

DRIVE-IN HORROR SHOW

Presents

iThink the App

VOLUME 14



Greg Ansin & Michael Neel

DRIVE-IN HORRORSHOW
PRESENTS:

iThink the App



GREG ANSIN
MICHAEL NEEL

Cover by
NICHOLAS FLANAGAN AND JEFF
O'BRIEN

Grim Films LLC

Copyright © 2018 Grim Films LLC, Gregory Ansin & Michael Neel

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without written permission from the authors, Gregory Ansin and Michael Neel, or the publisher, Grim Films LLC, except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

First edition.

iThink the App



A refreshing breeze blew off of San Francisco Bay, through the large windows of ATWater Tavern. Sunlight glared off of the metal chairs and wooden floors.

The waitress dropped off a fresh pitcher of Racer 5 IPA at the table. She looked at Mitch's Freddy Krueger tattoos, Tippi's Converse All-Stars featuring Vincent Price, and David's T-shirt of a zombie made of nachos. She put a hand on her hip and asked, "You guys in town for the convention?"

"How'd you guess?" Mitch answered, holding up the lanyard around his neck, which read "Frisco-Fright 2017" below a picture of a gore-drenched zombie.

"It's full of thousands of horror celebrities, crazy movies, and gory toys," Tippi said.

"It's like summer camp for horror nerds," David added.

The waitress shook her head. "Wasn't Halloween four months ago?"

"*Every* day is Halloween, for us," David replied.

The waitress laughed and walked away.

Mitch refilled their empty glasses. He sported a big, red beard and wore a *Night of the Living Dead* T-Shirt to match his horror-themed tattoos. Tippi's hair was dyed orange, and she sported a Doctor Who scarf and a pendant with photo of the Bride of Frankenstein. David's long hair was tied back in a ponytail, and his bright red corduroys were so intense that they looked like they could glow in the dark.

The clinked their glasses. "Cheers."

They drank. David said, "So, I have this great idea for a new app."

Mitch wiped froth from his long mustache. "Yeah?"

"It's called iThink. It's an app to tell you what to think and do."

Mitch and Tippi laughed; after a second, David joined in.

"That's so dumb," Tippi said.

"It might work," Mitch said, stroking his beard. "Look at Pokemon Go."

"Look at how addicted you got to *that*," Tippi said, pointing at him.

"Yeah, that was a little embarrassing."

"Think about it," David said. "With GPS, cookies, and all the data collection going on—I mean, I'm surprised someone hasn't done it already."

"So how does it work?" Tippi asked.

"I don't know, exactly. Some sort of algorithm, the same way a search engine does. Like, we are here in San Francisco. Other than the hotel, convention floor, or this place, what have we seen?" David answered himself, "Nothing."

The others nodded.

He continued. "I've never been to San Fran before, so the app could tell me: 'eat here, go to this theater, check out this cool toy store that only sells eighties GoBot toys.'" He saw the Giants and Mets playing on a flat-screen TV over the bar. "And dumb stuff, like 'watch the ball game.'"

“Or drink this beer,” Mitch said, taking a swig.

“Or ask that guy for his number,” Tippi said, gesturing towards a guy at the end of the bar, obviously another Convention-goer, dressed like a rockabilly Dracula.

“You got it,” David said.

“Seems like another bad hookup app.” Tippi shook her head. “And I don’t know, that sounds way too dumb to me. People are idiots. They’ll do anything their phone tells them to do.” She pointed to their pitcher. “*I think we should drink the rest of that beer. And let’s not think of the weather back home.*”

“Amen to that,” Mitch said. “I love Boston, but not in the winter.”

At the table next to them, a woman in her mid-thirties with fire red hair sat with her back to them. She cocked her ear and typed on her smartphone: “New idea: iThink the app.”

She raised her hand and got the waitress’ attention.

“Okay, okay,” David said. “I’ve got another one. You’ll love this: it’s called ‘The Flatulence Network.’ It’s a YouTube channel. The slogan is, ‘All poop, all the time.’”

They erupted with laughter. Tippi hit David on the shoulder.

“Something is wrong with you,” she said.

“Now that *has* to exist already, no?” Mitch said.

“You could have shows like ‘Smell my Fart,’” David said. “Or ‘What’s in Dad’s Poo?’ Or ‘The Diarrhea Diaries.’”

Mitch chuckled and spit a little beer.

“And the lead show,” David said. “‘Forrest Dump.’”

“If you’re ever in trouble, Forrest,” Mitch said in a terrible impersonation of Sally Fields. “Just poop, Forrest, poop.”

They laughed harder.

