

A MOUNTAIN HOUSE MURDER

Written by

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EXT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE - NIGHT

A lavish house rests atop a mountain; the balcony dangling over the edge. The front facing side is nearly all glass.

In the loft window a quick flash of light. A mostly muffled gunshot.

Then. Silence. A few moments later, a light switches on in another bedroom on the same floor.

The light in the loft turns on. A woman SCREAMS.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/LOFT - NIGHT

JEN, a middle-age woman in a red nightgown, stands horrified over the body of LEROY, her husband.

Leroy's body rests on a workbench; an unfinished model of the space shuttle underneath him. A bullet in his head.

BRENDA (O.S.)

(yawing)

Calm down Jen, you're always so dramatic.

BRENDA, Jen's younger sister, walks up the stairs.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Oh shit.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The rest of the house is awake and they sit on the couch. Brenda consoles her sister who is in tears.

Next to Brenda is her husband, CHRIS. TRISH, tall with long red hair, and CLAIRE, short and wrapped in a fuzzy blanket, also sit on the couch.

CLAIRE

You know, my husband died last month. Maybe they are connected.

BRENDA

(dumbfounded)

Yes, Claire, the heart attack that killed your husband followed you for a month up a mountain and shot Leroy in the back of the head.

Claire quiets down.

GEORGE (O.S.)
Nothing obvious up here.

GEORGE, Trish's husband and owner of the house, yells from the loft. He walks down the stairs.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Did anyone get ahold of the police?

CHRIS
They are on their way.

GEORGE
Good, good. Well, we should all just stay out here together until the cops come.

CLAIRE
I heard Chris say he hated Leroy. Last night.

CHRIS
Dammit Claire.

The couch erupts. Claire plays an innocent face.

BRENDA
Why would you say that?

CLAIRE
A friend of ours is dead! We all need to be armed with all the facts.

JEN
You didn't even know him, you're only here because of Brenda. Let's just do what George said and wait for the police.

George walks over and sits next to Jen. He puts his arms around her. Trish shoots a hateful look at him and stands up.

TRISH
I need a drink, anyone want anything?

Chris and Brenda shoot their hands up.

GEORGE
Can you get Jen a water?

Trish looks down at Jen.

JEN
No, I can get it.

TRISH
I got it. Just relax.

Trish walks to the kitchen. Chris gets up to help her... also to get away from Claire.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/KITCHEN

Trish grabs three wine glasses and a regular glass. She pops open an expensive bottle.

TRISH
I was saving this for a special occasion, but... You never know.

Chris doesn't want to be here either. Trish starts pouring.

TRISH (CONT'D)
You know, I heard George get up in the middle of the night. And I'm a H E A V Y sleeper.

CHRIS
Could've been to use the bathroom.

TRISH
Yeah, could've.

She hands Chris two wine glasses and takes the other two glasses.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/LIVING ROOM

They return to Claire being Claire. Chris sits next to Brenda, he tugs her a bit away from George.

CLAIRE
And now Leroy is on a rocket ship to heaven.

JEN
(sipping her water)
He was Buddhist.

BRENDA
How long till the cops get here?

GEORGE

Well we're about 5000 feet up, just getting up the mountain takes 20 minutes.

Claire stares at Chris. He notices, but doesn't look back at her.

TRISH

We called them about 15 minutes ago. Should be here soon.

CLAIRE

Why'd anyone want to kill Leroy?

The whole room groans. Trish gets up.

BRENDA

We can wait for the cops to ask that question.

TRISH (O.S.)

No, I think Claire is onto something. We are all just sitting here not acting like one of us killed Leroy.

Trish walks back from the kitchen again, her glass is filled

BRENDA

Because pointing fingers won't do us any good right now.

Again, the agitated group bicker against one another. In the midst of all this Jen just gets up and walks away.

GEORGE

Where are you going?

JEN

I'm going to lay down for a bit.

GEORGE

Let me walk you up.

TRISH

Use the buddy system.

Everyone looks at Trish.

TRISH (CONT'D)

Well we shouldn't be going alone to different rooms. Jen or George could be the killer.

JEN
How dare you.

TRISH
Well you found the body before
anyone else and 40% of murders are
from family members.

Trish gulps her wine.

GEORGE
Trish that is enough!

BRENDA
Well, maybe she is right. Blunt,
but right. I'll go with you two.

Chris tries to get Brenda to stay.

CLAIRE
(mouthing)
Don't leave me with them.

BRENDA
(back to Chris)
I'm sorry.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/MASTER BEDROOM

The room is large, with high ceilings, and filled with wooden furniture. The bedpost has 'George' and 'Trish' carved on it.

George and Brenda tuck Jen into bed.

BRENDA
Trish has been acting really weird.

GEORGE
She's just shaken up, that's all.

JEN
Don't start conspiring up here now.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/LIVING ROOM

Saying it is an awkward silence would be an understatement. Claire still peers into Chris' soul. Chris finally erupts.

CHRIS
I didn't do it!

CLAIRE
Why did you 'hate' him then.

Chris tries to rub the stress off his forehead.

CHRIS
Because he cheated on Jen.

