

## watch a few movies, take a few notes

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## watch a few movies, take a few notes

by [immolxtion\\_stxtion](#)

### Summary

It's a bit of a cliché, isn't it? It was a dark and stormy night, no neighbours, no lights for as far as the eye could see, tree branches rustling in a barely-there breeze. The ambiance is perfect, and he throws a pan of popcorn on the stove before heading over to the large DVD collection that only Subz could put to shame.

**“It's gonna get me by the end of the night.”**

**Shadows | Stalking | “Who's there?”**

### Notes

Scream is one of my all-time favourite horror movies, and when I was working through ideas for this prompt, I simply couldn't resist working an AU I've wanted to write for a while into it.

The title is, unsurprisingly, a quote from Scream. (Something, something, something, consistency. The chance was right there!)

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

The night is just starting to get dark when Vitalasy decides he should start a horror movie.

It's a bit of a cliché, isn't it? *It was a dark and stormy night*, no neighbours, no lights for as far as the eye could see, tree branches rustling in a barely-there breeze. The ambiance is perfect, and he throws a pan of popcorn on the stove before heading over to the large DVD collection that only Subz could put to shame.

His fingers tap against firm plastic and clear-coating, the length of his nails making rather pleasant sounds as he drags them from case to case. It's not like he hasn't seen most of them before—between family movie nights, and date nights, the intricacies of his collection are well known. That doesn't make choosing one any easier.

He's narrowed it down to Mean Girls (for the meme), and Halloween (because it's a classic) when the phone rings—not the bulky one that sits in his pocket with all the subtlety of a queer kid in high school, but the corded one that sits on the kitchen counter.

Politeness demands that he pick it up, so he goes to the island, lifts it from the cradle. “Hello?”

“Hello,” a man's voice says back, low enough that it slides down his spine like honey. It's a nice voice, really, but it doesn't live up to Subz's, the playful tones and curves of it. Vitalasy waits for the man to say something else, state his business, but he doesn't talk again.

“Hello?” he asks again, because maybe the line cut out, and he didn't hear it. “Are you there?”

“Who is this?”

Vitalasy frowns. What kind of telemarketer calls at ten in the evening? Sure, it could be a wrong number, but it's really not hard to remember who you want to call. “Who are you looking for?”

“What number is this?”

“What number are you trying to reach?” he asks in return, because the man dialled the damn number, it's not like he shouldn't know.

“I don't know,” he says, and Vitalasy frowns.

“I think you have the wrong number.”

“Do I?”

“It happens,” Vitalasy says kindly, because it does happen. Once, he accidentally called Zam at work while trying to call Subz. That was awkward. “Take care.”

He puts the phone down with a click, making sure it's secure in the cradle before starting to head back to the movie shelf. Maybe he goes with Mean Girls, just to lighten the mood a little. It would be—

The phone rings again.

Vitalasy sighs, goes back to the counter. “Hello?”

“I'm sorry,” the same voice says again, buttery-smooth and decently apologetic. “I guess I dialled the wrong number.”

Vitalasy can't help the little smile that plays at his face, because that's what he was thinking earlier. It's always nice to be right. Still, he's curious. “So why did you dial it again?”

“To apologize.”

“Well,” he says lightly, moving away from the kitchen to pull out his movie case. “You’re forgiven. Buh-bye now.”

He’s halfway to hanging up when the man hurriedly says, “Wait, wait. Don’t hang up.”

“Huh?” Vitalasy asks, moving to put the case down on top of the TV, eyes getting drawn out the doors beside it. It’s nearly black out, now, the final hints of the sun finally sinking below the horizon.

“I want to talk to you for a second.”

Well, he doesn’t really have a second to give, because there’s a movie ready to be put in the player, and popcorn he should really be checking on. “They’ve got 900 numbers for that. Seeya!”

He’s not near the cradle yet, but Vitalasy pulls the phone away from his ear, and pushes the switch down with a satisfying click. He’s got plans for the evening, plans that don’t involve talking with a phone man. When he makes it back to the kitchen, he drops the phone in the cradle, and rummages around in the cupboard for a lid that fits over his popcorn pan. There’s a glass one that will do the trick, and he’s just found it when the phone rings again.

