

# ***UNCANNY COUNTY***

“Locked In”

Number 2-F

By: William Franke

Performance Notes: Dialogue in *italics* = interior monologue/dialogue (for reference only; audio treatment to be done in post)

CHARACTERS:

Jill Conway

Dorothy "Dot" Conway ..... Jill's Mom

Stephanie Henderson ..... Jill's fiancée

Denny ..... psychic male nurse

Dr. Heyes ..... Jill's doctor, somewhat distracted

Natasha ..... not the sharpest bulb in the drawer/has a faulty filter

MacGruder ..... Coma patient

Cindy ..... Coma patient

**MUSIC:**     UNCANNY COUNTY THEME

Narrator:            You're riding alone on a moonlit, but starless night. You just missed your exit, and now there's only one way back home. So sit back, open your ears and hold on tight, because you're about to take a quick detour—through Uncanny County...

## Scene One:

**SOUND:** Ambulance sirens, the squeaking wheels of a gurney, then it crashing into hospital doors “All doctors to the ER”

**SOUND:** Rushing sounds, coming up from the depths culminating in gasping inhalation from Jill

**SOUND:** Hospital front desk sounds (beeping diagnostic machines, muted chatter)

Jill: *Aaaaaahhhh... Owww... Oh... Whoa. Ow.  
Where am I? What’s happening...<sup>1</sup>*

**SOUND:** Low-level ear-ringing, by which the following dialogue is muffled

Stephanie            Where is she?

Natasha             Are you family?

Stephanie           I’m her fiancée, where is she?

Natasha:            Curtain three.

**SOUND:** Low-level ear-ringing OUT, first crystal-clear voice is:

Dot:                  Jill!

Jill:                  *Mom! Mom? Why can’t I see any—*

Dot:                  Baby? Jill, baby, can you hear me?

Jill:                  *Yes. Yes! I just answered—*

Dot:                  Doctor, is she...?

Doctor Heyes:     Stable, but so far, unresponsive.

Stephanie:         Oh god.

Jill:                  *I just responded. Am I in a hospital?  
Somebody answer me!*

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<sup>1</sup> Italics are internal dialogue.

Dot: Are you her doctor?

Dr. Heyes: Mmm hmm. Dr. Heyes. That's Nurse Wittrock.

Natasha: Natasha.

Jill: *Why can't I see anything?*

Stephanie: Why are those bandages over her eyes?

Natasha: The windshield was shattered in the crash.

Jill: *Crash?*

Dr. Heyes: We didn't see any corneal damage, but there were quite a few lacerations around her eyes and eyelids.

Dot: Oh dear.

Dr. Heyes: That's probably nothing to worry about. The bandages should come off in just a few days.

Stephanie: What about the other driver?

Natasha: There was no other driver. Cops said she lost control and rolled the car herself.

Jill: (remembering) *No, no that's not—wait...*

Natasha: They said they pulled her from the car right before it burst into flames!

Dot: Oh my God!

Jill: *I remember...*

Stephanie: She must've fallen asleep at the wheel.

Jill: *No...no, I didn't fall asleep—*

Dot: Oh Lord, Steph—I was just talking to her this morning...

Stephanie: It's okay, Dot. It's gonna be okay.

Natasha: She was probably texting.

Dr. Heyes: (chastising) Nurse...

Natasha: What? Distracted driving is an epidemic.

Jill: *No, I was just driving—going to check out that wedding site when—*

Dr. Heyes: Sorry, folks, Natasha's new. All right, ladies. I'm afraid we're going to have to ask you to step outside for a bit. Jill is stable. We're going to run a few more tests.

Jill: *No—don't leave me here—*

Stephanie: Come on, Dot. They'll take good care of her.

Dr. Heyes: There's a waiting room right down the hall. We'll call you right away if she wakes up.

**SOUND:** Footsteps leaving room

Jill: *No, goddammit, I'm awake—can't you tell I'm AWAKE!?!?!*

**MUSIC:** Transition music

NARRATOR: Though she has committed no crime, Jill Conway has awoken to find herself in locked in a prison. But this prison has no concrete walls or iron bars—Jill is locked within the prison of her own body. Unable to move or even speak, Jill has no way to communicate to the outside world that she is, in fact, awake. And as awful as that may sound, Jill is about to come across something far worse...from the darkest corners of Uncanny County...

## **Scene Two:**

**SOUND:** Footsteps entering (sneakers)

Denny: Good morning, sunshine!  
Stephanie: Morning, Nurse Denny  
Jill: (resigned) *Good morning, Denny.*  
Denny: You're here bright and early.  
Stephanie: It's not like I'm getting any sleep.

