



ECHO LAKE

ENTERTAINMENT

TINY HAUNTED HOUSE

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6th draft

EXT. ABOVE PORTLAND - DAY

We fly above suburban neighborhoods and cleverly painted houses, listening to the jaunty-loungey vibe of Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass.

Now the outskirts. Peppered with mills and small factories unkempt and out of use. The New Frontier of Portland.

And this is where we touch down. At the gates of a boxy, brick, ten-story building...

The *Excelsior Typewriter Factory* (engraved on the gate) seems to be in the early stages of residential gentrification by the oddballs and iconoclasts forced out of town by a new generation of oddballs and iconoclasts.

A VEGETABLE GARDEN inside the gates is where we find ULYSSES BRANDYWINE. (30's. Quirky with curlique mustache.) Dressed in a too-deliberate denim gardening ensemble as he yanks turnips out of the ground.

He wipes his brow and waves pleasantly at a man riding a unicycle and wearing a tri-cornered hat.

UNICYCLE MAN

What do we have here?

ULYSSES

Gilfeather turnips. Known the world round for their creamy white flesh and smooth leaves.

UNICYCLE MAN

Sounds delicious.

ULYSSES

Oh, just wait 'til these babies soak for seven weeks in vinegar and sardine juice!

The man tries to stifle his gag reflex as he hauls ass away as fast as one can on a unicycle.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

We follow Ulysses as he crosses the lobby, carrying his bushel of turnips as he enters a clanky old elevator.

INT. CLANKY OLD ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

We can still hear Tijuana Brass as Ulysses rides the elevator. Smiling at nothing in particular.

INT. VAST FACTORY FLOOR TURNED LOFT SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Ulysses steps out of the elevator and directly into a huge CONVERTED LOFT SPACE. The apartment is an open floor plan. A long rectangle whose ends can barely be seen.

Ulysses turns to his left and shouts at a DISTANT FIGURE near a row of open windows.

ULYSSES

Ahoy there!

His wife, NAN, (30's) doesn't look up. She's typing on a laptop. Her WW2-era style of hair and dress are a match for Ulysses' vintage aesthetic.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

I said AHOY THERE!!

Nan finally hears. She looks up smiling and gives him a wave.

NAN

How are your turnips?

ULYSSES

What?

NAN

HOW. ARE. YOUR. TUR-NIPS???

Ulysses proudly holds up a turnip to show her. Nan squints at it, trying to see, but finally gives up.

ANGLE ON Nan's laptop. We see a fancifully art-directed BLOG PAGE titled **CONFESSIONS OF A PICKLER'S WIFE**.

Nan Brandywine is a writer and art director who lives outside Portland in a re-purposed typewriter factory with her husband (the internet-famous pickler/influencer Ulysses Brandywine) and their Amazon Parrot, Fillmore.

Ulysses heads over to the kitchen, passing by a half-dozen rows of shelving containing endless jars of PICKLED FOODS.

Once in the kitchen space, Ulysses sets down his bushel and checks the temperature on a GIGANTIC POT OF BOILING WATER.

He looks up from his thermometer and winks at FILLMORE, the GORGEOUS GREEN AND RED BIRD occupying a cage nearby.

ULYSSES
Hey good-lookin'.

FILLMORE
(squawking)
Hey good-lookin'!

ULYSSES
I've got something for you.

He steps back to the shelves and retrieves a HEAVY JAR filled with what look like little BLACK TURDS. He pops the hinge on the mason jar and fishes out one of the turds.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
Fillmore, you are in for a treat.
My pickled walnuts should be ready!

In the cage, Fillmore takes incremental steps backward. As Ulysses reaches toward the cage holding the walnut (turd) the parrot starts to shake his head back and forth.

Uly places the gooey walnut between his own lips.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
Come on, baby.

The bird tentatively pokes his head out and uses his beak to take the pickled walnut from his owner's lips.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
Mmmmm!

FILLMORE
Mmmmm!

ULYSSES
(yells to Nan)
See! I told you he'd like it!

Behind Uly's back, Fillmore spits the pickled walnut out of his cage and across the room. *Ptooeey!*

Ulysses turns back to the cage and hooks the metal clasp of the mason jar directly onto the cage.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
Here you go, buddy. You can have
all the pickled walnuts you want.

Satisfied, he steps back and surveys the kitchen, taking stock of his pickling equipment. Suddenly, a pained look.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
Where are my rubber O-rings?!

He looks to the far end of the loft, at a STORAGE CLOSET.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
Oh for Shit's Sake!

He hops on a SCOOTER and races off toward the storage closet.

In the empty kitchen, we notice that the heavy jar, now attached to Fillmore's cage, is starting to slowly bend the curved top of the stand that holds the cage.

It droops down and toward the stovetop. Upon which is the POT OF BOILING WATER. This does not go unnoticed by Fillmore.

FILLMORE
Oh for Shit's sake.

WAY DOWN AT THE END OF THE LOFT, Ulysses gets off his scooter and starts rummaging around the storage closet.

BACK IN THE KITCHEN, the shifting weight of the birdcage is causing the stand to tilt ever so slightly.

Fillmore looks back and forth between the tilting stand and the pot of boiling water.

FILLMORE (CONT'D)
Oh for Shit's sake!

BY THE WINDOWS, oblivious to the squawking, Nan types away. Tapping her foot to the music blaring from the record player.

With July's turnip harvest underway, my thoughts turn to the inevitable approach of radicchio season. I sincerely believe that, for Uly's Instagram followers, the thought of a Labor Day without his pickled radicchio portraits would be... well... utterly ridicchio.

BACK IN THE KITCHEN, Fillmore's cage stand wobbles, then finally loses its balance, tipping over and SLAMMING AGAINST THE KITCHEN COUNTER, leaving the birdcage just ten inches above the steaming lobster pot.

FILLMORE (CONT'D)
(frantically flapping)
OH FOR SHIT'S SAKE!!

The base of the cage-stand, now resting with one edge against the tile floor, starts to slide with the weight shift. Which slowly lowers the cage down toward the pot.

And as the bottom of his cage dips into the bubbling water, Fillmore furiously flies up to the top of the cage.

But there's only so far he can go, and as the cage starts to submerge an inch at a time, the poor bird squawks like crazy.

FILLMORE (CONT'D)
OH FOR SHIT'S SAKE!!!
OH FOR SHIT'S SAKE!!!

OVER AT THE STORAGE CLOSET, Ulysses is digging intently. He lifts his head when he thinks he hears... something.

BY THE WINDOWS, Nan also she thinks she hears... something.

AT THE CLOSET, Ulysses turns slowly toward the sound.

BY THE WINDOWS, Nan looks up slowly from her laptop.

AT THE CLOSET, we see a look of terror on Ulysses' face.

BY THE WINDOWS, Nan bolts to her feet, knocking the table.

SLOW-MOTION. Ulysses sprints madly to the kitchen.

SLOW-MOTION. Nan races, screaming, toward the kitchen.

It's a nightmarish version of *Chariots of Fire*, with husband and wife dashing across the loft from opposite directions.

And when they arrive, at the same time, they are greeted with a horrific sight.

A gilded cage ENTIRELY SUBMERGED in a pot of boiling water.

Nan and Uly lean closer and closer to the water. Helplessly drawn by shock and morbid curiosity....

SKRAAAAAAAWW!!!!

A HALF-MELTED, PARTIALLY DEFEATHERED FILLMORE POPS OUT OF THE WATER, giving one last terrifying DEATH-SQUAWK, before lifelessly submerging back in the water.

In slow motion, Nan and Uly fall to the floor, sobbing.

EXT. LAKESIDE PARK - DAY

Tiny raindrops fall on the surface of a lake where a small, floating SHRINE is tethered.

The balsa-wood shrine is a lovingly carved heart-shaped nest. In the center of the nest, a small coffin.

Soft music from a MANDOLIN plays. Gordon Lightfoot, perhaps.

Hands reach into frame, one at a time. Placing homemade tributes: A silken pouch of birdseed. A tiny bronze teething-bell. A likeness of Fillmore, painted on a small swath of black velvet. (locked in mid-air battle with a bald eagle.)

Angle on a small crowd of MOURNERS. Carrying umbrellas and dressed somberly except for a RED AND GREEN ARMBAND.

Ulysses and Nan stand in the middle of this gathering. Both of them wiping tears from their eyes.

Finally, Ulysses nods to A FRIEND, who dons a HORNED VIKING HELMET, and steps up to the shrine. He douses the shrine with lighter fluid, then strikes a wooden match...

VIKING HELMET FRIEND

Valhalla, I am coming.

...and tosses the lit match onto the shrine, which quickly BURSTS INTO FLAMES. Viking-Friend untethers the memorial barge and gives it a little kick, sending it off from shore.

The mourners watch it go, some of them saluting.

As the flaming shrine floats deeper out, it gets pushed by a gust of wind and comes in contact with a REMOTE CONTROLLED MINIATURE SAILBOAT.

The burlap sail of the R.C. boat immediately catches fire.

ANGRY VOICE (OFFSCREEN)

Hey what the fuck?

ULYSSES

(yells offscreen)

I'm really sorry!

We see now that this lake is quite popular. Visitors dot the shoreline all around, and the lake is a flurry of activity.

Another gust of wind sends Fillmore's fiery coffin on a beeline for a PADDLEBOAT being operated by TWO LITTLE GIRLS.

They both start screaming at the approach of the shrine, and once the object hits them, causing their paddleboat to catch on fire, the girls shriek and bail into the water.

BACK AT THE FUNERAL PARTY, the guests look on in shock. The Mandolin player stops playing, hangs his head and walks away.

Nan bursts into tears as Ulysses (himself crying) plunges into the lake in an effort to quell the mayhem. He thrashes around, up to his armpits in water, trying simultaneously to put out both fires and wrangle the screaming children.

INT. VAST FACTORY FLOOR TURNED LOFT SPACE - DAY/NIGHT

A MONTAGE of time passing, as Nan and Ulysses glumly go about their lives.

She tries to blog, but only types a few words before slamming her laptop shut.

He stares at his Instagram page. Unmotivated and uninspired.

Like a couple of ghouls, they meander the huge living space. And when they do happen to cross paths, they walk by each other, wordlessly.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

When Ulysses enters the cooking space, Nan stands in front of him, blocking his progress.

NAN

I don't think I can live here
anymore.

ULYSSES

What are you saying?

NAN

We have to get out.

ULYSSES

But how? We bought a place in the
desolate Portland outskirts
anticipating it'd become a thriving
bohemian hotspot. Like Dumbo in
Brooklyn or Dogpatch in San
Francisco. We even came up with
our own catchy word-mash for the
neighborhood! Portskirts!

NAN
(smiling wistfully)
Such a good name.

ULYSSES
We sell now it's gonna wipe us out!

NAN
But Uly, if we stay here, I'm
afraid it's gonna wipe out the very
fabric of our marriage.

Ulysses looks at her. She's right. And so he wraps his arms
around his wife, squeezing her tight.

ULYSSES
I guess we could use a fresh start.
(sighs)
So where do we go from here?
Unless you get a regular job, the
best we can do is rent out a room
in town.

Nan takes Ulysses' hand and leads him to a table where her
laptop sits. She has a nervous look as she starts to speak...

NAN
This is gonna sound crazy, but last
week I started looking for job
openings in print journalism.

ULYSSES
Pff. That's an up-and-coming field.
You sure you don't wanna see if
there's anything in VCR repair?

NAN
You know I've always wanted to do
REAL writing. And now more than
ever I want to do something that'll
take my mind off of Fillmore.

He nods, understanding all too well.

NAN (CONT'D)
Well, something DID come up. And I
applied for it. And... they made
me an offer.

ULYSSES
Congratulations! What's the job?

NAN

Doing layout design for a TINY weekly paper. But. There is one TINY catch.

