

THE HANDMAID'S TALE

a screenplay

by

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adapted from the novel by

Margaret Atwood

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NOTE:

This story takes place 'a few years from now', but the aim is not to show a 'futuristic' world. Apart from some special elements - the clothes, for instance - appearances are in the main familiar. It is the customs which have changed.

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HANDMAID STUDENTS wear plain oatmeal dresses.

HANDMAIDS are dressed in red ankle length dresses and white headdresses.

AUNTS are supervisors in charge of the Handmaids and are dressed in brown.

THE WIVES wear blue.

MARTHAS are house servants and wear dull green.

GUARDIANS are the civil police and wear uniform.

THE EYES are the Secret Service and wear plain clothes.

ECONOWIVES and men, who have not been given women, wear striped dresses red and blue and green.

1. INT. HANDMAID'S CENTER. GYMNASIUM. NIGHT

Faces of women, heads flat on army bunks, turned sideways, watching each other's mouth in the dark, lipreading.

VOICES
(from bed to bed)

What's your name?

Janine...

Dolores ...

Alma...

June ...

Moirra...

Kate...

The murmur stops.

A woman dressed in brown walks down the alley. Her flashlight illuminates faces for a moment. An electric cattle prod on her belt.

Varnished wooden walls and floor. Large windows. More female guards patrol on the balcony. Basketball hoops. No nets.

Kate looks around. From a bad tape, with lots of scratches and interference is heard.

KATE (V.O.)

We slept in what had once been a
gymnasium. I could smell the scent
of sweat, the taint of chewing gum
and perfume from watching girls.
Dances would have been held here.

Distant music lingers, a blending of sounds, style upon style, an undercurrent of drums. Kate lies, eyes open.

FLASH

Luke and Kate dancing.

High angle on the bunks. A hundred women asleep.

KATE (V.O.)

There was old sex in the room and
loneliness, and expectation, of
something without a shape or name:
I remember that yearning, for something
that was always about to happen. We
yearned for the future.

Pan to the balcony,

Guards with machine guns patrol outside the window.

3. EXT. SNOWY HILLS. DAY.

An empty valley.

A billboard with a torn poster: Fly American Airlines.

A Volkswagen drives across the valley and stops at the edge of a pine wood.

Caption over this:

A FEW YEARS FROM NOW.

In long shot, a man, woman and child (Luke, Kate and Jill, aged five) get out of the car.

Luke and Kate put on skis. They are carrying rucksacks. Kate is carrying Jill's skis. Luke hoists Jill up onto his back. They walk into the wood.

4. EXT. THE WOOD. DAY.

Luke and Kate trudging through the wood.

5. TELEVISION MONITOR. LONG LENS SHOT

The family glimpsed at the edge of the wood, between trees. Luke attaches Jill's skis to her feet.

6. GILEAD, BORDER PATROL CONTROL ROOM

Patrolmen stands monitoring the screens. Shots of the border,
Fortified with watchtowers, radar , electric wire.

7. FROM HELICOPTER AT HIGH SPEED: EDGE OF THE WOOD

Luke, Kate and Jill (4-5) come out of the wood and stand for a moment
on the ridge of the deep valley.

A sudden voice booms across the valley.

VOICE

This is Border Patrol. This
is Border Patrol.

Luke and Kate pull Jill back into the wood.

You are approaching the border
of the Republic of Gilead. You
are not permitted to go any closer
to the border. Turn back.

8. PATROLMAN WITH MEGAPHONE IN HELICOPTER

PATROLMAN

Turn back.

9. TREES THROUGH BINOCULARS FROM ABOVE

Luke and Kate glimpsed.

PATROLMAN'S VOICE

If you proceed any further down
that hill, we will shoot. Turn back.

Luke suddenly comes out of the wood and begins to ski down the
left side of the valley.

10. HEIGHTS

A Skimobile with two patrolmen glides out of the wood. The skimobile
goes into gear and sets off after him. The first patrolman stands with
a rifle.

11. KATE AND JILL ON THE RIDGE

In the background Luke skiing down the hill, the skimobile in pursuit.

Kate and Jill ski down the right side of the valley.

LUKE SKIING

KATE SKIING

A shot rings out. Kate's head jerks round. She loses her balance, twists
and falls.

Jill glides, slows, and stops, looking back up the hill.

LUKE'S BODY

Blood on the snow. Luke is dead.

The Patrolman turns and looks across the valley through his binoculars.

KATE AND JILL THROUGH BINOCULARS

Kate lying in the snow, grimacing with pain. Jill standing some feet below her, looking up.

Kate tries to stand, holds her leg, screams, collapses.

Jill tries to move up the hill. Kate signals frantically to her, pointing down the hill.

Jill turns and skis down into the valley.

THE SKIMOBILE

The skimobile crossing the valley, they intercept Jill and catch her.

KATE SEES HER CHILD BEING TAKEN AWAY ON THE SPEEDING
SNOMOBILE

She screams.

KATE (V.O.)

I can remember screaming, though
it may have been only a whisper.
Where is she? What have you done
with her?

Sound of music.

cut to:

12. INT. ATTIC OF SAFEHOUSE. DUSK

An old Elvis Presley song is heard through vibrations of a cheap speaker. A young woman (Kate) kneels by a tiny window. She works on an old audio-cassette. The faded label reads "Elvis Presley's Golden Years". It's half torn off. Using a pair of scissors, Kate breaks the recording protection and puts the cassette into an old deck. She pushes on recording and starts talking.

KATE

I am alive. I live. I breathe.
This is a story I am telling, rather
than write, because I have nothing
to write with. I am not in any
immediate danger anymore.

Sound of helicopter.

cut to:

13. INT. HELICOPTER. DAY

Kate handcuffed between armed men (Angels). She sees glimpses of:

14. EXT. HELICOPTER SHOTS. DAY

Views of forest, dead from acid rain. Vast industrial wasteland, toxic dumps, smoky ruins of bombed out cities.

KATE (V.O.)

This isn't a story I am telling. I
would like to believe this is a story
I'm telling. If it's a story, then
there will be an ending and real life
will come after it. I can pick up
where I left off.

Finally helicopter shot of old factory buildings, surrounded by barbed wire. A train pulls in through the gate. Barbed wire. A tank. As we get close to the ground people are seen, on trucks and trains. Most of them black people, being herded into one compound, some white people. (Jews, Jehovah's Witnesses, Jesuits) into a building marked "J".

15. INT/EXT. SELECTION FACILITY. DAY

Kate among hundreds of women prisoners in boiler suits, sitting, standing, walking, waiting in the former storage hall. Pill boxes with guards. The interior of the building is divided by wire fences.

One section is marked with a red cross and the symbol for female. One by one the women are channeled through these medical examination rooms. A voice through the loudspeaker calls out numbers.

THE VOICE

Results for following numbers:

4281, 6836, 2184, 9572, 3698. 6131

2659, 8134, 7227, 6375, 9282, 1414.

The called ones stand in line, anxiously awaiting the verdict.

A wardress reads from lists:

WARDRESS

4281 positive
6836 positive
2184 negative

A scream. Fighting. Tears.

Number 2184 is taken to one side, as most of the others - all negative.

KATE (V.O.)

The chances are one in ten, maybe.
What would be the point of knowing
anyway?

Only a few, about a dozen, Kate among them, are shown into a reserved space with benches, while all the others are immediately herded out of the building.

Down a ramp - -

Into waiting cattle trucks --

In the distance, near the barbed wire fences, there seems to be a riot. Shots are fired.

KATE (V.O.)

The air got too full, once of chemicals, rays, radiation. The water swarmed with toxic molecules. Women took medicines, pills. Men sprayed trees, cows ate grass, all that souped-up piss flowed into the rivers, crept into your body, not to mention exploding plants, along the Andreas fault, nobody's fault. There was no one cause, says Aunt Lydia.

Kate is called. Her result is positive. Her face shows relief, with trepidation. Kate sees the women's bleak faces, as they are taken away. One is protesting.

WOMAN

It's a mistake. I know I could
have a baby. I know. Just
let me try.

A cattle prod shuts her off.

16. INT. ATTIC. NIGHT

Kate talking into the mike. There is no light in the room.

KATE

If this is a story, I must be
telling it to someone. Even
when there is no one. I'll just
say you. Who knows what the
chances are out there, of survival,
Yours? I'll pretend you can hear
me.

She pauses, releases the recording button, upon which some fifties rock 'n roll plays

17. INT. BUS DAY

About twenty women sit two by two along the bus. Moira and Kate sit together.

As Aunt Helena passes, Kate's eyes flick to the cattle prod, slung on a thong, on her belt.

18. EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. DAY

The bus travelling. Kate's profile in the bus window.

19. FLASH

Kate and Luke walking down a street in summer.
Jill on Luke's shoulders. He is lifting her up
and down. They are laughing.

20. INT. BUS. DAY.

Moirira speaks out of the side of her mouth.

MOIRA

What did you do?

Kate starts, glances at her.

KATE

We tried to cross the border. What
about you?

MOIRA

'Gender treachery.' (She winks).
I like girls.

KATE

Christ. They could have sent you to
the Colonies.

MOIRA

They don't send you to the Colonies
if your ovaries are still jumping.

21. EXT. CONVENT. DAY

Soldiers drive a group of nuns out of the cloister. A younger one fights with a soldier. She loses her hairdress, but saves the Rosary.

The bus draws to a halt. The doors open. Kate and Moira watch a group of young nuns file on to the bus. Some of the nuns are crying.

AUNT HELENA

OK. Two by two, two by two,
along that side.

The nuns sit side by side. The bus goes on.

22. EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. DAY

Bus travelling.

23. INT. BUS. NIGHT AND EXT. CITY

Most of the women asleep. Army blankets on their shoulders. The bus stops abruptly. The women are thrown forward. Some scream.

AUNT ELIZABETH

Don't panic! Shut up!

A searchlight hits the windows. A road block can be discerned. Soldiers. The bus door opens. An officer steps on.

OFFICER

Who's in charge?

AUNT HELENA

I'm in charge.

She gives him papers.

This is my authority.

OFFICER

Oh-huh. And you're going where?

AUNT LYDIA

The Massachusetts Handmaid's
Centre.

The officer shines his torch along the lines of women. He gives the papers back to Aunt Lydia.

OFFICER

Sorry to disturb your ride. We've
had a little trouble around here.
Terrorists. Good night.

KATE WATCHES HIM LEAVE THE BUS

An armoured car patrols alongside a burnt out street. (Detroit? Bronx?
D.C.?) As the bus drives through the road block.

24. INT. HANDMAID'S CENTER. CAFETERIA. DAY

On one wall is a huge photograph of the five elders, the sons of Jacob,
The leaders.

A wardress lines up the women. Kate is at one end of the line, Moira at the
other. They all stand still, waiting.

A door at the back opens. Aunt Lydia comes in, followed by Aunt Helena
and Aunt Elizabeth. They walk to the women and look them over. Aunt
Lydia smiles.

AUNT LYDIA

Hello girls. Relax, Relax. At ease.

The women shift their feet.

That's better. I'm Aunt Lydia.
Are you all well?

The women stand uncertainly.

I want you to say - 'We are very well,
Aunt Lydia.' Are you all well?

The women respond, evenly.

THE WOMEN

We are very well, Aunt Lydia.

AUNT LYDIA

(pious voice. Rich in pauses)

Yes indeed. Because you are well.
You're healthy. You are the shock
troops, you will march out in advance,
into dangerous territory.

Marthas come in with coffee and breakfast. The women watch with hungry eyes.

AUNT LYDIA (con't)

You are the only ones whose tests are
positive. And you're also free from
infection. You're the lucky ones.
Let's hear you. 'We're the lucky ones.'

THE WOMEN

We're the lucky ones.

AUNT LYDIA

You sure are. You're going to be Handmaids. And now, enjoy your breakfast.

They start eating.

25. INT. AUDITORIUM. DAY

Aunt Lydia stands at the front of the room, in her khaki dress, a pointer in her hand. Pulled down in front of the blackboard is a graph, showing the birth rate per thousand. Kate's eyes follow the pointer.

AUNT LYDIA

There are no dates after the mid-nineties. A slippery slope, as you can see, down past zero line and down and down. Some believed there would be no future. Nonsense. They were lazy women. Sluts. Think of yourselves as pearls. All of us here will lick you into shape.

Moirra almost laughs out loud.

26. EXT. THE HANDMAID'S CENTRE. EARLY EVENING

The building is decayed, an old high school. Some latecomers hurry across the lawn. Incantation can be heard.

27. INT. HANDMAID'S CENTRE. THE GYMNASIUM. EARLY EVENING

Varnished wooden walls and floor. Large windows. Basketball hoops. No nets. A large photograph of the Leader on a wall.

One hundred young women kneeling by their beds (army bunks). They wear cotton nightdresses. Their heads are bent.

Aunt Lydia stands on the platform.

Aunt Elizabeth stands by the double doors, her electric cattle prod on her belt.

Aunts Helena and Sara among the the beds. They occasionally jab a kneeling women with a wooden pointer where she has slouched or slackened. The women at once stiffens, pressing her toes together. (These Aunts also carry electric cattle prods.)

Aunt Lydia leads the incantation, repeated in murmurs by the women.