The red-headed woman at the other table signed the credit card slip, gave it to the waitress, and put her credit

card into her wallet, next to an ID that read: “Professor Ingrid Mearsteen, PhD: University of San Francisco.” David, Mitch, and Tippi did not see her as she left, giving them dirty looks. *Idiots*, she thought.

Three months later:

Professor Mearsteen’s lab was in the basement of University of San Francisco’s Harney Science Center. It was windowless, but tidy and clean.

Assistant Professor Kenneth Boyd, who was about fifteen pounds overweight and prematurely balding at twenty-nine, hunched over a laptop, typing feverishly. Mearsteen looked at a mathematical diagram on a large whiteboard: a long list of boxes, arrows, letters, numbers, and charts. At the top was written: “iThink the App.”

On the board, equations surrounded a giant, interconnected tree, where topics like “User Info,” “Personal,” “Financial,” and “Hobbies” branched off into overlapping sections: “Jobs,” “Health,” “Sex Life,” “Eating Habits,” “Bank/Investments,” “Social Media,” “Shopping History,” “Follower/Leader,” and many more.

Mearsteen rubbed her eyes with the heels of her hands. *This should work*, she thought. *Why is it getting hung up all the time? What am I missing?*

Boyd looked up from his computer and exclaimed, “Got it!”

She hurried to him and looked at the lines of code running on his laptop screen. “Oh my God. How did you do it?”

“It wasn’t our algorithm that was wrong. Like we said all along, any computer science major could write it. And our

data collection worked fine. We just didn't have enough processing speed. Once I hooked into the university network, it worked like a charm. Piece of cake."

She slapped him on the back. "Nice work, Boyd."

"Thanks. But how do we get all the service providers to give us the bandwidth? And, for that matter, work together?"

"Let me handle that." Mearsteen said. She smiled.

The spacious grand room at Auberge de Soleil, a luxury resort in Napa Valley, overlooked a lush olive grove and manicured vineyard. Mearsteen had completely rented out the exclusive lodge.

Mearsteen and Boyd stood before a group of well-dressed men and women who sat in rustic, wooden chairs. They were from Silicon Valley and the world's biggest telecoms—Alphabet, Apple, IBM, Verizon, AT&T, Viacom, and more—and all were looking at their smartphones.

On their screens, the iThink logo, a rainbow-colored translucent brain, spun like a globe.

Boyd's laptop exploded with code. He shot Mearsteen a glance.

The Silicon Valley folks used the app on their phones.

Mearsteen looked around the room, nervous.

The Silicon Valley folks spoke:

"...It's like it knows me already..."

"...The kids are going to love this..."

"...Why didn't I think of this..."

"...This is a game changer..."

"...We have a winner here..."

They looked at Mearsteen and Boyd.

Everyone smiled.

Two months later, the dismissal bell rang at Ramsay High in Cleveland. The doors opened and kids poured out, running past a plastic, light-up sign of a tiger and the words: "Ramsay Tiger Pride!"

Garth Walker, Brady Helms, and Tyler Baskin, all wearing Under Armour shirts and Nike shoes, gathered to the side, away from the others. They pulled out their phones.

Garth looked at the spinning iThink brain. Text on his phone read: "iThink you should go to Jersey Joe's and get a tuna sub."

"I'm going to go get some food," Garth said, and left.

Brady's phone read, "iThink you should learn to play 'Smoke on the Water' on your guitar."

"I'm going to go home and play my guitar," he said, and left as well.

Tyler's phone read, "iThink you should talk to Jennifer Lynn."

Tyler looked at the front steps. Jennifer Lynn, a cute, blond girl in a sundress, sat on the top step, reading *Hopeless* by Colleen Hoover. He'd never talked to her before. "I'm going to talk to Jenny."

The Brown Line Train pulled into the Irving Park stop in Chicago. Hundreds of people poured out, walked a few feet, and stopped on the platform. They all took out their phones.

Their screens lit up with text: "iThink you should:

"...learn to play basketball at the YMCA..."

"...buy bleacher seats for the Indians vs. White Sox tonight..."

"...read 'I am Legend'..."

“...take your car for an oil change at Chip’s Garage...”

“...buy an Xbox One...”

“...treat your daughter for mint chocolate chip ice cream at Bosco’s...”

...and on...

...and on...

...and on...

The photo studio was in San Francisco's Oriental Warehouse lofts building, located in trendy South Beach, near AT&T Park. Professor Mearsteen stood in front of a white background as flashbulbs went off. Lights, cameras, and people surrounded her.