Off his quizzical look, Nan opens her laptop and types. Quickly, she spins the laptop and shows Ulysses a map and a few images of a REMOTE TOURIST TOWN in coastal Massachusetts.

ULYSSES

Massachusetts? Yeah, we need a fresh start. But across the country?

NAN

There's no fresher start than pulling up stakes and moving to the opposite coast.

ULYSSES

How are we gonna afford a house in a New England fishing community on my meager ad revenue and a local newspaper art director's salary?

NAN

We'll have to think small. But I think that's just what we need. To get closer. Too much space was the cause of... all this.

Ulysses, still trying to process this, clicks through the photos. It is an adorable-looking seaside community.

NAN (CONT'D)

A whole new environment. A new set of things to discover. And pickle!

ULYSSES

That's true. But we don't know anybody.

NAN

So we'll make new friends.
(playfully)
They say nobody makes friends faster than a man with a delicious pickle.

Uly chuckles, happy to see a smile on his wife's face.

INT./EXT. PORTLAND - DAY

MONTAGE of Nan and Ulysses starting the downsizing process.

-Selling off their bigger possessions like the gigantic portraits and a kitschy La-Z-Boy recliner.

-Uly at a farmers market, hawking his jarred veggies like a carnival barker.

-Painfully donating beloved items, like FILLMORE'S CAGE. They tearfully hand it over to a PURPLE-HAIRED WOMAN who immediately picks up her pet SKUNK, stuffs it in the birdcage. Ignoring Nan and Ulysses' puzzled faces, she gives them a blank look and slams the door in their faces.

INT. PORTLAND COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Nan and Ulysses sit facing a laptop conducting a SKYPE SESSION with a Cranberry Cove realtor named THAD SPURLOCK. (40. Brooks Brothers shirt and tie.)

Thad's face remains in a corner of the screen while Nan studies a cute Cape Cod cottage.

THAD SPURLOCK

Look at that master bedroom. I can totally see you feeding each other huckleberries in bed.

NAN

It's beautiful, Thad. But I think we're looking for something a bit smaller.

THAD SPURLOCK

No problem! I totally get it!
Pull up listing #29874.

(once Nan finds it)

A bit rustic, but hey, Abe Lincoln lived in a little log cabin and look how things turned out for him!

Nan and Uly smile as they scroll. It is charming.

THAD SPURLOCK (CONT'D)

Indoor-outdoor living. Great if you have pets. You guys are pet-owners, aren't you? I can tell.

Uly starts to choke up a little. Nan squeezes his hand.

NAN
It's kind of a long story.

Nan scrolls through the photos.

NAN (CONT'D)
This is gonna sound crazy, but it's
actually still a little bit bigger
than what we were looking for.

Thad scratches his chin. An almost... dark look crosses his
face before he plasters his real estate smile back on.

THAD SPURLOCK
You know what? I think you guys
are in luck. I've got a really,
really interesting property outside
of town that might be just what the
doctor ordered. 765626.

Nan types, then she and Uly sit back and study the pictures.

THAD SPURLOCK (CONT'D)
You're looking for cozy? This baby
is like a snug little cocoon!

Angle on the listing: The facade of the property is
relatively straightforward. A cottage in the woods. It's
cute, but in a doll-house way.

Nan flips to the photos of the interior. What there is of
the interior. There's a "living room" space. Book-ended by
a kitchen nook on one side, and what appear to be two closets
on the opposite side. The "bedroom" is a loft above the
kitchen area, accessed by a ladder.

ULYSSES
Wow. That is small.

THAD SPURLOCK
Absolutely! This house is tailor-
made for the couple that wants to
rediscover one another. *Intimately.*

Nan and Ulysses scroll through more photos of the house.
Every time they look a picture, they tilt their heads,
struggling to get some sense of perspective.

NAN
It's cute. No doubt about that.

THAD SPURLOCK

And look at those beams. All
reclaimed wood. Don't tell me you
guys don't love that.

ULYSSES

Reclaimed wood! Now you're
speaking my language.
(looks at a photo)
That kitchen might be a bit
cramped for pickling.

NAN

It's not that small.
(points to a picture)
Look at that bowl of fruit! And
those knives.

In the photo, a bowl of bananas and watermelons are used for
scale. And the row of knives hanging from a magnetic strip
give some sense of perspective.

They look at the price, then look at each other. *We can do
this.* Thad senses their acceptance and goes in for the kill.

THAD SPURLOCK

I'm telling you. This is your
forever house. **THIS** is the house
you two are gonna be buried in.

Ulysses and Nan smile, nodding their heads. In spite of the
OMINOUS MUSIC CUE that kicks in.

EXT. COASTAL MASSACHUSETTS - DAY

A VESPA zips along a winding cliffside road.

Aboard the motorized bike, Ulysses and Nan (behind him, arms
wrapped around his waist) take in the scenic beauty.

EXT. CRANBERRY COVE - DAY

Nan and Ulysses putter through town. It's every bit as
quaint as the photos suggest.

Main Street is peppered with trinket shops and boutiques.
And *appropos* of its history, every business has a cutesy
nautical-themed name.

A patio furniture store called **Moby Deck**.

A candle shop named **Thar She Glows**.

A t-shirt store called **The Shirt Off My Humpback**. In the display hangs its most popular item. A t-shirt that reads *Cranberry Cove is for Blubbers*. (with a cartoon of two whales holding hands and a heart with a harpoon through it instead of cupid's arrow.)

Even ST. JONAH'S CHURCH on the edge of the business district is getting in on the act. A ruddy-faced PRIEST is assembling letters across the sign in front. **ALL ARE WHALE-COME!**

ULYSSES

Ha-ha. He said "Whale come."

Nan slaps his arm playfully.

NAN

Let's find the house. The suspense is killing me.

Ulysses nods and steers the Vespa onto a side street that sends them climbing up into the hills above town.

EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

The Vespa scoots along a narrow curved road, finally coming to a stop at the end of the road.

Ulysses turns off the bike and he helps his wife off. They stand there, looking forward.

Reverse to show their POV. Of a MOVING TRUCK. And a couple of movers, pulling the last of their belongings out of the back of the truck and setting these things down on the grass next to the truck.

ULYSSES

Why aren't they putting the stuff inside the house?

NAN

What house? I don't even see a house.

The movers plop down the last of Nan and Uly's possessions, wipe their hands, and hop into the moving truck.

The truck starts up and drives off. When it moves, it reveals Nan and Uly's new house. Which previously couldn't be seen. Because the truck is LARGER THAN THE HOUSE ITSELF.

They stand before the house. It looks just like it did in the pictures. Just smaller. Like, infinitely smaller.

INT. THE TINY HOUSE - DAY

Nan and Ulysses step inside.

The house is a jarring contrast to their old place. The living room is the immediate space that they walk into.

The only seating area is a sofa-like thing built into the opposite wall.

On the wall above is mounted a GROSS OLD BEAVER HEAD.

It's decades old, evident by its patchy, dust-covered fur. Some of which has fallen off over the years. Under its crusty hard nose, long yellowed teeth extend far beyond its mouth.

They continue to look around. Strewn around the floor are a few CREEPY/ANTIQUY TOYS.

To their right are two doors. One of them opens up to a closet that could fit about a dozen outfits. The other opens up to a bathroom.

INT. "BATHROOM" - DAY

Nan and Uly peek into a facility where sink, toilet, and shower all insanely share the same square footage as your average airplane lavatory.

INT. "LIVING ROOM" - CONTINUOUS

After peering into the bathroom, Nan and Uly walk over to the kitchen at the opposite end. If you can call taking four steps "walking."

INT. "KITCHEN" - CONTINUOUS

The kitchen is one corner. Uly nearly bangs his head entering it because the "bedroom" loft is built above.

With its amenities all miniaturized, the kitchen has the look and feel of a child's set up.

Uly picks up the bowl of fruit featured in the website photo to offer scale. The "bananas" are tiny little PLAINTAINS.

Uly grabs the tiny cleaver off the magnetic rack. He uses what's in reality a TINY CHEESE KNIFE to slice open the tiny watermelons. Revealing them to be CUCAMELONS, the adorable little cousin to the real thing.

He looks over at Nan. Excited, but nervous.

ULYSSES
Well, we wanted Tiny Living.

EXT. THE TINY HOUSE - DAY

Nan and Uly stare at the huge pile of their belongings stacked up in front of the house.

The two of them grab a CHEST OF DRAWERS and try to fit it through the front door. No matter which angle they try, the chest won't make it through the front door.

They put the chest down on the patio.

ULYSSES
We're gonna have to put more stuff
in storage than we can even fit
inside the house.

Just then, a Prius pulls up. Thad Spurlock steps out of the car, brandishing a huge FRUIT BASKET.

THAD SPURLOCK
Knock-knock!
(holds up the basket)
Something for the new owners!

ULYSSES
(wise-cracking)
I'm not sure that'll fit through
the front door.

They all share the forced laugh of those who are just meeting for the first time.

THAD SPURLOCK
It's a tiny house. By definition.

ULYSSES
It's just as advertised. Although
I think you pulled a fast one on us
with that kitchen.

THAD SPURLOCK
How so?

ULYSSES
The cheese knives that looked like
real knives? The tiny fruit that
looked like.. standard-sized fruit.
Nifty little trick.

THAD SPURLOCK
It's not a trick. It's called
staging. Realtors have been using
platanos to enhance their photos
for hundreds of years.

Uly wags a finger at Thad before he turns to Nan...

ULYSSES
Not sure where I'm gonna set up my
pickle jars...

NAN
You can pitch your farmers market
tent right out front. A dedicated
space just for pickling.

ULYSSES
It's gonna be an adventure, that's
for sure.
(to Thad)
I do have some logistical
questions. You think you could put
us in touch with the previous
owners?

Thad's smile falters for a second. And his eyes dart.

THAD SPURLOCK
Oh... um. That's quite impossible.

ULYSSES
Why's that?

THAD SPURLOCK
It's just... it's a real estate
thing. Conditions of.. covenants..
and such. I wish I could help but
what with all the valuations...
and... variable base rates...

Thad mumbles REAL ESTATE JARGON, looking down at the grass,
until he just trails off.

THAD SPURLOCK (CONT'D)
Well, I'll leave you guys to it!

He hands his fruit basket to Nan, then hops back in his car.

Nan and Uly wave, then head over to move the chest of drawers
away from the front door.

They lift, and just as they're about to take it away...

ULYSSES

Hang on.

Uly looks at the chest, then at the door. He cocks his head, puzzled, then guides the chest EASILY THROUGH the doorway.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They set the chest down in the middle of the floor.

NAN

How did...?

ULYSSES

I'm positive we...

They just share a shrug, then head outside for more stuff.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Moving boxes stack and line the tiny living area. Nan is trying to unpack them and find room for the contents.

When she comes across a SHOEBOX SEALED WITH TAPE, she sneakily stashes it under a pile of clothes before Uly can see.

After that, she looks over sees Uly standing amid the boxes, looking a bit daunted and overwhelmed. She goes and gives him a hug.

NAN

Remember our wedding night?

ULYSSES

Of course.

NAN

Do you remember what you told me?

ULYSSES

I do.

(off her smirk)

That's what I said right? *I do?*

NAN

You said *Wherever our paths lead. Whatever comes our way. We're in this thing together.*

ULYSSES

And then we danced to the theme
song from *Hill Street Blues*.

Wistfully, Uly starts SCATTING the opening piano riff from
The Theme from Hill Street Blues.

She joins him. Then they dance. The kind of kitschy,
choreographed routine you'd see on YouTube.

The actual recording of *The Theme from Hill Street Blues*
begins to play. And as the dance grows more elaborate, the
couple swing each other in a circle.

They lock eyes romantically and smile, just before Nan GETS
SWUNG INTO A STACK OF CARDBOARD BOXES and biffs it. Knocking
over the boxes and sprawling onto the floor.

Laughing, Uly picks her up off the floor. Nan laughs too.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

This was a great idea.

