



# THE DISAPPOINTMENTS ROOM

FIRST DRAFT  
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Inspired by the real thing.

Time to pack.

QUICKCUTS of bending and folding and tucking as THE OPENING CREDITS ROLL... We hear someone BREATHING, a steady rhythm of inhales and exhales as they dutifully bend to the task...

CLOSE ON a box. Brown. Cardboard. Bought in bulk.

The lids on top are bent along perforated edges, folded down til they meet in the middle...

We hear a loud SQUEAL as a roll of packing tape RAKES ACROSS THE SCREEN, sealing the two lids together... Then a second pair of lids are bent, folded and sealed... Then a third and a fourth and a fifth... Bent, folded and sealed...

Again and again and again... Box after box after box...

THE CUTS COME FASTER NOW, lids bending and folding with lightening speed, packing tape RAKING left to right, then right to left, then left to right...

Again and again and again... Box after box after box...

Building in noise and speed and fury until all of a sudden WE'RE DONE.

Silence.

CUT TO a living room washed in sunset, empty except for what looks like an acre of moving boxes in every size imaginable.

On the far side of the room, standing in front of a window with her back to us, is a WOMAN. Dirty jeans, sweat-soaked T-shirt, hair gathered in a hasty knot. She's holding very still, focused on something outside...

WE MOVE TOWARD HER, pushing through the stacks... When we're near enough to see the perspiration on the back of her neck, WE SHIFT FOCUS, looking over her shoulder and out through the window to the street below...

OUR P.O.V.: Brooklyn, somewhere near the park... Residential. Upscale. The scars of gentrification no longer visible...

We see dogs on leashes and kids on bikes, people waving from the stoops of their ancient, crumbling brownstones... The whole neighborhood out enjoying this gorgeous June evening...

We also notice two people coming toward us down the sidewalk, a MAN and a little BOY, holding hands...

The man is slim, good-looking, with black hipster glasses he actually uses for seeing things. He's carrying a couple of eco-friendly grocery bags, both of them stuffed full...

The boy is a pint-sized version of the man, plus cowlicks and chubby cheeks. Nodding in response to something the man says, his face is thoughtful and serious, adult-like...

Then the boy looks up, right into our window, and breaks into a huge grinny-grin-grin. He points, excited. The man looks up as well, sees us, and just as he's about to call out...

WE CUT TO BLACK.

CUE TWO STARTLING BLASTS OF MUSIC, like a foghorn.

**BWAAAAAAAAA!!!! BWAAAAAAAAA!!!!**

Then a SWIRL of instruments fall to, the piece light and frisky, clearly of a different era.

**BEGIN A RAPID MONTAGE** of lush rural vistas... Meadows and mountains, cotton clouds and blue skies, rivers and streams lapping out in all directions... Welcome to the country...

THE MUSIC CONTINUES as WE ZOOM IN on a red Volvo SUV, zipping down the highway with a mass of bags strapped to the roof...

INT. VOLVO - DAY - SAME

The man in black glasses is behind the wheel. His name is DAVID. David is about to start singing. Loudly.

DAVID  
*IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHO WE AAAARE /  
WE ARE GENTLEMEN OF JAPAAAAAAAAAN /  
ON-N MANY A VASE AND JAAAAR / ON-N  
MANY A SCREEN AND FAAAAAAAAAN...*

What David lacks in pitch he makes up for in oomph. Turning up the volume, he looks in the rearview mirror... Reveal the little boy, JEREMY (5), snug in his car seat. Jeremy's singing along with dad, cheerfully mangling every other word.

DAVID & JEREMY  
*WE FIGURE IN LIVELY PAI-NT / OUR  
ATTITUDE'S QUEER AND QUAI-NT /  
YOU'RE WRONG IF YOU THINK IT AI-NT  
/ OOOOOOOO...*

Eyes twinkling, David looks to his right... THE CAMERA SLIDES OVER to find DANA, now showered and scrubbed, looking a lot fresher than she did yesterday. Dana's watching the road but she can feel her husband's eyes on her.

DANA  
(beat)  
It's a shame I packed the Jolson tapes. We could've popped them in after this.

DAVID  
Oh come on...

DANA  
No, I'm serious, David. Next time  
we stop the car I'll run my hand  
under the hood so we can grease up  
our faces. Do it right.

The whole time, super loud from the back -

JEREMY  
*IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHO WE  
AAAARE...*

DANA  
Can we please...

JEREMY  
*WE ARE GENTLEMEN OF JAPAAAAAAAAN...*

DANA  
...please listen to something else?

JEREMY  
*ON MANY-MANY-MANY-MANY...*

DAVID  
It's cute.

JEREMY  
*MANY-MANY-MANY-MANY A JAR...*

DANA  
It's offensive.

But she's suddenly got a hand over her mouth to hide the  
smile. David chuckles, looks in the rearview mirror again.

DAVID  
What do you think, peanut? Is it  
cute?

JEREMY  
Yeah!

DAVID  
Is daddy the cutest?

JEREMY  
YEAH!

DANA  
Is daddy a racist?

JEREMY  
YEAH!

DANA  
See? He knows it's true.

DAVID  
He knows it's all meant with a  
wink...  
(sighing theatrically)  
The real shame is it's been so long  
since I had a chance to strut my  
stuff! Do my thing.

JEREMY  
What's a 'racist?'

DANA  
I could be wrong - and correct me  
if I am - but I don't think two  
performances of 'The Mikado' -

DAVID  
Correction - three performances.

DANA  
I don't think three performances of  
'The Mikado' your junior year of  
prep school qualifies as a 'thing.'

The tone here is light, the territory well-trod.

JEREMY  
What's a 'racist,' Mommy?

DAVID  
I'll have you know I was told by  
more than one cheerleader that mine  
was the definitive 'Pooh-Bah.'

DANA  
Didn't you go to an all-boys'  
school?

David smiles, smacks his forehead.

DAVID  
Oh right...

JEREMY  
MOMMY! WHAT'S A 'RACIST?'

Oops. Time for a distraction.

DAVID  
Pooh-bah, Jeremy!

JEREMY  
Pooh-bah!

DAVID  
Pooh-bah from the town of Titipu!

JEREMY  
Pooh-bah from the town of Titipu!

DAVID  
POOH-POOH-BAH-BAH from the town of  
TITIPU-PU!

JEREMY  
POOH-POOH-BAH-BAH from the town of  
TITIPU-PU!

DAVID  
POOH-POOH-BAH-BAH FROM THE TOWN OF  
TITIPU-PU-BAH-BAH!

JEREMY  
POOH-POOH-BAH-BAH FROM THE TITI-BAH-  
BAH-POOH-POOH-CACA-TOWN... HA! I  
SAID 'CACA!'

Jeremy tips forward in back, cackling hysterically.

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
I SAID 'CACA,' MOMMY! I said  
'caca'...

David snorts, starts laughing.

DAVID  
Your son said 'caca,' babe.

DANA  
I know, David... I heard.

Then, helpless before this charm offensive, Dana surrenders.

DANA (CONT'D)  
I heard.

EXT. VOLVO - CONTINUOUS

We can still hear them LAUGHING as the car flies away from us  
and over the hill, speeding toward a shadowy horizon...

INT./EXT. VOLVO - NIGHT - LATER

It's now pitch black and pouring rain. The car SLIPS and  
SLIDES along a muddy single-lane road, branches SCRAPING the  
sides as they pass. David hunches forward, squinting through  
the wipers.



JEREMY  
(waking from a nap)  
Where are we?

DAVID  
We're home, peanut!

Jeremy looks out the window, reserving judgment.

JEREMY  
Where're the streetlights?

DANA  
They don't have streetlights in the  
country, Jeremy.

DAVID  
Just flashlights, buddy. Isn't that  
cool? We'll get you a big one. With  
your name on it.

JEREMY  
Red!

DAVID  
Red. You got it.

They roll up to the house, headlights illuminating a mile of  
shingle siding. Dana stares up at the facade as they come to  
a stop. Hard to see much, what with the rain and the night.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Babe?  
(beat)  
Dana, look at me.

She turns from the window, meets his eyes.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
This is a good thing, alright? It's  
a good move.

DANA  
Pun intended.

DAVID  
Hey - you believe me?

DANA  
I believe you.

DAVID  
Promise?

DANA  
(beat)  
Promise.

He leans over, kisses her, tender. Jeremy's face crinkles.

JEREMY  
Noooo... Don't...

DAVID  
Ready, peanut? Ready to see our new house?

JEREMY  
Yeah!

DAVID  
Ready to go inside?

JEREMY  
YEAH!

DAVID  
Then why are we still sittin' here?

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - ENTRY - MINUTES LATER

The front door swings open revealing Dana, David and Jeremy, soaked to the skin and loaded down with bags, peering into the darkness. David feels for a switch on the wall and two small sconces flicker on. Then one of them SPUTTERS and DIES.

But Dana's not thinking about the lighting.

DANA  
Shit.

JEREMY  
Mommy!

DANA  
Sorry.

DANA'S P.O.V.: Every box from the opening scene is piled high in the entry, plus a truckload of furniture. The sight is overwhelming.

DAVID  
I thought they were supposed to put everything in the right rooms.

DANA  
Obviously they didn't.

DAVID  
Well what are we gonna do?

DANA  
What do you think?

JEREMY  
It smells...

DAVID  
Hey, peanut - last one to find the  
bathroom has to go wee in the  
woods!

JEREMY  
WAIT! Wait for me!

DANA  
No running in the house!

But they're already gone. Dana lingers in the silence, then picks her way over to a wide doorway off the entry...

DANA'S P.O.V.: A black hole. Impossible to tell what kind of room this is or how big...

UNKNOWN P.O.V.: Dana, facing us in the doorway on the other side of a very large space. After a beat she backs away, zigzagging through the boxes to a doorway opposite...

UNKNOWN P.O.V.: Dana, facing us in the second doorway, looking small. Vulnerable. She turns away again, moving toward the staircase at the rear of the entry...

It's over-the-top, meant to impress. At the bottom, inset in the paneling on either side, are two opposing mirrors, both tall and foxed, coated with dust...

Dana steps between them, sees herself reflected on either side. *A thousand little Danas, stretching to infinity...*

CLOSE ON Dana, eyes now climbing the stairs as they sweep up to the second floor and beyond, up into the gloom, the sound of the rain on the windows growing LOUDER... And LOUDER...

WE START SWIRLING UP AND AWAY FROM HER, WIDENING to reveal just how cavernous this place really is... The house looming larger and larger... Dana growing smaller and smaller...

Until we lose her entirely among the boxes stacked below.

*INT. BATHROOM*

*OVERHEAD SHOT of water, swirling down a drain... WIDEN to reveal a bathtub rapidly emptying... WIDEN AGAIN to reveal a slick white bathroom, tricked out in expensive Carrara...*

*There's a woman curled up on the floor next to the tub, wrapped in a white towel, CRYING soundlessly... It's Dana...*

*We hear DRIP, DRIP, DRIP as the water drains to nothing...*

*DISSOLVE TO:*

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

**DRIP, DRIP, DRIP...**

OVERHEAD SHOT of Dana curled up on a mattress, her back tucked into the curve of David's belly. They're both sound asleep, wearing the same clothes as the night before. We can still hear rain falling outside... **DRIP, DRIP, DRIP...**

Wait a minute.

Dana opens her eyes, sees a puddle on the floor over by the windows. Shit. Then her eyes go to the ceiling, zeroing in on a nasty yellow stain. Looks old. She sighs.

INT. ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

We hear RUSTLING. PAN OVER to find Dana opening a large box marked "KITCHEN," an army of pots and pans nestled inside.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dana mops up the puddle with an old T-shirt, sets a pot under the leak. Then she stands, glances over to the bed. David's still asleep, snoring softly. She gathers her hair in a knot.

INT. BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

WIDE ON Dana as she enters, arms loaded with pots, pausing to admire the moldings and columns, the crystal chandeliers...

All of it filthy. But dry.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

WIDE ON Dana, pots balanced under one arm, moving from window to window, opening interior shutters, letting in the light.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

WIDE ON Dana, pots stacked on the floor, pushing back pair after pair of heavy, faded drapes. Whew. Dusty. She coughs.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM NUMBER ONE - CONTINUOUS

Dana looks in. It's bare, full of cobwebs, red anaglypta peeling off the walls in sheets. Hardly guest-ready, but dry.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM NUMBER TWO - CONTINUOUS

Same as the last but blue wallpaper this time. Also dry.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM NUMBER THREE - CONTINUOUS

Green wallpaper in this one. And dry as well.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM NUMBER FOUR - CONTINUOUS

Yellow wallpaper in here. And dry too. Good.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Dana works her way down a narrow corridor, stopping at doors on either side. Reveal a series of tiny rooms, each boasting a small iron bed and a few sticks of furniture. This floor feels grim and institutional, like every expense was spared. Fitting for the servants' quarters. But it's puddle-free.

DANA

I guess it's just our room.

She opens the last door at the end of the hall and finds a steep flight of stairs... to the attic. She puts a foot on the first tread... then hears a NOISE from somewhere below.

Dana wavers... then shuts the door. It'll have to wait.

INT. ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

We hear RUSTLING. PAN OVER to find Dana opening another box marked "KITCHEN," hauling out a large microwave.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She sets the microwave on the counter, looks around. Her new kitchen has squat to recommend it. Cracked tiles and broken cabinets, nothing cleaned or upgraded in decades...

Aha - there's a greasy outlet near the fridge. Dana plugs the microwave in, the little numbers blinking '12:00.' Then she opens one of their grocery bags, pulls out a box of Eggos.

David slouches in, bleary-eyed, hair on end.

DAVID  
Is there any coffee?

DANA  
We've got a leak in our bedroom.

DAVID  
Yeah, I saw... Is there any coffee?

DANA  
If you want coffee you need to find  
the coffeemaker first.

David comes up behind her, slips his arms around her waist.

DAVID  
Found her.

DANA  
Fuck you.

DAVID  
Is that a threat?  
(kissing her neck)  
Or a promise?

DANA  
Could be a threatening promise.

DAVID  
Or a promising threat...  
(then)  
Where's the peanut?

DANA  
He's not up yet?

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRS - MINUTES LATER

PAN UP from a waffle on a paper plate to Dana climbing the stairs. She reaches the landing, starts down the hall. As she nears the third door on the right she stops, listening.

JEREMY (O.S.)  
You're funny...

Dana moves closer to the half-open door, brow furrowing.

JEREMY (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
I don't know... We have to wait and  
see...

She pushes the door open...

HER P.O.V.: A bare mattress on the floor with a red sleeping bag on top of it. Jeremy's sitting on the bag with his back to us, giggling quietly.

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
No, she's a nice mommy... The nicest mommy in the world...

DANA  
Jeremy?

The boy goes still.

DANA (CONT'D)  
Who are you talking to?  
(beat)  
Jeremy, I asked you a question. Who were you talking to just now?  
(beat)  
Jeremy, turn around.

Shoulders slumping, Jeremy obeys... and Dana's eyes go wide.

DANA (CONT'D)  
Oh no.

PAN DOWN from the boy's pleading face to his lap, and to the biggest, mangiest tabby cat you'd never want to see.

DANA (CONT'D)  
Jeremy...

JEREMY  
PLEASE, mommy?

DANA  
Jeremy, where did you find that thing?

JEREMY  
He lives here! This is his home!

DANA  
No.

JEREMY  
Pleeeezzzzeeee?

DANA  
No pets, Jeremy. We've talked about this.

JEREMY  
MOMMY SAID WE CAN'T KEEP HIM!

Dana looks over her shoulder and JUMPS. David's right there.

DAVID  
Where'd that come from?

JEREMY  
Mommy said we can't keep him but I  
promise I'll take care of him BY  
MYSELF! I PROMISE, I PROMISE!

David plops down next to Jeremy, scoops up the cat.

DAVID  
Jesus! You stink, little guy...

DANA  
David, don't -

DAVID  
Someone needs a bath, huh?

JEREMY  
I can give him a bath MYSELF!

DANA  
Jeremy -

DAVID  
We could probably use a good  
mouser, babe. This place must be  
crawling with 'em.

JEREMY  
Yeah, he's a REALLY good mouser!

DAVID  
And look at this little face...

DANA  
David, can we please talk about  
this in private?

DAVID  
But he's so sweet...

JEREMY  
Yeah, mommy, he's SO SWEET...

DAVID  
What do you say, babe?

Father and son turn to her, one pouting for show, the other  
one for real. God they look alike.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

The cat's now in the sink, HISSING and STRUGGLING as David and Jeremy serve up an excessively sudsy bath.

DAVID  
Hold still, you little rascal...  
(then)  
How about 'Rascal,' huh? You think  
'Rascal's' a good name?

As Jeremy mulls this over -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
I think it's an excellent name...  
What do you think, Rascal? You like  
it?

CLOSE ON the cat, sporting a beehive of bubbles. He looks pissed. David laughs, starts rinsing him off.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
I think he likes it... Now do you  
know what 'rascal' means, peanut?

JEREMY  
Ummmm... No.

DAVID  
It means someone who is playfully  
mischievous...  
(looking out the window)  
Up to tricks.

DAVID'S P.O.V.: Dana, head down, arms crossed, disappearing around the corner of the house...

EXT. FRONT OF THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

It's still overcast but it's not raining anymore. Dana comes toward us down the drive, eyes on the ground, not stopping til she knows she's a good distance from the house. Then she closes her eyes, takes a deep breath, and turns around...

CLOSE ON Dana, eyes opening, a hand flying up to her cheek.

DANA  
Oh.

DANA'S P.O.V.: The house, finally revealed to us in all its ratty splendor... And it's a monster. Four shingled stories of 19th-century excess gone to seed, a Byzantine arrangement of gables, turrets, and chimneys.

DANA (CONT'D)  
Oh.

Is she smitten? Overwhelmed? Both? She starts laughing.

DANA (CONT'D)

Oh Dana... Dana Dana Dana Dana  
Dana...

**BEGIN MONTAGE** as she checks out the exterior, starting at the front and working around to the back...

Peering through the latticework under the front porch...

Running her hands along the sides of a giant brick chimney...

Picking at some flaking paint below the ballroom windows...

Tugging at a few loose shingles above the back door...

Crossing the backyard to a small wooden gate, latched shut...

There's an abandoned orchard on the other side. Apple maybe.  
It's vast and overgrown. Gnarled. Like out of a fairy tale.

Then Dana FREEZES.

