

THE BROOD

an original screenplay
by
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FOURTH DRAFT

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1. INT. MORNING. SOMAFREE LECTURE HALL

Two men sit facing each other in a pool of light thrown by a spotlight. They are sitting cross-legged on the thick, aquamarine carpeting of a room whose other features are, for the moment, in total darkness.

One of the men, Dr. Hal Raskin, is about forty-five, tall, tanned, curly-haired, graying at the temples and the substantial sideburns, charismatically good-looking in a clear, masculine way. The other man, Michael Trellan, is about the same age but overweight and balding, tense, shifty-eyed. Both men wear loose-fitting judo-inspired outfits with no belts, no watches, shoes or rings.

Raskin watches Trellan intently; Trellan looks everywhere - at his hand, his toes, the blackness beyond the circle of light - except into Raskin's eyes. After a beat, Raskin begins to speak. His voice is effortlessly resonant and expressive. Just the sound of it makes Trellan flinch almost imperceptively.

RASKIN

You're not looking at me, Mike. You're
not looking me in the eye. That's weak, Mike.
That's something only weak people do.

When Mike replies, it is with the intonations of a very young child, accompanied by physical gestures which are also the strained, imitative movements of a young child trying to act like an adult.

MIKE

(WITH THE VOICE OF A CHILD)

I could look you in the eye if I wanted to, Dad, I just don't...just don't want to look you in the eye.

RASKIN

Well, I guess you're just a weak person, Mike. I suppose you got that from your mother. Probably would have been better for you if you had been born a girl. Could have named you Michelle. Weakness is acceptable in a girl, Michelle. Oh, sorry...I mean Mike. I keep forgetting. But hey, wait a minute...maybe I should call you Michelle all the time. How about that? Then I wouldn't have to be so ashamed of you and your god-damned fucking weakness! I should just think of you as a girl all the time, Michelle. Buy you dresses, buy you dolls and frilly hats and scarves... Then you can be your Daddy's little girl, Michelle, and I won't have to be so god-damned fucking ashamed to be seen with you in public!

As Raskin begins to psych into playing the role of Mike's father, he gets nastier and more devastating. In response, Mike begins to cry quietly, biting his lips, clenching his fists, writhing with unspeakable anger and torment.

It is at about this point that we realize that the two men we have been watching are not alone: they are also being watched by about forty men and women who sit in silence in a horseshoe-shaped, broadloomed gallery which is almost one full story above the pair.

Prominent among those present is Frank Carveth, 34, slim, intense, moodily monitoring the procedures with a less than appreciative eye. Next to Carveth sits a bearded youth whose approach to the show seems to be much less critical. He is, obviously, an enthusiastic fan of Dr. Raskin's psychotherapeutic techniques, and reacts with fervour to every little twist of plot and counterplot in the psychodrama now unfolding. The bearded youth's enthusiasm annoys Carveth.

RASKIN

What do you say to that, Michelle? Sound like a good idea?

MIKE

(ALMOST INAUDIBLY)

Don't, Daddy. Don't.

RASKIN

(MERCILESSLY)

Did you say something, Michelle? Such a soft little girl's voice, couldn't hear what you said.

MIKE

(QUIETLY)

I hate you, Daddy. I hate you.

RASKIN

What? Speak up, girl.

MIKE

I hate you, Daddy. But I can't hate you because I love you. It makes me feel so guilty to hate you, I can hardly speak.

RASKIN

Then don't speak, Michelle. Show me. Show me your anger, don't tell me about it. I'm not interested in what girls have to say anyway. Show me your anger. Show me your anger. Show it to me, and then I'll understand it.

Mike is in the throes of incredible anguish, trying desperately to control it all, sobbing, tensing all the muscles in his body until they shake, grinding his teeth so loudly that the sound can be heard in the gallery.

Finally, Mike rips off his tunic and throws it out of the pool of light into the surrounding blackness. There are murmurs and gasps from the gallery: Mike's entire upper body is covered with lesions, vivid red ulcerations about one inch long, very sore-looking in the harsh glare of the spotlight, very moist and deep.

As Carveth and the others look on with reactions ranging from disbelief to revulsion, Mike's pectoral muscles begin to cramp up and swell until they have formed what is in effect a grotesque parody of a pair of woman's breasts.

The bearded youth covers his face with one hand, as though the spectacle is too bizarre to contemplate. But he is still watching raptly with his uncovered eye.

MIKE

(MOANING)

There you are, Daddy. There you are.

RASKIN

I see you, Michael. I see everything.

MIKE

This is me, Daddy. This is what you do to me inside.

RASKIN

Go all the way through it, Michael. Go all the way through it to the other end. Come out the other end, Michael. Don't stop in the middle. I'm watching you, Mike. I'm watching everything you do...

Mike suddenly lets out a shriek that makes Carveth jump involuntarily and has the bearded youth watching the arena from behind his hand again.

Mike throws his arms around Raskin, sobbing his guts out. Raskin holds him and rocks him in his lap.

MIKE

(SOBBING)

Daddy, Daddy, Daddy, Daddy...

As Raskin rocks Mike and kisses him on the face, the lesions which cover Mike's back, chest and arms begin to fade in colour. Within seconds they have all but closed up and disappeared.

There are more murmurs from the gallery, most of them expressing amazed approval, a few disgust at the general tone of theatre and faith-healing.

Raskin gently lifts Mike away from his lap and, with one arm still around Mike's neck, kisses him on the forehead and looks him directly in the eyes. Mike gazes back into Raskin's eyes, tears streaming down his cheeks and dripping onto his chest, which no longer displays its hysteria-provoked breasts.

The spotlight lingers for a few more seconds until only the vaguest traces of the ulcerations can be detected on Mike's skin, then fades out.

In the sudden darkness, the bearded youth slumps back in his chair, overwhelmed. He shakes his head.

BEARDED YOUTH

(QUIETLY)

Wow. The man is a genius. The man is a genius.

Carveth sits back in his own chair, waiting for the house lights to come on. He says nothing.

2. INT. MORNING. SOMAFREE HALLWAY

Carveth walks along a small hallway. One or two people pass him going the other way. The people smile at him, but he does not smile back. Through the windows in the hallway we can see the dense woods surrounding the building.

At the end of the hallway Carveth stops in front of a door. A sign on the door reads CANDICE CARVETH - PRIVATE. Carveth knocks on the door and opens it without waiting for an answer.

3. INT. MORNING. SOMAFREE BEDROOM

Carveth steps into the room and closes the door behind him. The room contains a child's bed, toys, children's books, a blackboard, a small desk with a built-in chair.

At the desk, her back to the door, sits Candice, a mature five-year-old girl with long blonde hair. She is covering a sheet of paper with long red crayon slashes and doesn't seem to notice Carveth.

Carveth watches her for a beat, then speaks.

CARVETH

Candy? It's me, honey. It's time to go home.

Candice turns, drops her crayon, slips out of the seat and runs to Carveth. Carveth scoops her up and they hug fiercely. Candice has tears in her eyes.

CANDICE

(QUIETLY)

Daddy. Daddy, Daddy, Daddy.

4. EXT. MORNING. SOMAFREE PARKING LOT

Carveth and Candice walk hand-in-hand up a grassy slope, ignoring the stream of other people - most of them coming from the demonstration - which is flowing in the same direction.

The people are heading for the Somafree parking lot, which is a large clearing in the middle of dense bush country. The lot is paved with flagstones and surrounded by a fence of rough-hewn timber.

A few people are, like Carveth, getting into their cars, but the majority are piling into a huge bus which has the word SOMAFREE emblazoned in primary colours on both sides.

Below the parking lot, the land slopes sharply away towards a large cedar hunting lodge by the edge of a lake. A sign on the lodge reads SOMAFREE, INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOPLASMICS, in colours that match those of the bus.

5. INT. NOON. CARVETH'S BATHROOM

In his bathroom at home in the city, Carveth helps Candice with her bath. She sits facing him in a half-full tub, playing listlessly with a wind-up plastic dolphin and a sailboat while Carveth, on his knees at the side of the tub, washes her legs and feet.

CARVETH

OK. Dunk those in the water and turn around.

Candice does as she is told without taking her eyes off her toys, as though deliberately avoiding Carveth's eyes.

As she turns around Carveth is shocked to see that her entire back is a collage of vicious purple and yellow bruises and angry red scratches. There also seems to be a bite mark on her right shoulder.

CARVETH

(WITH QUIET ANGER)

Oh, my God.

6. INT. AFTERNOON. RASKIN'S SOMAFREE OFFICE

Dr. Hal Raskin is getting dressed in his simple but elegant office, which contains a full bathroom and often doubles as an apartment. Raskin has just taken a shower and is in the process of towelling off his hair.

On the wall beside the mirrors in which he views himself as he dries his hair is a carefully framed poster. The poster is basically a blow-up of the front cover of Raskin's best-selling book, THE SHAPE OF RAGE: An Introduction to Psychoplasms, by Dr. Hal Raskin. A small blurb in the corner of the poster declares that THE SHAPE OF RAGE is Now a Bestseller in Paperback. The poster's graphics depict a fist clenched in anger gradually turning frame by frame, comic book style, into a mouth with bared teeth, then eyes narrowed and fiercely glaring, and finally an explosion that looks like both flesh and fire.

There is a quiet knock at the door. Raskin adjust his bathrobe around himself and answers without turning.

RASKIN

Yeah?

The door opens. A small, moustachioed Chinese man peeks into the room.

CHINESE MAN

Dr. Raskin, Mr. Carveth says he will not leave until he has talked with you. He is very definite on that point.

Raskin sighs a sigh of resignation.

RASKIN

OK, Lang. Send him in.

Lang nods, then disappears. A moment later Carveth enters the room. Lang closes the door behind him.

Raskin gives his hair one last swipe of the towel, then swivels in his chair to face Carveth.

RASKIN

Hello, Frank. It's been a while.

Raskin gets out of his chair and extends his hand to Carveth.

RASKIN

What can I do for you?

Carveth ignores the offered hand. Raskin drops his hand, not at all disconcerted.

CARVETH

I want to see Nola. I want to see my wife. Now.

RASKIN

You know she's still in intensive therapy. I couldn't let you break isolation.

CARVETH

You let her see Candice on the weekends,
don't you?

RASKIN

But that's different, Frank. Seeing her
daughter regularly...that was built into her
program from the very start.

CARVETH

Yeah? Well, her program's just changed.

RASKIN

What do you mean, Frank? You sound hostile.

CARVETH

My daughter's been beaten. Severely. And scratched.
And bitten. And it was her mother who did it.
Her mother who is under your psychiatric care.

RASKIN

That's an incredibly heavy accusation. Did
Candice tell you that?

CARVETH

Candice won't talk. She's pretending it didn't
happen. But it was either Nola, or some other
crazy you've got stashed away up here. In
either case, no more weekends with Mommy.
The kid stays with me.

RASKIN

To lose touch with her child like that might
send Nola off the deep end. It's a critical time
for her.

CARVETH

I happen to think she's been in over her head for some time now.

RASKIN

You have no legal right to deny access.

CARVETH

Any time you'd like to test the matter in open court, I'd be only too happy to oblige you.

RASKIN

We may just have to do that, Frank. An irresponsible accusation like that could really hurt us.

CARVETH

(COLDLY)

Good. I hope it does. Bye, Hal.

Carveth turns abruptly, heads for the door, and leaves. Raskin sits down, smooths back his hair, looks at himself in the mirrors for a beat, then reaches for the nearby intercom.

7. EXT. AFTERNOON. KRELL ST. PUBLIC SCHOOL

A few minutes before the bell goes to signal the end of afternoon classes, the vast yard of Krell St. Public School is deserted except for clusters of parents waiting for their children. The school itself is an aggressively modern structure, sleek and multilayered, and featuring small energy-saving windows, while the yard is a riot of rough wooden forts complete with turrets, wooden bridges, asphalt valleys filled with sand, swings, spinning tires, monkey bars, see-saws.

Carveth makes his way towards the door of Candice's classroom, studiously avoiding the small groups of parents - many of whom he knows from more sociable times.

8. EXT. AFTERNOON. CLASSROOM DOORWAY

The bell rings just as Carveth reaches the doorway of Candice's classroom. A tidal wave of kids in brightly coloured coats pours out of the doors and streams past Carveth.

Carveth watches them go by until only a few stragglers are left. He has not yet seen Candice.

Carveth pokes his head through the classroom door.

9. INT. AFTERNOON. CLASSROOM

In the classroom Carveth sees Candice's teacher, Ruth Mayer, wrestling with a stuck zipper on Candice's jacket. Carveth steps into the room and approaches them. Ruth is a dark, voluptuous, clear-eyed woman of 26. When Candice notices her father she taps Ruth on the shoulder.

CANDICE

Hey, Miss Mayer. My Daddy's here. He knows all about this zipper.

RUTH

(LOOKING UP FROM CANDY'S JACKET)
Hello, Candy's Daddy.

CARVETH

Hello, Miss Mayer.

RUTH

(SUDDENLY GETTING THE ZIPPER TO WORK)
There we go. You're all set now.

Candy runs over to Carveth and snuggles against his leg as Ruth stands up.

RUTH

(TO CARVETH)
I'd like to talk to you sometime soon, Mr. Carveth. About school activities...and about Candice. You missed the last open house.

CARVETH

OK. Soon.

10. INT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S LIVINGROOM

In the livingroom of Carveth's sparsely furnished two-bedroom apartment, Carveth and Candy sit watching television on the sofa.

Candy is wearing a pretty flannel nightie and is sitting on Carveth's lap. Her eyes are half-closed and she watches the TV screen with hypnotized, zombie-like intensity.

Carveth is not really watching at all. He is simply feeling bleak.

11. INT. NIGHT. SOMAFREE MARINA

In a room somewhere in Somafree, Raskin and Nola are in the middle of a private psychoplasmics session. Only their faces are lit, the rest of the room hidden in total darkness. The room, a converted lakeside marina, does have a substantial presence nonetheless: the scene is suffused by the sound of gently lapping water, water which is in the marina close by. The lapping has a slightly hollow feel to it.

Throughout this scene we stay tight on the faces of Raskin and Nola.

Nola has a very youthful, innocent face, with translucent Irish white skin, freckles, eyelashes so light in colour they are almost invisible. Only when she is angry is a certain craziness revealed in her eyes. At the moment her face is in repose. Serene, perhaps.

Raskin's voice comes to her out of the darkness. Although he is obviously playing the role of Candice, he makes no attempt to alter the pitch of his voice.

RASKIN (VO)

Mommy?

NOLA

(LOOKING UP IN RESPONSE)

Yes, Candice? Yes, sweetheart?

When we first see Raskin, he is on the edge of the shadows. For the moment it is Nola who holds centre stage.

RASKIN

You hurt me, Mommy. You hit me. You hit me with your fists. And you scratched me with your nails. You hurt me, Mommy.

NOLA

(BENIGNLY)

I didn't sweetie. You must have had a bad dream. Mommies don't do that. Mommies don't hurt their children.

RASKIN

They don't? They never do?

