The Mask of Fear

by

Floyd Jones

© 2026 Floyd Jones
floydjones8@protonmail.com
(215) 939-4369

Floyd Jones
318 Clear Spring Rd.
Lansdale, PA 19446

"We all go wrong by too strenuous a resolution to go right." — Nathaniel Hawthorne

1. EXT. TERRI'S HOUSE — NIGHT

A masked man walks toward a house at night.

INT. TERRI'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Inside, a woman (Terri) has a nightmare about the Covid panic. In the nightmare, the nation shuts down… sports venues close, schools, businesses… people are ordered to wear masks and do "social distancing."

NEWS ANCHOR
Breaking news tonight. Shutdowns expand across the country. 75 million Americans now told they should stay home. Major airports closed as an air traffic controller gets sick. The desperate measures at hospitals across the country. Health care workers running out of vital supplies. The deadliest day yet in Italy, and shocking new video from inside their hospitals.

News theme plays.

NEWS ANCHOR
Good evening, we begin with breaking news. The president's Coronavirus Task Force promises that help is on the way for health care workers, many struggling without enough masks, gloves, gowns, and life-saving ventilators. And important new information about getting tested for the virus, as cases in the US surge to nearly 22,000. The White House now saying not everyone will get a test, as yet another state announces drastic measures to stop the spread in

the US. We begin tonight with Erica Walters in New York.

ERICA WALTERS
Tonight on the front lines in the battle against the coronavirus, a stark warning from public health officials in New York… “Immediately stop testing non-hospitalized patients for Covid-19,” adding that patients not requiring hospitalization should stay home.

DR. FAUSTUS
Not every single person in the United States needs to get tested.

ERICA WALTERS
A message echoed in Los Angeles, where officials are telling providers to stop testing mild cases to “minimize possible exposures to health care workers.” This, as the Vice President announces that commercial testing is ramping up, including a new FDA-approved rapid test that gives results in as little as 45 minutes. Americans are still lining up to get tested as more than 80 million Americans are told to stay mostly at home. Orders spanning five states — New York, California, Connecticut, Illinois, and now New Jersey.

EMILY LANKFORD, U. OF CLEVELAND
It’s really hard to feel like you’re saving the world while you’re sitting at home watching Netflix on your couch, but if we do this right, nothing happens!

ERICA WALTERS
But Covid-19 shows no signs of slowing down. Nationwide, there are more than 20,000 confirmed cases. Today in New York - which has more cases than any state, a scare after an air traffic

controller tested positive, temporarily halting all flights to New York area airports. In Los Angeles…

Terri's phone rings, waking her up.

TERRI
Hello?

SAM
Terri, it's Sam. Are you OK?

TERRI
Yes, I'm fine. Sorry, I laid down to take a quick cat nap, but I guess I overslept. I'll take a quick shower, get dressed and come over.

SAM
OK, great. See you when you get here.

Terri leaves the bedroom, takes a shower, returns to the bedroom and gets dressed. All the while, the masked man is creeping into the house. As soon as she is fully dressed, he kills her.

**** OPENING TITLES ****

2. INT. OFFICE - DAY

Ted and Christine are waiting to see a doctor. Christine looks at her phone, and Ted looks at her. He notices that she's not wearing a wedding ring.

TED
Excuse me, do you mind if I ask you a question?

CHRISTINE
Not at all. Go ahead.

TED
I know this is very forward of me, but if you're not doing anything this week-end, would you mind having dinner with me? Maybe Saturday night?

CHRISTINE
I don't think so.

TED
Are you sure?

She looks him over.

CHRISTINE
Do you have a place in mind?

TED
Do you know Il Pomodoro? On Old York Road?

CHRISTINE
Mm-hmm. That's a nice place.

TED
Is it? I've never been. Always wanted to go there, though. Looks nice from the outside.

CHRISTINE
You know, my mother always told "Never date a man you meet in a psychiatrist's office." Or if she didn't, she probably should have.

TED
So… 7 o'clock Saturday?

CHRISTINE
I'll meet you there.

TED
I'm Ted, by the way.

CHRISTINE
Christine.

The receptionist tells Christine she can see the doctor now.

