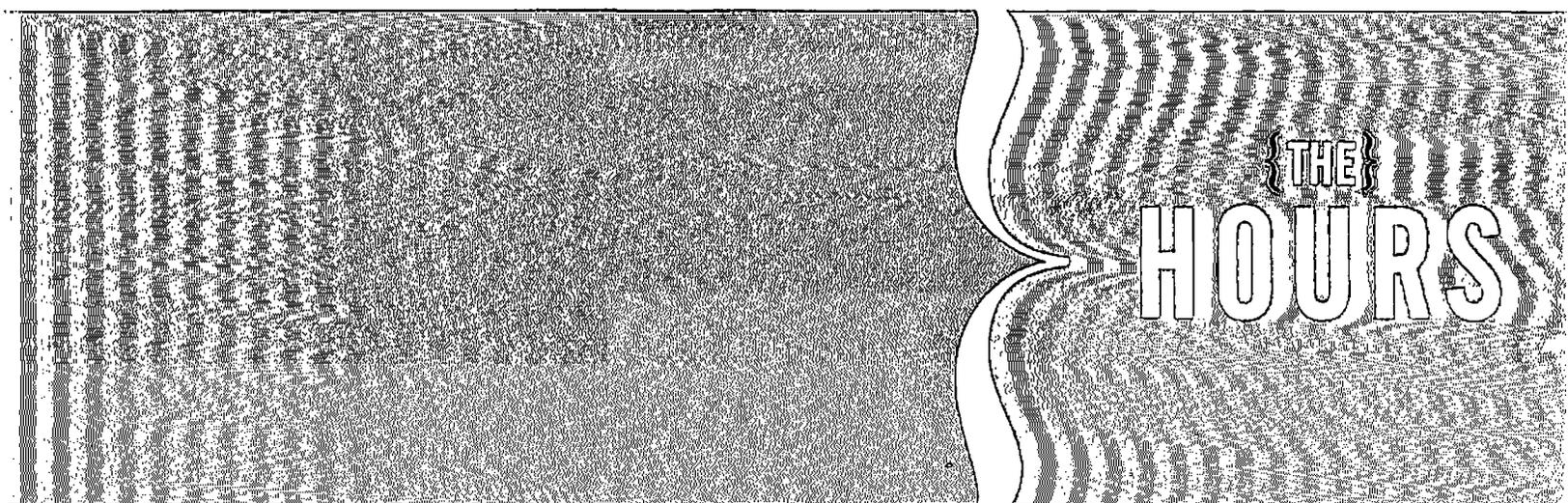


for your consideration



{THE}  
HOURS

ADAPTED SCREENPLAY  
**DAVID HARE**

BASED UPON THE NOVEL BY  
**MICHAEL CUNNINGHAM**



**MIRAMAX**

FADE IN:

1 EXT. MONK'S HOUSE (RODMELL, ENGLAND) - DAY 1

A river flows, not far from a small house in the Sussex countryside.

SUPERIMPOSE: SUSSEX, ENGLAND. 1941.

It is the 28th of March, a desolate, gray morning, as a woman of 59, very thin, in a huge overcoat with a fur collar, comes out of the house and hurries across the lawn. The edge of the lawn turns into a grassy, open field as she carries on her way, moving quickly, determinedly towards her destination.

2 EXT. RIVER OUSE - DAY 2

The woman reaches an embankment and has to clamber down to a brackish, mud-brown River Ouse. Her elegant, unsuitable shoes stick in the mud. The woman is seen more closely -- her face pale, fine, gaunt. As soon as she gets to the river's edge she looks round for a suitable stone. She sees one lying on the ground, the size and shape of a pig's skull. She picks it up and crams it a little clumsily into the pocket of her coat. Then VIRGINIA WOOLF turns and without taking off her shoes begins to wade out into the river.

3 EXT./INT. MONK'S HOUSE - DAY 3

LEONARD WOOLF is coming in from the garden on the other side of the house. At this point, he is 61. He has muddy corduroys and a pullover, the very picture of the aging intellectual -- austere, ascetic with a fine forehead and glasses. He comes distractedly into a small hallway at the back of the house and starts taking off his Wellington boots, unaware of anything wrong.

4 INT. MONK'S HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - DAY 4

Two blue envelopes are propped up on the mantelpiece. In handwriting, the single word "Leonard" is on one; the single word "Vanessa" is on the other. LEONARD'S hand reaches to lift his envelope, leaving the other where it is. He stands, fearful. The sitting room of the house is bohemian, casual, artistic, attractive. A YOUNG MAID comes into the room, unaware of the drama that is about to unfold.

MAID

Are you ready for lunch, sir?

(CONTINUED)

LEONARD

Not quite. Not just at the moment.

The MAID goes out. LEONARD, still in his gardening clothes, is tense as he opens the envelope. He unfolds two blue pages. VIRGINIA WOOLF'S voice is hard as she reads the letter.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

Dearest, I feel certain that I am going mad again. I feel we can't go through another of these terrible times. And I shan't recover this time. I begin to hear voices and can't concentrate. So I am doing what seems the best thing to do.

LEONARD looks up, alarmed, beginning to panic.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

You have given me the greatest possible happiness. You have been in every way all that anyone could be. I know that I am spoiling your life, that without me you could work. And you will, I know.

LEONARD runs back down to pull on his Wellington boots, then runs out of the back room. He comes out of the house and moves rapidly down the lawn. Terrified, he begins to run as the river comes in sight. Meanwhile:

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

You see, I can't write this properly. I want to say is that I owe all the happiness of my life to you. You have been entirely patient with me and incredibly good. Everything has gone from me but the certainty of your goodness. I can't go on spoiling your life any longer. I don't think two people could have been happier than we have been.

LEONARD has reached the edge of the river. He sees a woman's footprints in the mud. He looks out across its empty, flowing surface.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

Virginia.

6 EXT. RIVER - DAY

6

At once the image of VIRGINIA WOOLF'S body, face down, swirling fantastically like a Catherine wheel, back on the surface of the water and carried along by the current. Her hair is unloosed, her coat has billowed out. Her body swirls, moving fast downstream, wildly festooned like Ophelia, then comes to rest against an underwater pillar and curls up like a baby as the water catches the corpse against the stone. It is caught against the stanchion of a bridge. Over the bridge, in convoy, a line of Army trucks is passing, loaded with soldiers in transit. The convoy passes over, ignorant of the corpse beneath the bridge.

7 EXT./INT. THE BROWNS' HOUSE (LOS ANGELES) - DAWN

7

CREDIT SEQUENCE. Now a delivery truck moves down a suburban street.

SUPERIMPOSE: LOS ANGELES. 1951.

The CREDITS BEGIN. It is only just past dawn as the truck passes a car coming from the opposite direction. The car approaches a one-level, small detached house, which sits, secure, confident, a family image of post-war America. The car draws up in the drive, and from it gets out DAN BROWN, a sturdy, handsome American, just turning 30. He wears suit trousers and a white open-neck shirt, and he is carrying a bunch of white roses. He lets himself in through the front door, and moves, roses in hand, along past the sitting room with its pastel shades and low, sparse furniture into the kitchen. As he reaches for a vase, he looks towards the door of a nearly-darkened bedroom which is open at the back of the house. A few rays of light from the window help to pick out shapes. In the bedroom LAURA BROWN, a few years older than DAN, is lying asleep in the bed. She is small, angular and fragile. She turns a moment in her sleep.

8 EXT. HOGARTH HOUSE (RICHMOND) - DAWN (1923)

8

SUPERIMPOSE: RICHMOND, ENGLAND. 1923.

A younger LEONARD WOOLF, only 43, is walking past the church, carrying a newspaper and a pile of envelopes and packages he has collected. This suburban quarter, a half an hour away from London, is rich with flowers, lawns, trees. In the other direction come the morning COMMUTERS, dark-coated men, on their way to the station to work. Beside the church is a big gray-stoned house, its great face unmoving in the dawn.

9 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - HALL AND GALLERY - DAWN

9

LEONARD WOOLF opens the door of the house and goes into the hall, which is lined with paintings. He puts down the packages and paper and looks up in time to see a man in his 60s, obviously a DOCTOR -- he carries a doctor's bag and is in a dark coat -- coming down the stairs, heading to have a word with him.

LEONARD

Ah, Doctor. Good morning.

DOCTOR

Mr. Woolf. No worse, I think. The main thing is to keep her where she is, keep her calm.

LEONARD

Mmm. Friday then?

DOCTOR

Friday.

Their conversation is left behind. Upstairs, on the first floor, beyond the banisters of an open gallery, is the room the DOCTOR has come out of. Inside the bedroom, a woman is alone. She is lying chastely, blinds down at the windows. She is the younger VIRGINIA WOOLF, now only 41. She is staring up at the ceiling.

10 EXT./INT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT (NEW YORK) - DAWN (2001) 10

SUPERIMPOSE: NEW YORK CITY, 2001.

A SUBWAY TRAIN RATTLES violently PAST and a lone WOMAN is left standing on the platform. At street level, the sun is just about to rise down West 10th, one of the leafiest and most pleasant streets in the Village. The woman, SALLY LESTER, is walking quickly down the dawn street, returning home. She is tall, dark, dynamic, in her late 30s, wearing a leather jacket and jeans. She approaches a high red-brick terraced house, goes up the steps and lets herself in through its white-painted front door. SALLY goes up to the first-floor apartment, which she also unlocks. SALLY walks straight through the living room of quiet, Bloomsbury-bourgeois homeliness -- terracotta and pine, clay post, ceramics, plants and massive numbers of books. She goes down a corridor into a warm-colored bedroom, light beginning to beat now against large blinds. SALLY sheds clothes as she goes, taking off her leather jacket and jeans, stripping down to a T-shirt and knickers. She gets into the bed, does nothing to wake the apparently sleeping figure beside her. CLARISSA VAUGHAN is short of 50, tall, splendid beside the smaller SALLY. CLARISSA does not react visibly, but a moment after SALLY closes her eyes, CLARISSA opens hers.

11 INT. MONTAGE - ALL OF THE ABOVE - ALL DAWN

11

2001, 1951 and 1923. In MONTAGE, DAN BROWN stands in the bedroom in front of the mirror, tying his tie. CLARISSA throws back the sheet from the bed and gets up. She comes into the small bathroom in her white night gown, ties her hair back behind her head. LAURA, awake now, reaches for a book which is lying at the side of her bed. As her hand reaches for it, the title is clearly seen: Mrs. Dalloway. VIRGINIA sits alone in her bedroom in her dressing-gown, looking at herself in the mirror, then lifts her fingers to adjust her hair. Water pours onto CLARISSA'S face in the shower as she reaches her naked arm out in front of her to grope for the tap, invisible in steam. DAN sets out the breakfast things at the kitchen table for three people, then goes and spoons Nescafe for himself into a mug. He pours on hot water. CLARISSA, in a robe, goes to fill her percolator from a kitchen sink which is full of live crabs, in water. VIRGINIA completes dressing, checks herself neatly in the mirror, walks down the corridor and stands for a moment at the top of the stairs, readying herself. CLARISSA comes into her living room, stands in the middle with her remote control and adjusts the lighting, then turns ON a CLASSICAL RADIO STATION. LAURA arranges the pillows to enjoy a luxurious few moments of reading. She turns to listen for the sound of her husband in the kitchen.

In succession, the three women, suspended: VIRGINIA, pausing, CLARISSA looking around satisfied with the environment she has created, LAURA listening. Then one thing disturbs CLARISSA: a bunch of sorry-looking dead flowers in the corner of the room. She shakes her head in irritation. DAN brings his roses from the sink and puts the vase on the kitchen table. As he does so, another vase is put down by a MAID'S hands, this time with a bunch of blue cornflowers. As it goes down, echoing the identical motion from 28 years later, the CREDITS END.

12 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - HALL AND GALLERY - DAY (1923)

12

The vase of cornflowers is seen to be on a table in the open hall of Hogarth House. LEONARD WOOLF is sitting eating toast, drinking coffee, and already proof-reading a manuscript. He looks up at the sound of VIRGINIA appearing from upstairs.

VIRGINIA

Good morning, Leonard.

LEONARD

Good morning, Virginia. How was your sleep?

(CONTINUED)

VIRGINIA

Uneventful.

LEONARD

The headaches?

VIRGINIA

No. No headaches.

LEONARD

The doctor seemed pleased.

VIRGINIA helps herself to tea from the table and nods at the mail.

VIRGINIA

That's all from this morning?

LEONARD

Yes. This young man has submitted his manuscript. I've found three errors of fact and two spelling mistakes and I'm not yet on page four.

LEONARD is watching her all the time and sees that she is not planning to sit down.

LEONARD

Have you had breakfast?

VIRGINIA

Yes.

LEONARD

Liar.

LEONARD'S tone is casual. He has the quiet, tactful manner of a good nurse.

LEONARD

Virginia, it is not my insistence. It's the wish of your doctors.

VIRGINIA just looks at him, not answering.

LEONARD

I'm going to send Nelly up with a bun and some fruit.

Again, VIRGINIA looks at LEONARD, disobediently.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2)

12

LEONARD

Very well, then. Lunch. A proper lunch. Husband and wife sitting down to soup, pudding and all. By force, if necessary.

VIRGINIA

Leonard, I believe I may have a first sentence.

LEONARD looks her in the eye, knowing how stubborn she is.

LEONARD

Work, then. But then you must eat.

13 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

13

VIRGINIA goes into her plain, serene study and sits down, picking up a board on which she writes. There is an inkwell, a fountain pen. She lights a cigarette. Then, charged with quiet excitement, she opens a clean notebook. The blank page. Then a feeling of pleasure appears on her face in the hushed room. Before writing she tries her sentence out loud.

VIRGINIA

Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself.