Nola's face clouds over. She doesn't answer.

RASKIN

(INSISTENT)

They never do?

NOLA

They sometimes do. Sometimes. But then they're bad mommies.

(SUDDENLY ANGRY)

They're fucked-up mommies.

RASKIN

Like whose?

(PAUSE. NOLA DOESN'T ANSWER)

Like whose mommy?

NOLA

Like my Mommy was. Fucked-up and bad.

RASKIN

(SUDDENLY SWITCHING TO THE ROLE OF JULIANA,
NOLA'S MOTHER)

I am not, Nola sweetheart. You're being so
unfair. Mommies don't do that. Mommies don't
ever hurt their own children.

NOLA

(FURIOUS)

But you did hurt me. You beat me and scratched
me and threw me down the stairs...

Nola turns and looks at Raskin, rage in her eyes. Then suddenly
she stops. Her eyes widen. She's gone too far. She's spoken the
unspeakable. She turns away, but Raskin knows he's opened an
important wound. He's not going to let the moment slip away.

RASKIN

(MOVING CLOSE TO NOLA)

Show me what I did, darling. Don't stop it now.
Show me your anger. Show it to me! Nola, darling...
go all the way through it. Go all the way through
it to the end!

12. INT. MORNING. JULIANA'S LIVINGROOM

Carveth stands in the middle of his mother-in-law's living room with his coat on, eager to leave. But his mother-in-law, Juliana Kelly, a drink in one hand and a cigarette in the other, still wants to talk.

Juliana is in her mid-fifties, an extremely handsome woman with a waist-length graying pony-tail. The striking planes of her face are only just beginning to disappear into the flab of middle age. Juliana wears black leotards under her gray skirt and long, jangling earrings. Her personal style is very definitely 1920s Paris bohemian, and is in marked contrast to the style of her house, which is resolutely 1960s middle class Canadian.

Candice is nowhere in sight.

JULIANA

So I guess you're finding out what it's like.

CARVETH

What it's like?

JULIANA

To be a parent. You know, to be blamed for everything...to have the past distorted until you can't recognize yourself in it...your child's version of the past, I mean.

CARVETH

Juliana, Candice is only five.

JULIANA

She's working on it right now. Believe me. Nola phoned me last night. Very late. I was shocked. She told me things that she says she was thinking when she was five. My blood ran cold.

CARVETH

Nola called you? What did she say?

JULIANA

Oh, just that she's been "doing" me in therapy. That she's being forced to remember things she's tried to forget. She accused me of beating her, locking her in cupboards, horrible things. I guess unconsciously she felt guilty for inventing those things and had to call me.

CARVETH

(NOT WANTING TO GO INTO THE POSSIBILITY THAT THOSE THINGS MIGHT BE TRUE)

I guess.

JULIANA

I was a good mother, you know, but I was very unhappy with Barton. Miserably unhappy. I wonder if Nola's going to get around to "doing" her father? He used to drive me crazy. He was so insensitive.

Candice comes running excitedly into the room carrying an old, decaying white shoe box.

CANDICE

Look what I found upstairs on your bed,
Grandma! Those old pictures of you and
Grandpa and Mommy when Mommy was younger than me!

JULIANA

(TO CARVETH, TAKING A DRINK)

I'm afraid that phone call touched off a
horrid bout of nostalgia.

CANDICE

Can we look at these pictures? I love
these pictures.

JULIANA

Let me say goodbye to your Daddy, darling.
You open the box and spread them out on the
carpet. I'll be there in a minute.

Candice flops on the floor as Carveth and Juliana walk to the vestibule.

13. INT. MORNING. JULIANA'S VESTIBULE

Carveth puts his hand on the doorknob. Juliana puts her hand over it.
She looks intently into his eyes. Her own eyes are shimmering with
tears.

JULIANA

Thank you very much, Frank.

CARVETH

For what?

JULIANA

For bringing me my grand-daughter. I don't think Nola will want her here once she's finished "doing" me.

CARVETH

I'll have something to say about that. Candy needs a Grandma. Don't worry.

JULIANA

(KISSING CARVETH ON THE CHEEK)

You're sweet, Frank. Take your time. We'll be just fine.

Carveth kisses her cheek in return and smiles reassuringly.

CARVETH

OK.

(CALLING OUT TO CANDICE)

Bye, Candy. See you in a while.

CANDICE (VO)

Bye, Daddy. C'mon, Grandma. I'm ready.

Carveth leaves. Juliana closes the door and then turns back into the house, fingering her empty glass nervously.

JULIANA

Be with you in a sec, darling. Just have to get a refill and then I'll be ready for those lovely old pictures.

14. INT. MORNING. RESNIKOFF'S OFFICE

Carveth sits in the plush, oak-panelled office of his lawyer, Al Resnikoff. Resnikoff, fortyish, bespectacled, professorial, sits behind a desk the size of a skating rink with a worried look on his face.

RESNIKOFF

Frank, your separation agreement guarantees Nola weekends for as long as she's in intensive therapy. You can't deny her access without getting a court order first. And to get a court order under these circumstances is a nightmare.

CARVETH

She's been beating the kid. Doesn't that mean anything?

RESNIKOFF

Can you prove it?

CARVETH

C'mon, Al. One look at her back and anybody'd know...

RESNIKOFF

Did Candy tell you it was her mother who beat her?

CARVETH

No.

RESNIKOFF

A nightmare.

CARVETH

Nola is crazy, Al. She started off bad and she's getting worse.

RESNIKOFF

And if this shrink of hers suddenly turns up in court and says she's cured, she's completely sane, she's no longer even neurotic? What then?

CARVETH

This guy Raskin is strictly showbusiness, Al.

RESNIKOFF

But he's a legit MD, right? He's a real psychiatrist?

CARVETH

Yes.

Resnikoff shakes his head wearily and throws his pencil on the desk.

CARVETH

Al, I'm convinced that Psychoplasemics is one of those California hoaxes. A complete ripoff. A sideshow. I've seen it in action.

RESNIKOFF

Frank, what you think doesn't matter. You listen to me. You phone this guy Raskin and you be a mensch to him. Otherwise it's only a matter of time before the cops are at your door and your kid is gone for good. The law believes in Motherhood.

CARVETH

(EVEN MORE WORRIED)

What if I can dig up enough testimony to prove that Raskin's a dangerous fraud? What if I can at least show that Somafree is crawling with crazies and that it's no place for a child to be? Even on weekends?

RESNIKOFF

Well, you're getting warmer. Can you do it?

CARVETH

I'm sure I can.

RESNIKOFF

Yeah? You're really prepared to get your hands that dirty?

CARVETH

If I give her enough time, she'll really hurt the kid, Al. I know she will. So I'll do anything I have to.

15. INT. MORNING. JULIANA'S LIVING ROOM

Juliana and Candice sit on the living room carpet with about twenty old photographs spread out in front of them. There are many more still in the shoe box. Juliana has a scotch on ice beside her; Candice has an orange juice on ice beside her. They both sit on cushions.

Candice is fishing around in the shoe box. Suddenly she finds a picture that excites her.

CANDICE

Oh, this is the one I was looking for! This one's my favourite.

She holds up a dog-eared, sepia-coloured photo. Juliana takes it from her and looks at it through a small magnifying glass which hangs around her neck by a beaded cord.

JULIANA

This one is your favourite?

CANDICE

Yes. Mommy in the hospital when she was a little girl.

16. INT. MORNING. JULIANA'S KITCHEN

Just down the hall in Juliana's kitchen, the inner door of the two-way milk-chute which opens to the outside suddenly smashes open. A gentle breeze streams into the house.

17. INT. MORNING. JULIANA'S LIVING ROOM

Juliana looks up at the sound, not certain that it didn't come from the street. Silence. Juliana goes back to the photo that she and Candice have been studying.

The photo is a flash picture of a little girl who does not at all resemble Candice. The girl is sitting up bravely in a huge hospital bed, her arms, chest, and one of her cheeks covered with bandages of various sizes. Juliana, thirty years younger, sits on the edge of the bed, smiling a martyr's smile for the camera.

JULIANA

Oh, yes. I remember this picture. Your Grandpa Barton took this picture. He didn't come to the hospital very often. He was too busy to see his sick little girl, who was Nola, your Mommy. But I stayed with her nearly all the time, day and night. She forgets that sometimes. But why is this one your favourite?

CANDICE

I don't know. It just is. Tell me the rest of the story that goes with the picture. Why was Mommy in the hospital so much?

JULIANA

You know why.

CANDICE

I think I forget. Tell me again.

18. INT. MORNING. JULIANA'S KITCHEN

A bottle of orange juice tumbles out of the milk chute onto the kitchen floor. It is followed by a two-quart jug of milk. It is apparent that something is clearing the chute so that it can enter the kitchen.

19. INT. MORNING. JULIANA'S LIVING ROOM

JULIANA

Well, she was born with a special kind of skin that liked to grow bumps all over it, the way some people grow freckles. Only a few people in the world have that kind of skin.

CANDICE

And...?

JULIANA

And the doctors had to keep cutting them off her skin so they wouldn't grow too big.

CANDICE

But then..? Then what happened?

JULIANA

But then the doctors found some pills and things that your Mommy could take to stop those bumps from growing, and as soon as she started to take those pills, the bumps went away.

CANDICE

(IMPATIENT TO GET TO THE END)

And she was seven when she started to take the pills, and she's been taking them ever since.

JULIANA

That's right. You knew after all.

The sound of a plate smashing to the floor comes from the kitchen, followed by the ringing of a few forks and knives bouncing to a halt.

JULIANA

Hm. I guess I didn't stack the dirty dishes too well. Better go see what the damage is.

Juliana uncrosses her legs and stands up.

CANDICE

(STILL ENGROSSED IN THE PHOTOS)

Can I have some more orange juice?

JULIANA

(TAKING CANDICE'S EMPTY GLASS)

Certainly, Madam.

Juliana leaves the living room.

20. INT. MORNING. JULIANA'S HALLWAY

Juliana walks down the hallway which leads to the kitchen.

21. INT. MORNING. JULIANA'S KITCHEN

The instant Juliana steps into the kitchen she feels a blast of cold air on her feet and ankles.

JULIANA

Oo, that's chilly.

She turns in the direction of the cold air and notices that both the inner and outer doors of the milk chute are open. She walks over to the chute, picks up the jug of milk and the orange juice bottle, puts them on the kitchen table, and kneels down to close the chute doors.

To her surprise, Juliana finds that the inner door won't close because it has been almost completely wrenched off its hinges and its slide-bolt latch won't work because the latch housing screws have been ripped out of the wood which held them.

Puzzled, she gets up and slides the nearest kitchen chair against the door to keep it from blowing open. She then turns towards the refrigerator, Candice's glass in hand.

At the foot of the fridge lies a shattered plate and a few knives and forks. Juliana shakes her head, clears some of the debris away with her foot, and opens the fridge door. Then she stops in her tracks.

Juliana's eyes widen in surprise. Her focus is directed to something on top of the fridge, something we cannot see. From the unsettled expression on Juliana's face, whatever it is is very disturbing.

Juliana lets the fridge door close by its own momentum and takes a slow, careful step backwards, as though moving away from a large dog which might be dangerous.

Juliana flicks a glance down the hallway, as though anticipating a sudden flight out of the kitchen. Then she looks back at the top of the fridge and pauses for a beat. Should she run?

Without warning, the thing on the fridge propels itself forward with an inhuman wail and lands with all its weight on Juliana's chest.

Juliana falls backwards with a startled cry. The empty glass she has been holding shoots across the kitchen and smashes through the kitchen window.

22. INT. MORNING. JULIANA'S LIVING ROOM

In the living room, Candice looks up in surprise at the sounds coming from the kitchen. She freezes for a moment, her hand still in the box of photographs.

The sounds of struggle increase in intensity. Two bodies are thrashing around furiously on the kitchen floor, smashing into chairs and knocking things to the floor.

Suddenly Juliana emits a long, wailing shriek of pain, which mingles somehow with other strange, animal moans of fury. After two or three seconds, Juliana's wail is cut off as cleanly as if it were severed by a sharp blade. The silence that follows is punctuated by a pounding sound, regular and heavy, which continues for a few more seconds, then stops.

After a few beats of complete silence, Candice gets up slowly, tentatively, then walks towards the door leading to the hallway.

23. INT. MORNING. JULIANA'S HALLWAY

Candice peeks warily around the corner of the door and looks down the hallway towards the kitchen. Through the kitchen door, she can see an overturned chair and one of Juliana's shoes. Beads from the magnifying-glass cord are scattered everywhere.

Candice takes a deep breath, then steps into the hallway.

CANDICE

Grandma? Grandma?

Candice takes several steps down the hallway. She is gradually gathering momentum when one of Juliana's feet comes into view cocked at a crazy angle, the ankle of the black leotard ripped open. Candice stops beside the hall staircase, its steps at shoulder height.

Juliana's foot suddenly goes into a fluttery, almost delicate convulsion on the floor. Candice watches in bafflement. The convulsion stops.

Candice is about to take another step forward when she is suddenly aware of another presence very close by. She turns, startled, towards the staircase.

A small deformed hand clutches a bannister spindle only inches from her face. The hand is rubbery, its digits undefined, its flesh translucent and veiny. The hand is spattered with blood.

Beyond the hand, sitting in the shadows, is something breathing hard; its one visible eye bright with excitement.

Candice freezes.

24. EXT. AFTERNOON. RENOVATION SITE

On the lawn of an old three-story house in the process of being renovated, a workman loads bricks into a wheelbarrow. The exterior brick of the house has been sandblasted and its interior gutted and now partially rebuilt. The window-frames hold clear plastic sheeting which is bellying in the breeze, pending the arrival of new thermopane glass.

Stapled side by side to the front door are a green building permit and a cardboard sign bearing the words CARVETH RESTORATIONS LTD., which are followed by an address and a telephone number.

The workman wheels the barrow past the lawn's centrepiece, an immense steel disposal bin full of rubble, and through the front door, bumping the door open with the wheelbarrow's front wheel.

25. INT. AFTERNOON. GUTTED HOUSE. FIRST FLOOR

Frank Carveth strides through the rubble covering the hardwood floor of the gutted house his company is in the process of renovating. His clothes are a strange mixture of business and work garb: a three-piece suit with construction boots, work gloves and a hard hat, finished off by a clipboard and a measuring tape clipped to his belt.

Carveth's steps take him to the side of his chief carpenter/contractor, Hans, who is supervising the installation of insulation in the walls on both sides of a recently exposed brick fireplace. Hans is very European in dress and manner; he wears black laceup shoes and a cloth peaked cap and his English, though idiomatically perfect, is heavily accented to the point that, from a distance, you might think he was speaking German.

CARVETH

(TO HANS)

We're not making very good time, Hans. The Branleys are under the delusion that they're going to move in by May.

HANS

Naw, we're not going to make that for sure. Maybe mid-June. The city plumbing permit got held up because of changes in the building code.

A second workman comes down from the second floor and approaches Carveth.