“Hello,” he says with less enthusiasm than before, because he *really* doesn’t have time for this.

“Why don’t you want to talk to me?” the same man asks, and this time he frowns, feeling annoyance start to bubble up in his chest.

“Who is this?” If Vitalasy can at least get a name, maybe he can go to the police station and report someone for harassment, get the number on file.

“You tell me your name, I’ll tell you mine.”

He puts the lid on the popcorn, shakes the thing around so the kernels on the bottom don’t get burnt. “Yeah, I don’t think so.”

There’s no complaint, no demand that Vitalasy hands over his name *right this second*. Instead, he gets the question, “What’s that noise?”

So the popcorn could be heard over the phone. Huh! He didn’t think it was good enough to pick up on it. “Popcorn.”

“You’re making popcorn? I only have that at the movies.”

“Well, I’m getting ready to watch one,” he says kindly, looking over at the TV. Just barely, he can see the front cover of Halloween, not Mean Girls. Shoot.

“Really? What movie?”

“Oh, just some scary movie,” he deflects, because while he didn’t *mean* to pick out Halloween, he’s stuck with it now.

“Do you like scary movies?”

“Yeah, I guess.” They’re more Subz’s thing than anything, but Vitalasy can appreciate some of them.

“What’s your *favourite* scary movie?” the man asks, voice slipping into something that sounds like flirting. Vitalasy’s probably reading it wrong, though, because he’s not a girl, and men don’t just

flirt with men that openly. He knows how things are.

He leaves the popcorn be, shifts to take a seat at the island again. There's a knife block near the corner, and he fidgets with the handle of one as he responds. "I don't know."

"Oh, come on," he wheedles, sounding almost teasing. "You have to have a favourite."

Vitalasy frowns, slides the knife out of the block and tips it around for a second before sliding it back in. "Halloween, probably. You know, the one with the guy with the white mask who just sorta walks around and stalks babysitters. What's yours?"

"Guess."

"Nightmare on Elm Street?" he tries, because Subz has mentioned it a lot before, wiggled a bunch of knives around between his fingers while doing dishes. The effect was ruined by the suds on his hands and hair, but it was funny regardless.

"Is that the one where the guy had knives for fingers?"

"Yeah, Freddy Kreuger."

"Freddy . . . that's right. I liked that movie. It was scary."

"The first one was," Vitalasy concedes, dredging up memories of Subz and his rambles on them. "The rest sucked, though."

A low hum filters through the phone, slightly crackly. "So, you got a boyfriend?"

Vitalasy takes a second to think of Subz and his emo tendencies, the uneven streaks in his hair from home-made dye and summers spent half in the sun, half in his basement. "Why? You wanna ask me out? Isn't that a little weird?"

"Maybe. Do you have a boyfriend?"

"No," Vitalasy says, because it's not safe to be out, especially if this is some creepazoid out for his flesh. Maybe *Nightmare on Elm Street* was a good guess after all.

Switching tracks completely, the man asks, "You never told me your name."

"Why do you wanna know my name?" Vitalasy asks in return, dropping the knife back into its slot in the block.

Slowly, voice just loud enough to be audible, the man says, "Because I wanna know who I'm looking at."

Ice drops into Vitalasy's veins, and he bolts to his feet, nearly knocking over the stool. His gaze snaps to the glass doors, the wide, wide wall of them with no curtain cover. "What did you say?"

"I want to know who I'm talking to."

"That's not what you said," Vitalasy accuses, making a beeline for the porch lights.

"What do you think I said?" he asks, and Vitalasy flips the switch, breath half-stuck in his throat. Light floods the backyard, but there's nobody there, just a startled bunny that hops away.

On the stove, the popcorn *pops*, and Vitalasy nearly jumps like he's been shocked. "I have to go

now.”

“Wait, I thought we were going to go out,” the man says, and Vitalasy almost *laughs*. Not after that, no way.