AUNT LYDIA

Dear God, King of the Universe -

WOMEN

Dear God, King of the Universe -

AUNT LYDIA

- make us worthy to be filled.

WOMEN

- make us worhty to be filled.

AUNT LYDIA

Oh God make us fruitful

KATE

Oh God make us fruitful.

Close-up

28 FLASH

Jill skiing down the valley.

Over this: A sudden scream.

29. INT. THE GYM. NIGHT

Kate's head. She turns. The scream has turned to sobs.

At the far end of the gym Aunt Helena and Aunt Sara dragging a girl out, by her arms. Aunt Elizabeth opens the doors for them and shuts them with a bang. It was the young nun with the Rosary.

Aunt Lydia continues.

AUNT LYDIA

Mortify my flesh that I may be
multiplied.

WOMEN

Mortify my flesh that I may be
multiplied.

AUNT LYDIA

Oh God, King of the Universe -

WOMEN

Oh God, King of the Universe -

AUNT LYDIA

- fill my empty space.

WOMEN

- fill my empty space.

MOIRA, AT HER BED, LIFTS HER EYES AND LOOKS DIRECTLY AT KATE

KATE RETURN LOOK

30. EXT. HANDMAID CENTER. DAY

Early morning fences.

Two by two they walk around the concrete tennis court. The guards at the corners have their back to the girls. They are not supposed to look at them. One girl way up in a window, appears shortly, rubbing a wash cloth over her bare breast. The guard blushes.

31. INT. AUDITORIUM OR CHAPEL. DAY

Kneeling in front of the other Handmaids, the window girl has to confess.

Aunt Helena (A former weight watcher from Iowa) is conducting the exercise.

AUNT HELENA

What do you call a woman who shows off her body?

Pause.

Inviting fornication?

ALMA

A whore.

AUNT HELENA
(pointing at her victim)

So what is June?

JUNE

(She tries to protest. All she was doing was mirror herself in the window, unaware that she could be seen).

AUNT HELENA

There is a good reason why we have no mirrors here.

AUNT LYDIA

Take her to the Science Lab.

MOIRA

(whispers)

A return to traditional values....

Two Aunts drag the girl away.

AUNT LUDIA

I hate to punish her, but you
have to learn. Don't tempt men.
We know men can't help it. All
flesh is grass. God made them
that way. But we are different.
We have dignity.

31. INT. CORRIDOR. DAY

The girl is dragged into the Science Lab, where two Aunts are waiting
for her, with what looks like a whip

32. INT. AUDITORIUM. DAY

The girls' screams are heard, muffled through the doors, while Janine
is test fying in front of the class.

JANINE

(She tells jow she was gang-raped
at fourteen and had an abortion)
(book - page 92)

looks around at the assembly.

AUNT HELENA

Whose fault was it?

The Handmaids respond (some with overwhelming enthusiasm).

WOMEN

(in unison)

Her fault, her fault, her fault.

AUNT HELENA

(pleased with them, beaming)

Who led them on?

WOMEN

(in unison)

She did, she did, she did.

AUNT LYDIA

Why did God allow such a terrible
thing to happen?

WOMEN

(in unison)

Teach us a lesson, teach us a
lesson, teach us a lesson.

AUNT LYDIA

What is she?

WOMEN

WHORE! WHORE! WHORE

Moira and Kate catch each other's eye.

WHORE! WHORE! WHORE!

Janine bursts into tears.

AUNT HELENA

Kneel down. Hands behind your back.

Janine, her face red, dripping nose, kneels in front of the others. Most of the women avoid looking at her. Kate and Moira together, talk out of the sides of their mouths to each other.

KATE

I'm going crazy.

MOIRA

I know. This is a fucking loony bin.

JANINE

(under tears)

It was my fault, it was my own fault. I led them on. I deserved the pain.

MOIRA

(whispering)

Cry baby. Cry baby.

AUNT HELENA

Very good, Janine. You are an example. We thank you for testifying.

Janine grasps her hands and kisses them. The Aunt helps her up and puts her arm around the crying Janine.

AUNT HELENE

You see, in those days you were free to run into all kinds of trouble. Now, you are free from trouble. There is more than one kind of freedom. Freedom to and freedom from. In the days of anarchy, it was freedom to, now you are being given freedom from. Don't underrate it.

June, the Girl who "exposed" herself, is brought back. She can't walk. Her feet are a bloody mess. She collapses on a bench.

MOIRA
(to Kate)

It's the feet that do for a first offense. They use steel cables with frayed ends.

Kate turns away and wants to help June.

AUNT HELENA

Let her be and remember: for our purpose, feet are not essential. Physical exercise in Gym three!. Two by two on the double, everybody, two by two!

Kate is near Moira.

KATE

I've got to talk to you. Meet me
in the john after this.

MOIRA

Next to last stall.

An Aunt glares at them.

33. INT. BASEMENT. DAY

Kate walks by Aunt Elizabeth, on guard outside the washroom. She
checks her watch and notes the time.

AUNT ELIZABETH

Kate, sixteen hundred thirty-five.

34. INT. BATHROOM. DAY

It used to be the men's room. Kate enters a stall at the far end.
She looks down, sees red shoes under the wall. She puts her mouth
to a small hole in the wall.

MOIRA (O.S.)

Is that you?

KATE

Yes.

MOIRA (O.S.)

God, do I need a cigarette!

KATE

Me too. Is there any way out
of here?

MOIRA

Volunteer for the Colonies,
Jersey, Michigan, clean-up the
waste-dump till your nose falls off.
Two years survival, maximum.

KATE

There must be another way.

35. Flash the border. Kate running. The snomobile intercepting Jill. Kate can see her daughter, holding out her arms to her, being carried away.

36. THE GYM. NIGHT

Kate lies, eyes open. She bites into her blanket to stop herself from crying. Aunts on guard, patrolling.

Outside, seen through the window: Angels stand, their backs to the building. The women lying in their beds. June is moaning. The lights dimmed, but not out.

37. EXT. HANDMAID CENTER GATE. DAY

The guards step aside to let a car pass.

38. INT. CAR TRAVELLING. DAY

A Guardian drives. Aunt Lydia and Kate sit in the back. Kate wears a simple oatmeal dress. The car is driving along an almost deserted avenue.

AUNT LYDIA

Be modest and respectful. Don't speak
unless you're spoken to. Try to think
of it from her point of view.

KATE

Yes.

AUNT LYDIA

She is a highly respected woman.

Remember you're not her equal.

You are a Handmaid. That is your role and your life. Do you understand?

KATE

Yes.

The car stops at a red light. Kate looks out of the window. Alongside is a big open truck. Black people standing, packed close, staring out. The light goes to green. The truck drives away.

39. EXT. CAR. CHECKPOINT. DAY

The car stops at the entrance to an exclusive community. Wrought iron gates with an arch wreathed in foliage. Floodlights. Men with machine guns in a pillar box. A Guardian approaches the car.

40. INT. CAR

The driver shows the Guardian a pass. The Guardian looks into the car and stares for a moment at Kate. He withdraws.

The car drives on.

AUNT LYDIA

He is a very important man in this State. If you're chosen, it will be a great honour.

41. EXT. THE COMMANDER'S HOUSE.

The house is large. A wide lawn.

In the driveway, Nick, the chauffer, is washing a car. In the garage behind him there are three vintage cars.

Aunt Lydia's car draws up. The driver helps Aunt Lydia and Kate out. They walk to the house.

NICK WASHING THE CAR.

41. INT. COMMANDER'S HOUSE. HALL

Kate standing alone in the hall. On a wall a photograph of the Leader.

She looks at herself in a convex mirror.

From the half open door of the sitting room, the voices of Aunt Lydia and Serena murmuring.

Aunt Lydia comes out of the room, gestures to Kate to enter. Kate walks towards the room.

42. INT. SITTING ROOM

Serena sitting in an armchair, smoking. Kate comes in. Lots of flowers.

SERENA

Shut the door.

Kate does so.

She stands in front of Serena, hands folded.

The TV is on. First information about the Republic of Gilead.

Sit down.

Kate sits.

SERENA (con't)

This would be your first posting?

KATE

Yes.

SERENA

Here's how it works. I see as little of you as possible. Understand? But if I get trouble I give trouble back. Is that clear?

KATE

Yes.

SERENA

I know you're not stupid. I've read your file.

She smokes.

Kate looks at the cigarette with longing.

Do you want this job?

KATE

Yes, Ma'am.

SERENA

Don't call me Ma'am. You're not a Martha.

Pause. Serena puts her cigarette out, decisively, one jab and one grind.

SERENA

You would sleep here, in your own room. But if the Commander goes to the front or to the capital, you sleep at the Center. As for the Commander - he's my husband. You Understand? My husband. Is that clear?

KATE

Yes.

SERENA

Now I want to ask you one last question. Answer from your heart.

Serena leans forward.

Do you want a baby? Do you really want one? It won't work if you don't want one. Do you really want to have a baby?

KATE

Yes, I do.

Serena says a silent prayer, eyes closed. Kate looks around. There are several framed photographs of Serena (in her prime) during official church gatherings, fund raisers, etc. Serena sits back in her chair.

SERENA

I'll let you know.

43. INT. HANDMAID'S CENTER CAFETERIA. DAY

Silence. No conversation during meals.

They poke in their porridge. Some discontent murmur.

AUNT HELENA

Silence!

You're getting the best, you know. There's a war on, things are rationed. You are spoiled girls.

MOIRA

Naughty puss

Aunt Helena pushes a button on a cassette deck and a male voice starts droning .

VOICE

Blessed are the merciful. Blessed be
The meek. Blessed are the silent.
Blessed be those that mourn, for they
shall be comforted. St. Paul says: From
each according to her ability, to each
according to his needs.

Kate lifts her head and goes to the washroom. Aunt Elizabeth checks her watch and notes the time.

44. INT. BASEMENT. DAY

Kate crosses June, the girl with the severed feet. She helps her with the crutches up the staircase.

45. INT. BATHROOM. DAY

Kate walks straight to the last stall. The mirrors opposite the urinals have been removed. There are no mirrors at the center at all.

Kate looks down, sees shoes under the wall. She puts her mouth to the small hole in the wall.

KATE

Are you there?

MOIRA (V.O.)

Large as life and twice as ugly.

KATE

I have a posting. I go tomorrow.

MOIRA

Oh God, I'll miss you.

KATE

Me too.

MOIRA

Nobody wants me. The damn wives don't want me. I scare them. I don't know why. Maybe they think I want to touch their tits, or something.

KATE

Jesus! Listen. Be careful, for Chrissakes!

MOIRA

I'm going bats. I'm getting out of this shithole. I'm going to fake sick.

KATE

Oh yes? And then what?

MOIRA

They'll send an ambulance. They have two guys in the ambulance. They must be starved for it. They'll be my slaves.

KATE

No. no, Moira. Don't try it. They'll find you out.

MOIRA

Don't think that way, or you'll make it happen.

Kate flushes the toilet. Two of Moira's fingers appear through the wall. Kate touches them. The fingers embrace.

46. INT. HANDMAID'S CENTER. A ROOM. DAY

Part of the room is curtained off. Kate sits on a bench.

A girl comes out from the curtain and leaves the room.

A MAN'S VOICE

Right. Next one.

Kate goes through the curtain. An old man is sitting.

MAN

Take off your right shoe. Put your leg up on this cushion.

Kate does so. The old man begins to tattoo a number into her ankle.

47. INT. DORMITORY DAY

They are given the dresses and put them on for the first time, including under garments.

A schmaltzy male choir is heard over speakers. Kate looks down her red dress and red shoes.

KATE

Like dipped in blood.

MOIRA

I've never looked good in red. It's not my color.

48. INT. THE GYM (OR CHAPEL). DAWN

The women sit on bleachers at the sides of the gym. The Preacher stands on a high pulpit, the Aunts on a platform below him.

In the body of the auditorium stand Kate and two other women. They are dressed in the red ankle length dress of the Handmaid. They are illuminated by spotlights.

THE PREACHER (to the women)

(He describes the Little Evils leading to "the Castastrophe")

You all remember the age of the R-strain syphilis, also the infamous immune deficiency.

You have known still-births, miscarriages and you have heard of the godless attempts to interfere with his design, such as artificial insemination, fertility clinics and the like.

At this point, Moira gets up, walks a few steps down the center alley and collapses.

Kate watches anxiously as two Aunts rush in, feel Moira's pulse and carry her out.

The Preacher drones on.

PREACHER

God, out of his profound compassion, has seen fit to punish us by sending us a plague of barrenness, a desert of infertility. This is to test us! This is to test our faith in his love! But as he punishes, so can he bless. And all of you are blessed, and through you, our land. For you are the rarest of flowers, you have been given this precious gift - our future is in your hands.

During this, an ambulance is heard. Kate turns to the window.

49. EXT. COURTYARD, DAY

Moira is being lifted on a stretcher by two Angels, and carried to the ambulance.

50. INT. CHAPEL. DAY

Alma, sitting next to her, mouths.

ALMA

What is it?

KATE (with a grin)

A fever. Appendicitis possible.

The organ starts playing.

The ambulance drives off.

The choir sings a hymn or the following lines are performed to the music.

PREACHER

You are fertile ,you can give birth -

THE HANDMAIDS

Precious gift -

PREACHER

What a precious gift -

THE HANDMAIDS

Precious gift -

PREACHER

You can give birth, you can give birth
for your country!