SECOND WORKMAN

Mr. Carveth? There's a telephone call for you. Upstairs. But watch your step. We've started cutting the light wells through the second floor.

CARVETH

OK. Thanks.

Carveth leaves Hans and his two men and makes his way up the rail-less staircase.

26. INT. AFTERNOON. GUTTED HOUSE. SECOND FLOOR

On the second floor, Carveth walks down a broad, dusty hallway with two rectangles cut right through the floorboards and the joists. At the end of the hallway is a large open room with a dusty old Victorian bathtub sitting in the middle of it. The plumbing and electrical wiring have been roughed in in this bathroom-in-progress but, as in the rest of the house, no wallboard has been put up.

In the bathtub sits the only functioning phone in the house, also powdered with plaster dust. Carveth sits on the edge of the tub and picks up the receiver. From this vantage point the entire second floor is nothing but a skeleton of two-by-fours.

CARVETH

(ON THE PHONE)

Hello? Yes, this is Frank Carveth. What?

(HIS FACE GOES PALE)

She what? Where's my daughter? Where? Is she all right? Did she see it? Why don't you know?

Yes, yes, I understand. Is she in shock? Is she hurt?

I'll be right there. No. No. I'll be right there.

Carveth hangs up the phone and heads for the stairs, his face pale and drawn.

27. INT. AFTERNOON. GUTTED HOUSE. FIRST FLOOR

Carveth stumbles down the stairs in a daze. He is almost out the door when Hans turns away from his work and realizes that Carveth is leaving the site.

HANS

Hey, Frank!

He is about to say more but Carveth is already gone.

28. INT. AFTERNOON. POLICE COMPLEX. INTERROGATION

Carveth sits in a small Interrogation Room with Police Inspector Bruno Mrazek, a tall, nattily dressed detective with a moustache of the pencil-slim style formerly associated with villains in pinstripe suits. The room itself is in the heart of a new police complex whose architecture is uncommonly light and airy, feeling more like a chic shopping mall than anything else. The entire outer wall of the Interrogation Room is frosted glass, which at the moment is luminous with late afternoon sunlight.

Mrazek paces leisurely around the room, occasionally glancing at a yellow carbon copy of a police report.

Carveth's eyes are fixed on an object on the otherwise empty table in the centre of the room: a bloody metal meat-softening hammer in a plastic bag with a lead seal and three tags wired to it.

MRAZEK

One of our officers noticed a broken kitchen window while on a routine patrol of the neighbourhood. He found your mother-in-law's body in the kitchen. The murder weapon was on the floor next to her. Then he found your daughter sound asleep upstairs in the bedroom. It seems she missed the whole thing.

CARVETH

Where is she now? I want to see her.

MRAZEK

She's with our police psychologist, Dr. Birkin.

CARVETH

Psychologist? Why? Was she hysterical?

MRAZEK

No...on the contrary. She was very cool about it all. A little too cool, I thought. So I asked Larry Birkin to talk to her. Just for an opinion.

CARVETH

How long's that going to take?

MRAZEK

Another couple of minutes. In the meantime, could you possibly give me the names of any persons who would have a motive to murder this woman? You see, it doesn't seem to be a simple case of an interrupted break-in or, say, a rape-murder. And yet it was a very violent crime.

CARVETH

Juliana had a long series of lovers. I never met any of them.

MRAZEK

What about her husband?

CARVETH

His name is Barton Kelly. He works for the government out in Halifax. They were divorced over ten years ago.

There is a knock at the door.

MRAZEK

Come in.

A young man in a lawyerish suit and stylish glasses comes in and shuts the door behind him. He is very casual and relaxed.

MRAZEK

Ah...here's Dr. Birkin.

BIRKIN

(TO CARVETH)

Hi. You must be Candice's father.

Carveth stands up.

CARVETH

(RISING)

I'd like to take her home now.

Birkin raises his hands as though pleading with Carveth for patience. His tone immediately becomes more formal.

BIRKIN

(MORE FORMAL)

Mr. Carveth...please. Give me just two minutes with you first. It's important.

(CARVETH SITS DOWN RELUCTANTLY)

Birkin himself sits on the table, moving the plastic bag matter-of-factly to give himself more room.

BIRKIN

Speaking bluntly, I don't believe that your daughter escaped this incident entirely unscathed.

CARVETH

You think she saw it happen.

BIRKIN

I suspect she did. Or that she saw something which traumatized her, confused her, disturbed her. The officer who found her said that she was very difficult to wake up. To me that indicates an abnormal type of deep sleep, the kind that a lot of people, even children, use to escape something too painful to face. And she still says she doesn't remember being brought to her grandmother's, or seeing her at all.

CARVETH

You think she'll remember eventually?

BIRKIN

Mr. Carveth, I don't mean to pressure you or cause you undue anxiety...but I think you must encourage her to remember.

CARVETH

Why? Are you looking for a witness?

BIRKIN

I'm sure that possibility has occurred to Inspector Mrazek. But my concern is that the child could have a serious breakdown if she doesn't come to terms with what she experienced. These things tend to express themselves one way

BIRKIN (CONT'D)

or another. The longer it's suppressed, the more psychological or even physical damage it can do. I've seen five-year-olds with ulcers as bad as any middle-aged businessman's.

CARVETH

(EXHAUSTED)

OK, OK. I get the picture. Now, I'd really like to take my kid home. It's getting late for her.

Mrazek glances at Birkin. Birkin nods.

MRAZEK

No problem.

29. INT. AFTERNOON. POLICE COMPLEX. DETECTIVES' LOUNGE

Mrazek opens a door for Carveth whose fluted glass bears the words DETECTIVES' LOUNGE. Carveth walks through the doorway to find Candice sitting in a room full of detectives who are being forced to watch SESAME STREET with her.

Candice sits entranced on a couch licking an ice-cream bar mechanically, chocolate and ice-cream melting down her hand to the wrist. Carveth watches her for a beat. Her usual zombie-like trance has now taken on an especially distressing aspect for Carveth.

CARVETH

Candice.

The detectives turn to look at Carveth, but Candice doesn't respond. Carveth walks over to the TV set and turns it off. A couple of the detectives grumble protests but Carveth doesn't notice.

CARVETH

Candice...we're going home now.

Candice blinks rapidly for a moment, as though adjusting to the sudden lack of images to focus on, then turns to look at Carveth. Her face is smeared with chocolate - a face like any other kid's - except for the lack of expression, the scared emptiness in the eyes.

30. EXT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S APARTMENT BUILDING

Establishing shot of the 1940s vintage apartment building in which Carveth now lives, a modest beige five-storey affair.

31. INT. NIGHT. CANDICE'S BEDROOM

Candice lies curled up around her pillow in her darkened bedroom. Carveth sits on the edge of the bed, stroking her head.

CARVETH

You're sure you don't want a story? We wouldn't have to read. I could make one up for you.

CANDICE

(SLEEPILY)

No thanks, Daddy. I'm so sleepy.

CARVETH

Do you want to tell me a story? (SHE SHAKES HER HEAD)
(BENDING OVER AND KISSING HER) OK, sweetheart.
I'll see you in the morning.

CANDICE

(FAINTLY)

Night, Daddy.

Carveth gets up, disturbed by her lack of response to just about everything. He leaves the room just as the telephone starts ringing.

32. INT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S LIVING ROOM

Carveth sits on the sofa and answers the phone.

CARVETH

Hello?

NOLA (VO)

Frank? I want you to know that I understand,
Frank. I know how afraid you must be.

CARVETH

Nola?

NOLA (VO)

I know you've always been afraid that I would
turn into my mother right before your eyes.
I was afraid too...

CARVETH

Nola, has anybody told you about...?
Have the police gotten in touch with...?

NOLA (VO)

...but Frank, darling, you of all people should
know that I would never hurt Candice. I'm still
a bit shaky but I'm more stable than that.
I'd kill myself before I'd hurt Candice. You
don't have to threaten to take her away.

CARVETH

Anybody who talks about killing herself is
not stable.

NOLA (VO)

Oh, Frank, you know what I mean...You have to
be patient and you have to trust me. I know
I've been fucked-up. I know I wasn't able to
be good to you. But I'm getting better now.
All you have to do is wait a little longer and
we'll all be back together again...

33. INT. NIGHT. SOMAFREE MARINA

In the same darkened room that we have seen her in before, Nola hangs onto the telephone with fierce intensity, only occasionally allowing the fingers of one hand to wander nervously over a row of buttons on a wall-mounted intercom.

Nola is seen only in close-up. Somewhere behind her, water is lapping hollowly against concrete and brick.

CARVETH (VO)

Nola, you're dreaming. It's too late for that.

NOLA

(ANGRY, FIGHTING BACK TEARS)

It's not too late. It's only too late if you think negative thoughts about it. Then you'll make it be too late. It's only too late if you accuse me of hurting our daughter...

CARVETH (VO)

Are you saying you didn't touch her?

NOLA

Of course I didn't.

CARVETH (VO)

(ANGRY)

Listen to me. Her little back is one huge mass of bruises, scratches, and bite marks. Now who the hell did that?

NOLA

(SOBBING)

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

34. INT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S LIVING ROOMCARVETH

(FURIOUS)

You don't know? How dare you say you don't know! When she's with you, you're responsible for her. And if she gets hurt when you're supposed to be watching over her, then you're responsible whether you did it yourself or not. Believe me, Candy is not ever going to stay with you at Somafree again, and until I find out who beat her, she's not going to be left alone with you again either. And let me tell you something else... if Dr. Hal Raskin is your last hope for sanity then you are in big trouble.

Carveth stops to find himself listening to a dial tone. He slams the receiver down.

35. INT. NIGHT. SOMAFREE MARINA

Raskin is now at Nola's side. Only their faces are lit. The water laps softly somewhere behind them. Raskin is now playing the role of Nola's father.

NOLA

(WEEPING)

He hates me, Daddy. He despises me. He thinks I hurt our little girl.

RASKIN

Well, you'll just have to get that straightened out, won't you?

NOLA

(SUDDENLY ANGRY)

No, we won't have to get it straightened out. He's a fucking bastard. I hate his guts. How could he think I'd do something like that? How could he, Daddy?

RASKIN

I don't think you should be too hard on him, Nola sweetheart. After all, he's just being a good protective father.

NOLA

(SUDDENLY AFRAID AT THE TURN THE PSYCHODRAMA IS TAKING)

Oh, no...

RASKIN

(INSISTENT)

Oh, yes. He's just doing what a good father should do. He's just protecting his little girl. He doesn't want to see her hurt, does he? He doesn't want to see her hurt by anybody, even her own mother. And there's nothing wrong with that, is there?

(NOLA DOESN'T ANSWER)

Well, is there?

NOLA

(QUIETLY)

No.

RASKIN

No, there isn't. After all, that's what I did for you, isn't it? Frank is just protecting Candy the way I protected you, isn't he? Isn't he?

NOLA

No.

RASKIN

No? What do you mean?

(NOLA DOESN'T ANSWER)

What do you mean?

NOLA

I love you Daddy.

RASKIN

What do you mean when you say, "No."

NOLA

I don't want you to think I don't love you.

RASKIN

(HARD AND INSISTENT)

What do you mean when you say, "No."

NOLA

(QUIETLY)

I mean you didn't.

RASKIN

I didn't? I didn't what?

NOLA

(BREAKING DOWN)

You didn't protect me. You didn't, Daddy.

You didn't, you didn't, you didn't. And you should have. You shouldn't have looked away

when she hit me. You shouldn't have walked away

(CONT'D)

NOLA (CONT'D)

from the table when she twisted my words.

(NOLA BEGINS HITTING RASKIN ON THE CHEST WITH HER FISTS. HE MAKES NO MOVE TO STOP HER)

You should have stopped her! You should have hit her when she hit me. You should have slapped her when she slapped me. And God, how I love you, but you didn't protect me from her and you should have. You knew it was happening but you pretended it wasn't, and you should have, you should have! Why didn't you? WHY DIDN'T YOU?

(PAUSE. QUIETLY)

Didn't you love me?

36. INT. MORNING. CARVETH'S LIVING ROOM

Candice is standing patiently by the window, naked to the waist, while Carveth takes Polaroid pictures of her back by the morning light. Carveth turns her in various positions so that the pictures show Candice's face and back at the same time, and so that all the details of the bruises and scratches have been recorded.

One by one, Carveth slips the photos into a file-folder marked CUSTODY. The whole procedure is obviously distasteful to him, but he is determined to carry the affair through.

Candice is playing with a large, colourful paper flower as Carveth takes the photos. Even though her look is generally distracted, as though she has chosen to think herself somewhere else, she can't help naturally striking very coy and photogenic poses. The end result is a group of pictures that are very bizarre in their juxtaposition of backlit sunniness and cruel, ever-purpling bruises.

37. INT. MORNING. AIRPORT TERMINAL

Carveth and Barton Kelly, his father-in-law, walk through the airport terminal on their way to the car park. Carveth is carrying a small bag for Barton, who himself carries an attaché case and a suitcase. Barton Kelly is a large, red-haired, florid-faced man with freckles and an Irish temper. He wears a dark blue raincoat and walks quickly.

BARTON

You didn't have to bother picking me up,
Frank. We could have met later at the hotel.

CARVETH

I didn't like the idea of your having to come
in alone. How long are you planning to stay
in town?

BARTON

We could have the funeral tomorrow except that
Juliana's parents might want to come up from
Arizona. And there's that sister in Vancouver.
I don't know exactly how it'll work out.

(GLANCING AROUND)

Did Nola come with you by any chance?

(CARVETH SHAKES HIS HEAD)

No, I guess not. Well, and that's sad too,
really. What happened with the two of you? Any
chance of a reconciliation, as they say?

CARVETH

If you're in the mood when we get to your hotel
we can have a few drinks and talk about it.

Where are you staying?

BARTON

The Hyatt. You know, I actually thought about going back to the old house. I still have the key after all these years. Juliana used to make a big fuss out of the fact that she never changed the locks. I've never understood why. Maybe she could never completely admit that we were finished. Frank, when I think about you and Nola and that sweet little girl of yours having to go through the same heartache that we went through... well, it's enough to make you cry.

CARVETH

Yes, it is.

38. INT. DAY. SCIENCE CENTRE

Carveth and a short, heavy-set, broad-faced Slavic-looking man walk through the immense heavy technology displays at the Ontario Science Centre. As they walk, gleaming steel pistons pump up and down rods that are four stories high; an entire assembly line, completely automatic, assembles and dismantles random structures out of spun aluminum; and robot arms gyrate wildly through pre-programmed manipulations of glass blocks and pyramids.

The man is Dr. Wessler, 67, who is primarily responsible for designing the displays which surround them.

WESSLER

And you are the man from the computer magazine? The one with the funny name? The magazine, I mean.

CARVETH

Uh, no, Dr. Wessler. I'm the man with the wife in therapy with Dr. Raskin. Frank Carveth. I called you yesterday, remember?

WESSLER

Oh, yes. Yes. I remember now. You were worried about the validity of Psychoplasemics as a therapeutic technique

CARVETH

That's right. And I know that you used to work with Dr. Raskin many years ago.