Deep in the orchard, something just moved.

DANA (CONT'D)

Hello?

She unlatches the gate, is about to step inside...

**WHEN IT BURSTS FROM BEHIND A TREE, TEARING FOR THE WOODS AT THE FAR END... WE GET THE IMPRESSION OF SOMETHING MOVING FAST AND LOW, DISAPPEARING INTO THE UNDERBRUSH... AN ANIMAL...**

Eyes on the orchard, Dana calls back to the house.

DANA (CONT'D)

David... DAVID!

DAVID (O.S.)

I'm right here.

Dana turns around, sees David leaning out an upstairs window.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I thought maybe we could drive into town now. Get some groceries, a lay of the land... *Et cetera.*

DANA

David...

She turns back to the orchard, eyes searching.

DANA (CONT'D)

David, I just saw something!

DAVID  
What'd you see?

DANA  
I don't know! It was... I think it  
was an animal... It was big...

DAVID  
You're in the country now, babe.  
All kinds of critters out here.

DANA  
Like what?

DAVID  
You name it. Raccoons. Skunks. The  
occasional redneck...  
(then)  
You coming?

Dana grips the gate tight, still scanning the woods beyond.

DANA  
No... I can't. Not right now.

DAVID  
Oh come on... I'm sure the locals  
are eager to sneak a peek at the  
new lord and lady of the manor. We  
don't wanna disappoint, do we?

DANA  
David, I'm busy.

DAVID  
Pretty please?

Like a dog with a bone. Dana sighs.

DANA  
Fine. Just... let me wash my hands.

DAVID  
We'll meet you out front!

OFF Dana, lingering at the gate. Whatever it was it's gone  
now, probably more scared of her than the other way around...

At least that's what she tells herself.

EXT. TOWN - DAY - LATER

ESTABLISHING SHOTS of an old mill town... Brick buildings, a  
handful of stoplights, parking on the diagonal. You can tell  
it must have been proud once, bustling... Like a century ago.

The Volvo pulls into a space. As they all get out -

DAVID  
Not bad. Not bad a-tall.

An OLD MAN in overalls ambles by on the sidewalk.

OLD MAN  
'Afternoon.

DAVID  
'Afternoon!  
(to Dana, whispering)  
See? Friendly.

JEREMY  
Where's the movie theatre?

DANA  
(hedging)  
I don't know if they have one.

DAVID  
Of course they do! It's right over  
there!

JEREMY  
Where?

David points to a building that clearly says "POST OFFICE."

DAVID  
Right there!

JEREMY  
Right where?

Pointing to a worn-out Sunoco station next door -

DAVID  
Right next to the candy store!

JEREMY  
Where's the candy store?

DAVID  
(pointing further down)  
Right next to the toy store!

Jeremy stands on tippy-toes, trying to see.

JEREMY  
I don't see it... I don't see it!

DAVID  
It's right there! Right in front of  
you!

JEREMY  
RIGHT WHERE?

DAVID  
It's HUGE, peanut! Biggest toy  
store I've ever seen!

DANA  
David, that's cruel... Your  
father's teasing you, Jeremy.

JEREMY  
(crumpling)  
Ohhhh...

Dana takes the boy's hand, shoots David a look.

DANA  
(mouthing)  
Stop.

DAVID  
(also mouthing)  
What? It's funny.

DANA  
(to Jeremy)  
Let's go inside the general store,  
okay? And we'll see if we can find  
some Twizzlers for dessert. Does  
that sound good?

She herds Jeremy away. David follows, still chuckling.

EXT. MORTIMER'S GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

WIDE ON a turn-of-the-century facade as the three of them  
make their way up the steps. "Ye Olde" except for real.

INT. MORTIMER'S GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

It smells "Ye Olde" too, but they seem to have the basics.  
Dana picks up a basket, leads Jeremy deeper inside.

VOICE (O.S.)  
'Afternoon!

Reveal MARTI MORTIMER (50s) behind the long wooden counter, a  
round-faced woman in a floral print sweatshirt.

DANA  
Hello.

MARTI  
I bet I know who you all are!

DAVID  
I bet you do!

MARTI  
You all bought the Blacker House.

DANA  
The what?

MARTI  
The Blacker House! Off 28. Just  
outside town.

DANA  
Yes, I... I guess that's us.

MARTI  
Welcome! Welcome welcome! Happy to  
see some new faces around here!

DAVID  
Thank you! Happy to be a new face!  
I'm David... and this is my wife  
Dana... our son Jeremy...

MARTI  
Marti Mortimer! And the pleasure...

She leans across the counter, getting in the boy's *punim*.

MARTI (CONT'D)  
...is all mine. Hi, Jeremy! I'm  
Marti!

JEREMY  
Hi, Marti.

DANA  
That's 'Mrs. Mortimer' to you.

MARTI  
But my friends call me 'Marti.'  
Right, Jeremy?

Dana's jaw tightens but David keeps the conversation rolling,  
assuming a subtle "country" twang.

DAVID  
Now what's all this about the  
'Blacker House?'

MARTI  
That's the people that built your  
place! The Blackers. Back in 1890-  
something or other. Didn't they  
tell you?

As Jeremy wanders off -

DANA

Jeremy. Stay where I can see you.

DAVID

No, they didn't give us much history about the house at all.

DANA

The realtor just said nobody'd lived there for years...

MARTI

Now that's true. I can't even remember who was living there before you...

(then)

Now wait - that's not true. I believe it was a descendant of the original family. A second cousin. Or maybe a third... Hmph. I'll have to ask around.

(getting down to business)

More to the point, you all have your work cut out for you.

DAVID

Yup. Got a leaky roof for starters.

MARTI

Now if you need help with the big stuff, I am happy to recommend some honest, hard-working people...

DAVID

Actually -

MARTI

Ben Phipps, Junior - not to be confused with Ben Phipps, Senior, who drinks - now he's a man who knows his way around a hammer...

(mock fanning herself)

And he's not bad to look at either!

DAVID

Actually the plan is to do most of the work ourselves.

MARTI

Is that right? And what are you - some kinda architect?

DAVID

Well -

MARTI  
Well look at you! Ha!  
(flirty)  
Then I guess you know your way  
around a hammer too...

DANA  
Yes, I do.

As Marti's eyes stutter from David back to Dana -

DANA (CONT'D)  
I'm the architect. And I'll be the  
one working on the house.

MARTI  
(beat)  
Is that right?

DANA  
That's right.

MARTI  
Big job.

DANA  
Big job.

Marti lets that land with a thud, turns back to David.

MARTI  
And what is it you do?

DAVID  
Who me?

Tilting his head in Dana's direction -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
I keep this one happy.

MARTI  
Huh.

DAVID  
(beat)  
Anywho... We just came in to say  
'howdy' and pick up a few things.

MARTI  
Well look around, let me know if  
you can't find anything... And good  
luck with the house!  
(to Dana, pointed)  
We all can't wait to see what you  
do with the place.

DAVID  
We'll keep you posted.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. VOLVO - MINUTES LATER

The car doors WHUMP closed. Then David looks at Dana. Dana won't look at David. Then they both start laughing. A lot.

DAVID  
Wow.

DANA  
David, don't. Please. Not here.

DAVID  
Seriously? Seriously.

DANA  
Don't start. Please.

JEREMY  
Mommy?

David reaches for his wife's arm, grips it tight as the tears run down both their faces.

DAVID  
WOW. Just... wow.

JEREMY  
MOM-mee...

DANA  
YES, Jeremy... What is it?

JEREMY  
The lady's watching us.

Dana sucks in a breath, turns to look out her window. Marti's standing just outside the store, jacket half on, staring at them. Must have been stepping away for a minute.

DAVID  
Whoops.

Dana nods to Marti and Marti nods back... eventually.

DANA  
(sotto)  
Let's get out of here, David.

David turns the engine over, stifling one last giggle.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT - LATER

WE PAN UP the drive past the Volvo, turning left at the porch and then around to the back of the house...

As we reach the back door it SLAPS open, Dana exiting with another armload of empty boxes. She crosses to what's become the trash pile, throws them down, then stretches, sore. She's about to go back inside when she glances up to the roof...

**And sees a light on in the attic window.**

Then, as she stands there watching, **it goes out.**

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Inside, she finds David and Jeremy eating split pea soup straight from the pot.

                  DAVID  
Sorry. We couldn't wait.

                  DANA  
Did you just come down from the  
attic?

                  DAVID  
What?

                  DANA  
Did you just come down from the  
attic. Just now.

                  DAVID  
Why would I be up in the attic?

CUT TO:

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Dana comes toward us through the servants' quarters, David close behind, Jeremy in his arms. Jeremy's already got his flashlight on. It's red, as promised.

                  JEREMY  
Come on, Rascal!

Reveal Rascal in tow, threading ankles and mewing loudly.

                  DAVID  
You're positive you saw a light on  
up there?

                  DANA  
Yes. And then it went off.

DAVID  
It's probably just a faulty wire or something...

DANA  
All the more reason to check it out.

INT. ATTIC - CONTINUOUS

Dana turns her flashlight on at the top of the stairs... to little effect. It's a raw space the size of a soccer field. It's also not a maze of mysterious old trunks and dress mannequins under sheets. In fact, it looks stripped clean.

She sticks a foot out onto the floorboards, testing.

DANA  
Watch where you step.

DAVID  
Don't worry. I will.

DANA  
And hold onto Jeremy.

DAVID  
He's not going anywhere.

JEREMY  
I'm not going anywhere, mommy.

Dana moves farther into the attic, shining her flashlight over shadowy corners and slanting supports. But what quickly becomes clear is that -

DAVID  
Babe, I don't think there's any windows up here.

DANA  
That's not possible.

DAVID  
Look around.

He's right. There are no windows.

DANA  
I saw what I saw.

She takes a step away from them, turning around, trying to orient herself. Then she points toward the stairs.

DANA (CONT'D)  
Those stairs are laid east-west.

DAVID  
So?

DANA  
So the house faces south.

DAVID  
So...

DANA  
So the back of the house faces  
north, and that's where I was when  
I looked up and saw the window. And  
the window was near the west end of  
the roof. Which means...  
(pivoting 90 degrees)  
It's that way.

She takes off into the blackness.

DAVID  
Dana -

JEREMY  
I wanna go back downstairs.

DANA  
Take him if he wants to go.

DAVID  
You don't wanna leave mommy all  
alone up here, do you, buddy?

They follow, Dana's flashlight beam bobbing in front of them.  
Then it stops bobbing.

THEIR P.O.V.: A towering piece of furniture set against the  
far wall. It's old, made of wood, with a cabinet on one side  
and a tall stack of drawers on the other.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Cool. Where's the lion and the  
witch?

Dana starts opening drawers.

DANA  
Technically, I think it's what they  
call a 'chiffarobe.'

DAVID  
("southern fried")  
Want me 'n' Jeremy to bust it up  
for ya?

Jeremy doesn't get it, but he pats David's face anyway.

JEREMY  
Daddy, you're silly.

DAVID  
Why thank you.

Dana shuts the last drawer. Empty. She moves around to the side of the chiffarobe, leans her face against the wall, shining the flashlight behind it. Then her breath catches.

DANA  
David.

CUT TO Rascal sitting on his haunches, then PAN UP to Jeremy standing next to him, trying to hold both flashlights steady while his parents muscle the chiffarobe away from the wall.

DAVID  
Freakin' hell...

JEREMY  
Daddy!

DAVID  
That's not cursing, peanut.

DANA  
Just a little farther.

There. Done. They turn to look at the blank stretch of wall where the chiffarobe once stood. Except it's not blank...

There's a door there. Solid wood, average size. Completely unremarkable. Except someone tried to hide it.

DANA (CONT'D)  
And the window's on the other side.

She tries the knob. It's locked.

DANA (CONT'D)  
Of course.

DAVID  
Oooo-WEEEE-oooo... Don't sweat it, babe. We can get a locksmith out here first thing in the morning.

Dana takes her flashlight back from Jeremy, kneels down in front of the door, shining it through the keyhole...

HER P.O.V.: Darkness and dust motes.

DANA  
Forget it... It's not a priority.

DAVID  
Alright. Well... I think I'm gonna  
take Jeremy down now.

DANA  
I'm right behind you.

But she stays where she is, focused on that door.

DAVID  
Want us to heat up your soup?  
(beat)  
Babe?

DANA  
Okay.

David and Jeremy hover for a moment, then descend. It's only  
after they've gone that she thinks to turn and say -

DANA (CONT'D)  
Thanks.

But no one's there... Except Rascal, still sitting on the  
floor a few feet away, staring up at her with gleaming eyes.

INT. HOUSE - VARIOUS - THE NEXT DAY

**BEGIN MONTAGE** as they unpack and settle in...

Dana and David in the library, lugging a walnut desk into  
place in front of the big bay window...

Dana in Jeremy's bedroom, assembling a fire engine red  
headboard...

David in the library, setting up his laptop while Jeremy and  
Rascal chase each other around the desk...

Dana at the bottom of the stairs, switching out broken sconce  
bulbs, catching her reflection in one of the mirrors...

David in the library, sorting pens and pencils into his  
collection of pewter steins...

Dana in the kitchen, unwrapping plates and stacking them near  
the sink to be washed...

David in the library, arranging and re-arranging family  
photos on his desk...

Dana in the kitchen, making peanut butter and jelly  
sandwiches and slicing up apples for lunch...

Jeremy comes running in, followed by Rascal.

JEREMY

Yum yum yum yum yum yum yum...

Dana sets his plate on the table, hands him a paper towel.

DANA

We forgot to buy napkins.

JEREMY

Thank you!

DANA

DAVID!

She sweeps the apple cores into a trash bag, ties it off, drags it to the back door. She's about to open it when -

JEREMY

DON'T!

DANA

What's wrong?

JEREMY

Don't open the door!

DANA

Why?

JEREMY

Rascal will get out.

DANA

Jeremy, I have to take the garbage out.

JEREMY

But if he gets out he might not come back.

DANA

I thought you said this was his home.

JEREMY

It is. But he wants to go outside too.

Dana shoots Rascal a look. He's definitely got his eye on her. Or maybe the door. Or the garbage. Probably the garbage.

DANA

So what would you like me to do?

JEREMY

Don't open the door.

DANA  
Tell you what - how about we'll  
just be really careful when we do  
so he doesn't run out, okay?

JEREMY  
(doubtful)  
Okay.

Dana opens the back door slowly, making a show of watching Rascal. But he stays where he is.

DANA  
See? He wants to stay inside. Now  
I'll be right back.

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Dana dumps the bag and wipes her brow... Damn it's hot today.  
She throws a look toward the orchard, then up to the roof.

HER P.O.V.: The attic window. Small and round, with a thick  
wooden casing gone silver with age. Ordinary.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Dana comes back inside, finds David leaning against the  
counter, watching Jeremy finish the last of his apple slices.

DANA  
You hungry?

David looks her way, taking in the damp circles on her thin  
cotton T-shirt, the cut-off shorts with the frayed edges.

DAVID  
Sort of.

Then, eyes on Dana -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Jeremy. Nap time.

CUT TO:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

We find them in the thick... Sitting up in bed, still half-  
dressed... Dana's on top, David cradling her back... His eyes  
on her, her eyes on the ceiling... Rocking together... Trying  
to get close enough... Near enough... Deep enough...

Faster... faster... faster... But quiet... quiet... quiet...

WE SLOWLY MOVE AWAY from them, down over the floor and out into the hallway, down to the third door on the right and up to the bed, where we find Jeremy fast asleep, oblivious to the violence taking place down the hall...

SLOW FADE OUT:

BARKING. At first barely audible and then growing LOUDER...

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - AFTERNOON - LATER

CLOSE ON Dana, waking from a nap. She looks to the windows, sees Jeremy standing there, hands pressed against the glass.

DANA  
Jeremy?

Dana gets up, quickly pulling on her shorts.

DANA (CONT'D)  
Jeremy... What is it?

JEREMY  
There's a dog out there.

As she joins him at the windows -

DANA  
It's probably just a stray.

JEREMY  
I'm scared...

He turns from the glass, wraps his arms around her legs, seeking comfort. Dana smooths that little cowlick, soothing.

DANA  
It's okay, peanut. I'll protect you...  
(looking out the window)  
Mommy will protect you.

Then he slowly pulls away from her.

JEREMY  
Mommy?

Dana looks down, sees Jeremy examining the palms of his hands, concerned. He lifts them up, shows them to her...

**THEY'RE SMEARED WITH BLOOD.**

DANA  
Oh my god... Jeremy... Jeremy, what happened? What did you do?

She takes his hands in hers, searching for a cut or a gash, but she can't find one. Then she looks down at her shorts...

**THEY'RE SOAKED THROUGH.**

SMASH CUT TO Dana, waking with a start. She looks to the windows... Jeremy's not there... But she can hear BARKING.

DANA (CONT'D)  
David... David, do you hear that?

Dozing next to her, he murmurs something unintelligible.

DANA (CONT'D)  
David!

DAVID  
Whaaaat?

DANA  
There's a dog out there.

David leans up on his elbow, listening for a beat.

DAVID  
I don't hear anything.

DANA  
Listen.

Another beat. Still nothing. David plops his head back down.

DAVID  
Probably just a stray.

Dana rises, goes to the windows... but there's nothing to see. She SHIVERS, still trying to shake that horrible dream.

DANA  
But you heard it, right? It was loud...

DAVID  
What was loud?

DANA  
The barking. It woke me up.

DAVID  
Oh crap... Babe?

DANA  
What?

DAVID  
I forgot to take the lasagna out of the freezer.

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

Dana opens the back door and steps out in her bare feet, looking left and right. Then she starts toward the orchard, turning around as she goes, stopping at the open gate.

She walks through it, wary... Then, with a glance back at the house, she slips behind an apple tree and pulls a pack of Marlboros out of her shorts. Only one left. Shit. She lights it, hands shaking a little, inhaling greedily.

CLOSE ON Dana, eyes darting between the orchard and the back door, on the lookout for stray dogs and husbands.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

QUICKCUTS of Dana prepping dinner... Preheating the oven... Opening the freezer... Hefting the lasagna out... Shoving it in the oven... Reaching for a white plastic timer...

**CLOSE ON the timer as she sets it back down: 60 minutes.**

Sitting at the kitchen table, leg twitching restlessly...

**CLOSE ON the timer: 50 minutes.**

Coming back with another moving box, scissoring it open...

**CLOSE ON the timer: 40 minutes.**

Unpacking a set of knives, sliding them into a block...

