



# INTERNAL THREAT

A Crime/Thriller Screenplay  
by Joel McElvaney



The background of the image is a school hallway. On the left side, there are rows of blue metal lockers with silver handles and combination locks. The hallway extends into the distance, ending in a bright, open doorway. The floor is a light-colored tile. The overall lighting is bright, coming from the doorway at the end of the hall.

# **LOGLINE**

**When a bullied outcast seeks violent revenge on his long-time tormentor, his best friend must choose between helping his friend or saving the bully.**



# SCRIPT SYNOPSIS

The story opens on MARK COOPER, an angry loner recently released from drug rehab, watching an online video of himself being held in a headlock by TREY WAGNER, a benchwarming jock whose mother is PRINCIPAL WAGNER. Mark's rule-following best friend COREY BATES tries to intervene, but Trey's buddies hold him back. Too humiliated to return to school, Mark vows revenge on Trey. At school, Corey awkwardly pursues MARIANNA MORALES, the custodian's daughter whose college dreams have been put on hold due to her family's status. Mark, bitter that the "pussy boy" video has gone viral, decides to get revenge on Trey. He buys an AR-15 from an online dealer, deceives Corey about purchasing real bullets (not blanks), confronts Trey, and accidentally kills Trey's dog. Angry at Mark's deception, Corey cuts ties with him, and warns Trey's mother, Principal Wagner, about Mark's AR purchase.

Inconsolable and livid about the death of his beloved dog, Trey surprises Mark the next morning and beats him unconscious. The beating sends Mark over the edge. At the high school, Marianna sees a disguised Mark with his AR-15 just before he shoots and kills Trey and a teacher. When Corey hears shots inside the school, he rushes to stop Mark and gets a bullet in the stomach for it. Accidentally shooting Corey takes Mark out of revenge mode and into survival mode. He puts the AR in Corey's hands, melts into the post-shooting chaos at the school, and gets away from the scene when he's placed in an ambulance with the critically-wounded Corey. At the hospital, DETECTIVE RAMIREZ interrogates Corey, thinking he did the killings. Corey identifies Mark as the shooter. Marianna, there with her injured brother, sees Mark in the waiting area and tells Detective Ramirez. When Mark steals Detective Ramirez's handgun in the waiting area, Corey and Marianna distract Mark long enough for the Detective to restrain and arrest Mark.

In the epilogue, Marianna's family gains documented status and Mark's imprisoned for life.

**“The script is full of exciting tension  
to keep the audience guessing...  
and builds to a chaotic climax.”**

**-- The Blacklist**



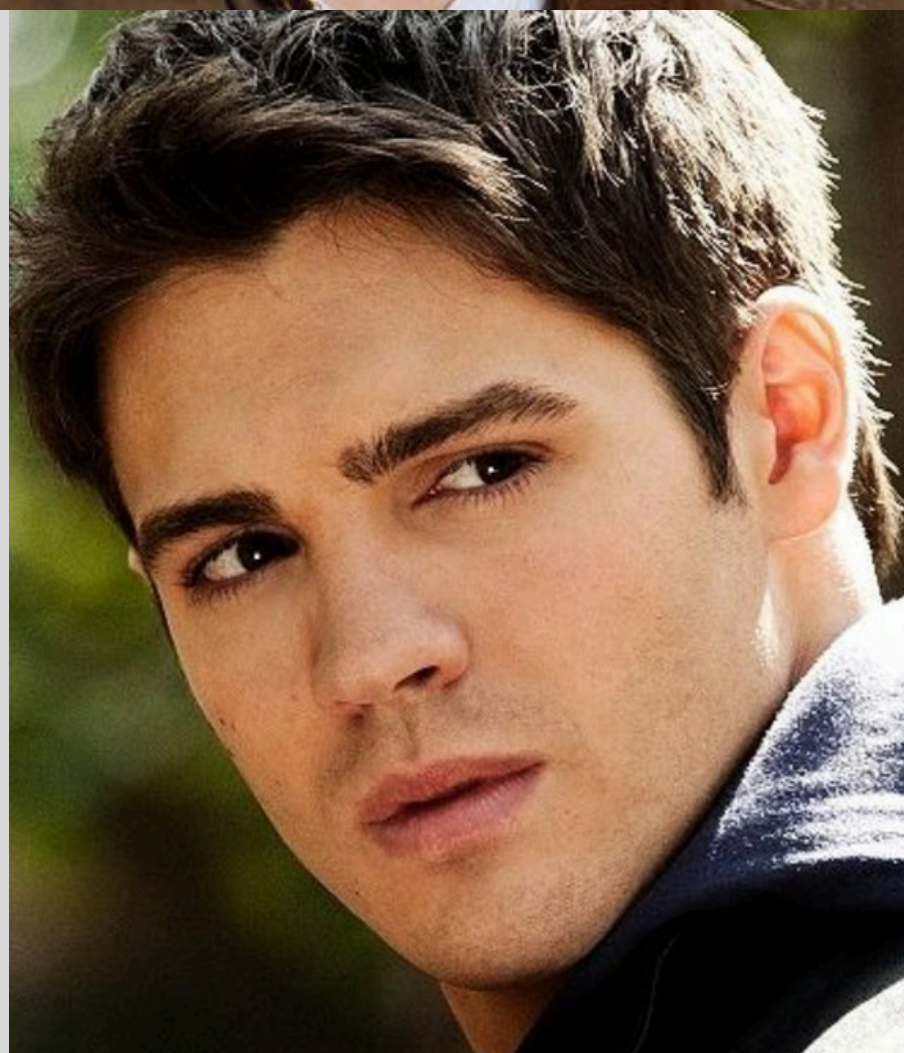


# KEY CHARACTERS



## COREY BATES

17 year-old protagonist, a rule-following loner who chooses to save others rather than stay loyal to his violent best friend Mark.



