHANE DUGAN

MISS BLACKY, whatever happens to
me, watch over this chest.

Miss Blacky replies with a soft MEOW. Shane stands up and looks around the quiet room. He stares deep in thought at the cedar chest.

FADE TO:

EXT. SMALL CEMETERY - DAY - FLASHBACK

Bleak overcast sky. Leaves fall from trees like soft falling snow flakes.

DANA DUGAN, the woman in the first photo on Shane Dugan's mantel, stands holding the hand of a child, the boy in the same photo, SHANE DUGAN at age 6, a wiry boy with sad eyes. They both stare ahead at,

A wooden casket lowers into an oblong hole. A grave stone lays to the side. The etched words read,

IN LOVING MEMORY OF DARREN DUGAN

Another woman, CAROL CORNELL, early thirties, lumbers over to Dana Dugan. A younger, slightly slimmer RAY CORNELL (30's) trails warily behind Carol.

Carol places her arm around Dana in a comforting embrace. Dana weeps.

Shane peers down in the hole. His eyes shift to his mother Dana and Carol, then curiously over at Ray.

FADE TO:

EXT. RAY CORNELL'S HOUSE - DAY - PRESENT TIME

FRONT YARD VIEWED FROM STREET

The house sits in a state of disrepair. Home building materials clutter the left side yard.

The old beat up white van sits on the right side of the house. A metal BARREL stands partially blocked by the van.

INT. RAY CORNELL'S HOUSE, MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

In state of disrepair. Papers and tools litter the room. Shane Dugan stands with eyes suspiciously studying,

Ray Cornell and Ray's son Barry who now wears a black shirt and the collar of a Pastor, both stand tense facing Shane.

Shane hands Ray the RENT envelope. Ray takes the envelope from Shane a bit edgy.

RAY CORNELL

Thank you Shane. It's a pleasure to have you as my renter.

Barry stares with eyes of compassion at Shane.

BARRY CORNELL

It's sad what happened to your family. We're all praying for you.

Ray gives Barry an anxious glance.

RAY CORNELL

Barry. You were going to ask Shane about church.

BARRY CORNELL

Shane we would like to see you in church again.

Shane gives Ray a quick glance than shifts his eyes back to Barry.

SHANE DUGAN

Maybe.

Ray shoots Barry another rigid stare and nods his head.

RAY CORNELL

I know Shane you're interested in the university. I have a few connections and Barry knows people from the church that can help you.

SHANE DUGAN

I'll keep that in mind.

Shane lumbers to the door. He turns and gives Ray a curious glimpse then walks out the door.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE, OLD PARKING LOT - DAY

Shane breaks up concrete slabs with a heavy jackhammer. He wears protective ear gear against the noise of the compressor. A large dump truck backs up to Shane.

MEEKA, from the second photo on Shane Dugan's mantel, pretty, feisty woman wears denim overalls, jumps down out of the driver's side of the truck. Meeka taps Shane on the shoulder. Shane stops the hammer and turns to Meeka.

MEEKA

Shane. It's lunch time. Lets go.

Shane nods to Meeka. Meeka lumbers over to the compressor and shuts it down. Bird CHIRPS pierce the sudden quiet air.

EXT. NATURE PARK - LATER

Picnic tables dot the park.

Shane sits at a table and stares distant at his sandwich which lays untouched. Meeka watches Shane with a frown.

MEEKA

Something troubling you Shane? You seem preoccupied. Unusual even for you, 'mister I don't need help' guy that you are.

SHANE DUGAN

Just thinking about things that happened.

MEEKA

It must have been awful, your father being killed.

SHANE DUGAN

I've got his memories locked in a cedar chest. I have my suspicions.

MEEKA

What?

SHANE DUGAN

I won't say until I'm sure.

MEEKA

Your mother died at a young age. What happened to her?

SHANE DUGAN

After my father was killed, we lost everything. Had to rely on outside help. That hurt her terribly.

MEEKA

You definitely take after your mother.

SHANE DUGAN

She was too indebted to the Cornell's. I think she was blinded by what she thought was Ray's incredible generosity.

MEEKA

Your landlord? You don't trust him.
It doesn't surprise me. You don't
trust very many people.

Shane gives Meeka a shy smile. He stares blank into the sky.

FADE TO:

INT. DUGAN'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Dana Dugan, late thirties, shows signs of a bitter life. She
sits at opposite end of table facing,

SHANE DUGAN (16) listens to her with sad eyes.

DANA DUGAN

Shane. I want you to keep your
father's belongings. His business
documents and diary.

