

THE STRANGER WITHIN

Written By

Steven Sloan

Fountain of Life Productions
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Fontana, CA 92336

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FADE IN:

The Broadrick's are going out of town for the weekend. They need someone to look after their mansion while their gone. Someone dependable, someone unknowing as to what happened to the last house sitter. Stella Albright was just terminated from her job and needs the money and has been chosen for the position of house sitter. She accepted the job after her best friend agreed to accompany her but something unexpected came up at the last minute and her friend is not available but assured her that she is just a phone call away. Stella fulfils the agreement first by preoccupying herself by listening to talk radio. Tonights talk show is different from the rest. The radio host interviews a woman who's recent death of her sister somehow replicates Stella's experience while house sitting. Listening to the caller tell her story paralyses Stella and the intensity increases when strange visitors knock on the door in need of help. One can only imagine, the suspense when you're all alone in a strange house with people you don't know and the one who scares you most is 'The Stranger Within'.

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

1 INT. THE BROADRICK HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

It's a stormy night, lightening and thunder canvas the sound of the city down the hill.

CREDITS ROLL against the back wall as the BUTLER Benson (Adult African American male in his late fifties) is tidying up the study. His domineer is as if it's his last day on the job.

We see luggage packed and readied by the door. Sheets cover most of the furniture and pictures on the walls.

SFX: SOUND OF CAR APPROACHING

Benson takes two crystal glasses and pours brandy.

Darran and Susan Broadrick enter the study drenching wet.

DARRIN

Thank you Benson, you always seem to know exactly what we need. Turn on the radio let's hear the weather report.

Benson goes to an old radio and turns the knobs.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

SFX: RADIO TUNNING

NEWS CASTOR (O.S.)

The body of a young woman has been found near the bridge of Platoma Lake. The body has been identified as Angela Sanchez a waitress at the Round-The-Town restaurant. Police say she was not married and had no next of kin to be notified but evidence leads them to suspect foul play. Coroner's office reports several internal parts of her body were missing. The motive is not clear but investigators say that this was a pre-calculated murder. At least two people corroborated in the killing of Angela Sanchez but with no witnesses or suspects her death is now classified as just another statistic. In other news tonight...

DARRAN

Is something wrong dear?

SUSAN

They found the body.

DARRAN

Sometimes things happen.

SUSAN

You said there was no way anyone could find it. No family, no one to give her a decent burial. They'll never find the body or who killed her.

DARRAN

Things don't always work as planned.

SUSAN

What about the work we just planned?

DARRAN

It will work, I've gone over and over it.

SUSAN

Shouldn't our house sitters have been here by now?

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (2)

DARRAN

I'm sure she's on her way. I can't imagine anyone being on time on a night like this.

SUSAN

I thought you said there would be two this time.

DARRAN

Something came up and one of the girls can't make it.

SUSAN

What do we really know about this girl anyway?

DARRAN

I had Benson run a background check on her. Can't be too careful these days, she's more than qualified.

SUSAN

Qualified how?

DARRAN

She graduated from college, was just laid off from her job and needs money to pay for student loans so she answered our add.

SUSAN

That qualifies the Boston Strangler for that matter!

DARRAN

She has no children, hasn't seen her foster parents in years I doubt if there is anybody worried about her being out on a messy night like tonight.

SUSAN

She has a friend!

DARRAN

Yes - Something unexpected came up and Stella will be house sitting all alone I guarantee.

SUSAN

Stella haaa! Is she pretty?

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (3)

DARRAN

What! Where did that come from?

SUSAN

You told me I was pretty before you swept me off of my feet. Come to think of it - the last girl was pretty.

DARRAN

Susan - you're the most beautiful girl in the world. If you were any more beautiful I'd have to put my scalpel to ya so that no other man would ever want you and I could have you all to myself.

SUSAN

You know I'm kidding, Doctor Broadrick. I just want to be sure this time Darran. The last woman we hired... the one moonlighting as a waitress, well, things didn't work out so well.

DARRAN

We made a lot of money off of that one.

SUSAN

But still, you had to do a lot of talking to get us out of that predicament.

DARRAN

That was an unforeseen decision we had to make at the last minute. There's only one way to tell who's right and who's wrong in life. You have to...

SUSAN

Have an unforeseen accident?

DARRAN

Give people a chance to make a mistake.

SUSAN

Well - we do need the money I hope all our planning pays off.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (4)

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I'm rather going to enjoy getting away from the mundane everyday life and into something we really enjoy doing.

SFX: KNOCK AT THE DOOR

DARRAN

There you see, just as planned.

Darran goes to answer.

STELLA

Hello sir, would you be Mr. Broadrick?

DARRAN

Why yes! You must be Stella. Come in please - and call me Darran. Honey - our house guest is here.

SUSAN

Be right there.

DARRAN

We were beginning to worry about you. Not that we didn't think you'd come it's just the weather and all.

STELLA

The roads were so bad and the phone reception is terrible up here. I did try to call.

Susan enters the room.

SUSAN

So glad you made it in one piece. I'm Susan -Darran's wife of 23 years. Nothing could ever come between us no matter how hard you try!

DARRAN

Susan!

SUSAN

And this is Benson our care taker who is being forced to escape to anywhere but here.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (5)

DARRAN

Normally Benson would be staying here while we're gone but you are his excuse for a well deserved clearing of his mind.