**SOUND:** Chair slide

Stephanie: I'm gonna get another coffee. I'll be right back if she—  
Denny: Gotcha.

**SOUND:** Footsteps leaving

Denny: Let's get these curtains open, shall we?

**SOUND:** Curtains sliding on track

Jill: *God, how many days has it been now? Three? Four?*  
Denny: (mimicking a woman's voice) "Sure, Denny, that would be nice."  
Jill: *I wonder where Mom is this morning.*  
Denny: Honestly, I don't even know why they close them at night. It's not like the streetlight is going to keep you awake.  
Jill: *Wait, is it Tuesday? Is she volunteering?*  
Denny: And you do need your sunlight. Good ol' vitamin D.

**SOUND:** Footsteps entering

Denny: Oh, hey, Doc.  
Dr. Heyes: Who are you talking to, Denny?

Denny: Just our patient.

Dr. Heyes: I highly doubt she can hear you.

Jill: *Then I highly doubt you're much of a doctor.*

Denny: (chuckles) You're probably right, Doc. But—you never know.

Jill: *Thank you!*

Dr. Heyes: Fair enough. (beat) Nice watch.

Denny: Thanks! My aunt gave it to me. It's vintage.

Dr. Heyes: Is that real gold? Nice.

Denny: For my anniversary.

Dr. Heyes: Anniversary?

Denny: My ten-year anniversary. Here at the hospital. You remember.

Dr. Heyes: I must have been off that day.

Denny: No, you were there. There was cake.

Dr. Heyes: Oh yeah! Well, let's take a look at those eyes, shall we? Denny, would you mind removing the dressings?

Jill: *Finally.*

Denny: Sure, sure thing, Doc...

Natasha: (over PA) Is it this one?

**SOUND:** Feedback

Natasha: (over PA) Oh! Sorry! Uh, Doctor Heyes, please report to the nurses' station immediately. Doctor Heyes, please report to the nurses' station immediately.

Jill: *You have got to be kidding me.*

Dr. Heyes: Denny, go ahead and take off the dressings. I'll be right back.



Denny: You got it, Doc.

Jill: *Oh thank god...*

**SOUND:** Sneakers exiting, followed by door closing

Denny: (taking his time, whistling)

Jill: *Ugh! Come ON!*

Denny: Good things come to those who wait.

Jill: *Wait. You can...hear me?*

Denny: Hmm?

Jill: *You can?!? Can you help me? I'm trapped in here. No one can tell I'm awake—*

Denny: Now, let's get these bandages off.

**SOUND:** Rustle of cloth bandages being removed

Jill: *Hello? Hello! (beat) You can't hear me. Obviously you can't hear me.*

Denny: Looking good, looking good. I'd say those scratches are almost entirely healed.

Jill: *At least I can see again.*

Denny: So let's see what we've got. Hello? Is there anybody in there?

Jill: *I can't move, much less talk, jackass.*

Denny: Can you blink? "Once for yes, twice for no" kind of thing?

Jill: *Blink? Oh my god, I—I can!*

Denny: Well, *that's* something. Let's do a little test. Once for yes, twice for no. Is your name Tammy Wynette? ... No. Okay, is your name Jill Conway? ... Yes!

Jill: *You got that?! Oh, thank god, thank god! Finally!*

Denny: Huh. Well, that *is* a problem.

Jill: *What's a problem? Is something wrong with my eyes?*

Denny: Let's get some new bandages on there just to be safe. All right with you, hon?

**SOUND:** Rustle of cloth bandages being put on, followed by two pieces of tape being dispensed

Jill: *No, wait, wait! What's wrong? My eyes are fine. Why are you covering them again? Look at me. Look at me! NOOO!*

Denny: All right. You're good to go.

**SOUND:** Footsteps entering

Dr. Heyes: (off mic, entering) Morning, Stephanie.

Stephanie: (off mic) Oh, morning, Doctor.

Dr. Heyes: We're just taking the bandages—Denny, I thought I told you to—

Denny: I did, Doc, but they still looked pretty bad. So I went ahead and changed the dressing. I figured you'd want me to.

Dr. Whitmore: Oh. Okay. That was probably a good idea.

Jill: *Good idea? Maybe you should check?!?*

Dr. Heyes: Still, I should probably—

Denny: They're coming along, Doc, wouldn't want to expose them again for no good reason.

Dr. Heyes: Good point. (to Stephanie) Denny here knows what he's doing.

Jill: *I'm fine—my eyes are fine! What is wrong with you?*

Stephanie: Can't you just take a peek?