DISSOLVE TO:

3. WOODS - DAY

Ted is walking through the woods. He sees zombies and tries to run away, but can't.

TED
I keep having these nightmares… I've gone out walking in the woods, and I see this abandoned house. It's all run-down and everything. So I go inside, but the place is infested with zombies. I try to run, but running is so diffi-cult… I can barely move.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Ted is on the couch, talking to Dr. Sam Waters.

TED
I'm having dreams like that more and more frequently lately. This past month, it's been three or four times a week at least.

SAM
Why didn't you tell me about this until now?

TED

I don't know. I guess when they started I didn't think they were a big deal. It's only recently, since they've started recurring a lot, that I've given them some thought. Do you think there's anything you can do to help?

SAM

Oh yes, I think so. The first thing we'll want to look into is stress reduction. I know your job can be rather stressful. We might also want to get you in to see a sleep specialist. Trauma, drugs, and neurological disorders can all cause nightmares. We'll want to rule out those causes first, because they require special treatments. There are also effective drugs that can provide immediate relief from bad dreams. Prazosin, for example, ends bad dreams almost immediately for most people. But there are significant side effects, especially if taken over time.

TED

OK. Hey, I saw this poster the other day on my way to work. It said "Vaping is as safe as sky-diving without a parachute!" I see people doing it all the time, though!

SAM

Well, it can't really be *that* dangerous, can it? I mean, people without a parachute die, right? They die always, and right away.

TED

Oh yeah, OK… so people don't die right away from vaping. They live for a while, but then it *does* kill them. I don't know why the state doesn't just make it illegal. They need to do something! It's not right to just stand by and let bad things happen.

SAM
How are things going for you at work?

TED
Oh, all right, I guess. I'm getting things done, but I still feel like my boss is trying to weasel his way in and take credit for my work. Frankly, I think he's jealous of me and is maybe a little afraid I'll get promoted ahead of him before too long. And oh boy, if that happens, he'll wish he had been a little more respectful!

SAM
Now, about that…

TED
Hey, I need to mention something real quick before we continue…

SAM
Yes?

TED
Well, I met this woman in the waiting room earlier. A patient of yours, I guess. And you know how you've been telling me how I need to be less shy, less reserved…

SAM
Ted, this is becoming a bad habit. Remember how things worked out with Terri?

TED
Well, I asked this woman out on a date and she said yes.

SAM
Oh, really? The patient who was just here? Miss Cooper? Christine?

TED
Yeah, that's her. You know how I am… I always get here at least an hour early, just in case.

SAM
Right.

TED
She and I are going to get together on Saturday night. But now, I need to know… about Christine… is she, like, nuts? I mean, unlike Terri, she seems normal, but obviously in a place like this, you never know, right?

SAM
Well, first of all, Terri isn't "nuts," and secondly, as you know, I'm not at liberty to divulge any sort of patient information…

TED
Of course, of course… but if you just have sort of a general impression… I mean, is it a good idea for me to see her or not?

SAM
I don't…

TED
Let me put it this way… is she danger-ous? Am I putting my life at risk? Is this date a greater or worse risk than vaping? How's that?

SAM
I think you'll be fine. But as long as you're taking my advice… I would cau-tion you not to worry too much about vaping, either.

TED
Well, let's not get crazy!

4. CAR — NIGHT

Jeff is driving, with Sandra sitting next to him. They hear a noise stop the car to get out & investigate. They see that they've got a nail in a tire.

JEFF
Damn. A nail in the tire.

SANDRA
What do you think? Is it bad?

JEFF
It ain't good. You know, we're only about a mile or so away from Sam's house.

SANDRA
You want to walk?

JEFF
If you're OK with it. Since we're staying the night, we might as well wait 'til morning to fix this.

SANDRA
It's OK with me. Let's go.

As they walk, a bum stares at them and then starts yelling:

BUM
Hey! What the hell are you doing out here? You should be inside!

They continue to walk, ignoring the bum.

BUM
You're doomed! DOOMED!

They continue on, leaving the bum behind. He shuffles away.

5. EXT. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Sandra & Jeff arrive at Sam's house. The killer watches as they enter.

INT. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Jeff and Sandra enter.