STELLA

So nice to meet you, both of you, all of you...

DARRAN

Sorry we spoiled your weekend having you reside in the dreariest place on the hill. Weather forecast says it's going to be like this for the next few days.

STELLA

Well it's that time of the year - rain, flood.

FX: LIGHTNING

SUSAN

Lightning - Thunder!

SFX: THUNDER

DARRAN

Listen we'd better skedaddle, this weather has no mercy on plane schedules.

Stella notices the plane tickets at the edge of the desk. She hands them to Darran.

STELLA

Can't get to far without these! Hawaii WOW! That's a change in the weather.

DARRAN

See honey, very observant, we got the right girl for the job. Benson will be here for a little while he's waiting for his ride. I'm sure he wouldn't mind helping you find your way around although there's nothing too significant about this place to learn, except the right door to escape.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (6)

SUSAN

Darran! - Don't let him scare you, there's plenty of interesting things to keep you occupied in this old house. Especially in the kitchen, there's a whole refrigerator of food just waiting to entertain you.

SFX: CAR HORN

DARRAN

That's our cue, our neighbour down the hill is dropping us off at the airport.

STELLA

You two just enjoy your selves and don't worry about a thing.

The Broadricks exit the door yelling as they exit.

SUSAN

(yelling)

Emergency phone numbers are on the counter. The phone system is on satellite in case of power failure. It would take an act of God for the phone not to work.

DARRAN

(yelling)

There a generator in the garage it will come on automatically should things get drastic, it should last a couple of hours, enough time to chop a few chairs up to make a nice warm fire.

SFX: CAR HORN

SUSAN

He's kidding. About the chairs that is. Benson make sure the generator is topped off with gas before you leave.

Stella closes the door behind them. She looks for ways to prove her credibility to Benson by straightening books, dusting, straightening a picture. Lightning ignites the room while Benson looks on.

ACT ONE

SCENE TWO

Stella attempts to get comfortable and start a conversation with Benson.

STELLA

So - are there any hidden
passageways, revolving doors or
underground tunnels I should know
about?

Benson just stairs.

STELLA (CONT'D)

You don't have very much to say do
you? My dad never said much, well
he wasn't my real dad. He would
say "A wise man keeps his mouth
shut while others think him a fool,
a fool opens his mouth and removes
all doubt'. I think that's what
it says, from the book of Proverbs
you know.

Benson gets up and approaches Stella.

BENSON

I'll go check the generator.

STELLA

Aha - is there a Television?

BENSON

In the living room. I'll show you
when I return. Until then!

Benson walks over to the Radio and turns it on.

After Benson leaves Stella keeps changing the channels but
because everything is about murder she decides not to listen
any longer.

NEWS CASTOR

Another tragic death tonight due
to the storm.

NEWS CASTOR (CONT'D)

The body has yet to be found.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

NEWS CASTOR (CONT'D)

The coroner is holding the scheduling of the funeral until all body parts can be found.

The atmosphere of the room is very uncomfortable and Stella is startled when Benson returns.

BENSON

The generator should give you no problem. There's enough fuel to last a few hours but only the lights in the kitchen and living room will operate should the power fail.

STELLA

Maybe you wouldn't mind showing me around. Just pretend we're at the Hurst's Castle and all your friends are here and you are the tour guide.

BENSON

Tour Guide - welcome to Hurst Castle, ladies and gentlemen please follow me.

Benson gathers all people in the room and begins the tour.

The walk begins from the study into the hallway. Pictures of previous owners are displayed on the walls. Faces of those who have passed on.

BENSON (CONT'D)

The Broderick Estate was once the residence of very prominent professors in the medical field. Dr. Henry Fassett and his wife were the presiding residents. Mr. Broderick and his wife were friends and given sole ownership of the property after the Fassetts perished in an unfortunate accident. It seems their bodies were diss...

The hallway seem endless as the guests are escorted into the main dinning area.

BENSON (CONT'D)

You are now entering the main dining quarters. Please be seated!

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

The guests are seated and Stella and Benson take the stage. Maids and butlers escort guests to their tables.

Entering the kitchen Stella looks into the refrigerator. It's ingulfed with food.

BENSON (CONT'D)
Kitchen, Dining Hall, living room,
Pantry beyond the door.

STELLA
Can you take me back there?

SFX: CAR HORN HONKS

BENSON
You should have no problem, time
for me to go!

STELLA
Well we all gotta go some time!

Benson hands her a piece of paper.

BENSON
If you should need. Phone number
to the nearest neighbour.

STELLA
Well if I should need, I shall.

Benson walks out of the the kitchen, and out of sight.

SFX: CAR PULLS OFF

Lightning flashes, Stella feels the desire to call her friend. She goes to the couch, turns on the T.V. and dials.

SFX: PHONE DIALING, RINGING AND ANSWER

YOLANDA (V.O.)
Something about the lightning always
sends my friend a-calling.

STELLA
Just wanted to let you know I made
it all right. Are you still busy,
it's not too late to join me. I
have a whole refrigerator all to
myself.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (3)

YOLANDA

Stella - there is nothing to be afraid of. It will all be over by morning.

STELLA

You could bring your friend here and I could chaperon.

YOLANDA

Stella... I would love to keep you company but...