Denny: They'll come off any day. Couple more, tops.

Stephanie: (resigned) All right.

Dr. Heyes: (beat) Then I'll see you tomorrow—wait. Is today Monday?

Denny: Thursday.

Dr. Heyes: Sorry—damn 30-hour shifts. I'll take a look at her on Thursday, then.

Stephanie: Another week?

Denny: Today is Thursday.

Dr. Heyes: I meant Monday. I'll see you Monday.

Jill: *Four days from now?!*

Stephanie: Do we really have to wait that long?

Dr. Heyes: Well—

Natasha: (over PA) Doctor Heyes, please report to the nurses' station immediately. Doctor Heyes, please report to the nurses' station immediately.

Dr. Heyes: Stephanie, I know you're in a hurry to get the bandages off, but I'd say in this case it's better to be safe than sorry—especially given that Jill is in a coma

Jill: *I'm not in a coma!*

**MUSIC:** Transition music

## **Scene Three:**

**SOUND:** Hospital sounds

Dot: Did y'all put the deposit down on that horse farm?

Stephanie: Not yet.

Jill: *What? You were supposed to do that last week!*

Stephanie: I feel so guilty. I told her I already had, but I think she knew I was lying.

Dot: She always knows. You'd better get on it. Jill said their dates would fill up quick. Lot of weddings in the spring.

Stephanie: Dot...

Dot: She's gonna wake up any day, and she's gonna ask you why you didn't do it.

Stephanie: I was going to do it, honest, but—Jill was changing her mind again.

Jill: *I just said I was thinking about it.*

Stephanie: Now she wants to have the wedding in this old, refurbished bank vault.

Dot: Really?

Jill: (gently) *Don't be judgy. You haven't seen it!*

They all laugh (including Jill), a little sadly.

**SOUND:** PA: "Dr. Baker to the nurses station"

Stephanie: I don't care. I'm good with whatever she wants. I just want it to happen.

Dot: Oh, darling, it's gonna be okay.

**SOUND:** Sneakers entering

Denny: All right, ladies, I'm afraid it's that time.

Jill: *Can't they stay a little longer?*

Dot: Oh, can't we stay a little longer?

Denny: Now, Dorothy, you know the rules.

Dot: I know, I know. Good night, sweetie.

**SOUND:** ~~—Kisses her forehead~~

Jill: *G'night, Mom.*

Stephanie: Good night, my love. I'll see you tomorrow.

**SOUND:** ~~—Kiss~~

Jill: *Good night, babe.*

Stephanie: C'mon, Dot. I'll buy you a drink.

**SOUND:** Two pairs of women's shoes exiting

Denny: Ugh, I thought they'd never leave.

Jill: *Oh, shut up, you son of a bitch.*

Denny: You kiss your mama with that mouth?

Jill: *You can hear me?!*

Denny: Of course I can hear you.

Jill: *You can hear me?!*

Denny: (chuckles) I can't *not* hear you. It's like you're broadcasting. 24/7. Every damn thought in that pretty little head.

Jill: *So why didn't you say anything?*

Denny: Why don't you tell me?

Jill: *I don't know—I don't understand...*

Denny: Neither did I, at first.

Jill: *What does that mean? How come you can hear me?*

Denny: You and I. Near as I can tell, we're kindred spirits. Peas in a pod.

Jill: *I don't know what —*

Denny: Psy-chic.

Jill: (beat) *Come on.*

Denny: You never suspected?

**SOUND:** Pager buzzing

Denny: All those times you knew people weren't being honest with you, but you couldn't figure out how?

Jill: (a glimmer of recognition) *Uh...*

Denny: No surprises on Christmas morning.

Jill: *Well, but I—*

Denny: I'll bet you even knew what that ring looked like before your girlfriend popped the question.

Jill: *Okay, let's say you're right, and I am! Why won't you help me?*

Denny: (beat) I never had me a psychic before.

Jill: *What is that supposed to...? I swear to God, if you lay a hand on me—*

Denny: (Chuckling) You'll what? Sock me in the jaw? Scratch my eyes out?

Jill: *I'll, I'll—*

Denny: Take it easy, darlin', that ain't what I'm here for. I want to get inside that head of yours...

Jill: *Then what—*

Denny: *Don't worry about it. (à la entering a pool) Ahhh....*

Jill: (feeling him enter her mind, alarmed) *Hey!  
Stop it!*

Denny: *You're just making it harder on yourself...*

Jill: *Stop that! Get out!*

Denny: (straining a bit to avoid getting pushed out).  
*You've got so much in there—I can almost—*

**SOUND:** Pager buzzing

Jill: (angry crying) *Get OUT!*

**SOUND:** Psychic push/shove

**SOUND:** Denny falls back into a wall.

Denny: Ow! (he's out) Well. Feisty. I like that.