**CLOSE ON the timer: 30 minutes.**

Unwrapping a bunch of utensils, yanking open a drawer...

And then stopping.

CLOSE ON the drawer as she slowly pulls it all the way out. There's a small section hidden at the back...

It's full of keys.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON the drawer then PAN UP to Dana, cruising down the hallway, flashlight under one arm.

INT. ATTIC - CONTINUOUS

She kneels in front of the locked door, sets the drawer down and starts trying keys... Barrel, flat, skeleton... Brass, iron, steel... All of them old, worn... Key after key after key, the drawer gradually emptying, until there's only one more left to try... Dana slips it in the lock...

And it doesn't work.

DANA  
Well fuck you too.

Annoyed, she begins SLAPPING keys back in the drawer. Then she stands, turns to leave, and her eyes skirt the top of the door frame... Looks just wide enough...

CLOSE ON fingers sliding along the wooden trim above the door... and closing around a small key, grimy with age...

CLOSE ON the old key entering the lock...

CLOSE ON Dana's mouth as she hears the lock CLICK...

CLOSE ON the blackened knob turning under her hand...

CLOSE ON Dana's eyes as the setting sun hits her face...

UNKNOWN P.O.V.: We're on the far side of the attic, watching from a distance as the door opens and Dana steps inside...

CLOSE ON Dana, looking fascinated... Baffled... Beautiful...

HER P.O.V.: A little room, bare, with one window about four feet up from the floor... But it's the floor that draws her attention... It's a patchwork quilt of reddish-brown sheet metal, soldered together with rusted iron bolts...

Dana frowns... What is this room?

She moves deeper into the small space, lost in thought, then hears a gentle CLICK behind her... Dana SPINS around, sees the door is now shut... Then her mouth drops open...

There's no knob on the inside... SHE'S LOCKED IN...

Dana moves to the door, DIGGING her fingers around the edges, trying to pry it open...

DANA (CONT'D)  
David? David, is that you?

She BANGS on the door once. Twice.

DANA (CONT'D)  
David? Are you out there?

She BANGS on it again, waits a beat.

DANA (CONT'D)

Jeremy?

Dana can feel her heart start to SKIP a little... She goes to the window, crouches down...

HER P.O.V.: A partial view of the yard between the back door and the orchard gate, but there's no one there...

She examines the window for a latch or a lock but it doesn't have one... Then she understands... It's not meant to open...

Dana turns to face the door again... Still shut...

CLOSE ON Dana, eyes FLICKING around the room, looking for something - anything - she could use to get out of here...

A bead of sweat trickles down her temple... It's hot up here... Stifling... Getting harder to breathe...

Dana wills herself to calm down, to slow her RACING pulse, but it's beginning to feel like the walls are closing in...

Then her eyes SNAG on something... There, on the floor in the corner, almost hidden in the shadows...

She goes over to it, bending down to see what it might be...

HER P.O.V.: A drain, its cover crusted and black...

Dana rises, eyes on the drain, absorbing the implications...

She looks to the door again... Then she THROWS herself at it, POUNDING on it, in the grip of a full-blown PANIC...

DANA (CONT'D)

David! David, please! Please let me out of here! DAVID! DAVID!

Dana knows this is crazy, knows she's overreacting, but she can't help herself... The room has gotten under her skin...

DANA (CONT'D)

DAVID, PLEASE...

QUICKCUTS as she CLAWS at the door...

DANA (CONT'D)

PLEASE LET ME OUT!

RAKES her fingers along the edges...

DANA (CONT'D)

DAVID! DAVID!

Sweat spilling down her cheeks...

DANA (CONT'D)  
DAVID, LET ME OUT OF HERE!

Mingling with the hot tears...

DANA (CONT'D)  
PLEASE... LET ME OUT!

But still no one comes...

DANA (CONT'D)  
David?  
(beat)  
DAVID!  
(beat)  
DAVIIIIIIIIID!!!!

Dana falls back from the door, sinks to her knees...

DANA (CONT'D)  
Oh please... Oh please, please,  
please, David, please...

And in the sun's last light, she sees them...

CLOSE ON shallow scratch marks on the floor in front of the door, like someone tried to dig down through the metal...

Dana JERKS away, MOANING in fear, SCRAMBLING to the other side of the room... She sits still for a second under the tiny window, whole body TREMBLING...

Then, when she accepts that no one is coming, Dana drops her head down, and cries herself to sleep.

SLOW FADE OUT:

INT. ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

CLOSE ON Dana waking up... Groggy. Disoriented. The little room as dark as a tomb. For a moment she has no idea where she is, who she is, how long she's been in here...

She crawls to the door, reaches up to beat on it one more time, AND IT SWINGS OPEN BENEATH HER TOUCH... Dana staggers to her feet, rushing out into the attic proper...

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Hurrying toward us, face streaked with tears...

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Running away from us... and then stopping short on the landing, arrested by the sound of unfamiliar voices below. Dana tiptoes to the railing, listening. Sounds like laughter.

DANA

David?

No answer. More laughter.

INT. STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Dana comes creeping down the stairs, pausing at the bottom, her reflection caught between the two tall mirrors.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

We find David and Jeremy lounging on the chesterfield and watching a sitcom, adding their own laughs to the laugh track. Then David looks up, surprised.

DAVID

Hey, babe. Where'd you come from?

THEN HIS FACE IS ROCKED SIDEWAYS WITH A CRACK, the sound echoing through the half-furnished room...

DAVID'S P.O.V.: Dana, standing over him. Shaking. Eyes slit.

DANA

I bet you thought that was funny.

(beat)

I bet you thought that was so fucking funny...

DAVID

JESUS CHRIST, DANA... What was that for?

DANA

I bet you had a good laugh... Leaving me locked up there for hours...

(breath hitching)

and hours...

DAVID

Dana, I don't -

DANA

IT'S NOT FUCKING FUNNY!

Jeremy's eyes grow huge.

DAVID  
Dana, I swear to god...

DANA  
I was upstairs, David...

DAVID  
I swear to god I have no idea what  
you're talking about...

DANA  
I was upstairs, David, LOCKED in  
that little room in the attic...

DAVID  
What little room?

DANA  
I FOUND the key and I went  
INSIDE...

DAVID  
Dana -

DANA  
And then somebody... SOMEBODY shut  
the door...

DAVID  
Dana, I would never -

DANA  
SOMEBODY LOCKED ME IN!

DAVID  
I would never -

DANA  
And if it wasn't you, who was it?  
WHO WAS IT, DAVID?

DAVID  
Babe... Babe, I don't know...

DANA  
WHO WAS IT, DAVID?

DAVID  
Babe, there's no one else here...

DANA  
THAT'S RIGHT! THERE'S NO ONE ELSE  
HERE!

She's hit by a fresh wave of tears, wipes them away, furious.

DAVID

Dana, I swear on my life I didn't  
lock you in that room...

Dana stares down at her husband, sitting there rubbing his  
cheek, looking all hurt and bewildered.

DANA

I was up there screaming for  
help... For hours... And you didn't  
come... YOU DIDN'T COME!

DAVID

Dana, we've been down here the  
whole time. And we didn't hear a  
thing. Honest to god...

JEREMY

We didn't hear a thing, Mommy...

Dana looks over at Jeremy... He's cringing, lip quivering, on  
the verge of tears. David pulls him closer.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

We didn't.

She can feel the doubt and confusion rushing in... She feels  
foolish and humiliated... Dizzy... And her head is pounding.

DANA

Why didn't you come, David?

DAVID

I -

DANA

Why didn't you come for me?

DAVID

Dana -

DANA

WHY DIDN'T YOU TRY TO FIND ME?

DAVID

I didn't even know you were gone!

**BRRRRIIIINNNGGGG!!!!**

The sudden noise is like a SIREN, making them all JUMP.

**QUICKCUT to the timer back in the kitchen: 0 minutes.**

CLOSE ON Dana. Dinner's ready.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM

OVERHEAD SHOT of water, swirling down a drain... WIDEN to reveal the bathtub, the white bathroom, and Dana on the floor, wrapped in a white towel, CRYING soundlessly...

We hear the DRIP, DRIP, DRIP as the water empties out...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - THE NEXT DAY

DRIP DRIP DRIP...

CLOSE ON drops of water falling into an almost full pot. A pink tongue appears, lapping daintily.

BEGIN A SERIES OF INTERCUTS

CLOSE ON a thick scrub brush, SCRATCHING back and forth across a scarred oak floor...

Back to the pink tongue. WIDEN to reveal Rascal drinking from a pot under the leak in the master bedroom.

JEREMY (O.S.)  
You thirsty, Rascal? You thirsty?

CLOSE ON the scrub brush, SCRATCHING back and forth...

Back to Rascal. WIDEN to reveal Jeremy sitting on the floor next to him, scratching him behind the ears.

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
You're a good boy, aren't you?

It's raining again, water SLAMMING against the windows.

CLOSE ON the brush, Dana picking up the pace...

Jeremy pushes the cat away from the pot, picks it up.

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
Come on, Rascal.

CLOSE ON the bristles, SAWING away at the wood...

WIDE ON Jeremy as he carries the pot down the second floor hallway, Rascal along for the ride.

CLOSE ON Dana's hands, clenched and tight...

CLOSE ON the boy's feet, THUDDING down the stairs. The cat JOSTLES him a little, water spilling out over the treads.

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
Look what you made me do!

**CLOSE ON Dana's knuckles, pale and bloodless...**

WIDE ON Jeremy tottering through the ballroom, water sloshing out left and right.

**CLOSE ON Dana's shoulders, expanding and contracting...**

CLOSE ON Jeremy as he enters the kitchen.

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
Here, mommy! I brought you some more water!

He pours what's left into a yellow bucket. Reveal Dana down on the floor next to it, still scrubbing. When she speaks she works hard to achieve the right tone. Normal. Maternal.

DANA  
Thank you, Jeremy. Now take that back upstairs, please, and put it back under the leak...

JEREMY  
Okay.

Jeremy and David pass each other in the doorway.

DAVID  
Whatcha up to, peanut?

JEREMY (O.S.)  
I'M HELPING!

David waits until the boy's gone, then turns to Dana. She keeps her back to him and her head down, busy.

DANA  
Well?

DAVID  
I put a wedge under the door to keep it open.

Dana continues scrubbing.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
So I don't think anyone's gonna get locked in there again.  
(beat)  
Not unless they want to.

DANA  
Is this you trying to lighten the mood?

DAVID

Sorry.

More scrubbing.

DANA

Did you see them?

DAVID

I don't know. It looks like... like normal wear and tear to me.

DANA

They're scratch marks, David. From someone's nails. On the floor in front of the door.

(then)

That's not fucking 'wear and tear.'

DAVID

I called Jules this morning.

Dana stops scrubbing.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I invited her and Teddy to come up for a visit.

DANA

Why?

DAVID

Because we haven't had them up yet. And because they want to come. They miss us. And we miss them.

DANA

Do we?

DAVID

Yes. They want to see you, Dana.

(quickly)

And Jeremy. And the house.

DANA

When?

DAVID

When what?

DANA

When are they coming, David?

DAVID

(beat)

A week from today.

Dana sits back on her heels, PLOPS the brush in the bucket.

DANA  
'A week from today.'

DAVID  
And they're going to stay through  
the weekend. I think it'll be good  
to have some company.

DANA  
Good for who, David?

DAVID  
They're our friends, Dana. And I  
already invited them so... It's  
done. Alright? They're coming.

Dana grabs the brush and SMACKS it on the floor. This  
conversation is over. David takes the hint, leaves.

As soon as she knows she's alone Dana stops scrubbing, closes  
her eyes, drops her head down on her arm... MEOW.

She hears it again. MEOW. Dana looks up, sees Rascal on the  
counter by the sink, staring out the window.

DANA  
Get down from there.  
(beat)  
I said get down from there, you  
little shit.

She gets to her feet, goes to shoo the cat away. Then she  
looks out the window too... And forgets all about him.

OUR P.O.V.: Dana and Rascal on the other side of the rain-  
streaked window, looking out over our heads.

THEIR P.O.V.: **A stray kite**, small and yellow and shaped like  
a diamond, hanging above the orchard.

CLOSE ON Dana, inexplicably rapt.

The kite seems to hover in place for a moment, rippling in  
the storm... Then it starts to drift... Dana moves down the  
counter, trying to keep it in view for as long as possible,  
then it vanishes around the corner of the house...

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Dana walks out the back door into the rain, eyes on the sky,  
looking for the kite. She rounds the corner of the house -

DANA  
OH!

**AND RUNS INTO SOMEONE... A MAN...**

MAN  
Whoa!

DANA  
Jesus!

MAN  
Whoa... Sorry... Sorry...

She backs away, one hand over her galloping heart.

DANA  
For chrissake...

MAN  
I really am sorry, ma'am. Hope I  
didn't scare you too bad...  
(then, chuckling)  
That was not my intention...

Dana puts a few more feet between them, sizing this stranger  
up... He's big. Handsome. Handsome but rough. And wet.

DANA  
Who are you? And what are you doing  
sneaking around outside my house?

The man smiles, raises his hands, as if to the leaky heavens.

MAN  
Answering your prayers.

CUT TO:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

**DRIP, DRIP, DRIP...**

Dana and BEN PHIPPS, JR. stand several feet apart, hands on  
their hips, staring up at the wide leak on the ceiling.

DANA  
It's gone unchecked for awhile.

BEN  
Uh-huh. Lucky for you it didn't  
cave. Lucky for you I stopped by  
when I did.

DANA  
Lucky for you people around here  
like to gossip.

BEN  
Uh-huh. That they do.

He gives her a sideways look.

BEN (CONT'D)  
Also heard you were an architect or something.

DANA  
Or something.

There's an intimate quality about this man's presentation and Dana's not sure she cares for it. Still, she finds herself distracted by a bead of water slipping down his brow...

BEN  
(smiling)  
Maybe we should talk about money.

DANA  
That's a little premature.

BEN  
Come again?

DANA  
You haven't been hired yet.

BEN  
No?

DANA  
No.

BEN  
(soft)  
Nothing I can do to change your mind?

DAVID (O.S.)  
Hello!

They both turn as David enters, laptop under one arm.

DANA  
This is David - my husband. David this is Ben Phipps, Jr.

DAVID  
Nice to meet you.

BEN  
Likewise.

As the men shake hands -

DANA  
Mr. Phipps is here about the leak.

DAVID  
Oh!

BEN  
'Ben' works fine.

DAVID  
Great! When can you start?

DANA  
That's still up in the air.

BEN  
(to David)  
Soon as you pull the trigger.

DAVID  
Well we should probably get on this  
right away, babe, don't you think?

DANA  
No.

BEN  
I'm free anytime...

DAVID  
Great!

DANA  
David -

BEN  
Just say the word...

DAVID  
Then I guess we'd like you to start  
as soon as possible.

DANA  
I'll tell you what I'd like. I'd  
like Mr. Phipps to come back here  
when it stops raining so the two of  
us can get up on that roof and see  
what's what. That way, once the  
situation's been thoroughly and  
properly assessed, we'll be able to  
discuss hours, materials, and scope  
of work in a manner that's not  
pulled directly out of our asses.

(to Ben)  
(MORE)

DANA (CONT'D)

What I would also like is to agree on a deadline, which, if not met, means revisiting the terms of our contract with the probability of penalties paid by you to us for every day of work exceeding the original agreement.

(then)

Now if that sounds acceptable, I'll look forward to resuming this conversation at a later date. Either way, it was a pleasure meeting you, Mr. Phipps. And now my husband here will show you out.

(then)

David? Would you mind?

And she leaves them both standing there, jaws properly slack.

INT. BATHROOM

*OVERHEAD SHOT of water, swirling down a drain... WIDEN to reveal the white bathroom and Dana on the floor... But this time she gets to her feet, using the sink for support...*

*DANA'S P.O.V.: Her reflection in the mirror... Face pale, eyes dark, falling apart... She opens the medicine cabinet, stares at the vials inside, shuts it...*

When we see her reflection again it's the same Dana (face pale, eyes dark, wrapped in a white towel) **BUT SHE'S NOW STANDING IN A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT BATHROOM...** It's old, scuzzy, tiled top-to-bottom in a sick shade of yellow...

She drops her eyes from the mirror, moves toward the door...

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

David's already tucked in on his side. So's his laptop. Dana pads to the bed, drops the damp towel on the floor, gets in, making sure to lie down with her back to him. A beat, then -

DAVID

Sorry.

DANA

What are you sorry for?

DAVID

I should've let you take the lead.

DANA

It's not a big deal.

DAVID

It was totally caveman. A full-on phallus fest. I don't know anything about fixing a fucking roof and I should've just left it to you.

DANA

I said it's not a big deal.

DAVID

Well maybe it's a big deal to me.

DANA

David?

DAVID

What?

DANA

I can't hold a space for this right now.

(beat)

Okay?

DAVID

Okay.

DANA

Goodnight.

DAVID

Goodnight.

She pulls the sheet up to her chin, like a child, closes her eyes. WE LINGER on David, concern in his.

INT./EXT. VOLVO - MORNING

It's a beautiful day, sunlight bouncing off the car as it passes through town. David's driving.

DAVID

I can always postpone.

DANA

I said we'll be fine.

DAVID

I really don't mind and they'd definitely understand.

DANA

It's only for one night.

DAVID

Two. Two nights. We've got dinner tonight and then brunch the day after tomorrow. I told you that.

(beat)

I'm pretty sure I told you that.

DANA

We'll be fine.

David looks in the rearview mirror.

DAVID

You're gonna keep an eye on mommy for me, right? Take good care of her?

JEREMY

We're gonna get my liberry card!

DANA

It's not 'liberry card.' It's 'library card.'

JEREMY

'Library card.'

DANA

'Library card.' Ten times.

JEREMY

Library card... library card... liberry card...

DANA

'Library card.' Start again.

JEREMY

Noooo...

DAVID

Dana -

DANA

Jeremy.

JEREMY

NOOOO!

DANA

(even)

'Library card.' Ten times. Now. Or you don't get one.

Then, begrudgingly -

JEREMY  
Library card... library card...

DANA  
(sotto)  
He can be from Brooklyn and not  
sound like Brooklyn.

JEREMY  
Library card... library card...

DAVID  
(sotto)  
You're from Brooklyn, babe.

JEREMY  
Library card... library card...

DAVID  
I'll have my cell on if you need  
me.

