

FEBRUARY

by Osgood Perkins

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CLICK CLACK. CLICK CLACK. CLICK CLACK.

The sound of heeled shoes on hard floor, chattering like overlapping voices.

EXT. WINTER LANDSCAPE - DAWN

A SLOW PANORAMIC VIEW of a field of white, gradually revealing a rural New England landscape in the dead of winter, stark and barren.

Moving past a line of dark and gnarled trees, passing into a clearing, moving in closer and coming to rest on a tight cluster of handsome brick buildings. A campus.

THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Still asleep in the first pale light of morning. No sign of anyone moving around anywhere.

But still, the CLICK CLACK of heeled shoes. Closer now.

INT. THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL, VARIOUS AREAS - SAME

We tour the school in a series of static tableaux, the early morning sun slowly crawling up the walls.

The CAFETERIA. A hundred chairs pushed in behind long tables. Empty.

The GIRL'S BATHROOM. Dry white sink basins. A row of shower heads sticking out of a tile wall. Empty.

A CORRIDOR. The polished floor reflecting the first light of morning. Empty.

No sign of anyone moving around anywhere.

But still, the CLICK CLACK of heeled shoes. Closer now.

INT. KAT'S DORM ROOM - SAME

Sunlight comes in through the windows, warming the peacefully sleeping face of KAT (13).

She is still very much a child, her features soft and rounded, her amber-gold hair fine like an angel's, a well-worn teddy bear suffocated into the crook of her elbow.

The CLICK CLACK of heeled shoes. Now coming into the room.

A DARK FIGURE enters and moves between Kat and the sunlight, casting a grainy shadow on her sleeping face.

Feeling this presence, Kat stirs and wakes, squinting, a sleepy smile spreading across her sleepy face.

KAT
(groggy)
Daddy...

So this must be her FATHER, clouding the edge of the frame. A soft, dark shape.

KAT
... you came early.

Rubbing sleep from her eyes, she doesn't look up at his face.

She doesn't see him.

And neither do we.

EXT. MAIN PATH - DAWN (CONTINUOUS)

Kat and her father walk along the twisting brick path.

CLICK CLACK CLICK CLACK.

It's bright out here and Kat squints up at the slate white sky overhead.

We stay with Kat as they walk, the strong presence of her Father only suggested by the hem of his winter coat. In his gloved hand he carries a small, square suitcase.

We can't see his head.

CLICK CLACK CLICK CLACK.

KAT
But, Daddy... where's the car?

She squints into the distance. And now we are in

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAWN (CONTINUOUS)

An object has been oddly placed in the center of the otherwise endlessly vacant parking lot, too far away to make out clearly, a faint HISSING sound coming out from under it.

Kat and her father walk toward it, getting closer.

We can see now that the object is darkly metallic, its cubist sides gleaming like something that might have fallen from space. A charred meteor, maybe, or a collapsed satellite.

The twisted shape HISSES.

Kat squints at it as she draws closer.

Seeing now that it is clearly a DEMOLISHED AUTOMOBILE, the front grill folded inward like a broken mouth, the windshield glass crazed in chalky spiderweb pattern.

Kat squints at it as she draws closer.

Seeing now that there is a SLOUCHED FIGURE in the passenger seat, its head tilted at an unnatural angle, the details of its face obscured by the cracked windshield glass.

KAT
(suddenly unsure)
Mommy...?

Kat presses down on her heels, not wanting to get any closer.

She stops walking. Her father stops walking.

CLICK. CLACK.

Kat pulls her father's gloved hand close to her cheek, looking up into his face, seeing him.

And then we see him, too.

His face isn't right.

It's charcoal black and slick, dripping with what looks like the white of an egg, his black mouth hinged open like a terrible puppet.

Kat opens her mouth to scream, but before the sound can --

HARD CUT TO

The face of an alarm clock as it clicks ahead to 5:00 AM.

And we are back in

INT. KAT'S DORM ROOM - PREDAWN

It's dark in here. Pale blue moonlight colors a high window.

Kat is awake and sitting on the edge of her bed, her toes just barely touching the floor.

She's listening to the darkness, her eyes shifting. A radiator grill on the floor by the wall is quietly HISSING.

Kat looks across the room to where her ROOMMATE is sleeping soundly, her head turned away. A nest of hair.

Kat eases herself up off of the bed and takes a few tentative steps into the center of the room, stopping there.

She stands there, listening to the HISS of the radiator.

She crosses to her desk where a calendar is pinned up. She reaches for a pen.

Her hand is shaking a little when she lifts the pen up to a square on the calendar that reads: MOM AND DAD HERE, the words framed by a carefully-drawn heart.

Steadying her left hand with the right, she presses the pen to the calendar, marking the square with a shaky 'X'.

CUT TO

INT. ROSE'S DORM ROOM - DAWN

A cigarette burns in an ashtray.

Syrupy HEAVY METAL plays low on a small, dusty boombox. One of the speakers is blown and it HISSES a little.

Slender fingers reach for the cigarette, tapping the ash loose and bringing it up to the face of

ROSE (17), darkly pretty with black hair and green eyes.

She takes a drag from her cigarette, expertly, like someone who acts 10 years older than she is, and does it well.

ROSE
(hushed voice)
You really think I should tell
him?

LIZZY (17, maybe half as cool) sits with Rose on her bed by a cracked-open window. They've probably been sitting like this for hours, exhaling smoke out into the cold night air.

LIZZY
(hushed voice)
Rose! Of course you have'ta tell
him. It's like half his. Half his
problem anyway.

ROSE
No it isn't. Not really.

LIZZY
Well it should be.
(then)
He got you into this... *situation*
in the first place. He knew what
he was doing...

ROSE
Yeah and like I didn't? He was
doing it to me!
(then)
And I was liking it...

They laugh a little.

ROSE
Shut up. It's so not funny.
(then)
Besides, it's only been four
days. I could still get it.

Rose takes a slow drag from her cigarette, looking out the window at nothing.

LIZZY
You gonna tell your parents when
you see them?

ROSE
Yeah, right. So they can kill me?
(then)
I actually think my dad would
actually kill me. Just to prove a
point.

LIZZY
(she totally understands)
Yeah.

INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM - SOMETIME LATER

Rose stands at the long horizontal mirror over a row of sinks, her head tilted slightly as she brushes her teeth, staring off at nothing, deep in thought.

CUT TO BLACK

And then

Superimpose title:

ROSE

INT. CORRIDOR, SPENCER HOUSE - MORNING

It's still very early and everyone else is still asleep.

Rose pads noiselessly down the hall in her bare feet, passing open doors to darkened dorm rooms, slowing a little when she passes the Dorm Parent's room.

Looking in, she sees the DORM PARENT asleep under a thick quilt that rises and falls with breath.

Rose tiptoes ahead, making no sound, passing a pay phone on the wall. A sign is posted on the wall next to it: IF SOMEONE IS WAITING PLEASE LIMIT YOUR CALL TO 10 MINUTES.

And just as she --

BBBBBBRRRRRRRIIIIIIIIIINNNNNNNGGGGGGGG

It RINGS loudly, stopping her cold.

ROSE
(whispers to herself)
Shit.

Turning around quickly, she picks up the receiver before it has a chance to ring again.

ROSE
(into phone)
Hello?

But there is only the warm HUM of the connection on the other end of the line.

ROSE
(into phone)
Hello? Hello...?

She puts the receiver back on the cradle and walks away.

INT. CORRIDOR - SOMETIME LATER

Now dressed in a puffy black snow jacket, Rose steps into a pair of snow boots, pulling on a pair of mittens.

EXT. SPENCER HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The front door to the dormitory building is painted a faded red. It opens from the inside and Rose comes out, clomping down the steps in her snow boots and walking out of frame.

We linger a moment, HOLDING on the faded red door.

EXT. THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL CAMPUS - EARLY MORNING

Rose walks the main path between the buildings, her visible breath trailing out from under the hood of her puffy black snow jacket.

The prim and well-kept campus unfolds in front of her as she goes along, not too many other souls out and about at this early hour in the crisp cold.

Approaching from the other direction is a MAN in a long dark coat, a suitcase at his side. Seeing him, Rose can't help but smile and wave a little.

ROSE

Good morning, Father Brian.

FATHER BRIAN (60s) smiles as he slows to greet her on the path. He is lean and quite tall, his neck a little bowed from a life of having to look down so much.

FATHER BRIAN

Good morning, Rosemary. I see you are up and around early this morning.

(smiling, he gets it)

Or maybe it's just that you haven't yet gone to bed.

ROSE

Ha. No. I just haven't been feeling too great, gonna go get a Tylenol from Ms. Drake.

FATHER BRIAN

Very good.

ROSE

(his suitcase)

You getting the heck outta here, Father Brian?

FATHER BRIAN

Yes, well, regrettably I'll be missing all of your parents.

ROSE

Seems like a kinda well-timed escape, if you ask me.

Father Brian smiles kindly. He doesn't mind that the girls think he's cool. He figures it can only help.

FATHER BRIAN

Yes, well. I have a taxi waiting.
I will see you next week. And you
take good care of yourself
between now and then.

ROSE

I always do.

FATHER BRIAN

Very good.

EXT. MYRTLE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Rose approaches a small, narrow Victorian house, clomping up the short steps in her snow boots.

INT. INFIRMARY - SOMETIME LATER

The walls are hung with medical illustrations of the central nervous system, a cross-section of the human eye, etc.

Rose is sitting on a narrow cot with a thermometer in her mouth, her face pinched as if in pain.

MS. PRESCOTT (50s) slides the thermometer from her mouth while MS. DRAKE (50s) busies herself at a nearby sink.

Suspected to be incestuous lesbians by the students who refer to them as "The Sisters", Ms. Prescott and Ms. Drake share an uncanny resemblance: tightly permed hair, large glasses and heavy felt smock dresses over thick, mossy cable sweaters.

MS. PRESCOTT

(shakes out thermometer)
Headache, you say?

ROSE

Yeah. And my throat kinda hurts
when I swallow.

MS. PRESCOTT

You poor thing.
(then)
It would be a shame to be sick
over the break.

ROSE

I know.

She coughs into her hand, wincing a little for effect.

Ms. Drake steps over and hands Rose a paper cup of water and an aspirin.

MS. DRAKE
Here you are, dear.

MS. PRESCOTT
Thank you, Ms. Drake.

Rose pops the aspirin and sips the water, swallowing with a grimace, peeking up at Ms. Prescott to make sure she saw it.

INT. CAFETERIA - MORNING

Tables filled with UNIFORMED GIRLS with still-wet hair, trays in front of them, their heads bowed, their hands together.

THE GIRLS
(in unison)
... and bless this meal that we
are about to receive and for
which we are truly grateful...

CUT AHEAD TO

The sudden, boisterous CHATTER of the girls eating breakfast, their voices overlapping like mad birds, their open mouths smiling, white teeth flashing.

Rose is among them, pushing her food around on her plate.

INT. AUDITORIUM - MORNING

The headmaster MR. GORDON (45, tweedy, salt and pepper hair, attractive) addresses the student body.

He steps around on the stage, his heeled shoes CLICK CLACKING on the thick-paneled wood flooring.

MR. GORDON
Of course everyone is excited to
have their parents come and tour
the classrooms and to share your
lives here at Bramford with
them...

General EXCITED MURMURING among the students.

MR. GORDON

(slightly louder)

But that doesn't mean that anything changes when it comes to conduct expectations. If anything, conduct is more important today than on any other day because you are all here representing Bramford. That means you are representing all of the young women who have been here before you and all the young women that will follow you once you've moved on. So you need to conduct yourselves in a manner that past generations would approve of and that future generations will aspire to.

(then)

Sound good?

In among the other girls, Rose chimes in:

STUDENT BODY

(in unison, flat)

Sounds good, Mr. Gordon.

MR. GORDON

And for those of you who have not picked up your school portraits you need to do that before you leave today... and also don't forget to check out your cell phones...

More general EXCITED MURMURING among the students.

MR. GORDON

All right. And if I don't see before you leave, have a great week and we will see you back here on the 22nd.

(indicating off stage)

Ms. Telikson, do you have any other announcements?

EXT. MAIN GATE - DAY

A line of impressive station wagons and SUVs roll through the main gate and into a long circular driveway in front of the school.

The sky over the horizon churns with dark clouds and the low RUMBLE of thunder, beating at the air like heavy wings.

EXT. MAIN PATH - DAY

From the spire of the old library building we look down onto the path that's crawling with students and their parents, moving like cells on a microscope glass.

FINDING KAT in among them, walking the path in the wrong direction, against the tide of students and their parents.

Kat scans the crowd as it trickles past, not looking up into their faces, but only at the fronts of their coats, a sea of cinched buttons and knotted scarves.

EXT. MAIN GATE - CONTINUOUS

Kat comes out to the main gate and cranes her head to look down the country road that leads up to the school. One or two late-arriving cars are slowly rolling in.

Kat scans the rolled-up car windows as they approach, all of them reflecting the barren, complicated branches of the winter trees overhead.

Her face pulled tight with cold, her eyes shifting, uneasy.

EXT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

Following Rose as she makes her way toward the building, a stack of books tucked under her arm. A few small clusters of students and their parents stand around in the cold.

A light snow is falling and Rose has put up her jacket hood. Her eyes down, she heads for the stairs.

LIZZY (O.S.)

Rose!

Rose turns, slipping back her hood.

Lizzy stands there with her WOODEN PARENTS in their expensive coats, and with no plans to make any introductions.

LIZZY

Where you going?

ROSE

Oh, I just... was gonna check out some of the performance.

LIZZY

You okay?

ROSE

Yeah. Of course.

LIZZY

Are your parents here?

ROSE

Yeah. They're waiting so I
better...

LIZZY

Okay. I'll see you next week,
okay?

Lizzy opens her eyes wide, trying to communicate something to
without her parents' knowledge. Rose smiles back at her.

INT. AUDITORIUM STAGE - SOMETIME LATER

Rose slips in at the back of the darkened auditorium, careful
to let the door CLUNK softly behind her. Looking up at the
stage, she sees

KAT

Plucking at a harp and singing The Beatles' "She's Leaving
Home", her upturned face pale in the stage lighting, her
voice meek and reedy.

KAT

(sings)

Wednesday morning at five o'clock
as the day begins... Silently
closing her bedroom door...
Leaving the note that she hoped
would say more...

Rose moves along the rear wall to where a small group of
girls is standing, sidling up to one of them who slyly passes
her a pack of cigarettes.

Rose mouths "thanks" and settles back against the rear wall,
watching the performance with casual disinterest.

KAT

(sings)

She goes downstairs to the
kitchen clutching her
handkerchief...

(MORE)

KAT (CONT'D)
 Quietly turning the back door
 key... Stepping outside she is
 free...

Rose scans the backs of the heads of the smartly-dressed parents sitting in the audience, her gaze tracking across to a pair of empty seats on the aisle.

Rose looks back up at Kat whose gaze is fixed on the same two empty seats, her eyes dull and glassy.

INT. ROSE'S DORM ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Rose is at her desk, her back turned to the door, slipping her fresh pack of cigarettes into her desk drawer.

STUDENT (O.S.)
 Hey, Rose.

Rose turns, startled. Another STUDENT, dressed in a heavy coat and ready to leave, sticks her head into the doorway.

STUDENT
 Mr. Gordon wants to see you.

INT. MR. GORDON'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Rose sits on a bench against the wall, picking at her nails, glancing occasionally at

KAT

Sitting next to her, sniffing, her eyes ringed with red, the cuffs of her Bramford sweater pulled over her fingers.

The Sisters stand by the door, Mr. Gordon behind his desk, bundled in his heavy snow jacket and hat, holding a phone up to his ear, listening to it RING.

He hangs up the phone and turns to Ms. Prescott, shaking his head with a frown as if to say "no answer".

MR. GORDON
 Katherine? Is there anyone else
 you'd like for me to call?

Kat shakes her head, her eyes down.

MR. GORDON
 Have you checked your cell phone?
 Maybe they called you there.

KAT

(quietly)

I don't have one yet. They said maybe for my birthday.

