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AGNES OF GOD

A Screenplay

by

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SECOND DRAFT

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AGNES OF GOD is a detective story, not only of the world, but of the mind and of the soul. Just as the Doctor is our voice, so the camera is our eye. It rests, sometimes curiously, sometimes casually, on any possible clue — on a nun's hands as she tells her beads, or bakes bread; on a snow-covered stubble of wheat in a field; on a feather as well as on a sunset; on a piece of earth clinging to a habit's hem. Nothing is unimportant. It shows us these clues in times of quiet as well as mid-scene, mid-argument. Nothing is unimportant.

The soundtrack music we hear is dramatic, sometimes in its simplicity, at other times in its volume and swirling madness. It is often electronically percussive, not only in the occasional burst of rock music from the secular world, but in the majestic violins and organs that sing tunes written by a demented Bach, a Beethoven transported to the twentieth century.

The light of the convent differs from that of the outside world — the latter being sharp, bright; the former soft, as if filmed through gauze. The light source often seems to come from odd angles — from a setting sun, a full moon, a candle on the floor, or a lamp set askew.

This movie is purgation: for the Doctor, and for us.

The Nuns are as follows:

Mother Miriam Ruth — in her 60's.

Sister Agnes — the youngest of the convent residents at 21.

Sister Marguerite — in her 60's; the second-in-command; a true harridan; Mrs. Danvers would quiver before her; one of the two "outside" sisters, she greets visitors and withers them on the doorstep;

Sister Anne — in her 40's; thickly-bespectacled, she suffers from migraines; she will often stand for hours, hand to forehead, bearing the pain; as the other "outside" sister, she is terrified of Marguerite;

Sister Susanna — in her 50's; quite heavy; she is the cook-sister, and spends all of her time in the kitchen, sampling her own cooking; quite jolly;

Sister Jeannine — in her 50's; in charge of the mail-order jelly sales, she is the least likely person to fulfill this job — her books are a shambles, her office completely disorganized; she believes, however, that all is well, and can easily locate any item beneath pounds of paper;

Sister David Marie — in her 50's; in charge of public relations, she works on a small 1930's typewriter, and sports a pencil in her wimple and a small mustache;

Sister Therese — in her 60's; in charge of keeping the convent spotless; her knuckles are raw and ever-bloody from her ferocious scrubbing; she is unforgiving of Agnes, if only for dirtying her room;

Sister Elisabette — in her 70's; almost completely blind; and

Sister Geraldine — in her 70's; almost completely deaf; these two never go anywhere without each other — one is the eyes, the other the ears; they whisper constantly, like black birds of doom;

Sister Madeline Marie — in her 80's; she is quite mad, and wanders about the convent of her own free will, ever-smiling;

Sister Genevieve — in her 20's; she is a novice; very plain, pock-marked; jealous of Agnes for the favoritism shown by Mother Miriam; given opportunity and a knife, God knows what she wouldn't do.

Sister Irene Marie — in her thirties, quite lovely, she spends much of her time caring for the animals or working in the garden with Sister Josephine.

Sister Josephine — in her 30's, wearing thick spectacles; she is in charge of the vegetable garden. Her fingernails are always crusted with dirt.

A soft, beautiful Kyrie is sung by a voice later identified as belonging to AGNES. It grows and swells as other voices join.

1. FADE IN:

on WIDE SHOT of pastoral country-side. The leaves are golden in the autumn light. A walled stone convent in the distance.

TITLE (RED)

The reason why birds fly is simply
that they have perfect faith..

After a moment, the rest of the TITLE FADES UP

for to have faith is to have wings.
- J.M. Barrie

FADE TITLE: as we

CUT TO:

2. A ROPE, brown and worn, hanging from top to bottom SCREEN-RIGHT. A pair of old hands slowly grasps the rope and pulls — a BELL RINGS. There follows:
A MONTAGE of nuns' hands and faces, then bodies at work, as the CREDITS ROLL:
3. A pair of old hands telling beads.
4. A pair of hands playing absently with a wedding band, on right ring finger.
5. A pair of floured hands rolling bread dough.
6. Hands milking a cow. SLOW PAN UP to the face of AGNES, beautiful in dawn light.
7. A pair of priest's hands (FATHER MARTIN) bringing the host to several nuns in communion.
8. The faces of SISTERS ELISABETTE and GERALDINE, in chapel, one blindly staring ahead, lips moving in prayer, the other dozing. SISTER ANNE, hand to forehead, praying.
9. SISTER SUSANNA, opening her oven and removing loaves of fresh-baked bread, with crosses impressed into the dough. She is smiling, beads of sweat on her face.
10. SISTER THERESE, on hands and knees, ferociously scrubbing stone steps.
11. SISTER JEANNINE and DAVID MARIE, sleeves rolled up, wearing work gloves, mucking out the cow stall.

12. SISTER GENEVIEVE swinging on a swing, her novice's veil trailing behind her in the breeze.
13. SISTERS JEANNINE, MADELINE MARIE AND GENEVIEVE are harvesting vegetables from the garden.
14. CLOSE UP of red-stained hands picking beets and throwing them in a wheel barrel.

15. INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT

ANGLE on the choir, singing the Kyrie.

THE CREDITS END

CUT TO:

16. EXT. CONVENT YARDS - NIGHT

The deserted yard buildings are bathed in moonlight. Silence.

ANGLE on cow, in her stall, munching hay.

ANGLE on the bell in the bell tower, as an autumn wind whistles by.

ANGLE on the walled convent, silhouetted against the night. Candlelight abounds in the chapel, and on the other side of the convent, a single light flickers in a high room. Agnes' SCREAMS cut across the air like knives, again and again and again...

CUT TO:

17. INT. CLOISTER HALL - NIGHT

Mother Miriam, kerosene light in hand, moves down the hall as quickly as possible. Behind her runs Sister Marguerite, babbling in French: "What is it, where is she? please tell me, what's the matter?" etc.

THE CAMERA TRAVELS with them as they move forever toward us.

At Agnes' closed door, Mother turns the handle.

Unable to open the door, Mother pushes her weight against it, again and again. With some trouble it slides open. Through the opening, we see Agnes' body blocking entrance.

CUT TO:

18. EXT. CONVENT - NIGHT

Sirens whining and red light flashing, an ambulance screeches to a halt in front of the convent gates. All of the convent lights are on, and the figure of Sister Marguerite waits impatiently by the front door.

CUT TO:

19. INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

By flashlight, an Intern furiously cuts away Agnes' habit. She lies unconscious in the hallway before her room. Marguerite cries to God and the Blessed Virgin, in French, while other nuns in the shadows pray furiously. One of them is screaming with each tear of the cloth. This SHOT is HAND-HELD pandemonium.

CUT TO:

20. INT. AGNES' ROOM - NIGHT

Mother stands alone, kerosene lamp in hand. The commotion continues in the hall behind her, but she is fearfully, quietly searching the room with her eyes.

ANGLE on the bed, stripped of its sheets. In front of it is a small puddle of dark liquid; beneath the mattress a dark object.

ANGLE on Mother's hands, dragging the object, a waste-paper basket, from beneath the bed. It is stuffed with the bed sheets.

Frantically Mother pulls the sheets, stained with blood, from the basket. She stops, gasping at what she sees.

ANGLE on Marguerite in the doorway, watching.

TIGHT on Mother, as she reaches to the floor and bringing her fingers, now wet with blood, above the basket, she reaches in and whispers in French the words of baptism.

CUT TO:

21. EXT. CONVENT - NIGHT.

Ambulance pulling away from convent. CAMERA HOLDS on it. Till it disappears into the night. A moment of silence.

CUT TO:

22. EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

The bustle of a big city at noon. WIDE SHOT of downtown Montreal. A crisp, fall day.

Out of the traffic a sportscar drives up in front of the courthouse. A CAMERA finds DR. LIVINGSTON stepping out of the passenger side carrying a briefcase. She leans down to the car window, says something we cannot hear to the male driver. Who smiles at her then edges out into the traffic. She turns and starts up the steps into the court building.

23. EXT. COURTHOUSE STEPS - DAY

A crowd of hungry reporters bursts from the building, flashbulbs popping.

Screaming in French, Sister Marguerite battles her way through the crowd. A lawyer, EUGENE LYON, follows her. Mother Miriam brings up the rear, sheltering Agnes as best she can. Agnes covers her face with her veil, and her hands. The reporters are shouting, their CAMERAS busy flashing, clicking.

ANGLE on Agnes, as someone rips the veil away from her face. She turns away and her face is illuminated by the flash of bulbs. In this split second of brightness, she is staring directly at the Doctor.

ANGLE on the Doctor, stunned by the pleading beauty and innocence she has just seen.

ANGLE on Mother, now shielding Agnes again, as she too stares at the Doctor.

CUT TO:

24. INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - DAY

The Doctor is on her feet, smoking as always. Seated around the room in comfortable chairs are: Lyon, the lawyer, bear-like; RICHARD LeCLAIRE, Crown Attorney, suave, portly; JUSTICE JOSEPH LEVEAU, elderly, firm.

LEVEAU

Martha, it's you.

DOCTOR

What about Larry? He's free.

LeCLAIRE

They want a woman.

CONTINUED

24. CONTINUED

LYON

All you have to do is meet with her
once or twice then tell the court she's
insane.

DOCTOR

Are you dictating my position to me?

LeCLAIRE

Martha, all we're saying is...

DOCTOR

(overlapping)

We're getting into some sticky legal
territory here...

LeCLAIRE

Nobody wants this case to come to trial.
Not the Church, not the Crown, least of
all me.

DOCTOR

Come on, Richard, she strangled a baby...

LeCLAIRE

Look. Nobody's interested in sending this
nun to prison.

LEVEAU

We're not telling you what to decide, Martha.
We're not even telling you to take this case.

LYON

Is there any reason why you feel you
shouldn't take it?

DOCTOR

Yes.

LYON

What's that?

Silence.

DOCTOR

Today's my birthday. I always make bad
decisions on my birthday.

CONTINUED

24. CONTINUED

The men laugh. Leveau slides a small folder her way.

LEVEAU
Happy birthday.

CUT TO:

25. INT. MONTREAL RESTAURANT - EVENING

Dr. Livingston is surrounded by five friends, 3 MEN and 2 WOMEN. They are dressed well and champagne is being poured. The MATRE D' and a WAITER arrive with a small cake with a sparkler on top. The group breaks into "Happy Birthday". Dr. Livingston is embarrassed but pleased, her dinner companion kisses her. The matre d' wishes his congratulations in French and she responds in fluent French.

CUT TO:

26. INT. DOCTOR'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

We hear voices off-screen. The Doctor says good night to a MALE COMPANION. We hear a laugh; they're slightly tipsy. He makes a date for later in the week and she enters the apartment alone. She doesn't turn the lights on. She puts her purse and keys on table, picks up the mail, and moves toward the kitchen. The Doctor enters the kitchen followed by a cat.

27. INT. DOCTOR'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

She opens the refrigerator door and removes a carton of milk. She pours some into a bowl for the cat and into a glass for herself, still intent on reading her mail.

28. INT. DOCTOR'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

She walks back into the living room still reading the mail. Milk glass in hand. She tosses the mail back onto the table. Beside the discarded mail sits the evening MONTREAL GAZETTE and the casefolder given her by Leveau.

The Gazette contains a front page story on the case. The sub headline reads:

NUN INDICTED FOR MANSLAUGHTER.

CONTINUED

28. CONTINUED

There's a picture of Agnes staring out at us frightened. The Doctor touches the case folder with her hand, thinking. She looks out the window at the darkened city. On the skyline stands the steeple of a gothic church lit from below. The cross is an illuminated against the city's darkness.

CUT TO:

29. EXT. CONVENT RURAL QUEBEC - COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

The Doctor's BMW pulls up to imposing iron gates backed with wood or metal. Flanked by a ten foot stone wall. The gates are closed. She gets out of the car and looks inside. She notices small buzzer beneath a brass plate on which it says in French "THE LITTLE SISTERS OF MARY MAGDALINE".

30. EXT. CONVENT - DAY

The Doctor rings the doorbell. She is smoking the butt end of a cigarette. Waiting, she looks around her. The countryside is beautiful on this bright October day. Swallows soar. Calm. Peaceful.

ANGLE on Sister Marguerite, approaching the gate. She opens it, staring angrily at the Doctor.

BACK TO Doctor

DOCTOR

Hello. I'm Doctor Martha
Livingston. I'm the court-
appointed...

She stops mid-sentence. Marguerite is staring at her cigarette. The Doctor quickly steps it out on the gravel. Marguerite stares at this squashed stub. The Doctor kicks it into the grass.

CUT TO:

31. INT. CONVENT RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

The Doctor is seated in an uncomfortable chair, waiting. There is one other chair in the room, and a bare table between. The Doctor nervously opens her purse and removes her cigarettes. She looks up.

ANGLE on picture of Jesus, looking reproachfully at her.

A voice speaks O.S.

MOTHER (O.S.)
Doctor Livingston, I presume.

The Mother laughs, as the Doctor turns. Approaching hand outstretched, the Mother does not allow the Doctor to get a word in edgewise.

MOTHER (continuing)
I'm Mother Miriam Ruth.

DOCTOR
(shifting cigarettes to her
other hand)
How do....(you do?)

MOTHER
You needn't call me Mother if you
don't wish.

DOCTOR
Thank... (you.)

MOTHER
Most people find it uncomfortable.

DOCTOR
Well...

MOTHER
I'm afraid the word brings up the most
unpleasant connotations in this day
and age....

DOCTOR
Yes...

MOTHER
...so you may call me Sister.

DOCTOR
Thank you.

MOTHER
(turning away)
You must have tons of questions.
You can smoke if you want to.