SAM
Hey, Jeff! Sandra! Glad you could make it.

Jeff and Sandra both say they're happy to be there.

SAM
I'd like to introduce you to Christine. She's one of my patients.

From outside, the killer sees Christine. We zoom in on his eyes and dissolve into a flashback:

6. INT. RESTAURANT — NIGHT

Ted and Christine are dining together.

TED
You know what's *really* scary? Climate change! It makes me so angry to see that there are so many people who don't take this issue seriously. I mean, the fate of the planet is at stake, and it's like people don't even care. And that's the thing… that's the thing. There's a real lack of *caring* out there these days. People are so self-interested. They're wrapped up in their own affairs, their own daily lives. And so

they don't care what happens to anyone else. They're so *selfish*. They won't lift a finger to help. You know what I mean?

CHRISTINE
Yeah… it's like they always say, it's a jungle out there.

TED
Yeah, it really is.

CHRISTINE
So… here's my question… are you sure it's so wrong for people to be self-interested? I mean, don't we *all* sort of look out for Number One first? And isn't that natural? I care about my neighbors. I care about my co-workers. But I would think, for example, when I have kids, that I'll care about them more than I care about my neighbors' kids. I mean, to be honest, the lady that lives next door to me has three kids, and they're cute and all, but I don't even remember their names!

TED
Yeah, well, but that's the thing, right? You said it's a jungle out there, and that's true. But we're supposed to be better than that. We can't just live like animals. We need to look at the big picture and realize that we've gotta put our interests aside sometimes, help each other out. Otherwise, we might as well throw civilization down the crapper. Our society, our rights, our freedoms… none of that stuff means anything unless we're willing to do the right thing… at least sacrifice a little bit, to help other people.

CHRISTINE
I guess you're right. Hey, have you heard about that coronavirus thing that's going on over in Asia now?

TED
No… what's the story there?

Just then, a waitress approaches. She asks if she can take their plates and if they want anything else. They tell her they're finished, and so she leaves the check on the table.

7. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT

The party is in full swing at Sam's house. Matt is playing Christmas song on the piano. When he finishes, everyone applauds.

SAM
Everybody, I just want to take a minute and thank you all for coming here tonight. As you know, it has been a very difficult year, but I think we all understand now that there's no reason to panic, and so I just hope we'll all have a little fun this evening.

CARL
I think I speak for everyone when I say "Thanks for having us over, Sam." As one of your patients, I can say that you've done a helluva lot for me personally. I've always been a bit of a hypochondriac myself, and I frankly don't know what would've become of me this year if it wasn't for you.

SANDRA
Me, too, Sam. After everything we've been through this year, a party like this was important. And I'm thankful to you for being such a calming influence.

SAM
Well, thanks… I consider that to be a very great compliment. I only wish that I had been able to help all of my patients…

CHRISTINE
You mean Ted?

SAM
Yeah…

As Sam tells the guests about Ted, and we flash back to Ted watching a news report about coronavirus and growing more fearful.

8. INT. APARTMENT

Ted is eating a cheeseburger and drinking a milkshake as he watches a news report on TV. [NBC - 3/12/2020]

SAM
(voice-over)
Ted had always been a bit paranoid, but when the lockdowns happened… well, that just pushed him over the edge.

NEWS ANCHOR
Breaking news tonight on several fronts on the coronavirus pandemic. The shock waves from President Trump's decision to ban nearly all travel from Europe.

TED
That racist son of a bitch!

NEWS ANCHOR
Americans scrambling to get home from overseas before it takes effect. States and cities taking drastic measures to enforce social distancing. New York's governor banning gatherings over 500 people; California banning

events of 250 or more. Now some states closing all public schools. Also tonight, across the country, the mass cancellations — Broadway going dark, DisneyLand and Universal Studios Hollywood shutting down. March Madness called off. The NBA, MLB, and NHL delaying their seasons. A second NBA player testing positive. And Hollywood legend Tom Hanks and his wife Rita Wilson infected.

TED
Oh my God! Tom Hanks is gonna die?