MR. GORDON

Hmmm. Well, bad weather coming in all over the East Coast. Probably they got caught up in that. Planes get delayed...

(thinks, then)

... of course without written permission, I couldn't let her go with anyone else anyway...

He thinks for another moment, this time checking his watch.

MR. GORDON

Hmmm. Well.

(then)

And Rose? What about you?

ROSE

I thought we got out on Friday.

(then)

I told my parents to come on Friday.

MR. GORDON

You thought we got out on Friday so you told your parents to come on Friday.

ROSE

Uh huh. I guess I spaced out.

MR. GORDON

And were you able to reach them?

Rose is caught off-guard, but recovers quickly.

ROSE

Uh. Yeah. They're coming. It's just going to take them maybe a day to change their trip plans.

MR. GORDON

A day?

ROSE

Well, yeah only because they were planning to come on Friday so they'll probably still just come... on Friday.

MR. GORDON

Oh. Well. All right, then. Ms. Prescott and Ms. Drake will be here in any case.

(then, to Kat)

Did you hear that, Katherine? It happens that parents get confused. Worst case they come on Friday and everyone goes home and we all have a nice break anyway, all right?

(keeping it light)

After all, we can't let you live here.

Kat's eyes are down at her feet, the toes of her worn sneakers lightly touching.

MR. GORDON

Rose?

Rose looks up warily from her fingernails.

ROSE

Uh huh?

MR. GORDON

You'll look after Kat until her parents arrive?

ROSE

Oh. Uh. I haven't been feeling that great.

MR. GORDON

No? Well, you look fine to me.

ROSE

I've had a sore throat. I was gonna stay in bed.

MR. GORDON

Yes, well...

Mr. Gordon pats his jacket pockets, ready to leave.

MR. GORDON

Ms. Prescott? In a few hours you will try Mr. Cornish again? On the home phone and on his mobile, won't you?

MS. PRESCOTT

Of course we will.

MR. GORDON
 (to Kat)
 Sound good?

Kat looks at him in silence. Mr. Gordon hangs in there. The Sisters look at each other. Rose looks up from her nails.

Finally, Kat blinks, nodding vaguely.

KAT
 (quietly)
 Sounds good.

EXT. PATH - LATE AFTERNOON

Rose walks with purpose through the lightly falling snow, her back turned to Kat who follows several feet behind, skipping a little to keep up.

INT. OFFICE, MYRTLE HOUSE - EVENING

Ms. Prescott stands with her arms folded in the doorway, looking in at Kat who is sitting at a small desk, holding a telephone receiver up to her ear, listening to it RING.

Her gaze has drifted over to a gold-framed portrait of Christ, his palms gently pressed together, his soft face upturned to a golden light.

There is a CLICK on the phone and the voicemail picks up and a MAN'S VOICE delivers a faint greeting, muffled and far away. Still, he sounds like a kind man.

Kat waits for the BEEP and speaks low and with little affect, her lips too close to the receiver to announce very well:

KAT
 (softly, into phone)
 Hi... Dad. It's me. Just calling
 to see where you and mom are and
 if you're coming. I guess you can
 call the school. Okay.
 (then)
 Bye.

INT. KITCHEN, MYRTLE HOUSE - EVENING

A simple crucifix is pinned to the wall above a small kitchen table around which the Sisters are circling, ladling hot soup into bowls. Rose fills water glasses from a ceramic pitcher.

Kat is placing spoons at each place, her eyes dull. She puts a spoon down on a napkin. It's a little crooked. She pauses and blinks at it. And then she straightens it.

CUT AHEAD TO

The Sisters, Rose and Kat are now seated at the table, bowls of steaming soup in front of them, their heads bowed.

IN UNISON

Dear Lord, we thank you for this
meal that you have placed in
front of us on this night and...

CUT TO

INT. ROSE'S DORM ROOM - EVENING

The ROAR of a blow-dryer.

Rose is drying her hair in front of a mirror, dressed in a black skirt and a black bra.

She clicks off the hair-dryer and places it flat on the desk next to a lit cigarette in an ashtray, smoke curling up from the tip and gathering thickly in the glare of a desk lamp.

HEAVY METAL plays low on her little dusty boombox, the blown speaker HISSING a little.

In a round vanity mirror, Rose can see Kat over her shoulder, standing in the doorway, watching as she picks up a hairbrush, running it through her hair.

Kat watches the rhythm of the hairbrush, her eyes tired.

ROSE

You know I'm not babysitting you
tonight, right, freshman?

KAT

(long pause)
Mr. Gordon said you're supposed
to stay with me.

ROSE

And what's he going to do? Bust
me for not being at school over
vacation?

KAT

Mr. Gordon said --

ROSE
 "Mr. Gordon said. Mr. Gordon
 said". Jesus. What are you, a
 freaking recording?

KAT
 (long pause)
 Where are you going?

ROSE
 Me? Nowhere.

Rose turns and nods to her bed where the covers have been
 pulled up over a pile of laundry, simulating a body.

ROSE
 The Sisters ask anything you just
 tell them I don't feel well so
 I'm staying in bed.

Rose looks at Kat, her eyes narrowing, speaking in a
 sensationalized whisper.

ROSE
 You know about them, right?

KAT
 Know what?

ROSE
 You know those are wigs, right?
 You know they have no hair on
 their bodies. No hair anywhere.
 And I bet you think it's like
 some crazy lesbo thing, huh?
 (then)
 Check out their eyebrows next
 time. Totally fake. Their real
 ones...?

She passes the lit cigarette in front of her eyes, making a
 HISSING noise between her teeth.

ROSE
 ... burned right off.

KAT
 That's not true.

ROSE
 Of course it's true.
 (then)
 (MORE)

ROSE (CONT'D)
You never heard about Jen
Pearlstein's sister? Graduated
like three years ago?

Rose leans in closer.

ROSE
She walked in on them one
night...
(pauses for effect)
... *worshiping the devil.*

Kat breathes quietly for a long moment.

ROSE
Yeah. And she had to go to a
psychiatric hospital. Could still
be there for all I know.

Rose smiles and turns back to the mirror, picking up right
where she left off, tousling her hair.

ROSE
It was like a whole thing.

KAT
Who told you that?

ROSE
You kidding? Everybody knows
that.

Rose gives herself a last look, pursing her lips as if for a
soft kiss.

ROSE
Just don't come into my room.
(then)
And don't touch any of my shit.

But Kat isn't listening anymore, her gaze drifting over to
Rose's cigarette, following the brume of smoke as it curls up
into the corner of the ceiling where it dissolves into air.

Rose watches her in the mirror.

EXT. MAIN GATE - NIGHT

A not-so-great-looking black sports car idles fifty yards
away from the main entrance, its red brake lights glowing in
the darkness.

The same HEAVY METAL MUSIC that we heard in Rose's room now plays on the car radio, muffled behind rolled-up windows.

Rose scampers through the gate towards the car, her handbag trailing after her at the end of a long strap.

INT. RICK'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Rose slides in next to RICK (19), a lean local guy, his face lit warmly by the orange dials on the dashboard.

RICK
Hey, baby.

ROSE
Hey.

He lurches over to kiss her on the mouth but she turns, redirecting his lips to her cheek.

RICK
(put off)
... the fuck? You okay?

ROSE
Yeah. I'm fine.

RICK
What's the matter?

ROSE
Nothing. Can we go, please?

RICK
Yeah. Sure.

Uncomfortable, Rose turns halfway and looks back at the school as Rick's car GROWLS to life.

EXT. MAIN GATE - NIGHT

Rick's car drives away, its red tail lights shrinking into the distance, the music on the car radio fading away.

Snow falls steadily on the road, filling in the outline of where the car was idling.

INT. CORRIDOR - SAME MOMENT

Kat stands at a window, looking out onto the main entrance, out to where the outline of Rick's car is gradually filling up with falling snow.

INT. ROSE'S DORM ROOM - SAME

It's quiet in here. Rose's little, dusty boombox has been turned off and her cigarette has gone out.

Kat is in the room, drifting around in the dark, lightly running her fingertips over the smooth surfaces of furniture and things.

Going to the dressing table she picks up Rose's hairbrush. A long, dark strand of Rose's hair is snagged in its teeth.

Kat replaces the brush, looking down at an envelope with a square plastic window on the front through which can be seen Rose's school photographs.

Kat opens the back flap of the envelope and slides out one of Rose's glossy yearbook portraits.

Just the head and shoulders of a beautiful teenage girl.

Kat looks at the picture, holding it still, studying it.

And then

BBBBBBBBRRRRRRRRRIIIIIIIINNNNNNNNGGGGGGGGGG

Out in the corridor, the pay phone RINGS.

But Kat seems to have not heard it, not moving, still looking at the picture, the darkness hanging all around her.

The phone RINGS again. It seems louder this second time. Kat looks at the picture, her eyes going dull and glassy.

The phone RINGS again. Louder still.

Kat's eyes fall softly shut.

CUT TO

EXT. MAIN GATE - NIGHT

The moon glows bright against the inky night sky. Snow falls steadily onto the road in front of the school.

Hours have passed and the outline of where Rick's car was parked is now completely covered over with fresh snow.

Headlights flicker in the distance and Rick's car approaches, slowing to a stop, HEAVY METAL playing dull and muffled behind rolled-up windows.

INT. RICK'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The music plays clear and loud in here. Rose sits in the passenger seat, looking out the window, the interior glowing warmly from the dim lights on the dashboard.

Rick reaches up and clicks off the radio. He sits in silence for a long moment, and then:

RICK
(under his breath)
The Bratford School.

Rose fakes a smile.

ROSE
Shut up.

There is a long silence, not necessarily comfortable.

RICK
Call me later?

ROSE
I don't have my phone.

RICK
So? That's it?

ROSE
Stop saying that.

RICK
Then what should I say?

ROSE
Nothing. You don't have to say anything.
(then)
I'll take care of it.

RICK
You can at least let me drive you.

ROSE

No. No way.

Rick finally looks over at her, taking his time.

RICK

You just be careful, okay?

ROSE

Yeah, right, okay.

They would normally kiss, but instead they just freeze.

EXT. THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL, MAIN PATH - MOMENTS LATER

Rose has left Rick and his car and she is now walking alone in the lightly falling snow, blue moonlight on her head and shoulders, her boots CRUNCHING on the ground as she goes.

Continuing on along the path she passes the faded red door to the Spencer House. She doesn't look over at it.

Approaching the Myrtle House, she stops, looking across. The Sisters are most definitely asleep at this hour but Rose instinctively ducks a little, just to be safe.

The windows of the Myrtle House are dark behind lacy curtains, a single candle flame dancing somewhere within.

Rose is just about to continue on when --

SNAP.

A twig somewhere. Or maybe an icicle. Something sharp in the stillness.

Rose turns halfway, looking around.

Nobody there.

She listens to the darkness.

INT. CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Rose comes in through a set of double doors, the hinges WHINING. Moonlight pours in through large windows, shining onto polished tabletops.

Rose makes her way to the back wall and through a set of swinging doors that leads into

THE KITCHEN

With only a narrow row of high windows near the ceiling to let the moonlight in, it's much darker in here.

Rose squints into the darkness, slowly groping along the wall by the door for a light switch. She doesn't find one.

She steps deeper into the dark room, guiding herself by the slivers of moonlight that shine off of hanging pots and pans and along the sharp edges of metal counter tops.

She goes over to an industrial sized refrigerator, pulling back with all of her weight on the door, opening it, freezing the wall behind her with pale, artificial light.

She looks in, squinting at the white on white brightness, finding a bowl of very red apples.

She takes an apple and closes the refrigerator, drenching herself in darkness again.

She turns to lean back on the refrigerator door, a sliver of her silhouette cut bright by the light of the moon. She takes a bite of the apple, chewing it in the darkness.

Swallowing, she turns her head slightly, as if feeling something breath softly on the back of her neck.

But there's nothing there.

She lets her gaze drift up into a high corner of the room, a pocket of shadow.

And then, just off in the distance

CLICK CLACK CLICK CLACK.

The sound of heeled shoes on hard floor, coming from the cafeteria, approaching the other side of the door. Not too close. But there.

Rose freezes, her eyes shifting.

ROSE
(quietly, to herself)
Shit.

She scans the kitchen, ducking down, staying low as she crosses the room, crouching down behind a cabinet.

CLICK.

CLACK.

The footsteps stop just on the other side of the door. Rose holds her breath. Stillness and moonlight all around her.

And then the footsteps move away from the door.

CLICK CLACK CLICK CLACK.

Rose listens to them go, her eyes shifting.

There is a long silence.

And then, over her shoulder

CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH.

Somewhere on the other side of the wall behind her, somewhere outside. Footsteps crushing the snow, going away.

Rose listens to them go, her eyes shifting.

INT. CAFETERIA - MOMENTS LATER

Rose pushes through the kitchen door, the hinges WHINING. She steps silently out into the main dining room, over to the windows, looking out.

In the distance, she sees the dark shape of a FIGURE as he passes under an overhead lamp, but only very briefly.

He is possibly 100 yards away. Strange that he would be able to cover such a distance in such a short time.

It looks like it must be a MAN, his back to us, the snow CRUNCHING under his feet as he walks away down the central winding path.

He pulls himself along, lurching forward as he goes, as if having to work to shrug along the weight of his body.

Rose watches him go. Stillness and moonlight all around her.

And then

CLICK.

WWWWWWHHHHHHHHUUUUUUUVVVVVVVVMMMMMMMM

Rose is startled, and she jumps.

But it's just the refrigerator fans turning on, HUMMING all around her.

CUT TO

INT. CORRIDOR, SPENCER HOUSE - NIGHT

We are looking down the darkened corridor at the front door, watching it. After a long moment, the handle CLICKS from the outside and swings open.

Rose steps in quietly, slipping off her boots and jacket, craning her head down to the end of the hallway, looking for some sign of Kat. Or maybe for some sign of the Man.

She moves quietly down the hall in her socks, passing open doors to dorm rooms.

All of them dark. All of them empty.

Coming to the one she thinks is probably Kat's, she slows, peering around the doorway and looking in.

INT. KAT'S DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The covers on Kat's bed have been pulled back, the comforter lolling over the edge and onto the floor like a tongue.

No one in here, either.

On the far wall Kat has pinned a hand-drawn welcome sign for her parents next to a poster of a puppy-eyed Paul McCartney.

Kat must have gone home. The Man must have been her Father, coming to get her. Because in here there is only the quiet HISS of the radiator grill.

INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM - NIGHT

In one of the stalls, Rose is sitting on the toilet. She wipes once, looks at the paper. Nothing.

CUT AHEAD TO

Rose washes her face at the sink, rubbing it dry with a towel. Looking up, she studies herself in the mirror.

ROSE
(to herself)
Idiot.

And then there is a DULL THUD, somewhere in the body of the building. Not very loud.

And then another, like someone moving a piece of furniture in some distant part of the building.

Rose turns her head to listen, her eyes drifting over to where the radiator grill against the wall is softly HISSING.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Rose sticks her head out of the girls' bathroom, looking down the darkened corridor.

There is that DULL THUD again. Very soft. And warm. Like the single beat of a distant pulse.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Following Rose as she pads down the hall in her bare feet, passing open doors to darkened dorm rooms.

All of them dark. All of them empty.

Coming to the end of the hall where the pay phone is, she sees that it's off the hook again, the receiver swinging at the end of the cord.

Rose slowly reaches out and picks up the receiver. It pulses in her hand with an insistent, fuzzy BUSY SIGNAL.

Replacing the receiver on the cradle, Rose turns to look over her shoulder, noticing that the last door on the corridor is slightly open, the latch CLICKING against itself.

The door is marked BASEMENT. She looks at it for a moment before stepping over to it, reaching out to push it open another few inches, looking down into a dark stairwell.

ROSE
(calling out softly)
Hello?

At first there is no answer, and Rose is about to close the door and turn away.

But then there is a very soft WHISPER.

There is no way to hear the words. It is only possible to hear that there are maybe three syllables.

WHISWHISPER.

ROSE
(calling out softly)
Hello?

She listens. And there it is again. WHISWHISPER.

