

DUCK AND COVER

Written by

Victor Xia & Nolan Lampson

FILM LEADER plays.

TITLE over:

Duck and Cover:
a PSA on Lockdown Safety
A BELROSE PARK HIGH
TV 201 PRODUCTION

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

1

The frame shakes, then steadies, resting on a giggling ALLIE, 16. She turns her gaze towards the camera, regaining her composure.

ALLIE
Are you ready?

BRANDON, the unassuming victim behind the camera, gives a thumbs up.

BRANDON (O.S.)
3...2...1... Okay, we're rolling.

ALLIE takes a deep breath, focused on maintaining poise, grace and an electric on-screen presence. She's good.

ALLIE
Hello, fellow students and welcome
to our instructional --
(reading)
-- safety -- video.

BRANDON stammers, delivering an unwavering monotone performance as he reads from his script.

BRANDON
Have you ever been in a lockdown
drill and had no idea how to act?
Are you concerned about how to
protect yourself in the event of an
INTRUDER on campus?

ALLIE
Today, we, along with the rest of
our talented Video 201 class here,
are going to show you how to be
prepared and be safe in the event
of a schoolwide lockdown.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

2

Two other students, DANIEL and SAMANTHA, stand in front of the camera. They make admirable attempts to deliver their lines clearly. DANIEL lacks confidence.

DANIEL

When you first notice the alert --
on your phone or over the
loudspeaker, if you are in a
classroom, close the blinds, duck
away from the windows, and take
cover.

SAMANTHA demonstrates.

PA SYSTEM (OPTION)

Attention Students. Attention
Students. This is a lockdown
procedure. Please proceed to the
nearest close space, and stay away
from doors and windows.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

3

BRANDON makes his way to the nearest classroom.

BRANDON

If you are in the open, try to find
your way to the nearest - to the
closest enclosed space or
classroom. The important thing is
to find somewhere to go.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

4

SAMANTHA

If you can't run, hide. Stay silent
when hiding. If you can't hide?
Then fight.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

5

DANIEL, SAMANTHA, and BRANDON sit in the classroom on chairs.

ALLIE

Now, the most important thing is to
stay educated and stay alert.

(MORE)

ALLIE (CONT'D)

Here, our class is watching a video
on how to stay safe during lockdown
- wait. That's not right.

A silence falls over the room. BRANDON rubs his temples.

DANIEL

What's that?

ANGLE on DANIEL as he POINTS to a USB stick, plugged into a projector near the wall. The projector begins to whirl.

BRANDON

I don't feel very good.

SAMANTHA

Wait. Is that...

She points to the slowly brightening image on the wall.

ALLIE

It can't be.

DANIEL

I don't think we should be watching
this. Turn it off. Turn it off.

We hear rustling, a faint scream as the students try to stop the projector, but it's too late. We DOLLY IN towards the image projected on the wall - and it becomes clear that on the screen is projected the start of the film. This film. Duck and Cover.

NOTE: In general, each angle/shot should be framed identically to the initial iteration, but shorter in length and with more unsettling "content" each iteration.

FILM LEADER PLAYS.

REPEAT TITLE SCREEN.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

6

The frame steadies on ALLIE. She giggles, but the smile fades, as if she can't remember what she was laughing at.

ALLIE

Hello, my beautiful viewers.
Welcome to this instructional
safety video. Today we are...

She trails off, looking behind her, uncertain.

A shadow, brief, flickering on the window behind her. AN INTRUDER.

BRANDON (READING OFF SCRIPT)
Have you ever been in a lockdown
drill and had no idea how to act?
Are you concerned about how to
protect yourself in the event of an
INTRUDER on campus?

He pauses.

BRANDON (CONT'D)
I feel like I've said this before.

ALLIE
Today, we're going to show you how
to be prepared and be safe -

Her mouth drops AGAPE in terror. THE INTRUDER is back, looming over the frame. ALLIE backs up, but she seems to bump into the left edge of the frame.

NOTE: Make wooden rectangle enclosing the frame, allows for physical barrier to escape from the screen on both sides.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
Get away from me!

The shadow looms closer and closer. ALLIE backs up, pounding on the left edge of the frame.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONT.

7

DANIEL and SAMANTHA are reading over their scripts. They hear a muffled yell from the other room.

SAMANTHA
You feel it too?

She wanders towards the edge of the frame.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
It's like - like we've been here
before.

DANIEL looks down at his feet, unsure. Then he STIFFENS.

DANIEL
Did you hear that?

SAMANTHA puts her hand up.

SAMANTHA

Wait.

We strain to hear - footsteps.

Faint, flickering, raspy - less the sounds of someone walking than the intruding presence of something malevolent coming into the room. THE INTRUDER.

INT. HALLWAY - CONT.

8

BRANDON has clearly already noticed something is wrong - really wrong. He hacks away at the edge of the frame with a chair, putting his shoulder into it, but it doesn't give.

BRANDON

I'm trying! I-

He slams his weight into the walls of his prison once more.

BACK TO: SAMANTHA and DANIEL in classroom.

SAMANTHA

DANIEL, do you remember how long
you've been here?