“Nah, I don’t think so,” he deflects, trying to still sound normal. His voice shakes, and it’s all he can do to hope that whoever is on the other side of the line can’t hear it. The island is in reach now, the phone cradle staring tauntingly at Vitalasy.

“Don’t hang up on me.”

In the nicest voice he can muster, Vitalasy says, “I’ve gotta go.”

“Don’t—” *click*. The phone goes down with more force than necessary, but Vitalasy can’t bring himself to care. His heart feels like it’s in his throat, hands threatening to shake. He just wants to watch a movie.

Quickly, he runs to the glass doors, grimacing when his hands clatter around the lock in an attempt to make sure the hold is secure. He’s home alone, his parents didn’t take their phones with them . . . he should be fine. This is just a prank. He should be fine.

On the stove, his popcorn pops ominously, and Vitalasy hurries over to check on it. His hand is just about to the pan handle when the phone rings again, a yelp startling from his throat.

“Yes?” he asks, holding the phone up to his ear again.

“I thought I told you not to hang up on me,” the man says like a threat, voice low like embers.

“What do you want?”

“To talk, I thought I told you that.”

“Dial someone else, okay?” Vitalasy asks, trying not to sound too desperate. He’s really not in the mood to be fucked around with tonight.

“Are you getting scared?”

“No,” he lies, because you don’t tell someone you’re scared in situations like this. “Bored.”

Then he hangs up the phone, because he doesn’t have to put up with this.

A few seconds pass by, enough for Vitalasy to start deluding himself into thinking things are safe. Then the phone rings again.

With a shaky hand, he picks it up. “Listen here, asshole—”

“No, you listen, you little bitch,” the man interrupts, voice sharp and full of malice. “If you hang up on me again, I’ll gut you like a fish. Understand?”

Vitalasy’s breath feels permanently stuck in his throat, hand shaking around the receiver. When he speaks again, his voice sounds watery, no longer the confident mask he was aiming for. “Is this some sort of joke?”

“More of a game, really.”

The glass doors shine ominously in the corner of Vitalasy’s vision before he remembers the front

door exists. His feet carry him there at a frantic pace, hands fumbling with the lock and the deadbolt. “I’m two seconds away from calling the police.”

“They’d never make it in time.” Sick satisfaction laces through the voice Vitalasy has become *far* too familiar with, and he hates every second of it.

Afraid of what he could potentially see, Vitalasy lowers himself to the peephole, closing an eye to look out. Part of him expects a monster, a man with a knife. What he gets is an empty, if slightly blurry porch. Relief shoots through his veins like adrenaline, but he still can’t help but ask, “What do you want?”

There’s a brief moment of hesitation, and Vitalasy almost starts believing that this is just a sick, twisted nightmare.

Then, there’s nothing but pure evil lancing through his ear. “To see what your insides look like.”

Vitalasy can’t help the strangled cry that shakes through his chest, and he slams the switch, ending the call and throwing the phone down to the nearest side table. His hand shakes when he looks at it, heart galloping at a frantic pace.

The doorbell rings, and he jumps out of his skin. The scream that rips through his chest isn’t masculine—damn near isn’t *human*, and he turns to look at the door as it goes off again.

‘Who’s there?’ he calls, pressing close to the door. When the only answer he gets is another bell, he tries again. “Who’s there?”

Silence.

Yeah, he’s calling the police. Screw this. Screw this dumb game, and the fear in his chest. The phone is right where he left it, and he’s just about to pick it up when it rings again.

If it were in his hand, he would have dropped it to the floor, might have broken it with his clumsiness. Instead, Vitalasy wraps clammy hands around the receiver, and lifts it to his ear.

All he can hear is the sound of his own breathing, the static of the call. It’s the only thing that reassures him that someone’s on the line, that he hasn’t forgotten to accept the call.

“You should never ask ‘who’s there?’,” the man says with a cruel pleasure. “Don’t you watch scary movies? It’s a death wish.”