She gently kisses him, and they go back to dancing. Now more
cautiously, in a tight little circle that stays within the
confines of the boxes crammed in their little living room.

We go into a MONTAGE OF UNPACKING AND CLEANING. Which
naturally is the shortest unpacking and cleaning montage in
the history of cinema.

INT. ORGANIZED LIVING ROOM - DAY

Uly and Nan admire their handiwork. With their belongings in
place, the house has taken on a much more liveable vibe.

One box remains on the floor, filled with the old, weird toys
that had been left behind.

They look around the room, both of them settling on the gross
old beaver head still mounted on the wall.

ULYSSES

I don't know. Do we keep it?

NAN

Displaying a helpless animal cut
down in the prime of its life?

ULYSSES

It's nice to maintain some of the
historical legacy of the house.

They step around the room, regarding it from different angles. And wherever they stand, the creature's tiny, cold, black glass eyes stare right at them.

NAN

Is it just me or do its eyes follow
you around the room?

ULYSSES

My... god! You're right!
(smiles at her)
Though I think that's more a by-
product of having a living room the
size of a phone booth.

Nan chuckles, then walks over to the box of old toys. She smiles fondly at a weird little GOAT TOY on wheels. A bristly horse-hair animal with a creepy face.

NAN

This could come in handy someday
when we've got a little one running
around the house.

ULYSSES

(cocking an eyebrow)
Oh really?

NAN

Well, if I can keep this little
fella, then you can keep the
stuffed beaver. Even if it does
give me the heebie-jeebies.

Uly walks over and holds the snout of the beaver, mimicking talking to his wife.

ULYSSES

I'm coming for you, Nan!

When he pulls away, a patch of gnarly fur comes off his hand.

NAN

And now you have Chronic Waste
Disease.

Uly makes an ick face, wipes his hand on a towel, then comes back and puts his arms around Nan.

All of a sudden a small drop of water falls on his forehead. Puzzled, he wipes it away and looks up.

Above, an OLD RECLAIMED WOODEN SUPPORT BEAM stretches across the ceiling. A SMALL DAMP CIRCLE can be seen in the wood.

NAN (CONT'D)
Is there a leak?

They both look up, curiously. Uly wisecracks...

ULYSSES
Must be coming from the upstairs
bathroom.

They both move about the room trying to see where that could
have come from.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
There's no way there's a leak. I
mean, it's old. Maybe it's sap?

Nan sees something in the wood.

NAN
Oh! Look Uly!

She points to TWO LETTERS burned into the wood. **H** and **M**.

Nan excitedly scans the beam and at the joint, eyes two more
LETTERS on another piece of wood. **T** and **Y**.

NAN (CONT'D)
What if the original owners burned
their initials in the wood? That's
so romantic.

Nan gets swept up in the fantasy...

NAN (CONT'D)
Did Horace Miller build this house
for his sweetheart, Thelma York?
(her eyes light up)
Or maybe Harriet May used this tiny
house to hide away her forbidden
love, Theresa Yarmouth! I love old
school lesbians!

But Uly is still curious about the source of that drip. He
examines the beam closely.

ULYSSES
No reason for it to be wet. It's
not even attached to the ceiling.

Ignoring Uly's interest, Nan comes up behind and grabs him.

NAN
Speaking of tongue and groove,
maybe we owe it to the original
owners to take our new boudoir out
on its maiden voyage.

She nods toward the sleeping loft, immediately causing Uly to forget about the inexplicable drip.

They step lively over to the ladder that leads to the loft.

Nan goes first, trying to look back enticingly as she climbs. Which only exacerbates the AWKWARDNESS of the ascent.

She loses her footing, and Uly has to hoist her up top. He follows, eagerly climbing and after some struggling, launches himself like a torpedo into the coffin-like bedroom.

INT. LOFT - SAME TIME

Nan and Uly's attempt at intimacy is an exercise in futility.

Knees BONKING walls...

NAN
Ow! Maybe if we just...

Elbows BANGED against wood...

ULYSSES
Aiii! Funnybone!

As this goes on and on, we see the couple's disposition change from cutely annoyed to genuinely frustrated.

When he finally climbs on top of Nan, Uly realizes that the ceiling is so low as to prohibit any kind of motion, let alone thrust.

In fact, they're pretty much wedged in that position. He finally squeezes himself off and flops down beside her.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
Maybe we should just try again
tomorrow.

Nan sweetly kisses his cheek.

NAN
Sure. Tomorrow is the first day of
the rest of our lives, right?

ULYSSES

Exactly.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - MORNING

Ulysses stands in the front yard, dressed in a vintage bathrobe and drinking French Press coffee.

Nan straps her bag to the Vespa, and puts on her helmet.

NAN

You gonna be okay here without the bike? I guess you could Uber.

ULYSSES

Uber-Schmuber. I'm all set. Gonna get the tent up and get busy.

NAN

(kissing him)

You'll be brilliant.

ULYSSES

You'll be brilliant.

He watches, smiling, as she zips off on the Vespa.

EXT. MAIN STREET - LATER

Nan parks in front of a white-brick, two-story office.

Taking her helmet off, she looks up to see an OLD LARGE SIGN attached to the side of a building. She smiles as she reads.

The Masthead - Sailing through the news since 1870.

INT. MASTHEAD OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

DING, DING. An old country-store DOOR BELL rings as she enters the charming old newspaper office.

This place hasn't been redecorated since its birth year. A large WOODEN COUNTER welcomes her, the front of it plastered with old signage and local advertisement paraphernalia.

Walls, stained yellow from decades of cigarette smoke, are covered with antique NAUTICAL ITEMS and FRAMED FRONT PAGES.

NAN

Hello? Anyone here?

A MAN'S VOICE with a THICK MASSACHUSETTS ACCENT yells...

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
If you're here for the Bean Suppa
coupons, we're all out!!

NAN
(yells out)
Um, no. I'm Nan Brandywine... I'm
supposed to start working today?

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
NAN? OH, YEAH. COME AROUND BACK!

Nan works her way around the counter towards the back room.

INT. MASTHEAD OFFICE - BACK ROOM - SECONDS LATER

Through a mist of cigarette smoke Nan sees PILES OF
NEWSPAPERS on the floor and tables. The room is a mess.

All the way in the back stands the man behind the voice.

TOMMY BIGELOW (mid 30's. Large-framed, flannelled.) He's bent
down trying to pull something out of an OLD PRINTING PRESS.
Head down in the press. Ass crack in full view.

TOMMY BIGELOW
Don't just stand there, sweetie.
Come over here and grab this thing.

Nan sets her bag down on a filthy workstation and walks over.

NAN
You want me to hold it open?

TOMMY BIGELOW
The alternative is pulling my pants
up for me. Ladies choice.

She gingerly takes the heavy iron press cover, allowing Tommy
to pull up his pants, then tug something free from inside.

TOMMY BIGELOW (CONT'D)
Okay you can let it down...
(when she does)
Now hold this...

She holds out her hands, GLOP! He foists a bunch of ink
covered TYPE LETTERS into her arms.

He wipes his inky hands on his flannel before shaking hers.

TOMMY BIGELOW (CONT'D)

Welcome!

OLDER WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

IS THAT THE NEW GIRL?!

Tommy walks Nan over to an open door, where she peers in...

And gets a good look at Masthead Editor GILDA MORGENSTERN, a tiny, crusty old woman, aged from years of whiskey and cigarettes. She looks about 70, but who knows?

She comes around her desk and meets Nan in the doorway.

GILDA

Gilda Morgenstern.

(re: Tommy)

And this useless sack of fish-guts
is Tommy Bigelow.

She looks at Nan's hands. Filthy and holding type blocks.

GILDA (CONT'D)

You like to get your hands dirty.
That's good. Those letter blocks
haven't been organized since the
Dukakis administration.

Leading Nan into the center of the huge messy printing room.

GILDA (CONT'D)

As you can see, we're about as
methodical as a nanny-goat with
dementia. That's where you come in.
See if you can come up with a
system to organize all these old
issues.

NAN

Like... chronologically?

Gilda lights up and kisses Nan on the cheek.

GILDA

You're a gift from Gahd!

NAN

Miss Morgenstern, when we spoke on
the phone, you made it sound like
the job was of a more...
journalistic nature.

Gilda and Tommy laugh.

GILDA

Did I say that? Sorry, sweetie. I must have been three-deep on Rum and Robitussins. This ain't the *Boston Globe*. Hell, it ain't even the *Nantucket Clamdiggers Almanac*! We're a tourist town weekly! The last big story we broke was a two-for-one sale on sun lotion at CVS.

Nan looks crestfallen.

GILDA (CONT'D)

I'll grab you some cardboard boxes for sorting those old papers.
(as she walks away)
Chronological! Why didn't I think of that?

TOMMY BIGELOW

And you can pitch in printing coupons too, sister. If I gotta print one more bean suppah coupon, I swear on my Mother's grave, I'll shoot myself in the face!

Nan sighs, grabs a paper towel, wipes the ink off her hands, and gets to work sorting stacks of papers. (which covers her hands in ink.)

INT. PICKLING TENT - MORNING

Ulysses puts the last support pole up inside the tent.

The interior of the space isn't large but he's got his WORK STATION and his PHOTO STAGING AREA all set up.

He places the last of dozens of empty jars that fill a SHELVING UNIT, then claps his hands together.

ULYSSES

That'll do pig. That'll do.
(looking around)
Now... Stage Two.

He pulls a PAPERBACK BOOK off his desk. **1000 THINGS TO PICKLE IN NEW ENGLAND.**

EXT. WOODS - MORNING

Ulysses walks through the forest, running his hands along the bark of each tree he passes. He stops and scans the landscape, then refers back to his book.

He doesn't see any vegetation other than the pine trees.

ULYSSES

Hmm.

EXT. DEEPER IN THE WOODS - MORNING

Uly slowly makes his way through thick woods. Continually peeking at his book, then looking down at the ground. Shaking his head.

ULYSSES

No roots. No herbs. No fungi.
Not so much as a pickleable legume.

The next time he looks up, the CREAKS and CRACKS of OLD TREES fill the air.

We see a LARGE PINECONE drop in front of him. He stares down at it, then bends down and picks it up.

A STRANGE WHISPERED VOICE is carried on the wind.

PICKLE IT.

His stare grows intense. We hear the voice again...

PICCCKKKLE ITTT.

Ulysses shrugs *why not* and puts the pinecone in his satchel.

Then, A RUSTLING SOUND. Ulysses quickly looks around. The SOUND OF LEAVES moving. He QUICKLY TURNS LEFT.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Who's there?!

The SOUND moves again. Ulysses grabs a STICK and grips it tightly like a baseball bat.

LEAVES behind him scurry in a flutter. He turns around, seeing a bush MOVE AND SHAKE.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

I'm warning you. I have a cudgel.

A TINY SQUIRREL pokes its head out from the brush. Uly gasps, a bit spooked. But when the Squirrel chirps merrily, Uly lets out a sigh of relief.

To Uly's delight, the cute squirrel begins maniacally rolling around in the leaves in front of him.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
Ha! You're crazy!

The squirrel runs in a cute little circle around Uly's foot. Uly smiles, but then is overcome by a heavy heart.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
I just don't know if I'm ready for
another small animal relationship.
My last one ended... badly.

The Squirrel goes back to rolling around on the ground. It's just too adorable for Ulysses.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
Okay okay. You win, ya little nut.
I will call you... Mister Nutso!

The squirrel stops rolling around, looks up at him, then scurries further along into the woods.

The squirrel stops, looks back at Uly, then goes a little farther. Stops again to look back at Uly. Almost beckoning.

INT. DEEP IN THE WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

Uly follows Mister Nutso until the little animal stops at the base of a tree and starts digging into the earth.

It digs a little hole, then steps back, looking up at Uly.