NEWS ANCHOR
The stock market in free fall. The Dow plunging over 2,000 points, the worst day since the 1987 crash. The testing crisis — the president says it's going smoothly — but a much more sobering message from a top expert fighting the crisis.

DR. FAUSTUS
That is a failing. I mean, let's admit it.

NEWS ANCHOR
Why is U.S. testing lagging so far behind other countries? And answering your questions: how to talk to your children about the outbreak, and how to prepare for the event that you may have to self-isolate.

TED
Jesus H. Christ!

8B INT. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT

The conversation from earlier continues…

CHRISTINE
When the lockdowns were announced, Ted barricaded himself in his apartment, sealing the windows and doors to prevent outside air from getting in. It had only been a week or so since our date, and I'll confess, I liked him. So I went to see him, but he wouldn't open the door to let me in.

8C INT. APARTMENT

Ted is barricading his apartment. He seals the doors and windows. We see that his bathroom is filled with toilet paper.

Ted hears a knock at his front door. He goes to answer it, without opening it, of course.

TED
Who's there?

CHRISTINE
Hi Ted, it's me, Christine. Just thought I'd drop by to see…

TED
You can't come in! What are you doing here? You shouldn't be outside! It's too dangerous! You should go home right away!

CHRISTINE
Well, I had to stop out to get some food for the week, and I figured that as long as I was in the neighborhood, I'd drop by…

TED
Jesus! What the hell? Get your stuff delivered! You can go online and take care of all that! You should NOT be out right now! You should go straight home!

Don’t stop anywhere, don’t talk to anybody! Call me when you get home. I - I’d love to talk to you, but not like this. We’ve gotta be smart. We’ve gotta be safe!

CHRISTINE
But…

TED
No, no! It’s just for a couple of weeks! Trust me, it’ll be all right, but you’ve gotta go now! Bye!

9. INT. SAM’S HOUSE — NIGHT

Back at the party…

CHRISTINE
I must say I’m surprised Ted hasn’t called the cops on us to derail the party.

SAM
That would be just like him.

Just then, the doorbell rings. Jeff opens the door and sees a cop. (It’s really Sam’s buddy Ralph wearing a costume, complete with a fake mustache.)

RALPH
All right, everybody… no parties allowed. All of you, pack your stuff and go home!

JEFF
Sam! Looks like we’re busted!

Sam approaches and rips off Ralph’s fake mustache.

SAM
Very funny!
Don't worry, everybody… this is just my buddy Ralph. He and I have known each other since grade school.

RALPH
Hiya, kooks!

Ralph is hit by assorted snacks thrown by the other guests.

10. TED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ted sees someone being taken away from his apartment building in an ambulance. He calls Sam.

TED
Dr. Waters? It's Ted. Listen, I'm at home and I'm looking out my window and I can see one of my neighbors being loaded into an ambulance and I'm freaking out here. He's probably dying of coronavirus and who knows how many people he's come into contact with and what he's touched!

SAM
Are you sure he's got coronavirus? Do you know who this person is?

TED
Oh my god, yes! I know that guy! His name is, uh, Harry! Oh my god… poor Harry! You're too young to die!

SAM
How old is this guy?

TED
Oh, he's like, 70 or something like that.

SAM
Oh… well, like I said… are you sure he's got coronavirus? If he's 70 years old… I mean, that's a little young to be dying, but it's not *very* young. He could have something else.

TED
Hey… what is with you? I called you for some emotional support! There's a pandemic going on around here, ya know? What do you think is going on? It's not like Harry's a hundred years old… he's only about 70. Maybe 75. And yeah, OK, he's got some health problems. You know, he's overweight and I think he might be diabetic. But coronavirus exacerbates all of these things! I sincerely doubt he'd be in that ambulance right now if it wasn't for this terrible virus!

SAM
Well, look, I'm just trying to keep things in perspective.

TED
Oh, no… the ambulance is pulling away! Oh my God… pull through, Harry! You're too young to die!

Crying, Ted hangs up the phone.

11. INT. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Back at the party, Vicki enters. Revelers engage in various activities as Ted watches from outside. Matt continues to play piano. Sam & Christine play chess.

Jeff and Ralph mix cocktails as Sandra watches. They greet Vicki as she enters, and she joins them.