Giovanni Peotseeo, a dapper man in his late forties dressed in all black, leaned toward her, holding a large camera. “Smile big!”

She did; the camera clicked and the lights flashed.

Within days, her photo was in *Time*, *People*, *The New York Times*, and all over Facebook and Twitter. #iThink was the top trending topic for a record six weeks in a row. The headlines came, one after another: “Ingrid Mearsteen: The Genius Inventor of iThink,” “The Mad Scientist of Silicon Valley,” “The Next Big Thing is Here!,” “iThink tops 1 Billion Downloads,” “iThink: the Biggest App EVER!” And more kept coming.

The Bloody Bone T-Shirt Company was in a small brick

building that stood next to the I-93 freeway, in the Dorchester part of Boston. The walls were covered with autographs of famous horror movie stars like *Halloween's* Jamie Lee Curtis, *The Devil's Rejects'* Sid Haig, and *The Walking Dead* star Norman Reedus. Freddy Krueger dolls, Jason Voorhees masks, foam blood-covered axes, and other trinkets filled every nook. A sign on the wall read, in a dripping red font, "Bloody Bone T-Shirts: the Sickest Shirts on This Planet!"

Tippi sat at her desk, reading *People* magazine. Professor Mearsteen smiled from the cover. Tippi looked up from the magazine, disgusted.

"She stole your idea!" she said to David, who was sitting at a computer on the other side of the room, laying out a design with two zombies ripping each other apart. He paid her no attention; neither did Mitch, who sat at a computer next to him, coloring a T-shirt of a man in a clown mask planting an axe into a young teenage girl's skull.

"Hey, dingbat!" Tippi said again. "She stole your idea!"

David looked up from the computer. "Wha?"

She pointed to the magazine. "She stole your idea!"

David shook his head. "No way. Like I said, I can't be the first to think of it."

"You shouldn't be saying your ideas in public like that," Tippi said.

"How could she know, anyways?" David said.

"I think she was at the restaurant."

"No, she wasn't. Besides I'm off that idea now. Mitch and I are running a GoFundMe campaign for our new project."

Tippi looked at them, distrusting their mischievous looks. "Oh God. What is it?"

"It's called 'Things Not to Put in your Microwave,'" Mitch said proudly.

"That's just wrong," she said. "You know what's going to happen, right?"

David smiled. "No. What?"

"You two will get sued by some mom when her kid cooks Mittens the kitty like a bag of popcorn."

Mitch chuckled. "You could call it Kitty Corn."

David grinned. "Or Pop Goes the Furball."

They laughed. Tippi gave them a cold stare. "Being a proud cat owner, I am truly horrified by you two."

Mitch looked at David. "You know, maybe you should sue this lady. It can fund The Flatulence Network. We could do some real classy titles, like 'The Real Dookie Howser,' 'Farts From Around the World,' and 'Drunken Teenage Hot Platers.'"

David exploded with laughter.

"You two are sick!" Tippi exclaimed. "Children." She shook her head and put the *People* magazine on her desk. "I don't have time for any more of this nonsense. I've gotta get back to work." She looked back at her computer and started typing an email.

David rolled his chair over to Tippi's desk. He put his elbows on her desk and his head in his hands. He stared at her.

Tippi looked up. "What!"

"So, are you going to try the iThink app?" David asked her.

"No!" she snapped. "Who would?"

David pointed to Mitch.

"What?" Tippi said. "Mitch, you did?"

"Of course I did," Mitch said, with a smirk on his face. "How could I not?"

Tippi stared at him, speechless. Finally, she said, "So tell me what happened."

Mitch's smirk turned into a full-blown smile. "Well, I hate to say it, but it was a lot of fun. I saw this movie that I never would have gone to see: *The Sword of the Five Blades*. It

had kung-fu action, flying ninjas, decapitations. It was amazing! And I met a bunch of cool people that I never would have otherwise, who also loved the movie. Then we ate at some random food truck that was painted in all sorts of trippy colors and rainbows, that I would never have gone to in a million years, but it had the best ceviche I've ever eaten."

He paused.

"That's all?" Tippi asked.

"Well..." Mitch tapped his finger on his desk. "I kind of met someone."

Tippi crossed her arms. "I can't believe it."

"Her name's Rachel."

"Really? You met someone?"

"Really. *And* I got a date tonight, so—"

"She'll end up being a stalker," Tippi said, cutting him off.

"Good for you!" David said. "Even though you'll probably get herpes or food poisoning from listening to that stupid app."

"Gotta love the modern world," Mitch said with a chuckle.

The sunset over the bay looked beautiful from Professor Boyd's victorian house in Pacific Heights. But his expression was sour.