Fascinated, Ulysses stares down at the little hole. He sees something sticking out of the ground. Something that looks like a pointed rock. He bends over, pulls the dirt and moss from around the object.

His eyes light up when he realizes it's AN OLD ARROWHEAD.

He looks down at the forest floor and sees another one. YEAH! He quickly scans the ground looking for more.

He brushes leaves around as his hand passes over the top of what looks like a YELLOW-TINTED BOWL.

He digs his fingers into the soggy earth and yanks it out.

It's a SKULL! Of some kind of large-ish animal. Busted and yellowed with age.

He starts examining the skull, turning it around. A huge chunk off its forehead is MISSING.

ULYSSES

Whatever you are, you sure got
beaned in the *cabeza*!

He stares at it, getting lost. We hear the STRANGE WHISPER...

PICCKKKLLE ITTT.

He pulls the skull CLOSER and CLOSER to his face, until...

A HUGE CENTIPEDE slithers out of an EYE SOCKET!

Uly drops the skull and runs off SCREAMING LIKE A CHILD.

EXT. BEHIND THE MASTHEAD OFFICE - EVENING

With a disgusted face, Nan hefts ONE OF TWO HUGE PLASTIC BAGS FILLED WITH NOTHING BUT CIGARETTE BUTTS into a dumpster.

Gilda sticks her head out the window of her Ford Fairlane as she backs out of a parking spot.

GILDA

Good work today, Toots! Tomorrow
you can go over and see Frank at
The Saucy Prawn. He wants to run an
ad for their all-you-can-shuck
oyster special. Take down what he
wants to say.... There's some
writing for you!

When Gilda drives off (cough-laughing all the way), Nan lets out an exasperated sigh, dumps the second bag of butts into the dumpster, and starts shuffling glumly toward her Vespa.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

As a romantic Burt Bacharach song plays, Uly puts the finishing touches on a CANDLELIGHT DINNER. (Uly has to duct-tape the candle to the dining table that, when folded out from the wall, comes to rest at a wonky off-angle.)

DRIP. That damn beam spits down on him again.

He wipes his cheek angrily, then pulls a chair over and climbs up to see where the this drip is coming from.

He lifts his hand on the topside of the beam, where the water should be, but his hand comes back dry.

ULYSSES

Just doesn't make any sense.

He hears the RUMBLING of the Vespa and quickly gets down and runs over to put dinner on the table. (gingerly, so it doesn't slide off.)

The front door opens and Nan limps in. Tired, sore, and discouraged. Her hands are filthy and covered in papercuts. Her outfit is inky and ruined. Her hair is disheveled.

Uly (cluelessly) tries to hand her a plate of antipasto, with a huge smile on his face.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Tell. Me. EVERYTHING!

Nan staggers past him, headed straight for the sleeping loft.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

What happened? Did the Mayor's goons rough you up because you threatened to write a scathing expose of municipal wrong-doing?

NAN

I'm fine. I just want to go to bed.

Nan starts climbing the ladder. It takes all her strength.

ULYSSES

I haven't even told you about the spooky Native American artifacts and crushed skull I unearthed today.

NAN

(not even listening)

I'm sure it was hilarious.

Nan gets up to the loft and climbs into bed.

NAN (CONT'D)

Oh, and my new co-worker and his wife are coming over for dinner on Saturday.

ULYSSES

(irked)

Why don't you just have them come over tonight since I've got an entire three-course meal that's gonna go uneaten.

NAN

Please don't be mad.

UP IN THE LOFT, Nan closes her eyes and starts to drift off. Unfortunately the clinks and clanks of Uly huffily cleaning the dishes below is loud enough to keep her awake.

Every time she starts to fall asleep, there's a CLATTER of dishwashing that jolts her eyes open.

Finally...

NAN (CONT'D)

Honey, is there any chance that can wait until morning? The sound is just driving me crazy.

ULYSSES

So you're saying you'd prefer the sound of our kitchen being raided in the middle of the night by EVERY RACCOON WITHIN A TEN MILE RADIUS?!

In response to Uly's raised voice ALL THE MAGNETIZED KITCHEN ITEMS - knives, spatulas, the spice rack - FALL OFF THE RACK with a loud and scary clank.

Uly jumps. Nan is jolted back to her senses. She looks down from the loft, and watches as Uly picks up a fallen knife, and puts it back up to the magnetic rack.

It sticks.

Nan climbs back down and joins him in the kitchen, bending over to pick up the fallen items.

NAN

Can a magnet suddenly and only briefly lose its mag...nitude?

ULYSSES

I guess so.

(softening to her)

I'll pick this stuff up. Sorry I yelled. Guess you had a rough day.

Uly kisses her on the forehead and guides her gently back to the ladder, helping her up to the sleeping loft.

Once Nan is up, Uly turns and stares bewildered at the strange scene in the kitchen.

INT. LOFT BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Up in their claustrophobic little loft, Nan and Uly both sleep snugly.

But when a faint SCRATCHING SOUND issues from the room below, Uly's eyes open. Disoriented, his eyes dart around. And just as they start to close again... THE SCRATCHING.

He lifts his head and tries to find the source of the noise, but the view from his pillow is limited to the close walls of the sleeping loft.

He looks down past his feet, but that only shows him the uppermost part of the house.

Another SCRATCH is followed by a faint FLUTTER OF WINGS.

ULYSSES

Nan? Do you hear that?

Nan just snores quickly and rolls away from him in her sleep.

Uly looks back to the foot of the bed when the SCRATCHING AND FLUTTERING get louder and more distinct. Closer.

A tiny BIRD HEAD pops up from behind the foot of the bed. The green and red features are unmistakable.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Fillmore?

The bird cocks his head at Uly and SQUAWKS in that old familiar way. Uly's face lights up in a tearful smile.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Fillmore!

To Uly's delight, his beloved parrot inches his way closer, revealing his magnificent breast and colorful plumage.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Get up here, buddy!

But Uly's delight turns to horror when the bird finally makes its way fully onto the bed, revealing its lower half to be the ROTTED AND DESICCATED remains of a dead thing.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Oh no. No.

The half-alive/half-dead bird picks up steam and starts racing along Uly's body as it makes a beeline for Uly's face.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

NOOOOO!!!

Uly BOLTS UPRIGHT as he wakes up from the dream, SLAMMING HIS HEAD against the LOW CEILING above him.

He grasps his head, hissing in agony. Then he looks around and sees the gray light of dawn coming into the house.

He flops back down on the bed, injured and a little traumatized from the nightmare.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - MORNING

Again Uly lingers in the front yard while Nan heads off to work. He has a big GOOSE EGG on his head from last night.

ULYSSES

I'm sure today'll be better.

Nan kisses his head gently on her way to the Vespa.

NAN

Are you sure you don't want me to drop you off at urgent care?

ULYSSES

Urgent care, Schmurgent care.
There's nothing more therapeutic
than gardening.

He holds up a HOE and a box of SEED PACKETS.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Since there's nothing to forage
around here, I guess I'll just grow
my own.

He watches as Nan zips off on the Vespa, then turns his attention to the ground next to his tent. Chipping away at the hard earth, trying to dig up rows for seeding.

It's harder than he thought, so Uly winds up and takes a big swing with the hoe, bringing the blade down just inches from THE SQUIRREL that seems to have snuck up out of nowhere.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Whoa!

(looking closer)

Mister Nutso? You almost got
yourself decapitated!

Mister Nutso doesn't mind. He just circles merrily around
Uly's foot, just like yesterday.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

No time for your monkeyshines.
Today's a time to plant.

The squirrel scurries away toward the woods. And, like
yesterday, Mister Nutso stops and looks back a few times.

It's just too fascinating to Uly. He looks back and forth
between his new vegetable garden and the summoning squirrel.

EXT. DEEP IN THE WOODS - MORNING

Ulysses tries to keep up with his squirrel buddy, but soon
loses track of him in the dark forest.

ULYSSES

Mister Nutso?

(looking all around)

Mister Nutso?

Uly comes to a clearing, and looking around, can't help but
see the STONE MARKERS arranged in patterns that suggest the
land had been used for some RITUAL PURPOSE.

He looks down, kicking at the dirt. Hard and pebbly.

Just then, the wind whips through the trees. The sun
disappears, and with the darkness, Uly gets a bit panicky.

He steps quickly back the direction he came from.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Okay. Stay calm. Don't think about
how these woods seem to be so
devoid of vegetation as to be
almost supernatural...

More creepy sounds of the forest make Uly quicken his pace.

A branch SNAPS loudly under Ulysses' foot. That's it. He
takes off, full sprint, back toward home.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - DAY

Ulysses trots nervously back into his yard. Eventually he makes his way over and stares at the ground where he had planned to plant vegetables.

He grabs the hoe, pokes around the hard dirt, then kneels to grab a handful. With a DEEPLY CHAGRINED look on his face, he lets the gritty, rocky soil run through his fingers. It's basically gravel.

ULYSSES
Of course it's dead soil.

A WHISPER IN THE WIND.... *Pickle itttttt.*

Uly shrugs off the voice and throws the rest of the grit to the ground. He storms off toward his tent.

INT. PICKLING TENT - CONTINUOUS

Uly goes to his desk, and grabs a FRAMED PHOTO of himself, Nan, and Fillmore.

He reaches out and touches the image of his beloved parrot. Thinking of happier times.

ULYSSES
You always used to give it to me
straight, old friend. Have we made
a huge mistake coming here?

Getting no response, he puts the picture back down.

Then his expression changes to a slightly GUILTY LOOK.

He looks around, making sure the coast is clear, then reaches inside the drawer and pulls out an OLD STONE JUG. He cradles it like an old friend, then slowly lifts it.

We cut away before it reaches his lips.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - DAY/NIGHT

TIME LAPSE of a few days and nights passing. Nan coming and going (in high speed).

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

Uly is trying to shower, but when Nan (inches away) turns on the sink to brush her teeth, the water pressure diminishes to a weak little spit.

He grits his teeth, trying not to be annoyed.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - DAY/NIGHT

MORE TIME LAPSE of days and nights passing. Uly gardens and tries to turn the rocky soil (in high speed).

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nan and Uly are both reading quietly. But in the tiny space, the sound of Uly's NOSE WHISTLING as he breathes, is enough for Nan to close her book. She grits her teeth, trying not to be annoyed.

INT. KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Nan listens to Dixieland Jazz while rinsing kale in the sink. She sees the mysterious drip spot on the living room floor. Exasperated, she goes over, towels it off, looks up, then goes back to her rinsing.

A ROLLING SOUND diverts her attention and she turns.

In the middle of the floor (where she just wiped the water) sits the old-timey Goat Toy.

She looks at it, looks around, then shrugs and goes back to her kale. A another rolling sound makes her turn back.

Is the goat toy closer than it was a second ago? Hm.

Unsure, she turns back to the sink.... Then does a quick look back. The goat toy is a good TWO FEET CLOSER.

The needle slips on the old record player and THE TRACK STARTS SKIPPING. Nan gets goosebumps.

She dries her hands and moves toward the record player, keeping one eye on the toy. And when she takes a step, the goat toy ROLLS A FEW INCHES toward her.

NAN

What the...?

She stops. So does the goat. The song keeps skipping.

With a nervous chuckle, Nan throws her dish-towel over the toy and quickly steps over to fix the record player.

The music goes back to normal. But when Nan turns around, the goat toy is no longer covered with the cloth.

Freaked out, Nan takes two steps toward the toy and gives it a SAVAGE PUNT toward the open front door...

...unfortunately right at the moment that Ulysses enters the front door, carrying an armload of jars. Unable to protect himself, Uly takes the flying goat toy right in the face.

ULYSSES

Gaaaahhhhh! Why?!?

He stumbles in the doorway, but Nan races over to help him before he drops his pickled goods.

NAN

Omigod, I'm so sorry!

She takes the jars out of his hands, so Uly can rub his face.

ULYSSES

What was that all about?

NAN

That toy was just...
(embarrassed)
... just in the way.