RALPH
Vicki, honey! Get your sweet buns over here, baby.

VICKI
Nah, I've gotta go see Sam. Are you guys mixing drinks again? I can't believe it. Every time I see you, it's the same thing. You guys are obsessed!

RALPH
Here, try this.

Ralph hands Vicki a drink. She takes a sip.

VICKI
Wow, that's good. What's it called?

RALPH
That's called a Northern Lights. It has edible glitter in it.

JEFF
Now try this one!

Jeff hands Vicki a drink. She takes a sip.

VICKI
Whoa! What's this?

JEFF
This is a Charcoal Mirage. The secret ingredient is a pinch of activated charcoal.

SANDRA
That's my favorite, too.

RALPH
Yeah, well, I'm just getting warmed up. I hope neither of you girls are planning to drive home tonight.

Carl, who's sipping a drink, sits next to Sam.

CARL
Hey Sam, I thought you said Terri was coming over.

SAM
She should've been here by now. I called her a little while ago. I don't know what's keeping her. By the way, have you seen Vicki? I expected her to be here by now, too.

CARL
Yeah, she got here a few minutes ago. She's watching Jeff and Ralph doing a cocktail mixing contest.

SAM
Again? Man, those guys are obsessed!

CARL
Maybe so, but they make some damn good drinks! ~ Anyway, Terri lives close to here, doesn't she?

SAM
Yeah, she lives in the neighborhood. Over on Curtis Street.

CARL
What's the number of her house?

SAM
318. ~ Oh, shoot! You're not going to go over there, are you?

CARL
I think I should.

SAM
No, really…

CARL
I just want to make sure she's OK. Be back in a jiffy!

Carl downs his drink and dashes away

SAM
Darn it. I gave out Terri's address without thinking.

CHRISTINE
Is it a problem?

SAM
Probably not, but it could be. Carl has a thing for her. There are too many romantic complications among these people. Seems like everyone here has some kind of issue.

Just then, Vicki enters. She sits next to Sam and puts a drink in his hand.

VICKI
There he is! There's my Sammy! Here, try this.
(To Christine)
Hi, I'm Vicki.

CHRISTINE
Christine.

VICKI
Are you a patient?

CHRISTINE
Uh huh. And how do you know Sam?

VICKI
Oh, he and I have known each other for years. He’s my fiancé.

CHRISTINE
(Shocked)
Oh, really?

12. STREET — NIGHT

Carl walks to Terri's house & knocks on the door. No one answers. Suddenly, the bum appears & startles him.

BUM
You’re gonna die!

CARL
Get out of here, ya filthy bum!

The bum walks away.

EXT. TERRI’S HOUSE — NIGHT

Carl sees a light is on inside and discovers that the back door is open… looks like maybe someone broke in. He goes inside and up to the bedroom, discovers Terri’s body, and Ted kills him.

13. INT. SAM’S HOUSE — NIGHT

Sheila is sitting in a chair sipping a drink. Christine sits down next to her.

SHEILA

You seem a little bummed out. Is something wrong?

CHRISTINE
That obvious, huh? You're Sheila, right?

SHEILA
Right.

CHRISTINE
I'm just trying to get a handle on the romantic relationships around here.

SHEILA
Oh, well, this is the place to be if you're looking to study romantic entanglements. I think everyone here has a thing for at least two other people. You met Ralph, right? He used to date Sandra, but now I think he's crazy about Vicki. He's married, too. I don't know where his wife is. Probably out fooling around with some other guy. I think Sandra still loves Ralph even though she's dating Jeff. And frankly, I think Jeff and Carl might be gay for each other. Don't tell anybody I said anything.

CHRISTINE
I was just starting to date a guy named Ted — who was invited to be here but refused to come. Now I'm falling for Sam, who I didn't realize was engaged.

SHEILA
Love's crazy, isn't it?

CHRISTINE
How about you? Who are you in love with?

SHEILA

I've sworn off men… at least for a while. The only man I see is Sam, and that's strictly professional. I'm tempted to say that I'm scarred for life by the experience I had, but I'm working to get past it.

CHRISTINE
What happened?