JEREMY  
Library card... library card...

DANA  
There's your train.

DANA'S P.O.V.: A silver Amtrak, wheezing into the station.

EXT. TOWN - TRAIN STATION - CONTINUOUS

David parks, hops out with an overnight bag, starts hustling.

DAVID (O.S.)  
David.

He turns around, sees Dana standing outside the car with his  
laptop, runs back for it.

DAVID  
Wow... Thanks!  
(a quick kiss)  
Where would I be, huh?

DANA  
Food for thought.

He hesitates just a fraction of a second... But then -

DAVID  
Bye.

Jeremy rolls down his window, waves.

JEREMY  
Bye, daddy!

DAVID  
Want me to bring back some  
Junior's?

JEREMY  
What kind?

DAVID  
The regular.

JEREMY  
With strawberries! No raspberries!

DAVID  
Strawberries! No raspberries!

The whistle blows in the background. All aboard.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Bye! Love you!

DANA  
Bye.

Dana waits until the train pulls out, then turns to Jeremy.

DANA (CONT'D)  
Was that it?

The boy looks confused.

DANA (CONT'D)  
I only heard eight.

Jeremy starts rolling up his window, giving Dana his best  
five-year-old stink eye.

INT./EXT. VOLVO - DAY - LATER

They park in what looks like a strictly residential part of  
town. Dana pulls a scrap of paper from her bag, checks it.

JEREMY  
Where is it?

DANA  
I don't know, Jeremy. It's supposed  
to be on this street somewhere.

EXT. TOWN - STREET - CONTINUOUS

Mother and son move down the sidewalk checking house numbers, stopping at a driveway next to an old Colonial. A sign on the lawn says "LIBRARY," with an arrow pointing toward the back.

EXT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

They make their way down the driveway to the side door. A sign in the window says "LIBRARY." A sign below it says -

DANA  
Closed.

JEREMY  
Awww...

DANA  
Unbelievable... It's 10:15 on a  
Friday.

Dana glances toward the carriage house at the very end of the driveway, starts moving in that direction.

JEREMY  
Where are we going?

DANA  
Hang on a second.

DANA'S P.O.V.: A sign on the carriage house door says "HISTORICAL SOCIETY." A sign below it says "OPEN."

We hear a gentle *ding-a-ling-a-ling...*

DANA (V.O.)  
Hello?

INT. HISTORICAL SOCIETY - CONTINUOUS

Dana looks in, finds a humble operation. Shag carpet, pine bookcases, and the vague smell of car oil. Jeremy lingers at the door, moving it back and forth so the bell keeps RINGING.

DANA  
Jeremy.

He stops, scowling.

VOICE (O.S.)  
Looking for the library?

Dana squints, sees someone sitting at a desk in the shadows.

DANA

Yes, we were! I mean, we saw it but the sign says 'closed.'

The stranger gets up, comes shuffling toward them. It's a tiny WOMAN (70s) with wavy white hair and very sharp eyes.

WOMAN

It's closed when I'm here and it's open when I'm there. Can't be two places at once.

DANA

No... I guess not.

WOMAN

Do you have a name?

DANA

Sorry! It's Dana.

WOMAN

Nice to meet you, Dana. They call me 'Ms. Judith.'

(eyeing Jeremy)

And who might you be?

Jeremy edges behind his mother.

MS. JUDITH

What's the matter? Cat got your tongue?

DANA

That's Jeremy. He's five.

MS. JUDITH

And I suppose Master Jeremy's looking to get himself a library card.

DANA

Yes, he is. Jeremy's becoming a very big reader these days.

MS. JUDITH

Is that so?

They both look to the boy for confirmation. Jeremy remains silent, finger lurking suspiciously near his left nostril.

MS. JUDITH (CONT'D)

Hmph. Then I'd better take you on over there. I'll get my keys...

As she heads back to her desk Dana's eyes start to wander.

DANA  
So you run the historical society  
as well?

MS. JUDITH  
No one else wants the job.

DANA  
I'm surprised you even have one.

MS. JUDITH  
(offended)  
A job?

DANA  
No! No, a historical society.

Off the older woman's steady look -

DANA (CONT'D)  
It's such a small town.

MS. JUDITH  
Small town. Long history.  
(closing her eyes)  
Settled 1658, founded 1688.  
Incorporated 1797, chartered 1855.  
Booming 1889, busted 1929. Left for  
dead 1952, and now...  
(wryly)  
Food for worms.

As she eases into a droopy gray cardigan -

MS. JUDITH (CONT'D)  
You'll find us long past our glory  
days, I'm afraid. Long past the age  
of the Blackers.

DANA  
I'm sorry?

MS. JUDITH  
The Blackers. The Honorable Judge  
and Missus... High society! Back  
when we could claim that kind of  
thing.  
(wistful)  
Legendary parties. Right there in  
your ballroom.

DANA  
How did you know where we live?

Ms. Judith walks back over, keys in hand.

MS. JUDITH  
Like you said - small town. 835  
according to the last census. 838  
now we've got you and yours!

DANA  
Are you from here, Ms. Judith?

MS. JUDITH  
Born and inbred!  
(beat)  
That was a joke.

Dana makes an appropriate noise.

MS. JUDITH (CONT'D)  
You know, Dana, my mother's mother  
witnessed quite a few of those  
parties...

DANA  
Really?

MS. JUDITH  
Oh yes... From the kitchen.  
(amused)  
The judge used to rave about  
granny's trifle. Of course they had  
plenty of servants in those days.  
It was a big house! Grand! Not so  
grand now...

DANA  
No. It definitely needs some TLC...

Dana looks toward the bookcases, suddenly inspired.

DANA (CONT'D)  
Do you think you have any pictures?

MS. JUDITH  
Of what?

DANA  
Of the house. I'd love to see what  
it looked like back then.

MS. JUDITH  
Oh! Good question... Yes. We might  
have a few somewhere. They'd be in  
black and white mind you.

DANA  
Whatever you can find would be a  
huge help.

JEREMY

Mommy...

DANA

Just a second, Jeremy.  
(to Ms. Judith)  
Could we take a quick look?

JEREMY

Mommy!

MS. JUDITH

The boy seems awfully eager to get  
his library card...

DANA

Ms. Judith - please. Historical  
references can be incredibly  
valuable to a restoration project.  
Seeing the house as it first  
looked, understanding the  
architect's original intention...  
(beat)  
Please.

CLOSE ON Ms. Judith, considering.

CUT TO a yellowed file box THUMPING down on the table.

MS. JUDITH

'Photos & Bric-a-brac 1890-1910.'  
That'll be your best bet.  
(turning)  
Master Jeremy? Shall we go get that  
library card? And maybe wash our  
hands?

DANA

Would you mind? I'll only be a few  
minutes.

MS. JUDITH

Not at all. We'll be right back.

Jeremy looks from Ms. Judith to his mother, uncertain.

DANA

Go on, Jeremy. It's okay.

As Ms. Judith guides him to the door -

MS. JUDITH

Did I tell you about the time the  
Ringling Brothers came to town?

JEREMY

The circus?

MS. JUDITH

The circus! Fall of 1895! First  
time people around here had ever  
seen an elephant... They were  
cleaning up the mess for days...

Their voices trail away as Dana removes the lid...

HER P.O.V.: Brittle papers and pictures stacked a foot deep.

DANA

Fantastic.

**BEGIN MONTAGE** as she flips through photos, cabinet cards, and  
faces from the past... Sepia-toned men and women from all  
walks of life, all posing stiffly for the camera...

We glimpse a variety of documents as well... Announcements  
and advertisements, invitations to parties and *carte de  
visites*, one name appearing over and over again... Blacker...

But we see no photos of the family...

Dana shuffles past several century-old images of the town,  
stopping at one of a large house surrounded by young trees...

DANA (CONT'D)

There it is... The Blacker House.

The shingles new and the lines still crisp. Dana drinks in  
the details, flips to the next photo...

It's another image of the house, taken from the back. We see  
a group of people standing in what was then a garden (now the  
trash pile), the ladies in white, the men in dark suits...

But no children...

Dana leans closer to the photo, trying to make out faces, but  
they're too small to see. Then her eyes drift to an inky  
black dot at the top of the house... The attic window... And  
suddenly she's forgotten how to breathe...

A NOISE outside breaks the spell... Ms. Judith and Jeremy are  
coming back. Casually, Dana slips both photos into her bag.

MS. JUDITH (O.S.)

I think someone is ready for lunch!

Dana looks up as they enter, smiles as Jeremy runs over.

JEREMY

Mommy, look! I got my liber... I  
got my library card!

He shoves a little red card into her hands, beaming.

DANA  
Yes, you did! Nicely done.

MS. JUDITH  
Now he's official.

DANA  
Thank you, Ms. Judith.

MS. JUDITH  
You're very welcome.

Indicating the stack of books in her arms -

MS. JUDITH (CONT'D)  
And we picked out a few treasures  
to take home today.

JEREMY  
I got the dinosaurs one!

Dana stuffs the rest of the materials back in the box.

DANA  
I really appreciate you letting me  
dig through your files...

MS. JUDITH  
Did you find anything useful?

DANA  
Maybe. I might have to come back.

MS. JUDITH  
Anytime.  
(then)  
When we're open, of course.

Dana stops when they reach the door, turns back around.

DANA  
Ms. Judith, did the Blackers... not  
have children?

MS. JUDITH  
No... The judge and his wife both  
died in the early 1900s and then  
the house passed to a niece. And  
then she lived there alone. And  
then after she died it sat empty -

DANA  
Until we came along.

Ms. Judith nods thoughtfully.

MS. JUDITH  
That house has never known  
children. Which is a shame...  
(beat)  
It's perfect for a family.

INT./EXT. VOLVO - DAY - LATER

WIDE ON the house through the windshield as the car comes up the drive. An old pick-up truck is parked near the porch. And there's a metal ladder leaning against the side of the house.

OFF Dana, frowning.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Dana and Jeremy walk up to the base of the ladder, their eyes on the parapet two stories above.

DANA  
Hello?

VOICE (O.S.)  
Hello yourself!

A familiar face pops into view over the parapet wall.

DANA  
What do you think you're doing up there, Mr. Phipps?

BEN  
Thought you said to come back when it stopped raining.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

Jeremy's now sitting in the grass next to the ladder, paging through his big book about dinosaurs. WE PAN UP the ladder to the top of the parapet, and find Dana and Ben inspecting the roof above the master bedroom. The space is small, flat, and baking in the sun. Dana's poking around with a crowbar.

BEN  
What do you think?

DANA  
I think all this has to go.

She stands, gives the crowbar back to Ben, wipes her hands.

DANA (CONT'D)  
We should demo the existing and  
build a new one. But with a pitch.  
Better drainage.

BEN  
Standard per foot?

DANA  
(nodding)  
Quarter inch.  
(then)  
Fir strips, plywood, new flashing,  
new tar paper -

BEN  
And so on and so forth. Top of my  
head I'd say it's a 4-day job.

DANA  
I say 2 days - max.

BEN  
I bill 80 bucks an hour.

DANA  
You'll get 60.  
(then)  
2 days at 60, 500 for materials...  
That's about 1460. Max.

Ben stares at her for a beat, squinting in the sun.

BEN  
You don't talk like an architect.

DANA  
My father worked as a general  
contractor for over 40 years, Mr.  
Phipps.

BEN  
Is that right?

DANA  
Yes - that's right. And he didn't  
like leaving me with baby-sitters.  
So I've spent a lot of time on-site  
and a lot of time around men who  
look a lot like you.

Dana goes to the edge to check on Jeremy. When she turns back  
around, she finds Ben watching her with a smug expression.

BEN  
You know who you look a lot like?

DANA  
Who?

BEN  
A smoker.

CUT TO a lit cigarette passing between two hands, one male, one female. Reveal Dana and Ben smoking up on the parapet. Dana sits on the wall, keeping an eye on Jeremy down below, careful to keep her cigarette hand out of his sightline.

BEN (CONT'D)  
So when did you start working for your daddy?

DANA  
When I was old enough.

BEN  
Doing what?

DANA  
Whatever he'd let me do.

BEN  
Must have been proud.

DANA  
Of?

BEN  
You. Getting a degree. Becoming an architect.

Dana gives the slightest of nods, goes quiet for a beat.

DANA  
He had a heart attack on the job a few months after I graduated.

BEN  
Sorry to hear that.

DANA  
(shrugging)  
He died getting his hands dirty.

BEN  
Just like he wanted.

DANA  
Exactly.

BEN  
And what about your -

JEREMY (O.S.)  
MOMMY?

Dana leans over, sees Jeremy standing on the bottom rung.

DANA  
Don't come up here, Jeremy! You  
stay right where you are.

JEREMY  
I'm hungry now!

DANA  
I'll be right there. Now get down  
off the ladder, please.

She watches until he hops off.

BEN  
Where's his father?

DANA  
The city.

BEN  
He coming back soon?

DANA  
(rising)  
That's not your concern.

BEN  
Must get scary at night... Tucked  
up in bed. All by yourself.

She smiles thinly, grinds her cigarette out on the tar paper.

DANA  
Congratulations, Mr. Phipps... You  
just found the line.

BEN  
Oh yeah? So now what?

DANA  
So now you can back the fuck up.

Dana steps out onto the ladder. As she disappears from view -

DANA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
And you can start on Monday. We'll  
expect you around 8.

OFF Ben, watching her go.

INT. JEREMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

We find the boy sleeping quietly in the glow of a plug-in nite lite. The cat's sleeping too, gone fetal on top of the sheets. Then, somewhere, a phone starts ringing...

*RING-RING RING-RING...*

Rascal lifts his head, looks toward the door...

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

WIDE ON Rascal emerging from Jeremy's room. He pauses, then pads silently toward camera...

*RING-RING RING-RING...*

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The cat enters, stops.

RASCAL'S P.O.V.: Empty, bedsheets in a twist, like someone tried to sleep but couldn't. The door to the bathroom is cracked, light and the sound of water coming from within...

*RING-RING RING-RING...*

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rascal nudges the door open, looks in.

RASCAL'S P.O.V.: Empty. But someone left the water on at the sink, and the door to the medicine cabinet is wide open...

*RING-RING RING-RING...*

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The cat trots toward the stairs, starts down, passing between the two mirrors at the bottom. *A thousand little Rascals...*

*WE HEAR THE PHONE STOP RINGING...*

INT. ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

He heads for the living room, drawn by a flickering light...

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

RASCAL'S P.O.V.: Dark except for the TV. He leaps onto the back of the couch as though to POUNCE, but no one's there...

CLOSE ON Rascal, his eyes amber and unblinking, lit by the glare of a late-night infomercial...

RING-RING RING-RING... SOMEONE'S TRYING AGAIN...

INT. BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

WIDE ON Rascal slipping across the ballroom, no bigger than a mouse in this enormous space...

RING-RING RING-RING...

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

LOW ANGLE SHOT as Rascal enters the kitchen... AND STOPS AT A PAIR OF FEET... THEY'RE SMALL, CHILD'S SIZE... AND BARE...

WE WATCH AS A LITTLE HAND REACHES DOWN INTO FRAME, SCRATCHES THE CAT BEHIND THE EARS... THEN RASCAL MOVES ON, THE CAMERA FOLLOWING, LEAVING THE FEET BEHIND...

Darting under the table, the cat snakes his way between a second, larger pair of feet, also bare... Then he hops up onto a chair and from there to the tabletop, tail flicking...

RASCAL'S P.O.V.: Dana, head down on the table, a hand draped over the photos she stole from the historical society...

CUT TO AN OVERHEAD SHOT: THEY'RE THE ONLY ONES IN THE ROOM...

RING-RING RING-RING...

Rascal stretches out, making himself comfortable, while Dana dozes on, unaware she's got company...

RING-RING RING-RING... RING-RING RING-RING...

SLOW FADE OUT:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

EXTREME CLOSE UP ON Dana, opening her eyes.

HER P.O.V.: The attic window... an inch from her face.

She JERKS backward, sitting up straight.

HER P.O.V.: The stolen photos on the tabletop.

JEREMY (O.S.)

Mommy?

She looks up. There's Jeremy at the other end of the table.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Can I have my breakfast?

Dana just stares, like she's never seen him before.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Can I have my breakfast, mommy?

Not breaking eye contact, Dana discreetly slides the photos off the table, tucks them down the back of her shorts.

DANA

Yes, Jeremy. You can have your breakfast.

**A SERIES OF SHOTS**

Dana filling a pot... Putting it on the stove... Turning on the gas... Staring into the water, waiting for it to boil...

Dana opening a cupboard, taking out a box of cream of wheat, pouring in the right amount from memory...

Then stirring... Stirring... Stirring...

Dana scooping the hot cereal into a bowl... Adding milk... A slice of butter... And a half teaspoon of sugar... Then she sets the bowl down in front of Jeremy.

DANA (CONT'D)

Just the way you like it.

JEREMY

You forgot the raisins.

DANA

(beat)

Right. Raisins.

CUT TO Dana sprinkling raisins over the cream of wheat.

DANA (CONT'D)

Just the way you like it.

JEREMY

Yum yum yum yum yum yum...

She sinks down into her chair at the other end of the table, watching the boy dig in, her eyes circled and flat.

**CAROLE & PAULA (V.O.)**  
*This is the garden of make-believe  
/ A magical garden of make-believe  
/ Where flowers chuckle and birds  
play tricks / And the magic tree  
grows lollipop sticks...*

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Jeremy's now sitting on the couch watching TV with Rascal. On screen, two long-haired hippies named CAROLE and PAULA dance and caper around a colorful cardboard set.

**CAROLE & PAULA**  
*Here in the garden what we say and  
do / We'd like you to join us and  
do it too...*

DANA (O.S.)  
Jeremy?

Reveal Dana in the doorway behind them.

**CAROLE & PAULA**  
*Can you crow like a rooster?*

DANA  
Jeremy.

JEREMY  
(eyes on the TV)  
Yeah?

**CAROLE & PAULA**  
*Cock-a-doodle-doo...*

DANA  
I'm going to be upstairs, okay?

JEREMY  
Okay.

**CAROLE & PAULA**  
*And clap your hands and stamp your  
shoe...*

DANA  
So you play in here, okay?

JEREMY  
Okay.

Dana crosses the entry to the stairs, "The Magic Garden" theme song seeming to follow her as she goes...

CAROLE & PAULA (O.S.)  
*It's a funny place but it's surely  
true / That we'd like to share it  
all with you...*

As she passes between the two mirrors...