She quickly moves to the door, closing it, though not tight.

CONTINUED

31. CONTINUED

MOTHER (continuing)
Just don't tell any of the sisters.
They wouldn't understand.
(she moves to the
window, opens it)
Especially Sister Marguerite. She'd
scare the pants off the Pope.

The Doctor is fumbling in her purse. Mother produces a match and lights it, then holds it for the Doctor to ignite her cigarette.

MOTHER (continuing)
Besides, I miss them.

DOCTOR
You were a smoker?

MOTHER
Two packs a day.

DOCTOR
Well, I can beat that.

MOTHER
Lucky Strikes.

Mother laughs at the surprise on the Doctor's face.

MOTHER (continuing)
My sister used to say that one of the
few things to believe in in this
crazy world is the honesty of
unfiltered cigarette smokers.

DOCTOR
You have a smart sister.

MOTHER
(sitting)
And you have questions. Fire away.

ANGLE on picture of Christ.

DOCTOR
Who knew about Agnes' pregnancy?

MOTHER
No one.

CONTINUED

31. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

How did she hide it from the other nuns?

MOTHER

She undressed alone, she bathed alone.

DOCTOR

Is that normal?

MOTHER

Yes.

DOCTOR

How did she hide it during the day?

MOTHER

(referring to habit)
She could have hidden a machine gun in here if she wanted.

DOCTOR

She had no physical examination during this time?

MOTHER

We're examined once a year. Her pregnancy fell in between our doctor's visits.

DOCTOR

Who was the father?

MOTHER

I haven't a clue.

DOCTOR

(leaving the window)
What men had access to her?

MOTHER

None, as far as I know.

DOCTOR

(Perry Mason now)
Was there a priest?

CONTINUED

31. CONTINUED

MOTHER
Yes, but... (I don't see...)

DOCTOR
What's his name?

MOTHER
(laughing)
Father Martin. But I don't see
him as a candidate.

DOCTOR
Could there have been anyone else?

MOTHER
Obviously there was.

DOCTOR
Then why don't you care to find out who?

MOTHER
Believe me, I've done everything short
of asking Agnes...

DOCTOR
Why haven't you asked...(her?)

MOTHER
(rising)
She doesn't even remember the birth.
Do you think she'd admit to the
conception?

ANGLE on the door -- through the crack, Marguerite is watching.

DOCTOR
Look, somebody gave her that baby....

MOTHER
But that happened some twelve months ago.
I fail to see how the identity of that
somebody has anything to do with this trial.

DOCTOR
Why do you think that?

MOTHER
Don't ask me those questions, dear.
I'm not the patient.

CONTINUED

31. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

But I'm the doctor. I'm the one who decides what is or is not important here.

ANGLE on door — Marguerite leaves.

MOTHER

Look, I don't know how to say this politely, but I don't approve of you. Not you personally, but...

DOCTOR

The science of psychiatry.

MOTHER

Yes. I want you to deal with Agnes as speedily and as easily as possible. She won't hold up under any sort of cross-examination.

DOCTOR

I'm not with the Inquisition.

MOTHER

And I'm not from the Middle Ages. I know what you are. I don't want that mind cut open.

CUT TO:

32. INT. CONVENT STAIRWELL - DAY

Sister Anne leads the Doctor up these narrow, wooden steps. From above drifts the VOICE OF AGNES, singing a Gloria. The Doctor stops for a moment to listen. The sound echoes in this vaulted chamber — is it ghost or angel?

ANGLE on Sister Therese, ferociously sweeping a landing. She looks up to smile dutifully at the Doctor.

32. CONTINUED

The Doctor continues up the stairs.. Sister Genevieve walks past her, going down, carrying a bucket of soapy water. She smiles at the Doctor.

DOCTOR

Good morning.

Genevieve does not answer, but blushes, dipping her head and continuing down the steps.

CUT TO:

33. INT. CONVENT HALLWAY - DAY

Anne leads the Doctor down this long hallway, onto which the rooms of the nuns open. An elderly sister, MADELINE MARIE, shuffles out of her room, and watches the Doctor, smiling, eyes twinkling madly.

Anne stops before an open door. The Doctor approaches and stops.

ANGLE on Agnes through the doorway, sitting on her window-sill, singing, sunlight on her face. As soon as she hears the Doctor, she stops abruptly, and turns to face us.

ANGLE on Doctor.

34. INT. AGNES' ROOM - DAY

White walls, a bed, a crucifix. Agnes rises.

AGNES

Hello.

DOCTOR

Hello. I'm Doctor Livingston.
I've been asked to talk to you.
May I?

AGNES

Yes.

The Doctor enters.

CONTINUED

34. CONTINUED

DOCTOR
You have a lovely voice.

AGNES
No I don't.

DOCTOR
I just heard you.

AGNES
That wasn't me.

DOCTOR
Was it Sister Marguerite?

Agnes smiles. A stir behind the Doctor, who turns to find bespectacled Anne holding her forehead, trying not to laugh as she walks away.

DOCTOR
You're very pretty, Agnes.

AGNES
No I'm not.

DOCTOR
Hasn't anyone ever told you that before?

AGNES
I don't know.

DOCTOR
Then I'm telling you now. You're very pretty
and you have a lovely voice.

AGNES
Let's talk about something else.

DOCTOR
(slowly closing the door)
What would you like to talk about?

AGNES
I don't know.

DOCTOR
Anything. First thing comes to your mind.

CONTINUED

34. CONTINUED

AGNES
(to crucifix)
God.

The Doctor casually makes her way to another window in the room, to sit like Agnes.

DOCTOR
Second thing comes to your mind.

AGNES
Love.

DOCTOR
(sitting)
Have you ever loved someone, Agnes?

AGNES
God.

DOCTOR
I mean another human.

AGNES
(smiling)
Oh yes.

DOCTOR
Who?

AGNES
Everyone.

DOCTOR
Who in particular?

AGNES
Right now?

DOCTOR
Yes.

AGNES
I love you.

The Doctor is a bit thrown by this.

DOCTOR
But have you ever loved a man? Other than Jesus Christ?

AGNES
Yes.

CONTINUED

34. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

Who?

AGNES

Oh, there are so many.

DOCTOR

Well, do you love Father Martin?

AGNES

(glowing)

Oh yes.

DOCTOR

Do you think he loves you?

AGNES

Oh, I know he does.

DOCTOR

He told you that?

AGNES

No, but when I look into his eyes I
can see.

DOCTOR

You've been alone together?

AGNES

Oh yes.

DOCTOR

Often?

AGNES

At least once a week.

DOCTOR

(sharing Agnes' joy)

Did you like that?

AGNES

Oh yes.

DOCTOR

Where do you meet?

AGNES

In the confessional.

DOCTOR (a beat)

Do you ever meet with him...
(outside the confessional?)

CONTINUED

34. CONTINUED

Agnes rises, leaving the window, moving to the darker part of the room. She becomes more and more agitated as the scene continues.

AGNES

You want to talk about the baby,
don't you?

DOCTOR

Would you like to talk about it?

AGNES

I never saw any baby. I think they made
it up.

DOCTOR

Why should they?

AGNES

I don't know.

DOCTOR

Do you remember the night they said
it came?

AGNES

No. I was sick.

DOCTOR

How were you sick?

AGNES

Something I ate.

DOCTOR

Did it hurt?

AGNES

Yes.

DOCTOR

Where?

AGNES

Down there.

DOCTOR

What did you do?

AGNES

I went to my room.

CONTINUED

34. CONTINUED

DOCTOR
What happened there?

AGNES
I got sicker.

DOCTOR
And then?

AGNES
I fell asleep.

DOCTOR
In the middle of all that pain?

AGNES
Yes.

DOCTOR
(gently riding her)
But where did the baby come from?

AGNES
(in a dark corner)
What baby?!

DOCTOR
The baby they made up.

AGNES
From their heads.

DOCTOR
Is that where they say it came
from?

AGNES
No, they say it came from the waste-
paper basket.

DOCTOR
Where did it come from before that?

AGNES
From God.

DOCTOR
After God, before the wastepaper basket?

CONTINUED

34. CONTINUED

AGNES

I don't know.

DOCTOR

How are babies born?

AGNES

Don't you know?

DOCTOR

Yes, I think I do, but I want you
to... (tell me.)

AGNES

(exploding)

I don't know what you're talking about!
You want to talk about the baby, everybody
wants to talk about the baby, but I never
saw the baby, so I can't talk about the
baby because I don't believe in the baby!

DOCTOR

(rising to calm her)

Then let's talk about something else.

Agnes opens the door to leave.

AGNES

No! I'm tired of talking.

Agnes runs from the room.

DOCTOR

(calling and moving after her)

Agnes....

35. INT. HALLWAY - DAY

AGNES

(going down the hall)

I don't want to answer any more
questions.

DOCTOR

How would you like to ask them?

A beat, and Agnes stops, turns.

CONTINUED

35. CONTINUED

AGNES
What do you mean?

DOCTOR
Just like that. You ask, I'll
answer.

AGNES
(smiling)
Anything?

DOCTOR
Anything.

36 EXT. FIELD - DAY

Agnes walks through the wheat stubble. The Doctor follows, smoking a cigarette. Occasionally, the CAMERA MAY FOCUS on a bird, on a bush, or a nearby scarecrow, on tall weeds blowing in the October wind.

AGNES
What's your real name?

DOCTOR
Martha Louise Livingston.

AGNES
Are you married?

DOCTOR
No.

AGNES
Would you like to be?

DOCTOR
Not at the moment, no.

AGNES
Do you have children?

DOCTOR
No.

AGNES
Would you like some?

CONTINUED

36. CONTINUED

DOCTOR
I can't have them any more.

AGNES
Why?

DOCTOR
Well...I've stopped menstruating.

This means nothing to Agnes, who continues.

AGNES
Why do you smoke?

DOCTOR
Does it bother you?

Agnes turns back to the Doctor.

AGNES
No questions.

DOCTOR
(smiling)
Smoking is an obsession with me.

AGNES
Why did you start?

DOCTOR
I started when my sister died. She was
an obsession, too.

AGNES
How did she die?

DOCTOR
Appendicitis.

AGNES
What's that?

DOCTOR
It's a... pain. Down here.

AGNES
Like I had?

DOCTOR
A little like that.

CONTINUED

36. CONTINUED

Agnes stops by the scarecrow and faces the Doctor, who stops too, waiting.

DOCTOR (continuing)
Any more questions?

AGNES
One.

DOCTOR
What's that?

AGNES
Where do you think babies come from?

DOCTOR
From their mothers and fathers, of course.
Before that? I don't know.

ANGLE on Agnes and the scarecrow.

AGNES
Well, I think they come from when an
angel lights on their mother's chest
and whispers into her ear. That
makes good babies start to grow. Bad
babies come from when a fallen angel squeezes
in down there, and they grow and grow
until they come out down there. I don't
know where good babies come out.

Agnes breaks away and runs toward a tree, shouting like a child to the wind. The
Doctor follows.

AGNES (continuing)
And you can't tell the difference except
that bad babies cry a lot and make
their fathers go away and their mothers
get very ill and die sometimes! Mummy
wasn't very happy when she died and I think
she went to hell because every time I see
her she looks like she just stepped out of
a hot shower!

Agnes stops at the tree, out of breath. The Doctor catches up. Agnes slides
down the tree to lie on the grass beneath it. She is truly ecstatic.

CONTINUED

36. CONTINUED

AGNES (continuing)

And I'm never sure if it's her or the
Lady who tells me things. They fight
over me all the time. The Lady I saw
when I was ten.

(she stretches her arms upward)
I was lying on the grass looking at
the sun and the sun became a cloud and the
cloud became the Lady and She told me
She would talk to me.

She turns away, hearing a distant voice.

AGNES (continuing)

Like right now she's crying, "Marie!
Marie!" but I don't know what that
means.

Agnes sits up suddenly, glowing, a beatific vision.

AGNES (continuing)

And She uses me to sing. And all I
can do is sing in Her voice, it's the
Lady's voice, God loves you!

Almost a sexual climax, this, and in the silence that follows she quietly turns to
the Doctor.

AGNES (continuing)

God loves you.

The Doctor is quite shaken by it all, and tries to make some sense of it.

DOCTOR

Do you know a Marie?

AGNES

No. Do you?

DOCTOR

That was my sister's name.

Agnes leaps up.

AGNES

I don't want to talk any more,
all right? I just want to go home.

ANGLE on Agnes as she walks across the fields toward the convent.

CUT TO:

37. INT. MOTHER'S OFFICE - DAY

Mother stands behind her desk, the Doctor by the door. This room is more cluttered than any of the others. The desk is loaded with papers, the bookshelves crammed with books. All a bit too worldly.

MOTHER

Well, what do you think? Is she totally bananas or merely slightly off-center? Or maybe she's perfectly sane and just a very good liar.

DOCTOR

What's your opinion?

MOTHER

(coming from behind the desk)
Well... I believe that she's...
not crazy. Nor is she lying.

DOCTOR

But how could she have a child and know nothing of sex and birth?

MOTHER

Because she's an innocent. She's a slate that hasn't been touched, except by God.

DOCTOR

(lighting a cigarette)
Bullshit.

MOTHER

In her case it isn't. Her mother kept her home almost all the time. She's had very little schooling. When her mother died, Agnes came to us. She's never been out there, Doctor. She's never seen a television show or a movie. She's never read a book.

DOCTOR

But if she's so innocent, how could she murder a child?

MOTHER

She didn't! I don't know what you'd call it -- whatever psychological-medical jargon you people use -- but she did not consciously kill that baby. She'd lost a lot of blood, she'd passed out by the time I found her...

CONTINUED

37. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

So someone else could have done it.

ANGLE on Mother.

MOTHER

No, not in the eyes of the police.