14 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - LOS ANGELES (1951)

14

LAURA is lying in the bed, luxuriating in a moment of being alone. She reaches for the copy of Mrs. Dalloway beside her bed and she opens it. She smiles in anticipated pleasure. She speaks out loud.

LAURA

'Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself.'

15 INT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK (2001)

15

CLARISSA is standing in the middle of the living room, frowning, as if wondering what she should do. Then she calls out to SALLY, unseen in the other room.

CLARISSA

Sally! I think I'll buy the flowers myself.

16 INT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

16

SALLY, still lying in bed, blearily reacts to what she has heard.

SALLY  
What? What flowers?

And then she remembers what day it is. SALLY starts to get out of bed.

SALLY  
Oh shit, I'd forgotten...

SALLY falls back on the bed.

17 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - DAY (1951)

17

A 5-year-old boy is watching as cereal is poured into a bowl. LAURA and DAN'S son, RICHIE, is sitting at the table as DAN prepares his breakfast. RICHIE is in pajamas, a sensitive little boy, his face unable to censor his shifting feelings. DAN is in shirt and tie, his jacket neatly hung on the back of a chair.

DAN  
There you are, son. You're never going to be a big boy if you don't eat your breakfast. You're going to be the big brother. It's a very important job.

RICHIE  
Is Mommy getting up this morning?

DAN  
Of course she is. Of course Mommy's getting up. She just needs her rest. Look. Here she is.

And indeed, LAURA has now appeared in the doorway, the bulge of an early to mid-term pregnancy visible. LAURA shakes her head at the sight of the white roses on the table. There's something odd, distant in her manner.

LAURA  
Happy birthday.

DAN  
Morning, honey.

LAURA  
Oh, Dan. Roses. On your own birthday. You're too much, really.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

DAN

He'll eat it now that you're here.

DAN gestures at RICHIE.

LAURA

It's your birthday. You shouldn't be out buying me flowers.

DAN

Well, you were still sleeping.

LAURA

So?

DAN

Well, we decided it would be better if we let you sleep in a little. Didn't we?

DAN smiles conspiratorially at his son. LAURA reaches down and kisses RICHIE.

LAURA

Good morning, bug.

DAN

You need to rest, Laura. You're only four months away.

LAURA

Honestly! I'm fine. I'm just tired.

DAN touches her stomach tenderly. LAURA smiles, but then slips away. She pours herself coffee. DAN is putting his jacket on over his dazzling white shirt, readying himself for work.

DAN

I've been telling him he's got to eat his breakfast.

LAURA

That's true.

DAN

So it's a beautiful day. What are you two going to be doing with it?

LAURA

Oh, we've got our plans, haven't we?

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

DAN

What plans?

LAURA

Well, it wouldn't be much of a party, would it, if I told you every detail in advance?

DAN

Then I'd better stop asking questions then, huh?

DAN grins at RICHIE, the whole performance for his benefit.

DAN

Hey, is that the time? I'd better get going.

DAN is looking at his watch. It's a morning ritual -- the same every day. He gathers his briefcase and heads for the door in haste.

LAURA

Have a good day.

DAN

You too.

LAURA

And, Dan...

DAN stops at the door.

LAURA

Happy birthday.

DAN

Thank you.

DAN'S gone. Without him, the room feels silent. RICHIE looks at his mother. It's as if she's nervous at being left alone with RICHIE. LAURA waves good-bye to DAN outside in the drive, then turns back to RICHIE.

LAURA

You need to finish your breakfast.

RICHIE

That's what I'm doing.

LAURA comes and sits at the table. RICHIE watches her, expectant.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (3)

17

LAURA

So. I'm going to make a cake.  
That's what I'm going to do. I'm  
going to make the cake for Daddy's  
birthday.

RICHIE

Mommie, can I help?

LAURA

Well...

RICHIE

Can I help make the cake?

LAURA frowns a second, as if regretting her son's  
eagerness.

LAURA

Of course you can, sweet pea. I'm  
not going to do anything without  
you.

18 INT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT - DAY

18

SALLY appears from the bedroom and looks down to the  
living room where she sees CLARISSA can be heard on the  
phone. SALLY is pulling on her jeans. The whole  
apartment is submerged in books -- bound proofs,  
hardbacks and manuscripts.

CLARISSA

No, of course you must come. I  
mean it. I always wanted you to  
come. And everyone involved in  
the actual ceremony.

CLARISSA acknowledges SALLY with a wave of the hand.  
SALLY turns and goes into the kitchen while CLARISSA goes  
back to the phone.

CLARISSA

I don't know. Around sixty. Well  
it will, it will mean so much.  
The whole occasion. And so the  
least I can do is have you all to  
dinner. Just to say thank you. I  
mean it. Of course.

SALLY is gone into the kitchen to pour hot coffee. She  
looks into the sink at the wriggling crabs.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

SALLY

My God, what if nobody comes? I suppose we can live for a month off crustaceans.

SALLY comes back into the room with her coffee and watches CLARISSA, who is still working her charm on the phone. SALLY mimics her, wordlessly.

CLARISSA

Oh, I take that as a yes. Oh, that's great. I'm thrilled. Oh, good.

SALLY smiles affectionately at how characteristic of CLARISSA this whole conversation has been.

19 EXT. WEST 10TH STREET (NEW YORK) - DAY (2001)

19

The sun is shining as CLARISSA appears at the top of the little run of steps from her apartment and heads cheerfully out onto 10th Street. It's a dazzling day.

20 EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE - DAY

20

CLARISSA heads down Fifth Avenue in good spirits. Rappers go by, skate-boarders. A few PASSERS-BY greet her as she moves through the district, a familiar figure, at ease in her favorite quarter. She is on a mobile phone, still making her arrangements for the party.

CLARISSA

This is Clarissa Vaughan. Yes, I'm just confirming that you're sending the car to pick me up first. Yeah, and then we're going...

NEIGHBOR

Hi, Clarissa!

CLARISSA

Hi, hi, can't talk.

CLARISSA waves and returns to her mobile.

CLARISSA

And then we're going over to six seventy-five Hudson. That's right. Between Fourteenth and Ninth. Then uptown. And there I will need you to wait. And it'll be over at seven.

21 EXT. SPRING STREET - DAY

21

Now CLARISSA is pausing for traffic and walking across Spring Street towards an exquisite flower shop, which is decked in buckets of summer blooms. CLARISSA heads cheerfully towards the glass door and goes in.

22 INT. FLOWER SHOP - DAY

22

CLARISSA goes into the chic little flower shop and raises her arms a little to greet the owner. Her name is BARBARA -- in her fifties, pale, with dark hair.

CLARISSA

Flowers! What a beautiful morning!

BARBARA kisses CLARISSA and puts an arm round her, the two of them at ease.

BARBARA

Clarissa, hi! How are you?

CLARISSA

I'm having a party! My friend Richard's won the Carrouters.

BARBARA

Well, that's just terrific. If I knew what it was.

CLARISSA

It's a poetry prize. For a life's work. It's the most prestigious. For a poet it's the best you can do.

BARBARA

Oh. Very good.

CLARISSA is proud on Richard's behalf but BARBARA is already pointing along the rows of flowers.

BARBARA

So what would you like? We've got loads of lilies...

CLARISSA

No. Too morbid. Hydrangeas, I think. And let's just have buckets of roses. Whatever. To hell with it. Spare no expense.

CLARISSA picks out one bunch of flowers.

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA

I'm going to take these with me.

BARBARA gets out armfuls of yellow roses and takes them to the desk, while an ASSISTANT takes the ones CLARISSA has picked out to take back herself. CLARISSA wanders up the other end. Now BARBARA is cutting the stalks and wrapping them.

BARBARA

I actually tried to read Richard's novel.

CLARISSA

Oh, did you? I know it's not easy.

BARBARA smiles, not unkindly, at the understatement.

CLARISSA

I know. It did take him ten years to write.

BARBARA

Yeah, well, I figured. Maybe it just takes another ten to read.

CLARISSA just smiles, coming to the counter to collect her flowers.

BARBARA

It's you, isn't it?

CLARISSA

What is?

BARBARA

In the novel? Isn't it meant to be you?

CLARISSA

Oh, I see. Yeah.

CLARISSA shrugs, half-pleased, half-embarrassed.

CLARISSA

I mean, in a way. Sort of. Richard's a writer. That's what he is. He uses things which actually happen.

BARBARA

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (2)

22

CLARISSA

And years ago, he and I were students, it's true. But then he changes things.

BARBARA

Sure.

CLARISSA

I don't mean in a bad way.

BARBARA looks at her a moment. CLARISSA frowns.

CLARISSA

More like, he makes them his own.

23 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

23

VIRGINIA WOOLF sits in her study, pen poised. She speaks to herself.

VIRGINIA

A woman's whole life...

24 EXT. SPRING STREET - DAY

24

CLARISSA comes out of the flower shop, carrying a bunch of flowers and sets off down the street. VIRGINIA continues speaking underneath.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

... in a single day.

25 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY (1951)

25

LAURA sits thinking at the kitchen table, turning the pages of a cookery book.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

Just one day... and in that day, her whole life.

RICHIE has run across the kitchen and now climbs his mother's lap.

26 EXT. TRIANGLE BUILDING - DAY (2001)

26

Now CLARISSA is walking through the meat market, carrying her distinctive bunch of flowers.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: 26

She crosses the road among the meat trucks. And then she approaches the huge, red-painted triangular building which looms up at her from the crossroads.

27 INT. RICHARD'S APARTMENT - DAY 27

At an upstairs window a MAN in a dressing gown parts his curtain to look down at CLARISSA approaching.

28 INT./EXT. TRIANGLE BUILDING - DAY 28

CLARISSA, confident, cheerful, approaches a doorway crammed between the metal criss-crossings of fire escapes. She opens the door with a key and goes into a tiny, squalid, airless lobby. A fluorescent panel splutters on the ceiling. CLARISSA heads for the cheerless graffiti-strewn freight elevator, closes the gate and rides upward.

29 INT. RICHARD'S APARTMENT AND CORRIDOR - DAY 29

CLARISSA rings the bell of RICHARD'S apartment, then presses her face close to the door to listen.

RICHARD (O.S.)  
(inside)  
Mrs. Dalloway, it's you.

CLARISSA  
Yes, it's me.

RICHARD (O.S.)  
(inside)  
Come in.

CLARISSA turns the lock with her own key and goes in to a desolate loft space. The first space is in near darkness, a gloomy kitchen-bathroom area. CLARISSA picks her way carefully through to the second, larger space -- the living area -- where the man at the window is sitting, pale, stick-limbed, in a rotting armchair which is covered in towels. RICHARD is in his late 40s, gaunt from AIDS, a noble skull merely, his boxer's nose and high forehead lit by a streak of light from between the blinds. He is wearing a blue robe with child-like drawings of rockets and astronauts on it. The whole place is bleached, chaotic, more or less bare of ornament. This is a man who has pared his life down to very little.

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA puts down the flowers and goes to the blinds.

CLARISSA

Richard, it's a beautiful morning.  
How about I let in a little light?

RICHARD

Is it still morning?

CLARISSA

It is.

CLARISSA raises one of the shades. RICHARD barely moves to greet the light.

RICHARD

Have I died? Am I alive?

CLARISSA bends over and kisses his forehead.

RICHARD

Good morning, my dear.

CLARISSA

Any visitors?

RICHARD

Yes.

CLARISSA

Are they still here?

RICHARD

No. They've gone.

CLARISSA

How did they look?

RICHARD

Today? Sort of like black fire.  
I mean, sort of light and dark at  
the same time. There was one a  
bit like an electrified jellyfish.

CLARISSA looks at him a moment, then picks up the flowers.

RICHARD

They were singing. It may have  
been Greek.

CLARISSA

You don't sleep at all, do you?

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

Oh, sleep.

CLARISSA has gone into the kitchen and calls back through to him.

CLARISSA

I saw three bluebirds on the way over. Do you think it's a good omen?

RICHARD

Do you believe in omens? Omens would mean someone was looking after us, someone was watching. Do you believe anyone's watching? Do they send signs?

RICHARD makes a sort of grin, amused at the idea.

RICHARD

I mean, I'd love to believe it.

CLARISSA

The ceremony's at five. Do you remember?

RICHARD

Do I? Do I remember?

CLARISSA

Then the party's after.

CLARISSA has arranged the flowers and now she reappears in the doorway of Richard's room. CLARISSA looks at him tolerantly, the long-suffering look of nurse to patient. His complex cocktail of pills is laid out neatly on a table nearby.

CLARISSA

They did bring you breakfast, didn't they?

RICHARD

What a question. Of course.

CLARISSA

You did eat it, Richard?

RICHARD

Well can you see it? Is there any breakfast lying around?

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA

I can't see it.

RICHARD

Well, then, I must have eaten it,  
mustn't I?

CLARISSA

I suppose.

RICHARD

Does it matter?

CLARISSA

Of course it matters. You know  
what the doctors say. Have you  
been skipping pills?

CLARISSA is frowning mistrustfully at the way the  
cocktail is laid out on the table but RICHARD is suddenly  
impatient, ignoring the question.

RICHARD

Clarissa, I can't take this.

CLARISSA

Take what?

RICHARD

Having to be proud and brave in  
front of everybody.

CLARISSA

Honey, it's not a performance.

RICHARD

Of course it is. I got the prize  
for my performance.

CLARISSA

Well, that is nonsense.

RICHARD

I got the prize for having AIDS  
and going nuts and being brave  
about it. I actually got the  
prize for having come through.

CLARISSA

It's not true.

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

For surviving. That's what I got the prize for. You think they'd give it to me if I were healthy?

CLARISSA

Well, yes, as a matter of fact I do.

RICHARD looks at her with an ironic gleam of doubt.