CAROLE & PAULA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
*If you sing for me / Tra-la-la-la-  
la-la...*

Reaches the landing...

CAROLE & PAULA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
*I'll sing for you / Woo-hoo-hoo-hoo-  
hoo-hoo...*

Enters the master bedroom...

CAROLE & PAULA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
*If you cry for me / Huh-huh-huh-  
huh...*

Sits down on the bed...

CAROLE & PAULA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
*I'll cry for you / Boo-hoo-hoo-  
hoo...*

Removes the two photos...

CAROLE & PAULA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
*If you scream for me / Ahhhhhhhh!*

And hides them between the mattress and the box spring...

CAROLE & PAULA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
*I'll scream for you / Woo-UH-huh!*

Then BANG. Dana WHIRLS toward the bedroom door... now shut.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The door opens and Dana steps out, unnerved.

DANA  
Jeremy?

She goes to the railing, looks down into the entry.

CAROLE & PAULA (O.S.)  
*So come on in without a fuss /  
'Cause the magical garden is  
waiting for us...*

DANA  
JEREMY?

A long beat... Then she hears a THUD on the floor above.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Dana steps into view at the far end.

DANA  
Jeremy, are you up here?

She goes to the first doorway, looks in... Then the second...  
Then the third... Then she hears a RUSTLING down the hall...

Dana turns to look...

**AND SEES A FLASH OF YELLOW VANISHING UP THE ATTIC STAIRS...**

INT. ATTIC STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Dana appears at the bottom, puts a foot on the first tread.

DANA  
Jeremy? Jeremy, I'm not in the mood  
for games...

Overhead, we hear a floorboard CREAK...

DANA (CONT'D)  
Jeremy?

Step by step, Dana starts inching her way up the stairs...

As she nears the top, the risers give way to a clear view  
across the attic, black as midnight except for the light  
coming through the open door to the little room...

Someone's in there... But it's not Jeremy...

**IT'S A LITTLE GIRL...**

**MAYBE SIX YEARS OLD... WITH A PALE, HEARTBREAKINGLY BEAUTIFUL  
FACE FRAMED BY THICK BLACK CURLS...**

**SHE'S WEARING A CANARY YELLOW PARTY DRESS, THE KIND WORN OVER  
A CENTURY AGO... AND NO SHOES...**

**CLOSE ON DANA, MOUTH HANGING, HARDLY BELIEVING...**

**CLOSE ON THE LITTLE GIRL, HER FACE SMOOTH AND SAD, EYES LARGE  
WITH SOME DARK AND UNBEARABLE SECRET...**

**SHE WATCHES CALMLY AS DANA COMES CLOSER... AND CLOSER...**

THEN, WHEN DANA'S JUST A FEW FEET FROM THE DOOR, IT SLAMS SHUT... WITH A STRANGLERED CRY DANA RUNS FORWARD, TURNS THE KNOB HARD, OPENS THE DOOR...

AND FINDS THE ROOM IS NOW EMPTY...

She steps inside, looking around, her face ashen, fearful...

Tiptoeing to the middle of the room, she does a slow turn, alert to the slightest movement or sound...

Suddenly we hear a child's LAUGH outside, high and tinkly...

Dana stoops down at the window, looks out onto the yard, and sees Jeremy running around the corner of the house...

THEN SHE SEES SOMETHING MOVE AT THE EDGE OF THE ORCHARD...

IT'S ONLY WHEN IT EMERGES THROUGH THE OPEN GATE THAT SHE GRASPS ITS FULL SIZE AND SHAPE... IT'S A DOG... A GERMAN SHEPHERD... AND IT'S HUGE... POWERFUL-LOOKING...

DANA'S JAW CLICKS OPEN AND SHUT BUT NO SOUND COMES OUT...

THE DOG CROUCHES LOW TO THE GRASS, EYES ON THE SPOT WHERE JEREMY JUST VANISHED... THEN IT BARES ITS TEETH, ITS LOW GROWL HUMMING ALL THE WAY UP TO THE ATTIC ROOM...

A SUSPENDED MOMENT... THEN IT CHARGES FORWARD, DISAPPEARING AROUND THE CORNER OF THE HOUSE...

AND THEN COME THE SCREAMS... WAKING DANA FROM HER STUNNED STATE, PROPELLING HER ACROSS THE ROOM TOWARD THE OPEN DOOR...

A SERIES OF INTERCUTS...

DANA RUNNING THROUGH THE ATTIC, FACE TWISTED IN FEAR...

CLOSE ON YELLOW TEETH, SNAPPING AND SHREDDING...

DANA SCRAMBLING DOWN THE ATTIC STAIRS, WAILING, ONLY ONE WORD DISTINGUISHABLE...

DANA (CONT'D)  
JEREMEEEEEEEEEE...

CLOSE ON A PAIR OF EYES, BLACK AND INHUMAN...

DANA RACING THROUGH THE SERVANTS' QUARTERS...

CUT TO A RIBBON OF GUMS, PINK AND SLICK WITH WET...

DANA FLYING ALONG THE SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY...

DANA (CONT'D)  
JEREMEEEEEEEEEE...

**CUT TO A LITTLE MOUTH, YANKED ROUGHLY OUT OF FRAME...**

DANA RUSHING DOWN THE STAIRS, HITTING ONE OF THE MIRRORS WITH HER ELBOW, THE NOISE A SHARP CRACK...

**A SMALL WHITE HAND, JERKED HARD ACROSS CAMERA...**

DANA SPRINTING THROUGH THE BALLROOM...

**A SUDDEN VIEW OF THE SKY, SHAKING VIOLENTLY...**

DANA CRASHING INTO THE KITCHEN...

**SOMETHING MEATY AND LOOSE, FLAPPING UNNATURALLY...**

DANA CLAWING HER WAY TOWARD THE OPEN DOOR...

**A TINY WHITE SOCK, KICKING IN THE GRASS...**

DANA TRIPPING DOWN THE BACK STEPS, SOMEHOW STAYING UPRIGHT...

**THE SOCK DROPPING TO THE GROUND... AND LYING STILL...**

DANA PINWHEELING AROUND THE CORNER OF THE HOUSE... THEN REARING BACK, ALMOST FALLING DOWN...

CLOSE ON DANA, FACE WHITE WITH SHOCK...

DANA'S P.O.V.: JEREMY, HIS BACK TO HER, PICKING UP THE BIG DINOSAUR BOOK HE'D LEFT OUTSIDE IN THE GRASS...

JEREMY

There you are! I was looking all over for you...

Dana slides back around the corner, SMACKS her hands over her mouth, smothering a SCREAM of terror and relief...

She stumbles toward the house and up the back steps, trying to stay quiet, trying to keep Jeremy from seeing his mother like this... Wild-eyed... Crazy-looking... She stops in the doorway, struggling to pull it together...

THEN FROM THE CORNER OF HER EYE SHE SEES SOMETHING SMALL STREAK FROM UNDER THE KITCHEN TABLE...

**IT'S RASCAL, HEAD DOWN, BEELINING FOR THE OPEN DOOR...**

**WITH NO TIME TO THINK DANA SLAMS THE BACK DOOR SHUT WITH BOTH HANDS... EXCEPT IT DOESN'T...**

**INSTEAD WE HEAR A SICKENING CRUNCH AS THE DOOR STOPS JUST SHORT OF THE FRAME...**

**WE'RE ON DANA'S FACE AS SHE LOOKS DOWN... WE DON'T SEE WHAT SHE SEES BUT WE KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED... AND IT'S TOO MUCH...**

IT'S JUST TOO MUCH...

WE HOLD on Dana... Everything inside her wants to drop to her knees and weep, but that's not an option... Jeremy's right outside... He'll be back any second...

OFF Dana... *What to do what to do what to do what to do...*

INT. ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

We hear RUSTLING. PAN OVER to find Dana opening a medium-sized yellow box marked "KITCHEN," removing its contents...

**A SERIES OF SHOTS**

Dana in the kitchen, her back to us. She lifts something off the floor, sets it carefully in the box...

Dana in the kitchen, standing in profile. She's at the counter, sealing the box with a roll of packing tape...

Dana in the entry, her back to us. She's sliding the yellow box back in with the rest...

Dana in the kitchen, standing in profile. She's scrubbing her hands at the sink... Then she looks up and SCREAMS.

VOICE (O.S.)

BOO!

DANA'S P.O.V.: Jeremy, his face right outside the window, somehow floating six feet off the ground. Then another face pops into view next to his.

DAVID

Hey! Look who I found outside.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY - MINUTES LATER

Dana sits while David makes them coffee. She's barely keeping it together, leg THUNDERING under the table as David sets an extra thick slice of Junior's cheesecake in front of her.

DANA

I thought you were coming back tomorrow.

DAVID

I was. But... I called and I called and I couldn't get through. And then I got worried. And then I thought, 'I really don't have to go to this brunch tomorrow.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

I should be home with my wife and my son, helping them unpack and getting settled in...' So I left.

DANA

How did you get here from the station?

DAVID

A cab!

Off her (non) reaction -

DAVID (CONT'D)

I know! I was surprised too. But they've only got the one. And I think he's also the dentist...

Dana squeezes out a smile as David sits down with the coffee.

DAVID (CONT'D)

So... what's goin' on around here?

DANA

(beat)

Ben Phipps is coming Monday morning to fix the roof. He tried to gouge us but I talked him down. It should only be a couple days' work. I haven't checked the forecast but I don't think it's supposed to rain again this week so... So I think we should be fine.

DAVID

I meant with you, babe.

DANA

Oh. I... I'm okay.

(then)

I haven't been sleeping well. It's... too quiet or something.

DAVID

(beat)

And are we taking our -

DANA

No. I'm not.

DAVID

Probably not the best idea.

Dana shakes her head, fiddles with her fork.

DANA  
I know. I know that. But they make  
me feel... You know.

DAVID  
Fuzzy.

DANA  
Fuzzy. Yes. And...  
(beat)  
I should really get back to work.

She gets up from the table like she's going to rinse out her  
cup. David gets up too, cutting her off, pulling her in.

DAVID  
Hey - it's alright. It's alright.  
I'm back now... I'm back...

Then she's CRYING full out, vibrating with pain.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
That's it... Let it out... Let it  
allllllll out...  
(then)  
I shouldn't have left you two alone  
out here so soon. This is my fault.

DANA  
David... David, I...

DAVID  
You don't have to apologize. Not to  
me.

DANA  
I wasn't -  
("going to apologize")  
I don't like being like this,  
David.

DAVID  
I know... I know.

He sways her gently from side to side... side to side...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
I know, babe... I know.

SLOW FADE OUT:

JEREMY (V.O.)  
Rascal?

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DUSK - LATER

We find Dana in bed, alone, lying on her side with the sheet up under her chin. She's listening to her son down on the first floor, calling for a cat that's not coming.

JEREMY (O.S.)  
RASCAL?

**WE STAY ON DANA THROUGHOUT THE FOLLOWING**

JEREMY (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Raaaaaaaa-scaaaaaaaaaal...

Sounds like he's climbing the stairs now, getting closer.

JEREMY (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Here, kitty kitty... Kitty?  
(beat)  
Rascal? Are you up here?

He's right outside her door. And now here comes David.

DAVID (O.S.)  
Hey, peanut - your mother's trying to sleep.

JEREMY (O.S.)  
I can't find Rascal.

DAVID (O.S.)  
Maybe he doesn't want to be found.

JEREMY (O.S.)  
DADDY!

DAVID (O.S.)  
Did you look in your room?

JEREMY (O.S.)  
YES!

DAVID (O.S.)  
Shh-shh-shh-shh-shh...

JEREMY (O.S.)  
("quiet")  
I looked everywhere...

DAVID (O.S.)  
I'm sure he's around. Hey - no.  
Don't bother your mother. She's trying to sleep.

Must have made a move toward her door.

JEREMY (O.S.)

But -

DAVID (O.S.)

I said no. Mommy's tired.

She can hear David going down, leaving Jeremy in the hall.

DAVID (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Now go get your jammies on and you  
can watch some TV, alright? And  
then it's bedtime.

A beat... Then a soft CREAK as her door opens.

ON Dana. *Don't come in don't come in don't come in...*

JEREMY (O.S.)

Mommy?

ON Dana, closing her eyes quickly. *Go away go away go away...*

JEREMY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Mommy, are you sleeping?

*Please go away please go away please go away please...*

DAVID (O.S.)

Hey! What did I say?

JEREMY (O.S.)

But -

DAVID (O.S.)

Close that door and go get your  
pajamas on. Or no TV.

(beat)

I mean it, Jeremy.

At last we hear the door close. Then Dana opens her eyes  
again, not going to sleep anytime soon.

INT. STAIRS - NIGHT - LATER

OVERHEAD SHOT as Dana tiptoes downstairs in the dark.

INT. ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

OVERHEAD SHOT as she pulls the yellow box from the stack.

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

OVERHEAD SHOT as she heads straight for the trash pile.

INT. ENTRY - MINUTES LATER

OVERHEAD SHOT as Dana crosses to the stairs, starts up.

CUT TO A LOW ANGLE SHOT as her feet exit frame... Reveal a sprinkling of glass at the bottom of the stairs by the wall. WE PAN UP to the mirror above... It's broken. There's a web of cracks the size of a fist, made during her mad descent earlier that day.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

OVERHEAD SHOT as she quietly climbs into bed, scooting her back into David's belly, wrapping his arm around her.

SLOW FADE OUT:

We hear SIZZLING.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

David's at the stove making pancakes. Jeremy, subdued, sits on the counter nearby, a mixing bowl in his lap.

DAVID  
Now throw some apple in... Get a  
good handful...

Jeremy scoops some diced apple, holds it out over the pan.

JEREMY  
Now?

DAVID  
Now.

As he dribbles it over the half-cooked pancake -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Oh come on. Don't be stingy.

Jeremy adds another helping.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
That's it. Yum yum yum yum...

INT. ATTIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

We're inside, looking through the doorway to the attic proper as Dana emerges from the darkness, stopping just short of the threshold, looking exhausted after a sleepless night.

CLOSE ON Dana, cautiously scanning the little room. She looks down... and then her eyes narrow. What's that?

LOW ANGLE SHOT of slippered feet stepping over the threshold and crossing the room, stopping next to a small curl of something or other on the metal floor. Dana's hand enters frame, picks it up, and WE FOLLOW IT back up to her face.

DANA'S P.O.V.: A filthy scrap of ribbon. Canary yellow.

Then Dana STIFFENS, turns her head to the side, and looks down. PAN DOWN the length of her body to her free hand...

THERE'S ANOTHER HAND HOLDING HERS... A CHILD'S...

**DANA DRAGS HER EYES FROM THE HAND UP TO THE WRIST, FROM THE WRIST UP TO THE ARM, FROM THE ARM UP TO...**

JEREMY

Mommy?

To Jeremy. Of course.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

I made pancakes.

DANA

(beat)

Did you make some for me?

JEREMY

Mm-hm.

DANA

Are they apple?

JEREMY

Mm-hm.

Dana smiles dully.

DANA

Yum.

INT. KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

Breakfast. Dana and David sit on either end of the table, Jeremy between them.

DAVID

Rascal turned up yet?

Jeremy shakes his head sadly.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
He hasn't? That's strange...  
(then)  
Want me to help you look after  
breakfast?

Jeremy nods.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Done and done! We'll search the  
house from top to bottom.

JEREMY  
I think he's not inside.

DAVID  
You think he got out?

Another nod.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
How'd that happen? I thought we  
were keeping the doors closed.

DANA  
(beat)  
Not yesterday.

DAVID  
What happened yesterday?

DANA  
Yesterday, when Jeremy went outside  
to get his library book, he left  
the back door open. Wide open.

DAVID  
Is that true, peanut?

JEREMY  
It was only for a MINUTE...

DANA  
Oh I think it was longer than that,  
Jeremy. I think you were outside a  
lot longer than that.

(then)  
I think Rascal got out when you  
left the door open. I think he got  
outside.

JEREMY  
(tearing up)  
Do you think he's coming back?

DANA

I don't know. He's wild... No  
telling what a wild thing will do.

Dana lifts her eyes, finds David watching her. She takes a  
careful bite of pancake, swallows, mouth dry.

DANA (CONT'D)

But we'll help you look.

DAVID

That's right, peanut. We'll help  
you look. Don't you worry...  
(patting Jeremy's head)  
We'll find him.

INT. BATHROOM

*We're in the white bathroom as Dana enters wearing a pale  
yellow blouse and slacks... She closes the door and turns on  
the shower, puts a hand under the spray, waits for it to get  
warm... Then she steps into the tub, still fully dressed...*

DAVID (V.O.)

Dana?

*She stands very still, letting the water soak her clothes...*

DAVID (V.O.)

Dana.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Dana's sitting on the back steps, winding and unwinding the  
yellow ribbon around her fingers, staring at nothing...

DAVID (O.S.)

Hey, babe?

She snaps to, sees David and Jeremy standing in front of her.  
They're dripping with sweat, like they've been bushwhacking.

DANA

Any luck?

DAVID

Nada... unfortunately. But we're  
gonna go down to the road now, take  
a look around. Wanna come with?

He's standing just a few feet from the trash pile. Dana can  
see a corner of the box poking out from under the debris.

DANA

I think I'll check inside again. He could be hiding somewhere. Maybe in one of the guest rooms.

DAVID

Sounds like a plan. C'mon, peanut.

As soon as they're gone she gets to her feet.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - VARIOUS - MINUTES LATER

WIDE ON Dana wandering from room to room... She's looking for something... but it's not Rascal. From time to time we hear David and Jeremy calling for the cat somewhere outside, the sound echo-y... Faraway...

She's about to start up the stairs when she hears something CRUNCH beneath her slipper. Dana looks down, sees the broken glass, then lifts her eyes to the mirror above...

DANA

Damn it.

She kneels, starts picking up the glass. Then she glances up at the mirror, her eyes level with the hole...

DANA'S P.O.V.: **Fingers**

She reaches out, gingerly pulls another piece of glass from the mirror... Then another... And another...

DANA'S P.O.V.: **A hand**.

She sits back for a beat, taking in the mirror as a whole...

CUT TO Dana, hands now wrapped in yellow dish towels, methodically BREAKING shards of glass out of the mirror...

Piece after piece after piece, the pile growing at her feet, her breath audible over the SNAP and CRACK...

There. Done. Dana takes several steps back, staring...