WESSLER

Before I decided to work with machines, yes. And before he went to California and got seduced by the beach at Malibu. Well. I will tell you everything I can tell you, and you make up your own mind about your personal situation. Now, as I understand it, Psychoplasemics is a bizarre attempt to cash in on a well-known phenomenon, namely, the body's reaction to a mental state. We all know people who get hives or rashes when they are put under stress. We know people who get mysterious migraine headaches, fainting spells, muscular spasms, you name it. And all these things disappear when the source of tension goes away. Sometimes patients unwittingly will their bodies to do these things just to get attention and sympathy. Now, in normal psychoanalysis, we try to cure the disease, not the symptoms. We try to discover and erase the source of stress, and the psychosomatic symptoms disappear.

CARVETH

But in Raskin's book THE SHAPE OF RAGE he points out that life by its very nature is often a source of stress that we can't erase. And that's where Psychoplasemics can help.

WESSLER

I know what he says. I know what he says. He says that the verbalization of traditional analysis, the talking endlessly about neurotic relationships and behaviour...this talking cures nothing. He says that the body is the central fact of human existence, and that anxiety must be expressed through the body to be relieved. In other words, he encourages the psychosomatic symptoms to blossom. But I say, what happens once these physical symptoms have established themselves in the body? What happens if Dr. Raskin encourages you to express your anxiety through skin rashes - and the rash becomes infected or cancerous? How can you control it?

CARVETH

So Psychoplasemics could leave you in worse shape than you were when you went in?

WESSLER

Of course. But don't misunderstand. All psychotherapy is dangerous. People like to forget that. They pretend that going to a therapist is like going to a dentist, or is maybe like some cultural event. It is not. It is always dangerous, always a true voyage into the unknown.

39. INT. NOON. CLASSROOM

Carveth and Ruth sit at Ruth's desk at the back of Ruth's classroom. The room is an elaborate split-level affair crammed with educational toys ranging from child-sized kitchens to plastic airplanes.

Carveth is looking at a crayon drawing which Ruth has spread in front of him. The drawing depicts a truly nightmarish landscape full of small demon figures and red and black volcanic eruptions.

RUTH

This is the kind of stuff Candy's doing now. Angry, violent, scared. Full of reds and blacks and explosive shapes. She used to do the usual happy pictures...you know, houses with cozy smoke coming out of the chimneys, bright suns, long grass with cats and dogs...

CARVETH

She's never brought any like this home. When did she start to do them?

RUTH

About three months ago.

CARVETH

What else has changed?

RUTH

Everything. She used to be very sociable and enthusiastic. Now she hardly talks. She's lethargic, distracted, cranky...

CARVETH

That started three months ago too?

RUTH

Yes. And it's gotten even worse this last week. She walks around in a trance. This drawing is a week old. She hasn't done another one since. She used to do three or four a day.

Carveth doesn't respond, but keeps staring at the picture.

RUTH

(GENTLY)

I don't mean to intrude, but if you wanted me to, I could suggest a good family counsellor. Maybe you and your wife would like to get together with somebody and...

CARVETH

No, that's not possible.

RUTH

I see.

CARVETH

Ah...Miss Mayer...

RUTH

Please. I do have a private life. Call me Ruth.

CARVETH

Sorry. Ah...Ruth...would you be willing to say in court what you've just said to me? About the change in Candice, I mean? And when it seemed to start?

RUTH

(VERY SURPRISED)

Well...well, I don't know. Why would you want me to do that?

CARVETH

Just about three months ago, my wife went into therapy with a psychiatrist named Hal Raskin. Have you heard of him?

RUTH

Oh, yes. Psychoplasemics. I've been meaning to read his book.

CARVETH

Well, even though my wife and I have been legally separated for almost a year, the kid was in reasonably good shape until Nola went into isolation therapy with Raskin. Up at his live-in treatment centre. And so that the kid wouldn't lose touch with Nola, so that she'd know she still had a mother, I agreed to let Candice spend weekends with Nola. But she started to come back from those weekends very...disturbed.

RUTH

So you want to stop taking her there.

CARVETH

I've already stopped. You see, it's not just a question of Candice not having a good time with her mother. Last week she came home with bruises and scratches all over her back.

RUTH

(SHOCKED)

Oh, God.

CARVETH

So I expect a custody battle. And I think your testimony as a professional who's known Candice over a long period of time could at least help establish that Candice shouldn't be seeing Nola while she's in therapy.

RUTH

I hardly know what to say. I'd have to talk to some people here at the school...Do you mind if I think it over for a few days?

CARVETH

I don't mean to pressure you, but please call me as soon as you can. And if there's anything more you need to know to help you make up your mind, no matter how...intimate, just ask.

Ruth nods, then turns to look out the classroom's picture window to the schoolyard. Carveth follows her gaze. They both watch Candy, alone now in the nearly deserted yard, swinging listlessly on a tire-swing, her mind a thousand miles away.

40. EXT. AFTERNOON. NURSING HOME DRIVEWAY

Carveth's car pulls up into the gravel driveway of a private nursing home. At the far end of the long, tree-lined driveway stands a tall, slightly seedy Victorian house with a large veranda.

Carveth gets out of his car, walks up the steps to the front door, opens it, and enters the house. There are no signs anywhere to indicate that the building is what it is - a private nursing home for cancer patients.

41. INT. AFTERNOON. NURSING HOME FOYER

Inside the foyer stands a receptionist's desk. Except for the desk, the place looks like a functioning private old house.

Carveth walks over to the desk and speaks to the receptionist, a thirtyish moustachioed man wearing a male nurse's uniform.

CARVETH

I'm here to see Mr. Hartog. Jan Hartog.

RECEPTIONIST

And your name?

CARVETH

Frank Carveth.

RECEPTIONIST

One moment, please.

(PUNCHING A BUTTON ON HIS TELEPHONE)

Vince? Has Mr. Hartog started his bath? He has a visitor. Yeah. Yeah, OK.

(HANGS UP)

Just go right up those stairs. It's the first room on the left.

Carveth turns and begins to walk up the curved staircase.

42. INT. AFTERNOON. NURSING HOME. SECOND FLOOR

Carveth comes up the stairs and stops on the landing. There is an open door just to his left. He walks up to the door and looks inside the room.

43. INT. AFTERNOON. HARTOG'S ROOM

Hartog's room is a strange combination of original old wallpaper and furniture and modern hospital equipment.

At first Carveth can't see anyone. Then he realizes that there is a man rolling energetically from side to side on the floor. The man is slightly overweight, has thinning stringy hair, and is sweating profusely into his two-piece track outfit.

Carveth looks around to see if perhaps he missed a door when the man calls out to him without missing a beat of his rhythmic rolling.

HARTOG

(GRUNTING WITH THE EFFORT OF ROLLING)

Sit down. Yes. You. Sit down.

Carveth enters the room and sits on a chair by the bed. Hartog is now curling in and out of the foetal position, rolling over to the other side, then curling in and out of the foetal position again.

Carveth watches for a moment, feeling very awkward. Suddenly, an alarm goes off beside Carveth. Hartog struggles painfully to his feet, walks over to Carveth, reaches behind him, and turns off the alarm.

Hartog then sits down heavily on the bed, breathing hard. He has a thick white towel wrapped around his neck which makes his head look very disconnected from his body.

When Hartog speaks, his speech is somewhat slurred and arrhythmic because of the drugs he is being treated with.

HARTOG

That's my heart.

CARVETH

Your heart?

HARTOG

Yeah. On the floor. My second heart. Your first heart makes your blood circulate, right? But what makes your lymphatic fluid circulate?

CARVETH

I don't know.

HARTOG

Movement. Walking, running, fucking. Anything. Rolling on the floor. People have this whole other fluid system they don't even know about. The lymphatic system. It's everywhere, you know... it's just like the blood system with its own

(CONT'D)

HARTOG (CONT'D)

style of veins and arteries - but no heart.
You have to keep moving to get it to circulate.
And they have just given me drugs and I have to
make the drugs move through the lymphatic system.
Pardon my sweat. I'm going to take a bath soon.
So. Mr. Carveth. How did you get my name?

CARVETH

My lawyer knows your lawyer.

HARTOG

Hah. And is your lawyer preparing a case against
Dr. Raskin too?

CARVETH

Basically, yes. Slightly different from yours.

HARTOG

Yeah? How different.

CARVETH

My wife is still in therapy with Raskin. We're
claiming psychological damage, not physiological.

HARTOG

Give him some more time with your wife and you'll
be able to claim physiological damage too. Wouldn't
this look impressive in court?

Hartog carefully unwraps the towel around his neck. His entire neck,
especially under his chin, is a mass of huge discoloured fleshy
lumps which are in fact grossly distended lymph nodes. Hartog strokes
them playfully, then puts the towel back in place.

Carveth can't help wincing.

HARTOG

That's Raskin. That's Psychoplasemics. It's called lymphosarcoma, and it's spreading. A form of cancer of the lymphatic system.

CARVETH

You blame Raskin for that?

HARTOG

Raskin did it. He encouraged my body to revolt against me and it did. You see? I have a small revolution on my hands, and I'm not putting it down very successfully.

CARVETH

Your lawyer really feels he can prove that Raskin's responsible?

HARTOG

You kiddin' me? You can't prove a thing like that. I mean, right from square one you're into metaphysics. You know...how do I know that I wasn't going to get cancer at age thirty-two whether I had gone into Psychoplasemics therapy or not? Etc. We'll get laughed out of court.

CARVETH

Then why are you going to court?

HARTOG

Revenge. Even if we lose, people won't be so willing to trust Raskin. They'll get nervous

(CONT'D)

HARTOG (CONT'D)

about Psychoplasemics. It'll be bad publicity. People won't even remember whether we won or lost. They'll just remember the slogan: Psychoplasemics can cause cancer. Is that gonna help you?

CARVETH

I don't think so. Maybe.

HARTOG

I'm not alone, you know. I'm in touch with a lot of people who did Psychoplasemics.

(LAUGHS BITTERLY)

We might form a club.

(VERY SERIOUS)

I want to help you.

CARVETH

(NOT CERTAIN HOW TO REACT)

Thanks.

HARTOG

I'm gonna be dead by next spring. I won't bore you with how it feels to know that. This place... the radiation treatments, those awful drugs...they're not gonna do any good. It's just so I have people around me. So if I can help you hurt Raskin and keep myself entertained for a while at the same time...what more could anybody ask? Right?

44. EXT. LATE AFTERNOON. SCHOOLYARD

Carveth hurries through the Krell St. schoolyard, glancing at his watch as he goes. The schoolyard is relentlessly deserted. As Carveth rounds the play fort, he can see Candice and Ruth playing together in the sand of the tiny amphitheatre at the edge of the yard.

Carveth stops to watch them for a moment. He hasn't seen Candice playing alone with a woman for a long time. He allows himself a smile. Candice is more animated than he's seen her for weeks.

Carveth starts walking towards them again. When Candice notices him, she runs towards him and gives him a big hug.

CANDICE

(HUGGING CARVETH)

Hi, Daddy.

CARVETH

(PLEASANTLY SURPRISED)

Hi, sweetheart.

(TO RUTH)

Sorry I'm late. Thanks for waiting with her.
You two seemed to be having a good time.

RUTH

We were. And I think I learned a few things that maybe we should talk about sometime.

CANDICE

Daddy, Miss Mayer said she was starving. Can we feed her at our place?

CARVETH

We could if she wanted to.

(TO RUTH)

What do you think? I'm getting to be a pretty good cook. We could talk after Candy's gone to bed.

RUTH

(GLANCING AT HER WATCH, NOT SURE WHAT SHE'S
GETTING INTO)

Ah...well...

(HESITATES)

...OK. Thanks.

Candy hugs her father again.

45. INT. NIGHT. CANDICE'S BEDROOM

Candice lies back in her bed on her pillow, her arms behind her head, thinking in the dark. Carveth comes in to give her the usual ritualistic night-time drink. He sits down beside her on the bed.

CARVETH

Here's your orange juice, sweetheart. We're all out of milk. Have to get some in the morning.

CANDICE

Dad? If you had babies with Miss Mayer, would they be my brothers and sisters?

CARVETH

They'd be what we call half-brothers and sisters. What made you think of that?

CANDICE

I don't know.

Candice takes the glass and takes a sip.

CANDICE

But would they be like real brothers and sisters? Would they help me if I was in trouble and lend me money and things?

CARVETH

Well, they'd be part of your family and they'd definitely help you if you were in trouble. (PAUSE) Are you in trouble?

CANDICE

No, no. I was just saying suppose I was.
And suppose they were in trouble. I would have
to help them, wouldn't I?

CARVETH

Sure.

CANDICE

Are you going to have babies with Miss Mayer?
They wouldn't even have to go to school,
would they? They'd have their teacher at home
all the time.

CARVETH

I've just met Miss Mayer, Candy. You don't
have babies with people unless you know them
very well, and for a long time.

CANDICE

Like you and Mommy when you had me.

CARVETH

That's right.

CANDICE

(GIVING BACK THE GLASS AFTER ONE LAST SIP)

OK. I'm finished.

(SNUDDLING DOWN UNDER THE COVERS)

Good night, Daddy. See you in the morning.

Carveth gives her a big hug and a kiss.

46. INT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S DINING ROOM

Carveth and Ruth sit at the dining room table having coffee and cake.

RUTH

As soon as Candy realized she had me alone, she got me to play mother and daughter with her. She obviously needs mothering and isn't getting it.

CARVETH

(NOT ENJOYING TALKING ABOUT IT)

Yeah. You know, some times it just kills me to think I might have screwed up my kid already. She's not even six. It wasn't supposed to happen like that.

RUTH

But it's not just you.

CARVETH

No. No, when I'm being easy on myself, I say, Well, it wasn't your fault. You got taken in. You got involved with a woman who married you for your sanity, hoping it would rub off. And instead it started to work the other way. Her madness started to rub off on me. And I suddenly found myself fighting for my life.

RUTH

But no matter what you think of Raskin and Psychoplasemics, your wife has still tried to reach out for professional help. Isn't that a positive sign?

CARVETH

Nola's always been in therapy. Her whole life from the age of ten on has been one long therapeutic process. I've even come to see our marriage as nothing much more than Nola's private eight-year mental health plan. I wanted a family and I got group therapy. Psychoplasemics is just the next phase. It's never going to end for her.

Ruth glances down at her fingernails, not knowing how to react. The conversation has gotten too heavy and too intimate for the nature of their relationship. Carveth realizes he's gone a bit too far.

CARVETH

Sorry. I guess I'm starting to sound like a bitter, obsessive old man. I'm trying hard not to turn into that.

The telephone rings. Carveth answers it.

CARVETH

(INTO THE PHONE)

Hello?

47. INT. NIGHT. JULIANA'S DINING ROOM

On the other end of the line is Barton Kelly. He is sitting at the dining room table at Juliana's house with a bottle of Scotch, almost empty, and a glass in front of him. He drinks steadily as he talks to Carveth. He now has a quite discernible Irish accent which was not at all in evidence at the airport. His blue raincoat has been neatly draped over another chair at the table.