HANDMAIDS

Oh precious gift!

PREACHER

May the Lord open.

HANDMAIDS

May the Lord open.

PREACHER

Let the Handmaids ascend.

The three Handmaids walk onto the platform and kneel. The Aunts fit white headdresses on their heads.

You will look neither to the right nor
to the left. You will remain steadfast
and true.

He raises his hands.

PREACHER (con't)

I pronounce you Handmaids in the
sight of God.

JANINE WEeping SILENTLY.

THE THREE HANDMAIDS.

They stand on the platform, Kate in the center, poised, grave.

51. FLASH

Jill on skis, gliding to a stop in the snow, a shot echoes, Luke falls,
drops of blood on the snow.

52. EXT. STREET. DAY

A car, driven by Nick.

Kate sits alone in the back seat, dressed in Handmaid's clothes.

Not a word is exchanged, but she can't avoid Nick's eyes in the mirror.

53. EXT. COMMANDER'S HOUSE. DAY

Kate's car arrives.

Inside car, Kate is sitting. She watches Nick getting out and around
the car. He opens the car door. She gets out. He gives her her bag -
with a smile.

She walks towards the front door of the house.

54. INT. HOUSE. HALL

Cora and Rita silhouetted against the open kitchen door, looking up
the hall.

55. STAIRS AND LANDING.

Kate carrying her bag, following Serena up the stairs.

On the second floor level, Kate sees someone coming out of a door, standing dark against the light. It's the Commander. He moves forward, steps aside to avoid touching her and inclines his head. His face remains unseen. Serena is calling from upstairs. Kate hurries.

56. INT. KATE'S ROOM

The door opens. Serena comes in, followed by Kate.

SERENA

Any questions?

Kate looks at her.

KATE

No, Thank you.

SERENA

I am responsible for you, no-one else.

You answer to me. You understand?

KATE

Yes.

SERENA

Are you clear about the Ceremony?

If not, say so at once. Are you perfectly clear.....about the form of the Ceremony?

KATE

Yes. I'm clear. - What is my name?

SERENA

My husband is called Fred.

KATE

Offred, then?

SERENA

Offred. Say it again.

KATE

Offred.

SERENA

That's right.

Serena leaves the room.

Kate alone, looks about the room

A bed. A chair. A table. A lamp. A window, two white curtains.

A window seat. A calendar clock on the wall,

KATE (O.S.)

This is the kind of touch they like...Folk art - made by women in their spare time. Return to traditional values. Waste not - want not. I'm not to be wasted.

Handwritten notes:
Serena has to
she says
Fred is
her husband

She looks up at the ceiling. A light fitting has been plastered over.

The curtains move gently. The window is partly open.

She goes to the window, tried to open it further. It is locked in its position.

She looks down into the garden and driveway.

57. EXT. GARDEN AND DRIVEWAY. DAY

Nick looks up at the window.

The Commander walks in the frame.

COMMANDER
Hi, Nick.

58. THE ROOM

She draws back from the window and starts exploring the room, the drawers - and finds a single red shoe.

KATE (V.O.)
Someone lived here, before me, another
Handmaid. Who was she?

She looks up at the light fixture.

59. FLASH

Jill running towards Kate, laughing. She jumps into Kate's arms, her legs around Kate's waist.

60. INT. OFFFRED'S ROOM. NIGHT

Offred (Kate) sitting still. A searchlight sweeps across the room.

The door opens suddenly. Cora comes in.

CORA

Quick, quick. It's tonight. I'm
filling the tub.

She goes out. Offred stands for a moment, then slowly begins to undress.

61. INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT

Offred in the bath. Cora stands watching. Offred lifts her right leg and washes her foot. She looks at Cora.

OFFRED

Did the one before me have the same
number?

Cora does not reply. A gong sounds in the house.

OFFRED

I know, I know: No fraternization.

CORA

I ain't got all day.

She hands her a towel

62. INT. OFFRED'S ROOM. NIGHT

Offred wearing her Handmaid's dress. Cora places a red veil over her head.

63. INT. THE LANDING LOOKING DOWN TO THE HALL.

The gong. Cora leads Offred down the stairs. The gong stops. A grandfather clock now heard ticking loudly. They turn at the foot of the stairs and walk towards the sitting room. Nick and Rita come from the other direction and join them at the door. They all enter.

64. INT. THE SITTING ROOM. NIGHT

Television is on the news.

Hundreds of black people passing through check points. Over this voice:

The city of Detroit is in ruins, fire-storms raged through the inner city after the bombarding.

ANCHOR MAN

Resettlement of the Children of Ham is continuing on schedule. Twenty thousand have arrived this week in National Homeland Five, with another ten thousand in transit.

Offred kneels on the floor. Cora and Rita kneel at a distance from her.

CORA

Wish he'd hurry up.

NICK

Hurry up and wait (he laughs)

He stands right behind Offred, his boot touching her toes. She moves her foot slightly, away. His boot follows, til they touch again. She does not dare to turn around. Serena enters and sits down.

SERENA
(to Nick)

Prepare the book and then fetch the Commander.

Nick takes a key from his pocket, opens a brass bound leather covered box on the table, takes out a large Bible and opens it. He leaves the room.

TV VOICE (O.S.)

We are weeding out the traitors. We are weeding out the godless. We are winning God's fight. The country's resurrection is progressing from day to day.

A white haired anchor man in the studio.

ANCHOR MAN

A team of Eyes, working with an inside informant in Vermont, has cracked an underground espionage ring. This ring is suspected of smuggling healthy women -

Serena switches channels till she finds a male choir singing "Come to the Church in the Wildwood". She looks at the Commander's chair.

SERENA

Late as usual.

Cora sighs.

A knock on the sitting room door.

COMMANDER'S VOICE (O.S.)

I won't need the car tonight, Nick.

The Commander and Nick enter the room.

Offred watches without turning her head.

The Commander wears a uniform.

He goes to the Bible. Serena kneels.

COMMANDER

Genesis Chapter 30. "And Rachel
had no children." Rachel said: -

SERENA

(memorized, Cora and Rita as well)

"Give me children or else I shall die."

Behold my maid Bilah. Go into her.
She shall bear upon my knees, that
I may also have children by her."

COMMANDER

"So she gave Jacob her maid Bilhah
as a wife; and Jacob went into her.
And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob
a son.

(he turns to Cora)

Could I have a glass of water. Please.

The old maid rustles out.

Then Rachel said: -

SERENA

"God has judged me, and has also
heard my voice and given me a son".

The Commander closes the Bible. The water comes. He drinks.

COMMANDER

Now we will have a moment of silent
prayer. We will ask for a blessing
for our endeavour.

The Commander, Serena, Rita, Cora, Nick and Offred bend their heads.

The clock ticks. Offred surprises Serena's look: ~~how she must hate her!~~

The Commander clears his throat.

COMMANDER

Amen.

65. INT. ON THE COMMANDER AND SERENA'S BED

The bed is a large four poster with a white canopy.

Serena lies towards towards the head of the bed, dress hitched up, legs apart.

Offred lies between Serena's legs, her head on Serena's stomach.

Her hands are raised. They are gripped by Serena tightly. Serena's rings dig into Offred's hand.

They are quite still, eyes closed. - Serena's eyes open!

Suddenly, Offred gasps.

The Commander stands at the foot of the bed, holding onto the bedposts, 'fucking' Offred.

Nothing is said. No further sound, other than the Commander's breathing.

The Commander's eyes are open, expressionless.

Finally, he emits a stifled groan.

Sound of zipping. Door closing.

Serena drops Offred's hands. Her rings have cut deep into Offred's fingers

what?

*43. looking at Serena's face
action
can't for
fucking
bitch
to see
Offred's
hands
the baby
what?*

le

SERENA
Get up and get out.

her pain, not mean 44.

Offred gets up, settles her skirt, goes to the door and sees how -
Serena settles her skirt, lies exhausted on the bed, staring up at the canopy, clenching her legs together. Their eyes meet: cold war..

66. INT. OFFRED'S ROOM. NIGHT

Offred lying. A knock at the door. Rita comes in with a tray.

RITA
Here's some lovely hot milk.

She puts the mug next to Offred's bed, stands and studies her.
She whispers.

RITA
What do you think? Do you think you'll be lucky? Oh, it would be nice. Everyone would be so happy. She deserves a little happiness too. Drink your nice hot milk. We need a lovely little baby in this house.

Offred looks at her balefully. Rita goes to the door. Offred, feeling her look, tries to drink, but can't. She'd rather vomit.

RITA
You get a nice good sleep.

Rita goes out.

Offred stands and begins to take off her clothes swiftly. She is naked. She goes to the washbasin and splashes water over her body. She goes to the window and tries to open it. It is stuck. A searchlight crosses the window.

67. EXT. HOUSE. NIGHT. LONGSHOT

Offred's silhouette at her window.

68. INT. OFFRED'S ROOM. NIGHT

Offred jerks the window open. She breathes in the air.

Footsteps approaching. It's Nick.

The searchlight crosses the window. Nick whispers from down below.

NICK

What were you doing? Are you crazy?
You could be seen. Don't you realize
that? You must never.....do that.
Again. You understand?

She stares at him.

They could kill you for it. Put on
your nightdress - when I've gone -
in the dark. Out of sight. Do you
hear? In the dark.

she stares.

KATE'S VOICE

I know his name is Nick. He lives here,
over the garage. Low status: He hasn't
been issued a woman, not even one.

He goes away.

69. INT. HOUSE KITCHEN. DAY

Cora giving tokens to Offred. The tokens have pictures on them: eggs, cheese etc.

CORA

You're to meet your partner at the corner. She;s called Ofglen. Wait for her. She takes you to the Grocery Store. And tell them fresh eggs and a chicken, not a hen.

Rita washing dishes in the background.

RITA

Tell her to tell them who it's for and they won't mess around.

CORA

Tell them who it's for. We get the best here.

Offred takes the tokens, goes to the door and turns. Rita and Cora look at her.

OFFRED

What happened to the one before me?

Silence.

CORA

What one before?

Cora goes to a cupboard and looks in. Rita turns the tap on and rinses plates.

RITA

She didn't work out.

70. EXT. HOUSE. DAY

Offred walks down path with shopping basket. It's a nice day, Spring is in the air.

Nick polishing car, cigarette in his mouth. He watches her walk towards him, puffs, drops cigarette, treads on it. His sleeves are rolled up, his naked arms have a nice tan.

He begins to whistle softly.

She draws close to him. She is tempted to pick up the cigarette butt.

NICK

Nice day.

She turns her head away, opens gate, goes out into the avenue.

71. EXT. STREET CORNER. DAY

She waits. A Martha is clearing leaves from a lawn.

A child's laughter.

She jerks her head around.

72. FLASH

The backs of Luke and Kate walking down a street, swinging Jill between them.

73. EXT. STREET CORNER. DAY

A shape, red with white wings around the face, carrying a basket stands next to her. She peers at Offred's face and turns. She walks away, stops, looks back, turns. Offred goes after her.

OFFRED

Are you Ofglen?

OFGLEN

Yes, I am meeting Offred. Are you the new one?

OFFRED

I am Offred

OFGLEN

Ah. Oh, I see. Blessed be the fruit.

OFFRED

May the Lord open.

OFLEN

Shall we walk.

74. EXT. CHECKPOINT. DAY

A Guardian examines their passes.

OFGLEN

The war is going well, I hear.

OFFRED

Praise be.

The Guards don't answer. They are very young and the women make then nervous. Offred looks straight into his eyes, until he turns away. Pass through the check point. Offred walks on. She moves her hips a little, letting her red skirt sway around.

KATE (V.O.)

I wanted to say: I hope they get hard
at the sight of us, but she may be a
real believer.

OFGLEN

They are not even allowed to put their
hands in their pockets.

Offred wonders if her shadow is a mind reading spy.

At the other side of the checkpoint a black van with a white eye
painted on it stand, engine running. Two 'Eyes' in dark glasses
look out.

75. EXT. TOWN CENTER. SHOPPING ARCADE. DAY

Offred walking toward Information Center. Various women with
shopping baskets. The arcade echoes with their footsteps. Most
of the shops are shut. Some 'craft' shops and food stores are open.

76. INT. MILK AND HONEY. DAY

The shelves are half empty. A Guardian with a gun at the cash desk.
Offred and Ofglen walk along the shelves with shopping baskets. A
Bee, A Cow.

OFGLEN

I see they have oranges today.

On a shelf, indeed, there are some.

OFFRED

They didn't give me any tokens for
that. Just for eggs and cheese.

She puts the tokens down.

OFGLEN

The war interferes with fruit from California. Even Florida isn't dependable.

GUARD

Quiet

They hush like schoolgirls. Nobody talks much. People just stand in line in silence

77. EXT. ARCADE. DAY

They walk across the arcade towards the grocery store. A sudden commotion. All the women in the arcade are hurrying towards a corner. Offred and Ofglen join them.

A fourteen year old girl, vastly pregnant, is walking towards a parked car. A number of the women applaud.

OFGLEN

She is a very happy girl.

The pregnant one beams and waves. The chauffeur gets out of the car and opens the door for her. She gets in. Her face behind the window is very childlike. Offred and Ofglen stand in line. Other women whisper.