SHEILA
Well, long story short, I met a man who started stalking me. He was obsessed, and started putting me in dangerous situations so he could "rescue" me. Damn near killed me when he cut the breaks on my car. He would spread vicious rumors and then come to my defense. My hero!

CHRISTINE
Wow, that's creepy.

SHEILA
Yeah. Some people will smother you with their love.

CHRISTINE
Jeez. I'm glad I don't know anyone like that.

14. INT. TED'S APARTMENT – NIGHT

TED
I'm so scared. Scared all the time. The virus is killing people by the thousands every day. I've been doing the right things… I stay indoors, I have all my food delivered… I have no human contact outside of you, Sam. Christine has called me a few times, but I don't even answer anymore. What's the point? We're not going to be able to get back

to normal anytime soon. This is the new normal. I refuse to be selfish like so many people.

I saw that Florida and Georgia are re-opening. It's too soon. It's too soon! It's human sacrifice! And those stupid college kids on Spring Break! How many people will they kill? Those stupid Southerners… hillbillies having a pool party? What the hell? They should be executed. They're going to kill every-body. They're going to destroy the world!

People say that this thing only affects old people, but that's not true. Young, healthy people are dropping like flies!

And yet people don't want to wear a *mask*? They want to go get a *haircut*? These people would kill us all, and for what? For a *haircut*? For their precious *jobs*? For their *401k's*?

I don't know how much more of this I can take. I have nightmares all the time now. Every night! I can hardly sleep. I'm lucky I can work from home, but it's so hard. But we've gotta stay locked down for as long as it takes.

INT. TED'S APARTMENT

Riots begin, and Ted watches the carnage from his window and on TV. He calls Sam.

TED

Sam? Yeah, it's me, Ted. Have you been watching the news?

SAM

Yeah, it's terrible, isn't it?

TED

What? No, this is great! This is long overdue!

SAM
Excuse me? You've been freaked out over the virus for months! Aren't you worried about these people spreading it?

TED
Hey, well… the thing is, racism is a public health issue, too. You know? So, I mean, if this is what it takes…

SAM
Well, OK. What can I say? I'm surprised. But… there was something I was hoping to discuss with you the next time we spoke…

TED
What's that?

SAM
Well, I've been reading some very hopeful news lately. Some very prominent doctors have said that they think this is a seasonal virus like the flu, and not worth shutting society down.

TED
Oh, no, no… that can't be right. Why are you minimizing this virus? Why are you minimizing the impact of racism?

SAM
I don't think I am. I'm just trying to keep things in perspective, that's all.

TED
OK, look… I've gotta go.

Ted hangs up.

INT. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT
Sam is sleeping when his phone rings. Ted leaves a message for him, and we see what's happening with Ted.

EXT. CITY STREETS — NIGHT
Ted is out on the street, joining with the rioters & looters.

TED
I just couldn't take it anymore… the isolation, the loneliness… and so I had to do something. You've always told me that, haven't you Sam? You've always said that a person has to face his problems and not hide from them, right? Well, that's what I'm doing now. I'm taking action to fight the systemic racism that plagues our country. I met this group of people out in the street… they're patriots, Sam. Patriots! And I joined up with them. We're putting ourselves at risk, putting our lives on the line, risking catching this terrible virus that'll surely kill us if we catch it. But we have to do this. We have to fight against racism. But I think we'll be OK. Fortune favors the bold, doesn't it? I'm happier than I've been in months! We're fighting for justice, Sam, and we're gonna win!

Ted lobs a molotov cocktail and runs away.

15. INT. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT
The Christmas party continues. Matthew finishes playing a Christmas song on the piano.

CHRISTINE
Wow, you're so talented.

MATTHEW

Oh, anyone can do this. You've just got to spend the time practicing, that's all.

Matthew takes a sip from a drink that's sitting on the piano.

MATTHEW
By the way, have you had one of these drinks? They're terrific.

SAM
I think that one's called a Solar Flare.

MATTHEW
It's so good.

Just then, we see a shadow pass over Christine. Startled, she looks out the window.

CHRISTINE
Did you guys see that?

SAM
See what?

Matthew shrugs his shoulders.

CHRISTINE
I could swear someone just walked by. I've had this terrible feeling that someone's watching us.