## MARK COOPER

Corey's best friend. Generally bitter and unhappy. Pushed to vengeance by public humiliation. Failed rehab for prescription pills.



# KEY CHARACTERS



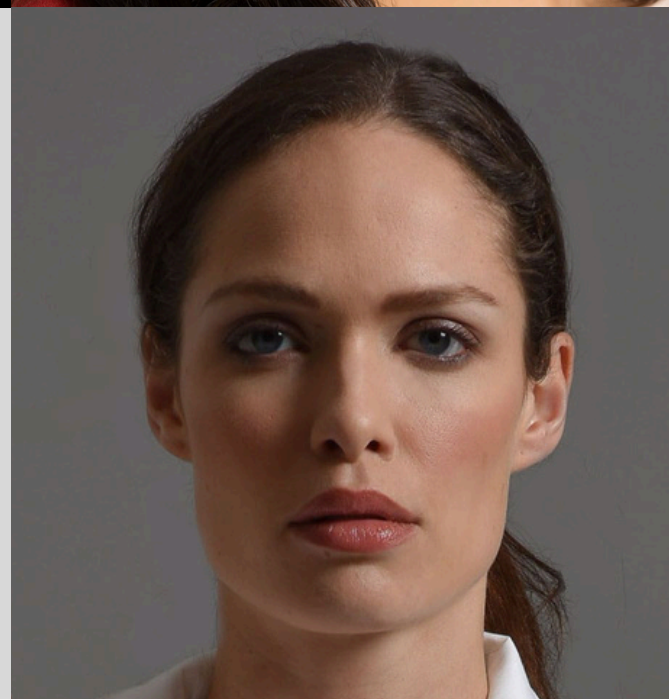
## TREY WAGNER

Benchwarming jock who hates the fact that his mom is the high school principal. Arrogant and sadistic.



## MARIANNA MORALES

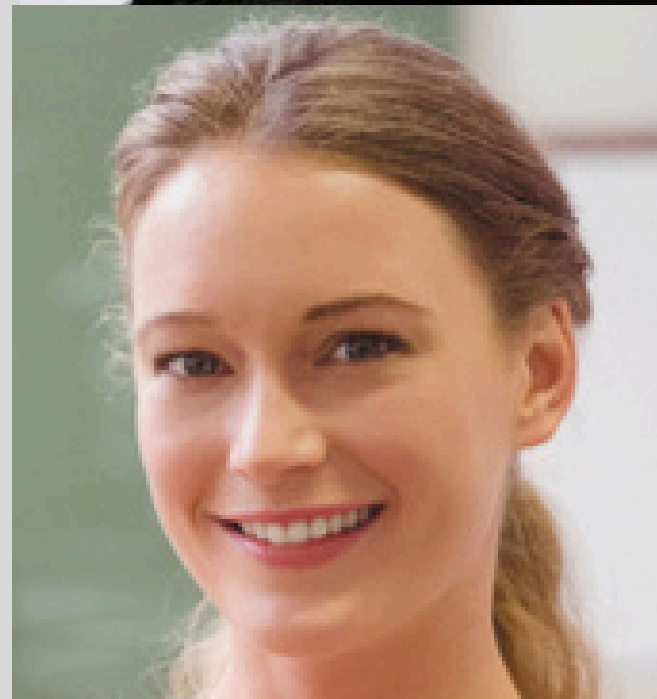
A smart senior whose dad works at the school and whose plans for college are stymied by her family's legal status. Corey's crush.



## PRINCIPAL WAGNER

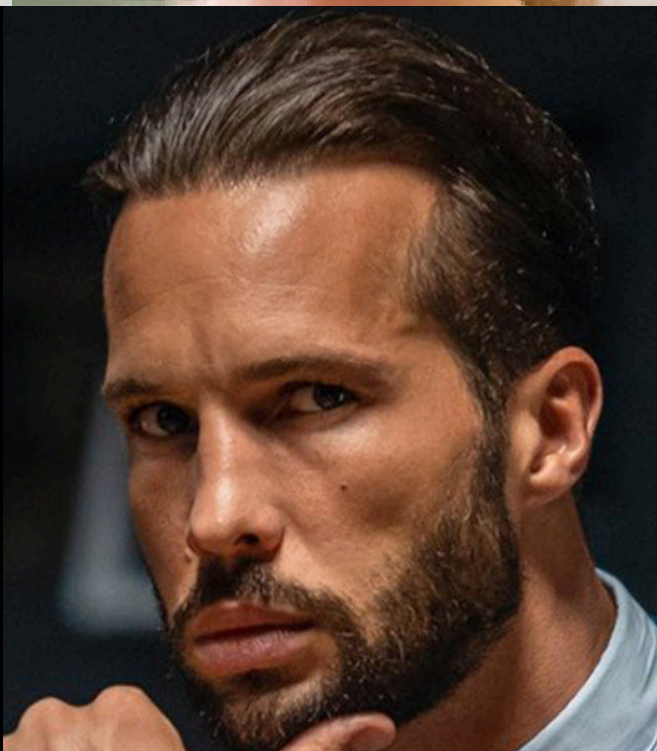
Trey's mother and principal of the HS. Alternately exasperated by and protective of Trey.