STELLA

I understand, I have to share my best friend with Sir Lancelot tonight.

YOLANDA

Listen - I could come up with a good excuse and he could...

STELLA

No, no - I'm sorry it's not fair for me to ask you to do that just for me. I was just...

SFX: THUNDER

FX: LIGHTNING

Lightning splashes against Stella's face.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Listen I got plenty things to do around here, you guys just, have a good time.

YOLANDA

Stella! I feel like I've really let you down, not being able to keep my word tonight. What about Connie, why don't you give her a call...

STELLA

(fake humour)

She's out of town. I'll call you tomorrow.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (4)

YOLANDA

Out... wait a minute, you called
Connie, before you called me. Oho
so that's the bulk of our
friendship, you called her first!
Just how does she fair. And when
did she ever do anything for you?
I'm the one who was always there
when you needed a friend. It's
like that aha?

Yolanda's voice fades out as Stella hangs up the phone.

Contemplating - Stella goes to the kitchen.

ACT ONE

SCENE THREE

2 INT. KITCHEN - SINK - NIGHT

Stella observes dirty dishes in the sink, she runs the water to wash them. After pouring the soap, Stella notices a portable radio and checks it for batteries. She tunes-in to a local talk show.

ROD

Stormy weather tonight as if you didn't know. Your listening to WTKM talk radio where we talk about anything and everything on the East Coast. And you're on the air with Rod Bruster and who am I speaking to feathering the storm tonight?

HELEN (V.O.)

Hi Rod - thank you for taking my call. My name is Helen Anthony. Some strange things are going on in my life lately and this storm doesn't help matters much. I just don't know where to start.

ROD

How about starting from the beginning, when did these - strange things start to happen?

HELEN (V.O.)

Actually my sister was brutally murdered during a storm just like this one tonight, and every time it rains I...

Helen brakes down in tears over the phone.

ROD

Helen, are you all right? Listen maybe that's not a good subject to discuss tonight maybe we should move on to...

HELEN (V.O.)

No - no it's all right.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

HELEN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
My doctor says I should talk things through, it's like therapy. It will rid me of the painful memories.

ROD
Okay - if it makes you feel better.

HELEN (V.O.)
I was the last one my sister talked to just before she died. To this day I don't know why she choose to call me instead of 911, maybe she'd be alive today if only...

ROD
It's okay, it's okay. What happened?

HELEN
I tried so many times to get her to hang up and call 911 but she wouldn't listen. She promised that she would call an ambulance... if I would just listen to her tell me about how she was attacked.

ROD
Attacked?

HELEN
Is that weird or what? Here she is dying and telling me what happened instead of calling for help.

ROD
You loved her very much and I'm sure she's looking down on us from a happier place.

HELEN (V.O.)
Yes - I believe you're right.

ROD
Did they - did they ever find the killer.

HELEN (V.O.)
No - never, but police said he was probably someone she just met still a stranger to her!

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

ROD
Yet they know it was a he.

HELEN (V.O.)
According to the autopsy. Some
sort of tool had been used but it
was definitely by the strength of
a man.

ROD
I'm sorry Helen I didn't mean to..

HELEN (V.O.)
It was a stormy night, just like
tonight. About three months ago.
Rosslyn - my sister - was in her
kitchen washing the dishes.

A bolt of lightening ignites the kitchen. Stella slows down
the washing to listen. The radio goes dead.

Stella goes to the T.V. and turns it on.

ACT ONE

SCENE FOUR

3 INT. CAR - ROAD - NIGHT - VIDEO

This is a black & white television movie with Darran and Susan playing characters from the 1920s. Darran and Susan are on their way out of town to the airport. Stella never sets her eyes on the screen and continues to wash.

JASMINE

All set?

DARRAN

Yes Jasmine. We really appreciate this. There's no way we could have driven out of town in weather like this.

JASMINE

My pleasure. Not that it matters much but... same fee as last time?

DARRIN

Absolutely but you have to understand, one of the participants dropped out of the equation. There is only one person in the house not two.

JASMINE

That's not my fault, the agreement was as long as I do my part I get paid the same no matter how many bodies. I don't care if...

DARRIN

All right, all right! You'll get your money.

(to Susan)

So, what do you think of our little house guest now?

SUSAN

She's perfect. And you say no one will be looking for her.

DARRIN

She is on her own, we have her all to ourselves.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

SUSAN

How do you do it? Find these people who exist one day and when they are gone the next, it's almost like they don't exist. Nobody cares about them.

DARRIN

It's a gift my dear a gift. Though I must admit there is a matter of skill involved in finding subjects to become victims to your hungry little body parts tape worm.

SUSAN

Please! My hunger isn't any different than yours. Tell me you don't agree to what's on the menu tonight. That sometimes for a person to escape the pains of life... it would be a blessing if someone else intervened. And helped to rid them of the pain and suffering caused by society or lack there of. When you think about it we're actually helping society see - everyone is worth something.

DARRIN

I didn't say I disagreed I'm just saying that every time we take someone out of their misery it brings us closer to extinguishing our own livelihood.

SUSAN

How so dear?

DARRIN

Well - I'm saying that eventually things catch up with you. One day someone is going to find out about us and then we become victims of our own demise. One day we're going to make a mistake. One day maybe even tonight with our new house keeper...

