

DOWN CAME THE RAIN

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Developed with the Assistance of VicScreen

**"There is nothing stronger than
a broken woman who has rebuilt
herself." - Hannah Gadsby**

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INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

MARY (10), sits cross-legged on a floral bedspread, knitting.

She sings softly as her fingers twist red yarn around METAL NEEDLES, ROPE BURNS on her wrists.

MARY

*In through the front door, around
the back... peep through the
window, and off jumps Jack.*

She repeats it, focusing on every stitch.

The bedroom door SWINGS open. MIRANDA (13) runs in, eyes wide with panic. She presses her finger to her lips.

Mary quickly slips the row of knitting off the needles, gripping them as Miranda pulls her into the wardrobe.

A MAN appears in the doorway, unsteady on his feet, ROPE draped around his collar.

MAN

*Mary, Mary, quite contrary, how
does your garden grow?*

He peers under the bed.

MAN (CONT'D)

*With silver bells, cocks and
shells, and pretty girls all in a
row...*

Turning to the wardrobe, the door slightly ajar, he sneers.

Opening it, he separates the clothes but the girls are nowhere to be seen.

Holding her breath, Mary watches him through a little hole in the wood. In the narrow space between the wardrobe and the wall, the girls hide.

Cobwebs all around them, they SQUEEZE each other's hands, their knuckles white.

With her free hand, Mary GRIPS the needles. Trembling, she slowly draws them up, ready to strike.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A cocktail skewer PIERCES a small sausage on a canapé tray.

Applause echoes through a converted warehouse, teeming with impeccably dressed guests. Strings of pearls around slender necks, long black gloves, faces carved from stone.

At the centre is MARY (30), heavily pregnant but frail, gaunt. She sweats through her makeup and pulls at the fabric cutting into her skin.

Above her, lights hang from exposed beams like bodies.

CHARLES (40s) delivers a speech at a podium, the crowd in his palm. Behind him a banner reads 'Birthright: Future-Proofing the Next Generation', underlined by a double helix.

CHARLES

Our civilization is vulnerable.
It's not sustainable. But luckily
for us, we are no longer
constrained by the genetics we were
born with.

MIRANDA (33) stands next to Mary, her eyes glazing over.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

We are on the cusp of a genetic
revolution. Knowledge is our hope.
Science is our hope. You, our
inspired, forward-thinking
investors, are our hope.

Mary politely refuses the glass of champagne offered to her.

COCKTAIL WAITER

It's for the toast, ma'am.

Accepting it reluctantly, Mary scans the crowd. She locks eyes with an older gentleman, ALEXANDER (70s), whose gaze flicks down to her glass. His lips purse.

CHARLES

Now, although my beautiful wife
jokingly calls herself Birthright's
guinea pig...

The guests laugh and turn their attention to Mary, now standing beneath a spotlight, the heat boring into her.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

The fact that I'm willing to use
this technology on the woman I
love, on my own baby, after
everything Mary and I have been
through-

Charles chokes on his words. The crowd holds their breath.

Miranda SQUEEZES Mary's hand.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Losing Teddy made me lose all faith
in nature. There is nothing natural
about seeing your wife give birth
to a corpse. It is Birthright's
mission to-

INT. WAREHOUSE - WOMEN'S BATHROOM -- NIGHT

On the cusp of a panic attack, Mary SLAMS the cubicle door,
relieved to be alone. She tries to steady her breath.

The champagne glass still in her hand, she contemplates it
for a moment before downing it.

She slumps onto the toilet, wrestling her black pantyhose
down her swollen legs.

Staring at the empty glass at her feet, she holds her head
like a vice, scraping LONG FINGERNAILS through her hair.

She reaches for toilet paper but there's none left.

MARY

Fuck. Is anyone there?

When no one responds, Mary buries her hand in the toilet
paper dispenser, feeling around.

She GASPS and pulls her hand out, examining her finger in
shock. There are two small punctures on her fingertip.

A black, hairy leg emerges from the dispenser, then another,
then another. She stares, wide-eyed, as a SPIDER scuttles up
the wall.

A gentle knock breaks her trance.

MIRANDA (O.S.)

Mary? Can I come in?

Mary unlocks the door and Miranda slips in.

She clocks the empty champagne glass and closes the toilet
lid, motioning for Mary to sit. She gently works her
stockings back up her legs as Mary scans the walls, ceiling.

Miranda follows her gaze, concerned.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
Let's get you home.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Bundled in thick coats, the pair wait on the curbside. The city street a wind tunnel, Mary's hair catches flight, whipping her face, lassoing her neck.

Miranda takes one last drag of her cigarette and butts it out. She takes the clip out of her hair.

MIRANDA
Here...

She stands behind Mary and smooths her hair, pinning it back. Mary closes her eyes and leans into Miranda, exhausted.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
Promise you'll talk to Charles
about going back on your meds?

Mary nods.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
It's your body, Mary. You have
final say. Remember that.

Charles appears by their side, taking Mary's hand.

CHARLES
Dad's pulling the car around.

MIRANDA
It's okay... I'll take her.

CHARLES
Thanks, but I'd feel better if she
didn't take a cab. Germs, you know?

A black Rolls-Royce Phantom pulls up in front of them. The back window winds down to reveal Alexander.

ALEXANDER
I hear you have some precious cargo
that needs transporting.

His smile is at once charming and menacing.

The driver opens the door but doesn't make eye contact.

MIRANDA

(to Mary)

Want me to come? I can stay over if
you want? Watch a bad movie?

A reporter cuts in, hand extended towards Charles.

REPORTER

Mr. Davenport, Andy Solomon, New
York Times. I'd love to ask a few
questions if you have a moment.

Shaking his hand, Charles notices a photographer lingering
and coaxes Mary to his side.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Hold there!

Flash.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

And Charles one with your hand on
the bump. Great.

Flash.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

Big smiles!

Flash.

Overwhelmed, Mary takes refuge in the car, her smile dropping
like a glass to the floor.

The driver closes the door before Miranda can get in, their
fingers meeting on opposite sides of the window.

INT. PHANTOM - NIGHT

Mary watches Charles and Miranda shrink into a speck through
the back windscreen.

Alexander pulls out a PEN KNIFE from his breast pocket. He
FLICKS it open and sets about peeling an apple, the skin
coming off in a perfect spiral.

ALEXANDER

He'll go down in history, your
husband. The work he's doing...
You're a lucky girl, being part of
this. And I'm a lucky man. Having a
son carry on the family legacy is
the single greatest gift.

Mary picks at her finger, the puncture replaced by a cut from her LONG RED NAIL. Blood pools and travels towards her palm.

MARY

He said he wasn't going to mention him.

ALEXANDER

I know. And I'm glad he changed his mind.

Alexander clocks the blood and pulls a pocket square from his suit jacket. He wraps it around Mary's finger, tight.

ALEXANDER (CONT'D)

Charles is changing the world. We either do what's he's planning, future-proof the next generation, or we get the fuck off this planet. Those are our options. Either go with Elon to Mars, or stay here with Charles. And if you're asking the world to trust you, follow you into the unknown, an anecdote like that-

MARY

Anecdote?

She studies his face.

ALEXANDER

Now's not the time to be selfish, Mary. You need to start thinking bigger. This isn't about you, or Charles, or me... This is about the fate of humanity, for God's sake.

Speechless, she stares as the red seeps into the floral fabric; a landscape soaked in blood.

EXT. HOTEL - LOBBY -- NIGHT

A doorman opens the car door, bowing his head.

DOORMAN

Mrs. Davenport.

Cash between his fingers, Alexander locks eyes with him.

ALEXANDER

Make sure she gets to her apartment, would you?

MARY

Oh, I don't need-

The doorman pockets the money and holds an arm out for Mary.

DOORMAN

Of course, Mr. Davenport.

Mary hesitates for a moment before accepting his arm.

Climbing the marble stairs into the hotel lobby, she steals a look over her shoulder.

She catches Alexander's gaze. Watching her, he takes a BITE of his apple before disappearing behind the tinted window.

INT. HOTEL - ELEVATOR -- CONTINUOUS

Every surface of the elevator is mirrored. Mary and the doorman stand side by side, the silence dense.

She squeezes her eyes closed as they pass the 50th, 55th, 60th floor, the ascent dizzying.

INT. PENTHOUSE - ENTRYWAY -- CONTINUOUS

The elevator opens into the penthouse apartment. The doorman holds the door, continuing to hover after Mary steps out.

MARY

Let me guess, he paid you to tuck
me in?

He drops his head and reaches for the button.

DOORMAN

Sorry, Mrs. Davenport. Good night.

MARY

Fuck, I'm sorry.

The mirrored doors close, leaving Mary alone with her reflection. It takes her aback; eyes red raw, skin sallow.

MARY (CONT'D)

You're starting to sound like one
of them. Rude bitch.

Her gaze falls down her body, so tightly bound. She pulls at her clothes, her face distorting as she peels off layers.

INT. PENTHOUSE - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN -- NIGHT

The penthouse is sparse, modern. Clean lines, high ceilings. She moves through the space as though suspended in air.

Large tapestries and weavings hang on white walls. They are all deep reds and purples, womb-like, vulva-like, but deformed. The collection has a haunting through-line.

A loom sits in the corner, frightfully close to floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the cityscape.

Mary places a bottle of red wine and a glass on the marble bench top. She stares at them, fighting the urge.

She presses her bare belly into the edge of the bench, a balloon about to burst. Veins line the skin, bulging.

A fluffy tabby cat jumps onto the bench, rubbing its head against Mary's face. It meows softly until Mary steps away from the bench, a line indented across her belly.

MARY

Hey, Moo...

Distracted, she pets it, her eyes flicking to the KNIFE BLOCK next to the stove.

INT. PENTHOUSE - NURSERY -- NIGHT

Mary stands in the doorway, a knife dangling at her side. Her grip loose, it swings like a pendulum; her toes curling into the carpet.

She flicks on a nightlight, revealing an animal-themed nursery. Paintings of mice and rabbits on the walls, a jungle of soft toys in a basket.

Tightening her grip on the knife, she moves towards a small chest on the dresser. "In Loving Memory of Theodore Davenport" is engraved on the wood.

The tip of the knife opens the latch and hooks the string of a small blue satin bag.

INT. PENTHOUSE - BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Mary undresses as the bathtub fills. Music plays through a rubber ducky radio, the sound tinny.

Clutching the knife and satin bag, she stares at the mirror until it steams up, her reflection slowly disappearing.

A soft *meow* steals her attention. She looks to the doorway to see Moo staring up at her.

Mary closes the door, shutting her out.

Turning off the tap, she places the knife on the ledge and opens the bag, sprinkling the ASHES into the water. Her foot cracks the surface and she lowers herself in.

The grey dust attaches itself to her skin. She smiles gently and rubs it into her chest and across her cheeks.

Resting her head against the porcelain, she closes her eyes.

Her hand reaches for the knife, gripping the handle.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: "DOWN CAME THE RAIN"

INT. PENTHOUSE - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN -- MORNING

Light floods the apartment, bouncing off every surface.

Charles, exhausted but jazzed, removes his suit jacket in one shake of the shoulders, draping it across the marble bench.

CHARLES
Sweetheart?

He clocks the bottle of wine and holds the glass up to the light, examining it for lip prints.

INT. PENTHOUSE - BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Unbuttoning his shirt, Charles stares at the empty bed, not slept in. He throws his cufflinks onto the crisp sheets.

CHARLES
Mary?

He follows the faint sound of music to the bathroom door. Moo sits in front of it, scratching the wood, meowing.

INT. PENTHOUSE - BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

He pushes the bathroom door open, his face draining.

CHARLES
FUCK! Mary!

Unconscious in the near-empty bathtub, Mary's body is covered in grey residue, her skin bluing.

She rouses as Charles scoops her out of the tub.

Clocking the knife, he frantically examines her body.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Mary? Hey, can you hear me?

He looks into her eyes, still cloudy, vacant.

He grabs a towel and swaddles her, rocking her from side to side. He holds her head tight against his bare chest.

MARY

Sorry... I must've fallen asleep.

CHARLES

It's okay. It's alright.

Coming to, Mary wipes her face with her hands, too hard.

She pushes her fingers deep into her belly.

MARY

Something doesn't feel right...

Charles takes a deep breath and kisses the top of her head.

CHARLES

Everything's okay, I promise.