1st WOMAN

A girl that pregnant shouldn't go out.

2nd WOMAN

Why?

1st WOMAN

One was stabbed with a knitting needle, right in the belly.

2nd WOMAN

Jealousy?

1st WOMAN

All children are wanted now. But
not by everyone.

GUARD

No more meat. Come back tomorrow.

He closes the shop.

They walk away .

78. EXT. THE WALL DAY

Carrying their baskets, they walk home, along a hundred year old
brick wall.

Floodlights and electrified razor wire has been added to the wall,
surrounding what used to be the campus.

They pass a gate, flanked by armored vehicles and guards. Inside
Gothic buildings and a cathedral is seen. No students. Soldiers.

OFFRED

May I ask you a question?

Ofglen walks on.

OFFRED

What happened to her?

What happened to the last Offred?

OFGLEN
(whispering)

How do I know. I thought you
would be her. How do I know?

OFFRED
(hissing)

But what do you think?

OFGLEN

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

They run into a little crowd, looking up at the wall.

GUIDE (O.S.)

The most ancient buildings go back
to the 18th Century. They can't be
visited for the moment as they host
the H.Q. of the security forces. But
we are going to see the Puritans'
seventeenth century graveyard after
lunch.

Ofglen is leading Offred to a specific spot, obviously the purpose
of her detour.

Five bodies hang from hooks. Their hands are tied in front of them,
their heads covered by white cloth bags. On one bag blood has
seeped through at the mouth. A small red mouth.

Kate holds her sleeve over mouth and nose. She feels Ofglen shiver
beside her.

Two corpses wear Guardian uniforms.

Three female corpses wear white coats. A placard round each neck
with a drawing of a human fetus.

Groups of people looking up at the bodies, including Ofglen and Offred.

A Japanese delegation (the women wearing short skirts and high heels) with an Official Guide, who wears a blue suit and red tie. One of the Japanese asks him a question.

THE GUIDE
(casually)

Yes, the foetus means abortion, of course. The unmarked ones "Gender Treachery", Homosexuals, you know our Constitution is quite clear on that point - these men are like war criminals. As to the women: who would seek to prevent birth, when it's so hard to conceive? An abberation of nature.

OFFRED AND OFGLEN WHISPERING

OFFRED

Do we have to stand here?

Do we have to listen to this?

OFGLEN

Yes. I'm in charge of you. You do as I say. You understand?

Silence.

A Japanese man whispers to the Guide. The Guide turns to Ofglen and Offred.

GUIDE

Of course, of course. (To Ofglen and Offred). This gentleman would like to ask you a question.

The Japanese man comes forward. He smiles.

MAN

You don't mind if I ask you a question?

Ofglen and Offred do not answer.

MAN

I would like to know - are you happy?

• Pause

OFGLEN

Yes. We are very happy.

Ofglen and Offred turn and walk away. They walk in silence until they turn a corner.

OFFRED

Are you happy?

OFGLEN

Aren't you?

79. INT.. BEDROOM NIGHT

Serena's face looks bitter. The ceremony proceeds as usual, the Commander seems to have some difficulty performing. Offred can't help opening her eyes to watch him, for a split second.

KATE'S VOICE OVER

I ought to feel hatred for this man
but it isn't what I feel. It's more
complicated. I don't know what to
call it. It isn't love.

Serena now opens her eyes. Just a glimpse. Offred's remain closed.

KATE'S VOICE OVER

It must be hell, to be a man, like that,
watched by women.
It must be just fine.
It must be hell.
It must be very silent.

80. STAIRS AND LANDING. NIGHT

The Commander comes out of the bedroom, walks down to his study.
Offred comes out next, crosses over to the staircase, walks up to her
room. The red veil is covering her face, another night of duty done.
Rita comes up from the kitchen, carrying the usual glass of milk. A
clock strikes.

81. COURTYARD. NIGHTEXT. HOUSE. NIGHT

Nick walks around, looking up at Offred's window. He sees the light
in the Commander's office and the man's silhouette against the curtains.

82. HER ROOM. NIGHT

Offred lying in bed, eyes open. Searchlight sweeps the window.

Pitch black.

Searchlight. She gets up.

Pitch black.

83. HALLWAY. NIGHT

Her white nightshirt, her hair down her back like a mane. Offred's reflection in the mirror.

She walks carefully, without creaking, along the runner.

She is barefoot.

The sitting room door is ajar. She slips in.

84. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT

There's a slight mist of light, through the drapes, from the searchlight outside.

Two men on patrol are seen behind the curtains.

She feels around on the table, knocking over some object, removing another one.

There's someone in the room behind her.

The door closes with a little click.

Offred gasps.

Nick's voice.

NICK

(whispering)

It's me. It's all right.

OFFRED

What?

NICK

I have a message. The Commander sent me. He wants to see you. Tomorrow.

OFFRED

See me?

NICK

Tomorrow night. In his study.
Ten o'clock.

Pause.

OFFRED

What do you mean.

NICK

But be careful. No one else must
see you.

OFFRED

What does he want?

NICK

He wants....

Suddenly he pulls her against him, his mouth on hers. Her hand goes down. His fingers move, feel her arm under the nightgown sleeve; then he puts it on her shoulder and pushes her slowly away.

NICK

(hardly audible)

In his office. Ten P.M. Tomorrow.

In the dark parlor, they move away from each other. Her hand finds the door knob, porcelain, cool under her fingers.

85. FLASH

Kate and Jill (4) walking through a park, eating ice cream. They wear light, short, summer dresses. Couples lie about on the grass.

86. EXT. GARDEN. DAY

Serena Joy surveys the planting of her flower garden.

Jmf

87. EXT. STREET. DAY

Offred meets Ofglen at the street corner. They walk as twins. A habit is forming.

OFGLEN

It's a beautiful May day.

OFFRED

It is. Praise be.

They continue in silence. In the distance is the checkpoint.

OFGLEN

Do you know what that means in French?

OFFRED

What?

OFGLEN

Mayday. If you say, in French, 'm'aidez'. M'aidez.

Pause.

OFFRED

It means, 'Help me'.

OFGLEN

Yes, that's right.

They walk on.

The Commander's car is gliding by. Behind tinted glass: Nick's profile, The Commander's.

Guards salute and wave the car through the checkpoint.

OFFRED

Do all the drivers belong to
"The Eyes"?

OFGLEN

It's better not to know.

88. INT. HOUSE STAIRS. NIGHT

Offred carefully descending the stairs. She is fully dressed, with the red veil over her face. She reaches the hall, turns along the back corridor, comes to a door. She knocks. The Commander's voice:

COMMANDER (O.S.)

Come in.

She opens the door and goes in.

89. INT. COMMANDER'S STUDY. NIGHT

A large desk. A map of the USA on the wall with different colored sections and pins. The photograph of the Elders. Photographs of the Commander rowing, playing football etc. Bookshelves without

books. Instead: electronic equipment of various kinds, souvenirs, emblems, etc. A television set is switched on, with no sound.

The Commander is standing at his desk. He smiles.

COMMANDER

Hello. Come in.

She closes the door.

You don't need the veil. This...ugh...
this isn't an official visit. Lift it up.

She does.

Why don't you take it off?

He comes closer and lifts the veil.

COMMANDER

May I?

He slowly pulls the veil away and looks at her hair.

Beautiful...Listen. What it is... I
just thought it might be nice if we
met under less....artificial
conditions.

She doesn't move. He stands very close to her.

Commander

I guess I just thought I'd like to get
to know you a little.

OFFRED

Get to know me?

COMMANDER

Yes.

OFFRED

How will you do that?

COMMANDER

Oh, we don't have to push it. We could...uuh....we could break the ice with some sort of game...for instance.

OFFRED

A game? What game?

COMMANDER

Scrabble?

She stares at him.

OFFRED

Scrabble?

COMMANDER

Yes. Do you know how to play?

Pause.

Have you ever played Scrabble?

OFFRED

Uh...yes...when I was young.

COMMANDER

Well, why don't we? How about it?

OFFRED

All right.

COMMANDER

Good. (he grins) Good!

He takes a scrabble board from desk drawer and scatters counters across it. They sit down.

COMMANDER

Let's go!

90. EXT. COURTYARD. NIGHT

Nick checks the light in the window, he chats with the guards on patrol.

91. INT. COMMANDER'S STUDY. LATER

The game of scrabble almost completed. Offred studying the board. In the background, television is on. An announcer is speaking over pictures of wooded hills and helicopters. A clump of trees explodes.

ANNOUNCER

Good news from the Appalachian Highlands where the Angels of the Apocalypse, Fourth Division, are smoking out a pocket of Baptist guerillas. They're getting air support from the Twenty First battalion of the Angels of Light.

OFFRED

I can use my last three letters in one go. Look.

She places the three letters. The Commander is peeling an orange with a small knife.

OFFRED

I've won.

COMMANDER

You sure as hell have won. Terrific. Congratulations.

OFFRED

Thanks.

COMMANDER

You know, I have a kind of idea that you play this game better than me.

OFFRED

Oh no.

COMMANDER
(grinning)

Yep, I think you do.

He leans back. He offers her the orange.

OFFRED

Thanks.

COMMANDER

I thought you would.

OFFRED

Why?

COMMANDER

Because you're a librarian.

She smiles.

OFFRED

Was

She looks at the book shelves.

92. INT. CORRIDOR. NIGHT

The Commander opens the door for her, but there isn't much space for her to get through.

She stands.

COMMANDER

Would you like to come here
again - play some scrabble,
listen to some opera, things
like that?

OFFRED

Sure. Thanks.

COMMANDER

Look at Nick every morning, when he's
cleaning the car. If he's not wearing his
hat come here at ten o'clock. Walk
straight in and wait. Okay?

OFFRED

What about your wife?

COMMANDER

She's in bed early. But it won't
be this week. I'm away in Washington
for a week. (He grins). Don't forget
me.

He peeps outside, listens.

All quiet. How about a good night
Kiss?

He inclines his head tentatively towards her mouth. She smiles and
slips through the door.

He looks out into the corridor and whispers:

COMMANDER

You play a mean game!

93. INT. HER ROOM. NIGHT

She opens the door, shuts it, leans against it. She puts her hand to
her mouth, starts to laugh, gags herself, rolls about the room in silent
laughter. She opens the closet, sits inside it, doubled up with laughter,
takes deep breaths gradually manages to calm down.

94. OFFRED'S ROOM. DAY

The breakfast tray crashes and porcelain breaks. A scream. Offred
opens her eyes. Cora kneels beside her.

OFFRED

What's wrong?

CORA

When I saw you lying there,
I thought -

Offred rolls over and pushes herself up.

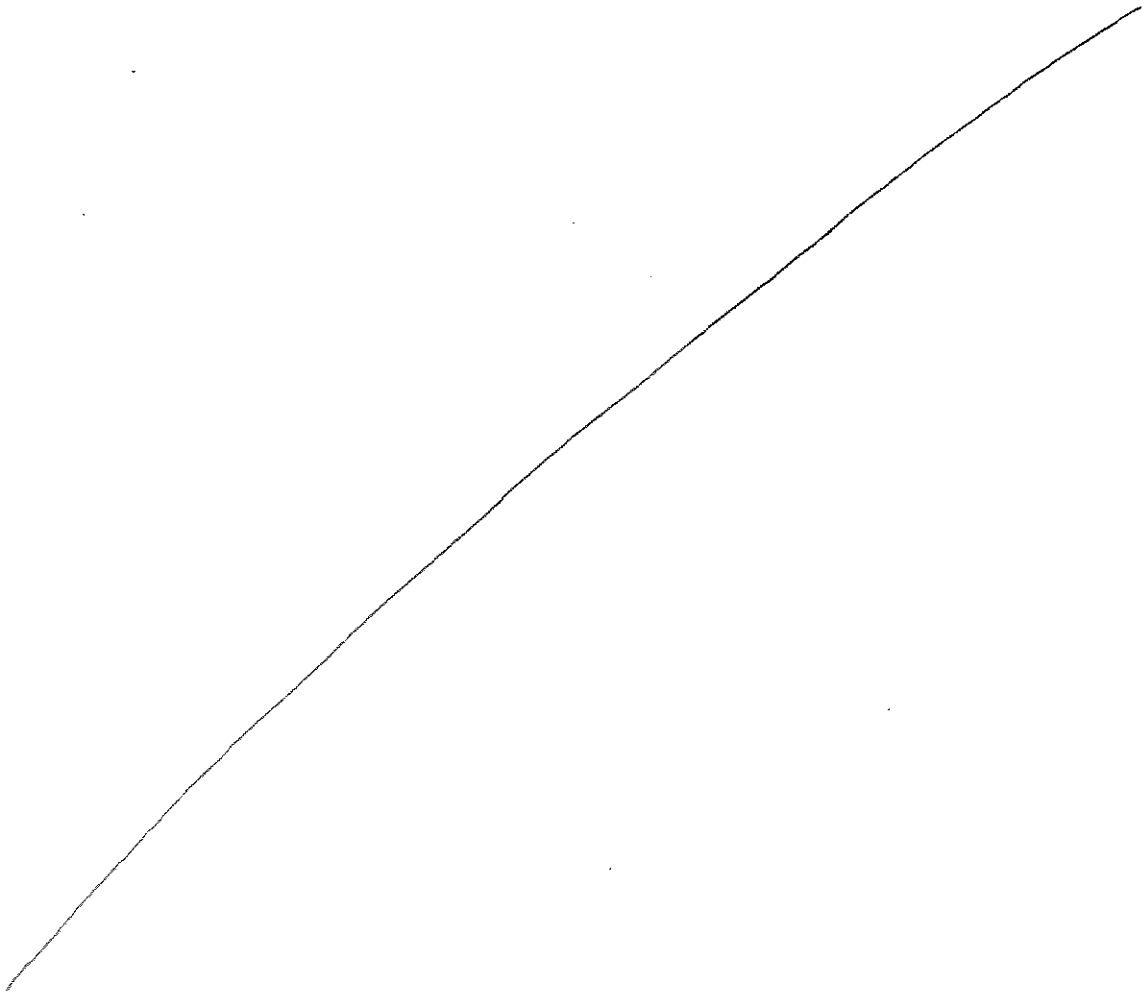
OFFRED

You thought what?