SUSAN

Honey!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: (2)

SUSAN (CONT'D)

We are not alone, there are very rich people behind what we do and believe me they don't want to go down either. But some things have to be done for the sake of - Humanity. Besides, everyone's already in place right?

DARRIN

Right!

SUSAN

Ready to make their move on our command and at the precise moment right?

DARRIN

Right!

SUSAN

Soooo... What's the problem?

DARRIN

I just have one question.

SUSAN

I give!

DARRIN

Are you really ready? Ready to get started, there is no turning back you know.

JASMINE

We're almost there, no turning back now.

SUSAN

Absolutely! Full speed ahead.

One final glance at each other.

DARRIN

What do you say we work this one from the seller. The attic was so cold the last time. Good for the dead but I could hardly work my surgery magic with my fingers frozen.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: (3)

SUSAN

The last victim never knew what hit her, I have a feeling this one won't be much different. Your little fingers will soon be warm and toasty. By the way I wish you'd stop using the same old plane tickets to Hawaii over and over again.

Susan tears up the tickets

SUSAN (CONT'D)

How about you fake some tickets to Spain next time?

DARRIN

Any where you like my dear, any where you like.

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

4 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

HELEN (V.O.)

Roslyn... My sister, was only 25 years old when she died. Young and beautiful - with great aspirations to be a lawyer. She said while she was washing dishes she thought she saw something in the backyard. An image of a man walking around.

SFX: THE IMAGE OF A MAN MOVES ACROSS THE BACKYARD FENCE.

Stella cuts herself in the sink and begins to wrap it.

ROD

She didn't think to call the police then.

HELEN

Roslyn never was one to take initiative. Somehow she managed to cut herself in the sink.

HELEN (CONT'D)

She told me she became so frightened. She stopped washing the dishes to tend to her wound.

SFX: LIGHTNING AND THUNDER CUT POWER TO THE RADIO

Stella turns off the radio and searches for a first aid kit in the cupboards. After finding a bandage she goes to the living room.

SCENE TWO

ACT ONE

5 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Turning on the television Stella attempts to find a comforting station. Every station has to do with murder, killing, or monsters. She is startled by the door bell.

SFX: DOOR BELL

Stella gets up to answer, but not before grabbing a knife from its holder.

SFX: DOOR BELL/KNOCK

6 INT. LOBBY - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Stella goes to the door, she peeks through the peep hole. There is a man dressed in a construction uniform. Stella talks through the door.

STELLA

May I help you?

THE KNIFE IN STELLA'S HAND BEHIND THE DOOR

MIKE

Hello Mame, I'm so sorry for the intrusion. My name is Mike Randolph, I'm a private contractor for the B & D Power Company. The City is a little bogged down tonight so they've asked me to help out. I'm working on a power outage in your neighbourhood I noticed that your house is one of the few with power still working. I'm going to be running some tests so don't be alarmed if your power goes out for a moment.

STELLA

My power! Why do you have to work on my power?

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

MIKE

Well I'm not working on your power
it's just that all the other grids
have failed and you - your grid
may be next. I'll check with you
a little later Mrs. Broderick,
that is if it's okay with your
husband.

STELLA

That will be fine.

MIKE

Would it be better If I spoke with
the man of the house.

STELLA

That won't be necessary either one
of us can make the decision.

MIKE

Very well, sorry to have bothered
you - have a good night.

Mike walks away, Stella rests against the door. She returns
to the Living room.

ACT TWO

SCENE TWO

She places the knife back to it's holder and decides to complete the job of washing the dishes. Once again Stella turns on the radio for company.

HELEN (V.O.)

The police asked if I knew of anyone who might want to kill her. I told them that she didn't have an enemy in this world. But I always wondered about, that man who claimed to be a Public Service Worker. After all he did tell her he would return later.

Stella stops what she is doing and backs away from the radio.

HELEN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

If only my sister had never went to the door that second time. She may still be alive today. I'll tell you what I think. When that door bell rang the second time. The City worker man had gone to his truck to get a weapon. He's the one who turned the lights out. But my sister was smart and had flashlights all over the place. She even had extra batteries. I know he killed her. Once she let him in the house he took away from me the most wonderful person in the world. He came up with all these excuses to get in, if only she had not opened the door, not opened the door.

Suddenly the doorbell rings, then all the lights go out.

SFX: DOOR BELL

FX: LIGHTS OUT

Stella grabs a flashlight and once again removes the knife from it's holder. She cautiously heads for the door.

ACT TWO

SCENE THREE

7 INT. LOBBY - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Stella peeks in the hole, she sees the power man has returned.

STELLA

What are you doing back here?

MIKE

It's me again maim. Mike - from the power company. I see your lights went out.

STELLA

I got flash lights - and enough batteries to last me a year so go away.

MIKE

Well - we wouldn't want you to use up your batteries Maim. I think I've almost got the problem solved. I just need to check your circuit breakers.

With the radio still on in the kitchen we can still HEAR the conversation going on.

HELEN (V.O.)

He tried to do everything he could to get in.

Stella now looking to the radio for instructions.

STELLA

Don't even think about coming in here.

HELEN (V.O.)

He killed her, I know he did.

STELLA

You did it didn't you! Your the circuit breaker killer.

MIKE

I'm the - what?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

MIKE (CONT'D)

I'm still trying to fix it Maim,
all I need is your...