Trish whips her head into the conversation.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
(leaning in)
Don't tell anyone. But they had
been working on it for a bit.

CLAIRE
So it was obviously Jen then?
Revenge is a bullet best served
cold.

CHRIS
What? Will you shut it Claire! How
do we know it wasn't you? Maybe you
have a dead husband fetish.

CLAIRE
That. Was uncalled for.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK. In all the yelling, the three of them
didn't notice the red and blue lights outside.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/MASTER BEDROOM

George, hearing the knocks, proceeds downstairs. Brenda lays
down with Jen.

JEN
This is a nightmare.

BRENDA
It'll be over soon.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/LIVING ROOM

Forensic agents walk up the stairs, George passes them on his
way down. OFFICER CRENSHAW talks with the three on the couch.

GEORGE
Thank you for coming officer.

OFFICER CRENSHAW
And you are?

GEORGE
George, owner of the house.

OFFICER CRENSHAW
Well need some time to comb through
the loft. In the mean time I'd like
to talk with everyone.

The officer flips open a notepad.

OFFICER CRENSHAW (CONT'D)
I'll start with a simple question
before we get everyone down here.
(to George)
Where were you when the body was
discovered?

GEORGE
In bed, like everyone else.

Trish takes another gulp of wine... but the bottle is empty.

TRISH
Well he did get up at some point.

George looks pissed at his wife.

GEORGE
Yeah to use the bathroom in the
middle of the night.

The officer writes feverishly in his notepad.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
What are you writing down?

The officer hides the notepad from view, looks perplexed at
George. He needs to calm down.

OFFICER CRENSHAW
Were the rest of ya 'asleep'?

Everyone nods. He flips his notepad shut.

OFFICER CRENSHAW (CONT'D)
I'm gonna go upstairs and talk with
the victims wife first, actually.

He motions to the other officer, a 'watch them' gesture.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/MASTER BEDROOM

Officer Crenshaw stands at the end of the bed.

OFFICER CRENSHAW
He always up that early?

JEN
Lee loves his hobbies.

Crenshaw scribbles on his notepad.

OFFICER CRENSHAW
And you, miss?

BRENDA
Brenda. I was fast asleep with my
husband. Woke up to Jen screaming.

Again, Crenshaw looks down to scribble in his notes. He notices something protruding out from under the sheet.

OFFICER CRENSHAW
Just a moment.

He lays down and lifts the sheet to find a small safe, door left open. Crenshaw puts on a set of gloves and reaches in.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/MASTER BEDROOM

Everyone is now on the couch, save the policemen.

BRENDA
You never told us you had a GUN!

TRISH
It is only for emergencies.

JEN
You didn't think it was important
considering Lee was shot.

OFFICER CRENSHAW
Who had access to the safe?

GEORGE
Only Trish and myself...

Everyone on the couch dramatically gets as far away from the two of them as possible.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
There is no way the one of us did
this.

A forensic agent calls down to Crenshaw. He holds a long strand of red hair. George moves away from Trish.

Officer Crenshaw approaches her. Checkmate.

TRISH

It wasn't me. I.. I don't know how
that got there. I don't shed.

She runs her hand through her hair; a clump comes out.

TRISH (CONT'D)

Oh shit.

OFFICER CRENSHAW

Ma'am you have to right to remain
silent.

Crenshaw continues to read Trish her Miranda Rights while handcuffing her. She throws a fit, but the officers keep her detained. An officer escorts her out the door.

OFFICER CRENSHAW (CONT'D)

(to the couch)

As for the rest of you, I'll need
you all to head down to the station
once you get decent.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/JEN'S ROOM

Jen changes into a new outfit. She uses a tiny mirror to apply some makeup, but it isn't working.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/MASTER BEDROOM

Jen walks through the master bedroom with her makeup bag in hand. She pushes open the cracked bathroom door.

George is standing like a deer in the headlights. His hand hovers over his pocket with a bit of red hair in it. He was trying to toss it in the trash can.

GEORGE

(nervous)

Hey, why don't you knock next time.

Jen slowly backs up.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I know what this looks like.

Jen feels behind her to not run into anything, her eyes focused on George.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

The only way we could be together
is with Leroy and Trish out of the
way.

Jen's breathing fluctuates. She backs into the door. She can't drum up any words. Her hands shake, but they finally latch onto the door knob.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOUSE/LOFT

Jen runs out the door and tries to run down the staircase, but George is too quick. He pushes her down and blocks the stairwell.

GEORGE

Why didn't you just knock!

Everyone downstairs hears the commotion.

BRENDA (O.S.)

Everything okay up there?

Jen, now lying in the middle of all the evidence, pulls herself up by the workbench. George charges at her.

In a moment of pure instinct, Jen grabs the space shuttle model and smashes George in the face with it. He stumbles back a bit.

Taking advantage of George's disorientation, Jen quickly strikes him again with the diorama. It shatters.

George stumbles back some more before he CRASHES down the stairs. All of the friends watch George's body tumble.

Jen triumphantly walks down the steps. She heads to the front door.

JEN

Now I have to clear Trish's name.

CLAIRE

I knew it was him!