The eggs are broken on the floor, there is orange juice and shattered glass.

CORA

I'll have to bring another one.



OFFRED

I must have fainted.

CORA

It's one of the early signs.

Cora blots some of the orange juice with a napkin. Offred takes the butter and hides it. They smile at each other, on their guards. They are not supposed to talk. No fraternization. As Cora leaves, Offred applies the butter on her face and hands, rubbing it voluptuously into her dry skin.

95. EXT. MEDICAL BUILDING. DAY.

Offred in a car. Nick is driving up the ramp. He stops.

NICK (with a grin)

Good Luck!

96. INT. MEDICAL BUILDING. DAY.

Entrance Hall.

At the desk her identity card is checked in the computer.

Other women are waiting, covertly they check each other's belly.

Guards with guns stand by the door. A man in green points to the elevator.

MALE NURSE
Second Floor.

97. INT. EXAMINATION ROOM. DAY.

She goes into an inner room. The door shuts after her.

The room is white. A folding screen, red cloth stretched on a frame, a god Eye painted upon it.

She undresses, lies on a table behind the screen. She puts a sheet over her body.

A second sheet, suspended from the ceiling comes down to her neck. It hides her face.
Footsteps. A cough.

THE DOCTOR.

Neither sees the other's face during their conversation.

DOCTOR
How are we getting along?

He picks up a chart, looks at it.

Three months and nothing in the wind, huh?

His hand examines her body under the sheet.

Mmn. You're in good shape though. Ripe.

He looks again at the chart.

DOCTOR (cont.)

Oh him. I know him. (He leans in, speaks quietly.) I know your Commander. He's tried twice before. He's probably sterile.

OFFRED

Don't they test them? The men?

DOCTOR

No, they don't test them. You get the blame, honey, if it doesn't work. Listen.

(Whispering.) Let me help you. I could help you.

OFFRED

How?

He takes off his gloves and rests his hand on her legs.

DOCTOR

Now. The door's locked. Nobody'll come in. They'll never know it wasn't him. I've helped others. Lots of women do it.

OFFRED

No.

DOCTOR

I have to see what they put you through.

Her face. His voice. His naked hand is moving on her, going under the paper sheet.

OFFRED

It's too dangerous.

DOCTOR

You know what could happen to you if you don't make it.?

OFFRED

Yes.

Pause.

DOCTOR

Besides, it's not the husbands, it's the women you have to watch out for. They don't like you girls hanging around the house for too long. Imagine what they must be feeling. They are defeated women, specially Serena Joy, she used to be quite a celebrity. Come on, what do you say?

OFFRED

No.

DOCTOR

Well, honey, it's your life.

OFFRED

Thank you.

The doctor withdraws behind the sheet.

DOCTOR

Next month.

98. INT. POOL. DAY.

Offred walks through a corridor. Behind a glass she sees a few mothers playing with babies in the pool. Cheerful like whales.

99. INT. THE HANDMAID'S CENTER. AUNT SARA'S OFFICE. DAY.

Aunt Sara and Offred. Aunt Sara sits at her desk with the chart. Offred sits on the other side.

AUNT SARA

I was hoping not to see you this month. How many Ceremonies have there been?

OFFRED

Three.

AUNT SARA

Dates?

OFFRED

The sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth.

Aunt Sara marks the chart.

AUNT SARA

What about the nineteenth? What about the twentieth? That's your best time.

OFFRED

I know.

Aunt Sara clicks her teeth.

AUNT SARA

You have one more month and then you'll be up
for reassessment.

100. INT. THE HANDMAID'S CENTRE. DAY.

Aunt Lydia stands on the platform. The Handmaids,
including Offred and Moira, watch a movie. The large
television screen shows a bleached porn flick. A naked
woman is hanging by chains from the ceiling, being
caned.

Aunt Lydia points to the screen.

AUNT LYDIA

You have been saved from that! In those
days, you were treated as an animal. You
were drowning in a tide of filth. We have
transformed the world. You have been saved
from total humiliation, from the rape of the
spirit even more than that of the body, but
there were other degradations. Anybody here
to testify of her own experience.

She switches it off.

Moira and Offred whisper.

MOIRA

Glad you're back.

OFFRED

Just a few days. He's in Washington.

Janine, now Ofwarren and pregnant gets up. She looks subdued, as if she'd been kicked around by so many, at random, that she'd roll over for anyone.

MOIRA

Still her favorite pet. I can just see her eating up that old....

JANINE/OFWARREN

(The usual bla bla...welfare...men cheating...you had to have your nose done...couldn't walk the streets, by night or day...)

Most of the women agree with her testimony. Moira and Offred just listen.

JANINE/OFWARREN

(Something along this line:)

I tried to do like other women I wore bras that push up your tits. I spent hours in the sun, I oiled myself like roast on a spit. I felt miserable, but he still took other women. I felt worthless. Now, I feel like a person. I don't have to compare to others all the time. I hope to have a nice baby and for it to grow up well protected. Then, I

JANINE/OFWARREN (cont.)

could have had one, but my husband didn't want to, he thought, kids are messy....

101. INT. GYM. DAWN.

Searchlights sweep across the gym.

The women asleep in their beds. Aunt Elizabeth sitting in her alcove by the door.

Offred's eyes half open. She watches.

Moira hurries back through the doors, goes to the Aunt, whispers loudly 'There's a flood.' Aunt Elizabeth grimaces, stands, goes out with Moira.

Offred slips out of bed.

102. INT. BASEMENT STAIRS. DAWN.

Offred silently down the stairs. She opens the door into the washroom carefully, peeps in.

103. INT. WASHROOM. DAWN.

Aunt Elizabeth is on the floor. Moira is kneeling on her back, hold the cattle prod, pressing her forehead down onto the floor. She prods her.

MOIRA

Keep quiet and don't dare look up or I'll kill you. I mean it.

Offred comes in quietly, take the cattle prod and gives the tape to Moira. Moira tapes Aunt Elizabeth's mouth. She takes the prod from Offred. Aunt Elizabeth had not seen Offred.

MOIRA

Get on your feet, you slut.

104. INT. BOILER ROOM. DAWN.

Aunt Elizabeth stands. Moira pushes her towards the door of the boiler room. They go in. The door closes.

Offred stands, listening. Silence. She opens the door to the boiler room and looks in. Aunt Elizabeth is trussed to a pipe clad only in her underclothes. Moira is putting on the Aunt's dress.

MOIRA (to the Aunt)

I like your panties sweetheart. Listen.
With a bit of luck they'll find you before
Christmas. Remember I didn't kill you.

105. EXT. BOILER ROOM. DAWN.

Moira and Offred come out of the boiler room and close the door. Offred adjusts the Aunt's dress on Moira.

MOIRA

Thanks.

They hug each other.

109. INT. COMMANDER'S STUDY. NIGHT.

The Commander and Offred are playing 'Double Solitaire' very fast. They slam the cards down in fierce competition. Offred slams the last card down on the table.

COMMANDER

You've done it! You're the winner! That's my girl!

She laughs.

OFFRED

Do I get a prize?

COMMANDER

You sure do.

He stands, goes to a cupboard and unlocks it.

It's a surprise prize.

He turns, holding two magazines.

Which one do you want? Vogue or Cosmopolitan?

He gives them both to her.

OFFRED

But....this stuff was all supposed to have been burnt. There were house to house searches, bonfires -

COMMANDER

Sure. They were bad for the people.
Confused their minds. But it's OK for me.
(He grins.) I'm mature.

He opens the cupboard door wide.

I have a whole pile of them. Come here.
Look.

She peers over his shoulder into the cupboard.

COMMANDER

Vanity Fair, Life, Saturday Evening Post,
Harper's Bazaar. Time and Newsweek. I also
have fiction. Do you like Raymond Chandler?

OFFRED

I sure do.

COMMANDER

Wonderful. Listen. We don't have to play
games every time.

She starts turning the pages. Pictures of women from
another time, wardrobe, make-up, images of unreal
beauty, promises of immortality.

Offred's thoughts wander, for a while she is unaware of
the Commander watching her.

OFFRED

Does your wife know about these? Why don't
you show them to her?

COMMANDER

She wouldn't understand.

He looks at her and suddenly grabs her by the shoulders and kisses her violently, crudely. She is limp. She stops kissing her, abruptly, turn away, wiping his mouth. She watches him, expressionless.

OFFRED

Could you get something for me? Could you get me some hand lotion?

COMMANDER

Hand lotion?

OFFRED

My skin gets very dry.

COMMANDER

Oh. What do you do about it, normally?

OFFRED

I use butter. I steal pats of butter - from the food trays.

COMMANDER

Butter! (He laughs.) That's very clever.

OFFRED

Can you do it?

COMMANDER

Sure. I can do that. But wait....she might smell it on you.

OFFRED

She's never that close to me.

COMMANDER

Sometimes she is.

Pause.

OFFRED

I won't use it....on those nights.

110. EXT. SERENA'S GARDEN. DAY.

Serena walks through the french windows in the garden. She is smoking. She sits in a deck chair, picks up some knitting and knits. Her eyes constantly flick to the side door of the house. It opens. Offred comes out. Serena calls softly:

SERENA

Offred. Come over here.

Offred comes to the deck chair.

SERENA

Sit down.

She hands wool to Offred. Offred sits on the grass and takes it.

She fits the skein of wool over Offred's hands.

Serena winds the wool, looks at Offred.

SERENA

Any sign?

OFFRED

No.

SERENA

Why do you think we all go through....what we do?

OFFRED

You mean the Ceremony?

SERENA

Yes. Why do you think I lie on a bed with you on my belly? Why do you think?

Offred stares at her.

OFFRED

What could I do that I'm not doing?

SERENA

Your time's running out.

OFFRED

Yes.

SERENA

Maybe he can't.

They look at each other, hold the look.

SERENA

Maybe you should try it another way.

OFFRED

What other way?

SERENA

Another man.

OFFRED

They hang you for that.

SERENA

It's done. Women do it frequently. All the time, in fact.

OFFRED

With doctors you mean?

SERENA

Doctors blackmail. It's got to be someone we trust.

OFFRED

Who?

SERENA

I was thinking of Nick.

Offred stares at her. She doesn't respond in any way.

SERENA

Your daughter is alive.

OFFRED

Alive?

SERENA

I believe it's her.

OFFRED

How long have you known?

SERENA

Oh....about four weeks.

OFFRED

Why didn't you tell me?

SERENA

I wasn't sure -

OFFRED (overlapping)

How could you keep it from - ?

SERENA (overlapping)

I wasn't sure whether it would be good for
you....to know.

Offred stares at her, eyes blazing. Serena does not
flinch. Offred sits, head in hands, whispers:

OFFRED

How is she?

SERENA

I'll see if I can get a picture for you.

She leans over Offred and murmurs:

You see, we have a lot in common. We could have motherhood in common.

Offred looks at her sharply. Serena lights another cigarette.

SERENA

Nick is been with us a long time. I think I could fix it with him.

Serena leans forward.

And he's quite good looking.

OFFRED

Mnn-hmm. What about the Commander?

SERENA

Well, we just won't tell him, will we?

Serena takes a cigarette and presses it into Offred's hand, closing her fingers around it.

SERENA

Just one. We don't want to ruin your health.

111. INT. OFFRED'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Offred by the window. She burs a match but does not light the cigarette. A knock on the door. She sits up. Serena comes in.

SERENA

Ready?

OFFRED

Yes.

They leave the room.

112. INT. KITCHEN. MOONLIGHT.

Serena and Offred come in. Serena whispers.

SERENA

Go out through this door and turn right.
There's another door there, it's open. Go up
the stairs and knock, he's expecting you.
No-one will see you.

113. INT. GARAGE. NIGHT.

Offred slips in through the garage door. She moves to
the stairs, goes up, carefully, reaches the top. She
smiles. She knocks at the door. It opens. She goes
in. The door closes.

114. INT. NICK'S ROOM. NIGHT.

It's dark in the room. She can only see his shape.
Already she is in his arms, his mouth is on hers. She
breathes, feverishly.

115. INT. ATTIC. NIGHT.

Kate's face against the window in an equally dark
room. Her eyes shining.

KATE (into Mike)

I made that up. It didn't happen that way.

116. INT. NICK'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Their bodies in sweat. Falling onto this fold-out bed.