RICHARD

Is it here somewhere?

CLARISSA

What?

RICHARD

The prize. I'd like to look at it.

CLARISSA

You haven't gotten it yet. It's tonight.

RICHARD

Are you sure? I remember the ceremony perfectly. I seem to have fallen out of time.

CLARISSA waits a moment, trying to be patient.

CLARISSA

Richard, it's a party. It's only a party. Populated entirely by people who respect and admire you.

RICHARD

Ah, small party, is it? Select party, is it?

CLARISSA

Your friends.

RICHARD

I thought I lost all my friends. I drove my friends crazy.

RICHARD reaches out and touches the flowers.

RICHARD

'Oh Mrs. Dalloway, always giving parties to cover the silence...'

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (5)

29

CLARISSA is stunned a moment by his unkindness, and then rallies, keeping her anger at bay.

CLARISSA

Richard, you won't need to do anything. All you have to do is appear, sit on the sofa. And I will be there. This is a group of people who want to tell you your work's going to live.

RICHARD

Is it? Is my work going to live?

RICHARD looks at her without pity.

RICHARD

I can't go through with it, Clarissa.

CLARISSA

Why do you say that?

RICHARD

I can't.

CLARISSA

Why?

RICHARD

Because I wanted to be a writer, that's all.

CLARISSA

So?

RICHARD gets up, heaving himself across the room on a crutch.

RICHARD

I wanted to write about it all. Everything that's happening in a moment. The way those flowers looked when you carried them in your arms -- this towel, how it smells, how it feels -- this thread -- all our feelings, yours and mine. The history of who we once were. Everything that's in the world. Everything mixed up. Like it's all mixed up now.

RICHARD'S eyes fill with tears.

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

And I failed. Whatever you start with, it ends up so much less. Sheer fucking pride and stupidity.

RICHARD slumps down again. CLARISSA watches, part impatient, part helpless.

RICHARD

We want everything, don't we?

CLARISSA

Yes. I suppose we do.

RICHARD

You kissed me on a beach...

CLARISSA

Yes.

RICHARD

You remember?

CLARISSA

Of course.

RICHARD

How many years ago?

CLARISSA shakes her head, too overwhelmed to answer.

RICHARD

What did you want then?

Again, CLARISSA says nothing. She is as upset as he is.

RICHARD

Come here, come closer, would you please?

CLARISSA

I'm right here.

RICHARD

Take my hand.

CLARISSA takes his painfully-thin hand, a handful of twigs.

RICHARD

Would you be angry?

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (7)

29

CLARISSA

Would I be angry if you didn't  
show up at the party?

RICHARD

No. Would you be angry if I died?

CLARISSA

If you died? Would I be angry if  
you died?

RICHARD

Who's this party for?

CLARISSA

What do you mean? Who's it for?  
What are you asking? What are you  
trying to say?

RICHARD

I'm not trying to say anything!  
I'm saying!

CLARISSA is panicking now.

RICHARD

I think I'm only staying alive to  
satisfy you.

CLARISSA is looking at him, aghast.

CLARISSA

So? Well? That's what we do.  
That's what people do. They stay  
alive for each other. The doctors  
told you: you don't need to die.  
The doctors told you that. You  
can live like this for years.

RICHARD

Well exactly.

RICHARD smiles, CLARISSA bitterly shakes her head, firm  
now.

CLARISSA

I don't accept this. I don't  
accept what you're saying.

RICHARD

Oh, what? And it's you to decide  
is it?

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA

No.

RICHARD

How long have you been doing this?

CLARISSA

Doing what?

RICHARD

How many years, coming to the apartment? What about your own life? What about Sally? Just wait till I die. Then you'll have to think of yourself.

CLARISSA doesn't answer. RICHARD smiles, sure of his point.

RICHARD

How are you going to like that?

CLARISSA lets go of his hand, disturbed. RICHARD just looks at her. CLARISSA gets up and stands a moment, shaken. Then speaks quietly.

CLARISSA

Richard, it would be great if you did come. If you felt well enough to come. Just to let you know: I'm making the crab thing. Not that I imagine it makes any difference.

RICHARD

Of course it makes a difference. I love the crab thing.

CLARISSA is about to leave but RICHARD calls across to her.

RICHARD

Clarissa?

CLARISSA

Yes?

RICHARD raises his head slightly for her to kiss him. CLARISSA puts her lips next to his, with great tenderness, not to hurt him. Then she squeezes his shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (9)

29

CLARISSA

I'll come back at three-thirty to help you get dressed.

RICHARD

Wonderful.

CLARISSA goes out. The sound of the apartment DOOR being RE-OPENED and then CLOSED. RICHARD is alone.

RICHARD

Wonderful.

30 INT. APARTMENT BLOCK - ELEVATOR - DAY

30

CLARISSA, in her dark glasses, gets back into the freight elevator, distraught from her encounter. She throws her head back in despair at the side of the elevator. The elevator goes down.

31 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - VIRGINIA'S STUDY - DAY (1923)

31

VIRGINIA WOOLF is still at her desk, just as before. But now the first pages of her notebook are filled with handwriting. She speaks again to herself.

VIRGINIA

It's on this day, this day of all days, her fate becomes clear to her...

At once there is a loud KNOCK at the door, interrupting VIRGINIA'S thoughts. Without waiting for an answer, NELLY BOXALL appears. She is large, red-faced, regal, in cook's apron.

NELLY

Excuse me, Mrs. Woolf, Mr. Woolf said I was to come and speak to you.

VIRGINIA

I can't imagine why he said that.

NELLY, unyielding, ignores VIRGINIA'S tone.

VIRGINIA

I'm nearly finished, Nelly. Please attend me in the kitchen and I'll be down very soon.

32 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - CORRIDOR AND KITCHEN - DAY

32

VIRGINIA is coming downstairs. She stops, standing with her back against the wall in the corridor outside the kitchen, preparing herself for the encounter ahead. From inside she can hear NELLY chattering freely with LOTTIE.

NELLY

What happens is, she says she wants something then it turns out she doesn't...

LOTTIE

Well she never does, does she? Never wants anything.

NELLY

Especially when she's asked for it. That's a sure sign.

LOTTIE

I wish I'd been there.

NELLY

Yeah, I wish you had, too.

The two women laugh cheerfully. VIRGINIA summons up her courage.

LOTTIE

Did you give her that look? That sort of look you do?

NELLY

I said, 'Madam'...

But before Nelly can finish, VIRGINIA has stepped into the open door and cut her off. NELLY is rolling out pastry and cutting huge chunks of raw lamb. Beside her, LOTTIE is working. She is in her teens, dressed identically to NELLY, and collusive, not missing a trick.

VIRGINIA

Yes, Nelly, tell me, how can I help?

VIRGINIA moves towards the table, trying to take charge of her formidable servant.

NELLY

It's about lunch.

VIRGINIA

Ah, yes.

(CONTINUED)

NELLY

I just had to go ahead on my own.

VIRGINIA

I understand.

VIRGINIA recoils slightly at the sight and smell of raw meat.

VIRGINIA

You chose a pie?

NELLY

I chose a lamb pie.

VIRGINIA

That seems suitable.

NELLY

You being so busy with your writing.

VIRGINIA does not respond. LOTTIE works on, impassive.

NELLY

I had no instructions. And I thought some of them yellow pears for pudding, unless you'd like something fancier.

VIRGINIA

Pears will be fine.

NELLY lifts up pastry and folds it into the pan, a figure of righteous hard work.

VIRGINIA

You do remember that my sister is coming at four with the family?

NELLY

Yes, ma'am, I haven't forgotten.

VIRGINIA

China tea, I think. And ginger.

NELLY hesitates in her actions. LOTTIE registers the moment also.

NELLY

Ginger, madam?

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

32

VIRGINIA

I'd like to give the children a treat.

NELLY

We'd have to go to London for ginger, ma'am I haven't finished this and there's the rest of the lunch to get ready.

VIRGINIA steels herself, not rising to the bait.

VIRGINIA

The twelve-thirty train, Nelly, will get you to London just after one. If you return on the two-thirty, you will be back in Richmond soon after three. Do I miscalculate?

NELLY

No.

VIRGINIA

Well then.

It's a trial of strength. NELLY doesn't move.

VIRGINIA

Well then? Is something detaining you, Nelly?

VIRGINIA is tense. But she knows she's won. NELLY puts down the rolling pin.

VIRGINIA

I can't think of anything more exhilarating than a trip to London.

33 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - PRINTING ROOM - DAY

33

VIRGINIA descends the stairs to the print room. The room is overflowing with manuscripts. In the middle of the untidiness, LEONARD sits with a scowl, scrutinizing proofs. Beside him, a handsome young man, RALPH PARTRIDGE, is working at the inky hand-operated printing press.

VIRGINIA

Good morning.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

RALPH

Good morning, Mrs. Woolf.

RALPH looks up, relieved to see her. The atmosphere is extremely tense.

LEONARD

We shall publish no more new authors. I have to tell you I have discovered ten errors in the first proof.

VIRGINIA

Lucky to have found them, then, Leonard.

LEONARD

'Paschendale was a charnel-house from which no min returned.' Do you think it is possible that bad writing actually attracts a higher incidence of error?

VIRGINIA is smiling.

VIRGINIA

If it's all right, I thought I might take a short walk.

LEONARD

Not far?

VIRGINIA

No. Just for air.

LEONARD now gives imperceptible consent -- just with his eyes.

LEONARD

Go then. If I could walk mid-morning, I'd be a very happy man.

VIRGINIA pauses a moment at the barb, then goes. RALPH watches.

34 EXT. PARADISE ROAD - DAY

34

There is a school next to Hogarth House and children in the playground. VIRGINIA comes along the pavement in front of the railings, lost in a world of her own. She walks a little, then stops, without realizing, and talks to herself.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

VIRGINIA

She'll die. She's going to die.  
That's what's going to happen.

A couple of people pass, noticing that this vague, genteel woman is talking to herself. Now VIRGINIA stares at a couple of little SCHOOLGIRLS in the playground, one earnestly whispering to the other, both intent.

VIRGINIA

That's it. She will kill herself.  
She will kill herself over  
something which doesn't seem to  
matter.

35 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY (1951)

35

LAURA is still in her dressing gown, but now with an apron tied over it. She is sitting frowning at a recipe book on the surface in front of her. Beside her she has assembled all the elements of cake-making -- eggs, tins, sugar and a series of pale blue bowls. But the endeavor is stalled. RICHIE is standing beside her, waiting patiently.

LAURA

Let's think.

RICHIE

You grease the pan, Mommy.

LAURA

I know you grease the pan, sweet one. Even Mommy knows that.

Decisively she reaches to assemble the elements. RICHIE frowns, watching.

LAURA

Okay. This is what we're going to do. Flour. Bowl. Sifter.

RICHIE

Can I do it, Mommy?

LAURA

Can you sift the flour?

LAURA smiles at him.

(CONTINUED)

LAURA

Yes, you can sift the flour, baby,  
if that's what makes you happy.

RICHIE

I'd like to.

LAURA

Okay. You do that.

LAURA gives RICHIE a sieve, then pours the raw flour in for him to shake out. RICHIE concentrates with great seriousness. Flour falls through the sieve in a fine white powder into a blue china bowl.

LAURA

Isn't it beautiful? Don't you  
think it looks like snow?

LAURA has gone back to looking at the recipe book again.

LAURA

Next -- now this is the next  
thing. I'm going to show you.  
The next thing is we measure out  
the cups.

RICHIE

Mommy, it isn't that difficult.

LAURA

I know, sweet pea. I know it  
isn't difficult. It's just... I  
want to do this for Daddy.

RICHIE

Because it's his birthday.

LAURA

That's right. We're baking the  
cake to show him we love him.

RICHIE

Otherwise he won't know we love  
him?

LAURA looks at her son a moment.

LAURA

That's right.

36 INT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT - DAY

36

CLARISSA is sitting immobilized in the second bedroom. The room is stacked with spare furniture which has been cleared away to make room for the party. CLARISSA has sat down on a hard chair, still trying to recover from her earlier encounter with RICHARD. Through the front door, full of cheerfulness, comes SALLY, carrying armfuls of dry cleaning and a load of Balducci bags.

SALLY

I got all the stuff. My God, what a zoo. Why do people have to talk about dry cleaning? I mean what is there to talk about?

SALLY has gone straight through to their own bedroom to put the dry cleaning down on the bed. Now SALLY has come out into the corridor and is heading with the shopping bags towards the kitchen.

SALLY

I bought you some flowers.

SALLY sees she has been pre-empted by the abundant flowers CLARISSA has already brought home. She throws her own offering down beside them.

SALLY

Where are you?

CLARISSA

In here.

SALLY has put the bags down in the kitchen, and is beginning to get oranges out of them.

SALLY

I got somebody to cover for me at work. I'll be with you all night.

SALLY opens the fridge door and starts putting oranges inside. She frowns slightly at the silence from CLARISSA.

SALLY

Are you all right?

CLARISSA

Sure.

Sally smiles to herself, not worried by CLARISSA'S slump.

SALLY

I guess you saw Richard.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

CLARISSA

That's right.

SALLY

Well, of course. I bet he said,  
'Oh by the way, honey, d'you mind,  
can I skip the party?

CLARISSA nods resignedly at SALLY'S prescience. In the other room, SALLY, still unloading oranges, nods in psychic response.

SALLY

Don't worry. Finally. He always shows up.

CLARISSA

Oh sure.

SALLY

In the end. What, Richard miss an award? A chance to talk about his work? I don't think so. He'll show up.

SALLY, in perpetual motion, has now come upon the table-party plan, a mixture of names and circles, which is laid out on the table.

SALLY

You did the seating?

CLARISSA

I did.