This scene intercuts at appropriate intervals with scene 46 above.

BARTON

It's Barton Kelly, Frank. How are you?

CARVETH (VO)

Just medicine. How are you?

BARTON

I'm terrible. I'm maudlin. Maudlin drunk.

CARVETH (VO)

Do you want to take a cab over here?

BARTON

Frank, I made a mistake. I came to the old house. That's where I am now. I came back to the old house where I lived with Juliana for twenty-two years. And it's got me, Frank. I'm depressed as hell.

CARVETH (VO)

Barton, get in a cab, will you? Tell him to take you to...

BARTON

That's not all, Frank. There's Nola too.

CARVETH (VO)

How do you mean?

BARTON

They wouldn't let me talk to her. That Dr. Raskin. He said he didn't care that Nola's mother had died, he couldn't tell her about it because she's...she's in a critical phase of her therapy, is what the doctor said. I said, What do you mean? Do you mean I'm supposed to bury the girl's mother and not tell her about it? And he said, Yes. He said hearing from me would be especially bad because she was "doing" me now. Nola was "doing" me. I wrote it down on

BARTON (CONT'D)

a piece of envelope here somewhere...Here it is...I said, What does "doing" me mean? He said it means she's working through our relationship. And I said, Why doesn't she just talk to me? I'm here in the flesh. And he said No, it was the father I was in the past when Nola was a little girl that she had to relate to. Not the father who exists now.

CARVETH (VO)

What did you say to that?

BARTON

I said, You fuckin' ignorant arrogant asshole, I said...

I said, You call me at my hotel by tomorrow and let me speak to my own daughter or I'll come up there and kick your ass for you. Then I gave him my number and hung up.

CARVETH (VO).

I think that's pretty good, Barton. I have a feeling you're going to get results.

BARTON

But I'm not waiting for results, you see, Frank. I'm too cagey for that.

CARVETH (VO)

Uh oh. What do you mean?

BARTON

I mean I'm going up there now. To Somafree. You see, they might move her tonight. So I've rented a car, and I've worked myself out a little map, and I'm leaving as soon as you get here.

CARVETH (VO)

As soon as I get there?

BARTON

I'm waiting on you, Frank. I know you'll want to go up there with me. You're not too far away, are you?

CARVETH (VO)

Barton, don't do this.

BARTON

I'm doing it, Frank. With you or without you.

CARVETH (VO)

OK, OK. I'm only about fifteen minutes away, Barton. Wait for me, OK? I'm on my way.

(PAUSE. BARTON TAKES A DRINK)

You'll wait for me for sure?

BARTON

You're a good lad, Frank. We'll go up there together and kick their ass. I'm waiting on you. I'll leave the door open in case I'm having a piss.

Barton hangs up the phone, snorts, and pours the last of the Scotch into his glass.

48. INT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S DINING ROOM

Carveth hangs up. He looks at Ruth, who gets the message.

RUTH

I have a feeling I've just been recruited to babysit.

CARVETH

Please. If you would...I'll be back in twenty minutes. He's drunk, he's going to drive his rented car off a bridge or something unless I bring him back and talk some sense into him.

RUTH

Twenty minutes?

CARVETH

That's all it'll take.

(GRABBING A BOOK FROM A BOOKSHELF: "THE SHAPE OF RAGE")

Here. Take a look at this while I'm gone.

If you like it I'll give it to you.

Ruth smiles a half smile. She'd rather not stay, but what can she do.

49. INT. NIGHT. JULIANA'S KITCHEN

Barton stands in the kitchen doorway. The police have cordoned off the kitchen by tying ropes to two kitchen chairs placed at either side of the doorway. On the other side of the cordon Barton sees the chalk outline on the tile of the floor which marks the position of Juliana when she died.

Barton gazes into the kitchen for a moment, a thousand incidents that he lived through there, all trivial, all now painful, running through his mind like so many old film newsclips.

The intrusion of the police in his home is suddenly intolerable, triggering off a brief storm of anger. Barton lashes out, kicking over the chairs. He steps over the downed cordon into the kitchen and walks slowly over to the chalk outline.

Barton gazes at the outline for a beat, then bursts into tears. He drops to his knees and reaches out, touching the outline with exquisite tenderness, then bending over and kissing the outline's hair, face, nose, eyes, lips.

50. EXT. NIGHT. URBAN STREET

Carveth drives through the streets in his battered old white Volvo on his way to Juliana's.

51. INT. NIGHT. JULIANA'S HALLWAY

Barton now stands at the foot of the hall staircase, contemplating a visit to the master bedroom. After a moment's indecision, he decides that since he has allowed himself to wallow in self-pity and regret already, he might as well go all the way. And the bedroom, a Pandora's memory box of infinite pleasure and infinite pain, ought to be the thing to take him all the way.

Barton begins a very unsteady climb to the top of the stairs.

52. EXT. NIGHT. URBAN STREET

Carveth continues his drive to Juliana's.

53. INT. NIGHT. JULIANA'S BEDROOM

Barton now stands swaying in the bedroom doorway. The room is much the same as Barton remembers it, perplexingly so. Frighteningly so. Is it possible that Juliana never really changed? Even after Barton left? Even after all the fights about how he stopped her from being herself?

Barton stumbles over to the bed, then sits down on it heavily.

BARTON

(MUMBLING)

Juliana. Juliana.

Not more than a foot away from Barton's right shoe, two small hands reach out from under the bed and grasp the edge of the bed frame. Barton, oblivious to this other presence in the room, begins to sob again.

BARTON

(SOBBING)

Juliana. Juliana. I never meant it to be this way.

54. EXT. NIGHT. JULIANA'S STREET

Carveth parks his car in front of Juliana's house and gets out. He locks the car door, then makes his way up the front path.

55. INT. NIGHT. JULIANA'S BEDROOM

Barton rolls onto the bed and collapses in tears. The moment he does so, a small deformed face, the face of a strange child-creature the size of a large six-year-old, appears from under the bed. The

creature wears dirty, rumpled, ill-fitting clothes. Its gaze is unblinking and expressionless. A few straggly, greasy lines of dark hair hang down over its face. The hair on its head is patchy. Its eyes are oddly wide-set and it has a hare lip and a badly cleft palate. Its ears, nose, and chin are soft and collapsed, generally unformed. It is the thing that killed Juliana.

56. INT. NIGHT. JULIANA'S VESTIBULE

Carveth opens the door which, as Barton promised, was left unlocked. Carveth steps inside and closes the door behind him.

57. INT. NIGHT. JULIANA'S BEDROOM

Barton buries his face in the pillow, sobbing wretchedly. The child pauses for a moment, then slides itself all the way out onto the rug at the side of the bed. It pulls itself into a squatting position and reaches out for something that attracts its attention on the night-table beside the bed: a matched pair of glass spheres with heavy marble bases, the kind that seem to snow or rain on the miniature landscape inside the sphere when you shake them. The child takes one sphere in each hand and climbs onto the bed, squatting beside Barton like a child coming in to its parents' bedroom on Christmas morning, impatient to open presents.

Barton feels the weight of the child in bed and rolls over. His eyes are blurred with tears, memories and alcohol.

BARTON

Nola?

Barton sits up.

BARTON

Nola?

At the sound of Barton's voice, the child explodes in fury and swings one of the spheres against his right temple. Barton goes down soundlessly, his body slumping halfway onto the floor with the force of the blow. The child's face seems to bloat and distort with anger.

Without hesitation, the child mounts Barton's chest and begins to smash at his face with both spheres, alternating hands as though beating a drum. A slow whine of pure rage spirals out of the child's throat as it smashes at Barton's senseless head until the the child is shrieking like a fiend from hell.

58. INT. NIGHT. JULIANA'S KITCHEN

Carveth has been looking for Barton in the kitchen. When he hears the hideous sounds coming from upstairs, he immediately runs down the hall and starts up the stairs.

59. INT. NIGHT. JULIANA'S STAIRCASE

Carveth runs up the stairs, calling out for Barton.

CARVETH

Barton! Barton!

60. INT. NIGHT. JULIANA'S BEDROOM

Carveth bursts into Juliana's bedroom. Barton's body lies beside the bed, one arm jammed behind it, its face a bloody pulp. One of the spheres, streaked with blood and snowing furiously inside, lies beside Barton's face.

Carveth is staggered by the sight.

CARVETH

Oh, no! Christ, no! It can't be true! It can't be true!

Carveth is suddenly aware of a presence behind him. He whirls around. Sitting on top of the door, balancing effortlessly on its toes, is the child, second sphere in hand, hissing a mad, open-mouthed hiss.

Carveth's eyes widen in fear, but before he has a chance to react further, the child throws the sphere at him and flips back over the door out of sight. Carveth easily dodges the sphere, grabs a pair of scissors from the dresser and bounds out of the room.

61. INT. NIGHT. UPPER HALLWAY. JULIANA'S HOUSE

Once out in the upper hallway, Carveth looks down the stair well. Everything is quiet. Would the child have had time to get downstairs? Carveth decides to search the upstairs first.

Warily, Carveth walks along the upper hallway towards the bathroom, scissors poised nervously.

62. INT. NIGHT. JULIANA'S BATHROOM

Carveth cautiously approaches the open bathroom door. He can see a smear of blood on the white quarry tiles of the floor. The child must be hiding inside. Carveth enters the bathroom, pushing the door flat against the wall to make sure nothing is behind it.

Once inside, Carveth quickly takes stock of the interior. There are two possible hiding places: the bathtub, across which the shower curtain

has hastily been drawn; and the built-in towel closet, whose door is slightly ajar. Carveth approaches the tub and, scissors poised, pulls the curtain aside. There is nothing behind it.

Without warning, the door of the towel closet swings open and the child tumbles out off the top shelf, flopping onto Carveth's back and then falling limp onto the floor. Carveth whirls, his heart pounding, the scissors ready to strike.

But it is immediately obvious that the child can hardly move. It lies twisted on the floor, panting, exhausted, gasping for air. Carveth watches it in horrid fascination. The thing stares at him, expressionless, the light going out in its eyes. It suddenly begins to go into a choking, gasping convulsion, like a fish out of water, and after a moment of this becomes deathly still.

Carveth lowers his weapon and exhales deeply.

63. INT. NIGHT. POLICE COMPLEX. CORRIDOR

Carveth and Inspector Mrazek walk purposefully along a corridor in the police complex. The place is teeming with night life hauled in off the streets.

MRAZEK

I can't get over it. The thing was in the house. It was in the house all the time. We searched the place but we weren't looking for anything that small. And we missed it. (SARDONICALLY)
We were spending our time checking out an Estonian musician.

CARVETH

Have you found out who it belongs to? The kid?

MRAZEK

We're checking various homes for delinquents, for retarded kids, for whatever. But nobody has ever heard of anything like this. My guess is some crazy woman who didn't want anyone to know she had a deformed child has had this kid locked up in an attic for years and never told anybody. Wouldn't be the first time.

64. INT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S LIVING ROOM

Ruth sits curled up in Carveth's sofa reading THE SHAPE OF RAGE. She is cosy but irritated because Carveth has been gone for hours and hasn't even phoned. She glances at her watch and shakes her head. The telephone rings. Ruth answers it immediately, thinking it might be Carveth.

RUTH

Hello?

(THERE IS NO ANSWER. LONG PAUSE)

Hello?

NOLA (VO)

(STRAINED)

Who's this?

RUTH

Ruth Mayer. Did you want to speak to Frank Carveth?

NOLA (VO)

Ruth Mayer? From Krell St. School?

RUTH

Yes. Is this Mrs. Carveth?

NOLA (VO)

Are you and my husband having your own private PTA meeting, Miss Mayer?

RUTH

I won't even bother answering that question.

NOLA (VO)

I wonder if the people who hired you would be interested to know that they had a whore teaching their children? Of course, it must be very hard for you to resist entanglements with all the eligible single daddies when they come to get their kids from you. They're so vulnerable, aren't they? And it's fun for you too. Nice safe little sexual encounters with married men, no strings attached. Sure. What do you care, right? What's it to you if you destroy any chance we might have to heal our wounds and put our families back together again?

RUTH

(UNBELIEVING)

This is ridiculous.

NOLA (VO)

(NOT HEARING OR CARING)

Or maybe you'd like it to go further than that. Maybe once you've found somebody you like who has a neat little family all ready for you to step into, maybe you'd do that instead, maybe you'd like to take my child away from me as well as my husband, maybe you'd like to leave me out in the cold. I mean, who'd be surprised, right? Poor crazy lonely Nola...we all knew she'd end up a suicide...

Ruth hangs up. She fumbles in her purse for cigarettes and lights one nervously. When the phone rings again she almost burns herself with her lighter. The phone keeps ringing. She mashes the cigarette out in an ashtray and buries the phone under one of the sofa's cushions.

65. INT. NIGHT. POLICE COMPLEX. AUTOPSY

Mrazek opens a door marked AUTOPSY for Carveth.

Mrazek and Carveth enter the room, Mrazek shutting the door behind them. In the centre of the room, which is almost oppressively bright, stands a broad autopsy table whose top is basically a large stainless steel tray with shallow sides.

In the centre of the tray rests a shapeless form under a black vinyl cover. Beside the table stands the autopsist, Terence Desborough - tall, fortyish, hyperkinetic. Desborough is always moving, even if only his hands, his mouth, or, one feels, his toes in his shoes. He wears a pale green plastic apron over his white lab coat.

Mrazek walks over to the table. Carveth, feeling as though he is about to break out into a cold sweat at any moment, follows reluctantly.

MRAZEK

Dr. Desborough...Frank Carveth.

Desborough turns to Carveth and holds up his hands, which are sheathed in surgical rubber and rather slimy.

DESBOROUGH

Forgive me if I don't shake hands. I was just doing a little preliminary exploration.

MRAZEK

Terry, could you give us the grand tour, please? I want Mr. Carveth's reaction to what you've got here.

DESBOROUGH

Right, then.

Desborough rolls back the vinyl cover all the way to expose the entire naked corpse of the child-creature that killed Juliana and Barton. The corpse lies in a shallow bath of preservative.

The combination of the sight of the small corpse, its mouth half open, thick tongue protruding, and the stench which envelopes him as the cover is removed, bring Carveth close to vomiting.

MRAZEK

There's a water cooler over there. Maybe you'd better have a drink.

CARVETH

(SHAKING HIS HEAD WOOZILY)

I think...I think I'd better not.

Carveth takes another look at the corpse, now completely exposed. It is extremely deformed, its back humped, its joints rubbery, its skin translucent and veiny. Desborough, oblivious to Carveth's predicament, blithely proceeds with his show.

