

Screenplay

Written by Nicholas J Pritchard

## HOMECOMING

A small coffee table sits in the middle of a modest living room, surrounded by bits of habitation debris, pizza boxes and beer cans neatly stacked against a once white wall. The house is silent, save for the dripping of a single tap in the kitchen into a poorly draining sink. The sound of the front door opening echoes through the house as the locks retract and the door is pushed open just a little bit too hard, causing it to smash into the radiator creating a resonating clang. A young woman struggles to pull a suitcase over the doorstep whilst turning and shouting

HANNAH

Hello? Anyone home? Guys I could use a... Woah!

She trips over herself in the attempt to enter, and ends up sprawled over her suitcase on the stairs. She blows a lock of hair out of her face and looks disgruntled as she assesses her situation, before struggling erratically to de-tangle herself from the suitcase and stand up.

## KITCHEN

Hannah is pacing the kitchen back and forth putting away various food supplies into the cupboards, she seems distracted and distant from the tasks at hand. Her phone, resting on a counter near her, starts to ring loudly. Hannah moves over to the phone and picks it up, looking at the caller id which reads Mum. Her expression drops a little, and she gently puts the phone down and steps back from it, standing a short distance away and watching the call play out. As the answer machine picks up we hear

MUM

Hannah? It's Mum honey, I just wanted to make sure you got back home safely, I.... Honey please pick up the phone.

Hannah almost reaches for the phone but stops herself before she makes contact, drawing the stray hand to her side.

MUM

I know things haven't been the best between us lately. Since Dad... well it's been tough on us all... Please just, let me know you're ok?... I love you honey.

(CONTINUED)

There is a long pause as if Hannah's mother is waiting, hoping, for her to pick up the phone, but eventually the click of her hanging up sounds.

Hannah stands frozen, as if she has separated from reality, her face a mixture of emotions. She takes a deep breath and exhales it dramatically as she runs her hands through her hair staring off into space, a single tear running down her face. Her stomach rumbles causing her to place a hand against it. She walks over to the fridge looking for food and opens it, before recoiling and gagging.

HANNAH

Oh Jesus, Tony! What kind of idiot... I mean who does this!

The fridge is filled with moldy vegetables, left there from some long forgotten dinner. A maggot crawls slowly over a rotting cucumber before disappearing within the vegetable.

GARBAGE DISPOSAL

Hannah is walking down the garden path dragging a black bin back filled with the rotting fridge contents, she has a clothes peg on her nose and looks extremely disgruntled, especially as she steps barefoot into a puddle of dirty water. All the way she is muttering obscenities about Tony and his eating habits and how she's going to make him pay.

Near the shed at the end of the garden are a row of bins, which she struggles to open with one hand whilst trying to throw the black bag in. She eventually succeeds, but receives a face full of bin juice from the bag as a reward. She stands there and just looks defeated and extremely annoyed, slowly wiping the off colour water from her face and shaking it off her hand in an exaggerated motion.

As Hannah turns to go back to the house an open door on the side of the shed catches her eye, the door resting on the frames latch. She pauses for a moment, staring at it as if trying to remember whether they left it open or not.

HANNAH

Even Tony wouldn't be that stupid...

She approaches the door cautiously, the world strangely silent around her. She slowly extends her hand towards the door, poorly concealed fear prominent on her face as tension builds. Suddenly next door's dog starts to bark loudly from behind her, causing her to jump in fright. She quickly recovers, running her hands through her hair as she doubles over, almost laughing whilst letting out a long drawn...

(CONTINUED)

HANNAH

Jesus.

Having righted herself she moves back to the shed and pushes open the door, using the burst of adrenaline from the fear to force herself into action.

THE SHED

The shed is dark and musty, with a small chain light on the ceiling. She pulls it causing a cloud of dust to fall down onto her head making her cough. As her eyes adjust to the small room she sees that someone has been living there. A mattress lays lopsided in the corner, stained with some kind of dark liquid. A few small bones, like that of a chicken litter the floor, and a lot of the equipment etc in the shed appears to have been damaged or messed with. A small wooden doll sits in the corner of the shed, which she picks up to study. The discomfort immediately returns to Hannah's face as she takes in the scene, and the dog starts to bark again, more aggressively this time. She quickly turns and leaves the shed, placing the doll in her pocket and locking the door behind her. She hurries back to the house where she slams the back door and locks it, double checking to make sure the door is sealed.

Her breathing is heavy and shallow as she stands in the kitchen and stares out into the garden. Her phone suddenly rings behind her causing her to start, she grabs it and answers with an exasperated...

HANNAH

Hello

As a voice answers on the other end we see her calm down slight, her breathing becoming more natural.