STELLA

Well your not coming in here I
know all about you so take your
electric behind off my property.

SFX: KNOCK AT THE DOOR

STELLA (CONT'D)

Go away or I'm calling the police.
My phone still works ya know.

SFX: KNOCK AT THE DOOR

STELLA (CONT'D)

That's it! I'm calling the police
NOW!

A strange voice replies from the door. It's JOSLYN VALENTINE
African American woman in her mid 30s. Friendly but
mysterious at times.

JOSLYN

That's exactly what I want you to
do but may I wait for the police
inside.

STELLA

Now who are you?

JOSLYN

Names Joslyn, Joslyn Valentine. I
swerved to keep from hitting a
deer, up the road a piece and ended
up in a ditch. All I need is a
tow if you wouldn't mind letting
me use your phone.

STELLA

Well... What happened to the man
who was just there?

JOSLYN

What man, you must mean the truck
driver. I saw a truck by your
house I started running towards it
and a man got in and drove off. I
guess I scared him away.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

SFX: THUNDER

FX: LIGHTENING

JOSLYN (CONT'D)

I would sure appreciate any help
you could give me. It's awfully
cold out here.

STELLA

What were you doing driving around
on a night like this anyway?

JOSLYN

I'd be glad to explain that, maybe
without the fear of getting struck
by lightening?

Stella takes a moment to contemplate the situation then cracks
the door.

SFX: THUNDER

FX: LIGHTENING

STELLA

Is anyone with you?

JOSLYN

Just me and some car keys, and
they are not even sharp.

Stella closes the door, removes the security chain then
reopens it.

STELLA

(very sceptical)
Come in. I'll get you a towel.

ACT TWO

SCENE FOUR

Once in the kitchen Stella starts going through drawers to find a towel. Joslyn opens the first drawer and finds one first. She begins to dry herself off.

STELLA (CONT'D)

So... where were you on your way to?

JOSLYN

A job, first night on my new job. Wouldn't you know it. As hard as things are today I get fired from my first real job. I was just getting off probation.

STELLA

I'm sure they'd understand, in weather like this. I wouldn't be surprised if your new job hasn't closed for the night.

JOSLYN

I sure hope so.

STELLA

Where is the new job?

JOSLYN

Aha... let's see...

Joslyn pulls a wet piece of paper from her pocket and attempts to read.

JOSLYN (CONT'D)

The-Round... something restaurant.
Round table... Round...

STELLA

Round-About-Cafe.

JOSLYN

Yeah! You know the place?

STELLA

I heard about it while I was driving up the mountain tonight.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

JOSLYN
You got anything warm?

STELLA
What?

JOSLYN
To drink - you got anything warm
to drink. I am freezing inside
and out.

STELLA
Of course.

Stella starts looking through the cupboards.

STELLA (CONT'D)
I'm afraid I am new around here
too. Tonight is my first day on
the job.

JOSLYN
Lucky for you, you made it here.
What did you hear?

STELLA
What did I hear?

JOSLYN
About my new job, you said you
heard about The-Round about - cafe
on the radio.

STELLA
I heard a terrible thing happened
to one of the workers.

JOSLYN
They found her body already?

STELLA
How did you know it was a woman's
body?

JOSLYN
Oh 50/50 guess. I have to admit,
it is rather eerie knowing that
you're taking the place of a person
who's been murdered.

Stella hands Joslyn a cup of hot tea.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (2)

STELLA

How did you know where the towels were?

JOSLYN

Maybe I did hear about it on the news cast on the way up. Just like you did.

STELLA

The towels, when you first came in you knew exactly where they were.

JOSLYN

You obviously didn't know where they were soooooo. I figured I'd start on the opposite side and meet you in the middle. Brilliant minds think alike. I think this weathers got us both jumpy. Now about getting my car fixed. May I use your phone, I can't get any cell service up here.

JOSLYN (CONT'D)

You said you were going to call the police on me...

STELLA

Sure! It's right here. Go right ahead. It's on satellite, never fails.

Joslyn picks up the phone and attempts to dial.

JOSLYN

Your kidding right? It's dead.

STELLA

But it worked. It was working before you came to the door.

JOSLYN

Well it doesn't work now. I guess it's an act of God!

STELLA

That's an interesting phrase, act of god!

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (3)

JOSLYN

I use to work for an insurance company. Anything weird or out of the ordinary happen to a client that we didn't want to pay a claim for, we would call it an act of god, then it would be up to the courts to decide. Most of the time, we won. So... It looks like you're my new baby sitter. What do you say we get to know each other and wait out the storm.

The girls go into the living room. They have a seat on the couch.

STELLA

So tell me about this new job of yours at the Round-A-Bout.

JOSLYN

It's a job. I applied to be a waitress. I didn't care that it is so far away from my home. I just needed a job.

STELLA

You have children?

JOSLYN

Two - boy and girl 7 and 10. Roslyn and Jacob. My little heart throbs - their dad was killed in Desert Storm.

STELLA

I'm sorry!

JOSLYN

No need to be. He was a good man. We did everything together, bought our house and now I'm having to struggle to make things work.

STELLA

I understand!

JOSLYN

So how is it that you ended up here at the Broderick's home?

SFX: KNOCK AT THE DOOR

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (4)

JOSLYN (CONT'D)

Maybe it's someone who can help me.