SALLY

I don't believe it. Louis Waters. Richard's Louis? Is he coming?

CLARISSA

He is.

SALLY

You put me next to him. Why do I always get to sit next to the ex's? Is this a hint, sweetheart? Anyway, shouldn't ex's have a table of their own? Where they can all ex together. In exquisite agony.

SALLY has appeared at the jamb of the second bedroom. CLARISSA looks up.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

SALLY

I'm off. Try not to pass out from excitement. Clarissa, it's going to be beautiful.

CLARISSA

Thank you.

SALLY

No problem.

SALLY turns and goes out. CLARISSA is alone. The apartment is silent.

CLARISSA

Why is everything wrong?

37 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - DAY (1951)

37

LAURA is looking at the finished cake. It isn't what she'd hoped. She has tried to pipe out the message "HAPPY BIRTHDAY DAN" on top. But the lettering is clumsy, and there are crumbs in the icing. LAURA speaks under her breath.

LAURA

It didn't work. Damn! It didn't work.

At once there is the sound of the back DOORBELL. LAURA looks, seeing the outline of a woman at the door. She begins to panic, checking in the mirror, alarmed to see herself, still in her bathrobe, looking like a distressed person. RICHIE has come running in, holding a red plastic toy he has been playing with.

RICHIE

Mommy! Mommy! There's someone at the door.

38 INT./EXT. BROWNS' HOUSE - DAY

38

Just a few seconds later. LAURA swings open the door, having made a hurried attempt at normality. Her hair is tidier, but she is still in the robe. At the back door.

KITTY is standing, a little younger than LAURA, and more confident, with a voluptuous, good-looking presence: well made-up, well turned out, at ease.

(CONTINUED)

LAURA

Hi, Kitty!

KITTY

Hi. Am I interrupting?

LAURA

Of course not. Come in.

KITTY

Are you all right?

KITTY comes through the door. It's true: LAURA looks a little wild-eyed, desperate.

LAURA

Why, sure.

KITTY

Hi, Richie!

LAURA

Sit down. I've got coffee on.  
Would you like some?

KITTY

Please.

RICHIE is on the floor, observing from a distance. KITTY sits at the kitchen table and sees the sugary heap.

KITTY

Oh look -- you made a cake.

LAURA

I know. It didn't work. I thought it was going to work. I thought it would work better than that.

KITTY

Honestly, Laura, I don't know why you find it so difficult.

LAURA

I don't know either.

KITTY

Anyone can make a cake.

LAURA

I know.

(CONTINUED)

KITTY

Everyone can. It's ridiculously easy. Like I bet you didn't grease the pan.

LAURA

I greased the pan.

KITTY smiles. LAURA is getting cups, pouring coffee.

KITTY

All right, but you have other virtues. And Dan loves you so much he won't even notice. Whatever you do, he's going to say it's wonderful.

LAURA looks at her reproachfully and pushes KITTY'S coffee across to her.

KITTY

Well it's true.

LAURA

Does Ray have a birthday?

KITTY

Sure he does.

LAURA

When is it?

KITTY

September. We go to the country club. We always go to the country club. We drink Martinis and spend the day with fifty people.

LAURA

Ray's got a lot of friends.

KITTY

He does.

LAURA

You've both have a lot of friends. You're good at it.

LAURA has said this without envy, and KITTY smiles, accepting the compliment.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (3)

38

LAURA

How is Ray? I haven't seen him in a while.

KITTY

Ray's fine. Hmm.

They both smile.

KITTY

These guys are something, aren't they?

LAURA

You can say that again. They came home from the war, they deserved it, didn't they? After what they'd been through?

KITTY

What did they deserve?

LAURA

I don't know. Us, I guess. All this.

LAURA gestures 'round the prosperous surroundings. KITTY nods at the copy of Mrs. Dalloway on the kitchen top.

KITTY

Oh. You're reading a book?

LAURA

Yeah.

KITTY

What's this one about?

LAURA

Oh, it's about this woman who's incredibly... well, she's a hostess and she's incredibly confident. And she's going to give a party. And... maybe, because she's confident, everyone thinks she's fine. But she isn't.

KITTY has picked up the book and now takes a glance at LAURA. The talk's run out.

LAURA

So.

(CONTINUED)

KITTY

Well.

LAURA

What is it? Is something wrong,  
Kitty?

KITTY gathers herself for a moment.

KITTY

I have to go into the hospital for  
a couple of days.

LAURA

Kitty...

KITTY

I have some kind of growth in...  
in my uterus. They're going to go  
in and take a look.

LAURA

When?

KITTY

This afternoon.

LAURA just looks at her, not knowing how to respond.

KITTY

I need you to feed the dog.

LAURA

Of course.

There's a moment's silence. KITTY puts her front door  
key on the kitchen table.

LAURA

Is that what you came to ask?

KITTY just looks at her, not answering.

LAURA

What did the doctor say, exactly?

KITTY

It's probably what the trouble's  
been. About getting pregnant.

KITTY looks at LAURA a moment, unused to confidences.

(CONTINUED)

KITTY

The thing is, I mean, you know, I've been really happy with Ray, but well... now it turns out there was a reason... there was a reason I couldn't conceive. You're lucky, Laura. I don't think you can call yourself a woman until you're a mother.

LAURA looks down at her own stomach. KITTY looks away.

KITTY

The joke is: all my life I could do everything -- I mean, I can do anything -- really -- I never had any trouble -- except the one thing I wanted.

LAURA

Yes.

KITTY

That's all.

LAURA

Well, at least now they'll be able to deal with it.

KITTY

That's right. That's what they're doing.

LAURA

That's right.

KITTY is rubbing her thumb against her forefinger, as at an imaginary stain.

KITTY

I'm not worried. What would be the point of worrying?

LAURA

No. It's not in your hands.

KITTY

That's it. It's in the hands of some physician I've never met...

LAURA

Kitty...

(CONTINUED)

KITTY

... some surgeon who probably drinks even more martinis than Ray, and no doubt always takes a six-iron to the green. Whatever that may mean.

KITTY is losing it now, fighting to control her feelings.

KITTY

I mean, of course I'm worried for Ray.

LAURA

Come here.

But in fact it is LAURA who gets up and goes over to KITTY. She bends down and embraces her. After a moment, KITTY slips her arms 'round LAURA'S waist. The two women hold onto each other, LAURA almost kneeling to be at KITTY'S level. Then, without planning it, LAURA kisses KITTY'S forehead, lingeringly. KITTY lets her.

KITTY

I'm doing fine. Really.

LAURA

I know you are.

KITTY

If anything. I'm more worried about Ray. He's not good at this stuff.

LAURA

Forget about Ray for a minute. Just forget about Ray.

KITTY'S face is against LAURA'S breasts. She seems to relax into her. LAURA lifts KITTY'S face, and puts her lips against hers. They both know what they are doing. They kiss, letting themselves go a moment. Then LAURA pulls away.

KITTY

You're sweet.

There is a brief moment, then LAURA turns and her eye falls on RICHIE who is on the floor with his toys. They had both forgotten him. He has watched throughout. KITTY stands up.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (7)

38

KITTY

You know the routine, right? Half a can in the evening, and check the water now and then. Ray will feed him in the morning.

KITTY has got up to go.

LAURA

Kitty, you didn't mind?

KITTY

What? I didn't mind what?

LAURA stands, anxious.

LAURA

Do you want me to drive you?

KITTY

I think I'll feel better if I drive myself.

LAURA

Kitty, it's going to be all right.

KITTY

Of course it is. 'Bye.

KITTY goes out. LAURA stands in the middle of the kitchen. She looks down at RICHIE who is still looking silently up at her.

LAURA

What? What do you want?

It is said just sharply enough to make RICHIE turn and go silently to his own room. LAURA looks at him going, then walks across to the kitchen top. Then, needing to do something decisive, LAURA picks up the cake which is cooling on a rack. LAURA opens a pedal bin with her foot, and slides the cake off the plate cleanly into the bin. It makes a satisfyingly-solid noise as it lands.

39 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - PRINTING ROOM - DAY (1923)

39

In the printing room, RALPH and LEONARD are reading proofs silently. LOTTIE appears at the door.

LOTTIE

Mr. Woolf, Mrs. Bell has arrived.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

LEONARD

Mrs. Bell?

LEONARD looks up in exasperation, as if this were typical.

LEONARD

Not due till four.

LOTTIE

I can't help that. She's here.

40 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

40

Virginia's sister, VANESSA BELL, is waiting in the drawing room. Although, at 44, VANESSA is older than Virginia, she looks younger and more open, more glossy and easygoing. She is just sending her little daughter out to play in the garden as VIRGINIA arrives, followed by LOTTIE.

VANESSA

Virginia!

They kiss. VIRGINIA laughs conspiratorially.

VIRGINIA

Leonard thinks it's the end of civilization. People who are invited at four who arrive at two-thirty...

VANESSA

Oh, God.

VIRGINIA

Barbarians!

VANESSA

We finished lunch earlier than we imagined.

VIRGINIA

I've had to pack Nelly off to London for sugared ginger.

VIRGINIA is heading cheerfully out toward the garden, but VANESSA comments well within LOTTIE'S hearing.

VANESSA

Oh, Virginia, you're not still frightened of the servants!

LOTTIE is left smiling, as the two women head into the garden.

41 EXT. HOGARTH HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY

41

VIRGINIA and VANESSA are sitting in the garden at Hogarth House, watching the children playing.

VIRGINIA

And how are you, sister?

VANESSA

Frantic. It's been ridiculous in London.

VIRGINIA

Ridiculous how?

VANESSA

Busy.

VIRGINIA

Why is busy ridiculous?

VANESSA

I would have invited you to our party, but I knew you wouldn't come.

VIRGINIA

Did you?

VIRGINIA looks genuinely surprised.

VIRGINIA

How did you know that?

VANESSA

I thought you never came to town.

VIRGINIA

You no longer ask me.

VANESSA

Aren't you forbidden to come? Do the doctors not forbid it?

VIRGINIA

The doctors!

VANESSA

Do you not pay heed to your doctors?

VIRGINIA

Not when they are a bunch of contemptible Victorians.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

VANESSA looks sideways at VIRGINIA, surprised by her forthrightness.

VANESSA

So? What are you saying? Are you feeling better? Has this fastness made you stronger?

VIRGINIA

I'm saying, Vanessa, that even crazy people like to be asked.

VIRGINIA moves on. VANESSA stops a second, briefly shocked. They are heading toward VANESSA'S three children who are gathered in a group near the bushes 'round something not yet seen. JULIAN BELL is 15, sturdy and muscular; QUENTIN BELL is 13, looking like a young soldier; and ANGELICA GARNETT is an exceptionally-beautiful little girl of five.

VANESSA

Hello, changelings, what have you got? What have you found?

JULIAN

We've found a bird.

VANESSA

Did you? Where did you find that?

JULIAN

I think it must have fallen from the tree.

QUENTIN holds a dying thrush out in his hands, a bundle of gray feathers.

VANESSA

Goodness, just look at him.

QUENTIN

He's alive. I think we might be able to save him.

VANESSA

Save him?

VANESSA frowns.

VANESSA

I think you have to be careful, Quentin. There's a time to die. It may be the bird's time.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: (2)

41

Fearing such talk may upset her, VANESSA instinctively squeezes VIRGINIA'S hand.

JULIAN

Come on. Let's pick some grass.  
Let's pick some grass to make a  
grave.

VANESSA is about to protest, but JULIAN interrupts.

JULIAN

I'm just saying then at least  
there'll be a bed for him to die  
on.

QUENTIN

Come on, Nessa, let's make a  
grave.

VANESSA

Oh God, oh very well. I'm coming.  
Wait for me, then. Angelica,  
you'll be all right?

VANESSA runs off with the boys.

42 EXT. HOGARTH HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY

42

ANGELICA is making the little bed of twigs. The others  
have gone off to pick grass. VIRGINIA appears above  
ANGELICA with some yellow roses.

VIRGINIA

Do you think she'd like roses?

ANGELICA

Yes.

VIRGINIA

Let's put roses 'round the grass.

VIRGINIA kneels down next to ANGELICA and helps her  
arrange the little bed. The bird is lying to one side.  
In the distance the boys are calling:

BOYS (O.S.)

Mother. There's some good stuff  
over here. Mother! Mother!

ANGELICA

Is it a she?

(CONTINUED)

VIRGINIA

Yes. The females are larger and less colorful.

The sticks, grass and leaves are now laid out in a rough circle. ANGELICA'S hands have the dead bird protected inside them as she lays down the thrush, arranging her feet under her. ANGELICA and VIRGINIA decorate the circle of leaves with roses.

ANGELICA

What happens when we die?

VIRGINIA

What happens? We return to the place we came from.

ANGELICA

I don't remember where I came from.

VIRGINIA

Nor do I.

ANGELICA frowns, trying to understand.

ANGELICA

She looks very small.

VIRGINIA

Yes. That's one of the things that happens. We look smaller.

ANGELICA

But very peaceful.

VIRGINIA smiles at ANGELICA. Suddenly VANESSA arrives with the boys, her energy breaking up the moment of quiet.

VANESSA

Is it done? Have we finished? Is the bird funeral complete? Have bird obsequies been done?

VIRGINIA

They have.

VANESSA

Good. Very well then. Are we to be denied tea altogether for coming so early?

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2)

42

ANGELICA runs off, happy at the job done. But VIRGINIA doesn't yet move.

VIRGINIA

No. Of course not.

VANESSA

Well, then. Come on, boys.

VANESSA walks off up the lawn with JULIAN and QUENTIN. They are all chattering as they go.

JULIAN

Where's Nelly gone?

VANESSA

She had to go to London to get ginger.

JULIAN

Did that make her angry?

VANESSA

Virginia says very.