He held *People* magazine. Professor Mearsteen smiled at him from the cover.

A familiar voice came from the TV, catching his attention. He snapped his head up and glared at Professor Mearsteen, who was being interviewed by Anderson Cooper on CNN.

"Funny you should ask, Anderson," she said. "I did have a few roadblocks to start, but *my* big breakthrough was real-

izing that the problem was the speed needed to process the algorithm, not the algorithm itself.”

“Oh, really?” Anderson replied.

“Yes, it all about processing speed,” Mearsteen continued. “Once I hooked into the University’s network, the application worked like I planned. I couldn’t have been more pleased with my work. You know Anderson, it’s one of the most rewarding things in life when you can solve your own problems. I was blessed to be so lucky.”

Boyd threw the magazine at the TV. “Oh, really?” he said, clenching his fists.

The iThink Corp. Building sat at the edge of San Francisco Bay; it was Leed-certified, with a roof garden, directional mini wind turbines, and solar panel-infused windows. A black Aston Martin DB9 skidded into a parking spot marked, “Res. for Prof. Boyd.”

The building’s open-air atrium was empty. Gerard, the security guard, looked up from his bank of security monitors as he heard Boyd’s echoing footsteps approaching him.

Boyd smiled at him. “Hi, Gerard.”

“Hi, professor Boyd. Didn’t expect to see you here on a Saturday.”

“Oh, there is always something to do. How are the kids?”

“They’re good, thanks for asking.”

“Give them my best.”

Gerard’s phone, sitting on the desk next to him, beeped; he looked at it and smiled. On the screen was a picture of grilled meat on stick and the message: “iThink you should order Korean BBQ from Hi-Lo Gardens.”

Gerard looked at Boyd and grinned. “Hell of an app you and Mrs. Mearsteen got there, professor.”

Boyd forced a smile. "Yes. Yes, it is."

The server room was a windowless cavern, filled with row after row of rack-mounted computer servers. They blinked green and red, beeping in an atonal pattern, a never-ending, ever-expanding whirlpool of data.

Boyd leaned over a terminal, and it scanned his eye. It chirped, and the screen read, "Welcome, Professor Boyd."

He typed on the keyboard and loaded new software from his private development server. The screen read, "Processing," as a red progress bar grew. Boyd tapped on the side of the terminal.

The screen chirped again, and read, "Update Installed."

Let's see how smart you are, Doctor, he thought. Like you said, it's one of the most rewarding things in life when you can solve your own problems.

Boyd smiled. "That will show her."

Gather, a restaurant in Boston's Seaport District, was filled with a young, hip crowd, all ordering from the iThink app. Mitch paced in front of the bar; he wore tight black jeans, black Doc Marten boots, and a short-sleeve t-shirt with a T-Rex trying in vain to take a selfie.

He talked into his phone, "It's not going to end bad, Tippi."

"I don't have a good feeling about this, Mitch," Tippi said. "Just bail tonight. See her tomorrow."

"Come on, how bad could it be?"

"Just leave. If she likes you, she'll understand."

"I think you're jealous."

“Shut up, Mitch. Just trust me on this one, plea—”

Rachel entered the bar, phone in hand, and waved to him. Her tight black skirt and cashmere sweater took his breath away, and he completely forgot about his conversation. *I love this app*, he thought.

“Mitch? You there?”

Mitch snapped out of it. “I gotta go,” he said, cutting Tippi off. “See ya on the flip-flop.”

“Hello? Hello?”

Tippi, sitting on her bed in a Frankenstein T-shirt, looked at her phone.

Mitch had hung up.

“I’ll see you on the flip-flop. Who freaking says that?” She crossed her arms. “Well, I hope you get stabbed.”

“Hey, Rachel,” Mitch said, nervously leaning on the bar. “Wow. You look great.”

“You too,” she said. “Nice shirt,” she said, pointing to the T-Rex on his chest.

He laughed. She gave him a long kiss.

She pulled away, and Mitch blushed. “So,” he said. “You hungry?”

“Yes,” she said, and looked at her phone.

Let’s see...burger with green chilli...no wait, maybe blue cheese...
Tippi thought as she stood in Tasty Burger in The Garage in Cambridge, checking out the menu.

From the corner of the restaurant, a plump frat boy in a Dartmouth sweatshirt nudged another frat boy in a Yale sweatshirt. Each held a phone in his hand. "I think you spit in my drink!" Dartmouth Frat Boy said.

Yale Frat Boy looked at his phone and replied, "No way, dickhead. I think you spit in mine!"