KATE'S VOICE OVER

I'm not sure how it happened, not exactly.

117. INT. ATTIC. NIGHT.

KATE

This is a reconstruction. All of it in my head. I hide in this safehouse.

118. INT. NICK'S ROOM. NIGHT.

She enters again. He's waiting, smoking, in his shirt sleeves. He gives her the cigarette.

NICK

Here, have a drag.

OFFRED

I don't have much time.

They stare at each other, get closer, embrace.

119. INT. ATTIC. NIGHT.

KATE

The way love feels, it's always approximative and it felt like a betrayal: my own response.

120. INT. NICK'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Her hands gripping Nick's shoulders, her legs squeezing him. She makes sounds.

KATES VOICE OVER.

Partway through I thought about Serena. She must hear us, sitting in the kitchen. Thinking: cheap. For a cigarette. She'll spread her legs.

121. INT. ATTIC. NIGHT.

Kate takes a deep breath, she releases the recording switch, pushes play and Mantovanti's strings play.

122. INT. NICK'S ROOM. LATER. NIGHT.

They are lying on the bed. The searchlight intermittently hits the wall above them.

NICK

The boss's wife was real ladylike. She said: I want you to fuck her, Nick, I want you to give her the works. Do it for me. I said, yes Ma'am, anything you say, Ma'am.

OFFRED

It's been years.

NICK

For me too.

He strokes her body.

OFFRED

I don't want to go to him. I won't go.

NICK

You have to go.

OFFRED

Why?

Nick does not speak.

OFFRED

Why?

NICK

Because he's a Commander.

OFFRED

It's you....I want to see.

NICK

You will. You will see me.

OFFRED

Will I?

NICK

Yes. But no romance. OK?

OFFRED (Like a quote)

"No Strings?"

Nick shakes his head.

NICK

Because we'd make mistakes. I don't want you to risk your life.

123. INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

Serena, restless, moves about the kitchen smoking. It's late. From the window she can see Nick's room above the garage. There is a dim light in the window.

124. INT. SERENA'S SITTING ROOM. DAY.

Offred tears open the sealed envelope. It contains a polaroid print. Square and glossy it shows her daughter, Jill.

SERENA

She's in good hands. With people who are fit.

On the photograph a woman is holding Jill's hand. They stand on a lawn in the front of a house. Offred swallows. She is not going to cry in front of Serena.

SERENA

I have to return it.

Offred lays it down and walks away.

125. EXT. STREET. DAY.

Offred rushes toward Ofglen and embraces her, before she can help it.

OFFRED

She's alive. My daughter is alive.

OFGLEN

Don't cry. And don't kiss me. We're not supposed to look at each other. We must walk. Keep your head down and lean a little towards me as we walk. That way I can hear you better and you me.

126. EXT. WINDOW SOUL SCROLLS SHOP. DAY.

The Soul Scrolls Shop is in the old University Close. Offred and Ofglen approach (in reflection) stand looking in.

OFGLEN

Perhaps one day you'll see her.

OFFRED

How?

Offred and Ofglen stare at each other's reflections.

OFGLEN

You're not alone. Do you understand? I'm with you. You're not alone. You could be one of us.

OFFRED

Is Nick one of you?

OFGLEN

What's your name?

OFFRED

Kate.

OFGLEN

Mine is Susan

Offred turns to look into Ofglen's eyes. She can't help crying.

Inside, the machines endlessly print roll upon roll of prayers.

A recorded voice announces: (During the above scene.)

VOICE

These prayers can be ordered by compuphone or right here in this store. We have five different prayers available. A prayer for health, a prayer for wealth, a prayer for a death, a prayer for a birth, and a prayer for a sin.

127. EXT. WALL. DAY.

They walk across to the Wall, where various groups of onlookers are looking up at three hanging bodies. Women.

Two Guardians stand on duty by the gate.

A Commander's limo leaves the compound and drives down the road. It passes next to a parked car, which explodes at the very moment. Smoke and fire.

A crack in the wall. The bodies sway. Eyes vans race across the grass.

A motorcycle races off, trying to escape.

VOICE FROM VAN

Get down! Down! Face down!

The Eyes jump out of the van.

People scream and drop in the cross fire.

Offred and Ofglen lie face down. Ofglen grips Offred's hand. They lie close, their hands clasped. Under the tumult Ofglen mutters:

OFGLEN

Watch your Commander. Study him. Get to know everything about him. Mayday is near!

Offred turns her face to her. Their eyes meet.

128. INT. COMMANDER AND SERENA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Offred lies between Serena's legs, her head on Serena's stomach. The Commander stands at the foot of the bed. During the act his eyes are open, the women's eyes are closed.

Suddenly, he stretches out his hand to touch Offred's face. Her eyes open. She flinches. Serena's eyes open.

Serena's hand catches and holds his hand.

The action is paralysed for a moment. All their eyes are open.

The action starts up again.

129. INT. COMMANDER'S STUDY. NIGHT.

An aria is playing on the stereo. Offred is no longer sitting stiff-necked, as in the first meetings, but with her red shoes off, no veil, legs tucked underneath on his chair.

OFFRED

Don't do that again!

COMMANDER

Do what?

OFFRED

Try to touch me like that. Has she said anything?

COMMANDER

Here's the hand lotion.

He hands her a bottle. On it she reads 'Helena Rubinstein. With compliments of Pan Am.'

OFFRED

Thank you.

COMMANDER

Why don't you try it?

She opens the bottle and sniffs. Slowly and voluptuously she rubs it into the skin of her hand.

OFFRED

She can do what she like with me. She could have me sent to the Colonies. Don't you know that? Don't do it again, please.

COMMANDER

OK. OK.

He displays the Scrabble game on the table.

OFFRED

Did Serena find out?

COMMANDER

About us?

OFFRED

No. About the last one. What happened to her?

COMMANDER

What?

OFFRED

My predecessor.

He starts distributing the letters.

COMMANDER

She couldn't handle it.

OFFRED

Handle what?

COMMANDER

Don't push your luck.

He drinks.

OFFRED

Did she hang herself?

He starts playing.

OFFRED

What with? Where'd she get the rope?

COMMANDER

She didn't do it with a rope!

The telephone rings.

He picks it up, very casually.

COMMANDER

Yes? What is it?

He listens.

So what?

He listens briefly, very cool.

The Commander is sitting facing her. His shoes are off. His legs stretch out, crossed. His foot idly mover under Offred's skirt, around her knee.

She is looking at him coolly, forming her words and trying to overhear the conversation. He is aware of her curiosity.

COMMANDER (into phone)

Just go ahead and do it...I said do it!

He looks at the Scrabble board, puzzled.

COMMANDER

Is that a word?

OFFRED

We could look it up. It's archaic.

COMMANDER

I'll give it to you. As long as you try to win.

He switches on his short wave radio.

COMMANDER

Are you trying?

OFFRED

Of course. I always try.

COMMANDER

It would take all the joy out of it if I thought you weren't trying.

They look at each other.

OFFRED

You know what you are?

COMMANDER

What?

OFFRED

You're a mystery. I don't know anything about you.

COMMANDER

There's no mystery about me. I'm just an ordinary kind of guy, really.

OFFRED

You must be good at something. What do you do - exactly.

He laughs.

COMMANDER

Too much damn paperwork!

He stops laughing, looks at her.

COMMANDER

It's tough. They keep bobbing up. You squash one bunch and another comes out from nowhere. They got the Commander of Georgia last week.

Offred gives him his glass of scotch. Her hand trembles.

COMMANDER

I was in market research to start with - then I branched out - became a sort of scientist. Then the guys made their move and they asked me to go in with them. The country was crazy. Nobody felt anything. Men or women. They had itches. Sex itches. Money itches. Everything was cheap. Opportunism all over. Nobody knew how to feel anything any more. Men could make money. It's not enough. And sex was too easy. Anyone could just buy it. There was nothing to fight for. Nothing to feel.

OFFRED

Do they feel now?

COMMANDER

Sure they do.

OFFRED

What?

COMMANDER

We've given them values, which people can feel (he hits his stomach) right here. it works. You have to admit that.

Pause.

Say something. What do you think?

OFFRED

You know what I think.

The Commander forms several words in a row.

COMMANDER

You're losing.

He is teasing her again with his foot. She is trying different combinations.

COMMANDER

We didn't create the pollution. We didn't manipulate genes and nukes. We didn't destroy the planet. but we will save whatever we can. If we have to shoot a few people , isolate a number of others, suspend credit and plastic, so be it!

OFFRED

Well, I had a husband and a sweet little girl and a job I was good at. I didn't need cleaning up.

COMMANDER (persuasive)

You were on the wrong track. One day you'll have to admit that it's better this way. Of course, better never means better for everyone. It always means worse, for some.

He stands, bends, takes her face in his hands, kisses her very gently. Offred is chilled, paralyzed.

KATE'S VOICE OVER

I wish this story showed me in a better light, more active. You'll have to forgive me, I am a refugee from the past, a survivor, not a hero.

130. INT. CORRIDOR'S AND KITCHEN. NIGHT.

Instead of going back to her room Offred hurries through the house.

131. EXT. COURT YARD. NIGHT.

She rushes across the illuminated lawn, between the beams of the search light, into the garage.

132. INT. NICK'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Nick in shirt sleeves. One lamp on.

OFFRED

Is it too late?

NICK (with half a smile)

Have you come to do your duty for the Fatherland?

OFFRED

Yup.

NICK

I could always squirt it into a bottle and you could pour it in.

OFFRED

It's still me.

She goes to him, touches him.

I'm still me.

She kisses him, rubs against him.

Aren't I?

He grabs her. They huddle together as if in a cage.

'133. INT. HOUSE. HALL. DAY.

Sound of a siren approaching.

Rita in the hall.

RITA

Offred the birthmobile! Hurry!

The birthmobile arrives. Offred hurries down the stairs.

RITA

Oh, may it go well!

OFFRED

Who is it?

RITA

It's Ofwarren.

Offred goes out of the front door.

A Guardian salutes. She gets into the birthmobile, which is painted red.

134. INT. BIRTHMOBILE. DAY.

The interior is red.

Three Handmaids are sitting.

HANDMAID/JUNE

Isn't it wonderful. Isn't it wonderful.

She squeezes Offred's hand. She's crying with joy.

The second Handmaid is praying. The third one is Ofglen.

135. EXT. COMMANDER WARREN'S HOUSE. DAY.

A large fenced garden. The red Birthmobile arrives. The Handmaids get out.

Another siren is heard. A blue limousine arrives. A group of Wives get out, dressed in blue.

There is an Eyes van at the gate and armed Guardians around the fence.

Men's eyes looking at the Maids.

In the garden there is an extensive buffet. Large

quantities of food. Champagne and white wine in ice buckets. 'Marthas' are serving dozens of excited wives. A small band, consisting of elderly male musicians, is playing "Whispering Hope." At the side of the garden, under a tree is a table for the Handmaids. Pitchers of lemonade, etc. (Later on the band plays "Let the Sun Shine: and "Come to the Church in the Wildwood.")

The arriving group of wives are greeted warmly by the others: "Happy Day! Welcome on this Happy Day! What a beautiful, wonderful day! Champagne! Let's have some champagne!"

On a chaise lounge lies the wife of Commander Warren, a thin woman with greying hair. The wives cluster around her pouring champagne into a silver goblet. They gaze at her.

A WIFE

Doesn't she look beautiful?

ANOTHER WIFE

Radiant. I'd say she looks completely and utterly radiant.

136. INT. COMMANDER WARREN'S BEDROOM. DAY.

Ofwarren sitting on the king size bed, propped on pillows. A white shift is hike up over her thighs.

Two Handmaids, on either side of her, grip her hands. A third lifts her shift, pours baby oil onto her stomach and rubs.

Aunt Helena supervising the scene.

Handmaids sit cross legged on the floor. Offred and Ofglen are among them.

There is a constant flow of Handmaids as one pair replaces another, to take part in the ceremony.

A soft chant rises and falls: "Breathe, breathe, breathe. Expel, expel, expel. Pant, pant, pant." Ofwarren tries to follow this advice.

Aunt Helena gives her an ice cube.

AUNT HELENA

Suck it.

137. EXT. THE GARDEN. DAY.

The band playing "Hey Ho, Hey Ho, it's off to work we go....." The Wives giggling, swaying, becoming drunker.

Offred and Ofglen come out of the house and walk to the Handmaid's table. They pour lemonade.

OFGLEN

So you're seeing him alone?

OFFRED

Who?

OFGLEN

What does he want? Kinky sex?

OFFRED

Uuh....in a way....I am his mistress.

OFGLEN

He's at the top. He's in charge of security for the whole State. He's a real bastard.

OFFRED

How do you know that?

OFGLEN

The grapevine. There is a password. Mayday. Don't use it unless you have to.

In background a Martha comes out of the house and approached a group of Wives.

MARTHA

It could be any time! It could be any time now!

WIFE

Well tell her to get a move on. We ain't got all night!

Raucous laughter from the Wives.

ANOTHER WIFE

Listen, I know all about these girls from way back. I tell you, they're whores, all of them. They'll do it with anyone.

OFGLEN (to Offred)

We may want to kill him.

Offred looks at her.

You could help us.

OFFRED

How?