Rose sighs to herself, turning to look back down the corridor from where she came. Nobody back there, either.

Taking a deep breath, she pushes the basement door open and moves through it, stepping down.

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Following Rose as she comes to the bottom of the stairs and pads down the basement corridor.

A door at the far end is marked FURNACE ROOM.

WHISWHISPER.

There is a small window on the door, on the other side of which a warm orange light is pulsing.

Rose instinctively slows to a stop, craning her neck in the direction of the light.

She breathes there for a moment before stepping slowly up to the door, rising up onto her toes and bringing her face up to the glass, looking in, and seeing

KAT

Kneeling in front of the furnace, her hands pressed flat on the cement floor.

She's bowing.

Her head coming up, eyes closed. And then, hinging at the waist, her head going down, her forehead softly kissing the cement floor.

Up and down, with the swift precision of a motor.

Her lips are slightly parted, moving almost without sound.

WHISWHISPER.

HARD CUT TO BLACK

OVER BLACK

The steady HUM of an airplane's engine.

PILOT'S VOICE (PUBLIC ADDRESS)
Ladies and gentlemen we are just
about to begin our initial
descent into Providence...

FADE UP TO

INT. AN AIRPLANE CABIN - NIGHT

TRACKING OVER the heads of PASSENGERS in the darkened cabin,
their chalky faces in the dim light of iPad screens, finding

A YOUNG WOMAN

In the soft halo of her overhead light, her cheek pressed to
the cool window glass, looking out at the plane's wing, the
blinking red light at the tip, the black sky beyond.

PILOT'S VOICE (PUBLIC ADDRESS)
... in a few minutes I'll be
turning on the fasten seat belt
sign...

She's roughly 20 but looks older, some of the brilliance
having gone from her eyes.

If you asked for her name, she'd tell you it's JOAN.

PILOT'S VOICE (PUBLIC ADDRESS)
... and ask that you remain in
your seat for the remainder of
the flight with your seat belts
securely fastened...

Joan picks her head up from the window with a sudden start,
looking around, disoriented.

In her lap she discovers that she is tightly clutching a
handbag, looking oddly at it as if vaguely surprised to have
a handbag in the first place.

She takes a controlled breath through her nose, getting her
bearings, scanning her surroundings.

Looking around the cabin, she spots a KIND-FACED MAN and his
WIFE a few rows back. Old enough to be her parents. Over
their heads, the illuminated sign for the lavatories.

Joan stands, slipping past the passengers in the seats next
to hers.

Making her way down the aisle, she eyes the older couple. On the tray table in front of them, a simple bouquet of flowers and a few small empty bottles of airplane gin.

The man looks up at Joan as she passes, a warm smile flickering over his face when they make eye contact.

But Joan doesn't like things like that. She looks away.

INT. AIRPLANE LAVATORY - SAME

Squaring up to the sink, Joan places the handbag on the narrow chrome counter, running the tip of her finger over the clasp.

She pauses, surprised by the sight of a PLASTIC HOSPITAL BRACELET on her wrist, studying it, as if unsure how it came to be there.

She hooks her finger under the plastic strap, yanking at it, but it won't come off easily.

The lavatory door rattles as someone pulls on it from the other side. Startled, she freezes.

JOAN
(calls out)
There's... someone in here.

She redoubles her strength, wincing as she pulls at the bracelet, breaking it off with a strong SNAP.

She drops the bracelet into the toilet, flushing it away.

The air being sucked through the toilet ROARS in the tight space and Joan's hands instinctively fly up to her ears --

HARD CUT TO

INT. T.F. GREEN AIRPORT, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND - NIGHT

Passengers descend the ramp, Joan among them, her handbag close to her body, her shoulders angled in, careful not to touch anyone.

Stepping onto the carpet of the terminal, she looks up at a smattering of late-night travelers waiting to board other planes, slung low on cushioned benches, staring into laptops.

But none of them are here for her. Better that way.

She lowers her eyes as she continues on, drifting through the terminal, slowing when she spots a bank of pay phones.

There is only one person at the bank of phones: a SKINNY YOUNG WOMAN in a semi-transparent raincoat.

Looking over her shoulder, Joan steps over to the bank of phones, digging around in her handbag for change.

She pulls out two quarters, holding them flat in the palm of her hand. The heads of George Washington.

She feeds the coins into the slot, dials and waits. It rings once on the other end. And then a CLICK.

Joan holds her breath, expectant. But --

RECORDED VOICE

(on phone)

We're sorry, but the number you have dialed has been disconnected or is no longer in service. If you feel that you may have reached this recording in error...

Joan takes the receiver from her ear and replaces it on the cradle, her hand lingering on the slick, black plastic.

She looks at the Skinny Young Woman, her back turned, thin vines of stringy hair lying flat on the back of her raincoat.

INT. AIRPORT NEWSSTAND - SAME

Joan flips through a road atlas, coming to a page that shows a large section of New England.

Her fingertip finds PROVIDENCE, then wanders up Interstate 95, passing Boston and moving outward into a rural section of Massachusetts, coming to rest on the town of

BRAMFORD

Her fingertip lingers affectionately on the name before pushing ahead, stopping on the town just past it.

PORTSMITH.

EXT. AIRPORT CURBSIDE - NIGHT

Snow falls lightly but steadily through the darkness. A large clock reads 3:31 AM.

Joan stands at the open door to a parked bus, talking to the DRIVER who sits hunched over the dish of his steering wheel.

DRIVER

Portsmouth?

(then)

That's over out by Bramford,
isn't it?

JOAN

(hesitates)

Yes?

DRIVER

We're talking Massachusetts.

JOAN

Yes. I know.

DRIVER

A Greyhound might get you there.

JOAN

Where do I get that?

DRIVER

They don't run in weather,
though. Bad weather coming later
today I hear. Messing everything
up. Greyhound usually the first
to beg offa that action.

JOAN

How far can you take me?

DRIVER

Me? No. I'm done for the night.
The only place I'm going is
sleep.

(then)

You could rent a car. You got a
license?

But she's barely listening anymore, starting to feel the cold, hugging herself inward, drifting away from the bus.

Scanning the curbside, she spots a pack of OLDER BUSINESS MEN wheeling small suitcases over to the only two taxis in sight.

Further along, she sees the Skinny Young Woman in the raincoat who was at the pay phone. She is talking to a YOUNG COUPLE, gesturing as if asking them for a ride.

The Young Couple seems unsure but eventually the man smiles, nods his head and pops the trunk so that they can put the Skinny Young Woman's suitcase in there.

Joan looks away, across the service road where she sees a SINGLE WOMAN reaching into her bag for keys as she walks toward a poorly-lit parking structure.

Joan tracks the single woman, taking her in. The woman disappears around a concrete pylon and Joan lets her go.

EXT. AIRPORT SERVICE ROAD - NIGHT

Joan walks briskly, a light snowfall dusting her hair, her shoulders rounded, her face pulled tight with cold.

She feels the slow approach of a car coming up behind her, the backs of her pant legs glowing in the glare of its headlights.

She presses on, hugging herself inward against the cold.

The car rolls up alongside her, keeping pace. It's a golden brown Mercedes Benz station wagon, older but impeccably maintained, its expensive innards PURRING with heat.

The passenger window rolls down to reveal the OLDER COUPLE from the airplane, the KIND-FACED MAN leaning over his WIFE, who doesn't seem at all happy about it.

KIND-FACED MAN

Excuse me, Miss...?

(then)

Sorry to sneak up on you like that but my wife and I noticed you walking and, well...

Joan keeps walking, not acknowledging him.

KIND-FACED MAN

You need a lift...?

Joan hesitates, slowing to a stop, hunching down to look in through the open window. They look like nice, normal people.

JOAN

Which way are you going?

KIND-FACED MAN

Well... gonna get out of here first and then make our way to the 95 heading East.

Joan straightens up, looking off into both directions.

KIND-FACED MAN
What about you? Where you headed?

JOAN
Portsmith?

Recognition flickers on the man's face.

KIND-FACED MAN
Sure. I know Portsmith.
(to his wife)
We know Portsmith, don't we?

HIS WIFE
We can take her as far as the
next service station, Bill...

KIND-FACED MAN
C'mon. Hop in...

He reaches back and clacks open the door. Joan hesitates for a moment, then goes for it.

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON - CONTINUOUS

Joan slips in to the back seat, clutching her handbag. It's warm inside the car, and she finally shivers.

The kind-faced man turns around and smiles wide. His wife in the seat next to him does neither.

KIND-FACED MAN
Getting chilly out there. You all
right?

JOAN
Yes. Thank you, sir.

KIND-FACED MAN
My name is Bill. This is my wife
Linda.
(then, smiling again)
And what's your name, sweetheart?

JOAN
Joan. My name's Joan.

Joan looks over at the back of Linda's head. She isn't going to turn around.

BILL

Joan. That's a nice name. I like that. You were on the plane from Tampa, weren't you?

(off her shy nod)

Us too. Out visiting some old friends. Do it every year around this time. Left our car at the airport here...

LINDA

I'm sure she isn't interested in your life story, for Christ's sake, Bill.

BILL

All right.

(then)

You all buckled in back there, Joan?

Joan fumbles for her seat belt, clicking it on.

JOAN

Oh. Yes. Thank you.

She looks up at Bill, still smiling warmly. He winks at her. Disarmed, she tries a smile. Not a very good one.

BILL

How about a piece of chewing gum?

Bill produces a piece of red Trident. Joan nods and reaches out, pinching it between her thumb and forefinger.

She puts the gum in her mouth, moving it around in there. It's almost like food. She chews it, her mouth closed, breathing through her nose. She chews it hard.

BILL

All right then. Let us vah-mi-noose...

Bill smiles kindly, turning, adjusting his own seatbelt.

Joan scans her surroundings, looking up at a bouquet of flowers sitting on the dashboard, the stems choked with a flat red ribbon.

Feeling Bill's eyes in the rearview mirror, Joan looks up. Bill looks away, but it's half a moment too late.

CUT OUTSIDE TO

EXT. AIRPORT SERVICE ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The car's exhaust pipe trembling in the cold, its amber turn signal pulsing.

Looking now at the car's bumper, we see that there is a sticker fixed to it, the edges slightly curled, not new. White lettering against a navy blue background:

THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL.

The station wagon pulls away from the curb, driving off, the moon hanging full against the night sky.

CUT TO

EXT. THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL - NIGHT

Snow falls steadily on the school.

INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM - NIGHT

The HISS of a running shower.

Rose leans against the row of sinks, nibbling a thumbnail, her brow pinched, looking down.

The door to the shower stall is closed but she can see Kat's bare feet on the other side of it, planted on the wet tile.

Rose watches Kat's feet as they step softly around on the tile, trying to think of what she's going to say next.

ROSE

You know how much trouble I could
get into?

Kat doesn't answer. Rose nibbles on her thumbnail some more, trying to decide where to take the conversation.

ROSE

You need a towel?

INT. KAT'S DORM ROOM - SOMETIME LATER

Rose stands against the wall by the door, looking down at Kat's wet towel crumpled on the floor.

She can see Kat's bare feet behind a closet door, stepping around as Kat gets herself dressed.

ROSE
What were you doing down there?

No answer.

ROSE
Were you sleepwalking? Is that
what that was?
(then)
You could have really hurt
yourself, you know.

No answer.

ROSE
Hello?

There is a long pause.

KAT
(quietly)
Uh huh.

That's more than Rose has gotten from Kat up this point and she exhales, resetting.

ROSE
You want a cigarette or
something?

Rose watches Kat's feet as she steps into a pair of pajamas.

KAT
(quietly)
Nuh uh.

ROSE
Suit yourself.
(then)
What about your parents? They
call?

Kat comes out from behind the closet door, wearing her oversized hooded Bramford sweatshirt and a pair of printed pajama pants.

She walks across the room without looking up, crossing to her bed. She pulls the covers back and gets in, curling up onto her side, looking for the first time at Rose.

ROSE
Did someone...?
(then)
(MORE)

ROSE (CONT'D)

I thought I saw someone coming up here. Didn't someone come... up here?

KAT

They're not going to call.

ROSE

Yeah, well, they got confused.

KAT

Like your parents?

ROSE

Uh huh.

KAT

But your parents didn't get confused. You told them not to come so you could go on a date.

ROSE

It wasn't a date.

KAT

It wasn't?

ROSE

No. It wasn't.

KAT

What was it?

ROSE

It was nothing.

Long pause. Kat smiles mildly.

KAT

You smell pretty.

Rose looks away, at a loss, shaking her head a little. She looks out the window to where it is snowing relentlessly.

ROSE

Jesus. It's really coming down.

KAT

Mr. Gordon said you were supposed to look after me.

ROSE

I know what he said.

KAT

Mr. Gordon said worst case they'd be here by Friday.

ROSE

Uh huh. I know what he --

KAT

But now it's too late.

ROSE

Too late for what?

KAT

Mr. Gordon said you were supposed to look after me.

ROSE

Listen, someone will be here to pick you up. You're making a big deal out of nothing.

KAT

They're dead.

Rose wasn't expecting that. She almost laughs.

ROSE

What?

(off Kat's silence)

That's an awful thing to say.

(then)

You shouldn't say that.

Rose looks sternly at Kat. But Kat just holds her gaze.

ROSE

Hey. You shouldn't say that.

(then)

It's so not funny.

But Kat doesn't seem to be planning to say anything else.

ROSE

You should go to bed. Go to bed and get up in the morning and just... Here.

Rose moves away from the door, coming over to the bed and smoothing out Kat's covers before sitting down next to her.

ROSE

Listen. You're going to be fine, okay? They're coming on Friday.

(MORE)

ROSE (CONT'D)
They're on their way. And that's
it. That's it, okay?

It occurs to Rose to reach up and tenderly brush the hair
away from Kat's forehead. But she decides not to.

ROSE
You're all right.

KAT
Mmm hmm.

ROSE
You should go to bed.
(then)
You... need me to do anything
else?

KAT
No.

Long pause.

KAT
You had your chance.

Rose watches her carefully, but Kat's mild gaze isn't going
anywhere.

INT. CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Rose pads down the hall, curling into her own room and softly
closing the door behind her with a CLICK.

But we stay on to look down the darkened, empty corridor at
the inside of the front door, watching it for a long moment.

INT. ROSE'S DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rose has her back pressed against the door, as if holding it
closed, her eyes shifting. The lights are all off in here and
it's dark.

Rose crosses to her bedside lamp, clicking it on. She clicks
on a standing lamp on the other side of the room, too.

She moves to the desk, sliding open a desk drawer and taking
out her pack of cigarettes, looking down at the envelope with
her school pictures in them.

Seeing a portion of her face through the little plastic
window on the front of the envelope, she turns it face down.

She takes a cigarette and crosses with her desk chair, putting it up against the door. With that in place she sits down on her bed, looking at her bedside clock.

3:58 AM.

Next to the clock is a framed picture of her and her parents on a ski slope somewhere. They are all smiling behind sunglasses. Three sets of shiny black eyes.

She lights her cigarette and sits there smoking in the dark.

She watches the chair on the door. Stillness all around her.

And then

PRELAP: the SUDDEN INSISTENT BEEPING of an alarm clock.

HARD CUT AHEAD TO

INT. ROSE'S DORM ROOM - MORNING

The clock now reads 7:45 AM, the alarm sounding.

Rose's eyes open and she reaches over to stop the alarm clock, pulling herself up to sit and looking out the window. The school is covered in a thick blanket of snow.

She lies back down, staring up at the ceiling, yawning herself awake, listening to the silence of the morning.

Looking up at a thin crack that runs along the ceiling over her head, she remembers Kat and her eyes shift.

Swinging her legs out from under her covers she gets out of bed, going to the door, opening it a crack, looking out into

THE CORRIDOR

Kat is standing at the far end, at the pay phone, her back turned, the receiver up to her ear.

After a moment, Kat hangs up the phone, letting her fingers linger on the slick, black plastic of the receiver.

Rose waits for her to turn around. But when she doesn't --

ROSE
(calling out)
So...?

Kat turns. From this distance, it's hard for Rose to make out any expression that Kat might have on her face.