DOCTOR

But in your eyes?

MOTHER

I've told you what I believe.

DOCTOR

That she was unconscious, yes, so someone easily could have come into the room and ... (done it.)

MOTHER

You don't honestly think...
(something like that...)

DOCTOR

It's possible, isn't it?

MOTHER

Who?

DOCTOR

One of the other nuns. She found out about the baby and wanted to avoid a scandal.

MOTHER

That's absurd.

DOCTOR

That possibility never occurred to you?

MOTHER

No one knew about Agnes' pregnancy.
No one. Not even Agnes.

The Doctor moves away in frustration, flicking her ash into a wastepaper basket.

ANGLE on basket. It is a small wire one, and does not fit the marks on the wall against which a larger one once rested.

CUT TO:

38. INT. DOCTOR'S CAR - DAY

The Doctor drives through the Quebec countryside. The car radio is tuned to a punk rock station. She flips to another channel. A News Broadcast. Talking about stalled arms negotiations. She flips to a French music station, then turns the radio off and does a U-turn.

CUT TO:

39. EXT. QUEBEC VILLAGE - DAY

A church sits beside its rectory in this small Quebec country village. The Doctor pulls up in her car and walks to the rectory door. She stubs out her cigarette and rings the bell.

40. EXT. RECTORY - DAY

ANGLE on the rectory door swinging open, POV DOCTOR.

We see a stern, middle-aged HOUSEKEEPER. (THIS SCENE IS IN FRENCH)

HOUSEKEEPER

Yes?

ANGLE on Doctor, standing outside.

DOCTOR

Is Father Martin in?

HOUSEKEEPER

What for?

DOCTOR

I'm here on behalf of Mother Miriam
at the convent.

The woman holds open the door. The Doctor steps into the kitchen.

41. INT. RECTORY KITCHEN - DAY

HOUSEKEEPER

Wipe your feet.

The woman leaves the Doctor alone, trapped on the doormat. The Doctor looks around the kitchen.

CONTINUED

41. CONTINUED

A collection of rosaries hung from a hook in the wall.

A picture of St. Therese of Lisieux.

A picture of the Pope.

A girlie calendar from a car dealership.

ANGLE on Doctor. A clumping sound is heard. The Doctor looks up.

DOCTOR'S POV - Father Martin enters. He is eighty if he is a day, and uses a cane. He looks at the Doctor and gives her a toothless smile.

CUT TO:

42. EXT. CONVENT - DAY

WIDE SHOT of the rear of the convent from right of barn. Voices are heard.

ANNE (V.O.)

This convent was built for over fifty. There are only fourteen of us now. We used to make our own bread, cheese, preserves, and sell them for income. Now all we manage are some jellies at Christmas.

The CAMERA continues to PAN past the barn to a yard where it picks up Sister Anne gathering eggs from the chicken house. The Doctor is following her.

DOCTOR

How do you survive?

ANNE

We own all the land around here, and rent it out. We keep a few acres for ourselves — some corn, wheat, some vegetables.

DOCTOR

You work this land alone?

ANNE

Occasionally a boy from one of the farms will come to help us.

DOCTOR

Is there any way he...?

CONTINUED

42. CONTINUED

ANNE

No. This place is locked
solid.

DOCTOR

(looking up at convent)
Which room was Agnes'?

Anne points to a room high on the top floor.

DOCTOR'S POV - Window high up

CUT TO:

43. INT. CONVENT HALL - DAY

TIGHT SHOT of a key inserted into old-fashioned lock.

44. INT. CONVENT ROOM - DAY

The door swings open. The Doctor enters. This is the room where Agnes gave birth. It has been stripped of everything except the bed, bare of its mattress. Even the crucifix is gone, a mere shadow of it on the wall.

Slowly, the Doctor walks to the window, three stories above the ground. Birds sing. A woman calls to another. In the garden outside the wall, some of the nuns are working. One stops to look up. A voice behind her:

MOTHER

There's no way anyone could get into
the convent. Sister Marguerite is the
only one with a key and she wouldn't
let Christ in after dark.

DOCTOR

Maybe Agnes went to him.

MOTHER

Oh come on, you've talked to her.
She doesn't even know how babies are
born let alone made.

The Doctor watches Mother closely.

CONTINUED

44. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

When did you first learn about her...
innocence, about the way she thinks?

MOTHER

A short while after she came to us.

DOCTOR

And you weren't shocked?

MOTHER

I was appalled. Just as you are now.
You'll get used to it.

DOCTOR

What happened?

MOTHER

She stopped eating. Completely.

45. FLASH BACK INT. CHAPEL - DAY

CLOSE-UP of Agnes, lit by candles.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

This was before her pregnancy?

MOTHER (V.O.)

Almost two years before.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

Why did she do this?

MOTHER (V.O.)

She said she'd been commanded by
God.

ANGLE on Mother and Agnes, kneeling in the darkened chapel. At first they speak in whispers, almost as if this were a confessional. Agnes quivers for fear she might tell her secret.

Her left hand is concealed beneath the white scapular of her habit.

CONTINUED

45. CONTINUED

MOTHER
He spoke to you Himself?

AGNES
No.

MOTHER
Through someone else?

AGNES
Yes.

MOTHER
Who?

AGNES
I can't say.

MOTHER
Why?

AGNES
She'd punish me.

MOTHER
One of the sisters?

AGNES
No.

MOTHER
Who?

A noise from the back of the church. Mother turns to look.

ANGLE on an elderly nun, SISTER PAUL, in the distance, shuffling out of the chapel.

Mother turns back to Agnes. They begin to speak in louder tones now, and their voices echo in the empty church.

MOTHER
Why would she tell you to do this?

AGNES
Because I'm getting fat.

MOTHER
Oh, for Heaven's sake.

CONTINUED

45. CONTINUED

AGNES

I am. There's too much flesh on me.

MOTHER

Agnes...

AGNES

I'm a blimp.

MOTHER

....Why does it matter whether you're fat or not?

AGNES

Because.

MOTHER

You needn't worry about being attractive here.

AGNES

I do. I have to be attractive to God.

MOTHER

He loves you as you are.

AGNES

No He doesn't. He hates fat people.

MOTHER

Who told you this?

AGNES

It's a sin to be fat.

MOTHER

Why?

ANGLE on wooden statue of St. Therese, with live rose petals.

AGNES (O.C.)

Look at all the statues. They're thin.

MOTHER (O.C.)

Agnes...

ANGLE on carving of St. Agnes, under torture.

CONTINUED

45. CONTINUED

AGNES (O.C.)

That's because they're suffering.
Suffering is beautiful. I want to be
beautiful.

MOTHER (O.C.)

Who tells you these things?

ANGLE on statue of St. Francis, birds at his feet.

AGNES (O.C.)

Christ said it in the Bible, He said,
"Suffer the little children." I want
to suffer like a little child.

MOTHER (O.C.)

That's not what He meant.

Agnes jumps to her feet.

AGNES

I am a little child, but my body keeps
getting bigger and soon I won't be able
to fit in. I won't be able to squeeze
into heaven.

MOTHER

Agnes, dear, Heaven is not a place with
bars and... (windows...)

Agnes, with her right hand, clutches her breasts. She is almost shouting.

AGNES

I mean look at these! I've got to lose
weight! I'm a blimp!

MOTHER (rising to go to her)

Oh my dear child.

Agnes is backing away, down the aisle of the church. She is lit only by the
burning candles in front of her.

AGNES

God blew up the Hindenberg, He'll
blow up me! That's what she said!

MOTHER

Who?!

CONTINUED

45. CONTINUED

AGNES

Mummy! I'll get bigger and bigger every day and then I'll pop. But if I stay little it won't happen!

MOTHER

(dropping to a near-whisper)
Your mother tells you this?

Agnes freezes - she has said too much. She and the Mother now stand apart. Mother is trying to get Agnes to come to her, but every move she makes forces Agnes to back up a step.

MOTHER

Agnes, dear, your mother is dead.

AGNES

But she watches. She listens.

CLOSE-UP of face of Blessed Virgin statue, smiling, beautiful.

MOTHER

Nonsense. I'm your mother now, and I want you to eat.

ANGLE on figure of Marguerite, watching from the shadows.

AGNES (O.C.)

I'm not hungry.

MOTHER(O.C.)

You have to eat something, Agnes.

AGNES (O.C.)

No I don't. The host is enough.

BACK TO MOTHER

MOTHER

My dear, I don't think a communion wafer has the Recommended Daily Allowance of anything.

AGNES

Of God.

MOTHER (corrected)

Oh yes, of God.

AGNES steps forward.

CONTINUED

45. CONTINUED

AGNES

What does that word mean? Begod?

MOTHER

Begot. You don't know?

AGNES

That God's my Father?

MOTHER

Only spiritually. You don't know what that word means? Begot?

AGNES

Begod. That's what Mummy calls it. She says it means when God presents us to our mothers in bundles of eight pounds six ounces.

MOTHER

Oh my dear.

AGNES

(dropping her eyes)
She says I have to be eight pounds again.

MOTHER

She even wants you to drop the six ounces?

Mother stops, following Agnes' eyes to the floor.

A small pool of blood is forming, dripping from beneath Agnes' scapular. Some red is leaking through the white.

Agnes sees this too and, looking at Mother, backs against a stand of candles burning before a statue of St. Sebastian, pierced with arrows.

AGNES

(near tears)
I'm being punished.

MOTHER

For what?

AGNES

I don't know.

Mother rushes at Agnes, tears away her scapular, grabbing her hidden hand.

The hand is bleeding from the palm.

CONTINUED

45. CONTINUED

MOTHER

Oh dear Jesus.

AGNES

(crying)

It started this morning and I can't
get it to stop. Why me, Mother?
Why me?

BACK TO SCENE

46. INT. AGNES' ROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP of crucifix-shadow, the bare space on the wall which once held the
cross.

DOCTOR (O.C.)

Why didn't you send her to a doctor?

BACK TO MOTHER

turning from the "crucifix" to the Doctor.

MOTHER

It was healed by the following morning.
She began eating again...(and
that's all that seemed important...)

DOCTOR

(exploding)

She had a hole in the palm of her hand!
She could have bled to death!

MOTHER

(matching the Doctor's fury)
But she didn't, did she?! If anyone
else had seen what I had seen, she'd
be public property. Newspapers,
psychiatrists, ridicule. She doesn't
deserve that.

DOCTOR

Well, she has it now.

MOTHER

I know what you're thinking.
She's an hysteric, pure and simple.

DOCTOR

Not simple, no.

CONTINUED

46. CONTINUED

MOTHER

I saw it! Clean through the palm of her hand! Do you think hysteria did that?

DOCTOR

It's been doing it for centuries, she's not unique, she's just another victim.

MOTHER

Yes, God's victim. That's her innocence. She belongs to God.

DOCTOR

And I mean to take her away from Him, that's what you fear, isn't it?

MOTHER

You bet I do.

CUT TO:

47. INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBER - EVENING

VIEW of Downtown Montreal at night - cars honking, neon signs flashing.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

I prefer to look upon it as opening her mind.

LYON (V.O.)

To the world?

DOCTOR (V.O.)

To herself. So she can begin to heal.

The CAMERA slowly pulls back revealing Lyon standing at window smoking a lighted cigar. LYON, LeCLAIRE, and LEVEAU are gathered again. The Doctor is her own defence attorney, furious, smoking. LeCLAIRE sits with feet up, the end of a long day. LEVEAU rests behind his desk, calm in this chaos.

LYON

But that's not your job. You're there to diagnose, not to heal.

DOCTOR

That's a matter of opinion.

LYON

The court's... (opinion.)

CONTINUED

47. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

Your opinion. I'm here to help her
in whatever way I see fit. That's my
duty as a doctor.

LEVEAU

But not as an employee of the court.
You're to make a decision on her sanity
as quickly as possible and not interfere...
(with due process of law.)

DOCTOR

As quickly as I see fit.

LeCLAIRE

Look, Martha, the kindest thing you can
do for the girl is to make a decision
and let her go.

DOCTOR

And what then? If I say she's crazy, she
goes to an institution. If I say she's
sane, she goes to prison.

LeCLAIRE

Temporary insanity, then.

DOCTOR

Oh yes, a child who sees the Virgin
Mary at the age of ten and eleven years
later strangles a baby is temporarily
insane. No, Richard, this case is a little
more complicated than that.

LeCLAIRE

But the longer you take to make a decision
the more difficult it will be for us.

DOCTOR

Why?!

LeCLAIRE

The bishop is breathing down our goddamn
necks!

ANGLE on Lyon, the bishop's man.

DOCTOR

So you think the sooner she's in prison
the better off she'll be?

CONTINUED

47. CONTINUED

LEVEAU

Martha, whatever your decision, I'm going to allow her to return to the convent and serve her time there.

This is morally and legally incredible!

DOCTOR

I don't believe this! I don't bloody believe this!

LeCLAIRE

We can have you removed from the case, Martha.

DOCTOR

You do and I'll have this on the front page of every paper in the Province.

LEVEAU

(trying to smooth things)
You wouldn't recommend she return...
(to the convent?)

DOCTOR

I wouldn't send her back to the source of her problem, no.

LYON

The bishop will be very upset...
(about this.)

DOCTOR

I'm fighting for this woman's life,
not for any bloody bishop!

CUT TO:

MONTAGE

Agnes is heard singing a Credo over the following:

48. EXT. CONVENT YARD - DAY

Winter is approaching - snow is in the air - leaves are blowing past the empty, deserted buildings.

49. EXT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The Doctor is talking to DETECTIVE LANGEVIN outside the station. He gives her reports and photographs. Uniformed POLICEMEN pass by.

50. INT. STABLE - DAY

Agnes stands within, framed by a doorway of falling snow. She is stroking the cow, and pouring a bucket of steaming milk into a milkcan. She wears a sweater and fingerless woolen gloves.