ULYSSES

Okay. Is herring too obvious?
(off Nan's puzzled look)
For tonight's *amuse bouche*.

He points to the pickle jars. Nan eyes the contents, dubious.

NAN

No sense in wasting your
masterpieces on my coworkers.

ULYSSES

(a little defensive)
I don't make these just to
photograph them and delight my many
Instagram followers, you know.
They're meant to be eaten.

Nan shrugs and smiles, admitting defeat. Uly gives her a thumbs-up before heading to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Uly closes the door behind him, pulls down his pants, and contorts himself into a position to sit on the toilet.

Once settled, he lets out a QUIET FART. Giggling comes from the direction of the kitchen. His eyes snap to the door.

IN THE KITCHEN, Nan stops what she's doing, grinning. Another soft fart issues from the bathroom. She stifles a laugh.

 ULYSSES (O.S.)
It's not funny!

 NAN
 (laughing)
Don't worry about it.

Bathroom door swings open. Uly storms out, buckling his belt.

 ULYSSES
I'm going into town!

 NAN
It'll be good for you to get a
change of scenery.

He grumbles under his breath as he leaves...

 ULYSSES
Can't even fart in this stupid
house.

EXT. MAIN STREET - AFTERNOON

Uly's Vespa buzzes through town, then parks in front of the local pub. *The Poop Deck*.

INT. THE POOP DECK - AFTERNOON

Uly, with a look of relief, exits the bathroom wiping his hands on his kerchief. He's about to leave, then decides to pull up a stool and flag the bartender.

 ULYSSES
Recommend any local microbrews?

The bartender slams down a Sam Adams and walks away.

Uly sips the beer, then notices the huge JAR OF PICKLED EGGS resting on the bar.

His eyes light up as he reaches into his overalls and pulls out a set of ornate copper PICKLE TONGS.

He helps himself to an egg, taking a big bite before his face twists into a grimace of disgust.

Uly makes a loud YUCK sound as he fishes the bite out of his mouth and places it on a cocktail napkin.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
Barkeep! How long have these eggs
been sitting in that jar?!

BARTENDER
I don't know. How long have you
been waxing your *moustache*?

ULYSSES
(briefly stunned, then...)
That brine should have a pH level
of no more than 4.0!

He dips a finger in the jar, then puts his finger in his mouth. Again, grimacing...

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
If that's any lower than 6.2 then
I'm a monkey's uncle! What are we
making here? Kimchi?

Hearing cackling behind him, Uly turns to see a gang of local MASSHOLES. Uly smiles at them.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
I mean, am I right?

The ALPHA MASSHOLE stares ahead. Not laughing.

MASSHOLE
You tourists sure got attitude.

ULYSSES
Actually, I'm not a tourist. My
wife and I just moved in to that
house up on Snapping Turtle Lane.
The, uh... tiny house.

The Massholes burst into laughter. Sharing knowing looks.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
What? Why is that funny?

Alpha Masshole steps up and uses his meaty paw to grab four pickled eggs out of the jar. Shoving them all in his mouth.

When he turns and addresses Uly, with a mouth full of egg, his words are almost incomprehensible.

MASSHOLE

I fink yuu shud get yrr skinny lul
ash back tuh yrr sknny lul housh.
Cuz uf yuu jusht bough that housh,
thun thuh pH balansh uf theesh eggs
ish thuh leasht uf yrr wurries.

ULYSSES

I didn't get any of that.

MASSHOLE

(finally swallowing)
What I said was... Maybe you should
take your fancy copper pickle tongs
and leave.

EXT. THE POOP DECK - AFTERNOON

Uly gets on his Vespa and drives off down Main Street.

He passes the church, where the priest is changing the sign again. **GOD WILL GIVE YOU PORPOISE.**

Uly rolls his eyes as he zips back toward home.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - NIGHT

Through the front windows, we can see that the dinner party is in full claustrophobic swing.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

With the four of them packed in the living room, it's impossible for Nan to go around with passed *hors d'oeuvres*. She bangs into everything and everyone.

Meanwhile, Uly struggles to make NOSE-TO-NOSE conversation with Tommy's wife, TOOTIE.

TOOTIE BIGELOW

So. What do you think about
Cranberry Cove?

ULYSSES

Nice. It's... nice. How do you
like living here?

TOOTIE BIGELOW
I like it. It's... nice.

ULYSSES
Try some pickled herring!

He grabs two of the *hors d'oeuvres* and hands one to her. She flinches at the sight of the slimy hunk of fish resting on melba toast. She squirms for a moment, then points.

TOOTIE BIGELOW
Is it just me or do that beaver's
eyes follow you around the room?

When Ulysses turns to look, Tootie flicks the fish off of the melba toast. It flies across the room and sticks to the window with a SPLAT.

She quickly shoves the bare toast into her mouth before Uly turns back around. When he does, Tootie makes a yummy noise and gives him a thumbs-up.

INT. TINY HOUSE - LATER

It's Dinner Time. And since there is no room to seat four people in the living room, everyone is squirming uncomfortably in FABRIC CHAIRS that hang from the ceiling.

Tommy and Tootie struggle to eat off the plates balanced in their laps without falling out of the hanging seats.

The only sounds are chewing and the kitschy FLAMENCO MUSIC coming from the old Victrola.

Nan tries to start conversation.

NAN
Thanks for bringing the beer,
Tommy. It's delicious

TOMMY BIGELOW
Yeah, let me get you another one!

He kicks his legs under him, trying to swing himself in a position to reach the bucket of beer on the counter.

But with every swing, he just smacks into somebody or something in the tight quarters.

On another try, Tommy bangs into the Victrola. CONK.

TOOTIE BIGELOW

Way to go. You knocked over their
record-player-thingy.

TOMMY

I'd like to see YOU try it.

Tommy takes another big swing. He reaches for the bucket of beer, but ends up knocking the whole thing onto the kitchen floor. Ice and beer everywhere.

Ulysses and Nan can only share a miserable look.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

The mess has been cleaned up, and now the group is playing Pictionary. Since there's no room for an easel, they've duct taped a big sheet of paper to the wall.

Nan is drawing and Uly is guessing. On the paper, Nan has drawn a DEER and a candy MINT.

ULYSSES

...um...horse candy.. mule...um...
mule lozenge... um.... deer...mint.

Nan points at Uly.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Deer... mint. *Terms of Endearment!*

That's it! They celebrate. Nan tapes up a clean paper.

Tootie nervously stands, looks at the clue card, and takes the sharpie from Nan, who sets the timer.

TOMMY BIGELOW

Don't fuck this up, Tootie.

Tootie scowls at Tommy, then gets to work.

Simple scribbles at first. A stick figure of a man, then a stick figure of a woman. Her hand moves slowly and shakily.

TOMMY BIGELOW (CONT'D)

*Fun With Dick and Jane. When Harry
Met Sally. Jesus. We're gonna be
here all night.*

Strangely, Tootie's face goes BLANK. The shakiness overtakes her whole body. Her hand seems to take on a life of its own.

But then her hands clench into fists. With slashing motions at the page, Tootie draws A KNIFE in the hand of the man, and scrawls A SCREAMING FACE on the woman.

Nan and Uly watch in horror as Tootie's eyes roll back in her head. A GUTTURAL WAIL leaks out of her gaping mouth.

ULYSSES

Tootie? Are you okay?

Fully possessed, Tootie stops drawing and starts RUBBING THE SHARPIE MANIACALLY ACROSS THE PAGE. As she covers the page in sharpie rubbings, IMAGES begin to form from beneath. As if they were shapes on the wall...

TWO SINISTER EYES and a TWISTED, SCREAMING MOUTH.

More sharpie rubbing reveals more horrific images. ROTTING CORPSES. SCREAMING SKULLS. More freaky sounds from Tootie.

Uly jumps up and rushes to help his convulsing dinner guest.

TOMMY BIGELOW

(oblivious)

Poltergeist....? Amityville

Horror...? The Shining? ... What?

Uly tries to assist the seizing Tootie. Then when the timer dings, Tootie collapses into his arms. Panting and weak.

Nan and Uly share a look. *What the hell was that?!?*

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Nan and Uly brush their teeth, cramped shoulder to shoulder in their mini bathroom. Both are wide-eyed and silent.

Nan bumps Uly out of the way so she can spit and rinse.

NAN

It's too much to be coincidence.

ULYSSES

(still brushing)

It is a lot of weird stuff.

NAN

The strange dripping beam. The goat toy that rolls on its own. The magnetic rack that suddenly loses its mag...nificence. Then the thing tonight.

ULYSSES

(spits)

So what exactly are you saying?

NAN

You know what I'm trying to say.
But I guess I just don't want to
say it out loud.

ULYSSES

Just say it.

NAN

I can't!

ULYSSES

If you truly believe it, then just
say it out loud.

NAN

Okay! I'll say it: "We live in a
tiny house and the motherfucker is
haunted!"

Seeing how wound up Nan is, Uly puts his arms around her.

ULYSSES

I know it's a lot of unexplainable
stuff, sweetheart. But doesn't
every new house have its
idiosyncrasies? I'm just not
convinced that a bunch of weird
little things means that this place
is haunted.

He shuffles his way awkwardly toward the toilet.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

If you'll excuse me, I'm gonna try
to have a bowel movement that
doesn't shake the house to its
foundation.

He lifts the toilet seat, and a GIGANTIC PLUME OF BLOOD
bursts forth.

Nan and Uly are doused in the onslaught of blood, gore, and
WHITE, FATTY TISSUE that spews from the commode.

They slosh to get out of the bathroom, flailing and slipping.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The bathroom door opens, sending Uly and Nan bursting out. They flop onto the living room floor, covered in ICK.

They look at each other, wide-eyed, then turn back to the bathroom...

...where the goop and goo seem to be RETREATING back into the walls of the bathroom. The gaps in the beams seem to be sucking the gore back into the walls.

Until the bathroom returns to being utterly PRISTINE. No mess. No muck. No possible explanation.

No remnants but the bloody goo smeared all over Nan and Uly.

They look back at each other. Flabbergasted.

INT. LOFT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nan and Uly are tucked in bed, wide-eyed and awake. Uly uses a kleenex to dig the last bit of bloody goop out of his ear.

ULYSSES

Well, we don't seem to be in any immediate physical danger.

NAN

True. But there's a point at which it begins to seriously diminish our quality of life. That thing with the toilet was... disconcerting.

ULYSSES

Shouldn't we approach it like we would any NON-supernatural house issue? By looking for a solution?

NAN

There's that priest in town. The one that puts up the punny signs.

ULYSSES

There you go. Let's get on that.

Uly gives her a kiss, then turns off the lamp on his side of the bed. After a moment...

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Gonna be hard to sleep after a thing like that.

NAN
You're not kidding.

ULYSSES
If only there was something we
could do... you know? To relax and
take our minds off this, if only
for a few moments.

(Nan gives him a look)
I just hope that the prospect that
this house is under some sort of
possession won't keep us from
doing... regular things like any
normal married couple. The kinds
of things that young, healthy...

NAN
Goodnight, Ulysses.

Nan rolls on her side. Uly just looks at the ceiling.

CUT TO:

LATER THAT NIGHT

Uly and Nan are asleep. Until a FLUTTERING SOUND causes Uly
to stir. He blinks and sits up (cautious of the low ceiling)
and tries to look past his feet and into the living room.

Catching a brief glimpse of red and green feathers.

ULYSSES
Fillmore?

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Uly climbs carefully down the ladder. When he reaches the
floor he peers around into the darkness.

There's SOMETHING bird-like curled up in a ball in the corner
of the room. A strange bundle of feathers, hunched over.

Uly makes his way toward the thing, scared but magnetized.

And when Uly touches it with his finger, the thing comes to
life. Uncurling itself, and revealing itself to be a PERSON.

A STUNNINGLY BEAUTIFUL BRAZILIAN WOMAN dressed in an
elaborate bird-like outfit that you might see at Carnivale.