ROSE
(calling out)
Well? What'd they say?

Kat walks toward Rose, stopping a few feet away from her, a mild, serene smile on her face.

ROSE
What'd they say?

KAT
He said it's all right.

ROSE
What's all right? Who said...?

KAT
He'll look after me.

Rose watches her.

KAT
He said I couldn't live here.
(then)
But I can. I can live here with
him. Just the two of us.

ROSE
Who is 'he'?

Long pause.

KAT
You know who.

ROSE
No, I don't know who.

KAT
Mr. Gordon, silly.
(then)
He's the headmaster.

ROSE
Oh.

Unsure, Rose knits her brow.

After a long moment, Kat raises her little hand, pointing a little finger at Rose.

KAT
 (softly, like it's a nice
 little secret)
 You. Smell. Pretty.

EXT. MAIN PATH - MORNING

Rose and Kat's steady BREATHING.

Wearing their black puffy snow jackets and boots, the two girls cross campus, clomping through the thick snow, clouds of visible breath hanging in the air around their heads.

Rose can feel Kat a few feet behind her and her eyes shift with vague discomfort.

INT. KITCHEN, MYRTLE HOUSE - MORNING

Rose and Kat help set the table for breakfast, the Sisters circling, spooning out globs of gray porridge.

Rose yanks open a clunky old kitchen drawer and silverware clangs around inside, JANGLING metal on metal.

Spoons and forks. And knives. Some longer and sharper than others.

Rose takes out four large spoons and closes the drawer.

JANGLING metal on metal.

HARD CUT AHEAD TO

THE KITCHEN TABLE - MINUTES LATER

Kat, Rose and the Sisters are seated at the table, their palms pressed together, heads down.

IN UNISON
 Dear Lord, we thank you for this
 meal that you have placed in
 front of us on this day and...

But Kat's not saying grace.

Her eyes are open, her pupils shifting with short movements, as if trying to remember the words. She looks slightly ill.

Ms. Prescott notices, and when they come to the end of the prayer and Rose and Ms. Drake reach for their spoons --

MS. PRESCOTT
A moment, please.
(then)
Katherine?

Rose and Ms. Drake slowly pull their hands away from the plates of food, unsure.

Ms. Prescott is watching Kat. An embarrassed smile is creeping across Kat's lips, her eyes down.

KAT
Yes, ma'am?

MS. PRESCOTT
Is there something wrong?

KAT
(takes a moment)
No ma'am.

MS. PRESCOTT
In that case, will you kindly
repeat grace for the rest of us?

Kat re-assumes the position, bowing her head, putting her hands together.

KAT
(quietly)
Dear Lord, we thank you for this
meal that you have placed in
front of us on this...

She stops short, like a machine that's been unplugged.

KAT
(quietly)
... that you have placed in front
of...
(then)
... and for which we --

She falls silent. Ms. Prescott watches her closely.

MS. PRESCOTT
Katherine.

Kat sits in silence, her body stiff.

MS. PRESCOTT
Katherine?

Kat pushes her chair back and stands, her hands coming up to cover her mouth, her knuckles going white at the creases.

A wet GURGLE rises in her throat.

And then

Pale vomit curls out from between her fingers, pearly chunks splurting down the front of her sweater.

She coughs violently, vomit spilling over her closed hands, splashing into her porridge.

Rose moves back in her chair to avoid being splashed.

ROSE
Jesus Christ...

The Sisters scramble to stand, taking Kat by the elbows, rushing to wipe the front of her sweater with their napkins.

MS. PRESCOTT
Mercy...

Kat stands limply like an invalid, her eyes fixed on the crucifix on the wall above the table, her vomit-smearred lips pursed slightly as if for a soft kiss.

INT. INFIRMARY, MYRTLE HOUSE - SOMETIME LATER

Rose leans in the doorway, watching from a distance as Ms. Prescott presses a wet washcloth onto Kat's forehead.

Ms. Drake busies herself with bottles of liquid medicines.

ROSE
Is she okay?

MS. PRESCOTT
She's fine.
(louder, for Kat)
Gone and made ourselves sick with worry, haven't we? Our minds flooded with unnatural thoughts.
(then)
We mustn't continue to entertain the possibility that something has happened, Katherine. It's bad for your health. Isn't that right?

MS. DRAKE
Yes, dear.

MS. PRESCOTT
 Ms. Drake, I should think that
 Katherine will rest here for a
 while.

MS. DRAKE
 I quite agree, Ms. Prescott.

Ms. Prescott gets up and crosses to the sink, next to where
 Rose is standing.

ROSE
 (quietly, to Ms. Prescott)
 Did Mr. Gordon call?

MS. PRESCOTT
 And why on earth would the
 headmaster call here?

ROSE
 I dunno. To say they're all
 right? Her parents...

MS. PRESCOTT
 Of course they are all right. And
 Katherine is all right as well.

ROSE
 No. I know. It's just... I dunno.
 (then)
 Because I thought I saw --

She stops herself.

MS. PRESCOTT
 You thought you saw what?

ROSE
 Nothing.

Rose watches Ms. Drake cross with a cup of water, bending
 over to hand it to Kat.

MS. PRESCOTT
 Thank you, Ms. Drake.

MS. DRAKE
 (to Kat)
 Drink this, dear.

But Kat makes no attempt to take it.

MS. DRAKE
 Katherine?

Ms. Drake waits an extra moment, then reaches down for Kat's hand, as if to guide it up to the cup.

Kat pulls her hand away with a sharp jerk.

KAT
Get your hands off of me, cunt.

The air goes out of the room.

MS. PRESCOTT
Katherine!

Ms. Drake stands up straight, thinks about it for a split second and then slaps Kat across the face as hard as she can.

Kat's head turns with the force of the blow and then returns to center. She looks up at Ms. Drake, expressionless.

ROSE
(covering her mouth)
... oh my god...

Ms. Drake looks hard at Kat, her cheeks hot with the sudden burst of rage.

MS. DRAKE
How dare you.

But when we see Kat again, she doesn't look quite the same. The skin on her face looks like it has been pulled tighter, her cheekbones standing out, her eyebrows slightly arched.

She looks older.

Ms. Drake notices the change, too, and she stops, her head tilted, her indignant anger slipping.

The room is still for a long moment.

And then

BBBBBBBBRRRRRRRIIIIIIIIIINNNNNNNNGGGGGGGG

The phone RINGS in some other part of the house.

Ms. Prescott and Ms. Drake stand in frozen silence, looking down at Kat. It's very still in the room.

The phone RINGS again.

MS. PRESCOTT
Ms. Drake? The telephone please.

MS. DRAKE
Certainly, dear.

Ms. Drake turns briskly and goes out, marching for the phone, leaving Ms. Prescott and Rose alone with Kat.

MS. PRESCOTT
Katherine. You ought to be
ashamed of yourself.

Rose can't decide where to look, either at the standoff between Kat and Ms. Prescott...

... or down the hallway to where she can see Ms. Drake at the telephone, her hand up to her forehead, striking the universal posture of someone receiving bad news from afar.

MS. PRESCOTT (O.S.)
Young lady you will look at me
when I am talking to you.

Rose watches Ms. Drake down the hall, her brow tightening. Eventually, Ms. Drake puts the phone down, lowering her head and crossing herself.

Straightening up, Ms. Drake turns from the phone and comes back to the infirmary room, passing Rose at the door and taking Ms. Prescott gently by the elbow.

MS. DRAKE
(hushed)
Ms. Prescott... a word, please.

Ms. Prescott turns and joins Ms. Drake on their way out of the room, leaving Rose and Kat alone.

Kat tilts down onto her side, lying down on the cot. She seems to have no intention of saying anything else and so Rose turns her head to look back out into the hallway.

She can see Ms. Prescott and Ms. Drake talking in a room down the hall. Ms. Drake looks upset. Soon, so does Ms. Prescott.

KAT
Now he really will come.

Rose turns to Kat who is lying on her side on the cot, looking off at nothing in particular. Rose watches her.

KAT
You'll see that he was wrong and
when he said I couldn't stay
here.

Long pause. Rose watches her. Kat's eyes fall peacefully closed.

KAT
He's the headmaster.

Ms. Prescott and Ms. Drake come back to the room, their attitudes changed, no longer looking to discipline Kat.

MS. PRESCOTT
Rose. Come out, please.

Rose steps out into the hall with Ms. Prescott who speaks to her in a hushed voice.

MS. PRESCOTT
I will kindly ask you to shovel
the path between the houses.
Shovel it down to the bricks.

ROSE
Me?

MS. PRESCOTT
Yes, you.

ROSE
But what did I do? She's the one
who called you a --

MS. PRESCOTT
Thank you, Rose.

ROSE
What about her? She just gets to
sit there?

MS. PRESCOTT
We are expecting Mr. Gordon later
this afternoon.

ROSE
Mr. Gordon?
(then, concerned)
What happened?

MS. PRESCOTT
To the bricks, please.

Without another word, Ms. Prescott turns and walks back into the infirmary.

EXT. PATH - DAY

Looking down from the spire of the old library building onto Rose as she shovels the path, dressed in the bulky shell of her black snow jacket, her hood pulled up.

We hear her BREATHING, and the thin WHISTLE of a winter wind.

She works hard, thick clouds of visible breath hanging in the air around her head.

CUT AHEAD TO

Time has passed and Rose has made progress, the dark red bricks on the path standing out against the white snow.

She spikes the shovel into the snow, stopping to wipe her nose with her sleeve and squinting across to the Myrtle House, sitting there silently in the lightly-falling snow.

The sound of her breath and the thin whistle of a winter breeze is all we can hear.

Taking up the shovel again, Rose goes back to work.

And now we watch her as if from the front steps of the Myrtle House, her figure small in the distance, her black snow jacket standing out against a field of white.

CUT AHEAD TO

EXT. THE MYRTLE HOUSE - SOMETIME LATER

Rose walks the now-cleared path, approaching the house, shovel in hand, clomping up the short steps in her snowy boots, reaching out for the knob, turning it --

But it's locked. She jiggles the knob.

She knocks on the door and waits, but no one comes to open it for her. She tries the knob again. But it's locked.

She turns and clomps back down the steps, going around to a side window and peering in.

The gauzy lace curtains are drawn, and the glare from the snow is too bright and she can't see in. And it seems very still in there.

She knocks on the window. Nothing.

Taking a step back, she looks up at the house, lingering there before tentatively turning and walking away.

INT. SPENCER HOUSE, CORRIDOR - SOMETIME LATER

Rose stands on the inside of the door, stomping excess snow off of her boots, pulling off her mittens.

INT. ROSE'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Rose stands in the center of her room, hands on her hips, surveying the fine mess of a teenage girl's life.

She crosses over to her unmade bed, sitting down on it, idly toeing a pile of dirty clothes on the floor.

She exhales and lies down on the bed, tired from shoveling. Turning onto her side she watches the bedside clock.

The time clicks ahead to 12:33 PM.

HARD CUT TO

INT. A CLASSROOM - DAY

Smooth, wavy SLOW MOTION.

It's school picture day at Bramford, a clouded gray backdrop pinned to the back wall of the classroom, a stool sitting in front of it, a few crude lights angled at the spot.

A PHOTOGRAPHER adjusts his camera on the head of a tripod.

It's Rose's turn to be photographed. She floats up to the stool, swinging herself up to sit on it, her long black hair spilling over her shoulders.

She looks up at the photographer, her face lit, her green eyes bright. She smiles. Her teeth are beautiful.

The photographer nods his chin up at her, raising his hand, releasing the shutter with a tight SNAP.

And there it is. A classic yearbook portrait. Just the head of a beautiful teenage girl.

And one day

It

Will

Be

Everywhere.

INT. ROSE'S ROOM - EVENING

Rose opens her eyes, groggily sitting up in bed, checking the bedside clock.

4:17 PM.

She looks around the room, getting her bearings. The evening sky outside her windows glows clear and dark blue.

ROSE
(groggy)
Jesus.

She gets out of bed, crossing to her closet, stripping off her clothes and a thin skin of long underwear, standing there in her underwear and bra.

Looking at herself in a full-length mirror, she puts her hands flat on her stomach, turning to the side, shifting her hips forward, checking herself out.

She gives up on it, stooping down to sift through a pile of dirty laundry, looking for a towel, finding a wrinkled pale green one, bringing it up to her nose. It's passable.

Rose swipes a small toiletry bag and a bottle of shampoo from atop a dresser, throwing the towel over her shoulder.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Rose pads down the hall, curling around a doorway and disappearing into the girls' bathroom.

We linger in the empty corridor, watching the front door.

We watch it for a long moment.

And then

On the other side of the door, the handle goes CLICK.

INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM - SAME

In one of the stalls, rose is sitting on the toilet. She bunches some toilet paper from the roll and wipes.

She checks the toilet paper. We don't see what she sees but her eyes fall closed and she smiles to herself, letting out a shaky exhale.

ROSE
(to herself)
Thank you, God.

AT THE SHOWERS - MINUTES LATER

Rose squeezes the shower knobs, letting the water run. She slips out of her bra and underwear, her slender feet stepping around on the white tiles.

EXT. MAIN GATE - EVENING

The lonely road that leads up to the school. Light snowfall.

A vehicle appears in the distance, marked by a pair of headlights that flicker in the distance.

Coming closer, it's a large SNOWCAT VEHICLE, a rack of dish lights and a long, bowed antenna attached to the roof.

The Snowcat pulls through the gate, GROWLS into the circular driveway and parks near the entrance.

The passenger door swings open and Mr. Gordon steps out. He looks ill, like he's suppressing a bad taste.

The driver's side door swings open and a smooth-cheeked RANGER steps out, his tan leather jacket creaking. He comes around to where Mr. Gordon is standing.

RANGER
You all right?

MR. GORDON
(he's not)
Yes.
(then)
They should be just over this way...

Mr. Gordon gestures towards the Myrtle House.

MR. GORDON
Please, after you.

The Ranger falls in step as they make their way onto campus.

CUT BACK TO

INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM - SAME

Rose showers, letting the warm water run over her head and her shoulders. She shakes her head a little, a small smile flickering on her face.

CUT BACK TO

OUTSIDE THE MYRTLE HOUSE

Mr. Gordon and the Ranger approach the house, clomping up the short steps, snow sticking to the treads of their boots.

Mr. Gordon steps up to the door, trying the knob. But it's locked. He looks up at the door, unsure. He knocks on the door.

KNOCK KNOCK.

CUT BACK TO

IN THE GIRLS' BATHROOM

Rose steps out of the shower, reaching for her towel, bending down over one of her long legs, drying off.

CUT BACK TO

OUTSIDE THE MYRTLE HOUSE

Mr. Gordon has produced a fat ring of keys and is fanning through them, his forehead pinched with confusion.

Finding the key he wants, he fits it into the lock, clicking the door open, stepping into the house.

MR. GORDON
(calls out)
Hello?

But there is no answer.

MR. GORDON
(calls out)
Ms. Prescott?

He steps further in, moving toward a doorway, drifting deeper into the house, his nostrils flaring a little bit.

The air in the house smells hot and thick with iron.

He turns a corner, moving into the small living room.

And then he sees it, his hand springing up to his mouth.

CUT BACK TO

IN THE GIRLS' BATHROOM

Rose stands at the row of sinks, the pale green towel around her torso, her hair wet, her feet bare. She unzips her small toiletry bag and reaches in.

But then

WHUMP

She stops and turns to look back at the door to the bathroom that has just sucked itself shut.

Unsure, she goes over to it, curling her hand around the handle, pulling it open.

There is a thin WHISTLE of wind on the other side of the door. She sticks her head out and looks into

THE CORRIDOR

Where the front door is yawning open, blue daylight coming in, a cold wind blowing through.

Rose squints down to the end of the hall, bracing herself against the rush of cold wind, stepping into the corridor.

And now she is moving towards the front door, moving down the corridor, passing open doors to empty dorm rooms.

All of them dark. All of them empty.

Moving down the corridor, passing open doors.

All of them dark.