51. INT. DOCTOR'S MONTREAL OFFICE - DAY

The Doctor is sitting at her desk chain smoking, looking at police photographs of the scene of the crime. She is physically upset.

52. EXT. REAR OF CONVENT - DAY

Sisters Therese and Genevieve are hanging out sheets on a line at rear of convent. The CAMERA follows their action, and reveals a young boy in a distant field. He watches for a moment, then moves to a tractor and drives over the horizon.

VOICE (V.O.)

His Excellency sends his apologies that he isn't available to speak to you in person.

CUT TO:

53. EXT. MONTREAL CATHEDRAL - BISHOP'S RESIDENCE IN B.G. - DAY

The Monsignor is walking with the Doctor in the Cathedral grounds.x.

MONSIGNOR

He merely wanted to express his gratitude to you for the special care you are taking with these case.

The MONSIGNOR offers the Doctor a cigarette from a gold case. She takes one, and he lights it for her as he continues speaking.

MONSIGNOR (continuing)

I must admit it's a bit of a surprise, the time involved. It's been rather painful for all of us.

He lights a cigarette for himself.

CONTINUED

53. CONTINUED

MONSIGNOR (continuing)

I've been told that you don't recommend she be returned to the convent.

DOCTOR

No.

MONSIGNOR

Well, I daresay you're right about that. But neither can it be for Agnes' benefit to have this investigation extended for any length of time.

DOCTOR

I've never called it an investigation, why do you?

MONSIGNOR

You know what I'm talking about.

He continues walking.

MONSIGNOR (continuing)

Your mother was a resident of Saint Catherine's Home, wasn't she?

ANGLE on Doctor, puzzled.

MONSIGNOR (continuing)

Why did you move her?

DOCTOR

I didn't think she was getting proper care. What has that got... (to do with anything?)

MONSIGNOR

And you had a sister who died in a convent.

She stops to confront him. The two are FRAMED with the soaring cathedral behind them.

DOCTOR

Who told you this?

MONSIGNOR

Do you still go to church?

CONTINUED

53. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

What business is this... (of yours?)

MONSIGNOR

I just wonder if you can be very objective about this case.

DOCTOR

Look, father, my religion, my Christ, is this.

(points at head)

The mind. Everything I don't understand in this world is contained within these few cubic inches. Just because I don't buy all the superstitions you subscribe to....

MONSIGNOR

It makes no difference to me what you believe, Doctor, but it makes all the difference to Agnes.

DOCTOR

What are you afraid of? It's not as if you're protecting her, for Christ's sake. Condemn her, but let's do it quickly, is that what you want?

MONSIGNOR

The longer this case is pending, the more fuel there will be for the newspapers, and the more difficult it will be for us.

DOCTOR

What about Agnes?

He sighs softly.

MONSIGNOR

Someone's got to suffer for this, Doctor. You must be merciful and quick.

CUT TO:

54. EXT. CONVENT CEMETERY - LATE AFTERNOON

The gravestones here are simple, varied, some very old, maybe one hundred fifty in all.

CLOSE SHOT - a new stone. It reads:

Soeur Marie Paul
Born, July 21, 1898
Died, February 23, 1984.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
You liked Sister Paul.

AGNES (V.O.)
She was kind to me. She told me I
was beautiful.

CAMERA PULLS BACK revealing Agnes kneeling in front of the stone. The Doctor stands behind her, smoking.

DOCTOR
What else did she tell you?

AGNES
She said all of God's angels would
want to sleep beside me, if they could.
I liked that.

She scrapes some leaves away and places two or three fall blossoms at the foot of the stone.

AGNES
She lived here for almost seventy years, and
every day she rang the bell, to wake us up,
to call us to God... She took me to my
secret place.

DOCTOR
Where's that?

Agnes head down, smiling. She wants to share, but...

DOCTOR
I promise I won't tell. Take me there too.

Agnes looks up at the Doctor. She is smiling.

CUT TO:

55. INT. STEPS UP TO BELL TOWER - SUNSET

The steps are narrow and steep. Agnes leads the way.

AGNES

She said I could see the whole world from
up here. That it looks much better far
away than it does up close.

They step out to the tower.

56 EXT. BELL TOWER - SUNSET

The view is exquisite. The tower is old, open. A single large bell hangs in its center, with ropes falling to the pit below. The bell itself is etched with angels and delicate Latin, like hieroglyphics. A sturdy platform rests directly beneath the bell.

DOCTOR

It's beautiful.

Agnes crawls onto the platform, and lies on her back beneath the bell.

AGNES

And sometimes I'll crawl under here
and sing. It makes a wonderful sound!

The sound echoes, and Agnes laughs.

AGNES

Sister Paul used to do it all the
time when she was a girl.

DOCTOR

What happens if the bell rings, and
you're under there?

AGNES

It's even more wonderful then.

The Doctor sits on the platform also, beneath the bell. Agnes, then the Doctor, laughs.

DOCTOR

It's like hiding from my mother when
I was a little girl.

AGNES

Where did you go?

CONTINUED

56. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

No place as wonderful as this.

It is a womb, a little house they share. Light comes from the top of the bell.
The inside is etched with angels.

DOCTOR

Agnes, have you ever thought of leaving
the convent? For something else?

AGNES

Oh no. There's nothing else. Just being
here helps me sleep at night.

DOCTOR

You have trouble sleeping?

AGNES

I get headaches. Mummy did too. Oh,
but she wasn't stupid. She knew things
nobody else knew.

DOCTOR

What things?

AGNES

She knew what was going to happen to me,
and that's why she hid me away.

DOCTOR

How did she know?

AGNES

Somebody told her.

DOCTOR

Who?

AGNES

I don't know.

DOCTOR

Agnes.

AGNES

You'll laugh.

DOCTOR

I promise I won't laugh. Who told her?

CONTINUED

56. CONTINUED

AGNES

An angel. When she was having one of her headaches.

DOCTOR

Did your mother see angels often?

AGNES

No.

DOCTOR

Do you?

AGNES

(too quickly)

No.

DOCTOR

Do you believe your mother really saw them?

AGNES

No. But I could never tell her that.

DOCTOR

Why not?

AGNES

She'd get angry. She'd punish me.

DOCTOR

How would she punish you?

AGNES

She'd...punish me.

Agnes crawls from under the bell. The Doctor follows. Agnes moves to the edge of the tower, away from the Doctor, who stands hand resting on the bell.

DOCTOR

Did you love your mother?

AGNES

Oh yes. Yes.

DOCTOR

Did you ever want to become a mother yourself?

CONTINUED

56. CONTINUED

AGNES

I could never be a mother.

DOCTOR

Why not?

AGNES

I don't think I'm old enough. Besides,
I don't want a baby.

DOCTOR

Why not?

AGNES

Because I don't want one.

DOCTOR

(lighting a cigarette)

But if you did want one, how would you
go about getting one?

AGNES

From someone who didn't want a baby.

DOCTOR

Like you?

AGNES

No! Not like me!

DOCTOR

But how would that person get the baby
if they didn't want it?

AGNES

A mistake.

DOCTOR

How did your mother get you?

AGNES

A mistake! It was a mistake!

DOCTOR

Is that what she said?

Agnes moves. The setting sun is directly behind her.

CONTINUED

36. CONTINUED

AGNES

You're trying to get me to say that she was a bad woman and that she hated me and didn't want me but that is not true! You don't want to hear the nice parts about her!

The Doctor begins moving slowly toward her, and Agnes backs away.

DOCTOR

Agnes, I cannot imagine that you know nothing about sex...

AGNES

I can't help it if I'm stupid.

DOCTOR

...that you have no remembrance of your impregnation...

AGNES

It's not my fault!

DOCTOR

...and that you don't believe that you carried a child!

AGNES

It was a mistake!

DOCTOR

What, the child?!

AGNES

Everything! Nuns don't have children!

Cigarette in hand, the Doctor reaches for her.

DOCTOR

Agnes...

Agnes lashes out at the burning cigarette...

AGNES

Don't touch me like that! Don't touch me like that!

...and loses her balance at the edge of the tower. The Doctor quickly catches her, and Agnes whips away in another direction, hurling these words at the stunned Doctor.

CONTINUED

56. CONTINUED

AGNES

I know what you want from me! You want to take God away. You should be ashamed! They should lock you up, people like you!

Agnes runs down the stairs. The CAMERA moves close on the Doctor. She is hurt and confused.

CUT TO:

57. INT. CONVENT OFFICE - EVENING

Mother stands at her desk, leaning on it, confronting the Doctor. The door is closed. The room is lit by a low light on the desk, throwing shadows on faces and ceiling.

MOTHER

You hate us, don't you?

DOCTOR

(astonished)
What?!

MOTHER

Nuns. You hate nuns.

DOCTOR

I hate ignorance and stupidity.

MOTHER

And the Catholic Church.

DOCTOR

I haven't said a word... (against
the Catholic Church.)

MOTHER (cutting her off)

This is a human being you're dealing
with, not an institution.

DOCTOR

But the institution...(has a hell of
a lot to do with...)

CONTINUED

57. CONTINUED

MOTHER (plowing onward)
Catholicism is not on trial here. I
want you to treat Agnes without any
religious prejudices or turn this case
over...(to another psychiatrist.)

DOCTOR
(exploding)
How dare you tell me how to run my
affairs...

MOTHER
It's my affair too.

DOCTOR (overlapping)
How dare you think that I'm in a position
to be badgered....

MOTHER
I'm only requesting...(that you be fair.)

DOCTOR (overlapping)
...or bullied or whatever you're trying to
do. Who the hell do you think you are?!
You walk around here expecting applause
for the way you've treated this child!

MOTHER
She's not a child.

If the Doctor could, she would tear this room to pieces:

DOCTOR
And she has a right to know!
That there's a world out there filled
with people who don't believe in God
and who are not any worse off than you!
People who still fall in love and make
babies and occasionally are very happy.
She has a right to know that. But you,
and your order, and your Church, have kept
her ignorant....

MOTHER
We could hardly do that...(even if we wanted.)

DOCTOR
...because ignorance is next to virginity,
right? Poverty, chastity, and ignorance,
that's what you live by.

CONTINUED

57. CONTINUED

MOTHER

I am not a virgin, Doctor.

She opens her desk drawer.

MOTHER (continuing)

I was married for twenty-three years. Two daughters.

...and taking two small framed pictures of her daughters, throws them onto the desk as evidence.

MOTHER (continuing)

I even have grandchildren. Surprised?

ANGLE on Doctor - speechless.

As Mother picks up the pictures and places them back in the drawer.

MOTHER

It might please you to know that I was a failure as a wife and mother. Possibly because I protected my children from nothing.

She closes the drawer.

MOTHER (continuing)

They won't see me anymore. That's their revenge. I think they tell their friends I've passed on. Oh, don't tell me, Doctor Freud, I'm making up for past mistakes.

DOCTOR

You can help her.

MOTHER

I am.

DOCTOR

No, you're shielding her. Let her face the big bad world.

MOTHER

Meaning you?

DOCTOR

Yes, if that's what you think.

CONTINUED

57. CONTINUED

MOTHER

What good would it do? No matter what you decide it's either the prison or the nuthouse, and the differences between them are pretty thin.

DOCTOR

There's another choice.

MOTHER

What's that?

DOCTOR

Acquittal.

MOTHER

(suspicious)

How?

DOCTOR

Innocence. Legal innocence. I know the judge would be happy for any reason to throw this case out of court.

A moment of silence.

MOTHER

What do you need?

DOCTOR

Answers.

CUT TO:

58. INT. CONVENT OFFICE - LATER

Some time has passed, as indicated by a makeshift ashtray filled with cigarette butts on the desk. The Doctor has slowly been going over the known facts, again and again, looking for some clue. Both women are seated across from each other at the desk.

DOCTOR

When would Agnes have conceived the child?

CONTINUED

58. CONTINUED

MOTHER
Sometime in February.

DOCTOR
How many boys were working here
then?

MOTHER
None. They're only here during the
summer and autumn.

DOCTOR
You don't remember anything
unusual happening at that
time?

MOTHER
Earthquakes?

DOCTOR
Visitors at the convent.

MOTHER
Nothing.

DOCTOR
Do you keep a diary, a daybook?

MOTHER
Yes.

DOCTOR
Look at it.

MOTHER
I have.

DOCTOR
Look again.

Mother opens a side drawer and, finding the correct book, removes it. She opens it in front of her, then wearily flips through the pages until she comes to approximate dates.

CONTINUED

58. CONTINUED

MOTHER

There's nothing here.

DOCTOR

Was the child full-term?

Mother notices something that did not register before. She flips back a few pages.

MOTHER

Oh dear God.

DOCTOR

(sitting up)

What is it?

MOTHER

(flipping back pages again)

The sheets.

DOCTOR

What sheets? ..

MOTHER

Dear God, I should have known.

59. FLASHBACK INT. CONVENT DINING ROOM - EVENING

ANGLE on white table cloth as it is shaken and folded after the evening meal.

PAN up to Agnes, seated at the table.

MOTHER (V.O.)

I should have suspected something.

Dishes are being washed in a large metal dishpan on the wooden table nearby. Everyone is present and helping. Mother is seated at the head of the table, questioning Agnes. The others work silently, listening.

MOTHER

Sister Marguerite says you've been sleeping on a bare mattress, Sister. Is that true?

ANGLE on Agnes, head bowed, face red. All eyes are upon her.

AGNES

Yes, Mother.

MOTHER

Why?

59. CONTINUED

AGNES

In medieval days nuns and monks would
sleep in their coffins.

ANGLE on Marguerite, who snorts at this remark.

ANGLE on Mother glances at Marguerite, then back to Agnes.