Jill: *Don't you dare do that a(gain)—*

Denny: Blah, blah, blah.

**SOUND:** Pager buzzing

Denny: I gotta go. I'm a popular guy. In high demand. But don't worry—I'll find a way in. Always do. I love a challenge. And it ain't like you're going anywhere.

**SOUND:** Pager buzzing

Denny: All right, all right, I'm coming, Natasha. Lord.

**SOUND:** Light switch, door closing

Jill: (regaining composure) *Oh my god, what am I gonna do? Someone. Can't anyone else hear me? Anyone?*

**MUSIC:** Transition music

## Scene Four:

**SOUND:** Hospital ambience

Dot: (a beat, then) Which one did you book? The bank vault or the horse farm?

Stephanie: Both. (beat) It's only money. (starts crying)

Jill: *Oh, baby. Not on top of everything. No.*

Dot: Oh, Stephanie. Don't cry.

Stephanie: I should have been there!

Jill: *What?*

Dot: What?

Stephanie: She wanted me to go with her to see the place, but I cancelled because of that stupid meeting!

Jill: *Steph, this isn't your fault.*

Dot: You can't blame yourself, Stephanie.

Stephanie: If I'd been driving—

Jill: *You never drive! I would have been driving!*

Dot: (gently) Steph, darling, isn't Jill usually the one who does the driving?

Stephanie: Well, yeah, I mean, but she just drives because she thinks she's better at it—

Jill: *I am better at it.*

Stephanie: (resigned) She is better. (beat) But if I had been—

Jill: *You wouldn't have been—this is nonsense!*

Dot: Nonsense. If you'd been there, maybe you'd also be in a coma.

Jill: *Or dead.*

Dot: (gently) Or dead!



Jill: (testing) *Or worse.*

Dot: Or worse.

Stephanie: (small laugh) What's worse than dead or in a coma?

Jill: *Wait. Mom. Mom? Can you hear me?*

Stephanie: Dot? Dot are you all right?

Dot: I'm fine. I don't know...it's almost like I could feel... (beat) Nothing. I just know she wouldn't want you to beat yourself up like that.

Jill: *How did I do that? I know she heard me, how did I do that?*

Stephanie: I know. You're right.

Dot: I always am. Now pull it together and be that badass my daughter fell in love with!

Stephanie: (laughs)

**SOUND:** Sneakers entering

Stephanie: Oh, damn it...

Jill: *No.*

Dot: Punctual as always, Denny.

Denny: What can I say? I'm a stickler. And I'm afraid it is that time.

Jill: (dreading) *No... No no no...*

Dot: We haven't seen you all night.

Denny: It's been a little crazy around here. Some guy drove into a herd of cattle over on Route 7.

Dot: Oh dear!

Denny: Oh, darlin', that's not the half of it.

Stephanie: Well, we've been waiting for you to take the bandages off.

Denny: Oh.

Stephanie: You said they would come off today.

Jill: *Yes! Finally! Jig's up, Denny.*

Denny: We really ought to wait on Dr. Heyes...

Jill: *Afraid I'll blink?*

Denny: I mean I'm not really authorized...

Stephanie: Well...

Jill: *C'mon, babe! Don't roll over like that!*

Stephanie: Denny. You've changed the bandages before, the only difference is that we're in the room. I'm afraid I have to insist.

Jill: *There's my badass.*

Dot: Oh, Denny, please? I need to see my little girl's eyes.

Denny: Well, it's not really in line with hospital policy...

Stephanie: If you think they need to be re-bandaged, then you can just put them right back on. No harm, no foul.

Denny: (jovially) All right, all right! For you, Dot. You wore me down! But her eyes are gonna be dry; I'll need to put drops in them. Let me go get some. I'll be right back.

**SOUND:** Sneakers exiting

Stephanie: Dot, I don't know, but, do you think there's something a little off about that guy...?

Jill: *Yes. YES!*

Dot: Who? Denny? I think he's a wonderful male nurse.

Stephanie: It's just nurse, Dot. I can't put my finger on it, but there's something... He's—

Jill: *Steph, he's bad, he's awful—please, hear me, you've got to help me he's—*

Dot: What makes you think—

Stephanie: Just a feeling—it's almost like—

**SOUND:** Sneakers entering

Denny: All right, ladies. I got some drops. Let's take a look at them peepers.