HARD CUT TO BLACK

And then

Superimpose title:

JOAN

EXT. WINTER LANDSCAPE - EARLY MORNING

The CLICK CLACK of heeled shoes on pavement, somewhere up ahead in the distance.

Joan trudges through ankle-deep snow, her face pulled tight with cold, a wisp of hair fluttering at her neck.

She's looking off into the distance as she presses on, her eyes bright with the onset of tears, shining like mirrors.

She tries to hurry, stumbling a little in the snow, trying not to fall too far behind, looking up at

THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

A fresh coat of new snow carpeting everything. Everything still. No one around.

But still there is the CLICK CLACK of heeled shoes.

EXT. MAIN PATH - CONTINUOUS

Moving with Joan as she trudges through the ankle-deep snow, her eyes sweeping the area, taking it all in.

CLICK CLACK.

Up ahead, the figure of a MAN in dark clothes, lurching forward as he turns a corner, disappearing around the side of a brick building and out of sight.

Joan's eyes go wild and wide and desperate and she presses forward, the snow deeper now, powdering her knees.

Somehow reaching the brick building, she turns the corner, seeing the faded red door of the Spencer House.

The Man is pushing through the faded red door, disappearing out of sight.

She's falling behind, the CLICK CLACK going away, muffled by the thick door, swallowed by distance.

Panic flickers in Joan's eyes and she tries to spring forward, but the snow is now at her waist.

Her eyes shining with tears, she struggles forward, parting the snow with wide strokes.

Somehow reaching the front steps of the Spencer House, she claws at them, pulling herself up, rising up to the door.

She presses her hands onto it, gently, as if onto the hide of some great, sleeping beast. Her eyes falling softly closed.

Her hand slides down the face of the door, going for the handle, her fingers curling around it.

She presses down into the handle. But it won't give in her hand.

The door is locked.

There is a muffled sound of a RINGING TELEPHONE on the other side of the door, dim and distant.

A RINGING pay phone.

Hearing this, Joan presses her ear closer, her eyes shifting, suddenly desperate. She needs to get closer. She wants to get in so badly. She's holding her breath.

The pay phone RINGS on the other side of the door, somewhere deep in the distance. But this time it is slightly louder.

Joan presses into the door handle, grinding into the door, chewing at the air, a network of veins standing out on the flesh on her neck.

The pay phone RINGS on the other side of the door. Slightly louder still.

Joan presses her forehead into the door, her teeth gnashing, her hand pressing down into the door handle.

And then

Her hand breaks apart, popping at the knuckles, crushing itself around the handle, pieces falling to the ground like a clutter of dry sticks.

The pay phone on the other side of the door RINGS, louder.

Joan doesn't stop grinding into the door, holding her breath, the muscles on her face going tight.

She presses down.

Her leg snaps at the knee, folding back the wrong way at the joint, her body buckling down to the ground, twisting down onto itself like rotted wood.

HARD CUT TO WHITE

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

The white face of a clean and pressed pillowcase, a tangle of colorless hair clinging to it like vines.

There is the muffled sound of an old phone RINGING, as if suffocated under something heavy.

Joan is asleep on the pillow, her head turned, more strands of her colorless hair stuck to her forehead with sweat.

Her eyes flutter open, dull, not yet awake. She lifts her head up slightly from the pillow, her pupils shifting.

She sits straight up in bed, looking around, finding herself in an UNFAMILIAR SPACE, looking across at

HERSELF, reflected in a mirror on the back of a door.

Probably once a very pretty girl, now not a pretty sight: her eyes ringed with gray exhaustion, a slick layer of sweat on her pale forehead and hollow cheeks.

The RINGING phone has stopped and the room is quiet.

Joan looks around to see that she is in a motel room, sitting up on a still-made bed, fully dressed in her sweater and jeans, her feet bare.

On the bedside table, propped up against an alarm clock, a handwritten note: *Thought I should let you sleep. Bill.*

Somewhere in the room, an old phone RINGS.

Joan turns her head to track the sound, looking across the room to where her handbag is sitting atop a television set.

The phone RINGS again and now it seems to Joan that the sound is coming from inside the handbag.

She slides herself off of the bed and goes for the handbag, putting her hands on it with caution, as if it could be hot.

She flips open the clasp and turns the handbag upside down and emptying it onto the bedspread.

Some make-up. A pack of cigarettes. A lighter. A hairbrush. Keys. A tampon. A wallet.

An iPhone, RINGING with the sound of an old pay phone.

Joan picks it up, looking at it blankly.

The screen says that "DAD" is calling. There is a photo of a MAN on a beach somewhere, hunched over a sand castle, a little girl nearby, mugging for the camera.

Joan stares at the photo as the phone goes abruptly silent. A message on the screen says "missed call" with a (6) after it.

And then a message on the screen tells her that she has a voicemail and there's an arrow that says "slide to listen".

Hesitant, Joan lifts a finger and presses it to the screen, tentatively swiping the arrow and starting the message. She brings the phone carefully up to her ear and listens.

VOICEMAIL MESSAGE (ON PHONE)

Joanie? Hey it's Dad. Where are you, honey? I've called your apartment a bunch of times and, I dunno... maybe call me when you get this so I know you're okay. Okay. I love you. Bye. Call me.

CLICK. The message ends. Joan looks at the phone, blinking slowly, her face pulled tight.

She looks over her shoulder, just to make sure that she's alone, just to make sure that no one else heard any of that.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - DAY

Joan runs the shower. She slips off her shoes and socks. She slips off her jeans and her underwear.

She pulls off her sweater, revealing an old white t-shirt with no bra underneath. She pulls that off, too.

Standing there naked, she looks at herself in the mirror.

Her body is in rough shape, underweight and frail, her ribs showing, her skin very pale, untouched by the sun.

Still worse, her left shoulder bears the scar of a puncture wound; a matching scar just above her left breast makes it clear that something went in one side and came out the other.

JUMP AHEAD TO

Joan showers, head down, the drain between her feet staring up at her, deep and black against the white of the tub basin.

JUMP AHEAD TO

Joan is out of the shower, drying herself and wrapping a towel around her torso, cinching it tight.

And then there is a DULL KNOCKING coming from the other room.

Joan turns, startled, her breath catching. Pinching her towel a little bit tighter, she slips out of the bathroom.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Joan slowly goes for the door.

BILL (O.S.)
Knock knock.

JOAN
Hello?

BILL (O.S.)
It's Bill.
(pause, then)
From the airport?
(then)
You mind if I come in?

She looks down at herself.

BILL (O.S.)
Just want to see how you're doing
is all.

She hesitates, then clicks the door open and backs up into the room, sitting down on the bed and pulling the towel tightly around herself.

Bill comes in, closing the door softly behind him. Seeing that she is in a towel, he looks down at his feet.

BILL
Oh. Excuse me.

She looks down, just sitting there. But it's all right. Bill has a friendly, authoritative presence, like a good teacher.

BILL
I see you're up, at least.
(indicates a chair)
You mind?

He takes the chair and moves it near the bed, keeping his eyes down to let her adjust to his presence.

BILL

So... I guess you were pretty zonked out there, huh?

(then)

Slept for almost four hours in the back seat. Talking in your sleep, some, too.

(then)

But don't worry. No dark secrets. Just sleep talk, mumbling and what not. I tried waking you when we got here... but nope... pretty much dead to the world.

(then)

You woke up long enough to let me help you get from the car to here, anyway.

JOAN

(barely)

Oh.

BILL

(moving right along)

Brought your things in for you.

Bill braves a look up at her, seeing the scar on her shoulder, but not wanting to stare at it.

Seeing the inside of her thigh where it meets the cuff of the towel, but not wanting to stare at it.

JOAN

(quietly)

I'm sorry.

BILL

Sorry? For what?

She doesn't know.

BILL

All right. First rule is you don't apologize to me, young lady. I'm happy to help, okay?

JOAN

I'm sor --

She stops herself, batting her eyes down.

BILL

(chuckles)

That's okay.

A natural silence slips into the room. It lasts a long time.

Joan keeps her eyes on the floor, her pupils sweeping back and forth as she tries to imagine what to do next.

JOAN
(quietly)
Why are you doing this?

BILL
Why am I doing what?

JOAN
(quietly)
Why are you helping me?

Bill considers his answer carefully. He tries smiling at her, but it doesn't stick.

BILL
You believe in god, Joan?

She takes her time, being careful.

JOAN
(quietly)
No.
(then)
I've never seen him.

BILL
Aw, well... you just gotta know
where to look.
(then)
Most people think you look for
him in some book or in some
statue or in a church. But that's
not how it works for me. I look
for him in the unlikely things
that happen. The little things.
Little coincidences.
(then)
For me, coincidences are like
little winks from the Lord, just
letting us know He's watching,
that He's keeping an eye on
things.
(then)
When I notice you on the plane...
you reminded me of someone.
Someone I haven't seen in a long
time.

That slows him down a little, and he takes his time starting up again.

BILL

And then you tell me you're going to Portsmouth... and a coincidence like that... I just can't ignore it.

(then)

Strange as it might sound, I guess I saw God in you.

JOAN

Are you going to... Portsmouth, too?

BILL

No. Not exactly. But we're going to the town just before it.

(then)

Linda and I are headed to Bramford.

Joan stiffens. It's almost imperceptible, the thin vein on her neck tightening like a string on an instrument.

BILL

We go out there every year around this time.

(then)

You know Bramford?

JOAN

(barely)

No.

BILL

Well, it's about 15 miles on to Portsmouth from there. You think you'll be able to make it the rest of the way?

Joan doesn't respond immediately.

JOAN

(suddenly)

When can we leave?

BILL

Well... hopefully first thing in the morning, assuming the weather holds up all right and the roads are open.

(then, smiling)

(MORE)

BILL (CONT'D)

Unless you've got a different
idea.

Joan tries to imagine what he means, her pupils shifting.

JOAN

Where's Linda?

BILL

Linda? She's sleeping.

Bill sits coiled in his chair, breathing. Joan sits on the bed, looking down at the carpet, a tangle of thick fibers.

But that's it. Bill presses his hands down onto his knees and stands up.

BILL

Well. I bet you're hungry.

(then)

There's a Friendly's just across
the parking lot.

(then)

Why don't you get yourself
dressed and come and have dinner
with me. You look like you could
use it, young lady.

JOAN

(quietly)

Thank you.

BILL

Fifteen minutes, okay?

Joan nods. She tries a smile, but it's not very good.

BILL

Okay.

He turns and walks out, pulling the door closed, leaving Joan alone again. Her eyes fall closed, breathing to herself.

A single tear appears in the teeth of her eyelashes but she brushes it away roughly before it has a chance to fall.

INT. FRIENDLY'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Joan enters, squinting under the bright fluorescent lighting. A SMILING HOSTESS who couldn't stop smiling if she tried.

SMILING HOSTESS

Good evening and welcome to
Friendly's. Will it be just the
one of you then?

Joan looks past the smiling hostess to where Bill is seated
alone in a booth, his hand up.

JOAN

No... I'm with someone.

AT THE BOOTH

Joan approaches the table. Bill smiles kindly at her.

BILL

There she is.

Joan slides in to sit down. There is a woman's winter coat
folded up on the seat next to her.

BILL

Linda has an extra. She won't
mind if you borrow it.

JOAN

Oh, Thank you.
(shakes her head)
I'm sorry.

BILL

Hey, no "sorry's", remember?

Joan looks down, trying a smile. It's her best one yet, and
good enough to get Bill to smile, too.

Joan peeks up to scan the restaurant. Very few other patrons
sit hunched over food that looks exactly like what it is.

In the corner of the room, she spots a LONELY WOMAN in a
booth, sitting with a disciplined straightness, her head
down, her lips moving silently, as if in prayer.

BILL

The chicken noodle soup's pretty
good here. You like chicken
noodle soup?

JOAN

(distracted)
Oh. Okay. That sounds good.

They sit in uneasy silence, Joan idly lifting up the corner
of her menu and then letting it flap down onto the tabletop.

The waitress comes over.

WAITRESS

You two know what you want?

BILL

I think we do. Joan?

JOAN

Oh. Me? Oh. I dunno. I guess I'll have... I guess I'll have the chicken noodle soup, please.

BILL

Reuben sandwich, french fries, please.

WAITRESS

I'll be right out with that.

The waitress picks up their menus and leaves.

BILL

So... Portsmith, huh? Is that home for you?

(then)

Your mom and dad?

JOAN

No.

BILL

You have friends there?

She thinks about it.

JOAN

I have a friend.

(then)

He's waiting for me.

(then, quietly)

He loves me.

BILL

Well, that's very good, isn't it?

Joan doesn't know what to say. There is another long silence.

BILL

Ever been to a Friendly's before?

(he's filling in her

pauses now)

Yeah, well... It's a good place for kids, anyway.

JOAN
 (very carefully)
 You have kids?

Bill repositions his knife and fork, smiling sadly.

BILL
 (takes his time)
 We had a daughter. Yes we did. A
 beautiful daughter. You remind me
 of her a little.
 (then)
 We lost her seven years ago.
 Seven years tomorrow, actually.

JOAN
 Oh. I didn't...

BILL
 No, no, not your fault.
 (then)
 And it's okay. We do okay. It's
 been difficult. But you know what
 they say: "time heals all
 wounds".

He doesn't like to scoff, but one escapes his throat.

BILL
 And little by little it does get
 easier. Except around this time
 every year when we go and lay
 flowers on the anniversary... I
 don't know. Sometimes I don't
 know if it helps or if it just
 makes it harder.
 (then)
 And my wife... well, she usually
 hits a rough patch right around
 now. But we do okay. We do okay.
 (trails off, catches
 himself)
 I'm sorry.
 (catches himself)
 Oops. Now you've got me saying
 it.

He smiles sadly. There is a long silence.

Joan steals another peek across to the lonely woman in the
 corner booth. The lonely woman is now looking across the
 room, gazing mildly at Joan.

BILL

Here. I've got a picture...

Bill hinges forward in his seat, reaching into his back pocket, pulling out his wallet. Joan feels his movements and looks back at him.

He's getting older and reaching back like that makes the tendons on his neck stand out a little behind reddish flesh.

He flips his wallet open and takes out a small photograph, pinching it delicately between his thumb and forefinger like it could fall apart at any moment.

His eyes shine and a thin, sad smile fights its way onto his lips as he hands the picture across the table.

Joan takes the picture from him, turning it right-side-up as she brings it closer.

And then she sees it.

Her lips part slightly, exposing the edges of her wet teeth, the flesh on the back of her neck going cold.

And then we see the picture, too.

It's a yearbook portrait. Just the head of a beautiful teenage girl.

Immediately recognizable as ROSE.

Joan feels a WARM BREATH just behind her ear. Suppressing a shiver, she lets her eyes fall softly closed.

Her lips part slightly and move with almost no sound.

WHISWHISPER.

CUT TO BLACK

And then

Superimpose title:

KAT

INT. FATHER BRIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Sunlight pours in from a high window and onto the head and shoulders of FATHER BRIAN who is working at his wide and sparse desk.

There is a soft KNOCK at his door.

SECRETARY (O.S.)
 Father Brian? We're sorry to disturb...

Father Brian looks up at his SECRETARY in the doorway, her hand placed gently on Kat's shoulder.

FATHER BRIAN
 Oh... of course. Hello, Katherine.

KAT
 Hello, Father Brian.

FATHER BRIAN
 Thank you, Dawn.

Dawn the secretary smiles and leaves. Kat takes a few steps into the room and waits at a respectful distance.

FATHER BRIAN
 Do you want to sit?

KAT
 Oh, no. Thank you, Father Brian.

FATHER BRIAN
 (smiles)
 All right.
 (then)
 Mr. Walch tells me that your recital is coming along very nicely. I'm sorry that I won't be here to see it.

KAT
 Father Brian?

FATHER BRIAN
 Yes, Katherine?

KAT
 Where are you going that you won't be here?

Father Brian likes to think of himself as open and available.

FATHER BRIAN

I have some personal business in Albany.

KAT

But when will you be back?

FATHER BRIAN

Well, after the break with everyone else, I should think.

KAT

Do you have to go?

He cocks his head very slightly, curious.