MOTHER

We're not in the Middle Ages, Sister.

AGNES

It made them holy.

MOTHER

It made them uncomfortable. If they
didn't sleep well, I'm certain the
next day they were cranky as mules.

This last has been delivered for the benefit of Marguerite.

MOTHER

Sister, where are your sheets?

Agnes will not answer.

MOTHER (continuing)

Do you really believe sleeping on a bare
mattress is the equivalent of sleeping
in a coffin?

AGNES

No.

MOTHER

Then tell me. Where are your sheets?

AGNES

(whispering, ashamed)
I burned them.

MOTHER

Why?

AGNES

They were stained.

CONTINUED

59. CONTINUED

MOTHER

(rising)

Sister, how many times have I burned into your thick skull and the thick skull of your fellow novice...

ANGLE on Genevieve.

MOTHER (continuing)

...that menstruation is a perfectly natural process and nothing to be ashamed of.

AGNES

Yes, Mother.

MOTHER (to both of them)

Say it.

AGNES/GENEVIEVE

It is a perfectly natural process and nothing to be ashamed of.

MOTHER

Mean it.

AGNES/GENEVIEVE

It is a perfectly natural process...

GENEVIEVE continues but AGNES, ashamed and confused, begins to cry.

Mother stands beside Agnes, arm around her.

MOTHER

A few years ago one of our sisters came to me in tears, asking for comfort.

ANGLE on Jeanine, intent on her work, but listening.

MOTHER (continuing)

Comfort because she was too old to have any children. Not that she intended to.

BACK TO MOTHER

CONTINUED

59. CONTINUED

MOTHER (continuing)

But once a month she had been reminded
of the possibility of Motherhood.
So dry your eyes, Sister, and thank God
that He has filled you with that
possibility.

AGNES

(into the table)

It's not that. It's not that.

MOTHER

What do you mean?

AGNES

It's not my time of the month.

MOTHER

(turning her around)

Should you see a doctor?

AGNES

I don't know. I don't know what happened,
Mother. I woke up and there was blood on
the sheets but I don't understand what
happened. I don't know what I did wrong.
I don't know why I should be punished!

Jeannine and the others freeze, watching.

MOTHER

For what?

AGNES

(sobbing)

I don't know!

MOTHER

Sister.

AGNES

(clinging to Mother)

I don't know. I don't know.

Agnes buries her head in Mother's arms.

CONTINUED

59. CONTINUED

MOTHER (V.O.)

That was the beginning. The night of the conception. That's why she burned the sheets.

CUT TO:

60. FLASH BACK INT. CONVENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Mother and Sister Marguerite in night clothes hurrying down a darkened hallway, the CAMERA moving with them.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

When was that?

MOTHER (V.O.)

The 23rd of February. That was the night one of our elder nuns passed away.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

Sister Paul?

Mother arrives at the door and pushes through.

MOTHER (V.O.)

Yes.

61. FLASH BACK INT. SISTER PAUL'S ROOM - NIGHT

MOTHER (V.O.)

I have no recollection of Agnes' activities on that night. I was needed in the sick room.

Sister Paul lies dying. Mother, Marguerite, Sister Anne and Father Martin are present, the latter performing the Last Rites. He anoints her feet, her hands, her head. Several of the nuns are gathered at the doorway, outside in the hall. They are praying. Agnes arrives, looks in with concern.

Sister Paul turns her head to look at Agnes.

ANGLE on Agnes, watching her.

CONTINUED

61. CONTINUED

CLOSE UP of Sister Paul. She mouths a word, carefully, but we cannot make out what it is she says. It is intended for Agnes.

CLOSE UP of Agnes, watching Sister Paul's lips.

CUT TO:

62. INT. OLD AGE HOME - TELEVISION ROOM - AFTERNOON

CLOSE SHOT on T.V. "Spiderman" or a violent animated children's cartoon is blaring from the set. Six old people sit watching it. Two are asleep.

ANGLE on OLD WOMAN puffing the butt end of a cigarette, chuckling at the program. She coughs. The Doctor carrying a small white paper bag enters the TV room from the foyer. She approaches the chuckling Old Woman. Leans over and kisses her tenderly.

DOCTOR

Hi, Mama.

OLD WOMAN looks up at her, then turns back to the T.V. The DOCTOR kneels beside her.

DOCTOR

I brought you something.

OLD WOMAN

Shut up. I'm trying to watch this.

Old woman continues watching. The Doctor from the paper bag, removes a pint of ice cream and a plastic spoon. She opens it. The old woman looks at the ice cream, and without a word, reaches over and takes the container and starts to eat with her plastic spoon.

DOCTOR

It's your favorite.

OLD WOMAN

Who are you?

DOCTOR

It's Martha, Mama.

OLD WOMAN

(looking carefully)

Oh. I thought you were Marie. Marie brings me ice cream too, you know. Chocolate. My favorite.

CONTINUED

62. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

I thought cherry vanilla was your favorite.

OLD WOMAN

Not anymore.
(she continues eating)
Now I like chocolate.

DOCTOR

Have you had a nice week? Are they taking care ... (of you?)

OLD WOMAN

You know, Martha never comes to see me. Only you Marie. You're the good one. You always were my good baby. Martha's going straight to hell. Ever since she divorced that son of a bitch of a Frenchman. I knew that wasn't gonna work out. Not like you Marie. You got married to God.

DOCTOR

Marie's dead, Mama.

OLD WOMAN

I remember when Marie was a little girl, she'd come back from the movies, and she'd say, "Mama," she'd say, "That ending was so sad," and I'd tell her they had all the happy endings locked away in a vault in Hollywood.

DOCTOR

That was me, Mama. It wasn't Marie who said that. It was me.

Old woman pauses and looks at the Doctor, intently trying to remember. She tenderly touches the Doctor's face.

OLD WOMAN

Who are you?

The Doctor's eyes fill with tears.

CUT TO:

63. INT. AGNES' ROOM - MORNING

AGNES below (Doctor's POV), walking to the stable, empty bucket in hand. The shot includes the windowsill in the foreground. The room is lit by the morning sun, Agnes enters the stable below. A great many birds seem to be flying out of the rafters.

VOICE

The devil's daughter.....

The Doctor turns. Marguerite is in the doorway.

MARGUERITE

....that's who she is. I've been watching. We were fine before she came. She brought the devil here.

Marguerite steps forward, into the room.

MARGUERITE (continuing)

There was blood on her hand, that night. I saw.

DOCTOR

Agnes?

MARGUERITE

No!

DOCTOR

Who? Mother?

Marguerite steps closer to the Doctor. Low, conspiratorial:

MARGUERITE

There's more blood between the two of them than you could even guess.

DOCTOR

What are you talking about?

MARGUERITE

Look in the convent records.

DOCTOR

What?

Marguerite turns, and leaves. Doctor calls after her.

DOCTOR.

Sister!

Doctor moves to the door as Marguerite hurries down the hall.

CONTINUED

63. CONTINUED

DOCTOR
(calling out)
Sister!

CUT TO:

64. INT. CONVENT STABLE - DAY

CLOSE UP of Agnes, furious.

AGNES
I'm not sick!

The stable is small, and not to be confused with the large, deserted barn seen later. The cow is in its stall. Hay is strewn over much of the floor. The wide, high doorway is open, and most of the light comes from here. The Doctor wears a down coat, and is smoking. Agnes carries a bucket of steaming milk. Through the following interchange, Agnes is on the attack, as the Doctor wants her to be. Their breath is visible in the cold.

DOCTOR
But you're troubled, aren't you?

AGNES
That's because you keep reminding me!
If you go away then I'll forget!

DOCTOR
And you're unhappy.

AGNES
Everybody's unhappy! You're unhappy,
aren't you?

DOCTOR
Agnes.....

AGNES
Answer me! You never answer me!

DOCTOR
Sometimes, yes.

AGNES
(walking toward the door)
Only you think you're lucky because you
didn't have a mother who said things to
(MORE)

CONTINUED

64. CONTINUED

AGNES (cont'd)
you and did things that maybe weren't
always nice, but that was because of me!
Because I was bad, not her!

DOCTOR
What did you do?

AGNES
I'm always bad.

DOCTOR
What do you do?

AGNES
I breathe!!!

Agnes plops the bucket down, spilling milk. Agnes drops to her knees, trying to
save the bucket. She begins to cry.

ANGLE on owl, turning its head, watching us.

The Doctor drops to the straw-covered floor, to kneel beside Agnes.

DOCTOR
What did your mother do to you?

Agnes shakes her head, refusing.

DOCTOR (continuing)
If you can't tell me, shake your head
yes or no. Did she hit you?

Agnes shakes her head no.

DOCTOR (continuing)
Did she make you do something you
didn't want to do?

Agnes shakes her head yes.

DOCTOR
Did it make you uncomfortable to do this?

Agnes shakes her head yes.

CONTINUED

64. CONTINUED

DOCTOR
Did it embarrass you?

Agnes shakes her head yes.

DOCTOR (continuing)
Did it hurt you?

Agnes shakes her head yes.

DOCTOR (continuing)
What did she make you do?

AGNES
No.

DOCTOR
You can tell me.

AGNES
I can't.

DOCTOR
She's dead, isn't she?

AGNES
Yes.

DOCTOR
She can't hurt you anymore.

AGNES
She can.

DOCTOR
How?

ANGLE on owl.

AGNES (O.C.)
She watches. She listens.

CONTINUED

64. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

Agnes, I don't believe that.
Tell me. I'll protect you from
her.

AGNES

She....

DOCTOR

Yes?

AGNES

She....makes me....take off my
clothes and then....

DOCTOR

Yes?

AGNES

...she makes....fun of me.

DOCTOR

- She tells you you're ugly?

AGNES

Yes.

DOCTOR

And stupid.

AGNES

Yes.

DOCTOR

And that you're a mistake.

AGNES

She says...my whole body....is a
mistake.

DOCTOR

Why?

AGNES

Because she says...if I don't
watch out....I'll have a baby.

DOCTOR

How does she know that?

CONTINUED

64. CONTINUED

AGNES

Her headaches.

DOCTOR

Oh yes.

AGNES

And then....she touches me.

DOCTOR

Where?

AGNES

Down there. With her cigarette.

The Doctor, stunned, hurriedly stubs out her cigarette. Agnes bursts into hysteria.

AGNES (continuing)

Please, Mummy, don't touch me like that. I'll be good. I won't be your bad baby any more.

The Doctor takes AGNES in her arms, turns her to speak face to face.

DOCTOR

Agnes, dear, I want you to do something. I want you to pretend that I'm your mother. Only this time, I want you to tell me what you're feeling. All right?

AGNES

I'm afraid.

DOCTOR

(taking Agnes' face in her hands)
Please. I want to help you.
Let me help you.

Agnes looks at this face, closely, for the first time.

AGNES

All right.

DOCTOR

Good. Agnes, you're ugly. What do you say?

CONTINUED

64. CONTINUED

AGNES

I don't know.

DOCTOR

Of course you do. Agnes, you're ugly.

AGNES cannot answer.

DOCTOR (continuing)

What do you say?

AGNES

No I'm not.

DOCTOR

Are you pretty?

AGNES

Yes.

DOCTOR

Agnes, you're stupid.

AGNES

(so difficult)

No I'm not.

DOCTOR

Are you intelligent?

AGNES

Yes, I am.

DOCTOR

Agnes, you're a mistake.

AGNES

(bursting out)

I'm not a mistake! I'm here, aren't I? How can I be a mistake if I'm really here! God doesn't make mistakes! You're a mistake! I wish you were dead!

Agnes breaks into tears and runs out of the stable.

ANGLE on owl, as it flies out of the stable, across the yard and into the deserted barn.

65. EXT. CONVENT YARD - DAY

The Doctor catches Agnes, turning her around and enveloping her in her arms. Agnes sobs.

DOCTOR
It's alright. It's alright. Agnes.
I love you. It's alright.

AGNES
(quietly)
Do you really love me? Or are you
just saying that?

DOCTOR
I really love you.

AGNES
As much as Mother Miriam loves me?

DOCTOR
As much as God loves you.

CUT TO:

66. INT. CONVENT RECORD ROOM - EVENING

CLOSE UP of file drawer being opened.

ANGLE on the Doctor, as she frantically searches through the file for she knows not what. She is not supposed to be here, and she knows it. This basement room is dark, cluttered, one hundred fifty years of history.

A sound behind her. She turns, to find Sister David Marie at the door bewildered.

DOCTOR
Good evening, Sister. I need some
biographical data on Sister Agnes.
Mother said that I'd find it here.

DAVID MARIE considers this, then strides to another battered file cabinet in this dark and cluttered room, and opens its top drawer. She draws out a folder and places it on top.

DOCTOR
Thank you.

The Doctor crosses to the folder, opens it and reads.

ANGLE on David Marie, leaving, on her way to Mother.

CLOSE UP of front page of file — handwritten biographical information on Agnes.

CONTINUED

66. CONTINUED

Opening the drawer, the Doctor flips silently through the file cabinet until she finds a folder:

CLOSE UP of folder in cabinet, reading "Miriam Ruth."

ANGLE on Doctor as she pulls it out and opens it.

CLOSE UP on line of Mother's biographical sheet, reading: "Born - Anna Marie Burette."

ANGLE on the Doctor, glancing back at Agnes' folder.

EXTEME CLOSE UP travelling along a line in Agnes' file, reading: "Mother: Mary Eugene Burkette."

CUT TO:

67. INT. CONVENT STAIRWELL - NIGHT

The Doctor confronts Mother on the stairs: Mother on a top step, heading down; the Doctor below her.

DOCTOR

You lied to me!

MOTHER

About what?

DOCTOR

Your niece!

For a brief moment, Mother does not reply.