MARY

No, something's not right, Charlie.
Feel this...

CHARLES

Mary, the baby is fine.

MARY

Feel it!

She grabs his hand and PLUNGES it into her belly.

MARY (CONT'D)

Do you feel that? What is it?

CHARLES

It's kicking, sweetheart. That's a good thing!

Doubled over, her forehead presses against the tiles. She tries to catch her breath or vomit or scream; she doesn't know which.

MARY
I can't breathe.

CHARLES
Listen to me, Mary... it's not going to happen again, okay?

MARY
How do you know?

CHARLES
Because I've made sure of it.

Her breath heaves.

MARY
I told you I wasn't ready, Charlie.
I can't do this again.

CHARLES
You absolutely can. We can.
Together. We're a team, yeah?

She tries to take a deep breath in but can't.

MARY
I'm really scared.

CHARLES
There's nothing to be scared of.
Everything is going perfectly to plan.

MARY
I need my medication.

Charles reaches over to the rubber ducky radio and turns it off. He holds her cheeks and looks into her eyes.

CHARLES
We're almost at the finish line,
darling. We've almost pulled this
off!

MARY
I think I really need to go back on
my medication, Charlie...

He runs his hand down her belly.

CHARLES

We've spent so long making sure
this baby is perfect. A survivor.
We don't want to mess with the
recipe now, do we?

Mary closes her eyes tight, warding off tears. Her face
scrunches, reddens. She shakes her head.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

You have to trust me.

Beat.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

You trust me, don't you?

She looks at him, searching his eyes.

INT. DAVENPORT PHARMACEUTICALS - BIRTHRIGHT OFFICE -- DAY

Mary perches on the edge of an examination table. The
hospital gown exposes her spine, protruding through her skin.

The Birthright office is a fishbowl within a sprawling
corporate complex, exposed but soundproof.

DR. WHITE (40s), dressed in a lab coat, pumps a blood
pressure monitor until it is TIGHT around Mary's arm.

Hair damp, eyes vacant, she stares at the veins in her
forearm as they BULGE.

Charles, drained, looks on.

Dr. White releases the pump.

DR. WHITE

Well, as usual, you're the picture
of good health. Vitals are strong,
bloodwork great. Our perfect little
guinea pig!

He laughs, but Charles signals for him to cut it.

MARY

I think I'd feel better if I saw
the baby. Surely one ultrasound
won't hurt?

He exchanges a look with Charles.

DR. WHITE

From what Charles told me on the phone, Mary, you're dealing with a great deal of anxiety, which is completely understandable for someone in your situation.

MARY

My situation?

Charles shifts his weight.

DR. WHITE

Pregnancy after a stillbirth is deeply traumatic for anyone, but for someone with your... history-

MARY

I've been doing everything right. I've done the treatments, the injections... I just need to see the baby and go back on my normal medication. I know my body, my brain, and-

Charles takes Mary's hand.

CHARLES

We know you do sweetheart, but Rob and I know the science. It's been an incredibly intricate process getting to this point. We don't want to stumble at the finish line, do we?

She deflates.

DR. WHITE

Charles is right. All we want is what's best for you and the baby.

Mary rakes her fingers through her hair.

DR. WHITE (CONT'D)

Listen, I'll write you up for some nice anti-anxiety pills, okay? They'll take the edge off so you can get some rest. Sound good?

CHARLES

Thanks, Rob. That sounds great.

Dr. White grabs his prescription pad, scrawling as he speaks.

DR. WHITE
Have you had a chance to think
about your dad's offer?

Mary looks to Charles, confused.

CHARLES
(to Mary)
Dad has very kindly offered us the
country house for a while.

DR. WHITE
He thinks, and I agree, that it
might do you some good to get out
of the city.

CHARLES
Doesn't that sound nice?

Mary's eyes pingpong between the men, trying to keep up.

MARY
This isn't code for me going back
to the hospital, is it?

Charles laughs.

CHARLES
Mary, it's not code. Trust me,
that's the last place I'd want you
to be right now, too.

MARY
But what about the treatments? We'd
have to commute back here every-

CHARLES
I'd take it all with us. Set it up
at the house.

The men exchange a look.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
It's obviously completely up to you
though, sweetheart.

Mary absently picks at her fingertip but there's no scab. She
looks at it, inspecting it closely, then looks at the tip of
her index finger on the other hand. Nothing.

Watching on, Charles takes her hands, his gaze soft.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
You okay?

She nods, bewildered.

Through the office windows, the sea of suits part, making way for Alexander, flanked by assistants.

He catches Mary's eye, smiling. He WINKS as he passes, disappearing into the only walled office in the space.

Mary looks down to her belly.

EXT/INT. CITY SIDEWALK/CAR - DAY

Mary watches bellhops lift suitcases into a black Range Rover, double-parked outside the hotel.

Charles slips them a tip and SLAMS the boot, breaking Mary's stare. He smiles and idles over to her, arms outstretched.

CHARLES

Well, that's everything!

He pulls her close, wrapping his arms around her.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I'm so proud of you, sweetheart.

You've made the right decision.

You're going to be the best mum.

He takes a Moses basket full of yarn from her hands and places it under the passenger seat.

Anxious, Mary looks up and down the sidewalk. She pulls her phone out of her pocket but before she has a chance to open it, Charles swoops in, plucking it from her hands.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

She's probably been held up in a meeting, sweetheart.

MARY

She said she'd say goodbye.

He slips it into the glovebox.

MARY (CONT'D)

She's my sister, Charlie. She's meant to be here.

CHARLES

I know she is. But she's not.

Charles gently loops her hair behind her ears.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
I know it sounds harsh but you need
to stop relying on her so much.
She's got her own life. Let's just
focus on us for a bit.

He holds her belly tenderly.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
On our beautiful little family.

Mary nods and lets him help her into the car. He straps her
in and reaches into the centre console, pulling out a large
Starbucks cup. He presents it to her proudly.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Chestnut praline latte, my lady...

Her face softens.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Hey... I love you.

She takes the cup and looks up at him.

MARY
I love you too.

INT. CAR - DAY

The city disappears behind them, replaced by the brilliant
greens of the countryside.

Road trip music blares from the car speakers. Charles sings
along, hardly hitting any of the notes but trying his best.

Knitting, Mary glances over at him with a hint of a smile.

MARY
What you're doing is criminal...

Charles tries to hit a high note.

MARY (CONT'D)
First degree murder. The poor song
didn't stand a chance.

She tries to stifle a laugh but can't.

CHARLES
God, I've missed that sound.

Mary opens the window and breathes in the country air. She rests her head on the seat and closes her eyes.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The car winds through the countryside, the landscape becoming wilder and greener as they go.

INT. CAR - DAY

Mary opens her eyes as they enter a ghost-quiet fishing village. Men haul in large nets of fish onto the docks. There is no signage on any of the shops, no hint to where they are.

CHARLES
Quaint, isn't it?

MARY
Please don't tell me this is it...

Charles puts his hand on her leg, smiling.

MARY (CONT'D)
Where's the pharmacy? The hospital?

CHARLES
On the backseat, baby!

Mary clocks a cooler on the backseat with the Birthright logo on it, a biohazard sticker below it.

He pulls up outside the local pub. Nursing their morning beers, a gaggle of old, weathered fishermen leer at a TEEN GIRL passing by.

Mary tenses at the sight.

MARY
Why are you stopping? Don't park here.

CHARLES
Don't worry, they're harmless. That bloke there...

He nods towards MICK (60s), the gnarliest of the group.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
He's been working for the family since I was a kid. Just need to grab the key off him.

He jumps out of the car, LOCKING IT behind him.

Mary jiggles the door handle in vain.

She watches Charles charm the group. Their hard faces unfurl, exposing crooked smiles.

Mick pulls him into an embrace before reaching into his pocket for the key. The pair turn their attention to Mary. Their mouths move but she can't make out what they're saying.

Mick idles towards her. She shifts in her seat and reluctantly winds down the window.

MICK

Well if it isn't the famous Mary!

He leans in, extending a rough, dirty hand.

MARY

Hello.

She goes to shake it but is taken aback when he reaches past and places his hand on her belly.

MICK

Nothing more beautiful.

He pulls away and smiles, his teeth yellow. He stays close.

MICK (CONT'D)

I was just telling Charlie boy that
I'm more than happy to deliver any
supplies while you're here.
Groceries, firewood... anything.

Charles gets back into the car.

CHARLES

Thanks again, Mick. Forgot how nice
small town hospitality is!

MARY

I'm sure we'll be fine, thanks.

MICK

I insist! In fact, I won't take no
for an answer.

Mary forces a smile. Mick taps the car before leaving.

She watches him rejoin the group and whisper something to his right-hand man. Swallowing a mouthful of beer, the pair look back to Mary, Mick licking the froth from his lips.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY -- DAY

No other properties in sight, the old wooden house is set back from the road, bordered by forest. The gardens are vast and dense. Overgrown, abundant.

Mary looks around in awe. There's something magical about the place; something not quite real. Rabbits bound across the grass. Birds flit from tree to tree.

Charles appears, tucking a picked flower behind her ear.

CHARLES

You look more relaxed already.

Mary looks around in wonderment.

MARY

I can't believe you've never brought me here before, Charlie boy...

Smiling, Charles pulls a couple of suitcases out of the car.

CHARLES

You know what my dad's like...

She laughs.

MARY

Unfortunately, I do.

CHARLES

He really cares about you, you know.

MARY

He only cares about me because I'm carrying the "Davenport heir".

CHARLES

You think it's a boy?

MARY

You think an heir has to be a boy?

Charles smiles.

CHARLES

Come on, I want to show you inside.

He's excited, childlike.

Mary turns her attention to the house, covered in ivy. She spots a boarded up room at the side, but quickly shakes it off, following Charles inside.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - ENTRYWAY -- CONTINUOUS

The house is ancient, cavernous. Everything is coated in a thick layer of dust.

Charles BEAMS.

CHARLES

Oh my God, it's exactly like I
remember! Well, maybe a bit
dustier, a few more cobwebs... but
she's stunning, isn't she?

Mounted animal heads stare down from every wall, along with old muskets, crossbows and other hunting paraphernalia.

MARY

Doesn't look like a "she" to me...

Charles puts the suitcases at the bottom of the stairs.

CHARLES

Kind of reminds me of your folks'
place, too... all this hunting
stuff.

Mary tenses, studying the walls with disdain.

She wanders through a doorway but a COBWEB stops her. She JOLTS and frantically pulls the web off her.

Watching a spider scurry across the wall, she slips off her shoe, ready to squash it.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Wait!

She startles.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Don't hurt it.

MARY

Why?

He cups his hand near the spider. It crawls into his palm.

CHARLES

It's bad luck. Don't you know the saying?

Wide-eyed, Mary watches him move to the window.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

If you wish to live and thrive, let the spider run alive.

He places it on the sill outside and watches it disappear into the ivy framing the window.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

They're actually pretty remarkable...

Mary scoffs.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I'm serious! You know they're the only creature on earth actually thriving as a result of climate change? If we were more like them, we might actually stand a chance.

Beat.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Anyway, I thought you'd have an affinity with them...

MARY

Why?

CHARLES

Well, you both like weaving, for starters...

Smiling, he turns back to Mary and sees that her arms are wrapped tightly around her body. His face drops.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Let's make up the bed so you can have a rest, yeah?

MARY

Rest. Bed. I like those words.

Charles takes her hand and guides her to the staircase.

CHARLES

You head up. It's the door at the end of the hallway. I'll just turn the power on.

He opens a door and descends down a dark, narrow staircase.

Walking up, Mary looks at the ceiling riddled with cobwebs.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- DAY

Charles airs a white bed sheet and lets it fall onto the four-poster bed.

Mary places her knitting on the nightstand, the beginnings of a pink baby blanket taking shape, and scans the room. Faded wallpaper peels like dried skin.

Looking out the window, she takes in the magnificent view of the garden. Charles cozies in behind her.

CHARLES

What do you think?

MARY

It's perfect.

He kisses the nape of her neck.

CHARLES

I knew you'd like it.

Charles moves his hands from her belly to her breasts, his breath deepening as he pushes into her. Mary squirms.

MARY

Charles...

CHARLES

I know, I know. I'm sorry.

Sheepish, he pulls away and moves to the dresser.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I couldn't help myself. You just look so good right now.

Picking up a bottle, he rattles some pills into his palm.