Shane nods and stares at Dana curious.

SHANE DUGAN

Whatever happened to daddy's
business partner ROY?

DANA DUGAN

Roy committed suicide after he was
released for the murder of your
father.

SHANE DUGAN

Do you believe Roy killed him?

Dana gazes at Shane puzzled, but refuses to answer.

Shane persists with intense curiosity.

SHANE DUGAN (CONT'D)

How did Ray Cornell get daddy's
business? Did Ray have anything to
do with his death?

Dana stares disappointed at Shane.

DANA DUGAN

Of course not. Ray and Carol have
always been there for us.

SHANE DUGAN

How did Carol Cornell die?

Dana stares blank at Shane, lost for an answer.

FADE TO:

EXT. NATURE PARK - PRESENT TIME

Shane stares blank at Meeka.

Meeka looks down at Shane's uneaten sandwich then looks up at
Shane.

MEEKA

You'd better eat. We have to get
back to the site.

SHANE DUGAN

I'll take it home.

MEEKA

Okay. But as hard as you work,
you're going to get mighty hungry.

Shane stares at the table and Meeka continuous.

SHANE DUGAN

I know we could've been good for
each other. I've liked you since we
were in high school together.

MEEKA

It would never have worked out.

SHANE DUGAN

Why?

MEEKA

You just don't trust people.

SHANE DUGAN

But I trust you.

MEEKA

You can't trust. That's why you've
always been alone.

Shane stares down at his sandwich embarrassed.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - LATER

Shane tosses large chunks of concrete into the bed of the
dump truck. Broken concrete slabs begin to fill the bed of
the truck.

FADE TO:

INT. DUGAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

The living room is all decorated for Christmas. Colorful
flicker lights brighten the room. Dana Dugan hangs Christmas
ornaments on a medium size spruce tree.

Shane Dugan (7) pulls shiny red Christmas balls out of a box.

Carol Cornell arms loaded with wrapped boxes enters the room.
Ray Cornell carries a bag of groceries behind Dana. Ray sets
the bag on a chair. He keeps silent and to himself as he
scans the room with intense interest.

DANA DUGAN

Carol I don't know how we would
have managed these past four years
without you and Ray's help.

Carol sets the boxes on a coffee table. The two women greet
each other with a kiss.

CAROL CORNELL

I haven't a problem with that.

DANA DUGAN

Shane and I are fine now. We manage pretty well.

CAROL CORNELL

I won't hear another word of this. You are family to us.

Tears well up in Dana's eyes.

FADE TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY - PRESENT TIME

Shane slings large chunks of concrete slabs into the bed of the dump truck.

Meeka lumbers over to Shane concerned.

MEEKA

Shane. Slow down for goodness sakes.

SHANE DUGAN

Almost finished.

MEEKA

It doesn't have to be done all today.

Shane smiles and slings more blocks. Meeka shakes her head and walks away.

SUDDENLY

Shane clutches his chest in pain and drops to the ground. Meeka rushes over to him in a panic.

FADE TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - LATER

Ambulance lights FLASH, siren SCREAMS. It speeds off the construction site.

Meeka covers her mouth and stares glassy eyed.

EXT. HOSPITAL - EVENING

The Ambulance pulls up to the emergency doors of a medium size hospital. Two EMTs jump out of the ambulance. They race to the back doors and throw them open, pulling a stretcher out with Shane Dugan laying unconscious on it.

INT. HOSPITAL, RECOVERY ROOM - NIGHT

Shane Dugan lays pale and motionless in bed, attached to monitors and IV machine. His eyes shut.

NURSES STATION

Meeka's eyes are red and tired as she listens to DOCTOR DORLEEN KABIAN (30's) professional and distinguished woman wears a long white coat with a pocket label tag that identifies her as a doctor.

DOCTOR DORLEEN KABIAN
Shane may be paralyzed for life.
Will he be prepared for it?

MEEKA
Is anyone ever prepared for that?

DOCTOR DORLEEN KABIAN
I suppose you're right.

MEEKA
When he finds out the news, it'll
kill him for sure.

DOCTOR DORLEEN KABIAN
We'll put him through psychological
therapy.

MEEKA

You don't know Shane. It won't work. Maybe I should have told him we had a chance together.

The Doctor eyes Meeka confused. Meeka lumbers away depressed.

INT. RAY CORNELL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Meeka rants and raves at Ray in disbelief.

MEEKA

You're nothing but hypocrites. How could you do that to Shane?!

Ray stares at Meeka stone faced.