Tippi turned her head to the commotion.

Dartmouth Frat Boy puffed up his chest. "Fuck you!"

Yale Frat Boy rolled up his sleeves. "No, fuck you!"

They started to push each other.

A balding manager with overly hairy arms and thick glasses rushed towards them with a broom in hand. He yelled, "Take your shit outside, losers," and pushed them out the door.

Tippi watched as the frat boys looked at their phones again. The familiar spinning, rainbow-colored icon told them what to do and they squared off.

The girl behind the counter asked for her order, but Tippi just left.

She'd lost her appetite.

David brought the bong to his lips. He took a huge hit, exhaled thick, white smoke, and farted. *Heaven*, he thought. *There is nothing like doing a bong hit on the toilet.*

The bathroom was filthy: the mirror hadn't been cleaned in what seemed like a year, clothes were strewn on the floor, and the shower was nearly black with mildew.

He was about to take another hit when there was a knock on the door. "What?" he shouted. "I'm busy."

"Hey, numbnuts," came the voice of Vince, his roommate. "It's for you."

Tippi sat on her couch, picking at her painted black fingernails. She held her phone to her ear.

The TV was on, with the sound muted. She turned around and tried to ignore it.

“Come on, come on!” she said. “What’s taking so long?”

Vince, his girlfriend Lisa, and his best friend Randy, all in their mid-twenties, sat in a living room decorated with mismatched, second-hand furniture, watching a woman kicking ass with two swords. Beer cans littered a cheap, black, plastic ikea coffee table.

“Wow,” Lisa said to Vince. “She’s amazing.”

“Yeah,” Vince replied, taking a swig of his beer. “*The Women of the Twelve Swords* is one of my favorites.”

David entered, strumming his guitar, just in time to see the kung-fu woman decapitate three men with one swipe. “Classic,” he said.

He picked up a tan nineteen-seventies-style phone that was lying on the ground.

“Where the hell have you been?” Tippi asked.

“It’s the weekend, you know I don’t use the cell phone,” David replied, strumming his guitar.

“Something is wrong with the app.”

At Gather, a waiter cleared the dessert dishes.

“That mousse with chocolate sauce reduction was amazing,” Rachel said, reaching for Mitch’s hand.

Mitch took her hand in his. "No doubt," he replied. "I'm stuffed."

They both looked at the spinning rainbow brains on their phones. "You want to get out of here?" Mitch said. "Go to my place?"

"You read my mind," Rachel replied with a smile.

David strummed his guitar again and rested the phone on his shoulder. "Oh please, not this again."

"Listen, dickhead!" Tippi screamed through the phone. "Turn on the news! The app has a bug."

David stopped strumming, mid-chord. "Wha?"

"Turn on the news, now!"

David turned to his roommates on the couch. "Turn it to Channel Five."

"Fuck you," Vince replied, with an inebriated grin. "We're just getting to the big axe battle, where—"

"I'm serious."

Vince put his hands up. "Okay, okay." He turned it to Channel Five.

The Channel Five newsroom was abuzz. News anchor Cynthia Fox's golden blond hair was a mess, and her power suit jacket was disheveled. She spoke, with a faster cadence than normal, "The iThink app has been hacked. It's telling people to do horrible things. And people are! We must warn you, the footage you are about to see is extremely graphic. So sensitive viewers should leave the room."

The news broadcast switched to a shot of a large man running down the street, his phone in one hand and a butcher's knife in the other. He lunged at a woman, stabbing her in the chest and laughing. He kicked an elderly man to the ground, and stood over him. The elderly man screamed; the

man brought the butcher's knife down into the elderly man's throat, and he screamed no more.

David stared, horrified.

On the TV, two young ladies in their twenties pulled each others' hair, cellphones in hand. One screamed, "He is mine!" as she drove the other one's face into the curb, cracking her teeth and breaking her jaw with a spray of blood.

Lisa grabbed Vince; he grabbed her back. Randy covered his mouth.

On the Massachusetts Turnpike, an eighteen-wheeler truck barreled through a line of traffic at ninety miles an hour. Cars flew as the truck hit them, thrown to the side like snow from a plow. The truck driver clutched the wheel with one hand and his phone with the other.

The camera returned to Cynthia, who spoke again, "It's horrible. I can't even speak..." She paused. "Ladies and gentlemen, do not, I repeat, do *not* use the iThink app."

She looked at something off-camera, and grabbed the desk defensively. "No wait, Stan, I can explain, I—"

Her voice was cut off by a shotgun blast, and her head exploded; it covered the anchor desk with brain, blood, and blond hair.