Vitalasy’s heart falls out of his chest, and he nearly collapses, back hitting the wall.

Subs has always talked about the importance of staying strong, of keeping up appearances. Vitalasy knows he’s right, so he gathers all he has left in him. “Look, enough is enough. You had your fun, but you better leave me alone, or else.”

“Or else what?”

“My boyfriend will be here any second, and he’ll be pissed when I tell him!”

“I thought you didn’t have a boyfriend.”

*Shoot!* Vitalasy forgot about that part, about that big problem which might actually be a smaller problem considering the state of things. “I lied. I do have a boyfriend, and he’ll be here any second, and your ass better be *gone*.”

“Sure,” the man says, dragging the sound out like he’s mocking Vitalasy.

“I do!” he insists, uncaring of how his voice climbs in volume, how he starts to sound hysterical. “He’s big and he plays football, and he’ll *kick the shit out of you!*”

“Oh, I’m getting scared,” the man mocks, not sounding a little bit honest. It’s almost enough to distract Vitalasy from the fact that he swore, something he doesn’t like to do.

“I’m telling you the truth,” Vitalasy insists, deciding to double down. “I lied before.”

“I believe you.” It sounds genuine, too genuine. Vitalasy looks to the back doors, staring out the glass into the dark—into the dark? Didn’t he turn the lights on?

“You better leave,” he says, as a last-ditch attempt. It doesn’t stop the man from responding to him.

“His name wouldn’t be Subz, would it?”

Vitalasy hits the floor, knees screaming at impact. Shoot. Shit. *Shit*. This is . . . this is *real*, and he hates every second of it. “How do you know his name?”

“Go to the back door, and turn on the porch light. Again.”

Vitalasy does as commanded, moving himself like a puppeteer would a puppet, legs wobbling with every other step. His hand smacks the light switch clumsily a couple of times before he manages to turn it on, and when he does, he hates what he sees.

Subz is tied to a chair in the middle of the patio, one eyebrow split with a gag in his mouth. His eyes are wide with what can only be fear, and Vitalasy wants to vomit. He feels sick. Subz is out there, captured, at the mercy of some person Vitalasy hasn’t even seen yet.

A scream rips its way from his throat, phone digging into his ear as he reaches a shaky hand for the door. Oh *god*.

“I wouldn’t do that if I were you,” the man warns, and Vitalasy snaps his hand back like the door could burn him.

“Where—where are you?”

“Guess.”

“Please don’t hurt him,” Vitalasy begs, eyes scanning across every part of the yard he can see, all of the brush and flat land. There’s nobody in sight.

“That all depends on you.”

Tears slip down Vitalasy’s cheeks when he turns to look back at Subz, tied up and helpless. “Why are you doing this?” He’s done nothing wrong. They’ve done nothing wrong. The only fault they could have is that they’re gay, but nobody knows that.

Simply, like there’s nothing wrong at all with what’s going on, the man says, “I want to play a game.”

Softly, Vitalasy whispers, “No . . .”

“Then he dies right now.”

Vitalasy likes that idea even less, a hasty, “No!” ripping through his throat.

“Then which is it?”

His hand presses against cool glass, and Vitalasy looks at Subz, his man, his fool, his love. Tears slip from his eyes too, and he looks absolutely hopeless. “What kind of game?”

“Turn out the lights, and back away from the window.”

The command is simple, and Vitalasy follows it, ignoring the way Subz thrashes in order to slap his hand against the switch until he knocks the light off. He tucks himself into the corner where the TV sits; it crackles with static, almost overpowers the soft, menacing voice that slips through his phone.

“Here’s how we play: I ask you a question. If you get it right, Subz lives.”

His head digs into the TV, eyes shut as he tries his damndest not to sob. “Please don’t do this.”

“Come on, it’ll be fun.”

“No, please—”

“It’s an easy category. Movie trivia.”

“— *please* —”

“I’ll even give you a warm-up question.”

Vitalasy sobs, but it does nothing to stop the question. He can’t even think straight right now, what kind of sick game is this?