Meeka glares with cold dark eyes at Ray. She turns and storms out the door, slamming it behind her.

INT. HOSPITAL, PATIENT ROOM - NIGHT

The moon shines through the window in a clear night sky.

Shane's face barely visible. His eyes closed and body motionless.

FADE TO:

EXT. RAY CORNELL'S HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Dana Dugan holds eight year old Shane Dugan's hand. Her eyes show weariness. She has aged beyond her years. They stand facing Ray Cornell in the front yard just beyond the,

FRONT PORCH

Carol Cornell gazes with sad eyes at Dana and Shane.

FRONT YARD

Ray speaks solemnly to Dana.

RAY CORNELL

We're sincerely sorry you lost your home. We understand your financial burden since the death of your husband Darren. You'll be pleased to know I bought your house at auction. The two of you may stay in the home, paying rent of course.

FRONT PORCH

Carol embarrassed by Ray's words, storms into the house.

FRONT YARD

Shane stares at Ray suspicious. Dana gawks at Ray devastated.

FADE TO:

EXT. RAY CORNELL'S HOUSE, BACK YARD - EVENING

Shane hides behind the FIVE FOOT HIGH WOOD FENCE joining the property with the Cornell's. He listens to,

Carol rants and raves at Ray.

CAROL CORNELL

I don't like what you did to them.

RAY CORNELL

I'm doing what's best for us.

CAROL CORNELL

No, not us, you.

RAY CORNELL

Carol, I am getting sick of this.

CAROL CORNELL

I have a mind to tell Dana what's going on.

RAY CORNELL

Cool it Carol if you know what's
good for you.

Carol stomps to the door. Ray grits his teeth and lumbers to
the fence Shane hides behind.

FADE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL, PATIENT ROOM - DAY - PRESENT DAY

The moon casts an eerie shadow over Shane's hospital bed.
Shane lays motionless.

A NURSE enters and stares at Shane.

Shane moves his arms, opens his eyes and slowly turns his
head to the nurse.

The Nurse hurries out of the room.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Meeka sits in a chair with her coat wrapped around it. She
wears an upbeat smile as she talks with,

Doctor Dorleen Kaban sits behind her desk. The Doctor speaks
cautious but reassuring.

DOCTOR DORLEEN KABIAN

Shane is an incredibly strong
willed individual.

MEEKA

Shane has always been a tough
person as long as I can remember.

DOCTOR DORLEEN KABIAN

I can see it in him. This can cause
a problem for Shane. Because he
becomes stressed, it places an
enormous strain on his heart.

MEEKA

Shane has had a lot of problems in his past. He finds it hard to trust people.

DOCTOR DORLEEN KABIAN

Shane trust you though. Doesn't he?

MEEKA

As much as he can. I understand Shane. I think he appreciates that.

DOCTOR DORLEEN KABIAN

When Shane recovers, he will need your support now more than ever.

MEEKA

There's something I have to tell him but I don't know how Shane will take it.

The Doctor fixes her eyes on Meeka concerned.

DOCTOR DORLEEN KABIAN

Use caution. But I'm sure he will be fine.

MEEKA

Thank you Doctor.

Meeka stands up, grabs her coat with a smile and walks out of the Doctor's office.

INT. HOSPITAL, PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Shane is propped up in bed. His lower half motionless. Meeka stands alongside Shane.

MEEKA

How do you feel Shane?

SHANE DUGAN

Weak. An odd sensation for me.

MEEKA

If that forces you to take it easy,
it's a good thing. The Doctor is
amazed by your recovery.

(joking)

I told her not to be.

SHANE DUGAN

I don't like being taken care of by
someone else. It's embarrassing.

MEEKA

Shane. Learn to trust. They're just
trying to help you get better.

Shane looks at Meeka with a questioning stare. Meeka glances
down at the floor, than back at Shane.

MEEKA

There's something I have to tell
you.

SHANE DUGAN

What is it?

Meeka stares at Shane. She hesitates unsure.

MEEKA

Maybe later.

Shane stares at the door determined.

SHANE DUGAN

There's a problem I have to clear
up once and for all. I've been
trying to do for years.

MEEKA

I can help.

SHANE DUGAN

I have to do this on my own.

Shane turns his head to the window. He stares in a trance to the panoramic view of the city.

FADE TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY - FLASHBACK

Shane (18) kneels to the ground facing a gravestone. He holds a bouquet of flowers. The gravestone reads,

'TO MY MOTHER DANA DUGAN. WHO TRIED SO HARD TO RAISE ME IN SUCH DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES'.