The broadcast turned to static.

No one spoke a word.

David had a horrifying realization. Into the phone, he said, "Oh fuck. Mitch."

Mitch's apartment was dark. He and Rachel lay on his bed, kissing. He slipped a hand under her shirt; she giggled, but did not move it away.

The thick brick walls of the hundred-year-old apartment

building, and the soft tunes of The xx, isolated them from the sound of the chaos outside.

On the nightstand, Mitch's phone glowed. It was set to silent mode, so neither Mitch nor Rachel heard a sound.

The words "David's Cell" flashed on the screen, then stopped.

Beacon Street, usually filled with college kids looking to get drunk, laid, or both, had been transformed into a war zone. Tippi navigated her orange Prius C through the overturned couches, derailed MBTA trains, burning cars, and swirls of airborne garbage, while David clung to the passenger seat. They swerved around a man who was staring at his phone while taking a shit in the middle of the street.

Gunshots rang through the air. Tippi stepped on the gas.

Tippi shook her head. "I knew it. I knew it! This app would be the end of the world."

"Look out!" David shouted.

Tippi jerked the car to the side, barely missing a couple having sex in the middle of the road.

"Holy lord," Tippi said. "It really is the end." She glanced at David; he was sending a text to Mitch. "Call him again."

"I just did. It went straight through."

"Then try him again!" Tippi shouted.

"Okay! Okay!" David barked as he dialed. He put the phone to his ear.

Several rocks flew at the Prius' windshield, sending spiderweb cracks across the center. Tippi floored it, glancing over her shoulder as a group of teenage boys and girls hurled more rocks, denting the Prius' rear bumper.

"Damn it!" David said. "Voicemail again."

"Can't they just shut off the app?" Tippi said.

“You’d freaking think.”

Two armored trucks escorted Professor Mearsteen’s Tesla Model S through the military blockade outside of the iThink Corp. Building. Soldiers in body armor threw tear gas grenades at crazed people on the other side of the barricade, sending them running.

Mearsteen ran into the server room, fuming. “What the hell happened, Boyd?” she yelled, then bumped into something heavy dangling from the ceiling.

When she realized what it was, she shrieked.

In front of her, Professor Boyd hung from a noose made of computer wires and cables. His eyes bugged out, and the tear streaks running down his cheeks were still fresh. A handwritten note was pinned to his chest: “I’m sorry.”

Mitch slept face-down in his bed, snoring. Rachel sat on the edge, in her blouse and underwear.

She picked up her phone and left the room.

She walked into the kitchen and poured a glass of water. She sipped it, reading her phone as she drank. The iThink brain spun, and flashed a message.

She paused, mid-sip. She looked at the set of Wüsthof knives in a block on the counter next to her.

Rachel grabbed a nine-inch steel knife from the block.

Tippi’s Prius pulled outside of Mitch’s apartment building.

The building's facade was covered in splatters of wet garbage, and broken glass peppered the ground.

Tippi and David leapt out of her car and ran towards his apartment. The front door was wide open, the lock broken. As they neared it, rocks smashed Tippi's rear windshield, spraying glass on the back seat. She screamed.

They ran inside.

Mitch twitched in his sleep, smiling. Rachel opened his bedroom door, casting a silhouette on the bed: the rectangular shape of her phone in one hand, and the long, pointed shadow of the knife in her other.

She approached the bed, her bare feet treading lightly on the floor, not waking Mitch. The glow from her phone's screen shone on her face, casting soft, jagged shadows on her wild eyes. The phone read, "Stab him. STAB HIM! BEFORE HE GETS YOU!"

She lunged at Mitch, nudging the bed as she did. Mitch jolted awake and saw her.

"Hey Rache, what the—"

He rolled out of the way, just as the knife plunged into the pillow where his head had been a split-second before. Mitch leapt out of the other side of the bed.

Rachel snarled at him, brandishing the knife in front of her face. She looked at her phone, which read, "GET HIM!"

Mitch looked at her phone, then the knife. "What the fuck is—"

Rachel jumped on the bed and swung the knife; Mitch dodged to the side, but the blade sliced his left ear, straight down the middle.

He screamed.

David and Tippi heard Mitch's scream from the hallway outside his apartment. David pounded on the apartment door and yelled, "Mitch! Open up!"

They heard crashes and muffled yells from inside.

"Mitch!" Tippi shouted.

"That's it," David said. "I'm breaking down the door." He backed up and threw his left shoulder into the door.

The door didn't move; David recoiled and grabbed his left shoulder, wincing. "Fuck!"

