

KILLER CATCHPHRASES

Written by

Lou Drangi

lou.drangi@pm.me

INT. LOFT - DAY

In a bright and spacious converted loft, LEAH, a teen in a hoodie, sits on a couch, popcorn and soft drink in her hands. She watches an old slasher movie featuring a MASKED KILLER.

MASKED KILLER (ON TV)
You can run, but you can't hide!

Leah rolls her eyes and grabs some popcorn as a group of teenagers runs away SCREAMING.

LEAH
So cliché...

Behind her, her father SAM, forties and gray hair in casual wear, enters the room.

SAM
Have you seen my eyeliner?

No response. Sam walks to Leah, searches under the cushions.

SAM (CONT'D)
Are you mad at me?

She finally presses pause on an old remote.

LEAH
I won't be if you let me come with you.

SAM
I've told you. You're not ready.

LEAH
Oh come on! I have it in me, I know it! Plus, it's a summer camp, how bad can it be?

SAM
Really bad. And I don't have time to have this discussion again.

He leaves the room.

LEAH
You know you don't need eyeliner though, right?

SAM (O.S.)
I don't care. Your mom loved it!

In another room, Sam does some VOICE EXERCISES.

The phone RINGS, and Leah picks it up from the couch.

LEAH

Yes? Oh, hi Bob. Yeah, he's getting ready. No, I'm not coming... WHAT?!

She SLAMS it back on the receiver as Sam returns and puts some makeup on with a brush.

SAM

Who was it?

LEAH

Bob. And, guess what? He's bringing his son, because he trusts him. How come you can't do the same with me?

SAM

Because. It's an important gig.

Leah stands up as her dad puts away his brush and grabs a backpack, ready to leave.

LEAH

And you'd be ashamed to share your poster with your daughter...

SAM

That's not the issue, you know it. It's just that there's gonna be a lot of teens your age. And, well, they can be brutal sometimes.

LEAH

It's OK. I can be *brutal* too.

She does a roundhouse kick, right into a porcelain vase that SMASHES on the ground. Her dad gives her a death stare.

LEAH (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I'm sorry!

SAM

You're impossible. I can't even imagine how you'd do under pressure.

LEAH

Fine, I get it, you don't want me to help you. But I could at least film you! Like mom used to do!

She mimes a camera doing a close-up on her dad. He pushes her away.

SAM

No need, they all film with their cellphones nowadays. You're staying right here.

LEAH

You're so unfair.

At the door, he tries to kiss her goodbye, but she recoils. With a sigh, he leaves the loft and Leah SLAMS the door shut behind him.

She STOMPS to the TV, and gets a VHS out of the VCR player.

She then goes to a bookshelf, and places the VHS between two others labelled "First Kill, 1988" and "Winter Massacre, 1996". The one she was watching is "Summer Camp Spree, 1993".

Next to it, she spots a book titled "Killer Catchphrases". She picks it up and starts reading a bookmarked page -- but the doorbell RINGS OUT and startles her.

Cautious, she walks to the front door, pulls the handle, and slowly opens the CREAKY door to reveal--

--The Masked Killer from the movie! He stands tall in front of her, a machete in his clenched fist.

Dramatically, he lifts his hand and removes his mask--

--beneath it, Sam, an awkward smile on his face.

SAM

I forgot my keys.

He goes inside, grabs them from the coffee table, and is about to leave again when Leah stops him with her hand.

LEAH

Wait. Is that... mom's machete?

SAM

Um, yeah.

LEAH

But you said you would only use it to *avenge her!*

SAM

Yes. And that's what I'm gonna do.

LEAH

Really? Without me, but with Bob and his son?

SAM

That's what I'm gonna do to Bob and his son, actually. While they're busy dealing with the teens.

LEAH

Do you mean they're the ones who--?

Sam nods gravely. Shocked, Leah opens the book in his face.

LEAH (CONT'D)

So that's why you highlighted "*Vengeance is a dish best served with a machete*" and "*Like father, like son*" in there!

SAM

Yeah. They're good lines, right?

Leah shakes her head, clasps her fists, frustrated.

SAM (CONT'D)

It's not easy for me either, you know. If I had told you they were your mom's killers, you would've wanted to help me. But Bob is dangerous, and I couldn't risk--

LEAH

--I know, I get it. But the problem is... Those lines suck, dad! "*Looks like dying runs in your family*" would be much better!

Sam laughs, relieved, and pats Leah's head.

SAM

Hey, that's a nice one! You'll make a great partner once you're ready!

LEAH

Right? But I guess, for now, I can settle for fiction. Good luck, dad.

Leah kisses him goodbye, and he leaves with a smile.

She closes the door behind him, and, from the shelf, gets a DVD titled "*Killer Night*" with "*Based on actual events*" written on the front, next to a poster of the Masked Killer.

She puts it in the player, sits back on the couch and grabs her popcorn as the movie begins.

THE END