SHANE DUGAN

Mama I miss you. I promise I will find daddy's killer. I believe Ray Cornell is the key to all that has happened to our family.

Shane places the flowers gently against the gravestone and stands. He turns from the gravestone and lumbers away.

FADE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL, PATIENT ROOM - DAY - PRESENT DAY - WEEKS LATER

Shane sits on the bed and reads a book titled, 'Science and the Afterlife'.

Meeka enters. She wears a troubled gaze.

Shane perks his head up from the book and tosses it on the bed with anticipation.

SHANE DUGAN

Have you talked to the Doctor?

MEEKA

I'm headed there now.

SHANE DUGAN

Did you find Miss Blacky?

Meeka gropes for the right words, but answers hurried.

MEEKA

She must be hiding. Let me see the
Doctor. I've got something
important to tell you later.

Shane opens his mouth to reply but, Meeka slips back out of
the room.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - LATER

Meeka too anxious to sit, stares at Doctor Dorleen Kaban who
eyes Meeka upbeat.

MEEKA

Shane can leave soon?

DOCTOR DORLEEN KABIAN

Very soon. A word of caution. Shane
seems to have recovered fully...

MEEKA

He is doing very well.

DOCTOR DORLEEN KABIAN

We have done test on Shane. His
heart has been under great stress
during his recovery stage.

Meeka shakes her head. She knows her tasks will not be as
easy as she hoped.

MEEKA

I have no choice, but to give Shane
the news I dread to tell him.

Meeka lumbers out of the room. Doctor Kaban watches Meeka
and frowns uncomprehending.

INT. HOSPITAL, PATIENT ROOM - EVENING

Shane dressed in street clothes and quite ready to leave the hospital. He watches Meeka pace the room nervous. Shane senses Meeka's hesitancy and sits back on the bed.

SHANE DUGAN

Go ahead Meeka. You've been trying to tell me something for the past 20 minutes.

Meeka stops pacing, turns to Shane and slings the words out of her mouth as fast as she can.

MEEKA

Ray thought you wouldn't pull through, so he sold all your stuff and rented the house out.

(beat)

I can help you Shane.

Shane's teeth clinch. His eyes blood shot.

SHANE DUGAN

What about Miss Blacky?

Meeka swallows and takes a deep breath.

MEEKA

I'm sorry Shane. I think she's gone too.

Shane's face turns beet red.

SHANE DUGAN

That crook. He'll pay for this. If he thinks...

Shane clutches his shirt in agonizing pain. He slips off the bed, onto the floor.

Meeka in a panic races to the door.

FADE TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - EVENING

A coroner's vehicle is parked at the emergency entrance of the hospital.

BACK OF VEHICLE

Two men load a stretcher with a filled body bag into the long black car.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Small deserted cemetery. Gravel paths cross, leading to one of the plots.

GRAVE SITE

Meeka stands in front of a gravestone. A large wreath lays up against the stone. The stone reads,

IN MEMORY OF SHANE DUGAN

A tear runs down Meeka's face. She wipes the tear with her hand.

MEEKA

Shane. Only if you could have been more trusting. I could've helped you.

(pause)

I really did care about you Shane. I knew we would not have had a trusting relationship together. You didn't know how.

(pause)

I hope that your troubled past is put to rest now. I will always have a place for you in my heart.

Meeka turns away from the stone and walks down the gravel path.

FADE TO:

EXT. RANCHER - EVENING

Dark clouds roll in blotting the setting sun. A chilling breeze rustles the tree leaves falling to the ground.

At the front of the rancher where Shane once lived, Miss Blacky eats out of a bowl not far from the front door.

INT. RANCHER, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Furnished different. The bookshelf once loaded with books now dotted with nick knacks.

RAUL MANNING (late 40's) a burly man, scolds his wife, TRISH MANNING (mid 40's) a short hair, stocky woman.

RAUL MANNING

Why the hell are you feeding that stinking cat. Get rid of it.

TRISH MANNING

I didn't feed the cat. I thought you did.

Raul stares at Trish in disbelief.

EXT. RANCHER - NIGHT

An outdoor lamp attached to the back of the house lights up the back yard. Rain droplets pelt the back window.

LOWER BACK EXTERIOR WALL OF RANCHER

Miss Blacky pushes through a small flappable door at the foundation of the house.

INT. UNDER RANCHER - CONTINUOUS

A long roomy kneeling high crawl space with dirt floor barely visible from,

FAR BACK WALL

The only light shines from a crack in the wall from up inside the house. The light streaks across and illuminates the cedar chest, which is securely locked.