**SOUND:** Bandages coming off

Denny: Oh, they *are* dry. Let me get some drops in there.

Jill: *My eyes are fine.*

Denny: Oops, little too much.

Jill: *Stephanie, come look at me.*

Dot: Oh, my baby!

Stephanie: Jill? Baby? Can you hear me?

Jill: (triumphantly) *Yes! Ask me to blink. Ask me to blink!*

Stephanie: Blink if you can hear me.

Jill: *I can! I am! I am blinking? Aren't I?*

Stephanie: (softly) Dammit.

Jill: *No, no... Blink, dammit, blink!*

Denny: Sorry, ladies... But I do need to ask you to leave. Visiting hours and all.

Stephanie: (to Jill) Good night, my love. (beat) God, I hope you can hear me.

Jill: *YES! I CAN! DON'T LEAVE ME HERE!*

Stephanie: (gasps, as though she's heard Jill, but knows she can't possibly have)

Natasha: (over PA) Visiting hours are now over. Visitors should please make their way to the exit. Thank you for your cooperation. *Las horas de visita ya han terminado. Los visitantes deben hacer su camino a la salida. Gracias por su cooperación.*

Dot: Stephanie... Sweetheart. Come on, let's go home. I know it's hard, but we need our rest, too.

Jill: *No, wait wait wait. Baby, don't go. Just wait...*

Denny: (kindly) Rules are rules.

Stephanie: (reluctantly, to Dot) Uh, okay. I'll see you tomorrow...

**SOUND:** Two pairs of women's shoes exiting

Denny: Well, THAT was a close one! (chuckles) *Or was it?*

Jill: *Why couldn't I blink? Were you doing that? With your mind?*

Denny: (chuckles) *Somebody's been watching too many movies!* (beat) *Lidocaine drops. Sometimes you're doing a procedure where you gotta numb someone's eyes—keep 'em from blinking.*

Jill: *Of course.* (beat)

Denny: *Had to improvise. Everyone else up here is—you know, let's just say there's a reason I call it my own little produce aisle.*

Jill: *Nice. That's why no one gets any visitors.*

Denny: *Mostly.*

Jill: *They just leave them here like this?*

Denny: *People lose hope, but no one wants to be the one to pull the plug. I make sure of that. And you know, people get busy. Lot on their minds. Sometimes they forget.*

Jill: *And sometimes you help them.*

Denny: *Now you're starting to get it.*

Jill: *Why would you do that?*

Denny: *You know how hard it is to get by on a nurse's salary? I gotta make sure I'm done with 'em.*

Jill: *What do you mean "done with 'em"?*

Denny: *I thought Old Man MacGruder was tapped out, but just last month I found out where he'd hidden that gold watch of his...*

Jill: *Scum.*

Denny: *It ain't like he's using it. Besides—it ain't just about money. Some of them have much better stuff tucked away in those noggins. Take Cindy over there. (beat) She may not look like much now, but back in the day—damn. And that girl could party. Hell, let me show you!*

Jill: *What? No! Let go of me!*

Denny: *Come on... You like girls, right?*

**SOUND:** Party scene from Cindy's past

Jill: (grunts with effort; then:)

**SOUND:** Jill pulling herself out of Cindy's mind

Jill: *You're disgusting.*

Denny: *You liked it.*

Jill: *I would never do that to someone.*

Denny: *Never say never. (beat) Besides, I'll bet you've been doing stuff like this for years. Pushing people around, getting in their heads—bringing them over to your way of thinking. (beat) You just didn't know you were doing it.*

Jill: *I don't know what you're talking about. Just leave me alone.*

Denny: *The way you slipped into Cindy just now? (beat) I'll bet you go back. Hell, what else are you gonna do around here? Tell you what, I'll keep her around—just for you. That DNR of hers ain't going nowhere.*

Jill: *She has a DNR? Then why hasn't her family—*

Denny: *I'm the one who found it. Don't worry—they'll find it when I'm ready...*

Jill: *You're a monster.*

Denny: *(ignoring her) I'm about ready to cut her loose anyway. After a while it's like looking at the same old magazines in the dentist's waiting room, you know?*

Jill: *(disgusted) Uchh.*

Denny: *But you ... (beat) Hell, I figured you'd be good for a coupla bucks when I saw that engagement ring, but I once I got a peek in that head... You're like a 3-D IMAX movie. Virtual reality, I mean—damn.*