STELLA

For such a secluded place this is the most popular door in town. I'll go check to see.

SFX: THUNDER/LIGHTNING

The radio comes on.

STELLA (CONT'D)

It's been doing that all night. Power surges.

SFX: DOOR KNOCK

Stella grabs a knife and heads for the door.

ACT TWO

SCENE FIVE

Stella looks through the peep hole.

HELEN

The police report said that he came back again. Can you believe that, returning to the scene of the crime.

STELLA

What are you doing back here. Someone saw you running away from here. I'm not letting you in and now you can be identified.

MIKE

Ahaaa! I don't have to come in, I just have to...

STELLA

Have to what? Take me out like you did that ladies sister on the radio. How did you do it anyway. strangulation, what - did you stick a screw driver in that poor woman's heart.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

HELEN (V.O.)

He stood there trying to get in.
He would have said anything!

Joslyn grabs a knife and heads for the door.

MIKE

Maim I'm just trying to do my job.

STELLA

You'll try anything to get in here.

MIKE

Not exactly Maim - I just need
permission to kill...

HELEN

How insane can you imagine - a
person asking permission to kill
you. Why!

STELLA

So you admit!

MIKE

I want to kill the power, just for
a second. That's all, I'm just
doing my job.

Joslyn raises the knife behind Stella.

JOSLYN

Maybe you should let him in Stella.

STELLA

It's the killer guy on the radio
posing as an man from the Power
Company.

JOSLYN

Who did he kill?

STELLA

The lady on the radio.

HELEN

I can still hear my sister screaming
for her life.

JOSLYN

How can she be on the radio if
she's dead?

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

STELLA

No her sister. He killed her sister. He want's to come in so he can cut the power off and kill us. We're not going to fall for that you electrified idiot you got your wires crossed.

JOSLYN

Oh my god, and to think I was going to try to get him to help me.

HELEN

The police said my sister wasn't his only victim. There had been several others at the same time.

MIKE

If you'll just give me permission to... listen. I'm going to call the police if it will make you feel better. I'm calling right now, I'll stand right here and call.

JOSLYN

I suppose it's ringing?

MIKE

Yes it ringing!

STELLA

You lying electrode! You can't get service up here, we all ready tried.

MIKE

My phone is satallite, it can't fail.

JOSLYN

Right Mike - we'll just see if the police even show up. Let's let him in, we can both take him on.

SFX: Thunder

STELLA

You knew his name.

JOSLYN

What - Did I say his name.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (3)

STELLA

Yes you sure as heck did say his name and I certainly don't remember telling you.

Stella and Joslyn square off and begin to circle each other with knives raised high.

JOSLYN

Didn't you tell me his name?

STELLA

When he told me his name you were no where around.

JOSLYN

I told you I saw the truck earlier. It said Mikes' Electric on the side of it.

STELLA

And another thing how did you know this was the Broderwick's home.

JOSLYN

WHAT!

STELLA

You asked me how did I end up to be at the Broderwick's house.

JOSLYN

That was an hour ago! Broderwick is the name on the mail box.

MIKE

Mami - the police are on their way. They have a car on patrol not far away.

STELLA/JOSLYN

Yeah right!

JOSLYN

You expect us to believe that.

MIKE

I'm gonna go wait in my truck. I'll be right out side.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (4)

JOSLYN

So let me guess, the cops pull up,
he kills them, puts on their uniform
and we let him in and he kills us
right. Or maybe the cops put on
his uniform and shot us with the
electric tazer?

The situation becomes some what humorous to both of them.

STELLA

I'm sorry Joslyn, it's just that
it's been such a strange night.

JOSLYN

I totally understand, you don't
have to explain but we're in this
together. Look - he's gone, what
do you say we try to find some
popcorn till the POLICE come.

STELLA

That sounds good. The pantry is
this way.

Joslyn and Stella exit into the pantry area. The news cast
is heard.

STELLA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

So - you really didn't know anything
about the phone?

JOSLYN (O.S.)

What phone?

STELLA (O.S.)

Well - Mr. Broderick said the there
was no way the phone could go out
because it was on satellite.

SFX: MICROWAVE POPPING CORN

SFX: LIGHTNING/THUNDER

HELEN

I guess my sister thought the man
had gone. But she let her guard
down and went to a window to get
in.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (5)

JOSLYN

That smells so good! I can't wait -
you have butter.

STELLA

I'm sure they do - some ware! It
taste kind of old.

JOSLYN (O.S.)

I love old, that's fine with me.
Old movies, older men, old money.

SFX: THUNDER

FX: LIGHTNING FLASHES

The radio flickers on.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

No chance of the weather letting
up any time soon. With roads washed
out power and phone lines down
you'd be best to dig in and stay
where you are. More information
on the body found in Platoma Lake
earlier this evening. There was
no evidence of forced entry at the
residence of the victim. The
suspect to this hideous crime was
for whatever reason allowed into
the home at the owners free will.
Police are still investigating but
now have reason to believe the
killer is someone who thrives on
persons leaving for vacation then
posing as someone who needs the
job of house sitting then once
inside take on the identity of the
actual owners. The suspect is
considered armed and extremely
dangerous. Back to tonights talk
about town with a young lady who
unfortunately lost her sister in a
very brutal murder. Are you still
there caller?