QUENTIN

I like it when Nelly gets angry. It's funny.

Then it's silent. VIRGINIA is left alone. She has not moved. She is still looking at the bird's grave. The bird is perfectly at peace and surrounded with petals. VIRGINIA looks. Slowly, VIRGINIA closes her eyes. Her face becomes a death mask.

43 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY (1951)

43

LAURA is lain out on the bed, an identical look on her face to VIRGINIA'S. Then, impulsively, she gets up from the bed.

44 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

44

RICHIE is sitting by himself playing on the carpet with his toys. He looks up, missing nothing, as LAURA comes out of the bedroom. She smiles absently at him, and walks across the living room to pick up the tapestry bag which is lying on a chair. She takes it with her and goes into the bathroom.

45 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY 45

LAURA opens the mirrored cupboard above the sink. In it, there are a few odd bottles of aspirin, etc. She reaches for some bottles of prescribed sleeping pills. She opens the tapestry bag, puts the bottles inside and goes out.

46 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 46

LAURA comes out of the bedroom with the tapestry bag. RICHIE looks up again, trying to puzzle out where she has been. LAURA heads straight for the kitchen, where she puts the bag on a high surface, out of the child's reach. LAURA reaches once more for the flour and eggs.

LAURA

Hey, bug, I've got this idea.  
We're going to make another cake.  
We're going to make a better one.

RICHIE

What happened to the first one?

LAURA smiles at him as if everything were completely normal.

LAURA

Then after that, I think we should  
go out.

47 EXT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT - DAY (2001) 47

At once a man's finger pressing the intercom. LOUIS WATERS is leonine, silvery, handsome, in his late 40s, casually but perfectly dressed: a once-startlingly good-looking man, now a little faded. He is nervous. It's taken him an effort to RING the BELL. After a moment he hears CLARISSA'S voice.

CLARISSA (V.O.)

Yes?

LOUIS

Clarissa, it's Louis. Louis  
Waters.

CLARISSA

Louis? My God. You're early.

LOUIS

Do you mind? Is it all right?

CLARISSA has pressed the BUZZER and LOUIS is coming into the vestibule of the building. As he does, CLARISSA swings open the door of the apartment to greet him. She has an apron around her waist and green plastic gloves on. Her hair is a mess and LOUIS has plainly interrupted her in mid-work. She is listening to a CD, which is BOOMING out behind her.

CLARISSA

Why should I mind? I'm delighted.

LOUIS

Well now.

They fall into each other's arms, embracing. They hold each other some time, with real need. Then CLARISSA lets go and sees that Louis' eyes are moist.

LOUIS

I feel I'm interrupting.

CLARISSA

Why, no.

LOUIS

I know the ceremony's not till five, but I flew in this morning.

CLARISSA stands a moment, shaking her head.

CLARISSA

Richard's going to be thrilled. He'll be thrilled to see you.

LOUIS

You think so?

CLARISSA

Of course. Of course he will.

There's just a moment's hesitation.

CLARISSA

What are we doing? We should go in.

CLARISSA leads LOUIS into the apartment, taking off her apron. LOUIS follows her, hesitant, wondering what is wrong beyond her astonishment at seeing him again.

(CONTINUED)

LOUIS  
Are you all right?

CLARISSA  
Oh, sure. It's nothing. It's  
just the party.

LOUIS  
Oh, right.

LOUIS looks around the room. Everything is now cleared to the sides. There are bunches of flowers everywhere. Yellow roses abound. CLARISSA TURNS OFF the CD of JESSYE NORMAN SINGING one of Strauss' last songs.

LOUIS  
Wow. It's looking beautiful. Are  
you still with...

CLARISSA  
Yes. I'm still with her. Ten  
years. It's crazy.

LOUIS  
Why is it crazy?

CLARISSA shakes her head, embarrassed.

CLARISSA  
No reason. Would you like a  
drink?

LOUIS  
Some water.

CLARISSA  
Okay.

CLARISSA lifts the lid on the big pot of shellfish, which is now bubbling on the stove. Around the kitchen, the ingredients to make crab souffle roll are laid out. CLARISSA takes a look, then takes off her plastic gloves, fills glasses with ice and carbonated water. She looks through the kitchen to where LOUIS is standing alone, still admiring the apartment.

LOUIS  
And you're still an editor?

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA

Oh, sure.

LOUIS

Still with the same publisher?

CLARISSA nods.

CLARISSA

How's San Francisco?

LOUIS

Oh. It's one of those cities  
people tell you to like.

LOUIS stops a moment looking at a framed photograph of  
the young RICHARD, looking handsome, healthy and young.

CLARISSA

Richard said he thought you were  
happy out there.

LOUIS

Oh great. So now the illness  
makes him psychic?

CLARISSA hands him his water.

CLARISSA

Louis, you have to prepare  
yourself. He's very changed.

LOUIS has picked out a copy of RICHARD'S book from  
CLARISSA'S shelves. CLARISSA goes back to her cooking.

LOUIS

I read the book...

CLARISSA

Oh, God!

LOUIS

Exactly. I thought you were meant  
to do more than just change  
people's names.

CLARISSA

Well...

LOUIS

Isn't it meant to be fiction? He  
even had you living on Tenth  
Street.

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA frowns, not liking the way the conversation is going.

CLARISSA

It isn't me.

LOUIS

Isn't it?

CLARISSA

You know how Richard is. It's a fantasy.

LOUIS

A whole chapter about 'Should she buy some nail polish?' And then guess what? After fifty pages she doesn't!

CLARISSA smiles, but LOUIS isn't amused.

LOUIS

The whole thing seems to go on for eternity. Nothing happens. Then wham! For no reason she kills herself.

CLARISSA

His mother kills herself.

LOUIS

Yeah. Sure. His mother. But still for no reason.

CLARISSA

Well...

LOUIS

Out of the blue.

LOUIS seems annoyed, but CLARISSA speaks quietly, trying to reach him now.

CLARISSA

I know the book is tough. But I liked it. I know. Only one thing upset me.

LOUIS

Oh yeah? What was that? What upset you?

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (3)

50

LOUIS is looking at her warily now, as if he fears being hurt.

CLARISSA

Well... that there wasn't more about you.

LOUIS

That's kind.

LOUIS looks up, caught off balance. Now he is moved, and risks a confidence.

LOUIS

I went back to Wellfleet.

CLARISSA

You did?

LOUIS

One day. I didn't tell you.

CLARISSA

No. But then I never see you.

LOUIS

You remember the house? It's still there.

Louis stops, thinking.

CLARISSA

I think you're courageous.

LOUIS

Courageous? Why?

CLARISSA

To dare to go visit.

LOUIS frowns.

CLARISSA

What I mean is: to face the fact we've lost those feelings forever.

CLARISSA'S eyes are full of tears, and she seems to have forgotten LOUIS is there.

CLARISSA

Shit.

LOUIS

Clarissa...

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA

I don't know what's happening.  
I'm sorry. I seem to be in some  
strange sort of mood. I seem to  
be unraveling...

LOUIS

Clarissa, I shouldn't have come.

CLARISSA holds out a hand to stop him coming over to  
comfort her.

CLARISSA

No, it's not you. Really. It's  
more... it's like having a  
presentiment. Do you know what  
I'm saying?

CLARISSA wipes her eyes, tries to make light of it.

CLARISSA

Oh, God, it's probably just nerves  
about the party. Bad hostess.

Suddenly CLARISSA sinks to the floor, not able to control  
herself anymore.

LOUIS

Clarissa, what's happening?

CLARISSA

Jesus!

LOUIS

What is it?

CLARISSA has gone away to the wall, like a child now,  
with her hand raised to hide her face.

CLARISSA

Oh, God!

LOUIS

Do you want me to go?

CLARISSA tires desperately to turn her grief to anger.

CLARISSA

No. Don't go. Explain to me!  
Why is this happening?

LOUIS moves towards her to try and reassure her by taking  
her in his arms.

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA

No. Don't touch me. It's better  
you don't.

LOUIS stands useless. CLARISSA looks at him a moment  
through her tears. Then she tries desperately.

CLARISSA

It's too much. It's just too  
much. You fly in from San  
Francisco. I've been nursing  
Richard for years...

LOUIS

I know.

CLARISSA

And all that time I've held myself  
together... no problem...

There's a silence. Neither of them can say anything.  
CLARISSA just looks pleadingly at him from the floor.

LOUIS

Yes.

Neither speaks. CLARISSA wipes her tears with her  
sleeve. She's quiet when she talks.

CLARISSA

One morning. In Wellfleet. You  
were there. We were all there.  
I'd been sleeping with him and I  
was on the back porch. He came  
out. He put his hand on my  
shoulder. 'Good morning, Mrs.  
Dalloway.'

CLARISSA is lost a moment in the memory.

CLARISSA

And ever since then, I've been  
stuck.

LOUIS

Stuck?

CLARISSA

I mean, with the name.

There's a silence. Then CLARISSA gestures towards LOUIS,  
to divert.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (6)

50

CLARISSA

And now you walk in... to see you walk in. Because I never see you. Look at you!

LOUIS looks at her, wanting to help.

CLARISSA

Anyway, it doesn't matter. It was you he stayed with. It was you he lived with. I had one summer. You'll see when he comes. He's still Richard. His mind wanders and he's in a lot of pain. But there's some constant quality. There's his Richard-ness.

LOUIS moves towards her, careful about what he wants to spell out.

LOUIS

The day I left him I got on a train and made my way across Europe. I felt free for the first time in years.

There is a silence. CLARISSA stares, taking in what LOUIS has just said. Then she gets up, trying to get back to normal.

CLARISSA

So. You must tell me about San Francisco.

LOUIS

What's to tell? I still teach drama to idiots. Mostly.

CLARISSA

They can't all be idiots.

LOUIS

No.

LOUIS has put his glass down.

LOUIS

No, in fact... I shouldn't tell you this: I've fallen in love.

CLARISSA

Really?

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (7)

50

LOUIS

Yes. With a student.

CLARISSA

A student?

LOUIS

Exactly.

LOUIS acknowledges the absurdity of it.

LOUIS

I know. You think 'Am I still up  
for this? All this intensity...'  
All those arguments, doors being  
slammed... well, you know what  
it's like...

CLARISSA says nothing.

LOUIS

Are you feeling better?

CLARISSA

A little. Thank you.

CLARISSA goes to the sink. LOUIS is suddenly embarrassed.

LOUIS

Do you think I'm ridiculous?

CLARISSA

Ridiculous. Fortunate, too.

51 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - DAY (1951)

51

LAURA takes a second cake out of the oven and sets it  
down on a cake rack. She looks at it a moment. It is  
much better than the first. It reads HAPPY BIRTHDAY DAN  
and is fringed with yellow roses. LAURA takes off her  
oven gloves and reaches for the tapestry bag. She goes  
out.

52 INT. CAR - DAY

52

The tapestry bag lands with a wham! on the back seat of  
the car. LAURA then bundles a rather surprised-looking  
RICHIE into the passenger seat. Then LAURA goes 'round  
and gets in the driver's side.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

LAURA

I'm going to leave you at Mrs.  
Latch's. I have to do something.

LAURA is dressed and made-up, armored to go out into the world. RICHIE is looking at her as she STARTS the CAR.

RICHIE

Mommy, I don't want to go.

LAURA

You have to. I'm sorry. I have  
to do something before Daddy comes  
home.

They drive off down the suburban street, fringed with palm trees.

53 EXT. MRS. LATCH'S HOUSE - DAY

53

A cute suburban house with plaster squirrels on the gable over the garage. MRS. LATCH, a big, florid woman in Bermuda shorts, opens the door. RICHIE is holding LAURA'S hand, and looking very reluctant to go into the house.

MRS. LATCH

Hello.

LAURA

Hi, Mrs. Latch. My boy's not very  
happy.

RICHIE

Mommy, I don't want to do this.

LAURA

I have to go, honey.

LAURA stoops down to his level and kisses him.

MRS. LATCH

Your mommy has things she must do.  
If you come in, I got cookies.

LAURA takes him so that she can look him directly in the eye.

LAURA

Baby. Baby, you have to be brave  
now.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

MRS. LATCH

Don't you worry, he's going to be fine.

MRS. LATCH reaches out and takes RICHIE'S hand. Turned away now from her son, LAURA walks across the lawn back to the car. Without warning, her face crumples in tears, but as she reaches the car she wipes her eyes with her hand to hide her distress. Then she turns back to wave.

LAURA

Honey!

RICHIE waves back from the step. LAURA quickly gets into the car, grinning at him. She can barely get the key in the starter, but when she does, she turns and drives away.

54 INT./EXT. LAURA'S CAR (LOS ANGELES) - DAY

54

LAURA is beginning to drive away down the road. She looks nervously in the rearview mirror. She sees RICHIE run out of MRS. LATCH'S arms and into the road screaming desperately.

RICHIE

Mommy! Mommy! No!

LAURA swings the wheel decisively to the left and with a little SQUEAL of RUBBER, accelerates away. RICHIE stands alone in the middle of the street.

55 INT./EXT. LAURA'S CAR - DAY

55

Now LAURA is cruising on a Los Angeles freeway. For a moment, her higher speed and the freedom of the road gives the feeling that she has successfully escaped.

56 INT. MRS. LATCH'S HOUSE - DAY

56

Back in the living room of Mrs. Latch's house, RICHIE moodily gets out a building set and begins building a small house. MRS. LATCH watches from the doorway.

57 INT. LAURA'S CAR - DAY

57

LAURA drives intently. She is aimless, distressed. But then she looks to the side of the freeway where there is a sign for the Normandy Hotel. Impulsively, with no pre-planning, LAURA swings the car dangerously across lanes and takes it out along the slipway towards the hotel.