DESBOROUGH

Let's start at the head, shall we? Now, you'll notice a veritable garden of deformities here. Our friend has abnormally wide-set eyes. He has small, unformed cauliflower ears. They probably didn't work too well. The nose is squashed and formless - its all cartilage, there's no bone in it, as, I suspect, is the case with the entire body. Like a shark that way, you see? All flexible rubbery stuff with no true bones. The upper lip is cleft - a modified hare lip - as is the palate. And the tongue, as you can see, is actually too thick and too inflexible for proper speech. The neck is slightly webbed and... there's something else here I'm saving for the moment. Let's go on. Now, I haven't had much of a chance to dismantle the little fellow, but I'm certainly looking forward to it because I have reason to expect to find him even more deformed internally than externally. My reasoning is this: this hump is not a normal hunchback, which is basically a spinal deformation. Instead, this hump contains traces of solid nutrient material, much like the yolk sac of certain fish, or perhaps a camel's hump. It's basically a gas tank that was full at birth, and so I expect to find almost no stomach or digestive organs inside.

CARVETH

You're saying this creature never eats?

DESBOROUGH

I think not. Perhaps once the sac was empty it would begin to eat to refill it. But I think not. I think once the hump material is completely assimilated, the creature simply starves to death. Runs out of gas, so to speak. Not designed for long life, I'm afraid.

MRAZEK

How old do you think this thing could be, Terry?

DESBOROUGH

Well, now. That's a nice question. Watch this.

Desborough presses on the creature's neck with the fingers of both hands. As he does so, three long slashes along the side of its throat open up to reveal a gauzy curtain of flesh inside each opening. The slashes are too regular to be wounds.

DESBOROUGH

You see these slits? I'm not a specialist in embryology, but I'm quite certain that they're vestigial gill slits, the kind that human foetuses display at a certain point in their development inside the uterus. In other words, there's a sense in which our friend is still unborn, a walking foetus. He's not even sexually differentiated yet.

Desborough straightens up and folds his arms. He smiles an inappropriately playful smile.

DESBOROUGH

And that leads us to the very last point of interest: An external deformity which is extremely subtle but also extremely provocative. I wonder if either of you noticed it.

Mrazek looks blank.

CARVETH

I noticed it.

DESBOROUGH

Yes?

CARVETH

There's no navel.

MRAZEK

No what?

CARVETH

No belly button. The thing has no belly button.

Mrazek looks at the creature's abdomen. There is not even the slightest hint of a navel anywhere.

MRAZEK

Jesus.

66. INT. NIGHT. SOMAFREE. MARINA

In the Somafree marina, Raskin and Nola are working through another psychodrama. As before, both are seen only in tight close-up, the room around them is lost in darkness, and the sound of gently lapping water pervades the scene.

This time, however, it is very late and Raskin looks haggard, exhausted. He runs his hand over his face and rubs his eyes. It is apparent that Nola is a kind of queen bee in the Somafree hive: Raskin comes to Nola whenever she needs him. In this psychodrama, Raskin plays the role of Ruth, Nola's imagined rival.

RASKIN

I don't owe you anything. I've only met you a couple of times. And I can see that your husband needs me. He's lonely. He can't raise Candice alone. And I know Candice. I see her more than you do. She likes me. Why shouldn't I get involved with Frank?

NOLA

(FULL OF SELF-PITY)

You're the beginning of the end, Miss Mayer. You're the beginning of the end for me, my family, my dream. It's too sad. And I feel so guilty for my part in it. I wish it had never happened. I wish we were still together, all three of us.

RASKIN

(PRODDING HER INTO ANGER)

You're dreaming right now. You're kidding yourself. From what Frank tells me, it was rotten right from the start. You never had anything real. It would be better for everyone if Frank divorced you and married me. We'd still let you see Candy on the weekends.

NOLA

(STUNG INTO ANGER)

That stinks. That stinks! We had a lot. We had beautiful things...things you couldn't even begin to understand. And we could have them again if everyone would just leave him alone and stop poisoning him against me and taking advantage of

(CONT'D)

NOLA (CONT'D)

his loneliness. Then he would wait for me,
he would help me get better instead of abandoning
me...that's what he would do if you would
leave him alone...

(SCREAMING)

...If you would just leave him alone, leave him
alone, leave him alone...!

67. INT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S VESTIBULE

Through the window of Carveth's front door, we see Carveth leaving
the taxi that has brought him home and walking up to the door. The
taxi stays where it is, interior light on, as the cab driver notes
the address.

Carveth unlocks the front door, steps inside, and is about to close
the door again when Ruth comes towards him along the hall putting
her coat on.

RUTH

Could you try to get that cab to wait for me?

CARVETH

Listen, I'm sorry. I phoned a couple of times.
You didn't answer.

Ruth steps past Carveth and waves to the cab driver.

RUTH

Hey...Taxi! Don't go away!

The cab driver sees her and signals OK. Ruth turns to Carveth, hurriedly
doing up the buttons of her coat.

RUTH

I didn't want to talk to your wife again.
That's why I didn't answer. Once was enough.

CARVETH

Nola called? What did she say?

RUTH

Oh...she just called me a whore and a homewrecker and threatened to tell the school all about me.....Listen, I've got to go. Your life is really a bit too complicated for me right now. See you at the next open house, OK? Bye-bye.

Before Carveth has a chance to react, Ruth is out of the house and on her way down the front steps. Carveth watches as she gets into the cab. The cab pulls away down the street. Carveth closes the door.

68. INT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S LIVING ROOM

Carveth wanders into the living room, a bit dazed. On the table is his copy of THE SHAPE OF RAGE. Beside it is an ashtray jammed to overflowing with Ruth's empty cigarette pack lying beside it.

Carveth is idly flipping the pages of Raskin's book when he thinks he hears something coming from Candice's room. He turns and walks to Candice's room.

69. INT. NIGHT. CANDICE'S ROOM

Carveth enters Candice's room. He stops just inside the door, listening. He doesn't hear anything. He moves further into the room and kneels beside the bed, his eyes gradually becoming accustomed to the dark. Carveth reaches out to adjust the covers over Candice and only then realizes that she is not in bed.

At that moment, Candice sobs loudly from somewhere in the darkness just behind him. Carveth whirls, his heart pounding. For just an instant, he is reminded of that moment in Juliana's bathroom when the creature fell out on top of him.

Candice is sitting on the floor in her nightie, jammed in the corner formed by her dresser and the wall. Her eyes are wide and red and she is crying.

CANDICE

Daddy.

CARVETH

Candice. What's the matter, sweetheart?
Why aren't you asleep?

CANDICE

I had a bad dream. A scary bad dream.

CARVETH

What was the dream about?

CANDICE

I'm afraid to tell you.

CARVETH

Why?

CANDICE

The dream doesn't want me to.

CARVETH

Candy...listen to me. I know what happened at
Grandma's. I know what you saw there. I just came
back from the police station, and when I was
there, I saw the thing that hurt Grandma. That's
right. I saw that strange child-thing that hurt
Grandma. And Candy...it's dead. I saw it lying
on a table and the police were there and it's dead.
It can't hurt you now, and it can't hurt me or
anybody else. Do you understand me?

CANDICE

He's dead?

CARVETH

Yes.

Candice doesn't react for a beat, then suddenly bursts into tears. Carveth gently pries her out of her corner. She throws her arms around him and cries even harder.

Carveth smiles, happy that she's getting everything out at last. He's sure that he's found the key to Candice's trauma and that she'll be all right from now on. But Carveth can't see Candice's expression, can't see the anguish in her face which says that she's hurting even more now than she was before.

70. INT. MORNING. NURSING HOME FOYER

Carveth enters the foyer of the nursing home. The moment he appears, Hartog jumps up from the couch he has been sitting on and hobbles over to Carveth, leaning heavily on an oak cane with a weighted brass handle. Hartog is obviously excited to see Carveth.

CARVETH

Hello, Jan.

HARTOG

Frank, I think we've got ourselves a live one.
C'mon upstairs. Got a visitor I want you to meet.

They start up the stairs.

71. INT. MORNING. STAIRCASE. NURSING HOME

Carveth and Hartog make their way up the staircase.

CARVETH

Is this the guy from Chicago?

HARTOG

No, he's a local boy. Lot closer to home than I ever expected to get.

72. INT. MORNING. HARTOG'S ROOM

Hartog opens the door of his room for Carveth. They both enter. Hartog carefully closes the door behind them.

Inside the room there is a man sitting on Hartog's bed watching a daytime soap opera. The man is a drunken wreck - his clothes are rumpled and dirty, his hair is messy and greasy, he's unshaven, one of his socks is missing, he's smoking furiously, spilling ashes all over the bed, drinking cheap rye from a bottle.

The man is laughing hysterically at the TV set, almost on the verge of tears. He doesn't seem to hear them come in.

HARTOG

Trellan? Mr. Carveth is here.

The man turns to look at them, casting his red-rimmed eyes from one to the other. He smiles a crooked smile. Carveth recognizes him as Mike, the man from the Psychoplasmics demonstration in scene 1.

MIKE

Hey, look who it is. So you're Nola's old man.

The queen bee's favourite drone.

(GIGGLES AND TAKES A DRINK)

HARTOG

(TO CARVETH, GLEEFULLY)

He's in bad shape, eh? Be dynamite in court.

CARVETH

What do you mean when you say Nola's the queen bee?

MIKE

Oh, she's the queen bee, all right. She's a star. She's the one he's interested in. The rest of us don't count any more. She doesn't even have to pay for it. And that's because she's the one who was born to prove that

(CONT'D)

MIKE (CONT'D)

Psychoplasemics is the ultimate therapeutic device. That's a quote.

(CRAWLING TO THE EDGE OF THE BED. TO CARVETH)

Would you be my Daddy? Hartog won't do it. My real Daddy won't do it. And that bastard Raskin won't do it any more. No. My real Daddy rejected me, and then, and then...

(OVERCOME BY THE DELICIOUS IRONY OF IT)

...my surrogate Daddy rejected me. That's too fuckin' wonderful, don't you think?

HARTOG

Tell him what happened at Somafree, Trellan.

MIKE

(GROVELLING. TO CARVETH)

Look...I'll make you a deal. Just...just be my Daddy, OK? And I'll tell you anything you want to know. I'll bleed for you, if you like.

Want me to bleed for you? No, that's silly, right?

It repulses you. I can see it. You're not into it, so why do it, right? Besides, nobody could do it like Dr. Raskin, not even real Daddy.

(IN AGONY)

And Dr. Raskin knows it. He knows I'm addicted to him and he doesn't care. He doesn't care. He's such a hard man.

CARVETH

I saw you at the demonstration last Sunday.

You and Raskin seemed very close. What happened?

MIKE

(SUDDENLY BREAKS DOWN CRYING)

He threw us out. All of us. He locked the door on us.

Mike begins to sob hopelessly. When he puts his hands up to cover his face, Carveth can see that they are covered with huge red hives. Carveth looks over at Hartog.

HARTOG

It's true. I've been in touch with some of the others. Everybody's been moved out of Somafree and all therapy suspended. All except for your wife. She's still there. And all within the last three days. No warning.

CARVETH

Does anybody know why?

Mike looks up, tears streaming down his face. His face is now covered with hives.

MIKE

(SCREAMING)

Sure somebody knows! I know! He wants to be alone with her! Dr. Raskin wants to be alone with your wife!

73. EXT. NOON. SCHOOLYARD

Carveth gives Candice a big hug in the middle of the schoolyard as the bell goes. She gives him a kiss, then runs off to join the line of kids at Ruth's classroom door. As Carveth watches her go, the door to the classroom opens and the line of kids starts to disappear into the room. Carveth can just barely make out Ruth's figure inside the room.

As Carveth watches, a slender woman of about Carveth's age catches sight of Carveth and walks up to him. Wendy wears huge plastic sunglasses, is chicly dressed and full of neurotic energy.

WENDY

(WARMLY)

Frank? Hi, Frank. God...I haven't seen you around.

CARVETH

(TURNING)

What? Oh, hi, Wendy. No...I guess I've been out of circulation the last little while.

74. INT. NOON. RUTH'S CLASSROOM

Ruth watches Carveth and Wendy talking in the distance for a beat, then walks to the back of her classroom as the kids stream into the room.

At the back of the room, Ruth starts to fiddle with a plastic record player which hasn't been working.

Meanwhile Candice joins the tail end of the lineup and is one of the last to enter the room. She plunges into the hustle and bussle around the coat racks and is in the process of unbuttoning her coat when the child next to her turns around and stares at her. It is one of the child-creatures. Candice freezes.

A second child-creature comes up behind Candice but she is too mesmerized by the first to notice. Although their rumpled, ill-fitting coats are different, the soft deformations of the faces and the dead eyes are identical to those of the thing that killed Nola's parents.

Candice's face goes blank. She begins to back away under the steady, unblinking gaze of the creature, her hands still on her buttons. Candice keeps moving backwards - the second creature moves aside for her - floating as though in a trance until she bumps into the solid blue service door at the side of the room. There she pauses for another beat, then turns and slips quietly out the door, unnoticed by all except perhaps one or two other children.

The creature watches the door with reptilian concentration until it closes in silence, cushioned by the pneumatic arm at the top which controls it.

The second creature stands beside the first for a moment, then the pair, still wearing their coats, begin to drift unobtrusively through the room towards the back where Ruth still fusses with the record player.

As they thread their way through the obstacle course of make-believe refrigerators and cardboard trees, the creatures acquire one carefully chosen object apiece. The first picks up a wooden hammer used to pound pegs into holes; the second a pair of blunt-ended paper-scissors. The regular kids who happen to notice them give them a wide berth without being too obvious about it.

At the back of the room, Ruth decides to abandon the record player and take charge of the class, which seems to have gotten suspiciously quiet. As she looks towards the wall-sized window at the front of the room, she can see Carveth and Wendy talking animatedly at the edge of the amphitheatre.

She then notices the two children still bundled up in their coats who are now only a few feet away from her.

RUTH

OK, what's the matter with you two? I don't even want to talk to you until you've taken your coats off and hung them...

Ruth's eyes widen in sudden fear as she focuses on the identical pair of soft, deformed faces. The two creatures close in on her from different angles before she has a chance to make a move. The first simply walks up to her and cracks her matter-of-factly on the hip with his hammer. She is surprised almost before she actually feels the pain. The creature hits her again and Ruth gasps and doubles over, both hands on her hip.

The second creature leaps for her face, twisting its free hand into her hair and swinging its legs around her waist. Ruth staggers under its weight. The creature starts hacking away small chunks of her thick black hair with the dull scissors, while the other one chops away at her shins and knees with the hammer as though she were some kind of bizarre, animated tree. Ruth's legs buckle under the fury of the attack and she goes down, taking half the objects on her table with her.

The child nearest the door, a hyper little boy named Sampson, watches in disbelief as his teacher thrashes around on the floor with the two creatures on top of her. The rest of the children back away, some of them whimpering, some crying, some too stunned to react. Sampson finally opens the front door and dashes out, yelling at the top of his voice.

75. EXT. AFTERNOON. SCHOOLYARD

Sampson runs madly towards Carveth and Wendy, screaming and waving his arms. Tears are now beginning to stream down his face.

SAMPSON

(SCREAMING)

They're hurting Miss Mayer! They're hurting Miss Mayer! The bad kids are hurting Miss Mayer!