Tippi pushed him out of the way. "Stand back, idiot." She kicked the doorknob, and the door flew open. They rushed inside and ran towards the commotion in Mitch's bedroom.

Mitch's dresser was overturned, and his clothes had spilled all over the floor. Deep slashes criss-crossed his mattress, exposing puffs of foam. On the floor, Rachel sat on top of Mitch.

"Rachel! Don't do this!" Mitch screamed.

She stared at her phone, raised the knife over her head, and plunged it towards Mitch's heart. As it neared his chest, Mitch saw a blur of dyed orange hair and Converse All-Stars tackle Rachel from the side, knocking her off of him and onto the floor.

"Tippi!" he exclaimed.

"Bitch!" Tippi yelled, as she pinned Rachel to the ground and knocked the knife from her hand. Tippi slapped her in the face as Rachel thrashed underneath her like a wild animal.

"Get off me!" Rachel yelled. "Mitch is dangerous! He must be stopped!"

Tippi grabbed Rachel's phone and yanked it from her claw-like grip. Tippi threw the phone against the wall, where the screen shattered and turned off.

Rachel's eyes returned to normal. She looked at the chaos

around her and stopped struggling. She saw the blood running from Mitch's sliced ear and began to cry.

"Oh, Mitch," Rachel said. "Oh, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean it."

"Like hell you didn't!" Tippi yelled.

"I swear, it's true."

"Don't lie to me, you little—"

"Tippi," Mitch said from the ground next to her. Tippi stopped and looked at him. "It's okay. It's over."

Mitch and Tippi sat on the couch in Mitch's living room; he was wrapped in a blanket, and a large bandage was taped to his ear. Rachel sat in the chair next to them, dressed in her clothes. The TV was on.

Chris Hayes sat at the MSNBC desk, and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, it seems that the worst is over. The iThink app has been turned off."

The room exhaled.

"I have on the phone with me Professor Ingrid Mearsteen, creator of the iThink app," Chris continued. A photo of her appeared on the screen, from her cover of *People* magazine.

"Hi Chris, thank you for having me on," Mearsteen said in a warbly voice. "Yes, the problem has been fixed. The app is offline."

"Professor, what can you tell me about the source of the problem?"

"A bug in the last update. I can't really say more at this time. We will be doing a full investigation with the FBI."

Mitch looked at his phone. His finger hovered over the iThink icon.

Tippi grabbed his hand. "Don't touch that."

Mitch moved her hand away. "It's okay." He pressed the icon. Everyone held their breath.

A message appeared on the screen: "iThink is temporarily out of service." Everyone breathed a sigh of relief.

"All over the world, forces are restoring order," Chris Hayes said. MSNBC cut to footage of tanks rolling down the streets of Paris; SWAT teams in riot gear arresting people in New York City; legions of police corralling protesters in Moscow, Madrid, Cairo, Rio de Janeiro, and dozens of other cities and towns across the globe. "Please, shelter in place till the local authorities tell you it's safe."

Rachel said to Mitch, "Can I talk to you?"

Mitch nodded, and they went into the kitchen. David and Tippi could not hear their conversation, but they gave each other worried glances.

They heard the door open, then close. Mitch walked back into the room, alone.

Tippi stood up and pointed a finger at him. "I can't believe you're just letting her go! Call the cops!"

"I'm kind of with Tippi on this," David said. "If I hadn't broken down the door, she would have—"

Tippi coughed and looked at David.

"Guys, guys, I get it," Mitch said, putting his hands out gently. "I feel terrible about this, but I was on that stupid app, too. It could have been me swinging the knife. I just got so caught up in it. She's a sweet girl. Now that she's not on iThink, she'll be fine. I'll be fine. We all will."

Tippi paused. Then nodded. "Okay, Mitch," she said.

"Thank you," he replied.

The three of them walked to the window and watched Rachel walk up the street. Her pace was slow. She took her phone from her coat and the glow filled her face as she scrolled on its cracked screen.

"Til the next big app comes around," Tippi said.