58 INT. MRS. LATCH'S HOUSE - DAY 58

RICHIE has finished the little house. Now he picks up the complete building and tumbles it bad-temperedly back into the box.

59 EXT. NORMANDY HOTEL (LOS ANGELES) - DAY 59

LAURA walks towards a huge wedding-cake hotel, a pseudo-Spanish '50s palace. She carries no luggage except her tapestry bag.

60 INT. NORMANDY HOTEL - ROOM - DAY 60

LAURA has checked into the hotel and is now standing in the room she has reserved. It is featureless, anonymous -- green spreads and candy wallpaper. LAURA is dropping fifty cents into a HOTEL CLERK'S outstretched hand.

CLERK

Breakfast is served between seven and eleven in the Regency Room. There's a swimming pool at the back, and the hotel is open for twenty-four hours.

He pockets his tip.

CLERK

Thank you, ma'am. Is there anything else you need?

LAURA hesitates a moment.

LAURA

Yes. No. Not to be disturbed.

He goes out. LAURA is left alone. She looks around the room. There is a moment of silence, of relief. LAURA looks 'round, not quite knowing what to do next.

LAURA sits on the edge of the bed and opens her bag. She takes out the pale green toilet bag and unzips it. She takes the little rank of pill bottles out and sets them down on the bed cover. As she does so, she sees her copy of Mrs. Dalloway at the bottom of the tapestry bag.

61 INT. NORMANDY HOTEL - DAY (A FEW MINUTES LATER) 61

Now LAURA is stretched out reading on the bed, a pillow against her back. AS LAURA reads her book, the text is heard in VIRGINIA'S voice.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

VIRGINIA (V.O.)  
 Did it matter, then, she asked  
 herself, walking towards Bond  
 Street, did it matter that she  
 must inevitably cease  
 completely...

LAURA pulls her blouse out from her skirt to loosen it,  
 and puts her hand on her pregnant stomach.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)  
 All this must go on without her;  
 did she resent it; or did it not  
 become consoling to believe that  
 death ended absolutely?

LAURA rubs her naked stomach slightly, feeling the child  
 within.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)  
 It is possible to die.

Suddenly brackish water floods from underneath, washing  
 up over the sides of the bed. LAURA, in her imagination,  
 sinks under the water, strewn with weeds, and then  
 drowns.

62 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - DAY (1923)

62

VIRGINIA is sitting with VANESSA having tea. JULIAN and  
 QUENTIN are at the other end of the room. VIRGINIA is  
 completely lost in her own thoughts.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)  
 It is possible to die.

VIRGINIA turns her head and becomes aware that VANESSA  
 has been speaking. She only hears the end of what has  
 obviously been a long discourse.

VANESSA  
 ... There was a lovely coat for  
 Angelica at Harrods, but then  
 nothing for the boys and it seemed  
 so unfair. Why should Angelica be  
 favored?

VIRGINIA does not reply.

VANESSA  
 Virginia? Virginia? What are you  
 thinking about?

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

VIRGINIA is still looking at her a little blankly.  
 JULIAN and QUENTIN are nudging each other, laughing at  
 how odd VIRGINIA is.

VANESSA

Are you still with us?

ANGELICA runs across to VIRGINIA, who scoops her up and  
 puts her on her knee.

VANESSA

Your aunt's a very lucky woman,  
 Angelica, because she has two  
 lives. Most of us have only one.  
 But she has the life she leads and  
 she also has the book she's  
 writing. This makes her very  
 fortunate indeed.

VIRGINIA smiles at ANGELICA on her knee.

ANGELICA

What were you thinking about?

VIRGINIA

Oh. I was going to kill my heroine.  
 But I've changed my mind.

63 INT. NORMANDY HOTEL - ROOM - DAY (1951)

63

Back in the (dry) bedroom, LAURA is lying on the bed, the  
 pills still visible on the table beside her. She still  
 has the book in front of her, but she is not reading it.  
 She puts it to one side. Then she rubs her naked stomach  
 again. Her eyes fill with tears.

LAURA

I can't! I can't!

64 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - DAY (1923)

64

VIRGINIA is just as before.

VIRGINIA

I fear I may have to kill someone  
 else instead.

65 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - HALL - DAY

65

Everyone is now gathered in the hall, saying good-bye.

(CONTINUED)

There is a car waiting outside which is being loaded. QUENTIN, JULIAN and ANGELICA are all in front as VANESSA and VIRGINIA make their way to the door.

VANESSA

It was a fascinating visit. They enjoyed it thoroughly.

VIRGINIA

Do you have to go already? I do wish you wouldn't go.

VANESSA

Why, Virginia, the last thing you need is our noisiness. My hopeless, clumsy boys.

VANESSA smiles at the lads.

VANESSA

Say good-bye, boys.

VIRGINIA

Good-bye, children.

The boys say "Good-bye" and "Good-bye, Aunt" and shake VIRGINIA'S hand. They go out of the front door towards a waiting taxi. VIRGINIA turns to her sister.

VIRGINIA

And you will return to what? To concerts? To parties?

VANESSA

Tonight? An insufferable dinner which not even you could envy, Virginia.

VIRGINIA

But I do.

Suddenly she looks VANESSA in the eye.

VIRGINIA

Kiss me.

It starts as a formal kiss, but then VIRGINIA, shockingly direct, pushes her lips against VANESSA. VIRGINIA holds her mouth a moment. When they part, VANESSA is overwhelmed, blushing at the power of VIRGINIA'S need.

VIRGINIA

Did you think I was better? Say something, Nessa. Didn't you think I seemed better?

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (2)

65

VANESSA

Yes, Virginia. You seem better.

VIRGINIA continues to look at her sister, pleadingly.

VIRGINIA

You think... you think I may one day escape?

There is a silence, the two women still eye to eye.

VANESSA

One day. One.

VIRGINIA

Nessa...

There's a short silence, broken by the sound of a car horn outside.

VANESSA

Come, Angelica. We must go.

VANESSA and ANGELICA go out of the door. ANGELICA turns back and waves.

ANGELICA

Good-bye.

VIRGINIA

Good-bye, little girl.

NELLY, returning from outside, closes the door and gives VIRGINIA a look as she returns to the kitchen. VIRGINIA stands alone in the hall.

LEONARD is standing at the end of the corridor, watching.

66 EXT. HOGARTH HOUSE - DAY

66

The boys are already in the taxi. VANESSA, obviously upset, wordlessly ushers ANGELICA to get in. Then she gets in herself, and draws ANGELICA to her.

VANESSA

Here. On my knee. Stay close.

VANESSA signals to the DRIVER.

VANESSA

Driver.

67 EXT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT - DAY (2001) 67

LOUIS lets the outside door of CLARISSA'S apartment building close behind him. He stands a moment at the top of the steps, full of relief to have left. Then, gratefully, he goes on his way.

68 INT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT - DAY 68

CLARISSA closes the door of the apartment and goes back into her living room, intending to resume her preparations for the party. But instead she stands, in the middle of the room, now bereft. She does not move.

69 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - DAY (1923) 69

VIRGINIA walks alone up the staircase. At the half-way landing there is a large window. VIRGINIA stops. Outside, she can see the happy family departing -- the three children chattering excitedly to VANESSA. Their car disappears. VIRGINIA watches.

70 EXT. TENTH STREET - DAY (2001) 70

A handsome, 19-year-old GIRL, lush and strong, in combat trousers and sweater comes along Tenth Street. She crackles with health like an Irish farm-girl. She bounds up the steps of CLARISSA'S apartment block and lets herself in with her key.

71 INT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT - DAY 71

The girl is CLARISSA'S daughter JULIA and now she is letting herself in to the apartment.

JULIA

I'm sorry, I know, I tried to get here earlier. I tried. Okay? Don't start. I know. It's just incredibly important. Because it's your party.

CLARISSA turns from where she is standing.

CLARISSA

Julia. How you've been doing?

JULIA

I'm fine.

CLARISSA has gone over to embrace her.

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA

Come here. What've you been doing?

JULIA

Well, studying, Mom.

JULIA eases out of her mother's needy embrace, blithely to take off her backpack.

JULIA

What should I do? Chairs?

CLARISSA

Oh. Can you clear my desk?

CLARISSA'S desk is covered in books which JULIA now clears by carrying them through to the bedroom. As she goes she calls back to her mother.

JULIA

I bumped into Louis Waters.

CLARISSA

You did. Where?

JULIA

In the street. They're all here aren't they? The ghosts. The ghosts are assembling for the party. He's weird.

JULIA on her way through sees her mother's face.

JULIA

You mean you can't see that? You can't see Louis Waters is weird?

CLARISSA

I can see that he's sad.

JULIA

All your friends are sad.

JULIA expects CLARISSA to laugh, but then stops, books in hand, seeing how preoccupied her mother is.

JULIA

You've been crying. What's happening?

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (2)

71

CLARISSA

All it is: I looked around this room. I thought, I'm giving a party. All I want to do is just give a party.

JULIA

And?

CLARISSA shakes her head, angry with herself.

CLARISSA

I know why he does it! He does it deliberately!

JULIA

Who? Is this Richard?

CLARISSA

Of course!

JULIA smiles to herself, as if she's used to it.

CLARISSA

He looks at me. He did it this morning. He gave me that look.

JULIA

What look?

CLARISSA

Oh, to say: 'You're trivial, your life is so trivial. Daily stuff, schedules. Parties. Details.'

CLARISSA turns, suddenly protesting.

CLARISSA

That's what he means by it. That's what he's saying!

JULIA

Mom, it only matters if you think it's true.

CLARISSA looks at her, taken aback by what JULIA has said. They both become quiet now.

JULIA

Well? Do you? Tell me.

There's a silence.

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA

When I'm with him, then, yes, I'm living. That's what I feel. And when I'm not, yes, things seem kind of silly.

JULIA walks away to the bedroom, struck by her mother's tactlessness.

CLARISSA

I don't mean with you. Never with you. But the rest of it.

JULIA

Sally?

CLARISSA

The rest of it. False comfort.

CLARISSA has followed JULIA into the bedroom and now they lie down, side by side, on the bed.

CLARISSA

If you say to me: when was I happiest?

JULIA

Mom...

CLARISSA

Tell me the moment you were happiest...

JULIA

I know. It was years ago.

CLARISSA

Yes.

JULIA

All you're saying is, you were once young.

CLARISSA smiles at JULIA'S remark. But JULIA knows it is still not resolved.

CLARISSA

I remember one morning. Getting up at dawn. There was such a sense of possibility. We were going to do everything. Do you know that feeling?

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (4)

71

JULIA nods, finally allowing what her mother is saying.

CLARISSA

I remember thinking: 'This is the beginning of happiness.' That's what I thought. 'So this is the feeling. This is where it starts. And of course there'll always be more.' It never occurred to me: it wasn't the beginning. It was happiness. It was the moment, right then.

There is a silence. JULIA looks thoughtfully at her mother. Then the DOOR BUZZER sounds. CLARISSA goes to the intercom, and a VOICE calls through: "Caterers."

71 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

71

Beef being dumped down into a frying pan filled with onions and being vigorously stirred, a pan of beef bones bubbling next to it. NELLY and LOTTIE working together in the well-lit kitchen, a whole range of vegetables laid out on the chopping boards for supper.

NELLY, who misses nothing, looks up from her cooking at the sound of someone coming downstairs. The kitchen door is open and gives onto the stairway. A figure moves quickly by, but NELLY sees. VIRGINIA is heading out in a long coat. LOTTIE has also looked up, the two of them noting VIRGINIA'S departure.

72 EXT. HOGARTH HOUSE - EVENING

72

VIRGINIA in her coat hurrying out, trying to make sure she is not noticed. She moves quickly through the garden. In the distance, LEONARD is digging at the edge of the garden. But his back is turned and he does not notice her. She hastens towards the gate, and out into the road outside.

73 EXT. RICHMOND STATION - EVENING

73

It is a summer evening, darkening a little, as VIRGINIA comes to the Victorian portico of Richmond station. Two MEN, returning from London, pass, and she catches a whiff of their conversation:

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

MEN

I told him that's what he had to do and if he didn't like it that was his business.

VIRGINIA passes them, trying not to be noticed, going into the hall, a fine canopied space of glass and arched ironwork. She goes to the ticket booth.

VIRGINIA

I need a ticket to London, please.

CLERK

Yes, madam. A single or a return?

74 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - EVENING

74

In a presentiment of what will happen again in 18 years' time LEONARD WOOLF comes in from the garden. It's a different house and a different hallway, but the action is the same. LEONARD sits to put on his slippers, hearing the sounds of the house. Then, as if noticing something, frowns.

75 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

75

LEONARD appears at the kitchen door. NELLY is standing behind her stew.

LEONARD

Ah, Nelly, good evening. I was wondering if you'd seen Mrs. Woolf.

NELLY

I thought you knew, sir. Mrs. Woolf has gone out.

76 EXT. HOGARTH HOUSE - GARDEN - EVENING

76

LEONARD WOOLF, in blind panic, fleeing the house, not in a coat, just out into the garden, and away off down the road.

77 EXT. PARADISE ROAD - EVENING

77

A middle-aged man, LEONARD WOOLF, running in his slippers, vest and corduroy jacket, charging down the hill towards the town.

LEONARD comes down the steps towards the railway platform. He sees VIRGINIA sitting rather conspicuously by herself on a bench at the end of the platform. A train has just gone, so there is not another traveler in sight. The railway line stretches away to London, empty and quiet. VIRGINIA is trying not to be self-conscious, but she is tense. She turns.

VIRGINIA

Ah Mr. Woolf, what an unexpected pleasure.

LEONARD

And perhaps you could tell me exactly what you think you're doing.

VIRGINIA

What I was doing? Why --

LEONARD

I went to look for you and you weren't there.

LEONARD moves towards her. VIRGINIA stays calm, resisting his panic.