MARY

What are they?

CHARLES
The pills Rob prescribed...

MARY
How do you have them already?

CHARLES
We stopped off at the pharmacy,
remember?

Mary studies Charles' face.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
You were napping in the car... I
thought you might've woken up while
I was in there.

He passes her the pills and a glass of water.

MARY
I slept?

CHARLES
In and out.

Mary hesitates.

He flashes his charming smile.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Happy mummy...

Beat.

MARY
Happy baby.

She swallows them and lies down.

Mary removes the flower from behind her ear and places it in
the glass of water next to her phone on the nightstand.

Charles opens the Birthright cooler and pulls out a small
canister of dark liquid. He transfers it to a syringe,
flicking out the bubbles.

On autopilot, Mary pulls up her top and gathers a fold of
skin with her fingertips.

Charles inserts the needle, pushing on the syringe. As the
thick liquid enters her, he looks at her long, pointed nails.

CHARLES

You might have to cut those off
before the baby comes.

Confused at first, Mary realises what he's talking about.

MARY

I wouldn't feel like myself without
them.

He pulls the needle out.

CHARLES

You wouldn't want to accidentally
hurt the baby, that's all.

Charles kisses her forehead and pulls at the heavy drapes.
They HISS as they slide along the rusted track, blacking out
the room.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- MORNING

Mary wakes to birds singing their dawn chorus.

Heavy-headed, her eyes struggling to stay open, she feels
around for her phone on the nightstand.

It isn't there.

She sits up, turns on the bedside lamp and notices the
flower. It's wilted already.

Off-balance, she opens the drapes. The house floats on a
cloud of mist, the grass shimmering with morning dew.

Before she can surrender to the beauty, she notices Charles
in the clearing. He is deep in conversation with Mick, a
dozen fish dangling by his side, fingers hooked in gills.

Mick glances up to the window. Mary slips out of sight.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Using the wall for support, Mary makes her way down the hall,
her white nightgown billowing out over her belly.

Her fingers move through the intricate carvings in the wood
as she stares up at portraits hanging from picture hooks. All
men, all stone-faced, militant.

She stops at one of Alexander. Locking eyes with him, she
holds up her middle finger, backing into an open doorway.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - GRANDMOTHER'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mary turns to find a beautifully furnished room, the bed draped in velvet.

Strings of pearls and gold tubes of lipstick are strewn across a dressing table. Transfixed, Mary moves over to it.

She drapes a LONG RED SILK SCARF around her neck and stares at her reflection, the luxurious fabric in stark contrast to her puffy face and matted hair.

Mary opens a tube of red lipstick and smears it across her chapped lips. She presses them together, close to the mirror.

She puts on a pair of clip-on earrings, the heavy clusters of pearls tugging at her earlobes. She tilts her head from side to side, enamoured.

Charles appears in the doorway holding a breakfast tray.

CHARLES

What are you doing in here?

Mary JUMPS, pulling the earrings off. One drops, pearls BOUNCING across the floorboards.

MARY

Fuck!

She tries to bend over but can't.

Charles puts the tray down and intercepts, holding her arm.

CHARLES

Leave it, Mary, please.

MARY

I'm sorry.

CHARLES

It's okay. Come on, let's get you back to bed.

He tries to usher her out, but she lingers.

MARY

Whose room is this?

Uncomfortable, Charles stumbles on his words.

CHARLES

No one's. My grandmother's.

Mary nods, taking it in.

MARY

It looks like she's about to walk
back in any second, finish her
makeup...

CHARLES

Mary, stop.

Taken aback, Mary freezes.

MARY

Okay...

Charles guides her out of the room. Mary steals one last look
over her shoulder.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- DAY

The silence heavy, Charles props Mary up in bed and places
the breakfast tray on her lap.

He sits on the side of the bed and gently wipes the lipstick
off with his thumb.

CHARLES

I'm sorry for snapping. I just...
miss her, I guess.

Charles pours her a cup of coffee. Mary stares at the dark
liquid, confused.

MARY

Why are you giving me coffee?

CHARLES

Because I love you? And because
you'd murder me if left
uncaffeinated too long?

MARY

But it's almost bedtime...

Charles laughs.

CHARLES

Mary, it's 7am!

Her eyes widen.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

It's good, darling! After a few more big sleeps and some country air, you won't know yourself.

He sweeps her hair off her face, tucking it behind her ears.

MARY

Have you seen my phone? It was on the nightstand...

CHARLES

Oh yeah, I put it downstairs.

MARY

Why?

CHARLES

Because I want you to *relax*.
Speaking of which...

He reaches into his pocket, pulling out a pill container.

Mary tenses as he shakes a couple of pills out.

MARY

They're making me feel funny...

CHARLES

Your body just needs some time to adjust to them. You know that.

He hands them to her. She reluctantly swallows.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Hey, I'm going to pop out and get some supplies. Mick brought over a massive haul of fish which I have absolutely no fucking idea what to do with. I'm thinking of pickling them... would that be weird?

MARY

Well I won't be the one eating them, so...

CHARLES

Come on, Mary! Fish is hardly meat! Please don't make me eat them all by myself.

He puts on a sulky face.

MARY

If you can eat a dozen investors'
assholes on a daily basis, darling,
I'm sure you can stomach a few
fish.

Charles laughs.

CHARLES

Seriously, sweetheart, I want you
to at least consider eating a bit
of meat, okay? Just for the next
month until the baby comes.

He leans over and kisses her forehead.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

See you in a bit, sleepyhead.

Disappearing down the hall, the heavy front door closes with
a BANG. Mary startles at the sound and pushes her breakfast
tray to the other side of the bed.

Idle, she reaches for her knitting, picking up where she left
off, but can't concentrate, her gaze pulled to the doorway.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Knitting in hand, Mary walks past the row of portraits to the
room with the velvet bed.

The door is closed.

She tries to open it but it is LOCKED.

Confused, she rattles the handle to no avail.

Moving further down the hall, she tries to open the next door
but it's locked too. So is the next, and the next.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - STAIRCASE -- CONTINUOUS

Off-balance, she stands at the top of the staircase.

Below, the space has been transformed. It's beautifully set
up; not a speck of dust to be seen. The surfaces shine, fresh
flowers in vases.

Gripping the balustrade, she makes her way down.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - SITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The warm glow of an open fireplace illuminates the room, the heavy drapes all drawn.

Mary notices her loom from the penthouse set up in front of an old wooden rocking chair, a woolen blanket strewn across the backrest.

Moved, she idles towards it. Her fingers trace the tapestry; the blackened cord of a placenta wrapping around itself.

Putting her knitting aside, she adjusts the loom.

A BUZZING sound hooks her attention. She follows it to a doorway off the sitting room, but it is LOCKED.

She peers through the keyhole but can't see anything.

Mary gets down on all-fours and peers through the crack at the base of the door, her belly pressing against the floorboards.

Retrieving her knitting needles, she buries them into the lock. After a few jiggles, it CLICKS open.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

The door opens with a creak, but the room is pitch black. Mary feels around for a light switch but can't find one.

Reluctantly, she enters the darkness.

A phone BUZZES, the blue light leading her towards it. She puts her knitting down on the desk and touches the screen, revealing a stream of missed calls and messages from Miranda.

Using the phone, she searches for another source of light. She spots a candelabra and some matches on the mantelpiece.

The soft, flickering glow of the candle reveals a grand old office, the windows all boarded up.

The phone RINGS, Miranda's name on the screen. Still taking in the covered windows, Mary answers hesitantly.

MARY

Hello?

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Oh my God, Mary! Why haven't you been answering your phone?!

Distracted, Mary runs the light of the candle along the spines of old leather-bound books lining the bookcase.

MARY

I've been resting.

She hovers on a row of Francis Galton's books: 'Hereditary Genius', 'Natural Inheritance' and 'Essays in Eugenics'.

Her face scrunches.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Resting? Mary, I've been worried sick. Neither of you have been answering my messages.

MARY

Worried sick? Bit rich for someone who didn't bother showing up yesterday to say goodbye.

The candle moves to books by the late Charles Davenport. Cradling the phone, she pulls one out. 'Eugenics, The Science of Human Improvement By Better Breeding'.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Okay, first of all, that was days ago. And second, you were the one who told me not to come.

MARY

What? No I didn't.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Well that's what Charles told me.

She puts the book back, trying to focus on Miranda.

MARY

Wait, he what?

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Mary, I'm really worried about you. Have you talked to Charles about going back on your meds yet?

Turning around, the candle illuminates a display case of PRESERVED HUMAN FETUSES in jars.

SHOCKED, she puts her hand to her belly.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Mary?

MARY
He said... uh-

MIRANDA (V.O.)
Where are you? What's the address?

Unable to look away, her eyes scan the rows of jars, each fetus deformed in some way. Conjoined twins, twisted limbs.

MARY
Um...

MIRANDA (V.O.)
You don't know where you are? Were you fucking blindfolded?

At the end of the row is a fresh jar. The fetus has an extra pair of arms and legs growing out the sides of its body.

MIRANDA (V.O.)
Mary, listen to me. I need you to drop a pin, okay? Can you do that?

Transfixed, Mary leans closer. She puts the phone on the shelf and picks up the jar.

MIRANDA (V.O.)
Mary?

Turning it around, she sees that the label reads THEODORE DAVENPORT, June 2020.

Shocked, she DROPS it.

Glass SMASHES.

MIRANDA (V.O.)
(muffled)
Mary?!

The fetus face down on the ground, she melts to the floor, her bare knees pressing into the glass.

She scoops the fetus into her arms, holding it to her chest. Rocking it back and forth, she WEEPS for her baby.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Mary wakes up in bed.

She flicks on the bedside lamp, her gaze groggy, blurred.

As her eyes adjust, she sees her knitting on the nightstand. It has grown; the baby blanket halfway finished. She reaches for it but is GRIPPED with pain.

Clutching her stomach, she notices a WET PATCH underneath her, her nightgown soaked.

MARY

No...

Moaning, she peels the sheets back. Her knees are covered in thick scabs. Confused, she goes to touch them but another contraction hits, paralyzing her.

She WAILS, sweat pooling on her brows, her lips.

Charles appears in front of her, squatting on the floor between her legs. He touches her belly but she FLINCHES.

CHARLES

Hey, hey... It's okay, I'm here.

He wipes her hair off her wet face, checking her temperature with the back of his hand.

MARY

What's happening? Charlie, what the fuck is happening?

CHARLES

It looks like we're having a baby, sweetheart!

Mary shakes her head.

MARY

No. No, it's too early. Charlie, you need to call an ambulance!

CHARLES

Mary, I need you to try to calm down a bit, okay? Let's lie you back, get you comfortable.

He tries to reposition her but she WRITHES.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Breathe with me, sweetheart. In... and out... In... and out.

He looks into her eyes.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Sweetheart, I'm going to run and get my kit, but I'll be back in two seconds. Focus on your breathing, okay? In for five, out for five. Can you do that for me?

Panicked, she nods.

As soon as he's out of the room, she slips off the bed and crawls towards the doorway. She's frenzied, eyes wild.

Before she can reach the threshold, he returns, pulling on a pair of surgical gloves.

MARY

What are you doing to me?!

CHARLES

I need to see how far dilated you are, okay? Lie back for me.

She shakes her head and squeezes her legs together.

MARY

You need to call a fucking ambulance!

Another contraction HITS and Charles seizes the opportunity, putting his hand between her legs.

Mary SCREAMS.

CHARLES

The baby's really close, sweetheart.

She shakes her head and squeezes her eyes closed, holding her breath. She is desperate, helpless, completely at his mercy.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Mary, you need to be strong right now, okay? Not for me, not for you, but for our baby. Our baby needs you to be strong.

Beat.

She lets go of her breath.

MARY

I can't do it, Charlie. Make it stop, please! I can't-

CHARLES

You absolutely can. When you feel another contraction come on, I want you to push, okay?

She shakes her head.

A contraction hits.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Here we go, sweetheart. Big push, okay? Big push...

Giving over to the pain, she lets out a primal SCREAM and pushes with all the strength she can muster.

A LONG, BLACK, NEEDLE-LIKE LEG EXITS HER BODY.

Her eyes widen at the sight.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

You're doing so well! Another big push, okay?

Another leg appears, then another, then another. They're gooey, covered in blood.

With one final push, A LARGE BLACK SPIDER the size of a baby leaves her body.