MATTHEW
It has been that kind of year, hasn't it?

CHRISTINE
Yeah. We're all a little jumpy, I guess.

SAM
Sure, but sometimes our fears have been justified, too.

MATTHEW
That's true. I always tell my patients that it's important to be able to distinguish between real threats and imaginary ones. For example, I never believed we would see a world-wide panic attack, and yet it happened.

CHRISTINE
Oh, are you a psychiatrist, too?

MATTHEW
You thought I was one of Sam's patients, didn't you? I guess I give off that kind of vibe. Mental patient chic.
(Sam looks at him disapprovingly.)
Not that there's anything wrong with that.
(Christine laughs)
Anyway, we've seen plenty of experiments and had plenty of case studies that show how people are conformists. They'll change their opinions to go along with the crowd. And once they've been tricked into believing something that's not true, it can be extremely difficult to get them to believe the truth. And people who can be convinced to believe absurdities can also be convinced to commit atrocities.

16. EXT. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Sheila steps outside for a smoke. She sees what looks like a foot over in the yard beside the house. She goes to take a look and sees to her horror that it's the bum… dead. She starts to scream, but suddenly Ted appears and kills her.

17. INT. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT

As Christine looks at the Christmas tree, she recalls the time when she called Ted:

TED
Hello? Oh, hey! How are you? Yeah, it has been a while. You staying safe?

CHRISTINE
Well… you know… I've been fine. But listen, I'm worried about you. And I miss you. I want to see you again.

TED
I want to see you, too. Why don't you hit me up on Zoom or FaceTime or something?

CHRISTINE
I mean, I want to see you in person.

TED
Well, of course I want that, too. But it's just not the right time. We've got to be responsible. We've got to be safe. If we got together and one of us infected the other…… well, that would be terrible, right? So, for now, we just have a have a "virtual relationship." It won't be for that long, probably, and it can be fun.

CHRISTINE
Ted.

TED
It was just a thought. I know, we haven't known each other for very long, and we hardly ever got to see each other in person… but, you know. I'm just saying… if you're interested.

CHRISTINE
This has been going on for six months. I don't think I can do this anymore. Goodbye, Ted.

She hangs up the phone.

TED
But… hey!

18. EXT. TERRI'S HOUSE — NIGHT

A cop approaches Terri's house. A neighbor greets him:

NEIGHBOR
I'm so glad you're here.

COP
You're the one who called? You say you've seen a couple of men sneaking around here?

NEIGHBOR
Yeah… first one guy, and then a little while later, another one. I saw both of them from the window in my kitchen. Both of them started by lurking around, and then they went in through the back door.

COP
Show me.

NEIGHBOR
They went in right there. See, it's open.

COP
Stay here.

The cop goes inside, and the neighbor soon follows.

19. INT. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Christine talks with Sam in the kitchen…

CHRISTINE
I have a confession to make, Sam.

SAM
Yeah?

CHRISTINE
I've fallen in love with you.

SAM
Oh, Christine.

CHRISTINE
I know, it's terrible. I didn't know you were engaged. You know, you might've mentioned that at some point.

SAM
Sorry.

CHRISTINE
It's OK. Just one of those things, I guess. First I fall for Ted, and then for you. Well, at least I'm striking out with a better class of man.

SAM
Well…

CHRISTINE
I suppose I shouldn't have said anything. Anyway, thanks for understanding.

Christine kisses Sam on the cheek. Vicki sees this. She announces her presence and enters the room.

CHRISTINE
If you don't mind, I'll excuse myself.

Christine leaves the room, while Vicki looks inquisitively at Sam.

20. INT. TERRI'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Ted kills both the cop and the nosey neighbor.

21. INT. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Back in Sam's kitchen, Vicki confronts him…

VICKI
All right, Sam… what the hell? What's the deal with her? Are you two fooling around?

SAM
No, of course not. Christine's really in love with Ted, but he's gone loony. I invited him to the party, too, but he declined. Just a few hours ago, I tried one last time to talk with him, but it didn't go well.

INT. TED'S APARTMENT — NIGHT

Ted is looking at a Christmas card while he is on the phone with Sam.