KAT

I mean I just wish you could stay and see my performance.

FATHER BRIAN

I am sorry, Katherine but I'm afraid this time it can't be helped.

(then)

I'm sure you are very much looking forward to seeing your parents on Wednesday, though, aren't you?

Kat smiles but it is not much more than a flicker. Father Brian notices, settling back slightly in his chair to see where this is going.

KAT

What if they don't come?

FATHER BRIAN

Your parents?

(then)

What should stop them from coming?

Kat's gaze has shifted to the bright window on the back wall behind his desk. The light coming through is coloring her face. Father Brian watches her.

FATHER BRIAN

Katherine? Is anything the matter?

KAT

No. Everything is good.

She looks at him, managing a polite smile.

KAT
Well, anyway, have a fun time in
Albany.

INT. CORRIDOR - MORNING

The boisterous CHATTER of girls packing suitcases spills out into the corridor from open dorm rooms.

Following Kat as she pads down the corridor in her socks, wearing a navy blue hooded sweater with the words THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL stamped in white across the back.

She makes her way to the pay phone against the wall, picking up the receiver.

She opens her palm, looking down at a pair of dull quarters. The heads of George Washington. She feeds the coins into the slot and dials.

CUT TO

INT. A SUBURBAN HOME - MORNING

A framed school portrait of Kat sits on the mantlepiece. An ordinary smile, her soft, blue eyes looking out at us.

KAT'S MOM stands in the front hallway, her coat on. She looks pleasant enough. Maybe a little short, a little heavy, but pleasant enough.

She's holding a set of car keys, looking at them oddly.

Outside the open front door, KAT'S DAD is loading suitcases into the trunk of an idling station wagon.

DAD
(calling out)
We should really get going!

Kat's Mom stares at the car keys in her hand, her forehead creased with uneasiness.

DAD
(calling out)
Honey?

He comes up the short front steps, appearing in the doorway.

DAD
Honey? You just about ready to
go?

Kat's Mom shakes herself out of her strange reverie.

MOM
Yes. Of course.
(then)
I just had the strangest... A bad
feeling.

DAD
A bad feeling? About what?

KAT'S MOM
I don't know.

DAD
Well, okay, but we're going to
miss the plane.

MOM
(vaguely)
Yes, of course. All right.

Kat's Mom turns, following Kat's Dad out to the car, closing
the door behind them.

We linger in the house, sunlight streaming in through the
windows.

Stillness.

And then

BBBBBBBBRRRRRRRRRIIIIIIIIIINNNNNNNGGGGGGGGG.

The phone RINGS.

CUT TO

INT. CAFETERIA - MORNING

Tables filled with UNIFORMED GIRLS, some with still-wet hair,
breakfasts in front of them, heads bowed, hands together.

THE GIRLS
(in unison)
... and bless this meal that we
are about to receive and for
which we are truly grateful...

Finding Kat among the other girls, her head bowed, her hands together, her lips moving along with the words.

Her eyes are open, her pupils shifting uneasily.

INT. MUSIC CLASSROOM - DAY

Kat practices the harp, the toe of her sneaker tapping out the time on the floor, her fingers plucking at the strings.

Her playing is distracted, her pupils shifting, as if trying to see something behind her without moving her head.

Her fingers lose their place on the strings and she stops suddenly, frustrated.

She turns and braves a look into the back corner of the room.

Nothing there.

Taking in a breath, steadying herself, she settles in to play again, tapping with her sneaker, her eyes softly closing.

KAT
(singing softly)
Wednesday morning at five o'clock
as the day begins...

There is a single thin wisp of golden hair that curls behind her ear, at the nape of her neck.

The wisp of hair flutters, as if stirred by a gentle breath, the skin on her neck rising with goosebumps.

She continues to play, her eyes closed, her lips parting with a short intake of breath, the inside of her leg brushing against the body of the harp, pressing into the smooth wood.

KAT
(singing, breathing)
...quietly closing her bedroom
door, leaving the note that she
hoped would say more...

Her eyes are closed now, her lips parted, the corners of her mouth just starting to curl up into a faint smile.

INT. LOCKER ROOM SHOWERS - EARLY MORNING

Drifting through an empty locker room, a single shower running, the air thickening with steam. Finding a shower door in particular and moving in on it.

On the other side of the door we can see the outline of Kat's shadow. She sings while showering, determined to master it.

KAT
(sings)
Quietly turning the back door
key, stepping outside she is
free...

Coming to the end of the verse, she pauses, listening to the room, to the hiss of the shower head.

She waits in the silence. But there is nobody there.

Content that she's alone, she starts in again.

KAT
(sings)
Quietly turning the back door
key, stepping outside she is
free...

And now we're moving away from the shower curtain, turning to the long horizontal mirror that hangs over a row of sinks, steam fogging the glass.

We keep turning, panning along the mirror glass, the thick film of steam blurring the reflection.

But still we can see that He is there, the figure of a MAN, soft at his edges, a dark blur behind the gathering steam.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Everyone is asleep.

Kat comes out of her room, padding down the hall in her socks, slowly but with determination, as if being pulled along by an invisible string.

She is going for the pay phone, stepping up to it, she looks down into her hand. A pair of dull quarters in her palm. George Washington's heads.

Slowly, deliberately, she lifts the receiver from the cradle and feeds the coins into the slot. She dials and listens to it ring. It rings for a long time.

And then

CLICK.

There is a HUM on the other end, warm and low.

KAT
 (pause)
 Hello?
 (then)
 Mommy?
 (then)
 Dad?

That HUM again. And then a VOICE. A warm PURR in its throat.

PURRING VOICE
 (on phone)
 Kat.

KAT
 Dad?

PURRING VOICE
 They've already gone.

There is a long pause. The warm PURR of the connection.

PURRING VOICE
 But they're not coming.

KAT
 (pause, quietly)
 Who is it?

Kat listens to the warm PURR, staring blankly at her distorted reflection in the pay phone's chrome face.

KAT
 (pause)
 Hello?

PURRING VOICE
 (pause, then warmly)
 Hi.

Kat's breath is coming in quiet, shallow gasps, her lips lightly brushing the shiny black mouthpiece.

EXT. MAIN GATE, THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL - DAY

A line of impressive station wagons and SUVs roll in through the main gate and into a long circular driveway in front of the school.

Far off in the distance, the sky over the horizon churns with dark clouds and the low RUMBLE of thunder, beating at the air like heavy wings.

EXT. MAIN PATH, BRAMFORD SCHOOL - SAME

From high atop the spire of the old library building, we are looking down onto the path, crawling with students and their parents.

INT. AUDITORIUM, BACKSTAGE - DAY

A deep red stage curtain sways gently, the thick MURMUR of the gathering audience RUMBLING behind it.

Moving away from the curtain, we pass through the general commotion of students milling around before the performance, tuning instruments, excitedly talking about nothing.

And there is Kat, apart from the group, standing with her harp, its smooth leather case open, its insides lined with deep red felt.

Her eyes are glassy, the murmur of the gathering audience on the other side of the curtain RUMBLING in her head, overwhelming all other ambient sound, getting louder.

GROWLING at her.

JUMP CUT TO

INT. AUDITORIUM STAGE - SOMETIME LATER

Kat walks out onto the silent stage, moving towards her harp that has been placed under the lights, harsh in her eyes.

The audience is quiet except for a small cough, a winter coat being repositioned, a flip phone being clapped shut.

Kat slips down onto a stool and places her hands gently on the harp, her fingertips cold and trembling.

She starts to play, her eyes dull and glassy.

She sings, her voice meek and reedy:

KAT
(sings)
Wednesday morning at five o'clock
as the day begins...

Her eyes are shifting, adjusting to the light. Now she can begin to make out the dark shapes of the audience members.

KAT
 (sings)
 Silently closing her bedroom
 door... Leaving the note that she
 hoped would say more...

Her eyes scan the audience, the hunched black figures, moving to the end of an aisle where there are a pair of empty seats.

KAT
 (sings)
 She goes downstairs to the
 kitchen clutching her
 handkerchief... Quietly turning
 the back door key... Stepping
 outside she is free...

Kat blinks, her eyes adjusting to the dark.

And now only one seat at the end of the aisle is empty. The other seat has been taken by the dark figure of a MAN in dark clothes, hunched in his seat, his back arched and rounded.

He's hard to see. His shape is soft. Almost like he could be covered in a coat of dark fur, thickly matted.

HARD CUT TO BLACK

OVER BLACK

Somewhere, dark and syrupy HEAVY METAL plays low on Rose's small, dusty boombox, the blown speaker HISSING a little.

ROSE (OVERLAP)
 The Sisters ask anything you just
 tell them I don't feel well so
 I'm staying in bed.
 (then)
 You know about them, right?

KAT (OVERLAP)
 Know what..?

FADE UP TO

INT. ROSE'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Kat stands in Rose's doorway. Rose leans forward over the back of her chair, speaking in a sensationalized whisper.

ROSE

You know those are wigs, right?
You know they have no hair on
their bodies. No hair anywhere.
And I bet you think it's like
some sicko dike thing, huh?

(then)

Check out their eyebrows next
time. Totally fake. Their real
ones...?

She passes the lit cigarette in front of her eyes, making a
HISSING noise between her teeth.

ROSE

... burned right off.

KAT

That's not true.

ROSE

Of course it's true.

(then)

You never heard about Jen
Pearlstein's sister? Graduated
like three years ago?

Rose leans in closer.

ROSE

She walked in on them one
night...

(pauses for effect)

... *worshiping the devil.*

Kat breathes quietly for a long moment.

ROSE

Yeah. And she had to go to a
psychiatric hospital. Could still
be there for all I know.

Rose smiles and turns back to the mirror, picking up right
where she left off, tousling her hair.

ROSE

It was like a whole thing.

KAT

Who told you that?

ROSE

You kidding? Everybody knows
that.

Roses gives herself a last look, pursing her lips as if for a soft kiss.

ROSE

Just don't come into my room.

(then)

And don't touch any of my shit.

But Kat isn't listening any more, her eyes following the brume of smoke as it curls up from the tip of Rose's cigarette, floating up into to the ceiling, discovering...

The dark figure of a MAN, cloaked in shadow. It's very dark where he is and it takes a moment for Kat's eyes to adjust.

After a moment she can see that the Man is standing upside down in the corner, his feet planted on the ceiling.

And now she can see that the Man's arms and legs are covered in a dense coat of thickly matted fur and that the rest of him is neatly folded into a pair of curled, leathery wings.

JUMP CUT TO

INT. ROSE'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

We are looking down onto the room as if from upside down in the corner of the ceiling.

We are looking down at Kat who is standing at Rose's desk, her hairbrush in her small hands, examining the single strand of hair that's stuck in its teeth.

Kat puts the brush down and picks up Rose's yearbook pictures, removing them from the envelope, looking at them.

BBBBBBRRRRRRRIIIIIIIINNNNNNNGGGGGG

Somewhere in the distance, in the corridor, the phone RINGS.

Kat looks at the picture. The phone rings again. Kat's eyes fall softly closed.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Kat steps up to the ringing pay phone, her eyes level with the receiver.

She reaches up, curling her fingers around the receiver, plucking it from the hook, slowly bringing it up to her lips.

Staring at the keypad. The numbers. She listens into the phone. There is the warm HUM of the connection.

And the VOICE. Deep. Bottomless.

PURRING VOICE

Hi.

Kat's bottom lip brushes against the mouthpiece, her breath coming more heavily now.

KAT

(softly)

Hi.

Her eyes are nervous and they shift a dull gray pipe that comes out from behind the pay phone box and runs along the corridor wall.

Kat's gaze follows the path of the gray pipe to where it disappears into the wall just outside a door marked BASEMENT.

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR - NIGHT

We're following Kat as she pads down the hall in her socks, the white letters that read THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL on the back of her sweater standing out against the darkness.

The corridor unwinds in front of her as she moves around a corner. Approaching the door marked FURNACE ROOM.

Kat moves up to the small window on the door, the warm orange glow pulsing behind it. Rising up onto her tiptoes.

Looking in.

HARD CUT TO BLACK

OVER BLACK

The dark and syrupy HEAVY METAL MUSIC plays low on Rose's little, dusty boombox, the blown speaker HISSING.

QUICK FADE UP TO

INT. INFIRMARY - DAY

Kat lies sideways on the cot, her eyes dull, staring off at

ROSE and MS. PRESCOTT, speaking to each other in the next room, their mouths moving.

CUT TO BLACK

OVER BLACK

The HISSING of the blown speaker is becoming more present, the music and all other sound fading back.

And then, without warning, there is a shrill, wet SHRIEKING.

QUICK FADE UP TO

INT. MYRTLE HOUSE - EVENING

We are floating through the parlor room.

Finding Ms. Drake, clawing her way across the floor, trying to shriek, her lungs filling with blood, stab wounds studding the back of her sweater.

And now we are moving away from Ms. Drake and finding

Ms. Prescott

Folded into a chair, her sliced throat pumping blood, her tongue licking at the corners of her mouth, her hands fluttering up to the wound.

And now we are moving away from Ms. Prescott and finding

Kat

Moving with long, deliberate strides through the rooms, a long knife in her hand, her knuckles streaked with blood.

The skin on her face stretched tight over her skull, her cheekbones standing out behind her skin, her eyebrows arched up unnaturally into a gruesome leer.

Following close on Kat's shoulder as she moves through the rooms, coming into

A BEDROOM

Two single beds. Kat moves over to the pillows, pulling off the white cases, smearing them with bloody handprints.

Following her back into the first room where she crosses to where Ms. Drake is slowly pulling herself along the ground.

Kat kneels down on the carpet next to her, raising the knife.
Stabbing her to death.

CUT TO BLACK

OVER BLACK

The HISSING of the blown speaker continues, low and steady,
like a burning pan.

QUICK FADE UP TO

INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM - EVENING

Rose has just shoveled the snow off of the main path of the
school. She is just now stepping out of the shower.

And now she is standing at the sink, a pale green towel
cinched around her torso, her hair wet, her feet bare. She
unzips her toiletry bag.

The door to the bathroom goes THUMP as it is sucked shut.

Rose turns and looks.

IN THE CORRIDOR

Rose peeks her head out of the bathroom, hugging herself
against the cold wind that's coming in through the open door.

Unsure, she hesitates before moving down the hallway, passing
the open doors that lead into the dorm rooms.

All of them dark.

All of them empty.

One of them dark but not empty.

Someone is standing in the shadows there. Someone soaked in
blood. Someone cloaked in blood.

KAT

But Rose doesn't see her. She continues on to the front door,
slowing as she looks down at a cluster of confused, wet
footprints on the floor just inside the door.

She slowly reaches out for the door, leaning into it to push
it closed. But stopping halfway.

Because now she can see just outside the door, out to where the snowy steps are spotted with blood.

Leaning into the door, Rose follows the spots with her eyes, now seeing a pair of pillowcases, propped up against the side of the building, just outside the door.

The pillowcases were once a snowy white, but are now thickly smeared with drying blood that's turning a coppery brown at the edges.

There is something in the pillowcases. Two somethings. One something in each. Both roughly the size and shape of a football.

Blood collects in the bottom corners of the pillowcases, seeping through, leaking out onto the snow beneath them.

Rose can't imagine what she is looking at. She slowly draws herself back, pushing the door carefully closed, stepping back carefully.

Trying to be quiet. But it doesn't matter.

Rose turns.

And Kat is there.

Her eyes wild, the hood of her sweater pulled down, her hair stuck to her forehead with blood, clinging there like vines.

A butcher knife flashes in Kat's little fist when she brings it up.

Rose brings her hands up to defend herself but Kat works quickly, stabbing through the webbing between Rose's fingers.

Rose swats at the knife as Kat brings it down again and again, Rose's hands falling apart like water.

Moving with ferocity now, Kat presses in close, stabbing Rose along the inside of her shoulders and then repeatedly through the throat.

Killing her.

Rose's body folds in on itself on its way down to the ground.

Kat stands over her, the skin on her forehead and cheeks pulled tight, her hair limp and colorless.

Kat's heavy breathing. Rose's twisted body crumpled on the ground at her feet.