A thick cobweb umbilical cord connects them.

HORRIFIED, Mary shuffles away, her back against the wall.

The spider writhes in Charles' hands.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

We did it! Oh my god, we did it!

Overcome with emotion, Charles brings it over to Mary, but before they make contact, she BLACKS OUT.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- DAY

Mary wakes connected to an IV drip.

Golden light streams into the room.

A bassinet sits by the open bay windows, a mobile hanging above it, birds gliding to the tune of a tinkling lullaby.

Charles stares into the bassinet adoringly. His face is soft, giddy with love. He coos, giggles.

Hypnotised by the sight, Mary grips the IV drip stand and pulls herself to standing.

She notices a patch of blood on the sheets and feels the back of her nightgown. She stares at the blood on her fingertips.

Heavy with fatigue, she moves across the room, eyes pinned on Charles and the bassinet.

With each labored step, her face loosens, her body relaxes.

Standing behind Charles, she places her hand on his shoulder, readying herself to meet her baby.

Charles looks up at her lovingly, smiling.

CHARLES

Hey, mama.

MARY

Hey...

She hesitates.

MARY (CONT'D)

Is it...

CHARLES

She's perfect.

Taking a deep breath of relief, tears roll down her cheeks.

She slowly peers into the bassinet, revealing A LARGE BLACK SPIDER, the size of a newborn, swaddled in blankets.

Mary BOUNDS across the room, the IV needle ripping out of her vein, the stand crashing to the ground.

Pinned against the wall, she stares at the bassinet, a high-pitch CHIRP now radiating out of it.

Charles looks at her, bewildered.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Mary? What-

She points, eyes wild. Blood drips down her arm.

MARY

What the fuck is that?

CHARLES

Darling, it's our baby...

Panicked, Mary's breath heaves.

MARY

No... no... that's not my baby.

The chirps become desperate. Charles buries his arms into the bassinet and scoops the swaddled spider out.

CHARLES

Aw, is someone hungry?

He looks to Mary expectantly.

She covers her chest.

MARY

No. No fucking way. Keep that thing away from me.

CHARLES

Sweetheart...

Charles moves towards her. As he gets close, Mary breaks free and RUNS out of the room.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY/STAIRCASE -- CONTINUOUS

Moving as fast as she can, she stumbles down the hall, leaving a mystified Charles in the doorway.

The spider SCREAMS.

CHARLES

Mary!

Reaching the top of the stairs, her ankle gives way and she COLLAPSES onto herself, tumbling down.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- DAY

A rhythmic, mechanical noise THROBS through the space, steady and relentless like a metronome.

Mary wakes in fright.

She is groggy, the room dark.

She turns on the bedside lamp to reveal a hospital-grade BREAST PUMP on the nightstand. She follows the tubes to her breasts, a nursing bra holding two suction pumps in place.

Shocked, Mary takes in the sight.

She pulls at the nursing bra, tight like a corset, but can't find the clasp to take it off.

The more she struggles, the louder the whirr of the machine becomes. The noise sounds like a voice, repeating "mur-der, mur-der" over and over.

Snapping the clasp, she RIPS the suction cups off her breast, her nipples swollen, dripping. She casts the bottles aside.

CHARLES

No!

She STARTLES as Charles lunges over her to retrieve the bottles, leaking onto the sheets.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Fuck...

MARY

What?

CHARLES

Do you know how precious colostrum is, Mary?

Frustrated, he combines the golden liquid into one bottle.

MARY

Do you know how fucked up it is to attach a breast pump to someone while they're sleeping?

Turning the machine off, Charles studies her.

He can't help but laugh.

MARY (CONT'D)

Don't laugh at me, Charles. You know I don't like it when you laugh at me.

CHARLES

I'm sorry, but sweetheart... we set the pump up together. You took it out of the box...

He sits down on the side of the bed, untangling Mary's legs from the damp sheets.

Mary takes a deep breath. She rakes her fingers through her hair but they snag on a knot.

MARY

Can I go back on my medication now,
Charlie? Please?

CHARLES

Not while you're breastfeeding,
sweetheart, you know that.

MARY

Well I think it'd be better if we
use formula then. I really feel-

CHARLES

We've been through this, Mary. You
know what the research says.
Breastfed babies have higher
cognitive functioning, stronger
immune systems-

MARY

I know what the research says but I
just-

CHARLES

You just what?

She digs her fingers into her closed eyes.

MARY

I feel like I'm losing my fucking
mind, Charlie.

CHARLES

You've just been through a massive
hormone withdrawal, okay? Baby
blues is to be expected, but it'll
pass, I promise.

Defeated, Mary stares at the wallpaper, a section in the
corner hanging by a thread.

A CHIRP echoes down the hallway.

She stares at Charles.

MARY

Where is it?

CHARLES

She is in her crib.

Mary's face scrunches with confusion. She points to the
bassinet by the window.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

We're trialling her in the nursery,
remember? So you can get a bit more
sleep?

MARY

The nursery?

CHARLES

Yes, Mary, the nursery.

He gets up, screwing the teat onto the bottle of breastmilk
as he disappears down the hallway.

Mary looks back to the bassinet and notices a RED LIGHT on
the dresser. She sees that it is a BABY MONITOR, but rather
than facing the bassinet, it is facing her.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY/NURSERY -- CONTINUOUS

Following the sound, Mary stands in the doorway of a NURSERY.

The room is a carbon copy of the nursery at the penthouse,
everything in the exact same position.

Rooted to the spot, her swollen ankle wrapped in bandages,
she stares at Charles on the window seat, the swaddled spider
sucking on its bottle hungrily.

CHARLES

I'll do this feed, sweetheart. You
go back to bed.

She continues to take in the room.

MARY

How did you... When did you...

CHARLES

Seriously, have a lie down. I've
got this.

Mary nods, but her eyes fall on the wooden chest on the
dresser. She beelines towards it, opening the clasp. She
pulls out the blue satin bag and looks inside. It's empty.

She deflates.

MARY

I need to call Miranda.

CHARLES
I've already told her. She sends
her love and is coming next week.

MARY
Next week?

CHARLES
She's in Chicago for that big case,
remember?

Skeptical, she studies him.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
She'll be here as soon as she can.

A KNOCK at the front door snaps her out of her trance.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Fuck, that must be Mum and Dad.

MARY
What? No...

Charles stands, repositioning the blankets around the spider.

MARY (CONT'D)
Charlie, I really don't feel up to
visitors yet. Please...

CHARLES
They won't stay long... they just
want to meet their granddaughter.

Her body tenses as he walks towards her with the spider.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Don't worry, sweetheart, you look
beautiful. A glowing new mum.

He kisses her cheek. She spots another red light by the crib.

MARY
Is that a baby monitor?

CHARLES
Yeah...

MARY
Where does the video go to?

CHARLES
Straight to an app on my phone.
Pretty cool, huh?

There's another KNOCK at the door.

He plants a kiss on her cheek.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Pop something on and I'll see you
down there in a sec, okay?

Charles gone, she steals one last look at the nursery.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - SITTING ROOM -- DAY

Mary perches on the edge of a Chesterfield sofa, a woolen cardigan wrapped tight around her like a straightjacket.

Alexander sits on the sofa opposite, next to Charles' mother HILDIE (60s), overly made up for the occasion.

CHARLES
Okay Grandpa, are you ready?

Charles proudly presents the bundle to his father. Alexander stares in awe, choking on his words.

ALEXANDER
Oh, Charles...

He wipes his eyes before a tear has a chance to form.

CHARLES
Dad, are you crying?

Hildie moves closer, peering into the blankets.

HILDIE
Let me see!

Mary tenses.

HILDIE (CONT'D)
Oh, poodle, she's... I don't even
know the word to describe her!

Chuffed, Charles sits next to Mary, gripping her thigh.

HILDIE (CONT'D)
Do we have a name yet?

Seeing that she's talking to her, Mary snaps to attention.

MARY
Um... no, not yet.

CHARLES
I'm leaning towards Charlotte.

Mary shoots him a look.

MARY
Why Charlotte?

He laughs, trying to break the tension.

CHARLES
After Dad's mum, sweetheart...

Embarrassed, Mary shifts in her seat.

HILDIE
Don't worry, dear. I had baby brain
something shocking when this one
was born...

She nudges Charles playfully with her foot.

ALEXANDER
Oh she was hopeless! Didn't know up
from down for weeks.

Mary forces a laugh, but her attention is drawn to the OFFICE
DOOR behind her in-laws.

CHARLES
Yeah, Mary's finding out about that
the hard way, aren't you, darling.

Distracted, Mary tries to pull her gaze back.

MARY
What?

Charles and Alexander laugh.

HILDIE
Aw, leave her alone, poor thing!
You're doing great, Mary.

She leans over and takes Mary's hand.

HILDIE (CONT'D)
If I'm being honest, I hated
Charlie when he was born.

CHARLES
Mum!

HILDIE

I'm speaking mother to mother right now, thank you very much, Charles.

She turns her attention back to Mary.

HILDIE (CONT'D)

Trust me, just go through the motions, do what you have to do - feed them, bathe them, blah blah blah, and natural instincts will kick in eventually. You probably feel like you're going absolutely insane at the moment, but one day soon you're going to wake up and the little parasitic alien blob is suddenly your child, and the love is unlike anything you've ever felt or anything you'll ever feel.

Hildie gives her a reassuring smile and squeezes her hand, her thumb gliding over Mary's long, pointed nails.

CHARLES

Well, that was a beautiful speech, Mother.

Charles stands to stoke the fire.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Can we get anyone a coffee? Cake?

ALEXANDER

I was more thinking steak and a scotch...

Hildie laughs, looking to Mary.

HILDIE

I hope for your sake Charlotte doesn't inherit the Davenport appetite. Voracious beasts, they are.

She stands up, patting Charles on the ass as she passes.

HILDIE (CONT'D)

In more ways than one!

Mary steals one last look at the bundle of blankets in Alexander's arms before following Hildie out of the room.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - BATHROOM -- DAY/NIGHT

Mary splashes her face, staring at her reflection as droplets roll down her cheeks, falling from her chin to her chest.

Trying to get some relief, she presses a damp flannel onto her engorged breasts, veins protruding like worms.

She can hear Charles saying goodbye to his parents downstairs. The heavy front door closes, breaking her trance.

Reaching for a towel, she buries her face.

Beat.

When she pulls the towel away, she JUMPS at the sight of Charles in the mirror behind her.

He smiles.

CHARLES

Sorry, darling, didn't mean to
startle you.

He wraps his arms around her, looking at her in the mirror.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Feeling a bit better?

She nods.

His eyes fall down to her breasts. He presses himself into her back, rubbing slowly.

MARY

Charlie... I can't-

CHARLES

I know, I know... I'm just enjoying
the view.

She pulls away, wrapping her body in the towel.

He adjusts his crotch and takes a deep breath.

Mary brushes her hair.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Maybe I could just watch you for a
bit?

MARY

Watch me brush my hair...?

CHARLES

Yeah, but...

Charles moves towards her tentatively, gently undoing her towel. It drops to the floor.

He steps back, unzipping his fly.

Ignoring the heaving breath and stroking behind her, Mary locks eyes with herself, the brush catching on a knot.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - NURSERY -- NIGHT

Standing in the doorway, the sound of the shower in the background, Mary stares at the crib.

She turns on a nightlight, the base a heavy porcelain rocket ship. It covers the ceiling in little blue stars.

The spider is curled up in a ball, shivering. It tries to cover itself with a blanket.

She watches it struggle.

Without her fingers getting too close, Mary picks up the blanket and drops it over its body, covering it completely.

The shower STOPS.

Mary holds down the sides of the blanket, trapping it. She holds her breath, her eyes squeezed shut.

Beat.

CHARLES

What are you doing?

Mary swings her body towards Charles in the doorway.

MARY

She was cold.

His face loosens.

Turning back to the crib, Mary hesitantly pulls the blanket back, exposing the spider's head.

CHARLES

Well, as brutal as it was to hear,
Mum was right - natural instincts
do eventually kick in.

Mary stares into the crib, eyes vacant.

MARY
Yeah, it's all falling into place
now...

Charles places a couple of pills into Mary's hand.

Defeated, she puts them in her mouth and swallows.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - NURSERY -- DAY

Shielding her eyes from the harsh sun pouring in, Mary wakes to Charles' muffled voice on the phone.

Lying on the floor, a cushion under her head, she stretches her stiff body.