“Name the killer in Halloween.”

Vitalasy hesitates, out of his mind with fear. He doesn’t—he doesn’t *know!* He should know, but he doesn’t, too busy feeling each beat of his jackrabbiting heart, thinking of Subz out in the dark with a murderer.

“Come on,” the man says, enjoyment audible. “It’s your favourite scary movie, remember? He had a white mask, stalked babysitters.”

Any words Vitalasy could have are stuck in his throat. Halloween . . . masks and babysitters and murderers with knives who kill people, like Subz, who is outside and left at the mercy of a horrible horrible stranger—

“I don’t know.”

“Come on,” the man goads, and Vitalasy swears there’s a smile on his face. “Yes you do.”

His hand jolts out for the TV rapidly, fumbling at the top. The movie case— *the movie case*. He has the Halloween movie case over there somewhere, he doesn’t need to think. He just needs to get it in his hands.

“Subz is counting on you,” he taunts, right as Vitalasy’s hand closes around the case, pulling it close to his chest. *Victory* .

“Michael,” he grits out, voice barely any louder than a whisper. “Michael Meyers.”



Joy laces through the man's voice when he speaks again, a triumphant shout of, "Yes!"

Vitalasy sighs with relief. His heart is still threatening to beat out of his chest, but he did it. He answered the question. He won the game.

"Now for the real question."

An inhuman wail comes from Vitalasy's chest, loud enough that he's sure Subz can hear. There's no shame left in his body as he pleads, "Please, leave us alone. Please."

"But you're doing so well. Next question, same category."

Vitalasy's face is damp with tears, hands clutched so tightly around the plastic case in his hands that he could break it. He doesn't want to do this. He has no choice but to do this.

Like an omen, the question gives him no time to rest. "Who was the killer in Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>?"

Vitalasy leaps to his feet, sick, sick satisfaction flooding through his body. He knows this. *He knows this!* "Jason! Jason! It's Jason!"

"I'm sorry, that's the wrong answer."

"No it's not!" he defends, because *he knows this*. "It's Jason."

A soft, disappointed noise. "Afraid not."

"It was Jason. I've seen that movie twenty goddamned times. It was Jason."

"Then you should know it was Jason's *mother*," the man says cruelly. "Mrs. Voorhees was the original killer. Jason didn't show up until the sequel."

"You tricked me," Vitalasy whispers. He can no longer feel his heart. It's like there's a hole in his chest, nothing but the hollow emptiness of knowing he got it wrong. "You tricked me!"

He can't—he won't let this happen! He bolts to the light switch, slamming it on. Subz is still out on the deck, still staring him down with Panicked eyes. Maybe it was a bluff? It was probably a bluff, and they're both here, and safe, and—

The porch light flickers out, and Vitalasy whirls around in a heartbeat. There's no switch for it on the outside of the house, something he's complained about before. But . . . if Subz is out there tied up, and the man is still on the phone with Vitalasy, who turned out the lights?

Slowly, he comes to the conclusion that the only way the porch lights could be turned off is if the killer is in his house. *Shoot*.

He's not prepared in any way to deal with something like this. Subz has tried to teach him how to hit before, but he was clueless and fumbling. Now his clumsiness has come to kick him in the butt.

On the counter is the same knife block he was fidgeting with earlier, the largest knife still half out of the slot. He could get in *so* much trouble for stabbing someone. He could die if he doesn't stab someone.

The cool press of the knife handle to his sweaty palm feels like death has already found a home in his body. Someone dies tonight. All Vitalasy can do is hope it won't be him.

He doesn't know where the phone is, only knows that he must have dropped it when the lights

went out. It's horrifying, to not know what the killer is up to, what he's trying to say. He wants the phone, but he wants the knife more, a soft burning scent starting to fill his lungs.

Something thuds loudly against the glass, and Vitalasy instinctively turns back around, eyes peering into the dark in search of something he can't see. Subz is still out there, right? If the killer is in the house, then he can't be hurt. Vitalasy would be the target. Subz is fine. Subz will be fine.