VIRGINIA

You were working in the garden. I didn't wish to disturb you.

LEONARD

You disturb me when you disappear.

VIRGINIA

I didn't disappear. I went for a walk.

LEONARD

A walk? Is that all?

VIRGINIA doesn't answer.

LEONARD

Is that all? Just a walk?

They have neither of them moved. LEONARD is firm now.

LEONARD

Virginia, Nelly is cooking dinner. She has already had a difficult day. We must go home. We must eat Nelly's dinner. It is our obligation to eat Nelly's dinner.

(CONTINUED)

VIRGINIA

There is no such obligation! No such obligation exists.

LEONARD

Virginia, you have an obligation to your own sanity.

VIRGINIA

And what is your role, Leonard? My husband? Or my prison guard?

LEONARD is shocked by her fierceness. He tries to soften his tone, but VIRGINIA flares up as soon as he speaks.

LEONARD

Virginia...

VIRGINIA

I have endured this custody. I have endured this imprisonment. I am attended by doctors. Everywhere I am attended by doctors who inform me of my own interests.

LEONARD

They know your interests.

VIRGINIA

They do not! They do not speak for my interests! How dare they presume? Let us imagine a life in which women are the doctors, and the men sit alone all day in shuttered rooms in the suburbs. Let us imagine that!

LEONARD shifts, but is still determined not to back down. Behind him the odd PASSENGER is beginning to arrive to wait for London train.

LEONARD

Virginia, it is hard... I can see it must be hard for a woman... for a woman of your...

VIRGINIA

Of what? A woman of my what exactly?

LEONARD

A woman of your gifts...

(CONTINUED)

VIRGINIA

Oh I see...

LEONARD

... of your... of your talents...  
to accept that she is not always  
the best judge of her own  
condition.

VIRGINIA

No? Who, then, is a better judge?  
Bring this judge to Platform One.  
Let me meet them.

VIRGINIA is looking at him defiantly.

LEONARD

You have a history...

VIRGINIA

Oh yes...

LEONARD

You came to Richmond with a  
history of confinement. Fits.  
Blackouts. Moods. Hearing  
voices. We brought you here to  
escape the irrevocable damage you  
intended to yourself. Twice you  
have tried to take your life by  
your own hand.

VIRGINIA is watching him closely now, attending every  
word, still not giving way.

LEONARD

I live daily with that threat.

VIRGINIA looks at him, refusing to answer.

LEONARD

I set up the press, we set up the  
printing press...

VIRGINIA

Yes...

LEONARD

Not for itself. Not purely as a  
thing in itself. But that you  
might find a ready occupation, a  
ready source of absorption and of  
remedy.

(CONTINUED)

VIRGINIA

Like needlework?

VIRGINIA has suddenly shouted. LEONARD for a moment loses his temper.

LEONARD

It was done for you! It was done for your betterment! It was done out of love. If I did not know you better I would call this ingratitude.

VIRGINIA

I am ungrateful? You call me ungrateful?

VIRGINIA looks at him, accusing, shaking.

VIRGINIA

My life has been stolen from me. I am living in a town I have no wish to live in. I am living a life I have no wish to live. And I am asking how this has occurred.

VIRGINIA nods, sure of her point. There are now several PASSENGERS on the long London platform, but VIRGINIA and LEONARD ignore them completely.

VIRGINIA

It is time for us to move back to London. I miss London. I miss London life.

LEONARD

This is not you speaking, Virginia. This is an aspect of your illness.

VIRGINIA

It is me. It is my voice. It is mine and mine alone.

LEONARD

It is not your voice. It is only a voice you hear.

VIRGINIA

It is not! It is mine! I am dying in this town!

(CONTINUED)

VIRGINIA is inflamed, passionate, almost mad. LEONARD looks at her, trying to keep calm.

LEONARD

If you were clear... if you were thinking clearly, you would remember: it was London which brought you low.

VIRGINIA

If I were thinking clearly?

LEONARD

We brought you to Richmond to give you peace.

VIRGINIA takes a moment to summon all her lucidity.

VIRGINIA

If I were thinking clearly? If I were thinking clearly, Leonard, I would tell you that I wrestle alone in the dark, and that only I can know, only I can understand my own condition. You live with the threat, you tell me. You live with the threat of my extinction.

There is silence. She is trembling, white.

VIRGINIA

Leonard, I live with it too.

Now it is LEONARD who cannot answer.

VIRGINIA

This is my right. This is the right of every human being. I choose not the suffocating anesthetic of the suburbs, but the violent jolt of the capital. That is my choice. The meanest patient, yes even the very lowest, is allowed some say in the matter of her own prescription. Thereby she defines her humanity.

VIRGINIA is calm now, certain.

(CONTINUED)

VIRGINIA

I wish for your sake, Leonard,  
that I could be happy in this  
quietness. But if it is a choice  
between Richmond and death, I  
choose death.

There are now tears in LEONARD'S eyes.

LEONARD

Very well. London, then. We  
shall go back to London.

LEONARD bows his head, overwhelmed by the defeat of his  
strategy. There is a silence. VIRGINIA watches, full of  
feeling for him. Then, at the opposite platform the  
train from London arrives. From its doors, phalanxes of  
COMMUTERS in dark coats and hats get down onto the  
platform and head for the exit. LEONARD looks up, wiping  
away his tears.

LEONARD

You must be hungry. I am a little  
hungry myself.

VIRGINIA smiles. They look at each other, the issue at  
last resolved between them.

VIRGINIA

Come along.

VIRGINIA and LEONARD get up and walk together along the  
deserted platform, both shaken by the encounter. After a  
moment, VIRGINIA takes his arm. They walk a while, arm  
in arm, merging into the crowd of COMMUTERS. Then  
VIRGINIA speaks, almost as an afterthought.

VIRGINIA

You do not find peace by avoiding  
life, Leonard.

79 EXT./INT. MRS. LATCH'S HOUSE (LOS ANGELES) - EVENING 79  
(1951)

LAURA'S car draws up outside MRS. LATCH'S house. RICHIE  
has plainly heard her arrive, for when she looks to the  
window, RICHIE is already banging his hands against it  
and screaming:

RICHIE

Mommy! Mommy!

(CONTINUED)

LAURA looks, fearful. Then she gets out of the car. Along the neat suburban street, sprinklers play across lawns, catching the evening light like fountains. RICHIE comes running from the house towards his mother with a triumphant cry of...

RICHIE

It's Mommy!

MRS. LATCH follows.

MRS. LATCH

Why, hello, Laura.

LAURA

Oh, Mrs. Latch. I'm sorry I'm late.

LAURA picks RICHIE up and he buries his face in her shoulder.

LAURA

Oh, now. Hey. Hey. Hey there, bug. What's wrong? What's wrong?

MRS. LATCH smiles reassuringly.

MRS. LATCH

He's fine. He's been fine. He's just pleased to see you.

LAURA

Come on, it wasn't that bad. It wasn't that bad, was it?

RICHIE has buried himself in LAURA. MRS. LATCH nods at LAURA'S hair.

MRS. LATCH

You got it cut, then?

LAURA

Oh, yes. Yes. No problem.

MRS. LATCH

It looks great.

LAURA

Thank you. They didn't have to do very much.

LAURA smiles, embarrassed at the lie.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED: (2)

79

MRS. LATCH  
We had a fine time together.

LAURA  
Thank you. Very much.

80 EXT./INT. CAR - EVENING

80

The two of them are driving side by side. LAURA has her eyes on the road. RICHIE is staring straight ahead, not looking at her. The car is moving noiselessly along suburban avenues. There is a long silence. They seem more like two adults than mother and child.

LAURA  
So that wasn't too bad, was it? I wasn't gone long?

RICHIE  
No, you weren't long.

LAURA  
That's right. At one point... I don't know... there was a moment when I thought I might be longer. But I changed my mind.

RICHIE says nothing.

LAURA  
Honey, what is it?

RICHIE  
Mommy, I love you.

There is a moment's pause.

LAURA  
I love you too, baby.

There is a thoughtful look on RICHIE'S face.

LAURA  
What's wrong?

RICHIE looks at LAURA as if he knows where she has been.

LAURA  
What?

But still RICHIE says nothing, just goes on looking.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

LAURA

Don't worry, honey. Everything's fine. We're going to have a wonderful party. We've made Daddy such a nice cake.

RICHIE is still looking at her, watchful.

LAURA

I love you, sweetheart. You're my guy.

RICHIE is seen from LAURA'S POINT OF VIEW, his little face flushed for a moment with pleasure. The SOUND FADES, and there is a SLOW DISSOLVE THROUGH TO:

81 INT. RICHARD'S APARTMENT - EVENING (2001)

81

RICHARD'S face seen from the exact SAME POINT OF VIEW. The child has become the man. RICHARD is sitting in the near dark, a gleam of light catching the sweat on his forehead. He has not moved from his chair, nor has he dressed. He sits thinking back to the scene in the car. LAURA'S voice is heard in RICHARD'S head.

LAURA (V.O.)

I love you, sweetheart. You're my guy.

82 EXT./INT. TRIANGLE BUILDING - EVENING

82

CLARISSA gets out of a hired car in the afternoon light, and heads into the doorway of the triangle building. She gets quickly into the elevator. The elevator ascends.

83 INT. RICHARD'S APARTMENT - EVENING

83

Beside RICHARD, a photograph of his mother, LAURA, on her wedding day, eyes down. RICHARD looks at it, the extreme sweat of illness running down his face.

84 INT. RICHARD'S APARTMENT - EVENING

84

CLARISSA, in a repeat of the morning's progress, comes to the door of RICHARD'S apartment and rings the bell to warn him of her presence.

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA

Richard, Richard, it's me. I'm  
early. I know.

She puts her key in the lock and opens the door. The blinds have been pulled up and the curtains parted for the first time. In full light at last, it looks like the apartment of a madman -- piles of cardboard boxes, a filthy bathtub, books flung everywhere. CLARISSA moves forward in astonishment.

CLARISSA

Richard! What the hell's going  
on?

RICHARD

What are you doing here? You're  
early.

RICHARD is pushing furniture to the side. He looks like an exalted scarecrow, his hair plastered to his skull. He's high as a kite, and still dressed in his bathrobe and pajamas. Immediately behind him, he has opened the window wide. CLARISSA looks in horror.

CLARISSA

Richard, what are you doing?  
What's going on?

RICHARD looks at her from across the room, his eyes gleaming.

RICHARD

Clarissa, I had this wonderful  
idea. I needed some light. I  
needed to let in some light.

RICHARD moves toward the window.

CLARISSA

Richard, what are you doing?

RICHARD

I had this fantastic notion. I  
took the Xanax and the Ritalin  
together. It had never occurred  
to me.

CLARISSA

Richard!

RICHARD screams at her.

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

Don't come near me!

CLARISSA stops. RICHARD scrambles painfully to the windowsill and lifts one leg over the sill, so that he is perched, bony, weightless, with the other foot still on the apartment floor. CLARISSA stands, trying to be calm.

RICHARD

It seemed to me I needed to let in some light. What do you think? I cleared away all the windows.

CLARISSA

All right, do me one favor, Richard, do me one simple favor...

RICHARD

I don't think I can make it to the party, Clarissa. I'm sorry.

CLARISSA

You don't have to go to the party. You don't have to go to the ceremony.

RICHARD'S face darkens. CLARISSA shouts in desperation.

CLARISSA

You don't have to do anything, Richard! You can do what you like!

RICHARD

But I have to face the hours, don't I? The hours after the party. And the hours after that.

CLARISSA

You have good days still, Richard. You know you do.

RICHARD

Not really. It's kind of you to say so, but it isn't true.

CLARISSA is stopped dead, full of fear at her next question.

CLARISSA

Are they here, Richard?

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

Who?

CLARISSA

The voices?

RICHARD

Oh, the voices are always here.

CLARISSA

But is it the voices you're hearing now?

RICHARD

No, Mrs. Dalloway. It's you.

CLARISSA looks at him, terrified now.

RICHARD

I've stayed alive for you.

RICHARD looks at her pleadingly.

RICHARD

But now you have to let me go.

CLARISSA looks at him, shocked by what he has said. But again as she moves toward him, he cuts her off.

CLARISSA

Richard...

RICHARD

Tell me a story, all right?

CLARISSA

What about?

RICHARD

Tell me a story from your day.

CLARISSA stops, fearing this is their last moment together.

CLARISSA

I got up...

RICHARD

Yes?

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA

And... I went out to get flowers  
-- just like Mrs. Dalloway -- in  
the book, do you know?

RICHARD

Yes.

CLARISSA

-- it was a beautiful morning.

RICHARD

Was it?

CLARISSA

Yes. It was beautiful. It was so  
fresh.

CLARISSA shakes her head.

RICHARD

Fresh, was it?

CLARISSA

Yes.

RICHARD

Like a morning on the beach?

CLARISSA

Yes.

RICHARD

Like that?

CLARISSA

Yes.

RICHARD

Fresh like when you and I were  
young?

There is a silence. CLARISSA doesn't answer.

RICHARD

Like the morning you walked out of  
that old house and you were  
eighteen, and maybe I was  
nineteen.

CLARISSA

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

I was nineteen years old and I'd never seen anything so beautiful. You, coming out of a glass door in the early morning, still sleepy. Isn't it strange?

CLARISSA

Yes. Yes it's strange.

RICHARD

The most ordinary morning in anybody's life.

RICHARD shakes his head slightly.

RICHARD

Clarissa, I'm afraid I can't make the party.

CLARISSA

The party doesn't matter. Give me your hand.

CLARISSA reaches out to him.

RICHARD

You've been so good to me, Mrs. Dalloway.

CLARISSA

Richard...

RICHARD

I love you.