Carveth grabs Sampson and holds him by the shoulders.

CARVETH

What's the matter? What's wrong?

SAMPSON

The bad kids! Some bad kids came to school and they're hitting her! They're hitting Miss Mayer! They made her fall down!

Carveth sprints off in the direction of the classroom, leaving Wendy to try to calm the nearly hysterical Sampson.

76. INT. AFTERNOON. RUTH'S CLASSROOM

Carveth bursts into the classroom. At first all he sees is terrified children lined up against the far wall, huddling up against each other.

Then he sees Ruth's crumpled form on the floor at the back of the room. Carveth races to her side. She is lying in the middle of an elaborate collage of paper, pencils, paint, clumps of hair, coloured pipe cleaners.

Carveth gently turns her face towards him. Her head rolls easily, much too easily, as though her neck were broken; and when her face comes into view, Carveth sees that her eyes are open and staring. Ruth is dead.

Carveth stifles the sick feeling in his stomach and, very controlled, picks up a large kid's drawing and puts it over Ruth's face. The crayon drawing depicts a house, a bright sun, a dog, grass, trees.

Carveth stands up and looks around at the kids, who are still in shock.

CARVETH

Where are the bad kids who did this?

Nobody answers. Carveth kneels down and grabs the nearest little girl, Lucille, by the shoulders.

CARVETH

Where are the bad kids who did this?

LUCILLE

(HESITANTLY)

They ran away. I don't where they went.

CARVETH

(LOOKING AROUND THE ROOM)

Candy? Is Candice here? Has anybody seen Candice?

LUCILLE

I saw Candice.

CARVETH

Where?

LUCILLE

Well, I saw her come in, and then I saw her go out. She went through the blue door. She still had her coat on.

77. EXT. LATE AFTERNOON. DIRT COUNTRY ROAD

Three children walk hand in hand along the edge of a tree-lined dirt country road. In the distance a plume of dust signals the approach of a pick-up truck.

When the trio gets close enough we can see that it is Candice and the two creatures that killed Ruth. Candice walks in a trance, her face as neutral as the faces of the pair on either side of her.

As the truck comes closer they move quietly off the road into the trees. They stand motionless in the bushes at the base of the trees until the pick-up truck, radio blaring, has gone by. Then they step back out onto the road and continue on their way.

78. INT. LATE AFTERNOON. NOLA'S ATTIC FLAT

The flimsy hardboard door of Nola's small attic flat bursts open under the weight of the shoulders of two large policemen. Carveth immediately steps into the room after them and looks around anxiously. Inspector Mrazek follows him in at a more controlled pace.

The simple, white-painted room has steeply sloping walls which are covered with pictures from art magazines, the emphasis being on reproductions of mystical mediaeval works. There is also a heavy delegation of photo portraits of strongly creative father-figures: Giacometti, R.D.Laing, Raskin, Jung, Freud, Calder.

The general feel of the place is monastic. There is a double bed in one corner, two chairs, a small round table, a rug, a pine chest. The rest is small found objects - shells, glass, bottles, bits of rusted wire latticework, weathered pieces of wood.

CARVETH

Candice?

Carveth doesn't wait for an answer. He disappears through a small doorway, then comes back into the main room only seconds later.

CARVETH

(TO MRAZEK, WEARILY)

That's it. She's not here. I can't think of any place else that she'd be.

(LOOKING AROUND)

God, it's smaller than I remember it. All three of us lived here for four years.

MRAZEK

Frank, you're exhausted. Why don't you go home?

CARVETH

There must be some obvious place that I'm forgetting...

MRAZEK

Dr. Birkin thinks that seeing those things in the classroom probably triggered off some kind of traumatic reaction in your daughter. Maybe it made her remember seeing her grandmother being killed. She's probably wandering around in a daze right near the school...

CARVETH

But then she could get hit by a car or fall or...

Mrazek takes Carveth by the shoulders.

MRAZEK

Frank, we've got bulletins out, we've got cars out, we've informed the newspapers. Go home.

79. EXT. DUSK. FIELD

Candice is now stumbling with exhaustion as the trio crosses a field in the middle of the countryside. The two child-creatures drag her along mercilessly as they soldier on like robots. They have a very specific destination in mind.

80. INT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S LIVING ROOM

Carveth sits at his living room table drinking coffee. His wrist watch is off and on the table beside him. It is 3:15 AM. The radio is playing music turned down low: Carveth is really only interested in any news bulletins that might bring him information about Candice.

Carveth is reading the early morning edition of the Globe & Mail. In front of him is a picture of Candice taken from a school portrait which is subtitled HAVE YOU SEEN THIS GIRL? Right next to it is a long article titled POLICE SEEK DWARF KILLERS. This last article includes photos of Ruth's classroom and diagrams of the school and surrounding area.

Carveth tosses the newspaper on the table and rubs his hand over his stubbled jaw. He is exhausted but sleep isn't even a vague possibility. There is a knock at the door. Carveth jumps up to answer it.

81. INT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S VESTIBULE

As Carveth approaches his front door, he can see a man standing on the front step through the door window. The man has his back to the door and is watching the street nervously, as though he were afraid he'd been followed.

At the sound of Carveth at the door, the man turns around. It is Mike Trellan, looking a little more in control of himself than he did at the nursing home. Carveth opens the door and Mike takes one step inside. Carveth does not move aside to let him all the way in.

MIKE

Hey, Frank. Let me in, OK? I think I'm being followed. Well, I'm not sure I am but I might be.

Carveth hesitates.

MIKE

Hey, listen...I found out what's happening at Somafree. Look, I'm a wreck. I admit it. I say stupid things. Don't hold it against me.

Carveth pauses a beat, then lets Mike in, closing the door behind him. But he doesn't usher Mike any further into the house. Mike peeks out the window, then turns to Carveth.

MIKE

I'm gonna tell you everything I know. But if I do... Frank,..... you gotta let me stay here tonight, OK? When I moved into Somafree, I really moved in. I've got no place to stay. And I can't go back to Hartog's out at that nursing home. It's too spooky.

CARVETH

Tell me what you know.

MIKE

Oh, Frank...that's a hard line to take. Can I at least come all the way in? Have you got coffee or toast or something...?

CARVETH

I'm not in a very good mood.

MIKE

OK,OK. Let's see what I know first. OK.

I said your wife was the only patient left at Somafree. I was wrong. I was very wrong.

(CONT'D)

MIKE (CONT'D)

You see, ah, the reason we were all moved out is that Raskin is on to something big, very big, and it involves his research with the kids.

CARVETH

(SUDDENLY VERY INTERESTED)

The kids? What kids?

MIKE

(QUIETLY, CONSPIRATORIALLY)

There's a boathouse compound that's on the other side of the trees from the main lodge. You can't see it unless you go right up to it. In the boathouse there are these kids, these disturbed kids that Raskin has living there. Something to do with discovering the childhood origins of neurosis or something, I don't know. I don't know where he got them to play with, but he's got them. And nobody's supposed to know they're there.

CARVETH

How do you know they're there?

MIKE

I saw them. I went back last night. I...I couldn't stay away. I followed Raskin around like a whipped puppy. In the shadows. (BITTERLY) When he saw me, he yelled. He yelled at me and I ran away. But they're in there, and so is your wife.

CARVETH

What do you mean?

MIKE

Nola's always had a special place at Somafree. Her own apartment in the boathouse. And that's where the kids are. Maybe she's taking care of them. Maybe it's part of her therapy programme.

Carveth pauses for a beat, then grabs his jacket from the coat rack and pulls open the door.

MIKE

(BAFFLED)

Hey, where're you going?

Carveth closes the door behind him, leaving the house to Mike.

82. EXT. NIGHT. COUNTRY ROAD

Carveth's Volvo smokes along a winding dirt country road in the moonlight, high beams blazing.

83. EXT. NIGHT. ENTRANCE ROAD TO SOMAFREE

The Volvo slews sideways as it makes the turn which takes Carveth off the last concession road and onto the entrance road to Somafree. There is an open gate a few feet along the road bearing a small sign which says SOMAFREE, NO TRESPASSING. The car blasts through the gate into the Somafree estate.

Carveth drives the car about fifty feet down the road, then stops it, turns off the ignition, and gets out. He takes a heavy aluminum three-battery flashlight out of the glove compartment and locks the doors. He hefts the weight of the flashlight, comforting himself that he can use it as a weapon if need be, then starts off down the road towards the parking lot.

84. EXT. NIGHT. SOMAFREE PARKING LOT

Carveth emerges from the bush onto the flagstones of the parking lot. There is only one car - a Mercedes 450SE with California plates - in the lot. Carveth climbs over the wooden railing at the edge of the lot and begins to walk down the sloping lawn towards the main lodge.

85. EXT. NIGHT. SOMAFREE LAWN

Carveth keeps in the shadows as he walks past the main lodge. One or two floodlights break up the night around the lodge. The entire interior of the place seems lit - lights blazing in every room - but Carveth can't see anyone inside as he glides past on his way to the stand of trees at the foot of the lawn.

86. EXT. NIGHT. LAKE EDGE

At the foot of the lawn Carveth finds a stone wall which runs along the edge of the lake past the stand of trees. Carveth jumps up on the wall and walks along it past the trees. As he walks, the boathouse compound - a large old boathouse surrounded by a high chainlink fence - comes into view. The boathouse has a stone marina level which sinks below the water and a wood frame boathouse perched on top of it. The windows of the boathouse are boarded up with plywood. The marina is accessible by a wide sliding door opening into the wet dock and a normal side door. Both doors are closed.

87. EXT. NIGHT. BOATHOUSE

Carveth jumps down from the stone wall and walks towards the boathouse. When he reaches it, he gently tries the side door, but it's locked.

Carveth is in the process of trying to see into one of the side windows which looks into the marina when a man opens the marina's side door and steps outside.

Carveth grabs the man by the collar, slams him against the side of the boathouse, and snaps his light on in the man's face. It's Raskin. He narrows his eyes, trying to see past the blinding light.

RASKIN

Who's that? Mike?

CARVETH

It's Frank Carveth, Dr. Raskin. I'm here to see my wife. We have a lot to talk about.

RASKIN

Carveth?

Carveth eases his grip and lowers the light.

RASKIN

I thought Trellan might go to you.

CARVETH

He did. He told me about the kids.

RASKIN

(NERVOUSLY)

He doesn't know much.

CARVETH

Enough to get the police here.

RASKIN

I hope you didn't do that, Frank. Not yet.

CARVETH

Why not? Have you got something to hide?

RASKIN

Because your daughter's here. And she's in danger.

CARVETH

(ANGRILY, PUSHING RASKIN AGAINST THE WALL)

Is it the kids? Is it those things? Did they bring her here?

RASKIN

Yes. They live in the boathouse, up there. That's where they're keeping Candice.

Carveth can't keep himself from slugging Raskin on the shoulder with the flashlight. Raskin winces but says nothing.

CARVETH

Does Nola know that Candy's here? What's she got to do with them? Is she some kind of surrogate mother to them?

RASKIN

(RELUCTANTLY)

She's not their surrogate mother, Frank. She's their real mother. Their only mother.

CARVETH

That's impossible. You're lying.

RASKIN

No, I'm not. It's all true. But listen to me - there might not be much time. I've just come from talking to Nola. I've been trying to get her to send Candice back to you. I've been trying to explain to her why Candice is in danger as long as she's with the kids, but she refuses to believe me.

CARVETH

Tell me.

RASKIN

Frank, the kids, the brood, those things...they are, quite literally, the children of Nola's rage. They are motivated only by her anger, whether that anger is subconscious or conscious. You remember Candy's bruises, the ones she got last weekend? You thought Nola had beaten the child. But in a sense, she really hadn't. It

(CONT'D)

RASKIN (CONT'D)

was the brood that did it. Nola was irritated and angry with Candice - something that happens between any normal mother and child - but Nola's anger communicated itself to the brood and they acted on that anger. They did something that Nola would never actually do herself - they beat Candice. It was the first time anything like that had happened. And even then I didn't realize how truly dangerous the kids were until I read in the papers about how Nola's parents died. Frank...those murders coincided to the minute with the release of Nola's rage against her parents in therapy.

CARVETH

How could Nola communicate with them? The autopsist said they couldn't even speak...

RASKIN

I don't know how it works. Call it telepathy, call it electrochemical empathy...all I know is that it does work, and it works from a distance of several miles.

CARVETH

You're insane. None of this is true.

RASKIN

You've seen one of them, Frank. They exist.

CARVETH

They're just freaks. Deformed children.

Carveth turns around and starts walking away from the lake towards the entrance to the boathouse.

CARVETH

I'm getting my daughter and I'm taking her home.

Raskin reaches into his suit jacket and pulls out a snub-nosed .38 Police Special. He cocks it. The sound is not subtle.

RASKIN

Carveth! I've got a gun. I'm pointing it at you.

Carveth stops.

RASKIN

Turn around.

Carveth turns around.

RASKIN

I want you to try it my way first. Believe me. It's the right way.

Raskin circles Carveth until he is closer to the boathouse entrance than Carveth is. Carveth turns in order to keep facing him.

CARVETH

What do you want me to do?

RASKIN

I want you to go into the marina and convince Nola that you don't want to take Candice away, that you want Nola back again, that you want your family back again. I want you to play the role of apologetic lover and husband.

CARVETH

Why?

RASKIN

Because if Nola's calm and happy, the brood is neutral. If you can keep Nola mellow, I'll be able to just walk into the boathouse, pick Candy up, tuck her under my arm, and walk out again. Can you do that?

CARVETH

I don't know.

RASKIN

Frank...if it goes wrong...if Nola gets angry - the kids get angry. Do you understand? And it's not just me who's going to pay the price of that anger.

CARVETH

(FRUSTRATED AND CONFUSED)

I don't trust you, Raskin.

RASKIN

(SHRUGS)

What does it matter? A few minutes ago you came here to see your wife. Go see her. I'll move into the boathouse about 30 seconds after you're in.

(CARVETH HESITATES. RASKIN GESTURES WITH THE GUN)

Go on. And Frank. Be nice to her.

Carveth backs down towards the lake, then turns and enters the marina. Raskin walks back up the slope to the boathouse door, glancing back once or twice to make sure that Carveth isn't following him.

88. INT. NIGHT. MARINA

Carveth steps through the door into the marina. The marina seems much larger on the inside than it would appear from without. The entire place has been gutted, wood-panelled, plastered, sound-proofed, and in general converted from a damp, concrete garage for boats into an exotic, plush apartment whose main feature is the long, rectangular wet dock which connects with the lake outside.

At the far end of the marina Carveth can make out the details of a small living area set on a raised platform at the edge of the water. Carveth slowly approaches the platform, walking carefully along the narrow dock-side ledge, the water gently lapping against its concrete prison.

As he moves closer in the dim light, Carveth can see that Nola is sitting on a bed wearing what appears to be a thick, translucent poncho or robe which leaves only her head exposed. As she rocks quietly from side to side, as though nursing a baby, she takes on the presence of royalty, of a saint, glowing golden under the spotlight above her.

