

The Writer and the Writer's Brother

screenplay by
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based on the play "Pillowman" by
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EXT. KATURIAN'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY

A single story house that is well kept and is very 1950's middle class. The house is surrounded by a fence in the back which lines up with a forest. In the driveway is a parked car. Everything is bright and cheery.

KATURIAN (V.O.)

Once up a time there was a little boy whom his mother and father showed nothing but love, kindness, warmth, all that stuff.

INT. KATURIAN'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A YOUNG KATURIAN is in his bedroom. He is six years old. He is a happy child, is content with his life and is very optimistic. He gets up from the bed he is sitting on and begins walking to his desk, as he walks, we see various 50's toys on the floor.

KATURIAN (V.O.)

He wanted for nothing: all the toys in the world were his...

He reaches the desk in his room and we see many books, papers with childish scribbles on them, paintbrushes, pencils, pens, even some marbles and bouncy balls are scattered around.

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

All the seeds of creativity were implanted in him from an early age and it was writing that became his first love.

Katurian sits down at the desk and picks up a pen.

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

He wrote short stories, little novels, fairy tales. All of them were happy about green little pigs, talking animals, and happy little boys.

He begins writing on the paper, pauses and smiles. He turns and looks towards the bedroom door:

KATURIAN'S MOTHER and FATHER are standing in the doorway, smiling approvingly.

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

His parent's experiment had worked.

Pause.

KATURIAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The first part of his parent's
experiment had worked.

The Mother and Father look away from Katurian and smile at each other, then turn and walk off down the hallway.

INT. KATURIAN'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - NIGHT

Young Katurian is asleep in his bed, content. Around the bed are presents, some unwrapped, others still in boxes. Katurian is sleeping peacefully, he doesn't realize what is about to happen.

KATURIAN (V.O.)
It was the night of his seventh
birthday, that the nightmares first
started.

Suddenly, there is a LOUD THUMP, like a hammer hitting something, immediately followed by a muffled scream. Katurian bolts up in bed and looks around frantically.

The noise happens again and Young Katurian looks in the direction of the wall.

There is another noise, but this time it's the sound of a DRILL accompanied by another muffled scream that sounds to be coming from a SMALL CHILD.

Young Katurian grabs a TEDDY BEAR that is next to him and slowly gets out of the bed. He begins to walk to the wall, as he does, the SOUNDS OF TORTURE get louder and more intense.

He reaches the wall and is standing next to his writing desk. He is mere inches from the wall, looking as if he is about to cry.

Silence.

Then, another MUFFLED SCREAM and the sound of ELECTRICITY CRACKLING.

Young Katurian jumps, hits his the side of his desk and turns to run back to the bed. We linger on a few DOMINOS which fall off the desk and clatter onto the floor.

INT. KATURIAN'S CHILDHOOD HOME/HALLWAY - THE NEXT MORNING

Young Katurian is standing in the hallway in front of a door that is bolted and padlocked. Young Katurian is still in his pajamas and looks both tired and scared, but curious.

He touches the lock on the door, then looks down the hall at the door on the left, his door.

Through the opening of the door, we can see that it is Katurian's bedroom, with birthday presents and all still on the floor.

KATURIAN'S MOTHER walks up to Young Katurian. He looks up at her.

YOUNG KATURIAN
What were those noises last night,
Mama?

MOTHER
Oh little Kat, that's just your
wonderfully overactive imagination
playing tricks on you.

Young Katurian takes a breath of relief.

YOUNG KATURIAN
Do all little boys hear such sounds?

Mother places a hand on Young Katurian's shoulder.

MOTHER
No, my darling.

She bends down to be on his level.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Only the extraordinarily talented
ones.

Young Katurian thinks for a moment, then smiles.

YOUNG KATURIAN
Oh, cool.

Mother kisses Young Katurian on the forehead, stands back up and begins to walk down the hallway. Young Katurian looks at the door again, then walks off into his room.