Jill: *You're not getting in. I'll stop you.*

Denny: *You'll try.*

Jill: *They'll hear me. (beat) They will.*

Denny: *Not like that. (beat) Oh, I heard you trying. Folks might pick up a feeling. A stray thought. Maybe they'll repeat a phrase or two—like your mama did—if they're not really thinking about it. But they're not going to hear you. Not like that.*

Denny: *Besides. They're gonna lose hope soon. Stop coming every day. Once a week, maybe once a month... I'll see to that.*

Jill: *But if you can stop them, then I—*

Denny: *We're not having a conversation, I'm just nudging them in a direction they already want*

*to go. Giving up. Letting go. (beat) You know  
what is easy to make people do?*

Jill: *What?*

Denny: *Forget. (beat) And when they do, well, I'll be all  
you've got left. You'll be begging me to visit.  
And if not, well... I'll get in there one way or the  
other.*

**SOUND:** Sneakers exiting

**MUSIC:** Transition/time passage music

## Scene Five:

**SOUND:** Hospital ambience

Natasha: (over PA) Visiting hours are now over. Visitors should please make their way to the exit. Thank you for your cooperation. *Las horas de visita ya han terminado. Los visitantes deben hacer su camino a la salida. Gracias por su cooperación.*

Stephanie: I guess that's it for tonight, my love.

Jill: *No. No, babe, please. Please don't go. Don't forget. Don't forget me. You weren't here yesterday and—*

Stephanie: I'm sorry I wasn't here yesterday, I just couldn't—never mind. (beat) God, I miss you. (beat) Let's go, Dot.

Jill: *You've got to hear me, I'm still here, I'm still here.*

Dot: You know, Easter's just around the corner. Sure would be nice to see you back at church. Good night, sweetie.

Jill: *No, no—Don't—YOU CAN'T GO!!!*

(beat)

Dot: Stephanie?

Jill: *Oh, my love—Hear me—PLEASE HEAR ME!*

Stephanie: I'm all right, Dot. But I just, I don't think I can leave her. Not tonight.

Jill: *YES!*

Dot: Why?

Stephanie: I don't know.

Dot: Huh. I'm not sure they're going to accept that as a reason.



**SOUND:** Sneakers in

Denny: Evening, ladies. I'm sorry, I guess you didn't hear the PA.

Stephanie: I heard.

Denny: Well then you know it's time to scoot. Rules are—

Stephanie: Made to be broken.

Jill: *What's the harm, Denny?*

Stephanie: (with a smile) What's the harm?

Denny: (friendly) Now, you know I'm a stickler.

Stephanie: All these other patients are comatose. We're not bothering 'em.

Dot: We're awful quiet.

Jill: *As mice.*

Denny: Well, if it was up to me—

Stephanie: But it ain't.

Jill *That's right. Stand up to that little weasel.*

Denny: Sorry. (kindly) It's so sweet seeing y'all's dedication. (very gently) But it ain't really helpin' her at this point. The best thing for her would be if they two of you—

Jill: *Oh, just shut your goddamned pie hole!*

Stephanie: (with her) Shut your GODDAMNED PIE HOLE!  
(beat) Sorry.

Jill: *Yes! Yes, baby it's me and he's bad—He wants to hurt me, he really wants to hurt me—*

Stephanie: (gasps) What are you doing to her? (beat)  
ANSWER ME, YOU SON OF A BITCH!

Dot: Steph?

Denny: You want to leave.

Stephanie: No. I don't.

Denny: It's okay, Stephanie. I understand you're emotional. That's natural, I get it—

Jill: (together) *Take your goddamned hands off her!*

Stephanie: (together) Take your goddamned hands off me!

**SOUND:** Dress shoes racing in

Dr. Heyes: All right, now let's all just take a breath.

Stephanie: (losing it) He won't let us stay. Why won't he let us stay?

Dr. Heyes: Okay. Calm down.

Denny: It's disruptive.

Dr. Heyes: It is. To the other patients.

Jill: *Calm down, baby. This isn't helping,*

Stephanie: I'm sorry! I'm sorry I lost my temper there.

Denny: It's all right. You know, you could—talk to administration.

Dr. Heyes: Absolutely. Maybe there's something they could do.

Denny: First thing tomorrow.

Dr. Heyes: Tomorrow. Come on.

Stephanie and Dot: Tomorrow.

Jill: (weakly) *No...*

Dot: It's probably for the best.

Denny: It is, you know. For the best.

Stephanie: For the best. (a little uncertain) Maybe so.