The porch light blinks back on. Subz is not fine.

Vitalasy chokes at the gory sight in front of him, eyes instinctively closing before he forces them back open. His boyfriend's head is lolled back at an awkward angle, one eye open while the other is closed. There are flecks of blood on his face and arms, blood that only gets worse below his throat.

He doesn't want to look. He forces himself to look anyway.

Subz's chest is torn wide open, guts pulled out to pool on his legs. More yet spill to the ground below like gravity demanded it of them. His large intestine cradles his stomach, the pale and ribbed outline stark against brilliant red. One kidney sits on his thigh, while the other is left discarded on the ground next to his liver, dark brown in the evening light. Blood is everywhere, oozing from the cavity in Subz's chest to spatter on the ground, painting the concrete in shades of red and brown.

Vitalasy thinks he's going to be sick. Vomit builds in his throat, and he fights the urge to gag. That's his—that's his *boyfriend*.

Reeling back in horror, a startled cry rips its way from his lungs. Subz is *dead*, torn to shreds all because Vitalasy couldn't keep his movies straight. He's so stupid! This is all his fault, and everyone is going to know.

His free hand comes to his throat, nausea and bile blending together until he feels like he really could vomit right now. The only thing that stops him is the chair that gets thrown through the glass of the doors, shattering them completely.

Vitalasy doesn't wait around. He *runs*, ducking into the hallway and pressing his back against the wall, knife clutched to his chest. Glass crunches seconds later, the sound of a heavy boot smashing tiny shards into tinier pieces. Oh, that rug is going to be *ruined*. Mom will be so mad at him.

There's a window nearby, and with shaky hands, he undoes the latch, shoves the bottom half of it open. Steady, stalking footsteps get louder, and Vitalasy wastes no time climbing out of the window, dropping the knife as he falls to the ground. *No!* That was all he had for defence!

Still, there's no time to wait around. Vitalasy runs, lets his breath saw through his chest until he pretends the tears on his face are from the wind, and not from sorrow. He goes to the back of the house, hears the man, whoever he is, make it to the front door and say something under his breath. If he had the phone, he'd know what it was.

Vitalasy doesn't have the phone. All he has is his hands, and his heart, and the body of Subz that lies in front of him, because he's in the backyard, and there are massive windows looking into the house. Another fucking mistake of his! God, why is he like this?

The man, who Vitalasy can now see, is dressed in a sort of black robe, more of a cloak than anything. He's looking into the coat closet, back to the doors, so Vitalasy darts inside and grabs the phone again, running away before holding it up to his ear.

He doesn't get even a second of respite before the man is speaking to him, a low and dangerous

croon of, “Oh? You have the phone again? That’s not very smart.”

Yeah, so sue him! Vitalasy isn’t being very smart right now! It’s kind of hard to be, when there’s a man in your house, threatening you like this is a game! All he can do is cower behind a wall, occasionally glancing at Subz’s body and trying not to heave. His head is lolled over backwards, eyes glassy, and it’s hard to look away, because this is the man that Vitalasy *loves*, dead on his porch.

He takes a risk, and turns to look in the window again, coming face to face with the stuff nightmares are made of. There’s a ghostly white mask staring at him, mouth open in what looks like a scream. It’s soulless. Vitalasy wants to scream too, as a gloved hand punches through the glass to close around his throat.

He slams his hands into the arm over and over again, trying to claw at the sleeve with nails and getting nowhere. All the mask does is watch, staring at him with that blank, horrifying stare. It’s not even *fazed*, and Vitalasy wants to cry.

When the hand lets go of his throat, there’s no warning. He stumbles backwards, and barely pulls in a breath of air before taking off, running for the front of the house. It’ll give him some time if the man wants to chase, having to move to the ruin of the door, dodge around Subz’s body before being able to take off.

He shoves through a gate, past a bush, and then the front lawn of his house is visible, large expanses of manicured grass with a few trees, never good for him to climb. There are lights in the distance, lights on the road, and there’s a part of Vitalasy that feels nothing but pure, clean relief, because his parents are coming home. *His parents are coming home*. He’ll have backup.