Kat turns to listen to the space around her head.

She hears the thin, sharp HISSING of the blown speaker on Rose's little dusty boombox continues, low and steady...

... joined now by the throaty HISSING of the radiator grill, somewhere in the distance, pouring down all around her.

... and joined now, too, by the warm PURRING of the connection on the other end of the pay phone, pouring down all around her.

The sounds blend together to create a full, BOTTOMLESS STATIC, like the rush of a continuous tide.

Kat lets her eyes fall softly shut, letting the sound drown everything out. Letting the sound fill her up.

Knife in hand, she bends down and straddles Rose's corpse, taking it by the hair and lifting it up by the head.

Breathing heavily through her nose, she works hard, her arm jerking back and forth in a SAWING MOTION.

Her lips are slightly parted, her teeth are wet and her eyes are bright with ecstasy.

EXT. PATH - A SHORT TIME LATER

The BOTTOMLESS STATIC drowns out all other ambient sound.

We're following the Ranger as he tracks the twin trails of blood that snake their way towards the Spencer House, a cold rifle in his hands.

Mr. Gordon can be seen hanging back, talking on his flip cell phone, a thin string of pearly vomit clinging to his chin, his eyes wild with terror.

Mounting the front steps to the Spencer House, the Ranger looks sideways at a smear of pooled blood by the front door. The pillow cases are gone.

THE CORRIDOR

The BOTTOMLESS STATIC drowns out everything.

The Ranger comes in, stepping over Rose's crumpled corpse. It doesn't have a head anymore.

Mr. Gordon hangs back out into the snow, shaking his head, his mouth covered with the inside of his jacket sleeve.

The Ranger lets him go, bringing up his rifle, moving down the hall, following a trail of bloodied footprints.

The sight of his rifle up to his eye, the Ranger moves down the hall, looking sideways into the doorways to empty and dark dorm rooms.

Looking ahead, he sees that there is a door on the hallway that is slightly open. He moves towards it.

The door is marked BASEMENT.

Keeping the rifle sight up to his eye, he nudges the door open a crack with the tip of the barrel.

The door swings open slowly.

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

The BOTTOMLESS STATIC drowns out everything as the Ranger moves towards the door marked FURNACE, the rifle's sight up to his eye.

He presses on the door with the toe of his boot and it swings open, revealing

Kat

Kneeling in front of the furnace, bowing with the swift precision of a motor, hinging at her waist and bringing her forehead to the ground where it lightly touches.

The heads of Ms. Prescott, Ms. Drake and Rose arranged in a semicircle on the ground in front of her.

The fire in the furnace pulses, the shadows cast by the heads on the floor dancing like grotesque cartoons.

Kat comes to the end of what must be some kind of series, raising her head and breathing in deeply through her nose.

The corners of her mouth curling up into a beatific smile.

Her lips are slightly parted and she is whispering something to herself but we can't hear it over the BOTTOMLESS STATIC.

And just as she is about to start again, she senses the presence of the Ranger and snaps her head to face him.

He opens his mouth to shout at her but behind the rushing wall of BOTTOMLESS STATIC it's all just pantomime.

RANGER
(silent)
*PUT UP YOUR HANDS. PUT UP YOUR
HANDS.*

A queer look of confusion clouds Kat's face.

RANGER
(silent)
PUT UP YOUR GODDAMN HANDS.

But Kat doesn't move, just looks at him, the BOTTOMLESS STATIC now raging all around her.

She turns around on her knees, bringing herself up to stand, craning her head to look at the Ranger, looking at him like he wasn't invited.

Kat raises her hands high above her head. It looks like she is surrendering.

But then her hands curl into tight fists, the veins on her wrists standing out like strings on an instrument.

Her eyes burn wide and wild, the flesh pulled tight over her skull, her cheek bones standing out, her eyebrows arched up unnaturally into a gruesome leer.

She's walking now towards the Ranger, her arms up.

She's shouting something, her teeth gnashing.

But there is no sound, the BOTTOMLESS STATIC ROARING like an approaching tide, drowning everything out.

RANGER
(silent)
STOP OR I'LL SHOOT.

Kat keeps coming, her arms up, SHOUTING SOMETHING over and over again, her eyes wide and wild, the flesh on her face pulled tight.

RANGER
(silent)
THIS IS YOUR LAST WARNING.

She keeps coming, SHOUTING SOMETHING over and over again.

And now her voice is starting to rise up behind the STATIC.

The Ranger sets his jaw and steadies the rifle, finger curled tight around the trigger.

Kat keeps coming, her arms up, SHOUTING, and now we can start to hear the words more clearly.

The Ranger steadies his rifle, his eyes dry with fear.

Kat is SHOUTING, her words now sharp and clear.

KAT
(SCREAMING)
HAIL SATAN!

The Ranger squeezes the trigger.

BANG

TO BLACK

OVER BLACK

The BOTTOMLESS STATIC cuts out and the dark and SYRUPY HEAVY METAL MUSIC swells up, coming down all around us.

The rise and fall of a bottomless bass guitar, the dusty lungs of an organ expanding over a rolling thundercloud of drums, cymbals poured on like a wavy, golden glaze.

And then

A series of QUICK SNAPSHOTS, all seen through Kat's eyes:

OUTSIDE THE MAIN GATE OF THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL - NIGHT

THROUGH KAT'S EYES we watch as Kat is carried from the scene on a stretcher. The stretcher is hooked up to a pulley at the end of a rope coming out of a helicopter.

The EMT team secures the stretcher and gives the go-ahead to the helicopter pilot

THROUGH HER EYES as she is AIR-LIFTED up and away from the school, looking up at the chopping blades of the helicopter's propeller.

BLINK TO BLACK

A HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

THROUGH HER EYES we watch the ceiling scrolling past as she is wheeled on a gurney down a hospital corridor.

UNIFORMED POLICEMEN and DOCTORS jockey for position over her, crowding the frame, their faces seared with shock.

BLINK TO BLACK

AN OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

THROUGH HER EYES we watch as she is operated on, the doctors haloed by bright disc lights, their features obscured in shadow. Their sweaty eyes shifting as they rush to work.

BLINK TO BLACK

A HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

THROUGH HER EYES we look up at a colorless particleboard ceiling. Father Brian leans into view in WAVY SLOW MOTION, looking right at us. His lips move in slow, silent pantomime.

FATHER BRIAN
(silent)
Katherine.

BLINK TO BLACK

AN INSTITUTIONAL CORRIDOR - DAY

THROUGH HER EYES we watch as she is wheeled down a dirty institutional corridor, the walls smudged with hand prints, the paint chipped and curled.

BLINK TO BLACK

AN INSTITUTIONAL REC ROOM - DAY

THROUGH HER EYES we look into the REC ROOM at a mental hospital on a typical day, leering patients in soiled pajamas, the unkind face of a NURSE leaning in with pills.

BLINK TO BLACK

AN INSTITUTIONAL REC ROOM - NIGHT

THROUGH HER EYES we see the same room on a typical night.

The television turned on in the corner of the room. A HOPEFUL TEENAGER performs on an episode of American Idol.

BLINK TO BLACK

AN INSTITUTIONAL REC ROOM - DAY

THROUGH HER EYES we see the same room on CHRISTMAS DAY.

A sad, crooked tree. A thrashing patient being restrained.

BLINK TO BLACK

AN INSTITUTIONAL REC ROOM - VARIOUS

The QUICK SNAPSHOTS start to come even more quickly now, the BLINKS TO BLACK getting shorter and shorter as we hurtle forward through time.

The REC ROOM on a typical day.

The REC ROOM at night. A HOPEFUL TEENAGER performs on American Idol.

The REC ROOM on Christmas Day.

Seven Christmas Days. One after another. Seven years.

BLINK TO BLACK

AN INSTITUTIONAL CORRIDOR - DAY

THROUGH HER EYES we see hazy sunlight glowing at the end of the corridor.

We are moving towards it. Someone has made a mistake. There is an open door at the end of the corridor.

There is a GUARD grinding away at a SCRAWNY WOMAN, her cheap jeans skirt hiked up, her cheaper purse dangling at the end of a long strap.

But they don't see us. And now we are walking away, going for the door, out into a parking lot where sunlight shimmers off of the hoods of cars.

BLINK TO BLACK

A HIGHWAY - NIGHT

THROUGH HER EYES we walk alongside a highway shoulder, lined with palm trees, their trunks bowed by gusts of wind. Looks like Central Florida or some horrible place like that.

BLINK TO BLACK

A SUBURBAN BACKYARD - DAWN

THROUGH HER EYES we are drifting through someone's backyard, weaving through rows of white sheets hung on a clothesline, swinging back and forth like a tide.

BLINK TO BLACK

A SUBURBAN HOME - MORNING

THROUGH HER EYES we watch as she strangles a YOUNG WOMAN to death, her eyes bulging, her blue tongue thrashing, her hand desperately clawing at her attacker.

BLINK TO BLACK

A BEDROOM - DAY

THROUGH HER EYES we look on as she rifles through a handbag, pulling out a wallet, going for a Florida driver's license.

The person in the picture is the woman we just saw being strangled to death.

The name on the license is JOAN MARSH.

JOAN.

BLINK TO BLACK

A TAXI - NIGHT

THROUGH HER EYES we watch the back of the driver's head as he drives into an airport, passing under a sign for DEPARTURES.

BLINK TO BLACK

AN AIRPORT TERMINAL - NIGHT

THROUGH HER EYES we jog towards the boarding gate, just making it before they close the doors.

BLINK TO BLACK

ON A SERVICE ROAD - NIGHT

THROUGH HER EYES we walk along the service road at the airport in Providence, snow falling at the lens.

Turning to look at the car that has pulled up alongside her.
A golden brown Mercedes station wagon.

HARD CUT TO BLACK

OVER BLACK

The HEAVY METAL fading away, leaving us with only quiet.

And then, after a long moment, there is a MURMUR of voices.
The CLICK CLACK of cheap silverware on cheap ceramic plates.
A faint PURR of canned music in a speaker.

The sounds of a nearly-empty restaurant.

AND WE ARE BACK IN

INT. FRIENDLY'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Joan lets her eyes open, looking down now at Rose's yearbook picture, pinched tight between her forefinger and her thumb.

Bill sits very still in the seat across from her, his eyes on the back of the picture.

BILL

That's her. That's my Rose.

JOAN

(blinks, quietly)
She's pretty.

BILL

She is, isn't she?

He opens his hand for the picture and Joan hands it across the table. He takes it in his palm, turning it towards himself like a plate, slipping it back into his wallet.

The waitress arrives with their food, putting a bowl of chicken noodle soup down in front of Joan.

WAITRESS

There you are.
(then)
Is there anything else I can get for you right now?

BILL

No. Thank you.

The waitress turns and leaves.

BILL
That looks good.

JOAN
(looking down)
May I... please be excused?

BILL
Oh. Of course. Please...

But Joan is already sliding out of the booth, pulling her handbag after her.

INT. LADIES' ROOM, FRIENDLY'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Joan is hunched over the sink, the water running. Her head down, she splashes water onto her face, pressing her hands over her eyes, holding them there.

And then, without warning, she LAUGHS.

Just once, like a crooked little bird escaping from the shallow part of her throat.

She keeps her hands pressed up to her eyes, listening to the water running. And she doesn't laugh any more.

She takes her hands from her eyes and braces herself on the sides of the sink, looking down into the basin, at the dark cyclops eye of the drain.

Her eyes fall softly closed, her head bowed. Pressing her hands down onto the sink, she is rocking herself very gently back and forth on the balls of her feet.

She reaches over and pulls down a paper towel, pressing it to her face. She looks up at the mirror, at her own reflection.

She notices a loose strand of hair sticking to her forehead and brushes it away. And then she brushes away another, curling it behind her ear.

She plucks at her hair, here and there.

Fixing it.

INT. BACK HALLWAY, FRIENDLY'S RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Joan comes out of the bathroom and starts down the short hallway but stops suddenly, ducking back behind the corner.

Peeking around, she can see a UNIFORMED POLICE OFFICER standing at their table, talking to Bill.

She watches, too far away to hear what is being said.

The uniformed police officer tips his hat and goes back to the front door, nodding goodbye to the hostess and pushing his way out into the night.

Joan breathes evenly, inching out from around the corner and nearly bumping into a dish cart parked against the wall. She looks down at it, her eyes shifting.

Atop the cart sits the carcass of a steak dinner on a scuffed plate, red and runny.

Lying sideways across the plate, a wood-handled STEAK KNIFE.

INT. FRIENDLY'S RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Joan comes back to the table, holding her handbag across her body, looking down at her feet as she walks.

Bill has placed some money on the table and is getting ready to stand, collecting their coats.

BILL

There she is.

(then)

It looks like we got some real bad weather coming in overnight. And if we don't get going tonight we're likely to get snowed out tomorrow... maybe the day after.

(then, looking up at her)

I assume you're still interested in coming along? Get to that boyfriend of yours?

Joan keeps her eyes down.

BILL

I'm just gonna go rouse Linda and try to be on the road by...

(he checks his watch)

... seven ten.

(then)

They're going to pack up our food for us. Maybe you can grab it and meet me in front?

JOAN

Okay. Thank you.

Bill is hurrying now, handing her Linda's spare winter coat and stepping briskly towards the front door.

Joan stands by the booth, Linda's spare winter coat gathered up in her arms.

She watches Bill go out into the gently-falling snow, the double doors slipping shut behind him.

SLOW CROSS DISSOLVE TO

EXT. TWO LANE HIGHWAY - NIGHT (MOVING)

Following close behind the Mercedes Station wagon, the tail lights glowing red in the darkness.

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON - SAME (MOVING)

It's quiet in here, the radio turned down very low. Snow rushes at the windshield, the wipers beating back and forth like hammers.

Joan sits in the back seat, watching the back of Bill's head as he drives, the pink gooseflesh on his throat pinched tight by his starchy white collar.

Her eyes shift to Linda in front of her in the passenger seat, the older woman's pale and slender neck visible between the sharp edge of her hairline and soft fluff of her sweater.

Joan sits very still, her hands folded over the purse.

They drive in silence, snow flashing outside the windows.

LINDA (O.C.)
 (to Bill)
 What did you say to her?

BILL (O.C.)
 To who, Linda?

LINDA (O.C.)
 You know who.

BILL (O.C.)
 You're being difficult. Please
 just try and relax and let me
 focus on the road.

There is a long silence. Joan waits. And then Linda turns around to address her directly.

This is the closest we've ever been to Linda, and we are surprised to see how deeply her face is creased with sadness, her eyes so sharp.

LINDA

I know he told you that we had a daughter. Although I know he said that we *have* a daughter.

(then)

I hate it when he says it that way.

BILL

(turning)

Linda.

LINDA

(still on Joan)

Oh, please, Bill. You focus on the road or you'll get us *all* killed.

(and then)

I bet he said that you remind him of her. He said that to you, didn't he? It's okay. He says it to almost everyone.

BILL

Linda. Come on.

Joan doesn't move. Snow rushes at the windshield.

LINDA

Did he tell you she was murdered?

BILL

Please...

LINDA

You focus on the road!

(then, to Joan)

Did he?

Joan is breathing through her nose, keeping herself steady.

LINDA

No?

Joan couldn't break from Linda's gaze if she tried, the older woman's intense stare now ringed red with hatred.

LINDA

Did he tell you that when they
found her she they had to run
blood tests to make sure that her
head matched the body?

BILL

(shouts)
That's enough!!

Bill reaches over to calm Linda but she swats his hand away.

LINDA

(screams)
DON'T YOU DARE TOUCH ME!

Linda abruptly turns in her seat, looking straight ahead.

Joan feels Bill's eyes on her in the rearview mirror and she looks up, meeting his gaze, holding it. He looks away.

Joan turns her head to look out the window. A sign appears on the side of the road, coming closer, coming into focus.

BRAMFORD 3 MILES.

In the back seat, Joan grips her handbag, the leather on the straps creaking in the stillness.

EXT. TWO LANE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Snow falls steadily onto the road as the Mercedes Station wagon continues on. No other cars in sight.