DANA'S P.O.V.: **A life-size oil portrait**, set deep into the paneling...

The old man is tall, corpulent, with a thick handlebar mustache and eyebrows like hooks. Dressed in late Victorian garb, he has a severe, humorless expression that looks like it could easily turn thunderous...

Dana slowly backs away, pivoting toward the second mirror...

She drifts over to it, hypnotized by her mottled reflection, the man in the portrait still visible over her shoulder...

Then she lifts her toweled hand... and SMASHES her own image.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRY - LATER

Heading for the library, David glances over to the stairs.

                          DAVID  
                  Holy shit.

DAVID'S P.O.V.: A life-size oil portrait... of a woman.

She's young and fair, fine-boned, cinched into a long white dress typical of the late 1800s. Pretty if unsmiling, there's a haunted quality around the eyes...

David turns, clocks the man's portrait on the other side.

                          DAVID (CONT'D)  
                  Holy. Shit.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

OVERHEAD SHOT of water, swirling down a drain... Then a thin trail of blood seeps into the mix... Reveal Dana at the sink, cleaning out a cut on her finger.

                          DAVID (O.S.)  
                  They're incredible.

She looks up into the mirror, sees David over her shoulder.

                          DAVID (CONT'D)  
                  Don't you think? I mean... I can't imagine... I can't fathom why someone would cover them up.

                          DANA  
                  (dropping her eyes)  
                  I can.

                          DAVID  
                  It's gotta be the judge and his wife, huh? The... Um... The -

                          DANA  
                  The Blackers.

                          DAVID  
                  Right! The Blackers.

Dana turns the water off, opens the medicine cabinet.

DANA  
We should get rid of them.

DAVID  
You're kidding.

She peels a band-aid, starts wrapping it around the wound.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Babe... Babe, they could be worth a fortune! They could be Sargents for all we know.

DANA  
They don't belong to us.

DAVID  
Well they belong to the house and the house belongs to us. *Ergo* -

DANA  
They give me the creeps. And I don't want them around.

David closes in behind her, puts his hands on her shoulders.

DAVID  
Look - why don't we talk about this later, alright? Why don't you take a little nap and I'll wake you for dinner. Does that sound good?  
(kissing her cheek)  
I'll tell Jeremy to keep it down.

Then, pausing in the doorway -

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Oh - and no sign of Rascal by the way. In case you were wondering.

OFF Dana, watching him go in the mirror.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

**STATIC SHOTS**

The front of the house... lights off, windows dark. Except for the buzz of crickets, everything is quiet. Still.

The back of the house... same as the front.

The gate to the orchard... standing open.

The trash pile... a dark silhouette.

The yellow box... poking out from the pile.

**THEN IT BURSTS OPEN.**

SMASH CUT TO Dana waking up in bed, GASPING, heart HAMMERING, moonlight pouring through the windows...

She looks to her right... David's asleep. She looks to her left... A clock on the table says it's well after midnight.

VOICE (O.S.)

Mommy?

She looks to the door.

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

MOMMY?

It's Jeremy, calling from his room.

JEREMY (O.S.)

MOMMY, CAN YOU COME HERE?

Dana throws back the sheet, goes to the door, opens it...

**AND FINDS THE GERMAN SHEPHERD ON THE OTHER SIDE... IT LEAPS FORWARD, JAWS SNAPPING... DANA SCREAMS, FALLS BACKWARD...**

**THE DOG LEAPS FORWARD AGAIN, STOPPING JUST INCHES FROM HER FACE, STRAINING AT ITS THICK LEATHER LEASH...**

**THEN WE PAN UP THE LEASH TO THE DOG'S MASTER... IT'S THE MAN FROM THE OIL PORTRAIT... JUDGE BLACKER...**

**AND UNDER HIS CAREFULLY GROOMED MUSTACHE, WE SEE HIS LIPS CURL IN A SATISFIED SNEER...**

**THE DOG CONTINUES TO BARK AND SNARL, NAILS SCRATCHING CRAZILY AT THE METAL FLOOR, LEAVING SCORES OF CRISSCROSSING MARKS...**

**REVEAL WE ARE NOW IN THE ATTIC ROOM, MAN AND DOG HOVERING IN THE DOORWAY, DANA CRAWLING BACKWARD, DESPERATE TO GET AWAY...**

**SHE HITS THE WALL OPPOSITE, COWERING UNDER THE LITTLE WINDOW, LOOKS TO HER LEFT... AND FINDS THE GIRL IN THE YELLOW DRESS RIGHT BESIDE HER...**

**EYES LOCKED ON DANA'S, SHE OPENS HER MOUTH TO SPEAK...**

GIRL

*No telling what a wild thing will do...*

SMASH CUT TO Dana waking up in bed, GASPING, heart HAMMERING, sunlight pouring through the windows...

She looks to the door... It's open, the hallway beyond empty. She looks to her right... David's not there. But there's a red-lined note card on his pillow. She reaches for it.

*Morning, sleepyhead! Took J. for a walk to look for R.  
Breakfast on the table... Love, D.*

OFF Dana, already coming up with a plan.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRY - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

We hear RUSTLING. PAN OVER to find Dana kneeling before a battered black tool chest. She knocks the lid back...

CLOSE ON pliers and hammers, tiny jars of bolts and washers. Dana's hand enters frame, DIGGING into the jumble, surfacing with a flat pry bar... That'll do nicely.

As her hand exits frame we clock an old Polaroid taped to the inside of the lid...

CLOSE ON a teenage Dana standing next to a thickset older man, both of them covered in dirt, both holding shovels and doing their variation on "American Gothic." They look filthy.

And happy.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

David walks in from outside, Jeremy riding piggyback.

DAVID

Babe?

DAVID'S P.O.V.: Dana's breakfast on the table, still waiting.

**A SERIES OF SHOTS**

David and Jeremy in the doorway to the ballroom.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Dana?

The living room.

DAVID (CONT'D)

DanaDanaDana...

The library.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Daaaayyyy-naaaa...

The dining room.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Hm. No mommy.

They fall back across the entry, heading toward the stairs, Jeremy still riding piggyback.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Call for your mother.

JEREMY  
Mommy?

DAVID  
Louder, peanut.

JEREMY  
MOMMY?

DAVID  
Holy shit.

JEREMY  
Daddy!

Jeremy reaches around, cups a hand over his father's mouth.

DAVID'S P.O.V.: The paintings are gone, the surrounding trim a mess of splinters where they were both wrenched free.

CUT TO:

EXT. HISTORICAL SOCIETY - DAY - LATER

Ms. Judith comes toward us down the driveway, keys in hand. She passes the red Volvo parked to one side, slows.

MS. JUDITH  
Goodness. What do we have here?

MS. JUDITH'S P.O.V.: Dana, arms crossed, PACING in front of the carriage house. The two portraits are stacked near the door, still on their stretchers.

DANA  
I'm making a donation.

CUT TO:

INT. HISTORICAL SOCIETY - MINUTES LATER

Dana sets the judge's portrait on the floor, leaning it against the wall next to his wife's.

MS. JUDITH  
This is extremely generous of you.

DANA  
We don't really have a place for  
them. And... And...

MS. JUDITH  
And they're both horrible.

DANA  
Yes. That too.

Ms. Judith shifts her gaze from the paintings to the woman standing next to her, a woman who's looking a bit... chewed.

MS. JUDITH  
Dana, forgive me for prying, but...  
(changing tacks)  
How's the restoration coming?

DANA  
It's not. If you want to know the  
truth.

MS. JUDITH  
There must be a great deal to think  
about.

DANA  
Yeah. You could say that.

Dana tries for a casual smile, suddenly ricocheting into a loud BARKING laugh, the sound ugly and brittle.

DANA (CONT'D)  
Sorry, I... I'm... It's...

She puts a hand to her mouth, swallowing something back as her eyes drift over to the paintings again. Then, quiet -

DANA (CONT'D)  
There's this little room I found up  
in the attic. It's got a metal  
floor and a window that doesn't  
open and a door that only locks  
from the outside. And it's... it's  
frightening. It frightens me. And I  
don't know what to make of it... Of  
that.  
(flushing)  
It's ridiculous.

MS. JUDITH  
Maybe.  
(beat)  
Maybe not.

Ms. Judith turns her back on the portraits and goes over to the tables, sagging down into a chair.

DANA  
What do you mean?

Dana follows, taking the seat next to her.

DANA (CONT'D)  
Ms. Judith? What is it?

For a moment the old lady keeps her own counsel. Then she reaches out, patting Dana's hand with thin, papery fingers.

MS. JUDITH  
Dana... Dana, it sounds like you have a 'disappointments room.'

DANA  
A what?

MS. JUDITH  
A disappointments room.

DANA  
I don't know what that means.

MS. JUDITH  
(beat)  
There was a time, not so long ago, when a child born with certain difficulties was considered... embarrassing. Especially if the family was well-to-do. Prominent socially. Sometimes a decision would be made to keep the child's very existence a secret...

She hesitates, aware she's feeding Dana's distress.

DANA  
Go on.

MS. JUDITH  
And so, confined to a room like the one you describe, tended to only by the parents or possibly a trusted servant, that boy or girl would spend their lives... However long those might be. No one to talk to. No one to play with. Never feeling the sun or the rain on their little faces... These children were...

DANA  
Disappointments.

Ms. Judith offers a small, sad nod. Then -

MS. JUDITH

Their time in this world was frequently brief... God willing. And when it was over they would be buried. Discreetly. Usually with none the wiser.

(beat)

Hard to believe. Difficult to accept. But... it happened. More often than people know. Or admit.

DANA

So there was a child.

MS. JUDITH

It does seem... likely.

DANA

Then what happened to her?

MS. JUDITH

To her?

DANA

Or him... If the Blackers had a child no one knew about, what happened to it?

MS. JUDITH

Well there's really no way to know, is there?

DANA

But it has to be buried somewhere.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY - LATER

The Volvo comes around a desolate bend in the road, making a right-hand turn between two stone pilasters.

MS. JUDITH (V.O.)

You're welcome to look, but I can only think of one place...

DANA (V.O.)

Where?

Dana parks in a small lot...

MS. JUDITH (V.O.)

It's the most obvious...

She gets out, looking around...

MS. JUDITH (V.O.)  
Which is why I sincerely doubt  
you'll find anything...

Then she starts moving away from us...

DANA (V.O.)  
Tell me how to get there.

WIDEN to reveal the town cemetery in front of her...

EXT. CEMETARY - CONTINUOUS

As Dana walks between rows of poorly-tended gravestones -

MS. JUDITH (V.O.)  
Head straight for the hill... It's  
the one at the top... naturally...  
The site was chosen because it  
could be seen from all sides...

Hiking up a steep rise, she makes her way toward the one  
monument that looms large over the rest...

MS. JUDITH (V.O.)  
You'll find them there... Both of  
them... Whether they've got company  
is the question...

Dana gets to the top, perspiring heavily, breathing hard. She  
pauses for a moment, then steps into the shadow of a massive  
black obelisk, a hundred years old and a dozen feet high...

CLOSE ON the words she finds inscribed at the base...

**JUDGE ERNEST ALOYSIUS BLACKER**  
**BORN NOVEMBER 21, 1837 - DIED MAY 3, 1912**

*"All Must Sip the Cup of Sorrow,  
I Today and Thou Tomorrow"*

DANA  
Bastard.

Moving around to the side of the monument, she finds a  
second, smaller engraving, like a footnote to the first...

**LILLIAN**  
**1877 - 1908**  
**HIS WIFE**

Then she keeps moving, circling the obelisk once... Twice...

DANA (CONT'D)  
Come on come on come on...

But there's nothing else to read, no other name mentioned...

CLOSE ON Dana, agitated, not ready to give up...

DANA (CONT'D)  
Where are you?

She turns around, taking in the thousands of other graves fanning out from the hillside in a wide, endless ring...

DANA (CONT'D)  
Where are you?

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. VOLVO - LATER

Dana pulls into their driveway, head spinning, the car BOUNCING over the ruts. As she nears the house, she happens to glance out the driver's side window...

**And sees a yellow kite hanging on the horizon.**

EXT. FRONT OF THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Dana strides through the tall grass, heading toward the back of the house, the kite still in view... It flutters in the sky, no string visible, right above the orchard...

As she exits frame we notice Ben up on the parapet, pausing from his work to watch her go by...

EXT. ORCHARD - CONTINUOUS

Dana passes through the open gate, starts down the path...

HER P.O.V.: The kite, high above and up ahead, a yellow diamond just glimpsed through the branches...

The canopy thickens the deeper she goes, the kite beginning to disappear for longer and longer stretches... There and then gone... There and then gone... There and then, when she's almost directly beneath it... Gone...

Dana stops, frustrated, straining to see the sky...

Suddenly she becomes aware of the woods all around her, the wind in the trees and the creatures in the underbrush... Dana looks back toward the gate and the house beyond... They're so far away... Unsettled, she starts to retreat...

THEN HER FOOT HITS SOMETHING HIDDEN IN THE LEAVES... Dana looks down, at first unwilling to believe... And then...

CUT TO Dana on her knees, SCRAPING away the roots and rocks, PUSHING back the natural debris of decades, until...

CLOSE ON a tiny marker, only 5" x 7" and cut roughly from stone, crudely carved with nothing more than necessary...

**LAURA**  
**1895 - 1901**

Eyes watering, cheeks white -

DANA

So little... That's so little.

(beat)

Little Laura... Six years old and out here all alone. In the woods.

(then)

What were they thinking?

She brushes the last of the earth from the dead girl's name.

DANA (CONT'D)

It's too young, Laura... That's much too young to be out here all by yourself. Down there in the dark. No one to keep you company...

Rocking back and forth now, face streaming -

DANA (CONT'D)

You poor thing... You poor, unloved, unwanted thing...

And WE SLOWLY SAIL UP AND AWAY from them, pulling up through the branches and the leaves into the clear summer sky.

SLOW FADE OUT:

EXT. ORCHARD - NIGHT - LATER

WE PUSH down the path accompanied by the CRUNCH of footsteps and a flashlight's beam, sweeping back and forth ahead of us.

Wait. There's something on the ground a dozen yards ahead...

It's a body, lying on its side, facing away from us...

The beam hits feet first then slides up to the head... And when Dana finally turns her face into the light, she doesn't seem the least bit surprised...

DAVID (V.O.)  
We were so worried, babe... Both of us... We had no idea where you'd gone... No clue...

CUT TO Dana, stony-faced, coming toward us through the gate. David's behind her, holding Jeremy's red flashlight...

DAVID (V.O.)  
We looked upstairs, downstairs, out back, out front... Everywhere...

She walks PAST CAMERA and up the back steps, through the door Jeremy's holding open for her...

DAVID (V.O.)  
I saw the car in the driveway so I knew you couldn't have gone far, but still... We were so worried...

David's the last inside. He closes the door behind him...

INT. ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

Dana approaches the stairs, starts up, David following...

DAVID (V.O.)  
And then I thought... I thought maybe Ben would know where you were... But he'd already gone home and I didn't have his number...

Jeremy stays at the bottom, watching his parents ascend. He's got his flashlight back now, and turns it off with a CLICK...

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dana enters first, David a few steps behind...

DAVID (V.O.)  
So I called Marti at the general store because I knew she would have his number... And she did... And then I called Ben and he said the last time he saw you, you were walking toward the orchard...

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON the shower levers. David's hand reaches into frame, turns them on, testing the temperature...

DAVID (V.O.)  
So I went looking for you again...

CUT TO Dana standing next to the tub. David tries to help her undress but she BRUSHES his hands aside, does it herself...

DAVID (V.O.)  
And there you were, just like he  
said... And I was so glad you were  
alright...

David offers an arm as she gets in but Dana WAVES him off...

DAVID (V.O.)  
Because sometimes I get worried...

Then she draws the curtain between them...

DAVID (V.O.)  
I get worried something's going to  
happen to you...

CUT TO Dana, head under the water, eyes closed...

DAVID (V.O.)  
Like you'll wander off for good one  
day...

CUT TO Dana, head under the water, eyes open...

DAVID (V.O.)  
Like you'll just... disappear...

CUT TO Dana getting out, David waiting with a towel...

DAVID (V.O.)  
And I think about what I'd do if I  
ever lost you, Dana...

Dana walks out of the bathroom, heading toward the bed...

DAVID (V.O.)  
And I don't know... I really  
don't...

She lays her head down on the pillow, pulls the sheet up...

DAVID (V.O.)  
I'm just glad you're home safe,  
babe...

PUSH IN on her face, blank and full at the same time...

DAVID (O.S.)  
I'm just glad you're home safe.  
(beat)  
Sleep tight.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear a dull **THUNK... THUNK... THUNK...**

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - THE NEXT DAY

OVERHEAD SHOT on Dana, alone in bed, staring at the ceiling.

**THUNK... THUNK... THUNK...**

Sounds like Ben's hard at work.

**THUNK... THUNK... THUNK...**

She sits up, swings her legs over the side of the bed.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dana lifts her T-shirt, slaps on some deodorant.

**THUNK... THUNK... THUNK...**

Gives her tongue a few brushes, spits.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dana stands under the leak, putting her hair in a knot.

**THUNK... THUNK...**

She pauses, watching the ceiling, waiting for the noise to resume. Then, from out in the hall -

**THUNK... THUNK... THUNK...**

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

**THUNK... THUNK... THUNK...**

Dana drifts to the railing, looks down. Jeremy's sitting at the bottom of the stairs, bouncing a red ball on the floor.

**THUNK... THUNK...**

DANA

Hey.

He turns his face up to hers, looking sad. Bored.

DANA (CONT'D)

I was thinking I could set up your house for you if you'd like.

(beat)

You can help.

(MORE)

DANA (CONT'D)

(beat)  
If you'd like.

OFF Jeremy, brightening instantly.

INT. ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

We hear RUSTLING. PAN OVER to find Dana lifting a plastic bin from one of the moving boxes, Jeremy looking on expectantly.

INT. JEREMY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

They sit next to each other on the floor, legs crossed, the bin in front of them.

DANA

Now do you remember how this goes together?

Jeremy nibbles his lower lip.

DANA (CONT'D)

That's okay. It's complicated.  
(a small sigh)  
As were the clients... if your mother remembers correctly.

Dana lifts the lid, dumps the contents out onto the floor.

CLOSE ON boxes, varying in size and made from thick card stock, each colored gray or brown to mimic steel or wood. Dana pulls a large piece of foam board from under the pile.