She presents herself to Uly. Smiling provocatively.

ULYSSES

What are you?

CARNIVALE BIRD-WOMAN

Yo soy Fillmore.

She dances seductively towards him. He's entranced by her bare flesh and gyrating hips.

Uly's uncertain at first. But when she grinds against him, he loses control and wraps her in a passionate embrace and kiss.

We see a look of DEEP SATISFACTION on Uly's eyes as he sucks face with the mysterious bird-lady.

Suddenly, the look on his eyes changes from lust to disgust. He pulls away from her, choking. He reaches into his mouth and produces a HUGE DIRTY FEATHER. Gagging, he pulls out another. Now a handful, all bloody.

When Uly looks up from the crud in his hands, the woman has transformed into the HUMAN-SIZED CORPSE of Fillmore.

Uly screams as the bird-thing lunges at his face. He blocks it, but its CRUSTY, PURPLE TONGUE wriggles its way closer to Uly's mouth. Forcing its way inside...

INT. LOFT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Uly jolts awake from his nightmare. Once again, he smashes his head on the low-hanging ceiling. He flops back in pain.

EXT. CRANBERRY COVE PIER - DAY

Seagulls eat stale bread from the hand of FATHER O'BACCULUM (the priest with the punny signs). He sits across from Uly and Nan on a bench overlooking the pier.

Uly has a painful-looking goose egg on his forehead, just two inches from his older, slightly-smaller goose egg.

FATHER O'BACCULUM

Hm. That certainly sounds like a strange series of events.

NAN

So many crazy things. I even found a piece of pickled herring stuck to a window for no reason whatsoever.

ULYSSES

Do you believe in demonic possession, Father?

FATHER O'BACCULUM

I'm aware of things that could be paranormal. We've all seen that piece of toast on the internet that looks like the Virgin Mary.

NAN

If it was only toast, Father.
Toast I can handle.

FATHER O'BACCULUM

I'm sure something like this is putting a great deal of strain on your marriage.

ULYSSES

You have no idea, Padre. What exactly is the church's position on intimacy inside a haunted house? Because this whole thing has really put a kibosh on our sex life.

Nan looks at her husband in disbelief. Mortified at the personal nature of his "confessional."

She looks apologetically at the priest, but Father O'Bacculum is swept up in Uly's story. He's now eating the bread crusts like popcorn.

FATHER O'BACCULUM

Go on.

Nan turns away, frustrated. Trying to drown out her husband's embarrassing tirade. When she does, a SAILOR on the dock catches her eye.

He's prepping a ship with his bare hands. His sweaty muscles glisten as he pulls up anchor. He's the real deal.

Nan looks back to Uly and his faux-nautical attire. He's futzing with his cuticles as he drones on.

ULYSSES

It just seems to me that if we let this thing interfere with our sexual relationship then the supernatural entity wins.

Nan looks back to the real sailor. He wipes fish-guts off his powerful hands before grabbing and heaving a heavy rope.

A GLIMMER OF LONGING crosses Nan's face before she turns back to Uly again. He's flicking tiny lint balls off his cable-knit sweater as he talks.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

I feel like maybe something like
this could even take our love life
into... adventurous new territory.

NAN

(having heard enough)
Father, can you just swing by the
house and tell us what you think?

EXT. TINY HOUSE - DAY

Uly and Nan, on Vespa, pull up to the house. Immediately followed by a beige Oldsmobile.

When the car pulls to a stop, we can see through the windshield Father O'Bacculum's look of FEAR AND DREAD upon spotting the house.

He steps out and removes his glasses with shaking hands. Then reaches for his stomach, suddenly hit with nausea.

NAN

Are you okay, Father?

FATHER O'BACCULUM

I just remembered I'm... supposed
to be interviewing a new altar boy.

He steps back to his car, but Uly heads him off.

ULYSSES

Just a quick peek. Maybe I can
tempt you with some oolong tea and
fermented roquefort?

Father O'Bacculum stifles a belch of distaste.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

O'Bacculum inches his way inside, on edge and jittery.

FATHER O'BACCULUM

I'm not sure what I'm looking for.

ULYSSES

Just take a sniff around and see if
your Spidey-Sense starts tingling.

He looks around, immediately hit with SUFFOCATING CLAUSTROPHOBIA. Sweat forms on his forehead, and an audible RUMBLE of gastrointestinal distress comes from his belly.

When he looks up at the ceiling, a drop of water from above lands on his forehead. Startling him more than it should.

When Father O'Bacculum moves out from under the beam, he gets hit with yet another drop of water from a different beam.

He keeps moving out of the way, but keeps getting plonked with droplets. He wipes the considerable amount of water off his head with a handkerchief and turns to his hosts.

FATHER O'BACCULUM
Does this happen all over the
house?

NAN
Does what happen?

The priest holds up his handkerchief, but it's TOTALLY DRY. He looks up at the ceiling and there are no drips at all.

Now Father O'Bacculum notices that the room is SWAYING.

From THE PRIEST'S POV, the house starts rocking back and forth. He lolls around, as if on the deck of a ship at sea. Reaching out for something to help him keep his balance.

But when we pop out to Nan and Uly, everything seems normal. The priest seems to be just staggering about drunkenly.

The Priest's stomach issues one more noisy protestation before he RUSHES INTO THE BATHROOM and slams the door.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

O'Bacculum locks himself inside, then goes to the sink. Splashing his face.

To his own mortification, he lets loose AN UNHOLY FART.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Having heard the sound, Uly lets out a snort of amusement.

ULYSSES
(to Nan)
Okay. Now I see how that could be
kinda funny.

BACK IN THE BATHROOM

Flop-sweat pours down Father O'Bacculum's face as he sits on the toilet.

His bowels let loose with a PRRTHTHTH! And the results of his anal tantrum land in the toilet with an alarming SPLASH.

He sits up a bit and looks down into the bowl with morbid curiosity.

And then his eyes go wide and he clamps his hands over his mouth to stifle his screams.

Floating in the toilet are half of his LOWER INTESTINES.

FATHER O'BACCULUM
(in whispered terror)
Dear god in heaven!

In a panic, he frantically collects his intestines up in his arms. But even as he does, he continues to loudly (and literally) crap his guts out.

His terrified prayers are drowned out by the noisy evacuation of his innards.

O'BACCULUM
Our Father, who art in heaven!
(FLAARPH)
Hallowed be thy...
(BRAA-AP)
... name!

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Nan and Uly are seized with hysterical giggles and trying to shush each other.

BACK IN THE BATHROOM

O'Bacculum struggles in tortuous agony. Trying desperately to retrieve his intestines from the possessed commode, the priest wraps them all around himself.

FATHER O'BACCULUM
LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION. BUT
DELIVER US...
(PTHPTHPTHHHH)
FROM EVIL!

Struggling under the weight of his own bowels, he stumbles forward, smacking against the sink.

He looks in the mirror, only to find that HIS GUTS ARE NOT WRAPPED AROUND HIM.

He's perfectly fine. His pants are still on, no less.

All is still for a moment. Other than his labored breathing.

Then one final sound issues from the toilet. A blasphemous fart that speaks a low voice.

EVIL FART
GEEET OUUUUUUT!!!!

The Priest's eyes go wide as saucers. WTF???

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Uly and Nan pull themselves together just as The Priest rushes out of the bathroom.

NAN
Father, are you alright? Can I offer you some carrot and mint paste to settle your stomach?

FATHER O'BACCULUM
It wasn't me!!
(off their dubious looks)
I'm serious!!
(off their polite nods)
This house is beyond salvation.
Damn it! Damn it straight to hell!

He races out the front door and to his car.

As the Priest speeds away, Nan steps over to the bathroom. Her nostrils twitch and she covers her face with both hands.

ULYSSES
(discouraged)
Well, that was a waste of time.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - NIGHT

Nan exits the house and heads toward Uly's pickling tent. Holding a plate of food.

INT. PICKLING TENT - CONTINUOUS

Nan slips inside to find Uly in front of a whole shelf lined with EMPTY JARS and muttering under his breath.

On his desk is his laptop, open to his Instagram page.

NAN
You want some dinner?

Uly snaps around, startled.

ULYSSES
Jesus!
(catching his breath)
Would it kill you to knock?

Nan looks at the tent flap, then reaches out and brushes her knuckles against the fabric, making a tiny whoosh sound.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
Thank you.

NAN
Thought I'd see if you were hungry.

ULYSSES
No, I'm not hungry. I'm stressed out. The claustrophobic house that my wife dragged me across the country to live in is possessed by Satan. It drips water, causes me to concuss myself every night, and smells like unholy ass! Vegetables won't grow in the soil! There's nothing to forage! So I can't even pickle anything! And as a result, my Instagram followers are dropping like flies! Imagine if you lost a thousand subscribers to your blog in one week!
(turning cruel)
Oh wait, you'd have to have a thousand subscribers to know how that feels.

Nan stands frozen. Trying not to show how wounded she is by that. Slowly, she puts the plate of food on his desk.

NAN
I'll just leave this here. And next time, I'll knock.

After she leaves, Uly stands there, knowing he went too far.

Finally, he turns back and walks to a corner of the tent. Where Mister Nutso is crouched.

ULYSSES
I'm sorry. What were you saying?

The squirrel starts chittering away.

 ULYSSES (CONT'D)
I know... Exactly!... People have
no idea the pressure that comes
with being an influencer!

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nan looks out the window, seeing Uly's silhouette in the tent. Satisfied, she moves to a bookshelf and removes a coffee table book about Depression-Era Clowns, which reveals a SHOEBOX hidden behind. The secret shoebox we saw earlier.

She's about to open the box when A CHILLY BREEZE runs down her back. Shivering, she looks up for the source.

And for the first time, notices a thin opening between beams in the ceiling.

She puts the shoebox back, grabs a chair, climbs up on it, and reaches up, prying her fingernails into the crease.

Finally, A PANEL comes free and flips open on a hinge. Revealing a SMALL, DARK COMPARTMENT overhead.

Tentatively, Nan reaches up with both hands, grabs the edges of the opening, and PULLS HERSELF UP so that her head enters the dark space.

INT. THE DARK SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Nan peeks around in the darkness, then holds up her cell phone which illuminates A TINY GHOULISH FACE.

Nan screams, then realizes she's looking at a SHRUNKEN HEAD. A Polynesian artifact with the eyes and mouth sewn shut.

She gets her bearings and realizes she has popped her head into AN ATTIC. A tiny little storage area only big enough to fit Nan's upper half.

She squeezes her torso inside, props herself up on her elbows, and looks around.

The nook is filled with nautical-themed ephemera: Besides the shrunk head there are MAPS of the Atlantic Ocean. A whaling ship tableau carved into SCRIMSHAW. A HARPOON that takes up the whole length of the mini-attic.

And an old framed photo of a YOUNG COUPLE. She dusts it off.

Between the sepia tone of the picture and the turn-of-the-century dress of the man and woman, the photo appears to be over a hundred years old.

And the couple are posed in front of Nan and Uly's house.

NAN

Whoa.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nan sits on the couch inspecting the OLD PHOTO. She's especially drawn to the man in the picture. He stares right at the camera with a haunted expression.

When she lowers the picture, Uly is standing in front of her. Wearing an EERILY SIMILAR expression on his face.

His sudden appearance startles Nan.

ULYSSES

Sorry. And I'm sorry for what I said. I didn't mean it.

NAN

I understand. We're both under a lot of stress, but I know this whole thing has been especially hard on you.

As Nan inspects the lumps on Uly's head, Uly looks at the stuff Nan recovered from the attic.

ULYSSES

Where'd you get that scrimshaw?

NAN

(pointing up)
Our Tiny House has a Tiny Attic.

She hands him the old photo of their house.

NAN (CONT'D)

Have a look at this.

ULYSSES

Whoa.

NAN

I think they might be the original owners.