MOTHER

I didn't tell you because I didn't think it was important.

Mother turns and walks away, down the hall toward her office, turning off lights as she goes. The Doctor follows angrily.

68. INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Doctor

No, it just makes you doubly responsible, doesn't it?

CONTINUED

68. CONTINUED

MOTHER

I never saw Agnes until she set foot in this convent! I was a good deal older than my sister. She ran away from home at an early age. We lost touch with her. When my husband died and I came here, she started writing to me. She told me about Agnes and asked me to watch over her in case anything happened.

DOCTOR

And Agnes' father?

At her office, Mother reaches in and flips out the light, then continues down the hall toward the foyer — the only remaining light.

MOTHER

Could have been any one of a dozen men, from what my sister told me. She was afraid that Agnes would follow in her footsteps. She did everything to prevent that.

69. INT. FOYER - NIGHT

DOCTOR

By keeping her home from school.

MOTHER

Yes.

DOCTOR

And listening to angels.

MOTHER

(unbolting the front door)
She drank too much. That's what killed her.

DOCTOR

Do you know what she did to Agnes?

MOTHER

(opening the door)
I don't think....(I care to know).

CONTINUED

69. CONTINUED

DOCTOR
She molested her.

Stunned silence. Tears spring to Mother's eyes.

MOTHER
Oh dear Jesus.

DOCTOR
There is more here than meets
the eye, isn't there? Lots of
dirty little secrets.

MOTHER
Had I known what Agnes was suffering...

DOCTOR
Why didn't you?! My God, you knew
she was keeping the child from
school. You knew she was an
alcoholic.

MOTHER
I knew that after....(the fact.)

DOCTOR
Why didn't you do anything to stop her?!

MOTHER
I didn't know!!!

Tears streaming down her face:

MOTHER (continuing)
And that's no answer, is it.

CUT TO:

70. EXT. CONVENT DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

ANGLE on convent door, closing.

TIGHT ANGLE on Doctor's high-heels walking along graveled driveway.

TIGHT ANGLE on her hand, opening the car door.

ANGLE on the inside of the car, lit by the interior car light. A BOY, fifteen,
blonde, exquisitely beautiful, looks up, frightened. The glove compartment is
open in front of him.

CONTINUED

70. CONTINUED

ANGLE on Doctor, frozen.

DOCTOR
Who are you?

The Boy turns, frantically trying to open the passenger's door.

ANGLE on Doctor.

DOCTOR
What do you want?!

ANGLE on the Boy, terrified. He opens the door and disappears into the night.

CUT TO:

71. INT. DOCTOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

We hear a key in the lock. The door opens. The Doctor enters carrying mail and paper. She dumps them on a table that's covered with unopened mail and unread papers. She crosses to the fridge and takes out a carton of milk. The phone rings. She ignores it. Almost automatically she pours a glass of milk and puts some in the cat's bowl. It's crying for attention. The phone continues to ring.

She crosses to the bathroom and turns on the bathwater. The phone stops. She places the milk on the sink and takes a vial of sleeping tablets from the medicine chest. She takes a capsule, washing it down with the milk. The phone begins ringing again. She ignores it, and sits on the toilet, watching, the steaming water fill the tub. She reaches for a cigarette. The phone stops.

She begins to remove her blouse, catches her image in the mirror, the steam filling the room. She looks tired, and perhaps realizes how involved she has become in her patient's problems. She tosses the unlit cigarette into the toilet.

CUT TO:

72. INT. MONTREAL POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

LAWRENCE LANGEVIN, a burly detective, wearing large horn-rimmed glasses, is at his desk filling out a report. A young overly made-up HOOKER is sitting on a chair nearby.

The Doctor takes a light for her cigarette from the Hooker. Langevin is talking.

CONTINUED

72. CONTINUED

LANGEVIN

What am I supposed to do? Chase after every delinquent kid in the province who wants to steal a car?

DOCTOR

Just check your records. Find out if there's any juvenile in the area ... (that...)

LANGEVIN

(interrupts)

What's the big deal, Marty? You think he was the father? Merde. It makes no never mind.

DOCTOR

Larry, there's got to be something...

LANGEVIN

You're crazy. You saw the report. It's a cut and dried case.

DOCTOR

But you were there. Is there anything not in the report that bothered you?

LANGEVIN

(sighs)

Okay. One thing. There was one thing, but it's probably nothing, it's this big.

He holds up his fingers measuring.

DOCTOR

What?

LANGEVIN

The wastepaper basket. The one in her room. None of the other nuns had one.

CUT TO:

73. INT. BARN - SUNSET

The barn is absolutely filled with pigeons, rustling, cooing, settling down for the night. Their nests are built on every possible rafter, their feathers sprinkle the floor. It's all quite wonderful and frightening.

The Doctor steps through the open doors and into the barn, stops.

ANGLE on a rusty pitchfork, resting in a corner.

Whispering.

The Doctor follows the sound.

Mother, on her knees, saying her beads. She kneels before a window, and the last of the sun streaks through.

Mother starts, turns, stares at the intruding Doctor.

DOCTOR

There was a boy in my car last night,
going through the glove compartment.
Do you know anything about that?

MOTHER

Oh, that must be Charlie.

Mother rises from her knees.

MOTHER

He lives down the road with his
grandmother. He's mute. Doesn't
speak a word.

(laughing)

You're not the first. He turns up
in all sorts of places. People's
houses, garages....

DOCTOR

Convents?

MOTHER

(smiling)

You think he was the father?

DOCTOR

We'll find out soon enough. I've
got the court's permission to
hypnotize her.

Mother's smile fades.

CONTINUED

73. CONTINUED

MOTHER
And my permission?

DOCTOR
I don't think you have anything
to say in the matter.

MOTHER
I'm her guardian.

DOCTOR
She's twenty-one years old,
she doesn't need a guardian.

MOTHER
But she must come to me first
and ask permission.

Mother starts to leave...

DOCTOR
And you'll deny it?

MOTHER
I haven't decided yet.

DOCTOR
(following Mother)
This woman's health is at stake.

MOTHER
Her spiritual health.

DOCTOR
I don't give a good goddam about
what you call....(her spiritual
health.)

MOTHER
(stopping, turning)
I know you don't.

DOCTOR
Sentence her and be done with it,
that's what you're saying. Well,
I can't do....(that yet.)

MOTHER
What I'm saying is that you have
a beautifully simple woman....

CONTINUED

73. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

An unhappy woman.

MOTHER

She is happy with us. And she could go on being happy if she were left alone.

DOCTOR

Then why did you call the police in the first place? Why didn't you just throw the baby in the incinerator and be done with it?

MOTHER

Because I am a moral person!

DOCTOR

Bull shit!

MOTHER

Bull shit yourself!

The birds react, awake.

DOCTOR

The Catholic Church doesn't have a corner on morality, Mother.

MOTHER

Who said anything about the Catholic Church.

DOCTOR

You just said....(that you...)

MOTHER

(riding over the Doctor)
What the hell does the Catholic Church have to do with you?

DOCTOR

Nothing.

MOTHER

What have we done to hurt you? And don't deny it. I can smell an ex-Catholic a mile away. What did we do? Burn a few heretics? Sell some indulgences? Those were in the day when the Church was a ruling body, we let governments do those things today.

CONTINUED

73. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

Just because you don't have the power you once had....

MOTHER

Oh, I'm not interested in the Church as power, Doctor. I'm interested in it as simplicity and peace. So tell me, what did we do to you? You wanted to neck in the backseat of a car when you were fifteen.

DOCTOR

It wasn't sex! My sixteen-year-old sister died when some superstitious nun wouldn't send her to a hospital! The priest said it was God's judgment on her for not saying her morning prayers!

MOTHER

Stupid people.

DOCTOR

And my mother accepted it! Never questioned a thing! I mean why didn't I die? I never said my morning prayers! And I was the ugly one! I was scrawny, I had big buck teeth, freckles all over my face — Sister Mary Cletus used to call me Polka-Dot Livingston.

MOTHER

So you left the Church because you had freckles?

DOCTOR

No! Because....yeah, I left the Church because I had freckles. And guess what?

MOTHER

What?

DOCTOR

That's also why I hate nuns.

She laughs. Mother joins in her laughter.

CUT TO:

74. EXT. CONVENT GARDENS - DUSK

The Doctor and Mother sit side by side in a small wooden gazebo. The Doctor is smoking.

ANGLE on their backs. The CAMERA slowly moves around them as Mother speaks:

MOTHER

When I was a child, I used to speak to my guardian angel. When I was six, the angel stopped speaking; but I remembered that voice. When I first came here I was nothing but a survivor of an unhappy marriage, a mother of two angry daughters, and a nun who was certain of nothing. Not even of Heaven, not even of God. And then one evening, I saw Agnes, standing in her window, singing. All of my doubts vanished in that one moment. I recognized the voice.

ANGLE on Doctor, watching her.

MOTHER (continuing)

Don't take it away from me again, Doctor Livingston.

BACK TO MOTHER.

MOTHER (continuing)

Those years after six were very bleak.

The Doctor takes a drag on her cigarette, lights another off of it. Mother watches. The Doctor notices this.

DOCTOR

Does my smoking bother you?

MOTHER

No, it only reminds me.

DOCTOR

(offering the pack)
Would you like one?

Silence. Mother struggles, then:

MOTHER

I'd love one.

She reaches for one. The Doctor laughs and lights it for her. Mother coughs.

MOTHER

I'm out of practise.

DOCTOR

Do you think the saints would have smoked had tobacco been popular?

74. CONTINUED

MOTHER

Undoubtedly. Not the ascetics, of course,
but, well, Saint Thomas More...

DOCTOR

Parliaments.

Mother laughs.

MOTHER

Saint Ignatius, I think, would smoke
Camels and then stub them out on the
soles of his feet.

The both laugh. Laughter as free as if they were stoned.

MOTHER (continuing)

And of course, all the apostles....

DOCTOR

Hand-rolled.

MOTHER

And even Christ would partake socially.

DOCTOR

Saint Peter, the original Marlboro
Man.

They find this hilarious.

MOTHER

Mary Magdalene?

DOCTOR

You've come a long way, baby.

Even funnier.

MOTHER

Saint Joan would chew Mail Pouch.

This is the topper. The Doctor, mid-laugh, takes a "toke". They begin to walk
back towards the convent. Fall leaves blowing, the wind catching the Mother's
veil.

DOCTOR

And what, do you suppose, are today's
saints smoking?

CONTINUED

74. CONTINUED

MOTHER

Oh, there are no saints today.
Good people, yes. But extraordinarily
good people? I'm afraid those we are
sorely lacking.

DOCTOR

Do you believe they ever existed?

MOTHER

Yes I do.

DOCTOR

Would you like to become one?

MOTHER

To become? One is born a saint.
Only no one is born a saint today.
We're too complicated.

DOCTOR

You can try, can't you? To be good?

MOTHER

Oh yes, but goodness has very little
to do with it. Not all of the saints
were good. In fact, most of them were
a little crazy.

ANGLE on the night sky, now beginning to twinkle with stars.

MOTHER (O.C.)

But their hearts were with God, left
in His hands at birth.

Mother, putting out her cigarette, leaves the wall and walks across the gardens
toward the convent. The Doctor follows.

MOTHER (continuing)

No more. We're born, we live, we die.
Occasionally, one might appear among us,
still attached to God. But we cut that
cord very quickly. No freaks here.
We're all solid, sensible men and women,
feet on the ground, money in the bank,
innocence trampled under foot.

Mother stops, the Doctor catching up.

CONTINUED

74. CONTINUED

MOTHER (continuing)
Well, we're better off. Less disease
for one thing. No room for miracles.
But oh my dear, how I miss the
miracles.

She continues walking, the Doctor beside her now.

DOCTOR
Do you believe Agnes is still attached
to God?

MOTHER
(talking the Doctor's arm)
Listen to her singing.

DOCTOR
I'd like to begin.

MOTHER
Begin what?

DOCTOR
The hypnotism. Do you still
disapprove?

MOTHER
Will it stop you if I do?

DOCTOR
No.

MOTHER
May I be present?

DOCTOR
Of course.

MOTHER
Then let's begin.

The Doctor takes a final drag and tosses her cigarette into the night. We follow
its arc. This is the last cigarette we see her smoke.

CUT TO:

75. INT. CONVENT ROOM - NIGHT

This room is absolutely bare of furniture, except for a wooden chair for Agnes and one for Mother. The only wall decoration is a crucifix. A candle sits on the floor and moonlight streams in through a skylight in this otherwise windowless room.

ANGLE on Mother, watching.

ANGLE on Doctor, watching.

ANGLE on Agnes, eyes closed, already under.

DOCTOR

You're relaxed. You're listening to a chorus of angels. Their music surrounds you like a warm and comfortable pool of water. It covers your mouth, your nose, your eyes. When I count to three you'll wake up. Can you hear me?

AGNES

Yes.

DOCTOR

Who am I?

AGNES

Dr. Livingston.

DOCTOR

And why am I here?

AGNES

To help me.

DOCTOR

Good. Would you like to tell me why you're here?

AGNES

Because I'm in trouble.

DOCTOR

What kind of trouble?

No answer.

DOCTOR

What kind of trouble, Agnes?

AGNES

I'm frightened.

CONTINUED

75. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

Of what?

AGNES

Of telling you.

DOCTOR

But it's easy. It's only a breath
with sound. Say it. What kind of
trouble, Agnes?

In silence, ANGLE on Mother.

ANGLE on Agnes.

AGNES

I had a baby.

ANGLE on the Doctor, a tiny sigh of relief.

DOCTOR

How did you have a baby?

AGNES

It came out of me.

DOCTOR

Did you know it was going to
come out?

AGNES

Yes,

DOCTOR

Did you want it to come out?