The turnoff for Bramford is coming up on the right and the station wagon is drifting over, turning off of the highway and onto

A COUNTRY ROAD

Snow falling silently. The moonlight bright on the fallen snow. Leafless black trees.

The station wagon drives on, tail lights glowing like coal.

And there is the sign for the turnoff to

THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON - SAME

Joan is looking out the window. She sees the sign for the Bramford School and her eyes fall softly closed.

JOAN
(quietly, eyes closed)
Could you please pull over?

BILL
(turns halfway)
Huh? What was that?

JOAN
(slightly louder)
I think I'm going to be sick.

He shifts in his seat to look over his shoulder at Joan.

BILL
You okay back there?

JOAN
(eyes still closed)
Please. Pull over.

BILL
All right... hold on, hold on.

LINDA
We are not stopping here.
(then)
Go past it, Bill.

BILL
Hold on, hold on...

LINDA
Goddamn it. GO PAST IT!

Bill ignores her, flipping on his turn signal.

BLONK, BLONK, BLONK.

In the darkness of the back seat, Joan's hand drifts over to her handbag.

Her heart is beating very quickly now and she is getting short of breath.

Her eyes are closed, her head still slightly tilted down. Her lips are moving, almost silently.

WHISWHISPER.

Bill scans the side of the road for a safe place to pull over and Joan's fingertips crawl over the clasp on her handbag.

BLONK, BLONK, BLONK goes the turn signal.

Joan lifts her head, her eyes slowly opening, the blacks of her pupils sharp like pins.

Bill spots a place to stop, checking the sideview mirrors, slowing down.

BILL

Okay. Here we go...

He looks up into the rearview mirror as he brings the car to a complete stop. He sees Joan's eyes. Looking at him.

She holds his gaze.

BLONK, BLONK, BLONK.

Joan reaches across her body, CLICKING off her lap belt.

She hinges forward in her seat, one hand curling up around Bill's forehead, her knuckles shining white with strength.

The other hand pulls the thin blade of the steak knife across his throat.

Bill's hands fly up, a rushing wave of blood splurting through his fingers, splashing onto the steering wheel and onto the knees of his pants.

He reaches hopelessly behind him, blood spitting out from the wound at his neck, his feet flapping at the wet pedals like suffocating fish.

OUTSIDE

The car lurches forward a few feet, its tail lights glowing red. Plowing deeper into a snow bank, it stops dead. A spasm.

IN THE CAR

Bill shudders forward, folding into the space between the steering wheel and the radio.

Linda has turned away from him and is fumbling at the door handle. But it's locked. And she isn't going anywhere.

Joan slides across the back seat, stabbing Linda in the face and neck. Linda swats hopelessly at the point of the knife, the flesh on her hands torn to red ribbons.

Linda is SHRIEKING, ducking her head down and away from the point of the knife.

Joan lunges forward over the seat, repeatedly stabbing Linda in the back and along the side of her neck.

The knife severs an artery and Linda's blood spatters Joan in the face. Joan flinches under the heat of it, putting her small hand up to protect herself from the spray.

Linda slumps across the seat, limp and crumpled.

Joan stops still. The air in the cabin is pink with wispy clouds of blood spray, hanging suspended in the cold air.

There is the BLONK BLONK BLONK of the turn signal.

OUTSIDE

The back seat door opens and Joan pushes herself out of the vehicle, lurching forward onto her hands and knees, gasping for air.

She hangs her head, gagging, coughing up nothing.

Silent snow falls on her head and shoulders and she looks up, letting it fall gently onto her hot, blood-spattered face.

With her hands she rubs the snow into her skin, washing off the blood.

Sitting now on her knees in the snow next to the open car door, Joan catches her breath and listens to the silence.

Her eyes shift, as if expecting something.

But nothing comes.

She turns quickly to look behind her. Nothing there. She sucks down a deep breath. She waits for a long moment.

But nothing comes.

After a long moment she steadies herself on the open door and stands up, turning to look into the car where she can see the slumped corpses of Bill and Linda.

Joan hesitates for a moment, her eyes shifting.

And then she reaches across to where the bloodied knife is lying sideways on the back seat.

She picks up the knife and slides into the car, taking a moment to sit in the space, her eyes falling softly closed, trying to regulate her breathing.

She listens to the BLONK BLONK BLONK of the turn signal, as if waiting for it to cue her forward.

BLONK

BLONK

BLONK

Joan steadies herself and leans across the front seat, taking Bill by the collar of his shirt and pulling his body back into some semblance of a normal seated position.

With her free hand she drags her sleeve across her eyes, killing any tears before they have a chance to fall.

She clenches her jaw very tight and takes hold of his hair, tilting his head back, bringing the blade up to the wound on his neck.

CUT AHEAD TO

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - MINUTES LATER

Joan moves smoothly around to the trunk of the station wagon, popping it open to reveal a pair of suitcases. Unzipping one, she finds Linda's clothes, neatly folded.

She pulls the suitcase from the trunk, turning it over and dumping it out, the older woman's things clattering to pieces on the snowy ground at her feet.

Moving around to the passenger door, Joan pulls out Linda and Bill's bloodied heads, putting them into the empty suitcase, zipping it up.

She moves with quick determination, refusing to be slowed down by the rising awareness that what she is doing is in fact totally mad.

JUMP CUT AHEAD TO

Joan kneels by the car in the red glow of the brake lights, partially nude, rooting through Linda's clothes in the snow.

Shivering in the cold, she dresses herself in Linda's ill-fitting, grown-up clothes. A loud flower print blouse and slacks.

JUMP CUT AHEAD TO

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON - MOMENTS LATER

Joan has slid in behind the wheel, clawing at Linda's make-up case, her hands shaking badly in the small space, going for a powder brush, checking herself in the rearview mirror.

She brings the powder brush up to her face, dragging it roughly along the line of her cheekbone.

She turns her head a little, looking hard at herself, trying to find the best angle of her face.

Her hand comes up slowly, picking at a loose strand of hair, trying to make it fall right on her hollow cheek.

Her eyes go soft with sadness as she pulls softly at her hair. Trying to fix it nice.

She catches her own eyes in the mirror. Shifting, wild.

Her movements slow to a stop, the powder brush pressed to her cheek. She looks at herself for a long moment.

EXT. THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL, FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Stillness. Gentle snowfall.

The Mercedes station wagon is parked by the front gate, the driver's side door open, the dim interior lights glowing amber in the darkness.

Joan steps out of the car, dressed in Linda's ill-fitting clothes, her face frozen under a plate of pale make-up, her hair fixed.

Taking Linda's suitcase, she makes her way up to the entrance, slowing when she sees

A broken lock clicking against the iron gate. And a collage of posted signs, worn by weather, peeling at the edges.

BUILDINGS CONDEMNED. NO TRESPASSING.

She hesitates a moment before reaching out to push on the gate. It creaks open easily.

Stepping through the gate and onto campus, she looks around. Gnarled winter trees. Empty spaces. Cold shadows.

She continues on, stepping into thick, fresh snow that covers the main path, drifting into

THE BRAMFORD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Once a handsome campus, now nothing more than a distracted group of hollow brick buildings in the snow, marked with faded graffiti, boarded-up, their faces blank like tenements.

Approaching the Spencer House, she slows at the sight of the faded red front door. Her eyes shining, she walks up to it, going up the short steps.

A makeshift SHRINE has been assembled at the foot of the door. A ring of hollow, cold candles. A brittle bouquet of dead flowers choked together by a frayed red ribbon.

Standing next to the flowers, a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH. A school portrait of a girl, the glass clouded by exposure to the elements.

But the picture is clearly of ROSE.

Joan looks down at the picture. She presses the toe of her thin shoe up against the side of the frame.

With the toe of her thin shoe she nudges the picture frame aside, clearing it from in front of the door.

She brings a hand up and presses it flat onto the faded red door, letting her eyes fall softly shut.

She feels along the face of the door for the knob, squeezing it. It clicks in her hand. She smiles a little to herself. Taking a breath, she presses it open.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Joan steps softly through the door, placing a foot gingerly down onto the warped floor on the inside of the building.

Standing in the space, she breathes. Her visible breath hanging suspended in the air around her head like a laurel.

She cranes her head to look down to the end of the hall where the pay phone should be.

Moving down to the end of the hallway, she slows her step.

The pay phone isn't there anymore.

Now it's just a square bracket with a deep hole at its center. A nest of gnawed cords and cables, connected to nothing, reaching out of the wall like young shoots.

Joan puts down Linda's suitcase, one hand coming up to cover her mouth, the other reaching out, running her fingers over the tips of the gnarled wiring where the phone used to be.

Blinking, she turns her head, following with her eyes the dull gray pipe that runs from the pay phone outlet and along the wall to the door marked BASEMENT.

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Following behind Joan as she steps softly down the dark basement hallway, the white flowers on her borrowed blouse standing out against the darkness.

In one hand she is carrying the suitcase, in the other hand she carries a lighter, its short flame licking the cold air as she makes her way down the near pitch-black corridor.

Her visible breath hanging suspended in the air around her head like a laurel, her eyes shining.

Turning a corner, she can see down to the end of the corridor, down to the door marked FURNACE ROOM.

But on the other side of the small window on the door, there is only more darkness.

Joan slowly steps up to the door, her breath catching in her throat, her eyes shining.

She places her hand flat onto the door, gently, as if onto the hide of a great, sleeping beast.

She can feel that it's cold in there.

Curling her hand gently around the door handle, she presses down on it, pushing her shoulder into the door.

But it's locked.

She bows her head, pressing her body to the door. Her breath catches and she holds it. She hangs her head.

JOAN
(very softly to herself)
Please.

She's exhausted.

JOAN
(very softly to herself)
Please.

Her body goes slack against the door and she turns her head, pressing her cheek softly against the cold paint.

Her eyes are tired and dull and ringed with grief. With her cheek pressed up against the cold door, she stares off at nothing.

And then

CLICK CLACK. CLICK CLACK.

Heeled shoes on hard floor, low in the distance.

Someone coming.

Joan hears it and her body tightens.

CLICK CLACK. CLICK CLACK. Low in the distance.

Joan hears the footsteps coming and she holds her breath, her eyes shifting.

CUT TO

INT. A HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

We are looking down at Joan when she was much, much younger.

When she was KAT, resting in a hospital bed, a heavily-taped compress on her shoulder, a rose-colored tube running from her nose to a machine that PURRS.

CLICK CLACK go the heeled shoes on hard floor, coming closer.

It takes a considerable effort for Kat to open her watery eyes. She struggles to blink herself awake, a single tear running down her smooth cheek.

Her head is heavy with medicine and she is able to turn it only very slightly so that can see out into a long corridor where a DARK AND BLURRED FIGURE is approaching.

Blinking to focus she can start to see that it is a Man in dark clothes, a small black suitcase swinging at his side.

Kat watches him come, blinking at the sharp CLICK CLACK of his heeled shoes on the hard floor of the hospital corridor.

She thinks to move her hand but finds that she can't. Thick leather restraints have been tightly buckled at her wrists. And down at her ankles, too.

CLICK CLACK go the footsteps of the Man with the dark clothes and the small black suitcase. Kat struggles to blink him into focus as he approaches.

She can see now that the man is Father Brian, a thin strip of starchy white at his collar. His small black suitcase is made of stiff leather and it CREAKS.

Kat's eyes are waking up now, her pupils shifting.

CLICK. CLACK.

Father Brian is at the door to her room, coming in with his small black suitcase, pulling the door closed behind him with a soft CLICK.

Kat shifts uncomfortably under her restraints. She feels like she should be happy to see him. But she isn't.

Father Brian is now stepping carefully over to Kat's bedside. CLICK CLACK go his heeled shoes on the hard hospital floor.

KAT
(groggy)
Father Brian?

But it seems like Father Brian has not really heard her as he leans in close, his eyes soft and sad and searching.

FATHER BRIAN
(softly)
Katherine.

He tentatively places his hand on her forehead that is now beading with sweat. She flinches at his touch and he does his best to not appear frightened.

KAT
(groggy)
Father Brian, can you get me up?

But Father Brian is not listening to her.

He watches her eyes, hunting for something, as if trying to see if there is something in there with her. He looks at her like this for a long moment.

FATHER BRIAN
 (softly)
 Ssshhhh. This will all be over
 soon.

And then Father Brian sees something just behind her eyes.
 Fear clouds his gaze and his face turns guarded and cold.

FATHER BRIAN
 (airless)
 There you are.

KAT
 (groggy)
 Please... please don't. I promise
 I'll be good. I promise...

FATHER BRIAN
 You are not wanted here.

Kat tightens her fists, her eyes sweeping back and forth in
 panic.

KAT
 (groggy)
 No... please... just... *let him*
stay...

Father Brian sets his jaw and leans in closer, looking past
 her eyes and speaking in a HISSING WHISPER, soft and even.

FATHER BRIAN
 (airless)
 I say that you will go from this
 place... You will leave here.
 (then)
 You will leave this poor girl and
 you will never come back.

Father Brian turns to reach down into his suitcase, pulling
 out a small bottle of water Holy Water and unceremoniously
 twisting off the top.

Seeing this, Kat's breath is coming harder now. It is a wet
 breath, ROLLING like boiling water. It's almost a GROWL.

KAT
 No...

FATHER BRIAN
 (rising)
 I command that you leave this
 place...

The flesh on Kat's face is being pulled tight over her skull, her cheekbones standing out, her eyebrows arching up into a gruesome leer.

FATHER BRIAN
(suddenly shouting)
I COMMAND THAT YOU GO OUT!

He raises the bottle of Holy Water high over his head. Kat's toes curl and she arches her back, her pelvis hinging towards the ceiling.

FATHER BRIAN
(shouting)
I COMMAND THAT YOU LEAVE THIS
POOR GIRL AND NEVER COME BACK!!

The leather restraints at Kat's wrists and ankles creak and split as she folds upwards like a tent.

Her head snaps back and THROUGH HER EYES the room turns upside down, Father Brian suddenly standing on the ceiling, whipping the air with the Holy Water, splashing the lens.

HARD CUT BACK TO

EXT. SPENCER HOUSE - DAWN

The first pale light of morning colors the blank face and faded red door of the Spencer House. Winter birds CHIRP high in the gnarled and twisted branches of a tree.

The faded red door opens and Joan comes out with Linda's suitcase in hand, looking down at the tops of her thin shoes, the toes caked with salt and snow and flecks of blood.

EXT. MAIN GATE - CONTINUOUS

Joan shuffles through the gate, her little hands curled around the suitcase handle, pulled along by its weight.

She passes the Mercedes Station wagon, parked at an awkward angle, the passenger door open, the interior leather sprayed with blood. Linda's things lying scattered in the snow.

Stopping at the edge of the road that leads up to the gate of the school, she puts the suitcase down in the fresh snow.

The fresh daylight is harsh on her face, frozen under a smudge of Linda's pale powder makeup, her gaze hollow and blank behind a smear of dark eyeliner.

She looks out into the distance, fixed on the end of the country road that leads up to the gate of the school.

She hopes that there might be something moving down there. There might be a flicker of oncoming headlights behind the dense line of trees in the distance.

She watches and waits.

She waits for a very long moment but then she remembers that nothing is going to come.

Her eyes go dull and glassy and they shine with grief as she slowly brings her small, thin hand up to her mouth.

She presses down hard onto her mouth, her knuckles glowing bright white.

And, finally, she cries.

She covers her nose and mouth with both hands, pressing down hard to stifle the sobs that are rising out of her throat.

She squeezes her eyes shut and hot tears splash over her white knuckles and onto the tops of her thin shoes, scuffed and crusted with salt and snow and blood.

With her hands clamped down hard over her nose and mouth, the veins on her neck stand out like strings on an instrument.

She SCREAMS into her hands.

She is screaming into her hands but with her nose and mouth covered there is almost no sound at all.

She can't breathe anymore.

There isn't even a cloud of visible breath hanging in the air around her head.

Hanging in the air around Joan's head there is only the staccato CHIRPING of winter birds, high up in the branches.

There isn't anything else.

CUT TO BLACK