Her eyes focus on a long, red nail clipping on the floor. She sees that her fingernails have been cut right back to the skin, the red polish removed.

Hoisting herself to standing, she peers into the crib.

The spider sleeps soundly.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Mary moves down the hallway, tired and sore.

She CRACKS her neck and clutches her breasts. There are wet patches on the fabric over her nipples.

She follows Charles' voice to the open bedroom door.

CHARLES (O.S.)
No, no, don't get me wrong, I'm
honored, Andy! Honestly, I really
appreciate you wanting to do this.

She lingers in the hallway, out of sight.

CHARLES (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Could you use one of the photos
from the launch? I just don't think
I can leave my family right now...

Through the crack in the door, she sees Charles pacing.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
(on the phone)
Right, no, I understand. Well do
you think they'd be open to running
it in a few weeks?

Mary presses her body against the wall.

Her eyes flick back towards the nursery.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - NURSERY -- CONTINUOUS

Staring into the crib, Mary holds her breath and reaches in, her arms trembling.

She GRABS the spider, her face twisting with repulsion.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - SITTING ROOM -- DAY

The fire ROARS.

Charles appears in the doorway, eyes scanning the room.

CHARLES

Mary? You in here?

He spots Mary sitting on the rocking chair in front of the fire, staring into the raging flames.

Edging towards her, he sees the spider on Mary's bare chest. Bigger, its legs wrap around her torso as its fangs hungrily search for her nipple.

Moved, Charles takes in the sight before gently repositioning the spider on her breast.

After a few attempts, it LATCHES.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

There you go! You're doing it!

Mary winces, but forces a smile.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Well, how does it feel, mama?

She searches for the words.

MARY

It feels... it's indescribable.

CHARLES

Yeah, well oxytocin is one hell of a drug!

MARY

What?

CHARLES

It's the chemical that's released
in your brain when you breastfeed.
The 'love hormone', or as I like to
call it, the 'cuddle chemical'.

MARY

Right. Yeah. Well it's...
beautiful.

CHARLES

Sweetheart, you have no idea how
happy this makes me.

She squeezes his hand.

MARY

Same. I feel like I can finally see
her, you know? Like a massive dark
cloud has lifted, or something.
Thank you for being so patient with
me. And for being such a beautiful
dad to our little girl.

CHARLES

Of course. Anything for you two.

Charles rests his head on Mary and stares down at the spider.

Grimacing, she turns her face away, breathing through the
torture. She notices another red light on the mantelpiece,
tucked next to an ornament of a cat.

Beat.

MARY

Hey, who was that on the phone?

CHARLES

Oh... um, it was the reporter from
The New York Times. He wants to run
a double page spread on Birthright.

Mary meets his gaze.

MARY

Charlie, are you kidding? That's
huge!

CHARLES

I don't think I'm going to do it.

She hits his arm playfully.

MARY

You're doing it. You have to do it!

CHARLES

He wants me to come to the city for a photoshoot and do a full profile interview. I'd have to be away overnight.

MARY

And...?

CHARLES

Mary... I can't leave you...

She looks at the spider and conjures a swooning smile.

MARY

So long as I have my new drug, I'll be happy.

Charles laughs.

CHARLES

Well yeah, now that Charlotte's had a taste of the breast, she'll probably want to feed around the clock.

Mary's eyes widen.

MARY

Excellent!

CHARLES

Which means you're going to need a protein boost, mama. Let me make you a nice, big lunch before I head off, yeah?

He reaches for the PINK KNITTED BLANKET from the side table and wraps it around the spider's body.

Mary stares at it, perplexed.

MARY

Is this... Did I...

CHARLES

Admiring your handiwork?

He kisses her head and leaves the room, a spring in his step. Mary runs her fingers over the soft wool of the blanket.

The spider unlatches and searches for her other breast. It latches again, Mary flinching at the initial sting.

She looks down to the nipple the spider was feeding on. The skin is RED, swollen. Blood starts to appear.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - KITCHEN -- DAY

RAW STEAK sizzles in the pan, blood oozing out.

Nauseated, Mary watches him plate up from the kitchen table.

MARY

Can you at least cook mine a little
bit more?

Charles laughs.

CHARLES

I'm sorry... is that the vegetarian
telling the chef how to cook meat?

He presents it proudly.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

You don't want to cook the vitamins
out. Defeats the purpose!

She tries to cut it, but can't quite reach around the spider,
still sucking hungrily on her nipple.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Here, let me...

He cuts a chunk off, pink and bloody, and moves it towards
her mouth like an airplane, complete with sound effects.

Mary cracks a smile.

MARY

Charlie, I'm not a child!

CHARLES

I'm practicing! By the looks of
this little critter, she'll be
graduating to solids in no time!

Mary's face drops.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

You okay?

MARY
You said 'critter'...

Charles laughs.

CHARLES
It's what my dad used to call me.
'Little critter'. Which I much
preferred over 'bane of my
existence'...

The fork still hovering in front of her, Mary takes a deep breath and opens wide for the airplane.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - CARPORT -- DAY

Holding the swaddled spider in her arms, Mary watches Charles hang his suit bag in the back of the Land Rover.

She does her best to appear tranquil, grounded.

Charles closes the door and stands in front of her, his hands cupping her cheeks. He searches her eyes.

MARY
Stop worrying! We'll be fine.

CHARLES
I know. I just-

He exhales.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
I knew you'd get to this place. You
were born to be a mother, Mary.

She forces a smile.

MARY
So what time is the big interview?

Charles leans down to give the spider a kiss.

CHARLES
7 o'clock. He wants to do it over
dinner. Probably try to booze me
up, get me to spill some family
secrets.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out Mary's phone.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
You call me, okay? I'll have my
phone on loud all night.

He tucks it into her pocket but hovers, looking up at the
dark storm clouds gathering overhead.

MARY
We're fine! Plus, you'll be able to
see us on your creepy baby monitor
app, won't you?

Charles laughs and climbs into the car.

CHARLES
I'm not sure if "creepy" is the
right word, but yes, I will.

He closes the door and winds down the window.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
You're going to kill it.

Shocked, Mary's eyes widen.

MARY
What?

CHARLES
Being a solo mum for the night...
You're going to smash it!

MARY
Oh... yeah. Thanks.

She plasters on a smile.

CHARLES
I love you.

MARY
Love you too.

The car disappears down the driveway, Mary's smile fading the
farther away it gets.

She turns back to the house and notices an old boat at the
back of the carport.

Coils of ROPE hang from the walls.

Her body tenses at the sight.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - ENTRYWAY -- DAY

Mary closes the door behind her and leans against the wood.

She pulls the phone from her pocket, but there are no notifications. She opens messages, but it's empty. No call log, no apps. The only contact listed is Charles.

MARY

What the fuck...

Trying to remember Miranda's number, Mary presses CALL and waits anxiously for an answer.

MARY (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Please, please, please...

WOMAN

Hello?

Her face sinks.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Hello?!

MARY

Hi... Sorry... Wrong number.

WOMAN

Who is this?

MARY

It's... I don't know. Never mind.

She hangs up.

The spider rouses, a leg reaching out from the blankets.

MARY (CONT'D)

No, no, no... it's okay... go back to sleep!

She scans the space. Animal mounts on the walls stare down at her, their eyes replaced with the RED GLOW of cameras.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - SITTING ROOM -- DUSK

Mary sits on the rocking chair in front of the fireplace, the spider feasting on her nipple. She appears calm under the watchful eye of the camera on the mantelpiece.

The storm broken, rain PELTS the windows, wind lashing.

MARY
(singing)
*Rock-a-bye baby, on the treetops,
when the wind blows, the cradle
will rock.*

She looks across the room at a grandfather clock, the hands ticking towards 6:30pm. Nearing the end of her tether, she rests her head on the back of the chair and closes her eyes.

MARY (CONT'D)
*When the bough breaks, the cradle
will fall, and down will come baby,
cradle and all.*

The spider UNLATCHES.

Mary looks at it, holding her breath. It moves around on her lap before nestling into the pink blanket, drifting to sleep.

She stares into the fire, her face as calm as she can manage.

CUT TO:

The grandfather clock CHIMES 7 o'clock.

Dropping the facade, Mary stares into the red light of the camera.

MARY (CONT'D)
Have a good meeting, sweetheart.

She STANDS, the swaddled spider slipping off her lap onto the wood, blanket tangled around its legs.

It whimpers, reaching out for her, but she is already on her way out of the room, grabbing a candle and matches from the mantelpiece.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - BASEMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Fevered, Mary opens the door to the basement, the spider's cries escalating in the background.

She peers down the narrow staircase, a single lightbulb illuminating her path. Staring at the maze of cobwebs, she clenches her fist, her knuckles white, and descends.

At the bottom of the stairs, Mary scans the space. It is dim, dank, mould growing up the walls.

Spotting the FUSEBOX, she beelines towards it.

She pries open the rusted cover and stares at the switchboard, searching for the mains.

As she looks, something makes her JUMP.

She looks down to see a COCKROACH crawling over her bare foot. She KICKS it off, but sees that the floor is TEEMING with them.

On tip-toes, the colour draining from her face, she strikes a match and lights the candle.

She takes a deep breath and switches off the mains, the space PLUNGING INTO DARKNESS.

Mary's face flickers in the candlelight, her breath heaving with adrenaline. She RUNS towards the staircase but the candle extinguishes.

MARY

No, no, no...

She stops to strike another match, a cockroach finding its way onto her foot and up her leg.

She flicks it off, but the match extinguishes.

MARY (CONT'D)

Fuck!

Standing dead still, cockroaches attaching themselves to her, she strikes a match and lights the candle.

She moves slowly, guarding the flame with her trembling hand. Climbing the stairs, tears stream down her cheeks.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - ENTRYWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Mary SLAMS the door to the basement.

Frenzied, she FLICKS cockroaches off her.

The spider's distant chirps are relentless, the sound building with the thunder outside.

When the cockroaches are off, Mary looks up at the animal mounts on the walls, their eyes now dead.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Mary opens the cupboard underneath the kitchen sink.

Eyes wild, she scans the bottles of chemicals. Next to a large bottle of bleach, she finds a can of BUG SPRAY.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - SITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The chirps STOP when Mary enters the room.

She holds the candle to the rocking chair, the pink blanket hanging off it, empty. She scans the room, but the spider is nowhere to be seen.

Her breath heaving, Mary clenches the candle in one hand and the bug spray behind it in the other, her finger on the aerosol button.

MARY

Come to Mummy...

A FLASH OF LIGHTNING illuminates the room, revealing the spider on the ceiling above her, its legs outstretched.

When the CRACK of lightning sounds, the spider SCURRIES across the ceiling, catching Mary's attention.

She JUMPS, holding the bottle out.

Terrified, the spider curls itself into a ball on the floor in the corner of the room.

Mary hesitates. She wipes her face, the candle dangerously close to her skin, her hair.

She looks back to the spider, her face unfurling as she edges towards it. She kneels down.

The spider SHAKES, trying to make itself as small as possible. It whimpers.

Beat.

MARY (CONT'D)

You haven't heard lightning before,
have you...

She places the bug spray on the floor.

MARY (CONT'D)

I used to be petrified of it when I
was a little girl. I used to think
that the world was ending. I'd hide
in the bathroom like a dog. But as
I got older-

A LOUD KNOCK at the door breaks the moment. Mary JUMPS to her feet, swinging her body towards the sound, petrified.

The spider VANISHES up the wall.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DOORWAY -- NIGHT

Standing at the closed door, Mary startles as another round of knocks sound.

MICK
Mary? It's Mick. From the pub. You
alright in there?

She cracks open the door.

Soaking wet, Mick is illuminated by the high beams of his truck parked behind him.

MICK (CONT'D)
Quite a night, isn't it...

MARY
What are you doing here?

His eyes fall to Mary's chest, her cardigan open. She conceals herself quickly.

MARY (CONT'D)
Sorry.

MICK
Hey, no apology necessary. Nature
sure is exquisite.

Beat.

MICK (CONT'D)
I told Charlie boy I'd keep an eye
on you while he's in the big smoke.
I see the power's cut out?

MARY
It's fine, thanks.

MICK
Can't have you all the way out here
with no power. Especially with a
little one.

Beat.

Conceding, she steps aside.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - ENTRYWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Turning on his torch, Mick scans the space.