ULYSSES

That means this house is at least a hundred and thirty years old.

(off her puzzled look)

That's a Henderson O'Wellington & Sons Persian Paisley cravat. Which came out in 1888. They made less than a thousand of these beauties. Grover Cleveland was buried in one. Man, the things I'd kill to get my hands on a Persian Paisley.

NAN

That subscription to *Moustaches and Muttonchops* actually paid off.

ULYSSES

You think this could shed any light on what's been happening?

NAN

I mean look at their faces. Don't they look kind of, haunted to you?

ULYSSES

Everyone in old photographs looks haunted. You had to stand in front of the camera without blinking for fifteen minutes.

NAN

No. They look seriously tortured.

ULYSSES

Maybe they were tortured artisans, like us.

(holds up the ivory)

Scrimshartisans?

NAN

I need to do some more digging. You're sure about the cravat?

ULYSSES

Hundred percent.

NAN

Alright well, that's a start. I'll do some more research tomorrow.

EXT. CRANBERRY COVE MAIN STREET - MORNING

Nan rides her Vespa through town. She passes the CHURCH and sees Father O'Bacculum out front. Changing the sign to...

REPENT OR SUFFER THE FOUL STENCH OF THE FIERY BOWELS OF HELL.

He turns and scowls at Nan, who waves back sheepishly.

INT. MASTHEAD OFFICE BASEMENT - MORNING

Using a dusty old MICROFICHE MACHINE, Nan scrolls through old issues of *The Masthead*.

On the desk next to her sits the picture from the attic.

Nan searches through older and older issues, hoping to find a photo of local residents that matches the picture from home.

But pictures of residents are few and far between. Even back in the 19th century, the newspaper was mostly comprised of business announcements and coupons. (in fact, every time she jumps back an era, Nan finds a quarter-page ad for SULLY'S FISH MARKET. The artwork just keeps getting more old-fashioned. And the price of Cod just keeps getting cheaper.)

NAN

I'm not finding anyone who looks
like these two. How about you?

We pan over and see Gilda looking through a second machine.

GILDA

Can you believe you used to be able
to buy a girdle for 75 cents?!?

NAN

But nothing about the homeowners?

GILDA

No. And nothing about the house.
It doesn't even show up on town
maps until the turn of the century.

NAN

That's not right.

GILDA

See for yourself, sweet teets.

While Gilda lights a cigarette, Nan looks at a comparison of maps from 1990 and 2000. It's on the latter, not the former.

GILDA (CONT'D)
It's like the history of that house
pre 21st century has been
completely wiped clean.

NAN
How is that possible?

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Nan boils some CONCOCTION over the tiny stovetop in the kitchen. She looks through the front window at her husband, who is desperately urging SOMETHING... ANYTHING to sprout from the janky little garden outside.

AS SEEN THROUGH THE WINDOW, Uly has his nose to the ground, quietly begging. After a few seconds he jumps to his feet and starts swinging the hoe madly into the ground.

ULYSSES (FROM OUTSIDE)
EAT SHIT, YOU FUCKING RHUBARB!

When he looks up, Nan looks away. Pretending not to notice.

A few seconds later, the front door opens. Uly slumps in.

NAN
Kombucha's almost ready!

Uly makes a little grunt of acknowledgment.

NAN (CONT'D)
I was able to do a little research
at the office today. Strangely,
this house doesn't appear on any
town map before the mid 90s.

ULYSSES
How wonderful that must be to have
a job that allows you to leave the
house and do research while I'm
stuck on a bedevilled piece of
property, impotently unable to
pursue my craft.

NAN
Sweetheart, I know you're
frustrated. But everything we have
is tied up in this house. We're
stuck. And I'm just doing what I
can to find a solution.

She pours the steaming liquid into two mugs.

NAN (CONT'D)

And in the meanwhile, the best I
can do is provide you with a hot
mug of comforting distraction
(takes a tiny sip)
You know, this could use a touch of
fresh mint from the garde...

Nan stops herself, making an awkward oops face. Uly gives her a stare, then reaches for his hot mug.

ULYSSES

We've already had one Catholic
priest run away screaming. I don't
know what to try next.

He brings the mug to his lips, then makes a face.

NAN

What's wrong with it?

Uly says nothing. He just turns the mug upside down. What comes out isn't Kombucha, but a tangle of SQUIRMING, WRITHING WORMS. Uly rolls his eyes and looks around the house.

ULYSSES

Har-de-har-har!
(back to Nan)
We've gotta try something.

A MONTAGE of efforts to "cleanse" the house of spirits.

1. In the living room, a SEANCE. An old, turbaned MEDIUM WOMAN keeps trying to light candles, but water keeps DRIPPING on them from the ceiling, putting them out.

2. Nan and Uly look in through the front window at the HIPPIE-MYSTIC DRUM CIRCLE crammed like long-haired sardines in the living room.

The six smiling DRUMMERS emit positive vibes as they keep a steady beat, slapping their hands rhythmically on BONGOS.

As the drumming gets FASTER and HARDER, we realize from the panicked faces of the drummers that they are no longer in control of their hands.

They drum IMPOSSIBLY FAST. It's like bongo *Whiplash*. The drummers begin to weep in terror when they look down and see that their FINGERS AND WRISTS are bent backward at GROTESQUE ANGLES from the viciousness of their pounding.

3. Nan, Uly, and A REALITY TV CREW are squeezed into the house. The crew is crowded in the middle of the room, trying to film.

Nan feels SOMETHING behind her. When she turns, she sees that the MOUNTED BEAVER on the wall is GNASHING HIS TEETH.

Nan screams. The crew scrambles to turn their cameras (and boom mic) the opposite direction, but it's impossible in such a tiny space. They clumsily step all over each other.

By the time they make the 180 turn, the beaver has stopped.

Nobody notices, but we see that the DRIP from the ceiling is creating a puddle that's getting precariously close to the SOUND MIXER's frayed and EXPOSED WIRES coiled on the floor.

The puddle creeps ominously closer to the crackling wires.

The puddle is WITHIN MILLIMETERS of the electric wires attached to the Mixer's headphones. Here come the fireworks.

Then, at the very last second, the wires get pulled away by the BOOM OPERATOR.

But when he does so, the Boom Operator SLIPS on the water and goes flying forward. Lurching with all his weight onto the BOOM POLE, which not only SNAPS from the impact, but IMPALES him right through the stomach.

The Boom Operator spins around, shrieking. Setting a RUBE GOLDBERG machine of slapstick mayhem into motion.

The Sound Mixer jumps back in horror and knocks into A CAMERA OPERATOR, who swings around and smashes into the face of B CAMERA OPERATOR, who drops his camera on the toe of THE HOST, who screams and falls back into the BATHROOM.

All the while, the Boom Operator is flailing round, knocking everything off the shelves with the boom as he clutches his impaled stomach, screaming. Everyone is screaming.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - SAME TIME

The whole gang rushes out of the house like it is on fire.

Last but not least, the Boom Operator runs to the door, but his escape is prevented by the boom pole sticking out of his front and back.

The boom (held HORIZONTALLY through the man's stomach) won't fit through the doorway, He's stuck. Maximum panic. He tries DIAGONAL, still can't make it out.

Finally, he figures that he has to point the boom pole toward the door in order to not get snagged.

He stumbles onto the lawn, where his crew gingerly try to load him into the van without further pole-smacking.

Jack the Host gives Nan and Uly a dirty look as he runs into the drivers seat and peels out of the driveway.

Ulysses and Nan hopelessly watch them drive off, then walk glumly back inside. We can see them straightening up through the open front door. Looking defeated.

INT. REAL ESTATE OFFICE - DAY

Nan enters Thad Spurlock's office and approaches the RECEPTIONIST.

NAN

I'd like to see the records on a house I just bought.

RECEPTIONIST

You'll have to make an appointment with Mr. Spurlock. I believe he has an opening next Wednesda...

Nan sees a door marked FILE ROOM and walks right in.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Hey, you can't go in there!

INT. FILE ROOM - DAY

Nan pulls the file on their house. ANGLE ON Nan scanning the files. Her eyes go wide.

INT. REAL ESTATE OFFICE - DAY

Nan walks out of the file room. She sees that the door to Thad's office is open, so she storms over and walks in.

The Receptionist chases her.

RECEPTIONIST

Hey, you can't go in there!

INT. THAD SPURLOCK'S OFFICE - SECONDS LATER

Nan bursts in, surprising Thad (who's feeding his goldfish).
Thad jumps and spills the jar of fish food into the tank.

NAN
What the hell is this?

THAD SPURLOCK
(peering at the papers)
That is what we in the industry
call the "chain" of "title."

NAN
No shit, Spurlock.

Nan points to the paperwork, and how the LIST OF OWNERS goes
on for THREE PAGES.

NAN (CONT'D)
Thirty-seven changes of ownership
in just over twenty years. That's
not normal.

THAD SPURLOCK
Actually high turnover isn't so
rare in a town like this. People
move here, charmed by our kitschy
gift shops and coastal *ambiance*.
Then they realize it's not for
them. Maybe it's the harsh
winters, or the constant smell of
rotting marine life down by the
docks.

Nan doesn't have an argument for this. But she refers to the
papers, looking at the names on the top of the list:

VINCENT AND TERESA CUSAMANO. MAY 17, 1996.

NAN
Well why does the chain of title
only go back to the mid-90's?

THAD SPURLOCK
That I couldn't tell you. I've only
been a real estate agent since
2002. Before that I was a bartender
and a parasailing instructor!

NAN
I'm taking a copy of this with me.

She turns and heads out. On her way, she spots a BATHROOM along the hall.

NAN (CONT'D)
But not before I use your toilet,
because the one you sold me is
fucking haunted.

When Nan steps into the bathroom, The Receptionist yells...

RECEPTIONIST
Hey, you can't go in there!

Thad gives the Receptionist a scowl.

THAD SPURLOCK
Good lord, Brenda. You know you
can be a real pill.

INT. TINY HOUSE BATHROOM - DAY

Even in his disheveled and manic state, Uly stares at his toilet in nervous discomfort. He agonizes, doing a little I-gotta-take-a-dump dance as he peers dubiously into the commode.

He starts to unbuckle his pants, but a TINY GROWL comes up from the toilet.

He re-buckles his belt, grabs his phone, and brings up the UBER APP.

INT. THE POOP DECK - AFTERNOON

Once again, Uly, with a look of relief, exits the bathroom wiping his hands on his kerchief.

OFFSCREEN VOICE
If it isn't old Princess Pickles.

Ulysses turns to see the whole smirking gang of Massholes.

ULYSSES
Get lost, asshole.

MASSHOLE
Oooooooh. What's wrong? Tiny
living starting to give you a tiny
dose of cabin feveah?

Ulysses' eyes burn.

ULYSSES
I said Fuck Off.

Masshole gives Uly a push in the chest.

MASSHOLE
Or what?

With surprising speed, Uly clocks him with a FEROCIOUS PUNCH TO THE FACE. Masshole wobbles, bell rung, then hits the deck.

The gang recoils, spooked, as Ulysses stares them down, CRAZED VIOLENCE in his eyes.

But their leader manages to smile even as he rubs his jaw.

MASSHOLE (CONT'D)
Well whaddya know? Sissypants
McVintage over hear can throw a
wicked Chowdermaker.

The gang helps him to his feet.

MASSHOLE (CONT'D)
'Til now my money was on her
killing him. Maybe I'll change my
bet.

ULYSSES
What does that mean?

MASSHOLE
Hopefully you'll find out soon
enough, Candle 'stache.

The Massholes walk off, laughing.

LESSER MASSHOLE
Ha-ha. Good one, Tommy.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - NIGHT

Nan stands outside Uly's pickling tent. She sees a flame casting a FLICKERING SILHOUETTE of Uly pacing madly.

NAN
Uly? Uly, I know you're in there.