# KEY CHARACTERS



## MRS. BATES

Corey's recently-widowed mom. Understanding.  
A little sad.



## MR. COOPER

Mark's hard-ass dad. He puts pressure on Mark  
and belittles him.



## DETECTIVE RAMIREZ

Calm professional, not easily rattled.

**“The ending leaves the audience with a realistic and tragic sense of justice.”**

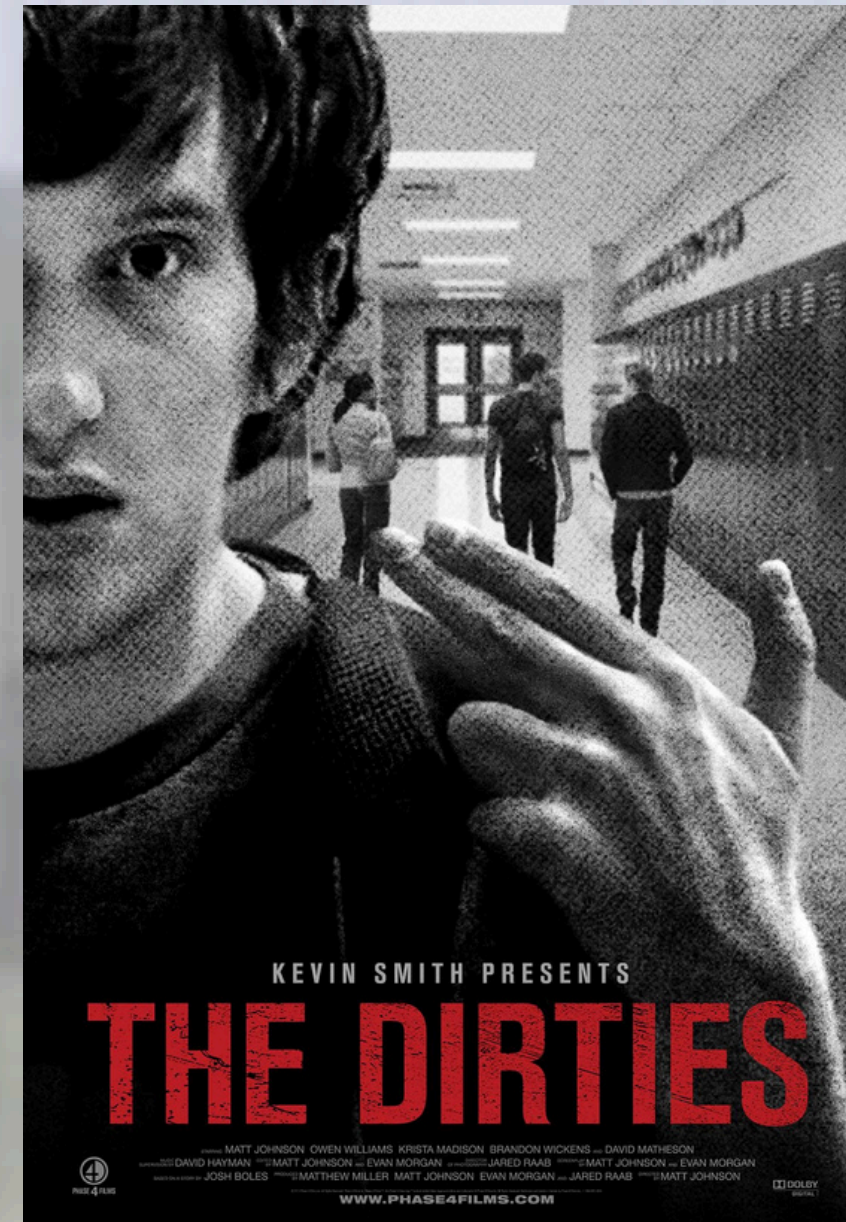
**-- The Blacklist**





# FILM TONE

- Tense
- Emotional
- Chaotic
- Dark





# FINAL WORD

FROM THE SCREENWRITER



**What would happen if a school shooter disguised himself and disappeared into the crowd of students afterwards and got away?**

**After 20+ years of teaching my students how to hide from active shooters, I had to deliver a “run-hide-fight” training to my high school classes that asked students to rush the shooter as a group, with the understanding that some of them would die to save the rest. The outrageousness of this expectation—for unarmed children—provided the genesis for this script.**



# CONTACT

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