She starts to cry, gasping in panic.

SAMANTHA

I can't remember how long I've been
here.

DANIEL sits, apathetic - or simply trying to be stoic. But he feels it too as he sits - waiting - and then he LOOKS UP.

DANIEL

We've got to get out of here, now.

The raspy presence of THE INTRUDER grazes the edges of the frame, crawling - and with it, a sickening auditory static.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

9

DANIEL, SAMANTHA, and BRANDON are sitting on chairs.

BRANDON shudders, then jumps, as if awakening from a bad dream. SAMANTHA is still quietly hysteric and crawls towards the edge of the screen, pounding on the invisible walls. DANIEL sits, head in hands.

BRANDON
Buh! - oh my god. Where's ALLIE?

A few moments of whimpering silence, broken by sobs from SAMANTHA and muttering by BRANDON.

ANGLE ON DANIEL. He jumps to his feet.

DANIEL
The projector. We've got to stop it
from starting again.

BRANDON
We can't.

He points directly at the camera.

BRANDON (CONT'D)
It's back there, behind The fourth
wall. Unless there's some way to
break through, to go past it - we
can't stop it.

SAMANTHA turns, looking into the shadows to the left of the room.

DANIEL
There is someone - something - here
- it's like we're being hunted,
like this thing - whatever it is -
its trapped us in this loop. Who
knows how many times we've already--

A whirring sound. A beam of light, coming from behind the camera. The projector has come to life.

SAMANTHA screams.

DOLLY IN towards screen.

FILM LEADER PLAYS.

REPEAT TITLE SCREEN.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

10

It's dark. The blinds are drawn. ALLIE stands, shuddering, center frame. She's crying with no sound, tears streaming out of wide-open eyes, blood staining her features.

She gurgles - a whisper.

ALLIE

Help me.

BRANDON has given up on the edges of the frame and is trying to break through the door behind him, which leads to the classroom. SAMANTHA and DANIEL rush to the opposite side of the door to help him. Muffled yells on both sides.

BRANDON

We have to find some way to stop
the cycle. We need to break through
--

SAMANTHA

Everything is sealed off --

BRANDON

Just wait. I think I can do it! The
door's about to give. One more -

A shadow flickers towards BRANDON - THE INTRUDER. He turns.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

11

SAMANTHA huddles center frame, trying to distance herself from the edges of her prison. Her gaze is off screen, and we hear THE INTRUDER breaking in from the door in the hallway. She closes her eyes, flinching as it enters the room (off camera). The shadow flickers over her, more clearly than we've seen it before - an amalgamation of silhouettes, a serial killer, a pulsating mass, an alien beast.

A whispered plea.

SAMANTHA

Please.

A scream.

ANGLE ON DANIEL

standing, hunched, positioned ready to receive a blow.

We PULL OUT, the camera for the first time coming off of its pedestal, wandering around DANIEL. It's dark inside the room, and we see studio lights set up around him.

DANIEL reaches a hand out towards the pane of glass in front of him, a translucent shimmering FOURTH WALL, as viewed from the side. Projected through it are previous scenes from past iterations of the video.

Flurries of light and sound - the video spins around him. A dragging sound - DANIEL turns to the side, looking into the dark corners of the classroom. The only light comes from the fourth wall and directly across it, the video projected behind him, forming an infinite hallway of iterations (two mirrors and a movable projector).

He squints in the light and we PAN TO:

For the first time, the hulking form of THE INTRUDER - grinning, hulking, and lumbering DIRECTLY TOWARDS DANIEL. A growl.

SUBTITLE: You're stuck. You can't run. You can't hide.

DANIEL gasps. Closes his eyes. Takes a breath. More flashes of light - clips of his friends whir on either side of him in glowing frames.

BRANDON

We have to find some way to stop
the cycle. We need to break through

--

SAMANTHA

If you can't hide? You've got to
find some way to fight off THE
INTRUDER.

Back to main video feed. DANIEL gathers his resolve and spins towards the desk behind him.

Off main camera again. DANIEL grasps a glass paperweight on the desk and turns toward THE INTRUDER. THE INTRUDER leers back at him. It's a standoff. THE INTRUDER staggers toward him, about to break into a run.

DANIEL turns and LOOKS TO:

The Fourth Wall. Shimmering. He turns and FLINGS the paperweight with all his force through the pane of glass.

ANGLE ON:

Slow motion. DANIEL through shattering glass.

Dolly back, revealing dozens of frames, other hallways with other DANIELs, blood-splattered, disturbing iterations.

We track back with the paperweight as it crashes through, back towards the surface -

sailing towards a brightening frame, a classroom, a group of students --

INT. FIRST CLASSROOM - DAY

12

-- as we SNAP BACK to see the paperweight crack the lens of the projector. This is the first iteration. We know it is so because the students are in shock, the paperweight having sailed out of the projector screen.

The camera moves towards DANIEL, sitting at one of the desks, as he starts, as if waking up from a bad dream. But he looks towards the projector and the lens is cracked.

FINAL TITLE: DUCK AND COVER

BLACK