OFGLEN

Make him trust you.

Suddenly a scream from the open bedroom window. The band stops playing. Everybody turns and looks up.

OFGLEN (whispering to Offred)

I hope for an UNBABY with a pinhead or a snout like a dogs.

Wives grip Mrs.. Warren's hands. She lies tense, her eyes closed.

A great sigh of joy from above. Aunt Helena appears at the window holding a newborn baby.

Wives fall into each others arms, laughing, crying, pouring champagne.

138. INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

Ofwarren crying silently.

OFWARREN (silently)

What was it?

The band strikes up from below.

OFWARREN

I want to go home.

She begins to cry, she tries to get up, insanity
seizing her.

139. EXT. GARDEN. DAY.

Aunt Helena comes into the garden carrying the baby.
She walks across the lawn to Mrs.. Warren. Wives crowd
around. The Aunt puts the baby into Mrs.. Warren's
arms.

AUNT HELENA

Here is your baby.

Mrs. Warren holds it, her eyes brimming with tears.

MRS.. WARREN

What is it?

AUNT HELENA

It's a lovely little girl.

Mrs. Warren looks up at her, smiles.

MRS.. WARREN

That's what I've always wanted. Always.

As the wives cluster around the baby, the camera finds
Serena standing apart, watching.

speed camera

140. INT. COMMANDER'S STUDY. NIGHT.

The Commander is hiding something behind his back.

COMMANDER

I have a little suprise for you tonight.
Something you'll like.

OFFRED

What is it? Chinese Chequers?

COMMANDER

Better.

He brings from behind his back what seems to be a handful of feathers. He lets it unfold. it proves to be a sequin dress.

OFFRED

What's this?

COMMANDER

It's a dress. For you. I hope to hell it fits.

OFFRED

You want me to wear this?

COMMANDER

Sure. I'm taking you out.

OFFRED

Out? Out where? What's going on?

COMMANDER

The Wives are celebrating. Why shouldn't we. I'm taking you out somewhere, that's all. Put the dress on. And here are some shoes.

He gives her a pair of mauve shoes with very high heels.

And here's some make-up.

He gives her lipstick, eyeliner, mascara.

I'll go dress.

He goes out. Offred sits looking at the dress, shoes and the make-up.

OFFRED (to herself)

Jesus.

141. EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE. NIGHT.

The Commander and Offred walk toward the garage whispering. She wears a blue cloak with a hood over the sequin dress. She is heavily made up.

COMMANDER

You look fantastic.

OFFRED

Fantastic is right.

COMMANDER

What a pair of pins!

OFFRED

These shoes are pretty big.

COMMANDER

Too big?

OFFRED

No. Not too big. Just big.

COMMANDER

You know what you are?

OFFRED

What?

COMMANDER

You're my date.

OFFRED

Gee. Where are you taking me?

The Commander grins, puts his finger to his mouth.

COMMANDER

Ssshhh.

147. INT. GARAGE. NIGHT.

The Commander and Offred slip into the dark garage by a side door.

A light in the car goes on. Nick gets out, opens the doors.

The Commander and Offred get in the car. She looks at Nick, briefly. He is expressionless.

He gets into the driving seat, presses a remote control. The garage door rises. He drives out.

143. EXT. THE STREET. NIGHT.

Car driving along the street. It comes to a checkpoint.

144. INT. CAR. NIGHT.

AND EXT. CHECKPOINT. NIGHT.

Offred sits with her hood up.

Nick pulls up by the side of the road.

COMMANDER

You'll have to get down on the floor now.
For a few minutes. Wives aren't allowed in
here.

OFFRED

In where?

COMMANDER

OK. On the floor.

She crouches down on the floor of the car. The car moves.

Her face by his shoes.

The car stops. Window down. Voice.

GUARDIAN

Good evening sir.

The car moves on.

COMMANDER

Right.

He helps her to sit up. She looks out of the window.

145. EXT. CAR TRAVELING. NIGHT.

The car approaches a tall building. It was once a landmark hotel. It is blacked out, all windows boarded up.

The car drives in to an alleyway at the back of the building and stops. Trash cans. They get out.

COMMANDER

Give Nick the cloak.

She does so. Nick folds it over his arm.

COMMANDER

Come on.

The Commander guides Offred toward a side door, which is made of steel. He takes out a key and opens it. They go in.

146. INT. CORRIDOR. NIGHT.

A concrete corridor. Fluorescent overhead lights.

COMMANDER

Here.

He slips a tag on her wrist, on an elastic band.

If anyone asks you, say you're an evening rental.

He steers her forward.

They go through a door into another corridor.

147. INT. COURTYARD. NIGHT.

They emerge into a central courtyard.

A fountain spraying water. Plants, trees, vines.

Oval sided glass elevators slide up and down the walls. There are several stories and galleries. A large skylight in the roof. It's cavernous. A floor show. The girls merely go through the movements. Dozens upon dozens of women. Men in dark suits. Groups of Japanese and Arabs.

The women are dressed in shortie night gowns, baby doll pyjamas, garter belts and black stockings, see-through negligees. Some are in bathing suits, one piece or bikini, jogging shorts and sun halters, leotards, cheer leader outfits, clinging evening and sequin dresses. All are heavily made-up.

People are dancing on the dance floor. A group of musicians play a Beach Boys number. On a big screen run a succession of silent images from Oscar ceremonies of the past.

COMMANDER

It's like walking into the past. Don't you think?

OFFRED (staring)

Yes.

COMMANDER

Don't gawk. Act natural.

A man calls: "Hi, Fred!" and comes towards them, waving. She looks at the Commander in a sudden panic. He grips her arm.

COMMANDER

Steady.

The man shakes the Commander's hand.

DICK

Fred! How are you?

COMMANDER

Hi, Dick. How you doing? This here is Mary Lou. She's new.

DICK

Hi, Mary Lou, how you doing?

OFFRED

Oh fine. Real fine.

DICK

You're new here, huh? Well, I'll tell you, you're going to love it here. Everyone has fun here. I mean, we really have fun here. What do you say, Fred?

COMMANDER

I'd say that's right.

DICK

She's a pretty girl.

He looks her up and down.

Yup. I'd say you got a pretty good looking girl here.

The Commander laughs.

COMMANDER

No, no, she belongs to me, Dick.

DICK

Sure, sure. (To Offred.) Have a good time, baby.

COMMANDER

See you, Dick.

He guides Offred through the dancers toward a table up on a tier.

COMMANDER

So what do you think of our little club?

OFFRED

It's a club?

COMMANDER

Well, that's what we call it.

OFFRED

I thought....all this sort of thing was strictly forbidden.

COMMANDER

It should be. But there is a war going on. These men are in it, so they need a little fun to keep 'em going.

He laughs loudly. They sit at the table. A waitress comes up.

WAITRESS

Good evening, Commander.

COMMANDER (to Offred)
Have a drink. What'll you have?

OFFRED
I haven't had a drink in years.

COMMANDER
Have one now. What'll it be?

OFFRED
Vodka tonic.

COMMANDER (to Waitress)
A vodka tonic and bring me a bottle of Scotch.

Suddenly Moira dances by. She is dressed as a Bunny Girl. She is wearing long gloves. The two women see each other.

The Commander takes Offred's hand.

COMMANDER (To Offred)
So what do you think?

OFFRED
Who are these people?

COMMANDER
Oh, officers from the front. Senior officials. Allies from Europe and Russia. And trade delegations, of course. It stimulates trade. It's a good place to meet people.

OFFRED

No, I meant the women.

COMMANDER (blankly)

The women?

OFFRED

Who are the women?

COMMANDER

Oh, the women....well, some of them are real pros. Working girls - from the time before.

OFFRED

And the others?

COMMANDER

Well, we have quite a collection. That one there, the one in green, she's a sociologist. Or was. That one was a lawyer. There's some business executives, school teacher, you name it. They prefer it here, anyway.

OFFRED

Prefer it to what?

COMMANDER

To the alternatives.

He strokes her neck. The waitress arrives with the vodka and bottle of Scotch on a tray. She also carries a telephone. She puts the drinks down and plugs the telephone into the wall.

WAITRESS

Telephone for you Commander.

Moirira dances by.

The Commander gives Offred her drink and pours one for himself.

COMMANDER

Here's looking at you.

He lifts the phone.

.148. INT. LADIES ROOM. NIGHT.

An older woman, wearing a purple caftan, seated at a table. The cattle prod in front of her, it's thong around her wrist.

WARDRESS

Fifteen minutes.

The rest area is gently lit in pinkish tones. Several women relax, shoes off, smoking, drinking coffee. Moirira's waiting for her.

Moirira and Offred fall into each others arms, laughing.

MOIRIRA

You look like a whore of Babylon!

OFFRED

That's what I'm supposed to look like! What the hell do you think you look like?

MOIRA

Well, I'll tell you, this ain't exactly my style. I asked them to get me something classy from Saks Fifth Avenue but you know what the mail's like these days.

OFFRED

I do.

She suddenly bursts into tears and sits on the sofa.

MOIRA

Don't do that. Your eyes'll run. Anyway there's no time. Shove over.

This she says to the other woman.

WOMAN

My break is up anyway.

She leaves.

Moira sits with Offred.

MOIRA

What the hell are you doing here? Why did they send you? Huh? What did you do wrong? Laugh at someone's dick?

OFFRED

It's just tonight. He smuggled me in. For the night.

MOIRA

Oh. So how you doing?

OFFRED

I thought I would never see you again. What happened? What happened to you?

MOIRA

They caught me. Then they....worked me over some. Then they showed me a movie about the Colonies. You know? The fucking toxic dumps and all the dead bodies and shit. They figure you have one year maximum there before your nose falls off. They stuck something up my ass and told me I only had two alternatives - the Colonies or here. So I said here.

OFFRED

So here you are.

MOIRA

So here I am. It's OK. You get free face cream. You get free booze, free drugs. You only work nights.

OFFRED

Oh shit.

MOIRA

Don't be silly. It's not so bad. There's all these women around. Actually it's paradise. I mean it.

OFFRED

Do they let you?

MOIRA

They don't give a fuck. I mean they don't care who you fuck. You know what they call this place? Jezebel's.

Offred clutches Moira's hand. Moira withdraws it sharply. Offred stares at her. She speaks in a hard, low voice.

OFFRED

Give me your hand. Give it to me.

Moira lifts her arm and slowly puts her gloved hand back on the sofa. Offred touches it and freezes. The hand is stiff, immobile, prosthetic. She looks at Moira.

MOIRA

Oh yes - they did that too. I told you, hands and feet we don't need for our purposes. They left me one. You guess what for.

VOICE

Get down here girls!

Offred and Moira stare at each other.

KATE'S VOICE OVER

I'd like to say she blew up Jezebel's with fifty commanders inside it. But I don't know how she ended. I never saw her again.

149. INT. BAR. NIGHT.

In the bar area two girls in cheer leader costumes are doing a routine, jumping and bouncing up and down. A man is cracking a whip.

COMMANDER

Let's go upstairs . Here's the key.

He shows her the key.

Offred gazes at him coolly.

They ascend the glass elevator: Offred on display next to him.

By the bar a large man suddenly jumps on the back of one of the girls, swinging his hat in the air. The girl collapses, the man on top of her. Laughter and shouts.

150. INT. HOTEL ROOM. NIGHT.

They enter.

COMMANDER

It's a nice room. It'll be different. It'll be nice. Wait for me.

He goes into the bathroom. She waits. She looks at the king sized bed, the lamps, the furniture. Everything is the same as once upon a time. There is an ample mirror, too. Her mascara has smudged, the lipstick bled, the pink feathers are tawdry.

The Commander lies down on the bed. And she does the same.

He pulls down one of her straps, slides his other hand in among the feathers. She lies there like a dead bird. He strokes her body, along the flank, down the leg, to the foot, around the ankle, where the tattoo is.

COMMANDER

Maybe I should turn the lights out.

151. INT. CAR TRAVELING. NIGHT.

Nick is driving.

The Commander sprawled, bottle in hand. Nick and Offred silent. Palpable tension between them. She wears the cloak and hood.

Nick suddenly stops the car, gets out, goes to the Commander's door, open it, touches the Commander's arms. The Commander wakes up.

NICK

Coming to a checkpoint, Sir. Shall I take that?

COMMANDER

Sure. Sure.

Nick takes the bottle, goes round the car and gets back into the driving seat. The Commander turns to Offred.

COMMANDER

Nick's a great guy. Everybody likes Nick. Do you know what he is? He's like a son to me.

152. INT. NICK'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Offred sitting in the cloak and hood. Nick comes in. He looks at her.

NICK

So....did he make you do it? Did you finally do it? What was it like? I said what was it like?

OFFRED

He wanted romance, real feelings, passion.

NICK

And he got it?

OFFRED

I faked it.

NICK

Is that what you did? Real clever. Women are so clever?

OFFRED

Oh, for God's sake! What did you want me to do, spit in his face and end up shovelling shit in the Colonies?

Silence. He goes to the window and stands looking out.

OFFRED

Do you think we'll ever get out?

He is still.

Do you want to get out? Could we get out together?

He turns to look at her.

NICK

Maybe.

He goes to her, touches her.

Maybe.

OFFRED

I'm cold. Hold me.

He holds her in his arms.