HANNAH

Oh, hey Tony. Hey listen I think someones been living in our shed!

----

What no I haven't seen anyone but there's stuff all over the place in there and it looks like someones been sleeping in it.

----

I guess your right, it's just freaky you know, like some hobo

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HANNAH (cont'd)  
living at the bottom of our garden.  
What no! We can't keep it as a  
bloody pet that's disgusting.  
Speaking of disgusting what the  
hell were you thinking leaving all  
that crap in the fridge, do you  
even understand how food works!?

As the conversation continues, becoming more light hearted, Hannah's discomfort and fear start to fade away and the scene fades out as she becomes more humourously animated talking to Tony.

#### KNOCKING ON THE DOOR

Hannah is laying on the sofa asleep in a dark living room, a half eaten pizza resting in a box on her lap. The tv casts a pale glow over her as a cartoon runs in the background, the sound barely audible. Three loud sharp knocks at the door resonate through the house, starting Hannah awake. Groggily she sits up as if unsure whether she dreamed the noise and stares towards the corridor in a haze. She checks her watch which shows it to be 3am, and rubs her eyes with one hand. She decides it was probably a dream and starts to lay back down when another three loud knocks tear apart the silence of the house, starting her into full consciousness. She sits there apprehensive, unwilling to move towards the door when suddenly the knocking starts again, only this time it does not stop but gets louder and louder and louder. She covers her ears as if willing the sound and whoever is creating it to go away and huddles her knees to her chest before screaming.

HANNAH  
Stop it!!! What do you want!?

The knocking instantly stops and Hannah sits there shaken by the incident. She finally jerks out of the stupor and begins scrabbling searching for her phone, before realising she must have left it in the kitchen. She slowly edges off the sofa, her eyes focused on the direction of the front door as she makes her way towards the kitchen. She backs through the kitchen door, eyes still focused on the front door, when a low banging makes her turn.

## THE KITCHEN

The back door is wide open, swinging lightly in the breeze. She freezes, her eyes darting around the kitchen trying to see if anyone is there, before she bolts for the door slamming it shut and locking it, then falling back on herself and scrabbling across the floor till her back is pressed against the wall. She stares at the door for a few seconds, waiting for something to happen, but when it doesn't she slowly starts to move across the kitchen floor towards where her phone was charging. Reaching a hand up onto the counter, she scrabbles to find her phone. Unsuccessful she slowly raises herself up to the counter level, trying to stay low, only to see the phone is gone and the charger is a mess, as if something chewed through it. The dog suddenly begins to bark again next door, before something silences it with a squeal. Hannah slowly turns to look out the window at the dark foreboding garden.

There is nothing visible at first, but soon she sees something arc out of the bushes at the end through the air towards her. The dogs carcass slams against the window causing Hannah to scream as it slides down the pane coating it with blood. She tries to muffle her screaming by covering her mouth as something lopes out of the bushes. It moves unnaturally as if its limbs were disjointed, more of a flail than a movement and is only visible as a silhouette. A strange creening noise emanates from it before it darts behind the shed.

## CORRIDOR

Hannah panics and turns and runs out of the kitchen, a shadow flits by the living room window and as she round the corner to the stairs something slams against the front door, trying to jiggle the door knob open. The creening sound fills the house and Hannah falls backwards on the stairs, crawling backwards to the second story trying to be quiet as the creening echoes through the house from the front door. As she reaches the top the front door bursts open and she scrambles into the nearest room, pushing the door too as quietly as she can. She sits there in the dark, listening as the creature moves about downstairs. A cacophany of crashing sounds marks its entrance to the kitchen, she tries not to make a sound but a slight movement causes one of the floorboards to squeak beneath her. She goes rigid clamping her hands over her mouth.

A low clicking sound is heard from the kitchen as the creature pauses its rampage. We hear it take a few footsteps then suddenly it starts to sprint upstairs, its footfalls loud and rapid as it scrambles its way through the house.

(CONTINUED)

Hannah leaps for the door and wedges herself against it as the creature barrels against the other side, ramming it continuously in a desperate attempt to gain entrance. After a few moments of this we hear it shriek in frustration and move into the next room, followed by the sounds of smashing and breaking furniture filling the air. Hannah sits against the door tears streaming down her face as the creature rampages around her. Slowly it seems to calm down and the low creaking noise replaces the shrieks and sounds of destruction. A voice from outside suddenly sounds as a neighbour shouts through the downstairs door.

NEIGHBOUR

Hello? Can anyone hear me? Is everything alright in there?

The floorboards creak as the creature takes a few steps onto the landing, Hannah is desperate to shout out, but doesn't want to alert the creature to her presence again.