DANA (CONT'D)

First things first - we start with the base.

They begin assembling the architectural model together, Dana selecting the right boxes and then, with his mother's help, Jeremy putting them into place, like an elaborate game of "Jenga." For a while they work quietly, companionably. Then -

DANA (CONT'D)

Jeremy...

JEREMY

Yeah?

DANA

Jeremy, I wanted to tell you that... I just wanted to say that I'm... I'm sorry.

JEREMY

What are you sorry for?

DANA  
For the c... For Rascal.

JEREMY  
That's okay.  
(bravely)  
Sometimes bad things happen and we  
don't know why.

DANA  
Yes, that's... that's very true.

JEREMY  
It's no one's fault. It's just the  
way it goes.

DANA  
Who told you that?

JEREMY  
Daddy.

DANA  
When does Daddy tell you that?

Jeremy shrugs.

JEREMY  
Always.

The model's quickly taking shape. It's a modern prefabricated house, all angles and edges, with large cutouts for windows. It's through one of these that WE GO CLOSE ON Jeremy, like we're inside looking out, Jeremy as big as a giant.

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
Mommy?

DANA  
Yes?

JEREMY  
Are you and Daddy going to have  
another baby?

We switch to a second window for Dana's CLOSE UP.

DANA  
Does your Daddy tell you that too?

Jeremy cocks his head, inspecting their work critically.

JEREMY  
I think sometimes maybe I'd like...  
a sister.

DANA  
You would?

JEREMY  
Sometimes.

He clicks the last box into place.

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
But not littler than me.  
(beat)  
Bigger.

Jeremy's attention is now on the tiny "trees" that decorate the foam base. Dana's attention is nowhere else but Jeremy.

DANA  
Bigger?

JEREMY  
Mm-hm. And she has hair that's black.

DANA  
Black.

JEREMY  
Mm-hm. And curly. Curly hair that's black.

Dana puts a hand on the floor to steady herself. Then, when she trusts herself to speak -

DANA  
Jeremy -

DAVID (O.S.)  
Babe.

She FLINCHES, turns. David's got his head around the door.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Ben says he needs to talk to you.

Dana turns back to Jeremy. He's already moving a couple of Mutant Ninja Turtles into their fancy prefab dollhouse.

JEREMY  
(*"Turtle" voices*)  
*Welcome home! Oh I hope they put the boxes in the right rooms...*

DAVID  
Babe? He said it's important.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARAPET - MINUTES LATER

CLOSE ON Dana taking a deep drag... Fuck that's good.

Reveal she's sitting up on the new pitch next to Ben, smoking and staring out at the view. It's another scorcher today, and the mood up here is slow and thick. And tense. And private.

BEN  
Hottest June on record...  
(beat)  
You putting in AC?

No response. Maybe she didn't hear. But then -

DANA  
I'd rather sweat it out than start  
dropping ceilings.

BEN  
Purist, huh?  
(shaking his head)  
You'll change your mind... June's a  
bitch. But July's her mama.

Ben shoots her one of his sideways specials.

BEN (CONT'D)  
He called me, you know. He called  
me looking for you.

DANA  
I know.

BEN  
So where'd you get off to?

DANA  
Nowhere. Just taking a walk.

BEN  
Must've been a long walk.

DANA  
I needed to stretch my legs.

BEN  
(sighing dramatically)  
Hope he appreciates all this.

Now it's Dana's turn to shoot looks.

BEN (CONT'D)  
I said I hope he appreciates all  
this.

DANA

Who?

BEN

Your husband. I hope he appreciates what you're doing for him.

DANA

And what am I doing for him, Mr. Phipps?

BEN

This.

He makes a sweeping gesture.

BEN (CONT'D)

All this... Leaving the city...  
Buying the old house in the  
country... You fixing it up... So  
what? So you can throw some big  
family dinners, everybody gathered  
around the table, eating vegetables  
you grew out back...

(knowing)

Isn't that the plan?

Dana takes an extra long drag.

DANA

Or something.

BEN

Or something.

DANA

(beat)

Are you married, Mr. Phipps?

BEN

Nope.

DANA

Any children?

BEN

Nope.

DANA

Is there anyone in your life -  
anyone at all - whose happiness  
comes before your own?

BEN

Nope. You jealous?

Dana looks his way, taking in the damp circles on his thin cotton T-shirt, the snug work jeans with the frayed edges.

DANA  
I feel sorry for you.

BEN  
I can work with 'sorry.' Sorry's a start.

DANA  
Too bad we're almost finished.

She gets up to go and he grabs her arm. Nice and firm.

BEN  
We don't have to be.  
(beat)  
We're both adults.

Dana could easily break his grip... But she doesn't.

DANA  
Please let me go.

BEN  
There's a reason you're not down in the kitchen baking pies right now. There's a reason you're up on the roof sneaking a smoke with me. And it's not 'cause I'm great company...

She can feel the warmth of his large hand, the calloused thumb gently grazing her skin.

BEN (CONT'D)  
I go where I want and I see who I want... when I want. No promises, no strings, no expectations. Doesn't have to be complicated, doesn't have to get messy. It just has to feel good. And when it stops feeling good... we'll stop.  
(beat)  
So what do you say?

OFF Dana, still not pulling away.

SMASH CUT TO:

CLOSE ON Dana, eyes closed, mouth open, riding hard...

PAN DOWN SLOWLY TO... to David, of course, gazing up at her with an expression caught somewhere between worship and worry. Eventually he gives in, closing his eyes as well...

DAVID  
Oh god... Oh god...

They're in bed, sitting upright, same as last time...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Oh Jesus... I love you, Dana... I  
love you so much...

...until she shoves him backwards, away from her, down onto the mattress... David tries to get up but she keeps him pinned... After a moment he surrenders, watching from a distance as his wife gets wherever it is she needs to go...

CLOSE ON Dana, maybe thinking about David, maybe not.

CLOSE ON David, definitely thinking about Dana.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM

**DRIP, DRIP, DRIP...**

CLOSE ON droplets falling from the spigot into a full tub. Reveal Dana at the other end, submerged up to her shoulders, hair in a knot. She looks relaxed... Like a corpse...

**BEGIN MONTAGE**

**Jeremy waiting at the kitchen table. David enters frame with a bowl of cereal. Cream of wheat. With plenty of raisins.**

**DAVID  
Breakfast is served...**

Dana reaches for a loofah, starts scrubbing her long neck...

**Jeremy coloring on the floor in the library. David's at his desk a few feet away, working on his laptop.**

Dana's got a leg up on the side of the tub now, making slow circles on her calf with the loofah...

**Jeremy standing in an aisle at the general store. He pulls a box of Twinkies from the shelf, puts it in the cart. Reveal David behind it, going over his list. Without looking up -**

**DAVID (CONT'D)  
Put that back, please.**

Leg now covered in foam, Dana drags a pink disposable razor from her ankle up to her calf...

**David unpacking groceries in the kitchen. Jeremy's at the table, legs swinging, eating a thick ham sandwich for lunch.**

Finished with her legs, Dana lifts one arm out of the water, starts dragging the razor over the wet skin...

David and Jeremy tossing a Nerf ball around on the lawn. David sends it up high and Jeremy runs after it, YELLING.

Dana carefully pulls the razor from her elbow up to her wrist, scraping it across the soft skin she finds there...

David and Jeremy sitting on the back steps, shucking fresh corn as the sun goes down.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
And be careful you get all the stringy stuff...

Dana turns her hand so it's palm up, raking the razor over the popped veins on her wrist... Then again... And again...

Nighttime. David and Jeremy are on the couch in the living room, watching TV and unwrapping their Twinkies for dessert.

It's almost like the razor's moving of its own accord...

David's still on the couch but Jeremy's now lying on the floor in front of him. David's got his feet on the boy's belly, tickling him with his toes.

JEREMY  
NOOOO... DON'T... STOP!

David stops.

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
NOW DO IT AGAIN!

David does it again. Jeremy SQUEALS, delighted.

CLOSE ON the razor, now pressing down slightly...

David tucking Jeremy in, giving him a good night kiss.

DAVID  
Sleep tight, peanut.

CLOSE ON Dana, looking fascinated... Baffled... Beautiful...

David closing Jeremy's door, starting down the hall...

CLOSE ON the razor, pressing down harder, the skin around it turning pink...

Entering their bedroom...

CLOSE ON Dana, lifting her eyes from her wrist...

Crossing to the bathroom...

CLOSE ON Dana, turning her head, and LOOKING DIRECTLY INTO CAMERA...

**Reaching for the knob...**

CLOSE ON Dana, still STARING INTO CAMERA... THEN SWIVEL AROUND TO REVEAL THE LITTLE GIRL IN THE YELLOW DRESS STARING BACK AT HER...

**Opening the door...**

David finds his wife standing at the sink, wrapped in a white towel, lathering her wrists and hands with lotion.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Jules and Teddy are coming tomorrow. They said they'd be here around five.  
(beat)  
Just wanted to remind you.

DANA  
Do you think I could get a little privacy, David? Or is that too much to ask?

Then she WHIPS the door shut in his face. BANG.

CUT TO BLACK

WOMAN (V.O.)  
No, it's embarrassing. Because my handwriting's gone to shit.

INT. KITCHEN - DUSK - THE NEXT DAY

We find David dressed in nice khakis and a red polo, busily prepping dinner while his guests stand around enjoying some chilled white wine.

Meet JULES (wearing "weekend in the country" as dictated by Barney's) and her husband TEDDY (wearing whatever's been dictated by Jules).

JULES  
Oops! Sorry, Jeremy! Potty mouth!

Reveal Jeremy by himself at the table, eating dinner early.

JULES (CONT'D)  
Anywho, if I want to send my Nana a letter it literally takes me three cards and five envelopes because I keep making mistakes! So there I am tearing up all this stationery -

TEDDY  
(to David)  
Expensive stationery.

JULES  
Vintage 'Mrs. John L. Strong' -

TEDDY  
I got it for her last Christmas.

JULES  
Which was very sweet -

TEDDY  
Just a stocking stuffer.

JULES  
And very thoughtful -

TEDDY  
It's the little things.

JULES  
Even if I did tell you exactly what  
to get. And where.

TEDDY  
Anywho. You were saying.

JULES  
Anywho. I was saying and the whole  
time I'm thinking I have got to get  
Nana online because my wrist is  
killing me and this shit is not  
cheap... Sorry, Jeremy!  
(to David, "ashamed")  
I did it again.

David checks something on the stove, glances out the window.

DAVID  
That's too funny, Jules...

He pulls a pair of Cornish Game Hens out of the oven, starts  
wrapping legs and wing tips in tinfoil to prevent scorching.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
That's too funny.

David's going for "upbeat" but he's obviously distracted  
tonight. Worried. Jules and Teddy share a look.

TEDDY  
So... where is Dana exactly?

JULES  
Teddy.

TEDDY

Jules.

DAVID

No, it's fine... It's fine. She said she had to go into town for something. I think she wanted to get something special for dinner.

JULES

She shouldn't have gone to any trouble, David...

TEDDY

Buddy, we could've picked something up on the way...

DAVID

I said it's fine. She insisted. And she'll be back any second...

David slides the birds back in the oven.

DAVID (CONT'D)

There! Done! Alright! Now...  
(turning to his guests)  
Who needs topping off?

Jules and Teddy quickly gulp what's left in their glasses, hold them out.

JULES & TEDDY

Please.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

David's at the head of the table, his guests on either side. Dinner's over, Jeremy's asleep, and still no Dana. David checks his watch, no longer bothering to hide his concern.

TEDDY

She must have a cell phone, right?

DAVID

She doesn't keep it with her.

JULES

Maybe we should start cleaning up.

But no one moves. Another awkward beat... then headlights SWEEP across the dining room windows. Jules starts to rise.

DAVID

Stay where you are.

We hear the back door open. David gets up, leaves the room. Teddy reaches for the bottle. The following is sotto.

TEDDY

Jesus H.

JULES

I can't even.

TEDDY

What is going on?

JULES

This is beyond. Beyond.

They fall silent, listening to the sound of hushed, angry voices coming from the kitchen. Suddenly there's an enormous CRASH... Then Dana enters in a WHIRL, eyes shining. Wired. David trails behind, fuming.

DANA

Sorry I'm late! Please forgive me... No please - sit! SIT!

Jules and Teddy had risen to greet her but Dana avoids them both, taking a seat at the end of the table opposite David.

DANA (CONT'D)

It took me forever to find what I was looking for... But I guess that's life in a small town! A very, very, very small town. As far from civilization as David could manage... right, David? No big city conveniences for us!

(winking at Jules)

No distractions either. Just peace and fucking quiet... Sorry to keep you guys waiting!

JULES

It's alright, Dana.

DANA

I'm sure it was.

JULES

It's great to see you.

DANA

Is it?

(looking away)

Your wife's not much of an actress, Teddy.

(then)

How were the Game Hens?

TEDDY

Uh... tasty. Very tasty.

DANA

Good! Because David's cooking can be a little heavy on the salt...

Another wink -

DANA (CONT'D)

And the estrogen.

DAVID

Dana, you're being rude.

DANA

Sorry! I was trying to be funny.  
(to Jules)  
I forgot - David's the funny one.  
Which makes me the not funny one.  
I'm not funny at all, am I, David?

DAVID

Not tonight.

JULES

How are you doing, Dana?

DANA

I don't know how I'm doing, Jules.

Calling down to the other end of the table -

DANA (CONT'D)

David? How am I doing?  
(back to Jules)  
You know I think my husband would say I'm not a hundred percent. Maybe ninety-eight? I've got my ups and downs, my good days and my bad. Know what I mean?

TEDDY

They say moving can be just as traumatic as divorce. Or a death.

JULES

(blanching)  
Teddy...

DANA

Is that what they say?

TEDDY

It's just... something I've heard.

JULES

Teddy.

DANA

No that's nice to hear, Teddy. It's nice to get a fresh perspective on the situation. Thank you. Because out here - in the sticks - that can be hard to come by. I swear there are days when it's like there's only one opinion echoing around in my head... and I'm not entirely convinced it's my own.

(leaning in to Jules)

I can't speak for David, although he does speak for me, but moving has been a little like a death -

DAVID

Babe.

DANA

Now who's being rude? It's not polite to interrupt people, David. Must have missed that day at finishing school.

(then)

To answer your question, Jules, I'd say this move has been a lot like a death, now that your husband mentions it.

(to Teddy)

So. Insightful.

(then)

Which reminds me - would everyone excuse me for a second?

She rises, heads back to the kitchen. Jules and Teddy look to David, but he can only stare at his plate, mortified.

JULES

(to David, sotto)

Maybe we should go.

DANA (O.S.)

STAY RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE, JULES!  
It's time for dessert! No one's going anywhere before dessert...

Between the BANG of drawers opening and closing -

JULES

David...

DAVID

Don't.

CLOSE ON a tiny flame... Then WIDEN to reveal a big white layer cake with six yellow candles and "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" in red frosting... Then KEEP WIDENING to reveal Dana, carrying it carefully from the kitchen out into the dining room...

JULES

Oh my god...

DAVID

Dana...

DANA

Don't bother singing 'Happy Birthday.' She can't hear you.

Dana walks the cake down to her end, sets it on the table.

DANA (CONT'D)

Or maybe she can! Who's to say?

She looks up to the ceiling, eyes sly and mischievous.

DANA (CONT'D)

Catherine? Are you listening? Are you with us, baby?

DAVID

Alright, Dana, just stop it!

DANA

Stop what, David?

DAVID

You KNOW what!

DANA

Stop WHAT, David? Spit it out!

DAVID

There is no excuse for this, Dana... NO EXCUSE!

DANA

Oh come on - what's a birthday party without a birthday cake?

Gesturing to Jules and Teddy -

DANA (CONT'D)

Isn't that why they're here? Isn't that why you asked them to come all this way on this one day out of all possible days they could have come?

JULES

Dana, we came because we were worried about you.

DANA

You came to see how far I've fallen. You came to see exactly how fucked up I am so you can go back to our friends and tell them how fucked up I am. How fucked up I still am.

DAVID

Dana, please... I'm begging you. Stop this.

DANA

No. No one forced them to come up here, David... No one forced your lock-jawed bitch of an ex-girlfriend and her inflatable fucking husband with his wandering fucking hands to come up here and sit at our table and eat our food on the exact fucking day our daughter was born six years ago!

She reveals a long-handled knife, points it at their guests.

DANA (CONT'D)

You chose to come here on Catherine's birthday... And we are going to celebrate Catherine's birthday...

David bolts from his chair.

DAVID

No!

DANA

Sit down, David! Let me cut you a slice!

DAVID

I SAID NO! I'm not going to let you put them through this, Dana!

He reaches her end of the table, grabbing for the knife.

DAVID (CONT'D)

You're not gonna put ME through this!

DANA

JUST LET ME CUT THE CAKE!

DAVID

I SAID NO! NO! GIVE IT TO ME!

After the briefest of struggles -

DANA  
Fine! Then TAKE IT!

David quickly retreats with the knife. Jules and Teddy move to join him, leaving Dana alone on her side of the room.

DANA (CONT'D)  
TAKE IT! And take this too...

Then she FLIPS the cake down the table...

DANA (CONT'D)  
TAKE ALL OF IT...

Then she starts on the plates and the serving dishes...

DANA (CONT'D)  
THIS is yours and THIS is yours...

The bottles and the glasses...

DANA (CONT'D)  
And THIS... And THIS...

Everything within reach...

DANA (CONT'D)  
AND THIS AND THIS AND THIS!

Crystal and china SHATTER against the walls and CLATTER to the floor as she SWEEPS the table clean...

DANA (CONT'D)  
TAKE IT BACK! TAKE IT ALL BACK!

Then, her voice low and scratchy -

DANA (CONT'D)  
I can't stop you, David... I can't stop you. I can't say no. No one can say no to you, babe...

Spent, Dana slouches against the table and finds her way to the floor, plopping down among the ruins of the meal...

DANA (CONT'D)  
I think... I think it's a blessing. I think it's a blessing she died when she did...  
(face splitting)  
But three months... Three months... That's ninety days... But I guess that was old enough, you know? Old enough to know she wanted no part of this... No part. So... she just... stopped. She just stopped breathing...

Bewildered, broken -

DANA (CONT'D)

It sounds so simple, doesn't it?  
Like you can just... not. Just make  
a choice... and not. 'No thank you.  
No more. Enough.'

(then)

And sometimes... and sometimes it  
feels like all the time... I envy  
her... You know?