Miss Blacky brushes up against the chest and purrs. Footsteps CREAK from the floor boards above.

SUDDENLY

a shadow crosses and blocks out the stream of light from the crack. The crawl space fades to black.

EXT. RAY CORNELL'S HOUSE, BACK YARD - DAY

Ray scrubs a red stain on the large crenate rock the EPA man fell on, with a wire brush. He strokes it with meticulous care. A cell phone RINGS. Ray pulls the phone out of his pocket.

RAY CORNELL

Yes.

Voice on cell phone,

BARRY CORNELL (V.O.)

Dad, did you forget we have a special meeting at the church tonight?

RAY CORNELL

Okay, okay.

Ray pushes the phone back in his pocket. He grabs a bucket and the brush and walks away from the rock.

The stain is faded, but still visible.

INT. RANCHER, BEDROOM - NIGHT

The moon casts an eerie light through the open curtains and into the dark room.

Raul and Trish sound asleep in a king size bed.

Twirling wind SMACKS the window pane. A glass SMASHES to the hard floor from another room unseen.

BED

Trish jumps up. She turns and tugs on Raul.

Raul, groggy, turns to Trish and crumbles. He turns back.

The sound of a cat's piercing MEOW echoes into the bedroom.

TRISH MANNING

(whisper)

Raul. Get up.

RAUL MANNING

Go back to sleep.

Trish pulls the blanket up to her chin.

INT. RAY CORNELL'S HOUSE - DAY

Trish stands by the front door. She gazes at Ray stressed and tired.

TRISH MANNING

Please check the house and Raul
wants you to get rid of that cat.

Ray eyes Trish with a curious stare.

RAY CORNELL

I'll check the house over and
remove the cat.

TRISH MANNING

I'm beginning to think living there
is a bad idea.

RAY CORNELL

Just give me a chance. You'll be
okay. You're use to the city. In
the country you'll hear unfamiliar
sounds. It's just the natural
surroundings.

TRISH MANNING

If that's natural, I'll take the
city.

Trish opens the door. Ray walks away from her disgusted.

RAY CORNELL

Suit yourself. You won't find
places like that with the rent
you're paying me.

Trish shakes her head and lumbers out the door.

EXT. RANCHER, BACK OF HOUSE - DAY

Miss Blacky sits under a window ledge. Her ear turned to the
voices floating out from the open back window above her.

RAUL MANNING (V.O.)

I thought you said Ray was getting
rid of that cat.

TRISH MANNING (V.O.)

He was suppose to. I don't like the
cat any more than you do.

RAUL MANNING (V.O.)

I'll show you how to get rid of it.

DRAWER PULLED OPEN unseen

TRISH MANNING (V.O.)

What are you doing?

RAUL MANNING (V.O.)
Getting my gun. That cat's history.

TRISH MANNING (V.O.)
Don't be a fool. I'll mix poison in
its food. Some body hears that gun
go off, we're both in trouble.

Miss Blacky darts away from the window.

BACK OF HOUSE - LATER

Trish inspects the crawl space door. A BOWL of uneaten cat food sits at the foundation of the house next to the flappable door. Trish stoops down closer to inspect the crawl space.

SUDDENLY

Miss Blacky DARTS out from under the house.

Trish JUMPS back, nearly tumbling over. Her face turns pale in shock.

TRISH MANNING
Don't do that!

Miss Blacky hisses at her.

TRISH MANNING (CONT'D)
Damn cat! Don't eat the food if you
know what's good for you.

Trish lumbers out of view. Miss Blacky watches her path.

INT. RANCHER, BEDROOM - NIGHT

The wind outside HOWLS. It RATTLES the window pane. Lightning flashes reveal,

Raul and Trish asleep in bed.

LIVING ROOM

Front door bursts open. Wind gust whips a few leaves through the open door.

BEDROOM

Raul and Trish jump up in bed. A sudden lightning flash reveals terror on Trish's face.

OPEN FRONT DOOR

Another lightening flash exposes,

Miss Blacky sits outside the door staring in to the room.

BEDROOM

Trish gives Raul an ultimatum stare.

TRISH MANNING

I've had enough, either leave with me or I leave alone.

Raul senses his dilemma. He scoots out of bed.

FADE TO:

EXT. RANCHER, FRONT YARD - DAY

Miss Blacky eats out of the bowl by the front door. She turns her head toward the driveway.

Two vehicles roll into the yard. Ray Cornell slips out of one of the cars.

CONNIE MAR, a few years younger, gets out of the other car. Connie adoringly eyes Miss Blacky.