CLARISSA stops, taken aback as he says it.

RICHARD

I don't think two people could have been happier than we've been.

There is a moment's silence. Then RICHARD inches forward, slides gently off the sill, and falls. CLARISSA screams.

CLARISSA

No!

Silence. No sound. Seen FROM BELOW, RICHARD'S body floating slowly down from the fifth floor in the air.

86 INT. RICHARD'S APARTMENT - EVENING

86

CLARISSA looks at the empty window. Then she steps back away from the window, just staring, making no noise. She takes one step back and then another.

87 EXT. HUDSON STREET - EVENING

87

RICHARD'S body lands against the concrete, SMASHING a BEER BOTTLE as it does. The corpse bounces, then settles, face down, his robe up over his face. Silence again.

88 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - NIGHT (1951)

88

The cake, now bright with lit candles on the dining room table. A great effort has been made for DAN'S birthday and the front room is bright with light and decoration. DAN blows out his candles in one long go. RICHIE and LAURA watch from their seats at the table.

RICHIE AND LAURA

Happy Birthday! Happy Birthday,  
Dan!

They all laugh.

DAN

This is perfect. This is just  
perfect.

LAURA

Do you think so? Do you really  
think so?

DAN

Why sure. You must have been  
working all day.

LAURA

Well we were. Weren't we, bug?  
That's what we were doing.  
Working all day.

DAN

This is just fantastic. It's what  
I've always wanted.

LAURA is doing well as the good wife, sharing her husband's delight in the cake. RICHIE is watching, with a serious expression.

(CONTINUED)

LAURA

Oh, Dan...

DAN

One day I'll tell you, Richie.  
I'll tell you how it all  
happened...

LAURA

Don't.

LAURA seems embarrassed. DAN looks up at her, quiet but serious.

DAN

I want to. I want to tell him the  
story.

LAURA is silent, giving permission, but ill at ease. DAN looks at RICHIE, full of pleasure at picking his way exactly through his story.

DAN

What happened: When I was at war -- at war I found myself thinking -- and I remembered that there was this girl that I'd seen -- I'd never met her -- at high school -- this strange, fragile-looking girl called Laura McGrath. Yeah. And she was shy. And she was interesting. And -- your mother won't mind me telling you this, Richie -- she was the kind of girl you see sitting mostly on her own.

RICHIE is listening intently. The three of them are intent 'round the table.

DAN

Yes. Richie, I'll tell you:  
Sometimes when I was in the South Pacific, the fact is, I used to think of this girl...

LAURA

Dan...

DAN

I thought of bringing her to a house -- a life -- well, pretty like this.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: (2)

88

DAN (CONT'D)

And it was the thought of the happiness... the thought of this woman... the thought of this life... that is what kept me going.

There is silence. DAN is looking at LAURA.

DAN

I had an idea of our happiness.

RICHIE watches, aware of the awful sadness between them.

LAURA

Did you make a wish?

DAN has taken one of the yellow roses from the cake, and, unaware, has been rolling it between his fingers, back and forth, back and forth. He is alone with his thoughts for a few moments, then he turns and looks blankly at LAURA. Then he nods.

DAN

Yes, I did.

89 INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

89

CLARISSA is seen through the glass panel in a door waiting at the morgue. She is standing in distress, shaken by the events of the afternoon. Then SALLY arrives at the door, led into the morgue by an ORDERLY. She stops a moment to look through the door. Now, full of feeling, she opens the door to join CLARISSA. CLARISSA looks across.

90 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - NIGHT

90

In the drawing room, there are two pools of light from standard lamps. On opposite sides of the room LEONARD and VIRGINIA are sitting, a kind of truce between them after the events of the afternoon. They are both reading. VIRGINIA'S book is in her hand. She still has the London rail ticket, which she is using as a bookmark. She fingers the ticket, turning it over. After a few moments LEONARD looks up, as if something has occurred to him from a previous conversation.

LEONARD

Why does someone have to die?

VIRGINIA looks up and frowns.

(CONTINUED)

VIRGINIA  
Leonard?

LEONARD  
In your book?

VIRGINIA  
Oh.

LEONARD  
You said someone has to die. Why?

LEONARD catches just a trace of VIRGINIA'S reaction.

LEONARD  
Is that a stupid question?

VIRGINIA  
No.

LEONARD  
I imagine my question is stupid.

VIRGINIA  
Not at all.

LEONARD  
Well?

VIRGINIA gives it thought before answering.

VIRGINIA  
Someone has to die in order that  
the rest of us should value life  
more.

LEONARD looks at her, the two of them serious now.

VIRGINIA  
It's contrast.

LEONARD  
And who will die?

VIRGINIA  
It's a secret.

LEONARD  
Tell me.

VIRGINIA pauses, then gives him the gift of an answer.

VIRGINIA  
The poet will die. The visionary.

91 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - RICHIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (1951) 91

RICHIE, the poet, the visionary, lying in the bed in a little room painted with stars. It is decorated with pictures of rockets and imaginary astronauts. His face is alert on the pillow.

92 EXT. BROWNS' HOUSE - NIGHT 92

The Browns' house seen from the road. It's dark. Just one pool of light is thrown onto their drive by a side-window. The street at peace.

93 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - RICHIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 93

RICHIE is lying awake listening to the sound of his father in the next room calling to LAURA.

94 INT. BROWNS' HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT 94

LAURA is sitting, her head in her hands, on the closed toilet seat. She is in white pajamas, bent down in an attitude of abject despair, unable to move. After a few moments, DAN calls through from the bedroom.

DAN (O.S.)

What are you doing?

LAURA looks up. She has taken her make-up off and it is plain she has been crying.

LAURA

I'm brushing my teeth.

DAN (O.S.)

Are you coming to bed?

LAURA

Yes. In a minute.

DAN (O.S.)

Come to bed, Laura Brown.

But LAURA doesn't move, just turns away, trapped.

DAN (O.S.)

I ran into Ray, he says Kitty's had to go to the hospital.

LAURA

That's right.

(CONTINUED)

DAN (O.S.)

Nothing serious, he said. Just a checkup.

LAURA

I'm terrified.

DAN (O.S.)

Why?

LAURA speaks quietly, not loud enough for DAN to hear.

LAURA

Oh, the idea she could disappear.

DAN has not heard anything.

DAN (O.S.)

Perhaps you could go see her in the morning, honey.

LAURA

I was going to. I was going to stop by.

There is another short silence. LAURA is unable to move.

DAN (O.S.)

I've had a wonderful day and I have you to thank.

LAURA looks away, in despair now.

DAN (O.S.)

Come to bed, honey.

LAURA

I'm coming.

But still LAURA stands, not moving. After a while, DAN speaks again.

DAN (O.S.)

So. Are you coming?

LAURA

Yes.

In the distance, you can hear a DOG BARKING. LAURA gets up and reaches for the pull-light over the mirror. The bathroom goes dark. She takes the steps which bring her to the door which leads to the door which leads to the bedroom. LAURA stands in the door, the only light falling on her face.

95 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - STUDY - DAY (1923)

95

VIRGINIA is now sitting in her favorite chair with a writing board across her lap, notebook in hand. The light pools around her. She is not writing, just thinking. LEONARD appears in the doorway opposite. He says nothing.

VIRGINIA

What? What?

LEONARD smiles.

LEONARD

I was hoping you were going to bed.

VIRGINIA

I am. I am going to bed.

They look at each other, their eyes full of love and humor.

LEONARD

What then?

VIRGINIA

All else is clear. The outline of the story is planned. Now one thing only.

VIRGINIA shakes her head very slightly, still in the chair.

VIRGINIA

Mrs. Dalloway's destiny must be resolved.

96 INT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (2001)

96

CLARISSA is in the kitchen with SALLY and JULIA. Every surface is taken up with food for the party which never happened. CLARISSA has the crab dish in her hand and is emptying it sadly into the bin. She is still in the coat she was wearing all afternoon. As she dumps the wasted food, she hears a RING at the DOOR.

CLARISSA goes to the apartment door and opens it. LAURA BROWN is standing directly opposite. She is now in her early 80s, slightly stooped with steel-gray hair and parchment skin. She is wearing a dark, floral dress and coat. CLARISSA is taken aback for a moment.

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA

You're Laura Brown.

LAURA

Yes. I'm Richard's mother.

CLARISSA

Of course.

CLARISSA reaches out her hand.

CLARISSA

I'm Clarissa Vaughan. Come in.

LAURA has a small bag which CLARISSA now lifts for her as she leads her into the apartment. At the end of the corridor SALLY is standing with JULIA behind her, but CLARISSA signals tactfully for them to hold off a moment, as she leads LAURA into the sitting room. Throughout the apartment, dinner tables have been set with white table cloths, and glasses. CLARISSA is alone with LAURA in the sitting room.

CLARISSA

My friend Sally's in the kitchen.  
And my daughter.

LAURA just looks at her a moment, not answering.

CLARISSA

We were having a party. We were  
going to have a party.

LAURA

I was lucky. I got the last plane  
from Toronto.

In the kitchen, unheard, unseen, JULIA watches, then speaks quietly to SALLY.

JULIA

So that's the monster.

LAURA has approached a table loaded with RICHARD'S books.

CLARISSA

I hope I did the right thing. I  
found your number in his phone  
book.

LAURA

Yes. He had it. But we didn't  
speak often.

(CONTINUED)

LAURA is looking at RICHARD'S picture. CLARISSA stands a moment, waiting.

LAURA

It's a terrible thing, Miss Vaughan, to outlive your whole family.

CLARISSA

Richard's father died...

LAURA

Yes. He died of cancer. Quite young. And Richard's sister is dead.

LAURA looks at her a moment.

LAURA

Obviously you feel unworthy. It gives you feelings of unworthiness. You survive and they don't.

CLARISSA waits a second before speaking.

CLARISSA

Did you read the poems?

LAURA

Yes. I read them. I also read the novel. You see, people say that the novel is difficult...

CLARISSA

I know...

LAURA

They say that.

CLARISSA

I know...

LAURA

He had me die in the novel. I know why he did that. It hurt, of course. I can't pretend it didn't hurt, but I know why he did it.

CLARISSA

You left Richie when he was a child?

(CONTINUED)

LAURA

I left both my children. I abandoned them. They say it's the worst thing a mother can do.

Neither of them move. The room is silent now.

LAURA

You have a daughter?

CLARISSA

Yes. But I never met Julia's father.

LAURA

You so wanted a child?

CLARISSA

That's right.

LAURA

You're a very lucky woman.

CLARISSA looks down.

LAURA

There are times when you don't belong and you think you're going to kill yourself. Once I went to a hotel. That night... later that night, I made a plan. Plan was, I would leave my family when my second child was born. And that's what I did. Got up one morning, made breakfast, went to the bus stop, got on a bus. I'd left a note.

There's a moment's silence.

LAURA

I got a job in a library in Canada. It would be wonderful to say you regretted it. It would be easy. But what does it mean? What does it mean to regret when you have no choice? It's what you can bear. There it is. No one is going to forgive me.

LAURA looks at CLARISSA, steady, unapologetic.

LAURA

It was death. I chose life.

97 INT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

97

CLARISSA comes out of the sitting room down the hall of the apartment and quietly goes into their bedroom, still wearing her dark coat. SALLY is in the kitchen with JULIA and now look up at the sight of CLARISSA. She gets up and follows CLARISSA into the bedroom.

98 INT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

98

SALLY comes into the room to find CLARISSA sitting on the side of the bed in her coat. The two women look at each other.

SALLY

You need to take your coat off.

SALLY comes round and gestures to CLARISSA to stand up. SALLY puts her hands on CLARISSA'S shoulders to help her take off the coat. As she does, CLARISSA turns and looks at SALLY, the two of them overcome. The two women look warmly at each other, then they kiss.

99 INT. APARTMENT - JULIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

99

LAURA is unpacking her suitcase on the bed in Julia's room. It has only a few things which she has hurriedly put in for the trip. She looks frail and alone. There is a KNOCK on the door and JULIA comes in with a cup and saucer.

JULIA

I thought you might like a cup of tea.

LAURA

That's very kind, dear. I feel I'm stealing your room.

JULIA has put the tea down beside the bed.

JULIA

We put the food away, so... if you're hungry in the night, just help yourself.

LAURA

Well, I will. You have somewhere?

JULIA

Yes. The sofa.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

LAURA

I'm sorry.

Instinctively JULIA moves towards her and puts her arms round her. The 18-year-old and the 80-year-old embrace. LAURA stands a moment, astonished at her warmth. Then JULIA moves away.

LAURA

Good night, sweetheart.

JULIA

Good night.

100 INT. HOGARTH HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT (1923) 100

VIRGINIA lies in bed, making no effort to sleep, but lying by moonlight in her bed, her eyes open, white like a ghost.

101 INT. CLARISSA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (2001) 101

The corridor of the apartment. Everyone else has gone to bed. CLARISSA, in her white pajamas, is in the kitchen turning off the lights one by one. As she turns off the last one in the kitchen, she comes into the corridor, and begins the same process. She looks round briefly at her own home: comfortable, solid, complete. At last she seems at peace. As she turns out the lights in the corridor, the voice of VIRGINIA WOOLF is heard.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

Dear Leonard, to look life in the face, always to look life in the face, and to know what it is, to love it for what it is. At last to know it. To love it for what it is. And then to put it away.

CLARISSA turns out the last light and the corridor is darkened. She turns and goes into her room.

102 EXT. RIVER OUSE - DAY (1941) 102

VIRGINIA WOOLF walks calmly once more into the river.

VIRGINIA (V.O.)

Leonard, always the years between us, always the years, always the love. Always the hours.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

102

VIRGINIA stands a moment, up to her neck in the water, about to plunge herself under. The sun plays on the water.

FADE OUT.

THE END