TED
I see you're having a Christmas party in a couple of weeks.

SAM
I am. You got the invitation, obvious-ly.

TED
Yeah. You know, Sam, I think I need to find a new psychiatrist. The fact that you think it's appropriate to have a

Christmas party this year is so shocking, so reckless… I just can hardly believe it.

SAM
So I guess you won't be coming?

TED
Hey man, screw you! I've poured my heart and soul out to you, and what do I get in return? Disease-spreading behavior, a willful disregard for science, and jokes that are in really poor taste!

SAM
OK, if you feel like you need to see somebody else, that's fine. I tend to agree… evidently I'm not doing much good for you.

TED
That's right, you're not. And… hey… you didn't invite Christine to your little party, did you?

SAM
As a matter of fact, I did.

TED
She didn't accept, did she?

SAM
Yes, she did.

TED
Listen here, you son of a bitch! I don't know what the hell is wrong with you… but I'm warning you… you'd better not have that party. I'm not just going to stand by and let this happen.

SAM
You know, that sounds a bit like a threat.

Ted hangs up on Sam.

Ted fumes… crying, raging, and muttering to himself.

TED
They don't follow the rules… they're going to kill everyone… They've gotta pay!

22. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Christine starts to leave. As she opens the front door, Sam stops her.

SAM
Christine, where are you going?

CHRISTINE
I'm going home. I'm so embarrassed.

SAM
You shouldn't be. Don't go. It's still early.

CHRISTINE
Vicki must think I'm awful.

SAM
Not at all. ~ Vicki, will you come over here, please?

Vicki joins them at the door.

VICKI
Hey, what's going on? You're not leav-ing, are you?

CHRISTINE
You must hate me.

VICKI
Hate you? Oh, come on! Look, Sam explained the situation to me. It's totally cool. You have nothing to be ashamed of, really.

CHRISTINE
Are you sure?

VICKI
Of course. Let's go get another cocktail.

They look over at the dining room table, but are surprised to see that no one is there.

VICKI
Wow, this party's really thinning out. Where is everybody?

SAM
That reminds me… Carl went over to check on Terri. Let me call and see what's keeping them.

As he calls, Vicki takes Christine's coat.

SAM
Strange. Neither one of them answer. I think I'll take a walk over to Terri's house and check on them. I'll be right back.

Sam puts on his coat and leaves.

23. INT. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Sandra & Jeff sneak upstairs and lie down together on a bed. We pan over to the other side of the room and see Ted. Unnoticed, he approaches the bed.

Downstairs, Vicki and Christine think they hear a noise. They go upstairs to investigate.

24. TERRI'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Sam finds the bodies of Terri, Carl, the cop and the neighbor. Just then, his phone rings. He answers:

SAM
Ted?

TED
I told you not to have that party, Sam. Now people are dead, and it's *your fault*!!

SAM
You did this! You filthy murderer!

TED
If people would only follow the rules, this wouldn't have to happen!

SAM
People *have* been following the rules, you maniac! But you can't see past your fear! You're a coward, Ted! A coward!

TED
Oh, yeah? How about you tell that to your girlfriend?

Ted hangs up. Sam, realizing that Ted's at his house, rushes out.

25. INT. SAM'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Vicki & Christine discover Sandra's & Jeff's bodies. Ted kills Vicki and tries to kill Christine, but she wounds him and runs downstairs,

finding Matthew's lifeless body lying beside the front door. She flees into the garage, where she finds Ralph's body. Finally, she runs out the back door, with Ted following. Sam arrives and is met by Christine while still outside.

CHRISTINE
It's Ted! He's here! He killed Vicki! He killed everybody!

She embraces Sam, and they hear a car start. They see Ted driving away.

SAM
I'm going to get him!

CHRISTINE
Sam, no! Don't!

Sam gets into his car and follows Ted. Ted speeds recklessly on the icy roads and crashes his car.

26. INT. HOSPITAL — NIGHT

At the hospital, Sam & Christine meet. A doctor tells them that Ted has died… we see the medical chart, which lists him as a Covid death. During the end credits, we hear a jaunty tune while we see people wearing masks, reminiscent of the end of *Dawn of the Dead*.