KATURIAN (V.O.)
And that was that.

INT. KATURIAN'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Young Katurian is sitting at his desk writing rather furiously.

KATURIAN (V.O.)
And the boy kept on writing, and
his parents kept on encouraging him...

As Katurian writes, the objects in his room begin to change as time passes.

On his desk, there are is no longer a plethora of toys, paints and books, but instead more paper and writing utensils.

On the floor around the room, toys disappear and are replaced with tennis shoes and clothes.

INT. KATURIAN'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - NIGHT

Young Katurian (now age 13), lays on the bed and appears to be sleeping.

KATURIAN (V.O.)
But the sounds kept going on...

There is the familiar sound of a MUFFLED SCREAM coming from the room next door.

Young Katurian is revealed to be awake and listening to the noises, he seems disturbed, but lays and accepts it.

KATURIAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And his stories got darker and darker...

INT. KATURIAN'S CHILDHOOD HOME/HALLWAY - DAY

Young Katurian is walking down the hallway. He looks anxious.

KATURIAN (V.O.)
On the day of his fourteenth birthday, something happened.

A piece of paper slides out from under the door of the locked room. Katurian looks at it. He pauses, his face shows surprise and intrigue.

He walks towards it slowly, bends down, and picks it up.:

There is a note, written in dried blood.

His hand shakes as he starts to read it.

YOUNG MICHAEL (V.O.)
They have loved you and tortured me for seven straight years for no reason other than as an artistic experiment. An an artistic experiment which has worked. You don't write about green little pigs any more, do you? Your brother.

Young Katurian drops the paper on the floor and looks at the door. He runs off down the hallway and comes back with an AX.

He furiously begins to chop at the door. He is weak and stumbles at first, but keeps pushing through. A slash begins to appear in the door.

Katurian finishes axing through the door and drops the ax. It THUDS onto the floor. Katurian stares through the gap in disbelief.

Inside the room are his Mother and Father sitting in FOLDING CHAIRS. They smile at Katurian as he looks at them in disbelief. His father holds a hammer and his mother sits next to a tape recorder and stereo, playing sounds of muffled screams.

There is a bucket of dark liquid between them.

He opens his mouth, but can't make a sound.

Katurian's father leans forward.

FATHER

Flip it over.

YOUNG KATURIAN

(nervously)

What?

FATHER

The note.

Young Katurian looks back at the note. He bends down and picks it up, turning it away from the side written in blood.

The other side reads: This certificate hereby presents Katurian Katurian with the award of First Place in the Young Adult Regional Short Story Contest. Signed Michelle Happernick. April 5 1963.

Katurian reads the certificate aloud with a shaky voice.

He looks back up at his parents, who are smiling uncontrollably.

YOUNG KATURIAN

What's in that bucket?

Without looking down at the bucket, his father respond.

FATHER

Pig's blood, silly boy. Did you think we were actually torturing some poor little boy in here all these years?

Katurian considers this for a moment.

YOUNG KATURIAN

I guess not.

Mother and Father begin to laugh. So, Katurian does to.

EXT. KATURIAN'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY

There is a moving truck outside of the house. Through a sped-up time lapse, we see boxes being loaded and the house being emptied. The truck drives away and we see the house begin to enter into disrepair.

KATURIAN (V.O.)

They moved house soon after that and though the nightmare sounds had ended, his stories stayed strange and twisted, but good, and he was able to thank his parents for the weirdness they put him through.

The time lapse stops as the house has reached it's peak desolation. A figure appears in the yard and walks towards the house.

We see that it is the present day Katurian. He looks a little sad and emotional to be back at his childhood home.

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

Years later, on the day that his first book was published, he decided to revisit his childhood home for the first time since he'd left.

INT. KATURIAN'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Katurian walks around his bedroom that has now decayed. He touches the remains of the desk and sighs.

Katurian turns and walks back into the hallway.