Mary stands behind him, eyes wide, alert.

MICK

Fuck me, haven't been in here for a while.

MARY

I thought you looked after the place...

MICK

Nah, not really. Not since Nanna Davenport left.

MARY

Charlotte?

Mick nods, making his way to the basement door.

She follows him.

MARY (CONT'D)

What happened to her?

MICK

No idea. The family kept it all pretty under wraps at the time.

MARY

Kept what under wraps?

MICK

Her leaving. No one really knows any details other than the name of the facility. I'd send a Christmas card each year and she'd always write back, bless her. They were always weirdly childlike, though. Big block letters. Last year was the first time she didn't reply.

MARY

Wait, last year? She's still alive?

MICK

She was. Not sure now. Like I said, the family likes to keep things private.

Mary's face drops.

MICK (CONT'D)
Anyway, better get to it.

He disappears down the narrow staircase.

Mary stands motionless, taking in the information.

The lights FLICKER as the power comes back on.

The animal mounts leer at her with their red eyes. She returns their gaze, seething.

MICK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
She likes her bouncer, then!

Mary startles.

MARY
What?

Mick points towards the sitting room, a baby bouncer just visible through the open doorway. Mary stares at the foreign object, perplexed.

Before she has a chance to stop him, Mick walks towards it.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - SITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Squatting in front of the bright plastic bouncer, Mick's face softens, glowing in the warm light of the fire.

Mary watches from the doorway. Her eyes zero in on a set of fire tools hanging on a brass stand.

MICK
She's got your eyes, hasn't she!

She wraps her fingers around the fire stoker.

MARY
Yeah...

Mick notices the bug spray on the floor. Mary clocks it.

MARY (CONT'D)
Cockroaches.

MICK
Oh, yeah, I remember them well. Be careful using that stuff around the baby though...

The spider reaches a leg up and pushes one of the overhead buttons. The tune of 'Itsy Bitsy Spider' plays.

MICK (CONT'D)

Ha! Look at that! You're very advanced, aren't you!

Mick sings along, hand movements and all.

MICK (CONT'D)

(to the spider)

Itsy-bitsy spider climbed up the water spout. Down came the rain and washed the spider out...

Mary's eyes widen.

MICK (CONT'D)

Out came the sun and dried up all the rain, and the Itsy-bitsy spider climbed-

MARY

You see it...

Mick stops.

She kneels down next to the bouncer, meeting Mick's gaze.

MARY (CONT'D)

I'm not insane. You see it, don't you...

MICK

See what?

She shakes her head.

MARY

Don't. I heard what you were singing...

MICK

The nursery rhyme? Jesus, my voice isn't that bad, is it?

Her eyes are wild.

MARY

Tell me what you see.

MICK

Mary, are you okay?

She GRABS Mick by the collar, her face close to his.

MARY
Fucking tell me!

A phone BUZZES.

Mary releases Mick, her eyes shooting up to the red light on the mantelpiece.

MICK
Charlie boy...

Rattled, he hands Mary her phone from the coffee table. She reluctantly takes it, staring at the screen.

Mick makes a quick exit. Mary watches him go, her trembling finger pressing ACCEPT.

MARY
(into the phone)
I was just thanking Mick for the gift...

CHARLES (V.O.)
Sorry, sweetheart?

MARY
The bouncer. I was just thanking him for the bouncer.

CHARLES (V.O.)
Wait, Mick's there?

Beat.

She looks at the red light.

MARY
He was... I just needed help with the power... it shut off in the storm.

CHARLES (V.O.)
Oh fuck, you had a blackout? That would've been so scary, sweetheart! Are you alright? Want me to drive back tonight?

Mary's gaze moves to the spider in the bouncer. She notices a COCKROACH crawling up one of the plastic legs.

MARY
Um, no... No, we're okay. You stay.

The spider lunges at it, biting into its body with a CRUNCH.

Mary holds her hand over her mouth, concealing a GASP.

CHARLES (V.O.)
You sure? You sound pretty
shaken...

Eyes glued to the spider, she shakes her head.

MARY
I'm just tired.

CHARLES (V.O.)
Okay, well, I'm proud of you, mama
bear. See you in the morning, okay?

She hangs up, hypnotised by the spider wrapping the cockroach in white silk.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - BEDROOM -- DAY

Mary wakes up in bed, dressed in a fresh nightgown.

A pot of coffee steams on the nightstand. Next to it sits her knitting needles, the metal GLINTING in the morning sun.

She picks them up, running her finger down the length of them, pushing the sharpened tips into her skin. A droplet of blood forms over the two small punctures.

Looking over to Charles' side of the bed, she spots his phone in the crumpled sheets. Listening to him cooing over the spider down the hall, she reaches for it tentatively.

Pushing the door closed quietly, she unlocks the phone, his home screen a selfie of a younger Mary pulling a face. She stares at it for a moment before a LOW BATTERY alert pops up.

MARY
Fuck.

She quickly searches for Miranda's name and presses CALL.

It almost rings out.

MIRANDA (V.O.)
Charles, hey, that address you sent
me doesn't exist, can you-

MARY
(whispers)
Miranda, it's me.
(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

Where the fuck have you been? When are you getting back from Chicago?

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Chicago?

MARY

I really need you here.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Mary, I've been waiting for you guys to send me the fucking address. It's honestly been like trying to track down where Harry Styles is vacationing. There's nothing online. I even got my cop friend to do a search and-

Mary takes the phone away from her ear.

MARY

I'm opening maps, hold on.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Do you know how to share location?

Just as she pushes the pin drop, the phone goes BLACK.

MARY

FUCK!

CHARLES (O.S.)

Mary? You okay?

MARY

I'm fine!

She quickly tucks the phone back in the sheets.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY/NURSERY -- CONTINUOUS

She follows the sound of Charles' voice to the nursery.

The spider lies on a play mat, enthralled by Charles. Its legs reach up as he tickles and kisses its body.

He notices Mary--

CHARLES

Good morning, sleepyhead!

But quickly returns his attention to the spider.

MARY
We need to talk.

He YANKS his finger away.

CHARLES
Ah, fuck!

MARY
What?

CHARLES
She must have a tooth coming
through...

MARY
Already? Charles, that's not
normal. You know that, right?

CHARLES
Of course I do. But Charlotte's not
normal.

He smiles at the spider proudly.

Mary edges into the room.

MARY
That's what I wanted to talk to you
about! Charles... you don't need to
pretend anymore, okay? I know. And
I think I'd be okay with it if we
could just talk about it, you know?
If you could be honest with me...

CHARLES
When have I not been honest? I've
been completely transparent
throughout this entire process,
Mary. Charlotte isn't normal. She's
never going to be normal. She's
extraordinary. She's the future of
our species, for God's sake!

MARY
Charles, she's fucking monstrous...

CHARLES
Don't say that, Mary. Can't you see
what we've created? Charlotte will
never get cancer, heart disease,
lung disease, the flu... you name
it. She will never get sick. This
baby is a fucking miracle!

MARY

That "baby" is an abomination!

Distressed, the spider CHIRPS.

CHARLES

Mary, please...

MARY

What, you're going to tell me to calm down? Feed me another tranquilizer then call me 'sleepyhead' when I wake up in a few days? Fuck you!

CHARLES

Mary, I don't know what's going on in your head right now, but...

MARY

Why didn't you tell me that Nanna Charlotte was still alive?

CHARLES

She's not. Who told you that?

MARY

What kind of "facility" was it, Charles?

Charles stands up and rummages through a toy basket.

Mary watches him intently.

MARY (CONT'D)

It was a psych hospital, wasn't it.

CHARLES

Have you seen that giraffe teething toy around?

MARY

Did you ever visit her? Huh? In the 30 years she's spent staring at a white wall, did you ever call?

He moves on to the chest of drawers. Mary appears at his side, SLAMMING it closed.

CHARLES

Mary, you know I don't like talking about her, so please don't fucking push me on this.

MARY
Well did you?

He rubs his eyes.

CHARLES
No.

MARY
Did your dad?

He shakes his head.

MARY (CONT'D)
Did anyone?

CHARLES
Why do you even care, Mary? You
didn't know the woman! What the
fuck is going on with you?

The spider starts to CHIRP, loud. Turning away from the
sound, Mary clenches her head like a vice.

MARY
That fucking noise! It never stops!

Charles watches her.

Beat.

MARY (CONT'D)
I don't want to end up like her,
Charles. I'm not going to end up
like her. I won't let it happen.

He gently places his hand on her back.

She tenses but allows it.

His voice is soft, tentative.

CHARLES
Trust me, Mary, you're not going to
end up like her, okay? You trust
me, don't you?

Turning back to Charles, she puts on a calm facade, looking
directly into his eyes.

MARY
I do. I'm sorry. I don't even know
what I'm saying... I'm just so
fucking exhausted.

Charles wraps his arms around her waist.

CHARLES

It's okay, sweetheart. I get it.

MARY

Do you want to go have a lie down with me?

CHARLES

Is that code?

Mary forces a laugh.

MARY

You wish.

She presses her lips against his but pulls away. They share a moment before he kisses her back.

Overcome with passion, he runs his hands down to her breasts.

She WINCES. He doesn't notice, cupping them TIGHT.

CHARLES

Your breasts really are exquisite.

Mary's eyes widen.

She puts on a playful smile and backs out of the room, unbuttoning her nightgown.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Mary drops her smile as soon as she is out of Charles' sight, her face tight, twisting with rage.

She pulls off her nightgown, bra and underpants, leaving them strewn on the hallway floor, a trail leading to the bedroom.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mary lies naked on the bed.

She peers down the hallway to see Charles walk out of the nursery. He notices her bra, her underpants, then Mary's naked body. He unbuckles his belt.

Crawling onto the bed, he runs his fingers down her back, kissing her body hungrily, his face buried in her skin.

Mary reaches over to the nightstand and grabs hold of her knitting needles, pulling them under the sheets.

He flips her over and climbs on top of her, stripping off the rest of his clothes.

CHARLES

Fuck I've missed this.

Mary WINCES. She turns away, trying to hide the pain.

Looking down the hallway, she sees the spider crawling towards the bedroom. It climbs the doorframe and settles on the ceiling above their heads.

Eyes closed, Charles pants, thrusting quickly on top of her.

Hands shaking, Mary pulls the needles from under the sheets, gripping them tight like a knife.

The spider lowers itself on a strand of silk, stopping just over Charles' bare back.

As he is about to climax, the spider descends onto Charles, its fangs BITING INTO HIS HEAD.

Mary's face is SPLASHED with blood.

She drops the needles. They CLINK onto the floorboards.

Rolling Charles' body off her, she leaps off the bed, staring down as the spider starts to cocoon his body. She zeroes in on the white silk, the precision of the spider's work.

Panting, her face loosens.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - BATHROOM -- DAY

Blood pools around the drain as Mary washes Charles off her.

When she turns off the shower, the house is SILENT.

She takes a deep breath and wraps a towel around herself, smoothing moisturizer into her face, down her neck, massaging it into her shoulders, loosening the muscles.

Her reflection begins to appear as the mirror defogs. She studies herself, refreshed, clean.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - STAIRCASE -- DUSK

Golden light fills the space.

Mary descends the staircase slowly, taking in the sight.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - SITTING ROOM -- DUSK

She opens the heavy drapes, the last rays of winter sun streaming in, bathing her.

A bottle of red wine in hand, she drops the needle onto a record, crackles morphing into blissful music.

Moving to the sound, she bites into a wheel of soft cheese, letting it ooze down her chin.

Her gaze flicks to the OFFICE DOOR.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - OFFICE -- DUSK

Mary stares at the display case. The jars of preserved human fetuses have transformed into jars of animal fetuses.

She takes a swig of wine.

MARY

Fuck you.

She turns to the bookcase, eyes wild. She smiles.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - SITTING ROOM -- NIGHT

The fire ROARS, feeding off a pile of eugenics books. The cover of a Charles Davenport book WARPS, the words 'Better Breeding' erupting in flames.

Watching from the rocking chair, Mary takes a long swig of wine, swallowing hard. She pulls the blue satin bag from her pocket, turning it over in her hand.

Pulling herself to standing, she walks to the fire. Leaning her head against the mantelpiece, she stares at it for a moment before letting the satin bag fall into the flames.

She closes her eyes.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY/MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Mary stumbles down the hall.

She stops at the portrait of Alexander. Shooting daggers with her eyes, she turns it over to face the wall.