**SOUND:** Footsteps out.

**SOUND:** Door closes.

**SOUND:** Beat, then door opens

Denny: *Well, well. Someone's been a bad girl.*

Jill: *I'll never let you in.*

Denny: *Oh, we're way beyond that, darlin'.*

Jill: *They'll be back tomorrow. And they'll stay, or they'll move me—*

Denny: *It pains me to say it, but I do believe you're right. They will be back tomorrow. (beat) Only they'll be too late.*

## Scene Six:

### Parking Lot

#### MUSIC CONTINUES

**SOUND:** Car doors closing

Dot: (after a beat) What's the matter, sweetie?

Stephanie: I, I can't leave, Dot. I can't leave.

Dot: She's in good hands, Steph.

Stephanie: I can't leave. He's up to something.

Dot: Denny?

Stephanie: I know it.

Dot: How can you possibly think that—

Stephanie: (Screams out in pain)

Jill: *STEPHANIE—HELP ME, HELP ME!!!*

**SOUND:** Car door opening & closing

Dot: Stephanie!

**SOUND:** Car door opening & closing

**SOUND:** Footsteps running

Dot: Stephanie, where are you going?

## Scene Seven:

### Back in the room

Jill: *Fine. I'll let you in—take what you want from my mind, but just don't—*

Denny: *Too late for that. Ain't safe. (beat) Couldn't leave well enough alone, could you? Now they're gonna poke around, ask too many questions. Can't risk it. (beat) It's for the best.*

Jill: *You don't have to do this.*

Denny: *Yeah, I do. You see, tomorrow morning, you'll be gone, your girlfriend will think she didn't want to leave your side because somehow, somehow she knew you were dying. Your mom, too. She'll blame herself. And in their grief they'll forget all about me. I'll see to that. (beat) Now just relax.*

**SOUND:** Flicking a syringe

Denny: *I'm just gonna put a little shot in your IV drip; you won't feel nothing.*

Jill: *They won't. They'll make you pay for this. They won't forget.*

Denny: *Then I'll have to kill them, too.*

MacGruder: NOOOOOOO!!!

Denny: What? Jesus! Who said that? MacGruder?!

**SOUND:** a clatter as MaGruder rises from his bed, others follow

Cindy: STOP! NO! STOP!

**SOUND:** Denny struggling with Cindy and MaGruder

Denny: Cindy—you—AGH—No! Let go of me! STAY BACK— ALL OF YOU! This is impossible, you're brain dead, you can't do this!

MacGruder: They're not...

Jill: *I AM!*

Denny: (Cries out in pain)

**MUSIC:** Transition music

## **Scene Eight:**

**SOUND:** Hospital front desk sounds

Natasha: Ma'am, it's after hours, and you're not being rational.

Stephanie: Rational or not, I want to see Dr. Heyes—

Natasha: I'm sure he will be here any—

Dr. Heyes: Whoa, whoa, whoa. I will call the police!

Stephanie: Call them!

**SOUND:** Chorus of muffled voices, sounds of a struggle

Dr. Heyes: What the hell?

Natasha: It's coming from the coma ward.

Dot: Jill? Baby?

Stephanie: Come on! (runs)

**SOUND:** Stephanie's shoes running, followed by others

**SOUND:** Hospital door open

MacGruder: Oh thank god, he's trying to poison me!

Dr. Heyes: What the—Denny, why are you standing in the corner?

Stephanie: Jill!

Dot: My baby!

MacGruder: Mom! Stephanie! Thank god you're here, babe!

Natasha: What in the...

Stephanie: Jill...?

MacGruder: Oh—wait.

Cindy: There. That's...marginally better. No offense Mr. MacGruder, but I prefer this voice.

Dot: I don't understand.

Cindy: It's me, Mom. It's Jill. I'm the one talking. I'm not in a coma—I had a stroke or something. That's what caused my accident. But I couldn't tell anyone because I'm locked in.

Dot: Locked in?

Dr. Heyes: Of course... It's a rare condition but—I took notes about that... I know I took notes about that... I ordered tests, but—

Denny: I never did them. *Wait—how did you make me—<sup>2</sup>*

Dot: Oh, my baby!

Cindy: Don't worry, Mom, I'm working on getting myself out.

Dr. Heyes: H-how are you—talking—like this?

Cindy: I'm not entirely sure.

Natasha: I thought they were vegetables.

Dr. Heyes: Natasha!

Natasha: Nurse Denny said!

Cindy: They *are* in vegetative states. They're gone. But somehow...I'm able to speak through them.

Natasha: Whoa.

Dr. Heyes: Fascinating.

Cindy: But...you need to know that Cindy—the woman I'm speaking through now—never

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<sup>2</sup> Italics are internal dialogue.



should have been put on life support in the first place.