INT. KATURIAN'S CHILDHOOD HOME/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Katurian walks down the hallway and stops in front of the door that he once axed through. The door still has the giant gash in it, but is also decaying and falling off the hinges.

Katurian touches the door and lightly pushes on it. The entire door falls to the ground and makes a loud THUD. It throws up dust and dirt.

When the dust settles, Katurian walks into the room and looks around. Some of the TORTURE DEVICES are still there, rusted and useless.

Katurian looks to the corner of the room and sees A DECAYING TWIN SIZE MATTRESS.

He walks over to it and bends down. Under the dust there is a sheet of paper. Katurian picks it up, dusts it off and finds that it's a STORY, WRITTEN IN BLOOD.

Panic comes across his face. He begins to read the writing and starts to cry.

YOUNG MICHAEL (V.O.)

Once upon a time, there was a little green pig who lived by himself with his master, farmer John...

Katurian stops reading the story and sets it back down on the mattress. He cries for a moment, then looks down at the mattress and notices:

A LARGE RIP IN THE FABRIC THAT HAS BEEN SEWN BACK UP, BUT IS BEGINNING TO COME UNDONE AGAIN.

Katurian begins to tear away at the rip, as he does so, it begins to stretch across the entire mattress. Katurian rips it faster and harder, until the entire threading is undone.

He stops, then slowly pushes back the covering and looks inside:

A DECAYING BODY OF A YOUNG CHILD.

Katurian jumps back and screams. He starts to cry even harder.

He looks around the room, still on his knees and sees the TORTURE DEVICES.

KATURIAN

(quietly)

No.

He stands up and begins to breathe heavily, trying to calm himself. He looks at the mattress, with a look of utter devastation in his eye, turns and walks out of the room.

He comes back a moment later, carrying a large can of liquid. He unscrews the can and begins pouring the GASOLINE onto the mattress. He sets the can down, then pulls a lighter out of his pocket. He flicks it on and drops it onto the soaked fabric, which becomes engulfed in flames.

Katurian stands there and watches it burn.

KATURIAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
He never mentioned a word of what he
had seen to anybody. Not his parents,
not his publishers, not anybody.
The final part of his parent's
experiment was over.

Katurian turns to face the camera.

KATURIAN (CONT'D)
Katurian's story "The Writer and The
Writer's Brother" ended there in a
fashionably downbeat mode without
touching on the equally downbeat,
but somewhat more self-incriminating
details of the truer story.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KATURIAN'S CHILDHOOD HOME/HALLWAY - DAY

Young Katurian (age 14) stands in the torture room, holding
the ax in his hands. Present day Katurian is standing a
little behind him.

Behind the two of them, we can see the door Young Katurian
has axed open. Nothing is decayed, it is all still fresh
and inhabited.

Mother and Father are not in the room, but on the mattress
in the corner is the barely alive body of Young Michael, who
seems to be the same age as Young Katurian.

Young Katurian drops the ax and walks over to him.

KATURIAN
After he'd read the blood written
note and broken through the door, it
was, of course, his own brother he
found in there. Barely alive and
brain damaged beyond repair.

Young Katurian kneels by the mattress and looks at, but
doesn't touch his brother.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KATURIAN'S PARENT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The bedroom door is open and Young Katurian and Present day
Katurian stand in the entrance to the room. Their backs are
to the camera and we can see a bed with two bodies, assumed
to be Mother and Father sleeping in them.

Young Katurian walks to the bed, climbs on it and crawls his way up to his parents.

Katurian looks the camera dead on.

KATURIAN

That night, while his parents were sleeping, the fourteen year old boy snuck into their room and held a pillow over both their faces for a little while.

Young Katurian pulls a pillow off his now dead father's face. He taps his mother on the shoulder multiple times, until she wakes up, confused.

Young Katurian waits for her to look over and see her husband. She starts to gasp, then Young Katurian shoves the pillow over her face.

FADE OUT.

THE END.