A small noise as Jeremy toddles in, looking frightened.

DANA (CONT'D)

Hey, peanut! Hey, little guy...

David goes to the boy, takes him in his arms.

DANA (CONT'D)

Did we wake you? Did we wake you  
up?

Dana tries to get up, can't. Slumps back down instead.

DANA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry... Sorry, peanut. Mommy's  
sorry... And Mommy's tired. Mommy's  
so goddamn tired...

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT - LATER

WIDE ON a sporty-looking Range Rover taking off down the  
drive. So much for Jules and Teddy.

OVER THIS we hear the sound of the front door closing...

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

WIDE ON Dana, cleaning up the mess piece by piece. David  
walks in from the entry, still holding Jeremy, now asleep.

DANA

(beat)

David... David, don't -

DAVID

When you're finished in here...

CLOSE ON the yellow box as he sets it down on the table.

DAVID (CONT'D)

...you can take care of this.

Dana GAGS, stifling an urge to vomit.

DANA  
Oh... Oh god...

DAVID  
I found it this afternoon. It was  
all taped up. And I thought -

DANA  
David -

DAVID  
At first I thought maybe we'd  
forgotten to unpack it. Thrown a  
box away by mistake. But it wasn't  
a mistake. Was it.

That's when she loses the battle, PUKING on the rug. David  
waits for the retching to die down a little, then resumes.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
I want it out of the house before  
Jeremy gets up tomorrow. And I  
don't mean back in the trash pile.

DANA  
What... What do you expect me to do  
with it?

DAVID  
Everything you'll need is already  
waiting for you by the back steps.

David turns, heads for the stairs. Over his shoulder -

DAVID (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Just get it done.

CUT TO:

EXT. ORCHARD - NIGHT - LATER

CLOSE ON a red flashlight bobbing along... Then WIDEN to  
reveal Dana rushing headlong down the path, awkwardly  
carrying the box, a pair of work gloves, and a shovel.

DANA  
He's right, you know... It's for  
the best...

Staggering forward, eyes front -

DANA (CONT'D)  
It's all for the best...

Coming to a stop, setting the box on the ground -

DANA (CONT'D)  
You'll see...

Carrying the shovel to a nearby spot -

DANA (CONT'D)  
Both of you...

HER P.O.V.: Laura's grave.

DANA (CONT'D)  
I brought you someone to play with!  
(putting on the gloves)  
Now you won't be so lonely out  
here... Now you won't be so afraid  
at night!

CUT TO the shovel STRIKING the earth, DIGGING deep as Dana starts working her way down through the soil...

**BEGIN MONTAGE** as the hours pass, the hole growing larger, Dana HEFTING shovelfuls out and to the side, out and to the side, out and to the side... MUMBLING all the while...

Then THUNK... The sound loud and hollow and horrible...

DANA (CONT'D)  
There you are.

She drops to her knees, SCRATCHING at the earth, not stopping until the old pine lid is revealed...

Dana grabs the shovel and starts STABBING at it, eventually making a hole big enough to BREAK apart with her hands...

She climbs out, picks up the box...

DANA (CONT'D)  
Come on, Rascal - you little shit -  
I've got someone I'd like you to  
meet...

Then she climbs back in, hunkering down, one knee on either side of the busted coffin lid...

DANA (CONT'D)  
Something tells me the two of you  
are going to get along just fine...  
(a dark chuckle)  
Call it a hunch.

Hands buzzing with adrenaline, Dana aims the flashlight into the hole, illuminating the sad pile of bones lying within...

Then she GASPS in horror...

**DANA'S P.O.V.: THE LITTLE GIRL'S SKULL... IT'S HIDEOUSLY ENLARGED... A GRISLY MOONSCAPE OF CRATERS AND BULGES... A BLOATED MUSHROOM SHINING PALELY IN THE FLASHLIGHT'S BEAM...**

**SMASH CUT TO:**

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE - MORNING

Except for the sounds of nature it's quiet. Peaceful.

WIDE ON a police car and a coroner's van, lights swirling silently, parked as close to the open gate as they can get.

EXT. ORCHARD - CONTINUOUS

OVERHEAD SHOT of Dana and David standing at the edge of the hole, Dana huddling in the crook of David's arm. WIDEN to reveal two police officers and the county coroner doing their thing, gingerly lifting the coffin up and out of the grave.

DAVID (V.O.)

'On the sixth day the squirrels came again for the last time. They brought a new-laid egg in a little rush basket, a parting present for the old owl...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BATHROOM

OVERHEAD SHOT of water, swirling down a drain...

DAVID (V.O.)

But Nutkin ran in front, laughing and shouting...

Dana pulls back the curtain in the white bathroom...

DAVID (V.O.)

Now the old owl took an interest in eggs, but still he did not speak...

She covers herself, steps down out of the tub...

DAVID (V.O.)

Nutkin danced up and down like a sunbeam, but still the owl said nothing...

Then she collapses to the floor, dropping out of frame...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JEREMY'S BEDROOM - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

Jeremy and Dana are curled up in his red bed, Dana holding the boy close. She's now showered and scrubbed, looking a lot fresher than she did this morning at Laura's grave.

DAVID (O.S.)

Then Nutkin made a whirring noise to sound like the wind, and took a running jump right onto the head of the old owl!

Reveal David in a rocking chair next to the bed, reading aloud from The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin by Beatrix Potter.

DAVID (CONT'D)

There was a flutterment! And a scufflement! And a loud *Squeak!* The other squirrels scuttered away into the bushes! But Nutkin - '

DANA

David. I think he's asleep.

David looks up, sees Jeremy out like a light. Smiles.

DAVID

Perfect timing. We were almost at the scary part.

DANA

Yes. We were.

They share a long look, listening to the rumble of their son's breath going in and out... in and out... Then Dana closes her eyes... and goes to sleep.

INT. JEREMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - LATER

She wakes up in Jeremy's bed. In the dark. Alone. David and the boy are gone and the house is quiet. Dana rises, goes to the door, puts an ear against it, listening...

Silence.

Hoping against hope there's nothing waiting for her on the other side, she cautiously opens the door...

And finds the hallway transformed...

**HER P.O.V.: Gas lamps and potted ferns, needlepoint runners and somber landscapes in heavy gilt frames, everything fussy and crowded in the late Victorian style...**

Dana walks down the hall as if in a dream, unable to accept but powerless to resist... She goes to the railing, looks down, and sees both oil portraits back where they belong...

CLOSE ON Mrs. Blacker... Looking sad... Withdrawn...

CLOSE ON the Judge... So cold... Sinister...

Another beat... Then Dana's eyes lift to the ceiling...

INT. ATTIC STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

She ascends in the dark, one hand on the wall to guide her, pausing at the top to GAPE at the mountains of furniture and trunks now piled everywhere...

Across the attic proper, she can make out a thread of light around the edges of the door to the little room...

WIDE ON Dana, zigzagging through the stacks, slowly making her way toward it...

INT. ATTIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON a plate of soft foods... A silver spoon enters frame, scoops a small portion... THEN WE PAN UP TO A LOVELY FACE LOOKING RIGHT INTO CAMERA... TO MRS. BLACKER...

She holds the spoon out to us, offering...

HER P.O.V.: LAURA, WEARING HER FAVORITE YELLOW PARTY DRESS, SITTING IN HER ROCKING CHAIR BY THE WINDOW...

THIS IS THE FIRST AND ONLY TIME WE SEE THE LITTLE GIRL AS SHE TRULY WAS, IN THE FULL MISERABLE BLOOM OF HER DISEASE...

SKULL LUMPED AND DISTENDED, HEAD BALD EXCEPT FOR A FEW ROPES OF GREASY BLACK HAIR, HER FOREHEAD IS SO MASSIVELY MISSHAPEN SHE CAN ONLY SEE OUT OF ONE EYE...

Laura leans TOWARD CAMERA, awkwardly wrapping her lips around the proffered spoon... She makes an effort to chew quietly, the way she's been taught, eager for her mother's approval...

WIDE ON mother and daughter, bathed in candlelight, locked in their ancient routine... THEN SWIVEL AROUND TO REVEAL DANA AT THE DOOR, TAKING IN THE WRETCHED SCENE...

Mrs. Blacker wipes the corners of Laura's mouth, offers the girl some water to wash the food down... Laura accepts, her usable eye blinking slowly and deliberately...

Dinner over, Mrs. Blacker returns the food and drink to a tray as Laura turns back to the window, beginning to rock and hum quietly to herself...

CLOSE ON Mrs. Blacker, rising behind the chair, gazing down at her little girl with a placid, patient expression...

PAN DOWN to Laura, rocking and humming, belly full, staring out at the world beyond the glass...

Then PAN BACK UP to Mrs. Blacker, HOLDING A CLAW HAMMER HIGH, AND BRINGING IT DOWN WITHOUT HESITATION...

AS DANA OPENS HER MOUTH WIDE WE...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

David wakes to the sound of a blood-curdling SCREAM...

Reveal Jeremy in bed next to him. David checks to make sure the boy's still asleep, then gets up, goes to the door...

And finds the hallway just as it should be...

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

He goes to the railing, peers down into the shadows below...

DAVID

Dana?

Another beat... Then David's eyes lift to the ceiling...

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

David moves toward us down the hall, checking every room...

DAVID

DANA?

Then another SCREAM comes spiraling down from overhead...

INT. ATTIC STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

He VAULTS up the last few steps, SPRINTING across the attic proper, RACING toward the door to the little room...

INT. ATTIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

David comes BURSTING in and then SLOWS... aghast...

DAVID'S P.O.V.: DANA, CROUCHED BENEATH THE WINDOW, WAILING  
AND SCRATCHING AT THE WALLS, FINGERS A HASH OF BLOOD AND  
SPLINTERS, STARING AT SOMETHING ONLY SHE CAN SEE...

DAVID

Dana!

He goes to her, reaching for her, doing what he can...

DAVID (CONT'D)

Dana, what's wrong? What's the  
matter?

DANA

Sh-sh-sh...

DAVID

What is it? What is it?

DANA

She-she-she... SHE'S DEAD!

David forces her to look at him, to see him...

DAVID

Yes and she's gone! Laura's gone  
now! They took her away! It's over!

DANA

NO -

DAVID

Yes! We know what happened now and  
it's over... IT'S ALL OVER!

DANA

No no no no no no NO!

Eyes bulging, rolling in her head -

DANA (CONT'D)

I was there... I was there...

DAVID

What do you mean?

DANA

It was me... It was me...

DAVID

Dana -

DANA

IT WAS ME IT WAS ME IT WAS ME...

DAVID

Dana, what are you talking about?

DANA  
I killed her... I KILLED HER!

DAVID  
Who?

DANA  
(gasping)  
CATHERINE!

David shakes his head, stunned.

DAVID  
Dana... Catherine died of SIDS - of  
crib death - six years ago!

DANA  
No...

DAVID  
She just stopped breathing! Just  
like you said... It was no one's  
fault! It was no one's fault!

DANA  
No, it was me... IT WAS ME...

Then, an anguished SCREAM -

DANA (CONT'D)  
I KILLED OUR BABY!

**FLASHBACK: A PAIR OF HANDS, FOLDING AND TAPING AND TUCKING,  
WRAPPING AND PACKAGING SOMETHING WE CAN'T QUITE SEE...**

DANA (V.O.)  
I waited until you went out... So I  
could be alone...

**THE HANDS STOP, FINISHED...**

DANA (V.O.)  
So we could be alone...

**AND WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL A WHITE BABY CRIB... COMPLETELY  
ENCASED IN PLASTIC WRAP...**

DANA (V.O.)  
And then I did it...

**A FACE LOWERS INTO FRAME, HOVERING OVER THE CRIB... IT'S  
DANA, LOOKING DOWN THROUGH THE LAYERS TO WHAT LIES WITHIN...**

DANA (V.O.)  
I had to...

WIDE ON DANA DRESSED IN A PALE YELLOW BLOUSE AND SLACKS,  
LEANING OVER WHAT LOOKS LIKE A LARGE, PLASTIC-WRAPPED BOX...

DANA (V.O.)  
I never wanted that baby... Any  
baby... Never...

CLOSE ON A TINY FIST OPENING AND CLOSING, FINGERS MOVING MORE  
AND MORE SLOWLY...

DANA (V.O.)  
It was me or her... And I wanted to  
live... I had to survive...

CLOSE ON DANA KISSING HER FINGERTIPS, PRESSING THEM TO THE  
PLASTIC, SILENTLY SAYING GOOD-BYE...

DANA (V.O.)  
I didn't know...

CUT TO DANA ENTERING THEIR OLD APARTMENT'S WHITE BATHROOM...

DANA (V.O.)  
I didn't know I was killing us  
both...

CLIMBING INTO THE SHOWER, STILL FULLY DRESSED...

DANA (V.O.)  
Every day...

STANDING UNDER THE SPRAY, STARTING TO REMOVE HER CLOTHES...

DANA (V.O.)  
Minute...

PULLING BACK THE CURTAIN...

DANA (V.O.)  
Second...

REACHING FOR A WHITE TOWEL...

DANA (V.O.)  
It's all I think about... all I'll  
ever think about...

THEN DROPPING TO THE FLOOR...

DANA (V.O.)  
Forever... And ever...

Back to Dana in the here and now, looking up into David's  
eyes, teetering on the edge... All it would take is a word...

DANA  
David... OH DAVID, SAY SOMETHING!

An eternal beat... Then -

                          DAVID  
I know.

                          DANA  
What?

                          DAVID  
I know.

                          DANA  
I... I don't... I don't -

                          DAVID  
Dana, I've known all along.

SHUDDERING, Dana tries to pull away, but David won't let her... Suddenly his hands are so strong... Like a wise...

                          DAVID (CONT'D)  
Yes, I went out that night... but I  
only went around the block...

**FLASHBACK: DANA WITH HER BACK TO US, WRAPPING THE CRIB IN PLASTIC...**

                          DAVID (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I just had a feeling... I just  
knew...

**SWIVEL AROUND TO THE BEDROOM DOOR, OPEN JUST A CRACK...**

                          DAVID (V.O.)  
And there you were... in  
Catherine's room...

**PUSH IN ON THE THIN STRIP OF SHADOW BETWEEN THE DOOR AND THE DOOR JAMB...**

                          DAVID (V.O.)  
I saw you, Dana...

**AND THEN KEEP PUSHING, UNTIL WE SEE THE WHITES OF A SINGLE STARING EYE...**

                          DAVID (V.O.)  
I saw everything...

Back to David in the here and now...

                          DAVID  
I saw you... And I forgave you.  
(smiling)  
I see you... And I forgive you.

CLOSE ON Dana... Staggered... Horried...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
I love you, babe.  
(simply)  
I always will.

And then whatever thread she was gripping tight SNAPS...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Dana. Oh Dana, don't cry! Oh my  
sweet, sweet Dana... My sweet  
little girl...

David wraps himself around her, cooing and cradling...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
It's alright... It's alright! I  
won't let them take you... I'll  
never let them take you...

He rocks and he strokes, he kisses and caresses, Dana's mind  
and mouth unhinging in a silent HOWL...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Hey - who's my baby girl, huh?  
Who's my sweet baby girl?

AS WE SLOWLY START TO PULL BACK...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
You are! Yes, you are... You're my  
sweet baby girl... And I'll always  
keep you safe... Always...  
(beat)  
Promise.

SLOW FADE OUT:

**A SERIES OF SHOTS**

Jeremy yawning, waking up alone in his parents' bed...

Running out into the hall and down to his room, finding his  
favorite red sweater, pulling it on... Rushing downstairs...  
Wolfing a waffle at the kitchen table...

Getting bundled into his puffy coat and hat by the back door,  
David making sure he's got his yellow mittens on tight...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Now you'd better stay in the  
backyard this time.

JEREMY  
I will.

DAVID  
Pinky swear?

Jeremy holds up mittened hands. No pinkies!

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Too late! Alright. Have fun.

Jeremy skipping down the back steps PAST CAMERA... WE FOLLOW HIM to reveal the backyard is now blanketed with snow...

Jeremy choosing a prime spot, then falling backward, arms outstretched, smiling a huge grinny-grin-grin...

David in the kitchen, preparing a tray of food... He drops a red poinsettia into a small vase, sets it on the tray...

David climbing the stairs, a thick coil of holiday evergreen looped around the bannister...

David moving away from us down the second floor hallway... Coming toward us down the third floor hallway... Climbing the stairs to the attic... Crossing the attic proper...

He reaches the door to the little room, balances the tray on one hip, feeling around in his pocket...

CLOSE ON the old key entering the lock...

CLOSE ON the blackened knob turning under his hand...

UNKNOWN P.O.V.: We're on the far side of the attic, watching from a distance as the door opens and David steps inside...

Reveal the attic room, transformed... Cleaned and furnished, made comfortable, with a rag rug, an old iron bed piled with quilts, and a space heater to keep things toasty...

And there's Dana in her rocking chair by the window, looking out at the view...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Babe? Breakfast.

She turns her head toward us, eyes listless, face slack...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Now don't give me that look. It's gonna be delicious! Scrambled eggs with cream cheese!

David sits on a stool across from her, tray on his lap...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Here we go... Babe? Open up.

When she drops her jaw he spoons some egg into her mouth, accidentally spilling a few crumbs onto her sweater...

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Oops! Uh-oh... I am makin' a mess!

He dabs at her sweater with a napkin, and it's then we notice her swollen stomach...

She's pregnant.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
There. Like it never happened.

There's a sudden NOISE outside... Dana turns back to the window, leaning close to look down onto the yard below...

DANA'S P.O.V.: A circle of snow angels, Jeremy standing dead center, waving up at her...

JEREMY  
MOMMY! MOMMY, LOOK!

Pointing to his handiwork, proud...

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
I MADE IT! I MADE THIS!

He waves again... And after a moment she waves back...

Then Dana watches her son run laughing toward the orchard, toward a small figure waiting at the gate, standing patiently in the snow, feet bare...

IT'S THE LITTLE GIRL IN THE YELLOW DRESS... HER FACE PALE AND HEARTBREAKINGLY BEAUTIFUL, FRAMED BY THICK BLACK CURLS...

THE GIRL LIFTS HER GAZE TO THE ATTIC WINDOW, LOCKS EYES WITH THE WOMAN BEHIND THE GLASS... THEN SHE RAISES HER HAND TOO...

AND WAVES.

WE WINK TO BLACK.

THE END