153. EXT. MAIN STREET. AFTERNOON.

Dozens of women walking in the same direction, Offred and Ofglen among them.

An Eyes van slowly passes, announcing, "Women's Salvaging today at 5:45. Male Particicution at 6 o'clock."

Offred and Ofglen approach the Wall.

Armored cars. Soldiers in riot gear. The women pass through the gate.

154. EXT. INSIDE THE WALL. AFTERNOON.

The old university grounds. Wide lawns, Dozens of Handmaids on the grass.

Wives and daughters sitting on folding wooden chairs on bleachers looking down on the platform. Marthas stand around the edges and on the library steps. Student Handmaids kneel at the front on small red cushions.

A long piece of rope winds in front of the first row of cushions, along the second and back through the line of chairs. The front end of the rope runs up onto the stage.

On the stage sits a Handmaid. Her hands rest in her lap. She ways a little in her chair. She has been sedated. She wears a shit shift and red shoes. It is Ofwarren.

Offred looks up and recognizes Janine.

OFFRED

It's Janine!

OFGLEN (whispering)

It was no good, you know. It was a shredder after all.

OFFRED

She used to be such a believer.

OFGLEN

She went crazy when she found out that they did away with the baby.

The official procession approaches the stage: Three women, one Aunt in front, two Salvagers in black hoods and cloaks behind her. Behind them other Aunts. They go up onto the stage. Aunt Lydia speaks into the mike.

AUNT LYDIA

Good morning ladies. I am sure we are all aware of the unfortunate circumstances that bring us here together on this beautiful morning, when I am certain we would all rather be doing something else, at least I speak for myself, but duty is a hard taskmaster, and it is in the name of duty that we are here today.

Silence.

Janine, praying.

OFWARREN (crying)

I am afraid to die....

The Salvagers tie the Handmaid's hands behind her back. (Okay!) She is helped onto a high stool under a scaffold. Obediently she bends forward as the rope is placed around her neck.

Ofglen whispers to Offred:

OFGLEN

If we asked you to go to your Commander's room - at very short notice - could you do it?

OFFRED

Yes.

OFGLEN

Would you do it?

OFFRED

Yes.

AUNT LYDIA

Why does God demand her death?

THE WOMEN

Give us warning. Give us warning. Give us warning.

The stool is kicked away. Aunt Lydia places her hand over the mike, stifling sounds. The Handmaids lean forward to touch the rope in front of them with both hands, and then place one hand upon their heart. A long sigh goes across the lawn. The Salvagers seize hold of the kicking feet and pull down.

AUNT LYDIA

I decree that the body be taken to the Wall and exhibited.

The body sways gently, white bag over its face. The feet dangle in red shoes.

OFGLEN (to Offred)

Would you do anything we asked you to do?

OFFRED

Yes, I would.

Aunt Lydia goes to the microphone.

AUNT LYDIA

Order. Order.

The women turn to her.

You may form a circle.

The Handmaids mill about on the grass in front of the stage.

AUNT LYDIA

Orderly, orderly.

The Handmaids finally form a number of circles around an empty space.

AUNT LYDIA

You know the rules for a particicution. You will wait until I blow the whistle. After that, what you do is up to you, until I blow the whistle again. Understood?

A low animal noise of assent comes from the Handmaids. Aunt Lydia signals. Two Guardians come forward from behind the stage. The drag a third man between them. His shirt is dirty and torn. His face is cut and bruised, the flesh swollen.

AUNT LYDIA

This man has been convicted of the rape of a Handmaid. The penalty for rape is death! Deuteronomy 22:23-29. This crime took place at gunpoint. It was brutal. The woman was pregnant and the baby died.

Sighs and strangled cries from the women.

The Guardians let the man fall. On his knees, he looks about squinting at the circle of red women. He opens his mouth.

MAN

I didn't....

Aunt Lydia blows her whistle into the mike. It echoes shrilly. At first, nobody moves. Only when the guards

start to aim their rifles and shoot in the air. A great surge forward. Ofglen darts through the crowd, incisively, reaches the man before the other women, kicks his head three times. He falls.

The other women charge toward the body, gasping, growling, screaming. The more fervent ones pushing the hesitant ones forward.

Offred is thrown off balance and falls.

Wives and daughters lean forward in their chairs, Aunts gaze down from the platform. Ofglen comes out of the melee.

OFFRED

Why did you do that? How could you do that?
I saw what you did!

OFGLEN

Be quiet. They're watching.

OFFRED

I don't care!

OFGLEN

Don't be stupid. He was no rapist - he was a political - one of our best men. I put him out of his misery. Can't you see what they're doing to him?

June walks towards Ofglen and Offred. There is a smear of blood across her cheek and more blood on the white

of her headdress. She is smiling.

JUNE

Hi there. How you doing?

They look at her right hand, which is holding something. It is a clump of blond hair. She giggles.

JUNE

Have a nice day.

155. EXT. STREET. EVENING.

They walk like twins, without looking at each other, whispering intensely.

OF GLEN

He is the brain behind all this. The insidious propaganda. The brain washing. You said you would.

OFFRED

I can't. I'm no good at that. I'd get caught.

OF GLEN

We could get you out. We can - if there is immediate danger.

OFFRED

I want to stay here. I can't. Serena promised to get me to see my daughter.

Ofglen is deeply disappointed.

A Van of Eyes passes by. They walk in silence.

156. EXT. COMMANDER'S HOUSE. EVENING.

The Commander gets into the car. Nick hurries over to his side and they leave.

Offred is walking up from the gate. The car does not slow down.

Cora, in the kitchen window, is satisfied to inform her.

CORA

They're off for the night. A major operation. You want you dinner?

157. INT. OFFRED'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Offred is sitting still in her chair.

A knock on the door. She starts. The door opens. Serena comes in.

SERENA

I'm sorry....to disturb you. I wondered....is there any news?

OFFRED

Oh for Christ sakes leave me alone!

She jumps up and goes to the window.

No! There's no news!

SERENA

So you might....?

OFFRED

Yes. I might!

SERENA

Praise be.

Serena goes out and shuts the door. Offred remains at the window.

158. EXT. CORNER OF THE AVENUE. MORNING.

Offred waiting. In the distance a Handmaid appears, walking towards her.

She draws closer. She comes to Offred's side. They walk together.

HANDMAID

Blessed be the fruit.

OFFRED

May the Lord open. I've thought about it.

The Handmaid turns to her.

But how would I do it?

Offred stares at the Handmaid. She is not Ofglen, she is June.

OFFRED

Where is Ofglen?

HANDMAID

I am Ofglen.

159. EXT. HOUSE. DAY.

The Commander's car draws up. The Commander gets out, goes into the house. Nick drives the car into the garage.

160. EXT. THE GATE. DAY.

Offred walks up to the house.

Beyond the gate an Eyes van slowly approaching. It stops, facing the house, engine idling.

161. EXT. COMMANDER'S HOUSE. DAY.

Nick watches her approaching, fiddling with his cap, trying to signal something. Before she can get near him, Serena has come out of the front door, standing on the steps.

SERENA

Offred!

Offred walks over to her.

On the top step Serena stands, her eyes flaring.

SERENA

I trusted you. I tried to help you. What do you have to say?

Silence.

I told you, onething I will not tolerate:
private arrangements.

She brings her hand from behind her back, showing the cloak.

SERENA

There is lipstick on it.

She drops its still holding something else. Purple sequins fall, glittering in the sunlight.

163. INT. COMMANDER'S STUDY. DAY.

The Commander turns sharply, pulls a gun.

Offred stand still and then calmly closes the door.

COMMANDER

Hey.....! It's you. What is it? I could have fired this thing. I didn't call for you. What is it?

OFFRED

I just wanted to see you. Sorry. An impulse.

The television is on. On the screen, the siege of a house. Shots. An explosion. Men rush out of the house, are shot.

The picture cuts to the Commander, near the scene of the action.

OFFRED

He, that's you.

COMMANDER

Last night, the usual -

OFFRED

Ssh! I want to hear.

The Commander is surrounded by the TV crew.

VOICE ON TV (Reporter)

We understand sir, that in the siege of Jackson Street, tonight, a number of terrorists were captured and killed. Can you - ?

COMMANDER

That is correct. We got the whole - so-called - 'Mayday' gang, and that included their leader - a very dangerous man. This is a significant breakthrough

While the statement on tv goes on, Offred turns to him.

OFFRED

So you got the "big boy" -

COMMANDER

Yes, we did.

OFFRED

What will you do with him?

COMMANDER

Do? It's done. You attended a little party for him yesterday afternoon.

She looks at him.

OFFRED

You mean the rapist?

The Commander laughs.

COMMANDER

Yes, the rapist. He probably was a rapist.

Offred looks back at the tv.

SPEAKER VOICE

A number of terrorists have been arrested all over the country -

ON SCREEN: Eyes are taking Ofglen out of a house. She is fighting back, kicking and screaming, her hairdress gone, her red robe torn.

OFFRED (staring)

How did you find out?

Offred is so shocked, she forgets to hide the dresses.
The Commander plays with one of the feathers.

COMMANDER

I am sorry she found out.

OFFRED

Did you tell her?

COMMANDER

I had to, after she found this. She gave me hell.

He blows the feather into the air.

Go to your room.

OFFRED

Is this what happened to the other one?

COMMANDER

Now you know.

Offred still isn't moving.

You always meant a lot to me....coming in
here....giving me my drink....cheating at the
game....caring for me....the thought of
you....by night....I want you to know that.

He leans forward to kiss her.

She lets the dress fall to the floor and slashes his
neck with the shears; blade.

He holds his neck, stares at her in astonishment, tries to stem the flow of blood, lunges forward with his other hand, grabs her, falls, dragging her down with him. They lie together on the floor, their faces close. He moves his hand, presses a button. Alarm bells suddenly go off throughout the house. She tears herself from his grasp and rushes out of the room.

164. INT. THE STAIRS. DAY.

Bells ringing. Offred runs up the stairs to her room. She rushes in, closes the door, stand still.

Alarm bells. Uproar in the house. Approaching sirens.

165. EXT. THE HOUSE. DAY.

A black van arrives at speed, draws up. Four Eyes jump out and rush into the house.

166. INT. HOUSE. HALL AND STAIRS. DAY.

The Eyes burst in the front door. Serena, Cora, Rita and Nick appear in the hall. Serena is screaming. She points up the stairs.

SERENA

It's her! It's her!

Two Eyes and Serena run up the stairs.

167. INT. HER ROOM. DAY.

Offred at the window, peering out, breathing hard. She is blood-stained.

The Eyes burst in through the door. They grab her. Serena tries to attack her. They keep her at bay.

SERENA

Bitch. After all he did for you.

168. INT. THE HALL. DAY.

The Eyes bring Offred down the stairs. The other two Eyes hold Nick.

AN EYE

We're arresting this man.

Serena collapses, sobbing. She is supported by Rita and Cora.

The Eyes take Offred and Nick out of the door.

169. EXT. HOUSE. DAY.

The Eyes bring Offred and Nick out of the house. The Eye holding Offred's arm pulls her violently. She resists. He slaps her across the face. She attacks him. Nick lurches forward and grabs her.

NICK (swiftly)

Go with it. It's Mayday. Trust me.

She looks at him, bewildered.

The Eyes put Offred and Nick into the van. They jump into the van. The van drives off.

Another black van passes them, siren blowing, stops at the house. A group of Eyes jump out and go into the house.

170. EXT. STREET. DAY.

The van speeding away, siren blaring.

171. INT. VAN. DAY.

NICK (to the Eyes)

OK. Do it round the second corner.

Two Eyes to to the back door of the van.

Offred stares at Nick.

OFFRED

What the hell - ?

Nick goes to her, hold her face.

NICK

It's OK. They'll look after you. I have to stay in the field.

The Eyes open the back door of the van.

AN EYE

Here we go.

Nick kisses her. She kisses him, desperately.

OFFRED

Nick -

An Eye pulls him away.

THE EYE

Come on Nick!

Nick and the Eye stand by the side of the van.

OFFRED

Nick - ?

NICK (to the Eye)

Okay.

The Eye hits Nick on the jaw.

He falls back against the side of the van, waits a moment, and then goes to the open door of the van and jumps out.

172. EXT. STREET. DAY.

Van speeding. Nick landing on a grass verge and rolling down.

173. INT. VAN. DAY.

Offred tries to see whether Nick landed safely. She takes off her Handmaid's hairdress.

KATE'S VOICE OVER

Whether this is my end or a new beginning,
I don't know.

174. EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD. EVENING

(Helicopter shot.)

The van speeds along.

Fade out to Black

title card: EPILOGUE

Fade in

175. INT. AUDITORIUM. DAY.

A strangely futuristic and yet familiar assembly of scholars. The tape cassettes are on display on the pulpit near the lectern, where Kate, now in her seventies, finishes her tale.

KATE

I was underground it must have been six or eight weeks before I ended in the attic, where I recorded these tapes. They are one of the few records of the time, The Giliadean Regime wiped its own computers and destroyed all printouts after various purges and internal upheavals led to its collapse.

KATE (continued)

I was taken from one safehouse to another,
and escaped on the Underground Female-
road, since dubbed by some the Under-
ground Frailroad

Laughter and applause.

A young women, no doubt her daughter, helps the old lady off the
stage.

THE END