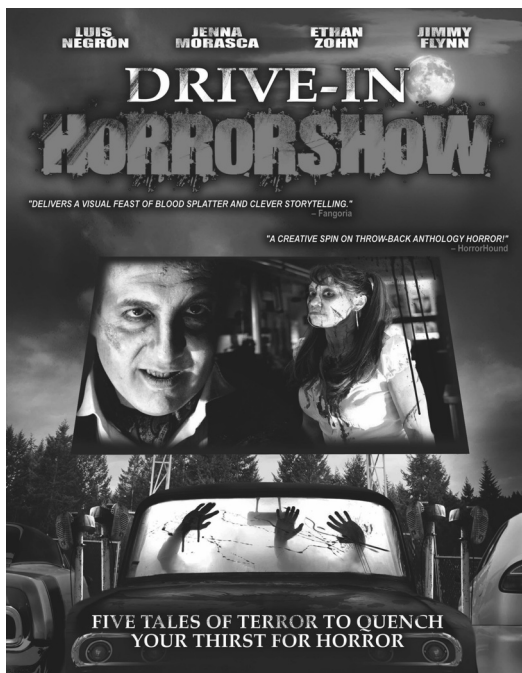
David laughed a little, “Then it might just be the end of the world.”

“No more phones or apps for me.” Mitch took his phone and smashed it on the ground.

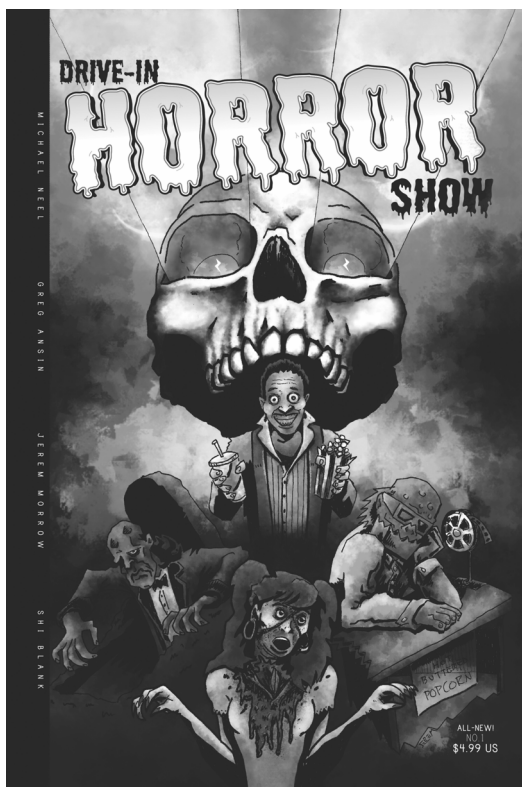
Tippi laughed. “Yeah, right.”

Not HORRIFIED enough? Need MORE TERROR?

See where it all began! Watch the *Drive-In Horrorshow* movie on VOD, On Demand, or DVD.....if you're not too SCARED!

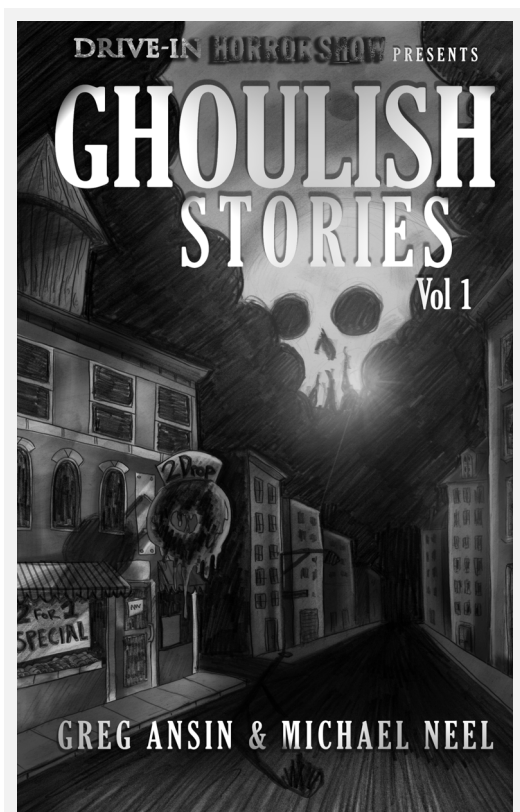


STILL not SCARED ENOUGH? Then maybe the *Drive-In
Horrorshow* comic book will SATISFY your SICK need for BLOOD
AND GORE!



Enjoy what you read here? Looking for OTHER SHORT STORIES
full of SCARES, THRILLS, and CHILLS?

Read MORE SHORT STORIES in *Drive-In Horrorshow Presents:
Ghoulish Stories, Vol 1*! It's available on Kindle, Kobo, Nook, and
in print.



About the Authors

GREG ANSIN and MICHAEL NEEL are the creators of *Drive-In Horrorshow*. They are always willing to scare any lost souls that need a good fright.



Greg Ansin



Michael Neel

*To watch the Drive-In Horrorshow movie, read the comic book,
watch our music videos, and much more, visit
www.DriveInHorrorshow.com*

We'll be waiting.