Inching towards the master bedroom, she peers in at the bed. The spider is curled up in a ball next to Charles' cocooned, liquified corpse, sound asleep.

The most content she's ever seen it, she lingers in the doorway, taking in the sight.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - GRANDMOTHER'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Mary turns on the bedside lamp, soft light filling the space.

She looks over to the dressing table and spots a black and white photo of a woman wearing a silk scarf. She picks it up and studies her face, heavy with sadness.

Mary opens the wardrobe to find dozens and dozens of 1930s evening dresses. She runs her fingers over the fabrics, admiring the collection.

She pulls one out and holds it against her body, admiring herself in the mirror.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - BATHROOM -- DAY

Pouring BLEACH into the tub, Mary scrubs the bedsheets with her bare hands, the water red, thickened.

She pulls the plug and watches the red swirl down the drain.

She wrings the sheet out and fills the bath again, rubbing the sweat off her brow with her bleach-soaked hands.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - STAIRCASE/SITTING ROOM -- DAY

Walking down the stairs with a basket of wet sheets, Mary looks to the sitting room. Through the open doors, she sees something glinting in the light.

Curious, she puts the sheets down and moves towards it. A LARGE SPIDERWEB fills the room.

Careful not to walk through it, she edges in, running a finger along a delicate strand, admiring the handiwork. The patterns are intricate, perfectly constructed.

She looks over to the spider in awe, busy putting the final touches on a corner.

MARY

What's your name? Your real name, I mean.

The spider stops, looking back at her.

MARY (CONT'D)
You look like a... Gloria.

Beat.

A CHIRP breaks the moment. The spider scurries across the web towards Mary.

MARY (CONT'D)
Hey, hey... it's okay! Do you want something to eat?

She sits in the rocking chair, surrounded by webs, and unbuttons her nightgown.

The spider REARS BACK.

Terror in her eyes, Mary stands up. She studies it.

MARY (CONT'D)
You've got a taste for solids now,
don't you...

The spider edges closer, the chirps intensifying.

MARY (CONT'D)
It's alright... Mummy's going to go
and get you something to eat, okay?

She peels away, backing out of the room.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - BASEMENT -- DAY/NIGHT

An empty breastmilk bottle in hand, Mary slowly descends the narrow staircase, shaking. The single lightbulb above her head flickers.

Standing in the middle of the room, she takes a deep breath before lowering herself to her knees.

After a moment of stillness, a COCKROACH scurries towards her, then another, then another. Before long, they SWARM her, crawling up her bare legs.

Tears running down her cheeks, she guides them into the bottle with her trembling hand. When it's full, she screws the teat on and RUNS back up the stairs.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - SITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The spider perches in the middle of its web.

Mary approaches cautiously, holding out the bottle of cockroaches. The spider leans forward, impatient.

She hesitantly twists open the bottle, releasing the cockroaches onto the web. Horrified, she watches as the spider DEVOURS its meal.

She barely has a moment to breath before the spider looks back to her and CHIRPS.

MARY
You're *still* hungry?

The chirps get louder, longer. She grips her head, her palms pushing in on her ears.

Unable to block out the sound, she flees the room.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - BATHROOM -- DAY

Mary locks herself in the bathroom and turns the bath tap on full bore, drowning out the sound.

She clutches her breasts, leaking through her nightgown.

Pulling it up, she manually expresses breastmilk into the sink, wincing with every turn of her fingers. Bloody milk covers the porcelain.

Something catches her eye in the mirror. A MOUSE scurries out from under the bathtub, along the skirting board.

Without taking her eyes off it, she lowers her nightgown and reaches for the metal rubbish bin.

She moves towards the mouse, cowering in the corner, and TRAPS it under the bin, its tail stuck under the rim.

She grabs a pair of nail scissors from the drawer.

Hands shaking, she lowers herself onto all fours, slowly moving over to it.

She grips the mouse's tail and takes the bin off. It tries to run away but can't. Her eyes fill with tears.

MARY
I am so sorry.

She takes a deep breath and brings the scissors down onto its small body, impaling it. Blood SPLATTERS up the white tiles.

Scrambling for the toilet, she lifts the lid and VOMITS.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY -- DAY

Drained, Mary walks towards the staircase, holding the dead mouse by its tail. She leaves a trail of blood in her wake.

A CHIRP sounds from behind her. She whips her head around to see the spider in the hallway, rearing.

It disappears into the nursery.

Terrified, Mary follows.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - NURSERY -- NIGHT

Standing in the doorway, mouse dangling, she makes eye contact with the spider.

It LUNGES towards the mouse, dangling by her side, but she pulls it away.

MARY

Gloria, I am your mother. You
listen to me.

Taken aback, the spider cowers.

Maintaining eye contact, she holds up the mouse.

The spider waits.

MARY (CONT'D)

Good girl.

Mary NODS, dropping the mouse to the floorboards with a THUD.

She stands tall, watching the spider cocoon it and suck out its insides.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - GRANDMOTHER'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Collapsing into bed, Mary buries her head in the pillows, reveling in the silence.

She closes her eyes, her body sinking into the velvet.

The spider appears in the doorway. It quietly crawls up onto the bed, stopping just in front of Mary's face.

It CHIRPS. Mary JOLTS awake.

She FREEZES at the sight. It is RAVENOUS.

Collecting herself, she sits up and raises her finger, shooting it the mother's look. It cowers.

MARY
Are you actually hungry, Gloria? Or
are you just being a cunt?

The spider CHIRPS.

MARY (CONT'D)
Okay, okay...

She crawls out of bed.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - STAIRCASE -- NIGHT

Mary's feet wobble as she descends the stairs.

Stopping halfway down, she looks up at the hunting equipment displayed on the wall. She pulls down a shotgun and turns it over in her hands.

It CLICKS open. It's loaded.

MARY
What the fuck...

She looks back at the wall of guns.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - GARDEN -- NIGHT

Torchlight cuts through the darkness, searching the garden.

Gripping the shotgun, Mary flinches with every sound she hears in the wind. Barefoot, she shivers in the cold air.

The light falls on a RABBIT in the clearing, eyes glowing. Stunned, it stays still. They stare at one another.

Mary takes a deep breath and raises the gun, taking aim. Hands shaking, she hesitates, unable to pull the trigger.

The rabbit BOUNDS into the garden. She slumps to the ground, casting the gun aside. She buries her head in her hands.

She JUMPS up as something rubs against her. Her body relaxes when she sees a CAT, a pink collar around its neck.

MARY

Hey... you gave me a fright!

Purring, the cat rubs against her leg, coaxing Mary back to the ground. Comforted, she lets it cuddle into her lap.

MARY (CONT'D)

Aren't you a friendly kitty! What's your name?

She looks at its collar.

MARY (CONT'D)

Daisy. That's a pretty name. I have a cat at home. I miss her.

CHIRPS bleed into the garden. Spooked, the cat looks towards the house.

Tears in her eyes, Mary brings the cat close to her body, cuddling it tight.

MARY (CONT'D)

It's okay...

She holds her hand over its ears, pressing its face into her chest as the chirps get louder.

She squeezes her eyes closed.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY/GRANDMOTHER'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Her breath shallow, eyes red, Mary is beyond exhausted.

Hardly able to keep herself upright, she moves down the hallway holding the DEAD CAT by its back legs.

Shaking, cheeks stained with tears, she stands in the doorway, staring down at the spider. It rears back.

Mary holds up her finger. The spider waits.

She NODS, but averts her gaze before the spider rips the cat out of her hand.

Broken, Mary crawls into bed, burying herself, but as soon as her head hits the pillow, the chirps start again. They're louder, more desperate than ever.

Mary SCREAMS into the pillow in frustration.

Sitting up, she sees that it hasn't touched the cat.

MARY

Are you fucking kidding me?

The spider sniffs the cat but pushes it away. Legs reaching up into the air, it CHIRPS. The sound is intolerable.

MARY (CONT'D)

I made you dinner now eat it!

The spider moves closer, rearing its legs.

They lock eyes.

MARY (CONT'D)

Okay fine, you want a real meal?
Mummy will go out and get you a
real fucking meal.

Incensed, she swings her legs off the bed.

CUT TO:

Sitting at the dresser in one of Charlotte's black dresses, Mary looks at her manicured reflection, face plastered with makeup, hair impeccable.

The spider sits on the bed behind her, staring at her as she applies a thick coat of red lipstick.

Pouring a deep glass of red wine, she takes a swig and drapes the long silk scarf around her neck.

It runs a red line down her back.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY -- NIGHT

Wobbly in her heels, Mary makes her way down the gravel driveway towards the front gate.

She turns back to the carport, the ropes hanging on the wall behind the boat now GONE.

EXT. PUB - NIGHT

Sweaty and delirious, Mary arrives at the pub.

The same gaggle of men LEER at her. She shoots Mick a quick smile before disappearing inside.

He peels away from the group and follows her in.

INT. PUB - CONTINUOUS

Mary perches uncomfortably on a barstool.

She pulls out a compact from her handbag, anxiously powdering her nose and checking her teeth for lipstick.

Mick appears behind the bar, startling her. She shoves the makeup back into her bag.

MICK

Well you look a hell of a lot
better than the last time I saw
you.

Mary buries her head in her hands, feigning embarrassment. She reaches her hand across the bar and rests it on Mick's.

His eyes widen with her touch.

MARY

Mick, I am so sorry about the other
night. My hormones were-

MICK

Say no more, I beg you.

They share a smile.

Beat.

Mick pulls his hand back.

MICK (CONT'D)

Charlie boy know you're here?

Mary smooths her hair back and adjusts her dress, her swollen breasts spilling out.

MARY

Oh, he's still in the city.

MICK

What about the baby?

MARY

Dead to the world.

She pulls out her phone, flashing it quickly.

MARY (CONT'D)

Don't worry, the baby monitor's
connected to my phone. Pretty cool,
huh?

Reluctant, Mick studies her.

MARY (CONT'D)
Oh... you never popped down to the
pub after your kids fell asleep?

MICK
Touché.

A smile creeping across his face, he pours two bourbons,
sliding one across to her.

He raises his glass to drink but Mary stops him.

MARY
Eye contact! You don't want seven
years bad sex, do you?

Speechless, Mick clinks her glass.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - ENTRYWAY -- NIGHT

Falling over each other, Mary leads Mick into the house.

She steals into the sitting room and turns on the record
player, cranking the volume.

MICK
Wait... won't that wake the baby?

Mary returns to Mick's side, tracing a line down the buttons
of his shirt with her finger.

MARY
Oh, she sleeps through anything. We
can be as loud as we want.

She grabs the buckle of his belt, leading him to the stairs.

Lust-drunk, he follows.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mary PUSHES Mick onto the bed, pulling her dress over her
head. She undoes her bra.

Mick scans the room, sniffing. His face twists.

MICK
Can you smell that?

MARY

No?

MICK

Really? It smells like something's
died in here...

He tries to get up but she straddles him.

MARY

I've been hearing squirrels in the
roof at night. Maybe one died.

MICK

Smells like a mass murder to me.
Want me to get rid of them?

Mary looks into his eyes.

MARY

I want you to shut up so I can suck
your dick. Is that okay?

Cock-struck, he nods.

She slides off him and drops to her knees.

Mick watches in awe as she leans forward.

Eyes closed, she reaches under the bed and pulls out a length
of ROPE, running it over her breasts.

His eyes widen.

MICK

You're a bit of a firecracker,
aren't you...

MARY

You have no idea.

CUT TO:

Naked, legs splayed, Mick stands on the four-poster bed, tied
up in the middle of what looks like a spider web.

Mary tightens the final Shibari knot. Her head close to
Mick's body, he stares down at her, mesmerised.

She steps back and admires her handiwork.

MARY (CONT'D)

Now, let me go and slip into
something a little more
comfortable...

MICK

Don't be long. Not polite to keep a
man waiting.

She smiles.

MARY

I wouldn't dream of it.

She lingers at the door, shooting him one last look.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - GRANDMOTHER'S BEDROOM/HALLWAY -- NIGHT

The room completely upturned, the spider REARS back on the
bed as soon as Mary opens the door. It CHIRPS.

MARY

Come on, baby. Dinnertime. I've
made you your favourite...

The spider pushes through the doorway and follows Mary down
the hall to the master bedroom door.