The man appears in front of Vitalasy, all white mask and gleaming silver poised in the air. He can’t help the way he stumbles back, tries to dodge the downswing of an arm that doesn’t belong to him.

Warmth blooms in his chest, and Vitalasy looks down in time to see the knife pull out of his chest, red staining the lavender and cream of his sweater. *Oh. Oh god*.

The arm swings down again, but he blocks the stab with the phone, taking off in a stumble, because he can feel the pain now, and it’s *blinding*. God, if this is how Subz felt . . . he doesn’t want to know what everything else would have been like. It’s horrible. He hates the fact that Subz had to go through this.

His parents get out of their car, an agonizingly short distance away, though it feels like miles to Vitalasy and his tired body. He staggers towards them, tries to scream. His throat doesn’t work, closed up with agony and grief and the horrible, throbbing pain in his chest.

A hand lands on his shoulder, and Vitalasy is pulled back into the unforgiving press of a knife, punching through his side until all he can do is collapse to the ground. Grass tickles his face, unbearably rough as he rolls to his front, staring his attacker in the eye.

His hand is gripped tightly around the phone as the mask tips to the side, staring at him almost curiously. He can’t *breathe*. Everything hurts, an overwhelming pain that only gets worse as the man walks around his body and grabs his foot.

The grass is rough against his body, jostling the sound in his side. Through the phone, almost faintly, he can hear the voices of his parents. It’s so horribly, heartbreakingly awful to know that they’re so close and yet so far away, ready to be the next victims. He just wants them to be safe.

Wants a funeral where people visit him, and don't care if he's gay

"Help me," he croaks out, barely even a whisper.

The volume doesn't matter. It's enough to get his mom on the phone, a frantic yell of "Vitalasy? Vitalasy?"

"Mom?" he croaks, voice barely a whisper. He's lost so much blood already, chest aching like boiling water has been poured all over it. Despite this, more seems to ooze from the wound right over his heart, bleeding like a heartbreak. "Mommy?"

He can hear her voice on the phone, confused and afraid. She's asking where he is, whispering platitudes that it will all be okay, but he's not okay, he's being dragged across his front lawn with an ache in his chest, and it's getting hard to breathe. His chest drags in shallow breaths, each one pulling at his wound and making it sting more.

There are hands on his body, grabbing at his arms and hauling him to his feet, shoving his back against a tree. He can't stay on them long, and he falls back to the ground, hears a muted "*Shit!*" in response. There's dirt in his lungs, agony in his veins as he's rolled over again, phone left forgotten.

The mask stares him down, and weakly, Vitalasy grabs at it, pulling it to the side. He *knows* those eyes, knows that face, and it's all he can do to not ask *why?*

His questions don't matter in the end, because there's a blooming pain in his chest, matched only by the agonizing snap of the bones in his wrist, the mask getting pushed back over a too-familiar face. Fire cuts through his chest, head lolling to the side enough to see a knife sliding through his chest, pulling and tugging until his guts are out.

His eyes flutter shut, and he lets out a weak noise instead of a scream, because there's nothing left of him, not anymore. He's just so tired.

He's so tired.

Vitalasy slips into the darkness and the pain, closing his eyes for the last time.

#### **HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT FOUND DEAD AT OWN HOUSE AFTER GRISLY MURDER OF TWO.**

A student at Woodsboro High was found dead last night, gutted and hung from the tree in his front yard in a horrifying act of human depravity. His friend, star football player Subz, was also found dead, tied to a chair and gutted just as brutally. Between the two murders, it's clear Woodsboro has a serial killer on the loose, or at the very least, someone who is armed and dangerous. If you have any information about the killer, please contact Woodsboro Police Department.

Our condolences go out to the families of both youths. Please, light a candle for them.

#### **End Notes**

I've had so many ideas for this AU, and this is (hopefully) only the start of the iceberg,

because the end scene of that movie is *screaming* my name, as is a carefully-chosen Ghostface.

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