Dr. Heyes: She's DNR? Natasha, did you know about this?

Natasha: How would I know? I just started here!

Cindy: Denny knew—and he ignored it.

Denny: *No, no*—It's true. Cindy had a DNR, and I never ran the tests on Jill.—*Get out of my*— And there's more.—*No*—Much more. I want to make a full confession.—*I DO NOT!*

Natasha: What're you talking about, Denny?

Denny: I've abused my position—*Get out*—been stealing from all these patients.

Natasha: Stealing?! But you're a nurse!

Denny: This watch was Old Man MacGruder's.

Dr. Heyes: You said it was an anniv—

Denny: And generally denying—*No!*—these patients—*Stop!*—and their families closure for my own—*Arrgh!*—twisted reasons.

Stephanie: I knew there was something wrong about you.

Denny: *No, GET OUT OF MY*—ARGH!—I'll kill you, you bitch!

**SOUND:** Denny lunges for Jill

Natasha: Denny!

Stephanie: Get away from her!

**SOUND:** Punching, clatter, struggle.

Stephanie: I said, get AWAY!

**SOUND:** Huge clatter, Denny slumps to the ground

**SOUND:** Stephanie KICKS him

Stephanie: And STAY down!

Dr. Heyes: All right, Stephanie! All right! Natasha, call the police.

Natasha: Oh, I'm already on it.

**SOUND:** Dialing phone

Denny: (weakly) Listen, Doc, ya—*No—Get outta my head!*—gotta belerrv mrrr— Brrlllrrrv mrrr... (He has a stroke)

Dr. Heyes: Denny?

Natasha: Denny?!

Dr. Heyes: Code blue! Code Blue!

**MUSIC:** Transition music

## Scene Nine:

Jill: You're just saying that because you feel sorry for me.

Stephanie: No, no. Really. I'm happy with the bank vault.

**SOUND:** Footsteps entering

Jill: Oh, hey, Doc.

Dr. Heyes: Good morning, Jill. Ready to finally get out of here?

Jill: You have no idea. No offense.

Stephanie: I'll be glad to get Jill out of here...and far away from that creep. And to see him locked up for a long time, when he wakes up.

Dr. Heyes: *If* he wakes up.

Stephanie: That doesn't seem fair.

Jill: It is what it is. Come on, my love. We've got a wedding to plan.

Stephanie: So we're settled on the old bank vault?

Jill: God no, babe. I like the horse farm you found.

Stephanie: Really? I was hoping you would.

Jill: It's perfect. And besides, after all this, I think I'd prefer an outdoor wedding.

**SOUND:** Transitional music

## Scene Ten:

**SOUND:** Diagnostic machines, respirator

**SOUND:** Door opening and closing, footsteps in

Denny: *Well, well. Look who's here.*

Jill: *You look...the same.*

Denny: *Looks are deceiving. I'm getting stronger.*

Jill: *I can tell.*

Denny: *And payback is a bitch. (chuckles) Mmm. I can't wait to get to that girlfriend of yours. Or is it wife now? (chuckles) Ironic, isn't it? Me coming down with the same rare condition as you?*

Jill: *Ironic.*

Denny: *And the doctors missing it. (beat) I assume you had something to do with that last part. (beat) Don't bother answering. We'll discuss it when I get out.*

Jill: *You're not getting out. (beat) You didn't just "happen" to have a stroke, Denny. And you didn't just "happen" to get locked in.*

**SOUND:** Psychic energy "hum"

Jill: *I locked you in.*

Denny: *(squirms in pain)*

Jill: *And you are never getting out.*

Denny: *Aaaauuggghh!*

**SOUND:** Psychic lock turning

Jill: *(beat. Then, a breath) All right, then.*

**SOUND:** Door opening and closing

**SOUND:** Sneakers

**SOUND:** Hospital front desk sounds (beeping diagnostic machines, muted chatter)

Natasha: I told you. No real change.

Jill: Didn't think there would be.

Natasha: It is so kind of you to visit him. Especially after all those awful things he did.

Jill: None of us are saints. Besides, I know what it's like in there. So I guess he'll have at least one occasional visitor.

Natasha: Kindred spirits.

Jill: Something like that...

**MUSIC:** UNCANNY COUNTY THEME

NARRATOR: Jill Conway may have walked away from the confines of her bodily prison, but the horrors she faced will continue to haunt her for some time, maybe for all time. On the surface, she'll seem fine—happily married to Stephanie, beginning their new life together, but on some level she'll always be looking behind her, waiting for the monster to reappear. Because sometimes the happy ending isn't really an ending at all... Especially in Uncanny County...