NEIGHBOUR

Hannah is that you? Do you need me to call the police? I don't see you.

A second voice sounds out, the creature, at first horrifically distorted and inhuman, but slowly becoming more like Hannah's as it repeats the word "Hello". When it eventually sounds right.

CREATURE

Hello. Everything alright.

NEIGHBOUR

Are you sure? We heard screams and stuff.

CREATURE

Everything alright. Don't need Police.

NEIGHBOUR

Ok... Well try to keep it down then.

A few seconds pass as the neighbour leaves and the creature stands waiting. Hannah struggles to contain her frustration and horror at what has just occurred.

A sliding grating sound emanates from just outside the door, followed by footsteps in the roof as the creature maneuvers itself into the attic. It seems to walk around in the compartment for a while, its low thudding footsteps echoing

down to Hannah, before it settles down and silence fills the house.

#### ESCAPE

A few minutes pass as Hannah sits in the oppressive darkness, the silence deafening, with only the occasional creak from above breaking it. Slowly but extremely carefully she opens the door a crack to look out onto the landing, debris is strewn everywhere, and the door to the attic is ajar, with a crack revealing the darkness above it. She opens the door fully, and slowly makes her way to the staircase being careful to make as little sound as possible, a creak from above makes her pause, eyes filled with terror, but when nothing happens she relaxes slightly, exhaling. She rounds the corner of the staircase and is just about to make a run for it when she sees the entire stairway is blocked by the furniture and debris, making it completely impassable. Bordering on hysteria she tries to control herself, struggling to hold back the outburst building in her throat. She moves back onto the landing and leans against the wall trying to calm her breathing her eyes darting between the attic door and the stairs. As she begins to calm down, a shadow slowly looms out of the door next to her, it catches her eye and she screams, darting forward as the creature leaps at her from the side catching her on the arm. She dives for the nearest door, spun by the contact with the creature, and turns to slam it shut but the creature manages to get a hand through the crack, trying to force the door open. She slams the door on its hand repeatedly, shrieking in a mixture of fear and rage, before the creature concedes wailing and falls back from the door. She draws the lock across and blocks the door with a chair, moving back just in time to see the creature retreating into the attic. She falls back onto the bed and looks down at her arm which is torn open, blood seeping from the jagged wound. The world around her begins to spin and she passes out.

#### GIVE

As Hannah comes back to consciousness, there is a brief period of confusion where she doesn't seem to know where she is. Suddenly remembering her situation she panics and her eyes dart around the room, calming slightly when she sees the door is still blocked by the chair. The sun is starting to rise and a little light streams through the window, the scene is much calmer. Hannah starts to relax, her breathing calming down, but as her own breath starts to become quieter and more relaxed, she notices the heavy breathing now filling the air is not her own. Her eyes are drawn to a blood smear on the chair that was not there before, a smear

(CONTINUED)

that leads to the cupboard. The breathing is laboured, as if drawn through a short straw by someone wracked with pain. Hannah's eyes slowly pan from the door to the cupboard in front of her, where through a small crack in the door, a single, wild, bloodshot eye stares intently and longingly at her.

The scene cuts to black as the cupboard doors burst open and the creature darts out. We hear Hannah scream, then silence.

## DARKNESS

Hannah awakens in a dark small room, the shed. There is very little light and Hannah has to squint to make out anything. A buzzing noise emanates from nearby accompanied by a small blue light, her phone. Hannah scrabbles around the floor trying to find the phone and upon reaching it holds it up to her face. Mum reads on the caller id, and Hannah's eyes begin to well up as she draws the phone close to her face answering the call.

MUM

Oh honey you finally answered I..

HANNAH

(Tearfully)

Mum...

MUM

Hannah what's wrong, are you ok?

HANNAH

Mum i'm so sorry, i'm sorry about Dad, i'm sorry about everything.

MUM

Hannah you're scaring me, what's happening, where are you?

HANNAH

I love you mum, I love you so much  
I..

The creature's face looms out of one of the walls towards Hannah, a crackling sound emanating from its mouth.

HANNAH

Mum I love you, I love you so...

At this the creature leaps onto Hannah and we hear her screaming as she is dragged off into the darkness, the phone falls to the floor, the call still active.

(CONTINUED)

MUM  
(Extremely Distressed)  
Hannah? HANNAH!? Oh my god

Her voice fades as she drops the phone, leaving only Hannah's screams to fill the darkness.

END

As the sun starts to rise, we see the creature shambling across the garden, blood drips from its body. One hand trails lazily across the ground dragging through the grass. The other is clutched tightly, almost lovingly, like a parent leading a child, around the arm of the small wooden doll.

Written by Nicholas J Pritchard