HELEN

Yes I'm here.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (6)

RADIO ANNOUNCER

With out getting too insensitive,
What were some of the last things
you remember your sister telling
you?

STELLA

How about I take your popcorn in
the kitchen and pour on the melted
butterrerrrrrrrrrrrr?

JOSLYN

Noooooooooooooo! Thank you!

HELEN

My sister just liked to talk about
everything. The last thing I
remember about her was how she
loved to make popcorn and watch
T.V. We never really saw the movie
we just talked all night.

The POWER flickers and the radio shuts off.

Joslyn and Stella sit there frozen in position.

STELLA

You know I really need to finish
the dishes. How about you watch
TV while I finish up.

Stella turns on the television and heads for the kitchen.

8

ACT THREE

SCENE ONE

9 INT. BRODERICK'S SUMMER CABIN - NIGHT

The Brodricks, dressed in the 1920s arrive at their summer cabin playing in the television set.

Susan puts her bags down and looks around. Darrin closely follows.

SUSAN

If you ask me, this is the real reason I married you. scullion, mystery, love.

DARRIN

Because we'd rather kill than go on a real vacation?

SUSAN

No - because we kill so much alike. Do you want to rest a while, I could fix you something to eat.

DARRIN

(imitating Dracula)

I want to suck your blood, that's all the meal I need.

SUSAN

Do you think she knows what's going on.

DARRIN

She hasn't a clue. That's what makes this the perfect crime.

The Broderick's begin to unpack their bags.

SUSAN

Can body parts be traced back to the original owner? I guess - we're owners of our own body parts - aren't we?

DARRIN

Now that technology doesn't exist as of yet.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

DARRIN (CONT'D)

But it won't be long before someone figures out a way to deliver a liver from one body to the other.

SUSAN

Can you imagine that. Hospitals holding fire sales on peoples body parts. Buy two body parts and the installation is free.

DARRIN

But wait - their's more! If the eyes don't quite fit in the socket, we'll even throw in an extra finger, lip or tooth.

SUSAN

Silly! I'm so proud of you. Do you realize how many doctors would love to be in your shoes? Why I wouldn't be surprised if even your victims were proud to be the one.

DARRIN

The one!

SUSAN

The one chosen to die for, the prime subject.

SFX: THUNDER/LIGHTNING

SFX: KNOCK AT THE DOOR

STELLA

I bet it's that electro magnetic fool again.

JOSLYN

I'll go with you.

Stella and Joslyn head for the door with knives in hand. The power comes on the radio.

HELEN

If only she had not gone to the door that last time. She would still be alive today!

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (2)

DARRIN

I guess it's true about taking the
life of another human being.

SUSAN

What do you mean dear?

DARRIN

It get's easier every time.

HELEN

If I could take her place in that
grave so she could live again I
would do it. I'd kill myself if
it meant that she could live again.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Now now Helen! You know there is
a law against the taking of a life.
Even if it's your own.

HELEN

I don't care. I love my sister
and I miss her so...

SFX: DOOR KNOCK AND BANG

OFFICER SHIN

Miss Broderick, It's officer Shin
with the police department. It's
okay to open up.

JOSLYN

Nice touch, black man always wanted
to be an Asian. I bet he's even
squinting his eyes when he changes
his voice like that.

HELEN

The killer could have been anybody.

DARRIN

I'm going to do something I've
never done before darling.

SUSAN

Umm that sounds interesting, and
just what might that be dear.

DARRIN

I'm going for the prime choice.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (3)

DARRIN (CONT'D)

The value of these body parts will bring us the mother load. Highest quality possible, USDA approved.

SUSAN

Our house sitter. Do it honey do it now.

DARRIN

No my darling, she comes later but for now... the main course.

SUSAN

Darrin you can't be serious.

Darrin grabs Susan and positions her for the kill.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Darrin, what's the matter, what are you doing? NO! Why!

DARRIN

Got to make the mortgage darling. One can live cheaper than two.

Susan backs against the wall.

DARRIN (CONT'D)

You always said I'm the head of house hold, I ware the pants.

HELEN

I'd stick a knife straight through his heard if I saw him today. That electro maniac pervert.

STELLA

Show us your badge, Officer Shin.

POLICE OFFICER

How can I show you with the door closed?

JOSLYN

Put it up to the peep hole.

The girls struggle to see through the peep hole.

STELLA

You're no cop.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (4)

STELLA (CONT'D)

I can get one of those badges out of a cracker jack box.

OFFICER SHIN

Listen to me, I assure you, I'm a police officer. One of you may be in serious danger. We have a report of a woman who escaped from the down state mental hospital. She's been taking over homes in the area. Once inside she murders the residence and assumes their identity. She maybe leading you to believe she needed road service, a job or to use the phone whatever the case you may be in danger.

Both girls jump back and face off with knives in hand.

STELLA

I've had questions about you ever since you came here.

JOSLYN

And now I've got questions about you again.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Did you and your sister get along.

HELEN

What are you trying to say?

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Why else would you be calling in tonight unless you needed release from previous issues?

HELEN

Why don't you come out and say it Rod. Why don't you ask me if I killed my own sister?

SUSAN

Don't do it Darrin. I love you, you know I do.