Her hand on the doorknob, she hesitates for a moment, taking
a deep breath. She opens it, watching from the doorway as the
spider enters the room.

Mick turns around.

MICK

What the fuck...

He tries to break free but can't.

MICK (CONT'D)

Mary, what the fuck is this?!

The spider stands in front of Mick and looks back to the
doorway, locking eyes with Mary.

She NODS and the spider LUNGES at him.

Its fangs STAB his face, blood spraying everywhere.

Keeping the door ajar, Mary walks back down the hallway, the
spider cocooning Mick alive.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - GRANDMOTHER'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Mary stares at her reflection in the dressing table mirror.

The screams blend with the music from downstairs.

Hands shaking and covered in blood, she opens the top drawer to find an old carton of cigarettes. She pulls one out and lights it.

She inhales deeply, reveling in it.

Looking back at the drawer, she notices a packet of fake acrylic nails. Her eyes light up.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - SITTING ROOM -- DAY

Her fingernails long, red and pointed, Mary sits at her loom working on a new piece of weaving.

Swigging wine from the bottle and smoking a cigarette, she unravels Mick's blue knitted jumper, using the yarn to create a beautiful seascape.

The spider happily works behind her, the room now a giant, intricate web.

The music stopping, Mary walks over to the record player, flipping the record and dropping the pin back on.

She takes a deep drag of her cigarette and looks to the web, the white silk shimmering in the late afternoon sun.

She smiles and closes her eyes, moving her body to the music.

The spider CHIRPS.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - GRANDMOTHER'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Sitting at the dressing table in another black dress, Mary wraps the red silk scarf around her neck.

The spider sits on the floor at her feet, looking up at its mother getting ready. She applies a thick coat of lipstick.

MARY

What do you think, Gloria? Is your
mum a cool mum?

She smiles down at the spider and plants a kiss on top of its head, leaving a red lip print.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Having mastered the heels, Mary walks down the street with confidence. Turning the corner, she stops dead in her tracks.

MARY

Fuck.

A police car is parked outside the pub. Officers question the gaggle of men, their faces long, contorted with worry.

Before she is spotted, Mary slips back around the corner, her back pressed against the wall, breath fast.

She takes a deep breath, scrunching over herself.

Slipping off her heels, she BOLTS back down the street.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - ENTRYWAY -- NIGHT

Pushed beyond exertion, Mary's breath HEAVES. She turns the deadlock and presses her back against the wood.

The spider ROUSES, the chirps louder than ever. They're relentless; one constant sound with no pause for breath.

She grips her breasts, the fabric of her dress soaked through with milk. She slides down the door to sitting.

On all-fours, she pulls out an aching breast and expresses milk onto the floor with her fingers.

She MOANS with pain.

Her desperate eyes look up at the hunting equipment lining the wall of the staircase.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - STAIRCASE -- CONTINUOUS

Mary runs her fingers over the old muscats, crossbows and hunting knives.

Hands shaking, she pulls down a knife in a leather sheath.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - NURSERY -- CONTINUOUS

She stands in the doorway, knife hanging at her side. Shattered, she can hardly hold its weight.

She idles over to the rocket nightlight and turns it on, the ceiling covered in stars.

The spider stops chirping at the sight of Mary, looking up at her expectantly.

She holds out her hands, nothing to offer.

MARY
I'm not a very good mum, am I?

Tears in her eyes, she slides the knife out of the sheath.

MARY (CONT'D)
I want to be.

She moves towards the spider, each step laboured.

MARY (CONT'D)
I so desperately want to be.

She wipes her face, the knife dangerously close to slicing her skin.

She kneels in front of it, face to face.

Beat.

MARY (CONT'D)
Is it dinner time, baby?

Choking back tears, she meets the spider's gaze and NODS.

The spider remains still, quiet.

MARY (CONT'D)
You have eight fucking eyes! Can't
you see me nodding?!

It doesn't move.

Desperate, she holds the knife to her wrist.

MARY (CONT'D)
Fine! You want Mummy to chop up
your dinner for you?!

The spider CHIRPS, distressed.

She presses the blade into her skin, blood pooling.

A LOUD KNOCK at the front door stops her.

She shoots a desperate look at the spider.

MARY (CONT'D)
Get in the wardrobe. Now.

She pushes it in.

MARY (CONT'D)
Be a good girl and stay in here
until mummy comes back, okay? Can
you do that for me, Gloria?

The knocks turn into POUNDING.

MARY (CONT'D)
Mummy's coming back. I promise.

She closes the wardrobe and slides a chair in front of it.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - STAIRCASE/ENTRYWAY -- NIGHT

Blood running down her arm, the knife has been replaced with
Mary's knitting needles.

Delirious, she edges towards the door.

MARY
Hello?

ALEXANDER
Mary, it's me! Let me in.

Her face drains.

Shoving the knitting needles down her top, she unlocks the
door, opening it slowly.

Alexander goes to greet her but sees her blood-soaked arm.

ALEXANDER (CONT'D)
Fuck, Mary!

He rips off his jumper and wraps it around the wound, tight.

ALEXANDER (CONT'D)
Here, sit, sit...

Guiding her to a chair, he tries to sit her down but she
slips out of his grasp.

MARY
I'm fine... I was just cooking
and...

ALEXANDER
(calling out)
Charles!

MARY
He's not here.

Confused, Alexander studies her.

ALEXANDER
He's not here?

MARY
Yeah, he's in the city for that New York Times thing... the Birthright profile. I said he could go; it's such an amazing opportunity and-

ALEXANDER
His car is out front...

MARY
I drove him to the station. He didn't want to leave me without a car, bless him.

ALEXANDER
Mary, back up... I'm confused. That was a couple of weeks ago. I assumed he's been here in baby land...

Mary's knees buckle, her face completely drained of colour.

Alexander watches her.

ALEXANDER (CONT'D)
Where's the baby?

He moves past her, looking up the staircase.

MARY
She's asleep.

ALEXANDER
I don't mind.

MARY
I don't want to wake her.

ALEXANDER
I'll be quiet.

They stare each other down.

He sets off up the stairs. Mary follows.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - NURSERY -- NIGHT

Standing in the doorway, Mary watches Alexander walk across the room to the crib, the pink blanket draped across it, covering the slats.

She looks over to the wardrobe but the door is open, the chair on the ground.

She scans the walls, the ceiling, but all she can see is the little blue stars.

Looking to the rocket nightlight, she reaches for it, gripping it tight.

As Alexander leans down into the crib, she RIPS the nightlight from the socket, plunging the room into darkness.

ALEXANDER

What the fu-

There is a CRASH, then a THUD as his body hits the ground.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - SITTING ROOM -- NIGHT

Alexander wakes in the middle of the giant spider web, his body cocooned. Only his head remains uncovered.

Mary watches him from the rocking chair, her arm properly bandaged. She holds her knitting needles.

As he comes to, he looks down at his body. He tries to free himself but can't.

MARY

Hey, sleepyhead.

Alexander shoots her a look.

ALEXANDER

What?

MARY

Oh... that's what Charles used to call me after he'd fed me those pills from your candy shop... you know... the ones to knock me out for days at a time?

He shakes his head.

ALEXANDER

Mary... you're clearly unwell. Why don't you let me down and we can talk, yeah? Get Charles on the phone and figure out a plan?

Mary stands, eyes wild.

The spider emerges from a higher web, stretching its legs.

MARY

I'd love to talk, actually. I have so many burning questions, you know?

Alexander turns on the charm.

ALEXANDER

I'm not going anywhere, so shoot!

MARY

Well before I start, I should probably let you know that your son is dead.

His face drops.

ALEXANDER

You're lying.

She pulls his wedding ring from her pocket and holds it up.

ALEXANDER (CONT'D)

He probably took it off to go to the city. You know what boys are like...

She flicks it across the room.

MARY

Whatever. Believe me, don't believe me, it really doesn't matter.

Alexander swallows, hard.

ALEXANDER

What do you want, Mary? Name your price and I'll make it happen. Just, please, please leave my son and my granddaughter out of it. They haven't done anything to deserve this...

MARY

Oh Charles did everything to deserve this, but you're right - Gloria deserves a good life. She's the future of our species, you know.

Changing tack, Alexander stares her down.

ALEXANDER

That baby isn't staying here. You know that, don't you?

MARY

We're not planning on staying here. It's not really to our taste.

ALEXANDER

I don't think you understand what I'm saying...

MARY

I don't?

Mary moves closer, face to face with Alexander.

His words are full of venom.

ALEXANDER

You're an unfit mother.

MARY

Just like yours?

Alexander SPITS in her face.

She smiles.

The spider hovers over him, rearing back.

Mary leans forward and plants a soft kiss on Alexander's cheek.

She pulls back and NODS. The spider BITES his head, blood SPRAYING Mary's face.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - GRANDMOTHER'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Mary closes the door behind her, but Alexander's screams are inescapable.

Shaking, she opens the top drawer of the dresser and pulls a cigarette out of the carton. She strikes a match and lights it, taking a deep drag.

She closes her eyes, exhaling slowly.

A loud CRASH breaks her trance.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - STAIRCASE/ENTRYWAY -- NIGHT

Standing at the top of the stairs, she sees Alexander BURST through the sitting room door, dripping in blood.

The spider follows, rearing back angrily.

He clenches the PEN KNIFE, holding it out in front of him.

Mary's face sinks.

MARY
(whispers)
No...

She looks up to the wall of hunting equipment and pulls down a gun. She cocks it open but it's not loaded. She tries another but it's empty too.

She stares down at the spider, slowly edging towards him.

When it gets close enough, Alexander SWINGS the knife at its leg, severing it.

MARY (CONT'D)
NO!

The spider WAILS.

Alexander crawls towards the door.

Rage building, Mary RUNS down the stairs and LUNGES at him, landing on his back.

Flat on the floor, she DIGS her long, red fingernails DEEP into his cheeks, pulling the flesh back.

MARY (CONT'D)
No one touches my baby, you hear
me? NO ONE!

Desperate, Alexander nods, blood gushing from his face.

ALEXANDER
I'm sorry... I'm sorry!

With a primal scream, Mary SLAMS Alexander's head against the tiles with a CRACK.

Silence.

She turns back to the spider and pulls her fingernails out of Alexander's face, flicking chunks of flesh off.

Kneeling by its side, Mary examines the cut. She unwraps the bandage from her arm and transfers it to the spider's leg, wrapping it tight.

It SQUEALS in agony.

Stroking its head, she tries to comfort it.

Wrapping its legs tight around its body, the spider suddenly looks small, defenseless.

A faint siren WHIRS in the distance.

MARY

No, no, no...

She runs to the window, faint red and blue lights just visible through the trees.

MARY (CONT'D)

Baby... we have to go.

Mary disappears for a moment, returning with the Moses basket and pink knitted blanket. She carefully places the spider into the basket and covers it with the blanket.

There's a heavy POUNDING at the door.

Breath heaving, she pokes her head under the blanket, holding her finger to her lips.

MARY (CONT'D)

Be quiet for mummy, okay?

She pulls the needles from her pocket.

MIRANDA (O.S.)

MARY!

She whips her head around to the sound.

MIRANDA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Mary, let me in!

Mary runs to the door and swings it open. She stares at Miranda in disbelief, falling into her arms.

Miranda holds her tight, squeezing her eyes closed.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
Oh my fucking God, Mary. Oh my
fucking God.

MARY
You found us.

MIRANDA
I'll always find you, Mary.

Opening her eyes, she sees Alexander's mutilated body on the floor and releases Mary, backing out of the doorway.

She turns and RUNS to her car.

MARY
Miranda! No!

After a moment, she returns holding a JERRY CAN.

They lock eyes.

MIRANDA
Get the baby.

The lights getting brighter, the sirens louder, Mary RUNS back into the house, returning with the Moses basket.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
Get her into the car.

Mary hesitates.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
NOW!

She runs.

INT. COUNTRY ROAD - MIRANDA'S CAR -- NIGHT

Miranda speeds down the winding road. Mary sits in the passenger seat, Moses basket on her lap.

Behind them, the country house ERUPTS IN FLAMES.

POLICE CARS appear in the distance, speeding towards them.

MIRANDA
Just act normal, okay?

MARY

When have I ever not acted normal?

A smile spreads across their faces.

Their hands meet on the center console, fingers wrapping around one another's, tight.

Mary closes her eyes.

Red and blue lights FILL the windscreen, blinding them.

CUT TO BLACK.