Carveth gets quite close to the platform before Nola realizes someone is there.

NOLA

Hal?

Carveth steps into the light. He speaks quickly, softly, before she has a chance to react.

CARVETH

It's me, Nola. It's Frank. I thought it was time I came to see you.

NOLA

(COLDLY)

I've got Candice, Frank. I've got her and I'm not giving her back. You should never have tried to take her away from me, Frank.

(A BIT MORE SOFTLY)

I was hurt that you would do that. I always wanted to share her with you.

Carveth moves even closer, walking as though the floor were made of eggshells.

CARVETH

I think it was a misunderstanding, Nola. On my part, and then on yours. That's why I'm here. I want us to understand each other.

89. INT. NIGHT. BOATHOUSE

Raskin pushes open the door to the boathouse, revolver in hand.

The boathouse is completely dark. Raskin reaches inside and feels around for the light switch. He finds it and flicks it on. An extremely soft, indirect light bathes the interior of the boathouse. The narrowness of the entrance, which runs between the enclosed boathouse kitchen on the left and the bathroom on the right, prevents Raskin from seeing much more than the rows of bunk beds inside.

Raskin takes a deep breath and moves quietly inside.

90. INT. NIGHT. MARINA

Carveth can now see that Nola is encased in something that resembles an oxygen tent; but it is an unusual one in that it leaves her head free and surrounds the rest of her body. Through the translucent colourless plastic of the tent, Carveth can vaguely distinguish the shape of Nola's body and the colour of flesh, but the outline seems oddly swollen, lumpy, and generally distorted.

NOLA

It's hard for me to believe you when I know you're getting involved with another woman. If you're not willing to wait for me, I don't know what I'm doing all this for. I feel betrayed...

CARVETH

That's part of the misunderstanding, Nola. I'm not involved with any other woman. You're the only woman in my life. You always have been, and you always will be. That won't ever change, and you know it.

NOLA

(BURSTING GENTLY INTO TEARS)

I wish it were true. God, how I wish it were true.

CARVETH

We've lost touch, Nola. That's the only reason all this happened. All we have to do is make sure we don't lose touch again.

NOLA

But isolation is part of my therapy, Frank. What's been happening to me has been just too strange. Too strange to share with anyone from my old life...

CARVETH

Then make me part of your new life, Nola. Let me be part of it. Show me, educate me, involve me. I'm ready now. I wasn't before, but I'm ready now.

91. INT. NIGHT. BOATHOUSE

As Raskin passes the bathroom door he takes a quick look inside, hoping that perhaps Candice is there. It is empty. Raskin studies the intercom on the bathroom wall just inside the door. There is a button marked MARINA as well as one marked LODGE. Raskin is tempted to press it and the LISTEN button to hear how Carveth is handling Nola, but he decides to continue on. He moves away from the bathroom and into the main room of the boathouse.

As Raskin's eyes acclimatize to the interior light level, he can see the walls of the boathouse lined with child-sized triple-level bunk beds, like some sort of miniature Victorian opium den. The air inside is hot and heavy with moisture, like a greenhouse. The room is full of breathing.

Raskin soon realizes that most of the children who occupy the bunk beds are awake and following his progress, propped up on their elbows, chins resting on bunk posts, or sitting with their backs against the wall. The children all wear off-white institutional two piece pyjamas. At least a dozen of them are now visible.

The children begin to shift around uneasily as Raskin moves from bunk to bunk, examining each mound of blankets, each shadowy corner for Candice. At the moment, the creatures tolerate Raskin's presence, but it is a very tentative acceptance.

Raskin works his way down the line of bunks towards the far curtained window before he finds Candice curled up and asleep in a lower bunk, watched over by two of the brood, one sitting at the head of the bed, one curled up behind Candice, its own ungainly form pressed closely against Candice's, stomach to back.

Ever so gently, Raskin puts his free hand on Candice's shoulder and shakes her. Candice shrinks away from his touch, still deep in sleep, then suddenly sits bolt upright, her eyes prematurely open, her mind half dreaming.

CANDICE

Daddy? Is it time to go to school yet? I think I forgot my lunch...

RASKIN

It's Dr. Hal, Candy. Your Daddy is downstairs talking to your Mom. He wants to see you. C'mon. Come with me. He's waiting for you.

CANDICE

Daddy? (RASKIN NODS)

Candice swings her legs over the edge of the bed without hesitation, her eyes still dreamy and half-focussed. The creature behind her in bed sits up with her, like a shadow or a Siamese twin.

Raskin takes Candice's hand and leads her slowly towards the door. The creatures slide down from their bunks as they go, forming a fleshy, bobbing slipstream behind them.

92. INT. NIGHT. MARINA

NOLA

Are you ready for me, Frank? Are you really?
I seem to be a very special person, and I'm
in the middle of a very strange adventure.

Carveth sits on the platform at Nola's feet.

CARVETH

Then take me with you, Nola. I want to be
with you wherever you go.

NOLA

(LOOKING DOWN AT HIM WITH FIERCE INTENSITY)
Do you? Do you?

CARVETH

Yes.

NOLA

(BEAMING ECSTATICALLY)

Then look!

Nola unzips the plastic tent from the inside and spreads its front flaps open like the wings of a huge, exotic bat. Inside the tent she sits cross-legged in the lotus position, completely naked. At random intervals over the entire surface of her skin, including her arms and legs, sprout translucent lumps of flesh ranging from walnut-size to - in two cases - the size of large watermelons.

Through the backlit spheres of flesh, Carveth can see clearly what appear to be human embryos and fetuses in varying stages of development. The two largest fetuses seem to be floating in globes of amniotic fluid, as though the globes themselves were some kind of external uteruses or amnions. They join Nola's body at the already distinct humps on their backs.

As Carveth watches, innerly recoiling in disgust, the larger of the two most developed foetuses begins to pinch off at its base, as though special circular muscles in Nola's skin where the sac joined her body began contracting in a grotesque imitation of uterine contractions.

It takes only a few moments for the sac to be pinched off completely. It falls to the bedding of soft surgical gauze which surrounds her, where it rolls around as the foetus twitches, amniotic fluid seeping out into the bedding through the slit in the sac left by the pinching-off process.

Carveth stands up, unsteady on his feet, dizzy and nauseous. Nola picks up the foetus and begins to pull away the sac which surrounds it. The amniotic fluid in the sac spills out in a sudden gush onto the bedding and over Nola's ankles and feet.

CARVETH

Oh, God! Nola...!

Nola lifts the squirming, humanoid foetus up to her mouth and begins to lick it all over, like a dog with its new-born young.

Carveth starts to gag, then manages to control the sick feeling he feels in the pit of his stomach. He backs away from the platform. Nola looks up at him. Carveth shakes his head.

Nola is hurt, betrayed, furious, anguished. She clasps the squirming foetus to her breasts and screams at the top of her lungs.

NOLA

No...! No! I disgust you. I sicken you.
You hate me, don't you? You didn't come here
because you love me. You came to take our daughter
away and give her to somebody else. You came
to betray me!

93. INT. NIGHT. BOATHOUSE

Raskin is about halfway to the front door of the boathouse when he hears the sound of several pairs of small, bare feet hitting the floor behind him. He pushes Candice away from him and turns, leaving himself slightly off-balance. Raskin can now see clearly the faces of the children who have jumped down from their bunks behind him. The faces are bloated with rage.

A hand reaches for Raskin's face from just behind him on a top bunk. The hand rakes him across the eyes with ragged, dirty fingernails. Raskin grunts in pain, turns and fires point blank at the creature in the bunk. The creature's head disintegrates against the boathouse wall.

Candice has already reached the bathroom door and turned to see where Raskin has gone. When she sees Raskin kill the creature her jaw drops in disbelief.

The creatures go berserk as though they were one animal. With ear-ripping shrieks of rage, they lunge for Raskin from the floor and from their bunks. Raskin fires wildly, hitting two more, one in the chest and one in the hip.

Candice screams and claps her hands over her ears, shaking her head madly.

Raskin goes down to the floor under the weight and fury of the attack. The whole place explodes with twisted children who kick, bite, scratch and bury Raskin; squealing and shrieking with strange, distorted little voices.

Candy watches the writhing mass of bodies on the floor of the boathouse. Suddenly, Raskin erupts from the sea of small bodies like a whale desperately surfacing from the deep. Raskin has lost his gun. He forces his way unsteadily to his feet, pulling with him three of the children with their jaws locked to his neck and cheeks.

Raskin's face is a mass of bloody bites and scratches and one of his eyes is closed and oozing. He gropes frantically for support against one of the bunks, looking hopelessly at Candy with his good eye, begging soundlessly for help.

Candy shakes her head in horror, her hands still over her ears. Raskin manages to take one more step towards the door. The creature locked to his left cheek falls to the ground, taking a piece of Raskin's flesh with him. Raskin screams in pain.

The sound of Raskin's scream seems to whip the creatures into an even greater frenzy. They renew their attack furiously, leaping at his throat from the floor, climbing onto the bunks to grab at his hair and jump at him, ripping the legs of his pants to shreds and gnawing at his knees.

Raskin staggers under the onslaught and finally goes down. Candice watches in hypnotized horror as Raskin sinks beneath the waves of insanely undulating little bodies.

94. INT. NIGHT. MARINA

Carveth tries desperately to overcome his disgust and calm Nola, but it's hopeless.

CARVETH

I wouldn't do that. I wouldn't do that to you...

NOLA

(SCREAMING)

You're lying, lying, lying! I know it when I hear it. I know you so well. But it won't work. It won't work! I'd kill Candice before I'd ever let you take her away from me. Do you hear me? I'd kill her!

95. INT. NIGHT. BOATHOUSE

As Candice backs away from the attack on Raskin, the children suddenly begin to turn their attention to her. One by one, they leave Raskin's torn and battered body, rise, and begin to move towards Candice.

Candice lowers her hands from her ears and glances back at the open bathroom door, still backing away slowly. Suddenly, the whole pack of twisted children start for her, eyes burning, mouths drooling, voices whining and cackling.

Candice turns and throws herself into the boathouse bathroom, slamming the door behind her. The impact of many small bodies, hands and feet hit the door a split second after it closes.

Crying in fear and on the verge of hysteria, Candice still has the presence of mind to slide the small brass bolt of the inside lock home. The pressboard door flexes and pulses with the tearing and hammering being inflicted on it from the other side.

Candice wedges herself into the corner of the bathroom furthest from the door as the creatures begin to smash holes in the flimsy material. Their hands come through the holes, groping for anything - the doorknob, the bolt lock, or Candice if she should come near enough.

Realizing that the door won't last much longer, Candice throws herself at the intercom next to the door, desperately trying to evade the small hands and fists that can now reach her. She presses the MARINA and SPEAK buttons and begins to scream and cry into the speaker.

CANDICE

(SCREAMING INTO INTERCOM)

Daddy! Daddy! No, no, no, go 'way! Daddy!

96. INT. NIGHT. MARINA

The sounds of Candice and the creatures smashing at the door suddenly echo through the marina over the amplified intercom on the wall not far from where Nola sits. When Carveth hears Candice calling for him in terror, he immediately knows what has happened in the boathouse.

CANDICE (VO)

(OVER INTERCOM)

Daddy! Don't let them get me! They'll hurt me again! Please, Daddy, please!

Carveth jumps up onto the platform and grabs Nola roughly by the shoulders, stepping on one of the foetuses as he does so. Carveth starts to shake Nola with insane energy.

CARVETH

Make them stop! Nola, they're doing what you want them to do! You want to kill Candy!
You want to kill my daughter! You make them stop or I'll kill you!

NOLA

Then kill me! Kill me, kill me, kill me...!

Nola struggles to get away, holding on to the foetal creature under her incubator. Carveth almost loses her. They stumble across the platform together, knocking over lamps, trays, bottles.

Carveth traps Nola when she stumbles and kneels on her chest. He grabs her by the throat and begins to strangle her. She thrashes around furiously, forcing Carveth to squeeze her throat with all his might to keep her from slipping away. Nola's eyes gradually slip up under her upper lids as she loses consciousness. At the same time, the sound of the creatures smashing at the boathouse bathroom door coming over the intercom diminishes and, as Nola succumbs, finally stops.

Candice can still be heard sobbing hysterically. Carveth is demented, uncontrolled, enraged. He uses all the leverage and strength he can muster to choke the life out of Nola.

Carveth doesn't stop until he is sure that Nola is dead. Only then does he relax the pressure in his hands and let them slip from Nola's bruised throat. He breathes deeply, wildly, trying to regain his composure.

Carveth stands shakily to his feet. The foetal creature that Nola was holding on to now flounders helplessly beside her body. Carveth steps down from the platform, pauses, then turns his back on Nola and heads for the marina door.

97. INT. NIGHT. BOATHOUSE

Carveth kicks open the boathouse door, hair disheveled, eyes glazed.

In the dim light of the boathouse, Carveth sees about fifteen of the creatures lolling about on the floor like mindless infants, unable to stand or to co-ordinate any of their limbs or movements.

One of Raskin's legs, bloody beneath the shredded pants leg, protrude from the shadows. Carveth steps over the creatures to see if Raskin might still be alive. From his reaction when he kneels down in the shadows to check Raskin's pulse we understand that Raskin has died, and died horribly.

Carveth gets up and looks around the room. Candice is not there. Then Carveth remembers passing the bathroom door on his way in. He returns to the bathroom door. It is still closed, light from the spotlight outside the bathroom window streaming through the holes and splintered cracks in it.

Carveth tries the door. It's still locked. Carveth hits it with his shoulder a few times until the lock bursts and the door slams open.

Candice is huddled in the far corner, her arms folded over her head. Carveth steps in and kneels beside her.

CARVETH

(WITH INFINITE WARMTH)

Candy? It's OK now. Your Daddy's here. Everything is going to be all right now.

Candice doesn't respond. Carveth gently unfolds her arms and lowers them, then cups his hand under Candice's chin and raises her face. Candice is shivering, her eyes blank and traumatized. She doesn't seem to see Carveth, but rather focusses on something in her mind.

98. EXT. NIGHT. SOMAFREE ENTRANCE ROAD

Under the dense, overhanging trees which cover the Somafree entrance road, Carveth bundles Candice into the front seat of the car. He covers her with his jacket, then gets into the driver's seat and starts the car.

99. INT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S CAR

Before moving off, Carveth spends a moment holding Candice close, petting her hair, and rocking her rhythmically, hypnotically. Then he lets her go, balances her against his right side, and puts the car into gear.

100. EXT. NIGHT. SOMAFREE ENTRANCE ROAD

Carveth's car begins to jounce its way slowly down the narrow, rutted entrance road towards the concession road beyond the gate.

101. INT. NIGHT. CARVETH'S CAR

Inside the car, Carveth concentrates on negotiating the bumpy road. Beside him on the seat, next to Carveth's thigh, Candice's left arm lies exposed and still. As we move macroscopically close to the skin on Candice's arm, we can see tiny translucent buds beginning to push out like goose bumps amongst the delicate blonde hairs.

END