DARRIN

And I love you my darling.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (5)

DARRIN (CONT'D)

That's why I'm doing this - for us, to prove my love. We'll be together forever in hell.

SUSAN

Darrin PLEASE! PLEASE! Don't do it!

OFFICER SHIN

Open the door now! We mean you know harm.

STELLA

We, what does she mean we?

JOSLYN

Electro fart is with her. He's edging her on. Once this door is opened - it's all over, for both of us.

STELLA

We need to just go! We open the door and let them come in and we run out the back door. Let them kill each other.

JOSLYN

(whispering)

The cop and the electric killer are in cahoots. Their not going to kill each other.

STELLA

Joslyn, just tell me this. Your car really did brake down didn't it?

SUSAN

Of course it did! Are you still trying to figure out...

HELEN

I killed her! Yess I killed her and the horse she road in on! My sister and I never got along. Even when we were kids she always got the best, Oh she was mommie's pride and joy, the cream of the crop while me and my little brother got the left overs. Yes I did it.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (6)

JOSLYN

You really are the house sitter
and you didn't kill the Brodericks?

STELLA

What are you talking about? You
think I!

DARRIN

I never meant to be anything but
good to you Susan.

STELLA

You and electro mania man aren't
working together to get me to open
the door for him?

HELEN

My sister didn't have to die.
Tell me she didn't have to die.
Tell me I made a mistake.

ROD

Why didn't you call the police
instead of taking your own sisters
life?

JOSLYN

The cop and electro man aren't
really your side kicks to kill me
and make it look like I killed the
Brodericks?

ROD

Tell me the truth Helen.

HELEN

I've told you the truth!

ROD

Did didn't kill your sister, your
mother killed her. Your just trying
to save the one you love aren't
you?

HELEN

I... I... I love my mother. She
told me to do it because I was
under age.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (7)

ROD
So you really want to kill your
mother!

MIKE
I just need your permission to...

STELLA/JOSLYN
NO!

The radio and television turns to noise.

Both knives go into the air to kill the cop and electrician.

They open the door, Mike (the electrician) falls backwards
into the bushes. The cop draws her weapon.

STELLA
Now what permission are you talking
about what! What! What!

MIKE
Permission to reset your circuit
breaker. I'm not allowed to do
anything without the residents
permission.

10 EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Mike gets up and goes to the circuit breakers. He flips the
switch and all the lights come back on.

STELLA
You fixed it?

MIKE
With a little help from my friends.

The police officer puts her gun away. Several people come
from behind the wall. Yolanda is the first to speak.

YOLANDA
Happy belated birthday girl friend.

STELLA
Yolanda! What are you talking about.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

YOLANDA

I wanted to give you a surprise belated birthday party and congratulations on passing probation on your new job. I was waiting for everyone to arrive at my house. I knew you couldn't stand it by yourself on a stormy night. So we had to end the party sooner than we thought.

Everybody starts filing in.

STELLA

Yolanda!

YOLANDA

Oho - Stella, meet Mike aha - Sir Lancelot, he really does work for the city power company, That's why your lights were flickering.

MIKE

You really had me with the knife thing. Ech Ech Ech!

YOLANDA

Dominique, my classmate in college performing arts. You know her as Joslyn, she really is a cool friend.

JOSLYN

Pleased to meet you Stella. You didn't miss a beat. You had me going when I had to come up with all those excuses as to why I knew so much about the Brodericks.

YOLANDA

Jennifer Holly, Voice over class. You know her as Helen the lady on the radio.

HELEN

Girl I just love how you pay attention to details.

YOLANDA

And of course... Benson the butler, he doubled as the radio announcer Rod Bruster.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (2)

ROD

Girl you can cut my commercial any time of the day.

BENSON

Happy birthday Stella, Yolanda neglected to mention I also helped in the cleanup of this place so it would be perfect for your party.

YOLANDA

Your TV show, the neighbour down the street. She provided the house and her son provided the telescope to see everything you do. She's also officer Shin to keep you safe at night.

OFFICER SHIN

Girl I thought I was gonna have to blast the lock off to get you under control.

YOLANDA

Last but not least, the Broderick's

Darrin and Susan enter wearing their wardrobe they wore on television show.

DARRIN

Tell me - how did I look on the big screen.

SUSAN

Happy birthday Stella I hope this shows you there are a lot of people who care and love you.

YOLANDA

I hope you're not mad at me. You just don't know how sorry I am that I had to miss your birthday last year so, I called a few friends up from my acting class to celebrate.

Yolanda takes Stella to the kitchen window. She points to the house not far away.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (3)

YOLANDA (CONT'D)

Girl - you were so into being scared you didn't notice the telescope across the way. We could see into the kitchen window from the house down the road. That's how we knew about the cut on your finger. The owners of this place were nice enough to play along. We got a good deal for two nights rental. They are going to tear it down and build a freeway. How is your finger anyway, that was a nasty cut but Richard's wiring to the radio worked it right into play. By the way - your job - getting fired.

STELLA

Please don't!

YOLANDA

Yeah! It added a nice touch to you looking for work. Just don't forget to report back on Monday. Congratulations on passing probation. There's just one more thing.

STELLA

I don't think I can take anymore, need I ask - WHAT?

YOLANDA

PARTY!!!!!!

Music up, all cast brings the guests on the stage for dancing, singing food and fun.

THE END