AGNES

No.

DOCTOR

Why?

AGNES

Because I was afraid.

DOCTOR

Why were you afraid?

AGNES

Because I wasn't worthy.

CONTINUED

75. CONTINUED

DOCTOR
To be a mother?

AGNES
Yes.

DOCTOR
Why?

Agnes turns her head, uncomfortable, crying.

AGNES
May I open my eyes now?

DOCTOR
Not yet. Very soon, but not yet.
Do you know how the baby got into
you?

AGNES
It grew.

DOCTOR
What made it grow? Do you know

AGNES
Yes.

DOCTOR
Would you like to tell me?

AGNES
No.

The Doctor leans against the wall beside the crucifix.

DOCTOR
(driving on)
Did anyone else know about the
baby?

AGNES
I can't tell you that.

DOCTOR
Will she be angry?

AGNES
She made me promise not to.

CONTINUED

75. CONTINUED

DOCTOR
One of the sisters?

Agnes lets out a choked cry.

DOCTOR
(calming her)
Alright, Agnes. Let's go to
your room. It's the night about
a month ago when you were very
sick.

AGNES
I'm afraid.

DOCTOR
Don't be. I'm here. Alright?
Agnes nods.

DOCTOR (continuing)
Tell me what you did before you
went to bed.

AGNES
I ate.

DOCTOR
What did you have for dinner?

AGNES
Fish. Brussel sprouts.

DOCTOR
You don't like brussel sprouts?

AGNES
I hate them.

DOCTOR
And then what happened?

AGNES
We went to chapel for vespers. I
left early because I wasn't feeling
very well.

Agnes stops, alert.

DOCTOR
What is it?

AGNES
Someone's following me.

CONTINUED

75. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

Who?

AGNES

Sister Marguerite, I think.

DOCTOR

Was it Sister Marguerite who
knew about the baby?

Agnes turns away, resisting.

DOCTOR (continuing)

Open your eyes, Agnes. I want
you to see your room as you saw
it on that night.

Agnes opens her eyes.

DOCTOR

What do you see?

AGNES

My bed.

DOCTOR

What else?

AGNES

A crucifix.

DOCTOR

Above the bed?

AGNES

Yes.

DOCTOR

Anything else?

Agnes leans forward into the moonlight.

DOCTOR (continuing)

What do you see? Something different?

Agnes nods.

DOCTOR

What is it?

CONTINUED

75. CONTINUED

AGNES
A waste paper basket.

ANGLE on Mother.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
Do you know who put it there?

AGNES (V.O.)
No.

DOCTOR
Why do you think it's there?

AGNES
For me to get sick in.

DOCTOR
Are you ill?

AGNES
Yes.

DOCTOR
What do you feel?

A contraction. Agnes holds her stomach, crying.

AGNES
I feel as if I've eaten glass.

DOCTOR
What do you do?

AGNES
I have to throw up.

Agnes leaves the chair to kneel before the "waste basket". She tries to throw up.

AGNES
I can't.

Another contraction.

AGNES (continuing)
It's glass! One of the sisters
has fed me glass!

CONTINUED

75. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

Which one?

AGNES

I don't know which one. They're all jealous, that's why.

DOCTOR

Of what?

AGNES

Of me!

Another contraction, more violent.

AGNES

Oh God.

A second one, immediately after the first.

AGNES

Oh my God!

The contraction ends. Agnes feels her skirts. Her water has broken.

AGNES

Water. It's all water.

DOCTOR

Why doesn't anyone come?

AGNES

They can't hear me.

Contraction.

AGNES

Oh no, please. I don't want this to happen. I don't want it.

ANGLE on Mother, desperately trying not to interfere.

Another contraction, incredibly severe.

AGNES

Oh God! Oh my God!

Agnes whips her head up, gasping, "seeing" someone.

CONTINUED

75. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

What is it?

AGNES

Get away from me.

DOCTOR

Who?

AGNES

Go away! I don't want you here!

DOCTOR

Is someone in the room with you?

Agnes backs away from some unseen threat.

AGNES

Don't touch me! Don't touch me!
Please! Please don't touch me!

Contraction.

AGNES

No! I don't want to have the
baby now! I don't want it!

She stares at the person in the room, whom we cannot see.

AGNES

Why are you making me do this?!

Another contraction.

Agnes is trying to hold her legs together.

Mother rises, rushes in.

MOTHER

Stop her, she'll hurt herself!

As Mother grabs her, Agnes screams and flails her arms.

AGNES

You're trying to take my baby!
You're trying to take my baby!

Mother backs off, terrified.

MOTHER

No!

CONTINUED

75. CONTINUED

Agnes pushes on the baby's head, trying to keep it in.

AGNES
Stay in! Please stay in!

Another violent contraction — the most severe yet. Mother, afraid, helpless, screams.

MOTHER
Stop her! Help her!

AGNES
It's not my fault, Mummy!
It's a mistake, Mummy.

The Doctor quickly embraces Agnes.

DOCTOR
Agnes, it's alright. One, two,
three. It's alright.

Agnes relaxes out of the trance.

DOCTOR
It's alright.

The Doctor calms Agnes, as she would a baby, whispering, soothing.

DOCTOR (continuing)
Thank you. Thank you.

ANGLE on Mother, watching, exhausted, angry.

CUT TO:

76. INT. ARCHIVES - DAY

ANGLE on the door, opening into the room. The Doctor enters. Reversed on the door are the letters: "Provincial Archives - Architecture - Lands Dept. - Province of Quebec."

This dark and musty room is filled with stacks of rolled maps, scroll-like, resting on shelves. An elderly LIBRARIAN (male) is seated behind a desk, reading a French Cinema Magazine.

DOCTOR
Excuse me. I'm looking for some
ground plans for St. Mary Magdalene's
convent in Saint-Jovite.

CONTINUED

76 CONTINUED

LIBRARIAN

(in French)

Oh yes. It's a heritage building.
Early nineteenth century, I think.
Follow me.

He leads her into the stacks muttering.

LIBRARIAN (continuing)

The Convent of the Little Sisters
of Mary Magdelene. Why do you want
this?

DOCTOR

(in French)

I'm doing a study on old convents.

The Librarian looks at her, then chuckles and takes a rolled set of plans from a
dusty stack.

LIBRARIAN

(in French)

Very interesting, I guess.

CLOSE UP of map being unrolled on a table.

ANGLE on the two of them, looking at the map.

LIBRARIAN

(in French)

This has everything. Even the
secret entrances. They all had
them. Usually to get from
building to building in the snow.
Like that one.

He points.

EXTREME CLOSE UP of a dotted line on the map. His finger traces it.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

(in English)

That's how he got in. Or she got out.

LIBRARIAN (V.O.)

(in French)

Excuse me, what did you say?

DOCTOR (V.O.)

(in French)

Nothing. Nothing.

CUT TO:

77. INT. CHURCH - DAY

The Doctor walks down the right aisle of the chapel, lit only by the candles before the alters. She is looking at her notebook.

The Doctor stops in front of a wooden statue of Saint Michael, sword in hand, guarding the portal of Eden.

ANGLE on statue, from Doctor's P.O.V.

ANGLE on the Doctor, looking for she knows not what. Her eyes alight on:

CLOSE UP of statue's left forefinger, at its side, pointing downward and to the left.

The Doctor walks to the left side of the statue — here is a narrow, near-hidden set of stone steps leading down.

Taking a candle, the Doctor follows the steps, ducking beneath a low stone arch to enter.

78. INT. CRYPT - DAY

A narrow dirt path between rows of stone sarcophagi. The place is in wretched condition — tombstones cracked, covered with dust -- as if no one has been here in quite some time.

The Doctor stops, and brushes the dirt off one of the slabs to read it (dates): "1772 - 1856".

CUT TO:

79. INT. TUNNEL

CLOSE UP of the bottom of a trap door, located in the top of the tunnel. Several bolts fastening it are thrown back by the Doctor's hand.

80. INT. BARN - DAY

ANGLE on the trap door being flung open, hitting the floor, raising dust. We do not see yet what room we are in.

The Doctor's head rises above the door. She squints in the bright sunlight. The CAMERA SLOWLY MOVES around behind her, so that we now see the room that she is seeing — the large central room of the deserted barn.

CUT TO:

81. EXT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - MONTREAL - DAY

The BISHOP's black limousine pulls up. Mother climbs out of the back and glances at the address, then charges into the building.

CUT TO:

82. INT. DOCTOR'S RECEPTION AREA - DAY

The Doctor's Receptionist, HELEN, is busy typing from a tape recorder, a hearing piece in her ear. Mother bursts through the door, startling the receptionist.

MOTHER

Is the Doctor in her office?

HELEN

Who shall I say is.....

Mother heads for the office door.

HELEN

Just a minute. Please. You can't go in there!

She moves to stop Mother but is too late.

83. INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

DOCTOR's POV: Mother is standing in the doorway with the receptionist behind.

DOCTOR

That's alright, Helen. Just close the door.

ANGLE on Mother, visibly upset.

MOTHER

I just met with the bishop and I told him that your job is done.

DOCTOR

What? What are you....(talking about?)

MOTHER

You've formed your opinion about her, haven't you?

CONTINUED

83. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

Maybe as far as the court is concerned
yes. But personally.....

MOTHER

Personally? I don't think you were
asked to become personally involved...

DOCTOR

But I am.

MOTHER

And I'm asking you to get the hell
out. If we want to hire a psychiatrist
for Agnes, we'll find our own, thank
you.

DOCTOR

One who'll ask her the questions
you want asked.

MOTHER

One who will approach this matter
with some objectivity and respect!

DOCTOR

For the Church?

MOTHER

For Agnes!

DOCTOR

You think she's a saint?!

MOTHER

She's been touched by God, yes.

DOCTOR

How? She hallucinates, stops
eating, and bleeds spontaneously.
Is that supposed to convince me
she shouldn't be touched?! Give
me a miracle! Nothing less. Then
I'll leave her be.

Mother, watches gravely, then speaks, taking the plunge:

CONTINUED

83. CONTINUED

MOTHER

The father.

DOCTOR

Who is he?

MOTHER

Why must he be anybody?

ANGLE on Doctor, at first stunned, then bursting into laughter.

DOCTOR

You're as crazy as the rest of
your family.

MOTHER

I don't know if it's true, I...

DOCTOR

How? Do you think a big white
dove came flying through her
window?

MOTHER

No, I can't....(believe that.)

DOCTOR

Then give me a reasonable explanation.

MOTHER

A miracle is an event without an
explanation. That's why people like
you fail to believe, because you demand
an explanation, and when you don't get
one you create one.

DOCTOR

This is insane.

MOTHER

If she's capable of putting a hole in
her hand without benefit of a nail,
why couldn't she split a cell in her
womb?

DOCTOR

I thought you didn't believe in
miracles today.

CONTINUED

83. CONTINUED

MOTHER

But I want to believe. I want the opportunity to believe. I want the choice to believe.

DOCTOR

What you are choosing to believe is a lie! Because you don't want to face the fact that she was raped, or seduced, or that she did the seducing.

MOTHER

She's an innocent.

DOCTOR

But she's not an engima. There's a tunnel out of the crypt into the barn. Did you know about that?

Mother surprised does not answer.

DOCTOR

That's how she got out.

MOTHER

That's crazy. How could she find something...(like that?)

DOCTOR

Somebody told her.

MOTHER

Who? That tunnel hasn't been used for fifty years.

DOCTOR

(exploding)
Stop lying, Mother!

MOTHER

Why would I lie?

DOCTOR

Because this is murder we're talking about.

MOTHER

Murder?

CONTINUED

83. CONTINUED

DOCTOR

Aren't you concerned about what she told us the other night? About that other person in the room?

MOTHER

I'm concerned about her...
(health and safety.)

DOCTOR

Who was that other person, Mother? Was it you?!

Mother rises....

MOTHER

If you believe this is murder then it is the Crown Attorney you must consult. Not me. And definitely not Agnes.

...and crosses to the door.

DOCTOR

Where are you going?

MOTHER

(at the door)

To the court. To have you taken off this case.

CUT TO:

84. INT. DOCTOR'S BEDROOM - MORNING

CLOSE SHOT on electric alarm radio. It is 7:30 a.m. It buzzes and the radio begins to play. It is turned to the morning CBC news. It continues to play over the scene.

ANOTHER ANGLE - WIDE SHOT of the Doctor's bedroom. The early morning light. She awakens and, slightly groggy, gets up and disappears into the bathroom. The CAMERA remains in the bedroom. We hear running water off screen. There is a sound as the Doctor rushes into the room and throws back the covers to reveal blood stains on the white sheets. The CAMERA HOLDS.

CUT TO:

85. INT. CONVENT ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON back of Genevieve's head. Sister Marguerite gathers her long hair and with a pair of large scissors, begins to cut. Sister Anne and Sister Jeannine smile encouragement at Genevieve in a tiny mirror. Genevieve smiles through her tears.

CUT TO:

86. INT. MONTREAL COURTHOUSE - DAY

The Doctor is following Leveau, in his robes, through the marble halls to his court. He is in a hurry, slightly distracted. She is desperate, more emotional during this defense than she has been in her earlier ones.

DOCTOR

All I want is one more week!

LEVEAU

Why? Mother Miriam is very adamant about this, you've done nothing to show any progress....

DOCTOR

I'm a nuisance to her....

LEVEAU

You're a nuisance to all of us, Martha, let's face it.

DOCTOR

I'll have a decision in a week.

LEVEAU

It's gone on long enough! You're out!

DOCTOR

Joe. She didn't kill the baby!

Leveau stops.

LEVEAU

You have proof?

DOCTOR

I'll have it.

CONTINUED

86. CONTINUED

LEVEAU
When?

DOCTOR
Next week.

Leveau moves toward a door.

LEVEAU
No, Martha....

DOCTOR
Tomorrow! I'll have it tomorrow!

ANGLE on Leveau. He stops at court entrance. He looks at her, pauses.

LEVEAU
(in French)
Alright, Martha. Tomorrow.

CUT TO:

87. INT. CHAPEL - DAY

A nun is taking her final vows. Genevieve lies face-down, draped in white, in the center aisle. She is surrounded by flowers.

The choir of nuns is singing. The CAMERA rests on some of their faces -- Sister Susanna, smiling; Sister Madeline Marie, in her own world; Sisters Jeannine and David Marie, remembering their own profession.

ANGLE on Mother, watching the young nun.

ANGLE on Father Martin, swinging the censor, with difficulty, over the prostrate Genevieve. He is assisted by another priest in white.

Mother looks on at Genevieve's proud FAMILY, who are gathered in the rear of the chapel.

CUT TO:

88. INT. RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

Family happily congratulating Genevieve. She is surrounded by her sisters.

CUT TO:

89. EXT. FRONT GATE OF THE CONVENT - AFTERNOON

Doctor hands Mother a letter. Mother reads it and hands it back angrily to the Doctor.

MOTHER

This is permission to take her apart.

DOCTOR

Where is she?

MOTHER

Hasn't she had enough?

DOCTOR

I want to ask her a few questions.

MOTHER

My God, but you're determined.

DOCTOR

Who knew that she was pregnant?

MOTHER

If you're going to continue to persecute us.....

DOCTOR

Was it you?

MOTHER

She's a nun and.....(you hate nuns.)

DOCTOR

Did you know that she was pregnant?

MOTHER

Yes!

SILENCE, except for the birds. Mother breaks from the door into the yard. The Doctor follows.

DOCTOR

And you didn't send her to a doctor?

MOTHER

It was too late.

DOCTOR

What do you mean?

CONTINUED

89. CONTINUED

MOTHER

I didn't guess it until....

Mother fights tears.

DOCTOR

Don't put on any tears for me,
Mother. Until when?

MOTHER

Until it was too late!

DOCTOR

For what?

MOTHER

I don't know, too late to stop it!

DOCTOR

The baby?!

MOTHER

The scandal! It was too late to stop
it but I had to try. I had to have
time to think.

DOCTOR

And you didn't get it, did you?

MOTHER

No!

DOCTOR

You went to her room to help with
the birth.

MOTHER

She didn't want help.

DOCTOR

But you wanted the child out of
the way.

MOTHER

That's a lie.

DOCTOR

You hid the waste paper basket in
the room.

CONTINUED

89. CONTINUED

MOTHER
I didn't hide it! I put it there
for the blood and the dirty sheets...

DOCTOR
And the baby!

MOTHER
No!

DOCTOR
You tied the cord around its neck...

MOTHER
I wanted her to have it when no one
was around! I would have taken the
baby to a hospital and left it with
them. But there was so much blood, I
panicked.

DOCTOR
Before or after you killed the child?!

MOTHER
I left it with her! I went for help!

DOCTOR
I doubt that's what she'll say.

MOTHER
Then she's a goddamn liar!

CUT TO:

90. INT. CONVENT RECEPTION HALL - DAY

Celebration continues. A wedding cake stands in the center of the room. Genevieve embraces her parents. She has flowers in her hair, and the glow of a new bride. French Canadian folk music plays from a small record player. Some children are dancing.

CUT TO:

91. INT. CONVENT ROOM - DAY

Agnes, as before, is seated in a chair. Her eyes are closed. She is under hypnosis.

DOCTOR
Agnes can you hear me?

AGNES
Yes.

DOCTOR
I want you to remember if you can
one night last February, the night
Sister Paul died. Do you remember?

FLASHBACKS INTERCUT WITH SCENE # 91

92. FLASH BACK - INT. SISTER PAUL'S ROOM - NIGHT

As before, Sister Paul turns in bed to see Agnes standing in the hall. Her lips form a word.

91. BACK TO SCENE

DOCTOR
What's the matter?

93. FLASH BACK

EXTREME CLOSE UP of Sister Paul's lips, forming a word.

AGNES (V.O.)
She said "Michael."

91. BACK TO SCENE

DOCTOR
What did she mean?

AGNES
The statue.

94. FLASH BACK

ANGLE on the statue of St. Michael, before the door to the crypt.

AGNES (V.O.)

She's shown it to me the day before.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

And the passage to the barn?

91. BACK TO SCENE

AGNES

Yes.

DOCTOR

Why?

AGNES

So I could go to Him.

DOCTOR

Who?

AGNES

Him.

DOCTOR

How did she know about Him?

AGNES

She'd seen Him too.

DOCTOR

Where?

AGNES

From the Bell Tower. The day before she died.

DOCTOR

And so she sent you?

95. FLASH BACK - INT. CRYPT - NIGHT

Agnes, candle in hand, walking along the crypt into the tunnel.

AGNES (V.O.)

Yes.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

What happened?

96. FLASH BACK - INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

Agnes undoes the bolts and lifts up the trapdoor.

97. FLASH BACK - INT. BARN - NIGHT

Agnes rises from the trap door, candle in hand.

AGNES (V.O.)

He's here.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

Are you frightened?

AGNES (V.O.)

Yes.

Agnes, in the flash back speaks timidly.

AGNES

Hello?

ANGLE on bird shadows, restless, moving.

Agnes walks forward.

CLOSE UP of Agnes, lit only by her candle.

AGNES

Where are you?

ANGLE on the pitchfork, leaning against the wall, gleaming in moonlight. A rustle of sound.

Agnes turns to find the source of the sound - the hay loft.

CONTINUED

97. CONTINUED

She places the candle on a barrel and begins climbing the ladder to the loft, slowly, carefully. The bird sounds increase - they seem to be waking.

She reaching the top of the ladder and steps into the loft, lit only by moonlight.

She freezes.

Framed in the moonlight at the end of the loft is a silhouette.

AGNES

Is it you?

Silence.

AGNES

But I'm afraid.

Silence.

AGNES

Yes. Yes I do.

Silence. She steps forward.

AGNES

Why me?

The figure moves.

AGNES

Wait! I want to see you!!!

91. BACK TO SCENE

CLOSE UP of Agnes, opening her eyes.

DOCTOR

What do you see?

These images whip by, the voice always in the present:

98. FLASH BACK

CLOSE UP of Agnes on her back in the straw, eyes wide, looking up.

102. CONTINUED

The OWL screams, swoops low.

91. BACK TO SCENE

AGNES

Oh my God, he sees me.

103. FLASH BACK

Agnes, in ecstasy, reaches up an outstretched arm to the sky.

AGNES

Oh, it's so lovely.....

ANGLE on the owl, swooping in SLOW MOTION in the dark.

AGNES

...so blue, yellow, black wings,
brown blood....

91. BACK TO SCENE

AGNES

No, red, His blood.

104. FLASH BACK - ANGLE ON Agnes, bleeding from the palms. She screams in both past and present.

AGNES

My God! My God!

91. BACK TO SCENE

ANGLE on Agnes, thrust back in the chair.

AGNES

I'm bleeding! I'm bleeding!

CLOSE UP of drops of blood, falling to the floor beside the chair.

CONTINUED

91. CONTINUED

MOTHER

Oh my God.

ANGLE on Agnes, hands open, bleeding from her palms.

The Doctor stands back, stunned. Both women are terrified, not knowing what to do.

AGNES

I have to wash this off, it's on
my hands, my legs, my God, it won't
stop, how do I make it stop?!

Mother grabs Agnes, who struggles fiercely.

MOTHER

Agnes....

AGNES

Let go of me!

MOTHER

Agnes, please....

AGNES

Get away from me!!

Agnes, wrenching free, runs to a corner of the room. She huddles beneath the shadow-cross on the wall, all during the following:

DOCTOR

Who did you see?

AGNES

I hate him!

DOCTOR

Who was he?!

AGNES

I hate him for what he did to me.

DOCTOR

Who?

AGNES

I hate him!

DOCTOR

Who did this to you?!

CONTINUED

91. CONTINUED

AGNES

God! It was God! And now I'll
burn in hell because I hate him.

Agnes burst into tears. The Doctor reaches toward Agnes.

DOCTOR

Agnes, what happened to the baby?

MOTHER

She can't remember!

DOCTOR

Yes she can! Agnes....

MOTHER

She doesn't remember!

DOCTOR

...what happened to the baby!

AGNES

It was dead.

MOTHER

Don't do this to her!

DOCTOR

It was alive, wasn't it?

AGNES

I don't remember.

MOTHER

Please!

DOCTOR

It was alive, wasn't it?

MOTHER

Don't do this to me!

DOCTOR

Wasn't it?!

AGNES

YES!!!

Silence.

ANGLE on Mother, away from them, against a wall.

DOCTOR

Mother Miriam was with you,
wasn't she?

91. CONTINUED

AGNES

Yes.

DOCTOR

She took the baby in her arms...

AGNES

Yes.

DOCTOR

You saw it all, didn't you.

AGNES

Yes.

DOCTOR

And then...what did she do?

Agnes looks at Mother.

DOCTOR (continuing)

Agnes, what did she do?

AGNES

(tears swelling)

She left me alone with that little... thing. I looked at it and thought, this is a mistake. But it's my mistake. Not Mummy's. God's mistake. I thought, I can save her. I can give her back to God.

DOCTOR

What did you do?

AGNES

I put her to sleep.

DOCTOR

How?

AGNES

I tied the cord around her neck, wrapped her in the bloody sheets, and stuffed her in the trash can.

MOTHER

No.

CONTINUED

91. CONTINUED

Mother turns away, alone with her grief.

The Doctor watches Agnes, unbelieving, afraid to believe.

LEVEAU (V.O.)

1

In view of the situation as it
now stands and the testimony given
here this morning.....

CUT TO:

105. INT. MONTREAL COURTROOM - DAY

Leveau is addressing the courtroom, only about a quarter full, mostly reporters. Leclaire is present, as is Lyon, beside whom sits Agnes, staring vacantly ahead. Sisters Maqrguerite and Anne sit behind her. In the second row of the courtroom, apart from anyone, sits the Doctor.

LEVEAU

...it seems quite clear that the
defendant was in no manner
responsible for her actions. It
is therefore the judgment of this
court, that she be returned to the
convent of Mary Magdalene where she
will be cared for under proper
medical supervision until such time...

Agnes stands. Leveau stops speaking.

Silence.

All eyes are on her.

LEVEAU

Yes?

Silence.

Agnes stares at him, trying to speak, wanting to speak.

LEVEAU

Do you have something to say?

Agnes nods.

CONTINUED

105. CONTINUED

ANGLE on Anne and Marguerite, not knowing whether or not to allow this to continue.

ANGLE on the Doctor, transfixed.

ANGLE on Leveau. He nods.

Agnes begins speaking, quietly at first, then louder.

AGNES

I stood in the window of my room every night for a week. And one night I heard the most beautiful voice imaginable, and when I looked I saw the moon shining down on Him. For six nights He sang to me. Songs I'd never heard. And on the seventh night He opened His wings and lay on top of me. And all the while He sang.

Agnes begins to sing.

"Charlie's neat and Charlie's sweet,
And Charlie he's a dandy....

LEVEAU

(softly)

Please remove her from the court.

Anne and Marguerite try to pull Agnes down, to quiet her. She remains standing, singing.

AGNES

"...Every time he goes to town,
He gets his girl some candy."

Leveau bangs his gavel.

LEVEAU

Would someone please remove the
defendent from the courtroom?

The SERGEANT-AT-ARMS takes Agnes' arm and she stops singing. He leads Agnes, followed by Anne and Marguerite, up the aisle of the courtroom. Reporters stand, aim their cameras. Flashbulbs pop. Agnes stops, mid-aisle, looking at the Doctor.

CONTINUED

105. CONTINUED

ANGLE on Agnes, illuminated by flashbulbs, reminiscent of the first time she looked at the Doctor.

ANGLE on the Doctor, watching her, eyes filled with tears.

CUT TO:

106. HILLSIDE - EVENING

WIDE SHOT - DOCTOR'S POV

It is a glorious evening in late autumn. In the distance, a procession of nuns, blessing the fields, walks through the fallow land. The convent stands framed behind them.

ANGLE on the Doctor, standing on the hillside, watching. A rustle of leaves behind her. She turns.

ANGLE on the Mother, veil blowing in the soft wind. She looks tired, older.

MOTHER

I saw your car.

The Doctor turns back to watch the convent. Mother stands beside her.

DOCTOR

(looking out)

How is she?

MOTHER

Fine. Quiet. She doesn't sing.

DOCTOR

I miss her.

MOTHER

I know.

Silence.

They stand together, facing out. The Doctor finds these words difficult.

DOCTOR

I wish she'd left something.....
some little part of her faith with me.

CONTINUED

106. CONTINUED

From the distance, Agnes' voice drifts up to us, singing a beautiful "Agnus Dei." Mother shifts her head, listening, visibly moved. Tears spring to the Doctor's eyes.

DOCTOR

Oh God. I want so much to believe that she was innocent. That would be miracle enough.

MOTHER

(turning to her)
She is. She still is.

The Doctor turns to her.

MOTHER (continuing)

Listen to her singing.

Tears fall from the Doctor's eyes and she bows her head. Mother embraces her gently, and the Doctor rests her head on the Mother's shoulder, as a child would embrace its mother. Mother, crying also, holds her close.

CUT TO:

107. EXT. BELL TOWER - DAY

ANGLE on Agnes, more radiant than ever, standing in the tower, singing out to the fields, finishing her "Agnus Dei."

AGNES

"Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem."

A BIRD flies skyward into the setting sun. The bell begins to ring.

FADE OUT

THE END

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