She looks down and sees that her husband has PADLOCKED the flap of the tent. It does nothing to actually secure the entrance, but Nan gets the message and retreats to the house.

INT. PICKLING TENT - NIGHT

Uly, looking both exhausted and manic, is ranting and raving to himself as he looks back and forth between a shelf of EMPTY JARS and his laptop, which is open to his Instagram page. (and demonstrates that his number of followers is half what it was when we met him.)

ULYSSES

An embarrassment! That's what you are! What kind of man can't even pickle a single jar?!

He stops when he hears a CHITTERING SOUND outside the tent. Uly races over to have a look.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Mister Nutso! Is that you?

Foiled by the padlock, Uly has to reach through the flap, and unlock the padlock before stepping out into the night.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Thank god it's you, little buddy!
You're the only one who understa...

He stops in his tracks when he sees that it's not his rodent companion, but another FATTER, DARKER SQUIRREL. Who looks up at Uly, chittering happily.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

What the hell do you want?

He takes a kick at the animal, who scampers away swiftly.

Uly goes back and continues muttering madly by the shelves.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Might as well go the local goddamn Wegmans and buy a jar of Vlasic Kosher Dill Spears like some mindless consumer suckling at the teat of Big Pickle!

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Through the window, we see Nan drive off on the Vespa. We pan over to see Uly in the kitchen, trying to make breakfast.

He's as unkempt as we've ever seen him. Shambling around in his bathrobe. (a silken, throwback dressing gown.)

And every effort of cooking eggs is a frustrating reminder of the lack of space in their kitchenette. Every move involves SQUEEZING, CONTORTING, or BANGING into something in his way.

Taking a moment to calm himself down, he notices something on the wall and does a double-take before stepping up to inspect what caught his eye.

A WOODEN PLANK of the wall is splintering a tiny bit. A jagged little piece of wood sticks out.

ULYSSES

Great. That's all I need.

He wedges a finger inside the frayed bit of wood, prying it away from the wall. When it comes off, it creates a tiny HOLE in the wall. A hole through which Uly can see SOMETHING.

He keeps prying away with a fingertips, pulling away little pieces of wall and enlarging the hole.

Uly stands back, puzzling at the hole. On the other side of the wall is the outdoors. Yet no SUNLIGHT comes through.

He steps out of frame quickly, coming back with a HAMMER.

He whacks with the hammer, knocking out bigger chunks until he opens a hole big enough to put his head through.

He does, and when he pulls his head back in, he's SMILING. There's MORE HOUSE on the other side of the wall!

He takes the hammer and continues to bash away, finally creating an aperture big enough to CRAWL THROUGH.

INT. MORE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Uly squeezes himself through the hole and plops down onto the floor. He gets to his feet and looks around, enchanted.

Before him is a PALATIAL VICTORIAN DINING ROOM. In the middle of the room, a table with a piping-hot breakfast and tea spread out before him.

Uly walks past the table, in awe as he grabs a cup and takes a sip of tea. When he looks ahead and sees EVEN MORE HOUSE (a massive hallway, a library, a billiards room) his walk becomes an excited run, off to see what wonders await.

INT. GARDEN ATRIUM - CONTINUOUS

Uly strolls through an ARBORETUM, past flowers and hanging plants of all kinds.

He comes to a CUCUMBER PATCH and holds a plump, perfect specimen with reverence. He looks up and sees the cucumber patch goes on past a wall of vegetation, ultimately leading to an INDOOR OLYMPIC-SIZED POOL!

Uly happily runs toward the pool and dives in.

INT. POOL - CONTINUOUS

From our view underneath the surface, we see Uly submerging with an expression of rapture.

He glides through the water, tumbling and twisting joyfully.

And then he just FLOATS THERE. Suspended blissfully...

Until a single RED DROPLET drops down through the water next to him. Uly looks at it, curiously, when another RED DROPLET shoots down past him. Then another.

Soon the scene is like the beginning of *Saving Private Ryan*. Uly, still underwater, dodging projectiles of BLOOD RED that pierce the water all around him.

The water gets murky and red. Uly begins to panic and tries to swim up, but the surface now seems MILES ABOVE HIM.

Lost and disoriented, Ulysses thrashes blindly. And when a PAIR OF HANDS grab him, he loses his shit and issues an UNDERWATER SCREAM.

The hands take hold of him and wrestle him upward...

Until he bursts to the surface, and flops onto the side of a rock. He clings to the rock, gasping. Then he looks around.

It's NIGHT. And he's on the edge of a CRANBERRY BOG. And his wife is on her hands and knees next to him.

EXT. CRANBERRY BOG - NIGHT

Nan flips Uly over. Slapping his face in desperation.

NAN

Wake up!! C'mon Uly! Please!

ULYSSES
 (coming to his senses)
 What happened?! Where are we?!

NAN
 You were sleepwalking! You walked
 way out here... You almost drowned!

ULYSSES
 Damnit, Nan. Stop being so
 dramati...

Blearghhhh! Uly VOMITS a bellyful of water and cranberries.
 Nan helps him to his feet and guides him away from the water.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

The two are walking up the road, hitchhiking.

ULYSSES
 I wasn't sleepwalking. I was going
 swimming!

NAN
 You were just inspired to hike 10
 miles away from the house and go
 night-swimming in a cranberry bog?

EXT. BACK OF A PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

They sit in the bed of a truck. Both shivering.

NAN
 What's wrong with admitting you
 were sleepwalking?

ULYSSES
 What's wrong with admitting you
 don't appreciate the importance of
 nighttime exercise?

EXT. TINY HOUSE - NIGHT

Nan and Uly stand in their open doorway as the pickup truck
 drives off. They wave, smiling. As soon as the truck is out
 of sight...

NAN
 Look, your behavior is becoming
 more and more unhinged every day!
 I'm scared for you, Uly. And...
 (MORE)

NAN (CONT'D)
I can't believe I'm saying this,
but I'm scared for myself!

ULYSSES
Stop blowing everything out of
proportion! It's nothing more than
a classic case of Pickler's Block!

NAN
Enough with the pickling, Uly!
There are malevolent forces at work
in this house and you're obsessed
with your pickling!

ULYSSES
I'm not obsessed.

NAN
Oh, no? I bet you're thinking
about pickling right now!

From ULY's POV, Nan is yelling at him from inside a GIGANTIC
PICKLE JAR. Her words are a GURGLE as she floats in brine.

ULYSSES
What do you want from me, Nan?
I've lost my inspiration! I
haven't pickled a thing since we
got here! My followers have
abandoned me! My advertisers have
dropped me! Do you expect me to be
fine when my career and my
livelihood have gone down the
toilet?!?
(quietly)
I just want to do some pickling.

NAN
You ARE pickling! That's the scary
part! You ARE pickling!

Uly can only give his wife a puzzled look.

NAN (CONT'D)
You think I don't look at your
Instagram page?!

Nan pulls out her phone and goes to Instagram. She holds up
his page to show him the pictures.

Uly scans his Instagram page. We see horror after horror in
the jars. DEAD BUGS. THE CENTIPEDE THAT SCARED HIM. THE
SKULL FROM WHICH THE CENTIPEDE SLITHERED.

NAN (CONT'D)
 THIS is why your followers have
 left you! THIS is why your
 advertisers dropped you.

She swipes again, revealing the *piece de resistance*. MISTER
 NUTSO'S LIFELESS BODY swimming in a jar.

Ulysses is shocked by the sight of his friend, dead.

ULYSSES
 Mister... Nutso.

NAN
 Exactly! That's the perfect way to
 put it, Uly! This house is turning
 you into some kind of "Mister
 Nutso!"

He sees multiple angles of the dead squirrel in an elaborate,
 well-executed series of Instagram triptychs.

NAN (CONT'D)
 Can you admit now that you need
 help? That this house is doing
 something horrible to you?

Uly views the pictures and A SMILE slowly creeps to his face.

ULYSSES
 Something horrible? Don't you see,
 Nan? It's beautiful. THIS IS THE
 BEST WORK I'VE EVER DONE!

THROUGH THE OPEN DOORWAY, we can see that when Uly raises his
 voice, all the furniture in the house vibrates, as if there
 had been a tiny earthquake.

BACK OUTSIDE, Uly continues his rant.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
 I see what it is, now! You're
 jealous! You think this house is
 changing me?! MAYBE IT'S CHANGING
YOU!

AGAIN INSIDE, all Nan and Uly's belongings lurch with a JOLT.

ANGLE ON the bookcase, where books begin to inch out and off
 the shelf.

BACK OUTSIDE...

(MORE)

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
Maybe this house is changing you
into somebody who has NO
APPRECIATION FOR ARTISTIC GENIUS!

INSIDE, another great shake. Books fly off the shelf.

And what also topples from the shelf is Nan's MYSTERIOUS
SHOEBOX.

Uly notices this through the open door. And even in his
apoplectic state, his curiosity is piqued.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Uly enters the house, magnetized toward the strange shoebox
on the floor.

Uly kneels next to the shoebox. Reaching for the lid.

ANGLE ON Uly's face as he opens the box. His expression turns
from NERVOUS CURIOSITY to HORRIFIED SHOCK.

He screams and DROPS THE BOX back on the floor.

ANGLE ON the open shoebox, which we now see contains the
grotesquely taxidermied corpse of FILLMORE.

Uly bends down to pick it up, and when he stands back up, Nan
is standing behind him.

 ULYSSES
I'm having another nightmare. This
is another nightmare right? Right?!

 NAN
No baby, you're not dreaming.

 ULYSSES
It's this damn house. It's trying
to torture me.

He runs to the wall and starts banging on it hysterically.

 NAN
Ulysses, stop. It wasn't the house.

 ULYSSES
What?

 NAN
It was me. I'm sorry.

ULYSSES

It was you?

NAN

It was supposed be a surprise. I didn't want you to find out this way.

ULYSSES

We watched him burn.

NAN

I swapped his body out with a boiled turtledove I bought in Chinatown.

She points at the amateurishly preserved Fillmore.

NAN (CONT'D)

I thought it would be a nice thing to do. So he'd always be with us.

ULYSSES

You lied to me.

NAN

I didn't lie. I just kept it a secret.

Ulysses looks at Nan and with OVERDRAMATIC GRAVITAS, delivers a line that will definitely be used in the movie's trailer...

ULYSSES

In a house this small there's no room to hide your secrets!

NAN

Okaaay.

ULYSSES

I can only wonder what else you're not telling me.

NAN

Don't be ridiculous...

ULYSSES

You defiled him, Nan! You turned our beautiful Fillmore into a hideous abomination of crap taxidermy! No wonder so many hellish things are happening around us!

(MORE)

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
It must be poor Fillmore's soul
lashing out in revenge! THIS IS
ALL YOUR DOING!!

And with that, Uly stomps back outside.

Nan watches through the open door as Uly takes his HOE and starts DIGGING A GRAVE for his beloved parrot.

 NAN
Um... Isn't that where you just
planted radishes?

Uly looks down. She's right.

 ULYSSES
Son of a...

He storms away, headed into the pickling tent.

INT. PICKLING TENT - CONTINUOUS

Nan follows Uly into the tent.

 NAN
Uly, please!

She looks outraged when he pulls the ANTIQUE JUG out of the drawer.

 NAN (CONT'D)
No, Uly. You said you were done
with that!

 ULYSSES
Maybe I decided to start up again.

Uly stares her right in the eyes as he pops off the cork.

 NAN
Don't you dare!

Uly brings the jug slowly to his mouth. He closes his eyes and ... starts BLOWING THE OPENING NOTES for a schmaltzy, nostalgic JUG-BAND song.

Nan puts her hands over her ears and runs out of the tent.

Uly's sad jug music continues, with accompanying instruments slowly joining in over the SAD JUG BLOWING MUSIC MONTAGE.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - MORNING

Nan heads off to work, walking by Uly. Uly doesn't even look up as she passes.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Uly somberly places Fillmore's shoebox in a shallow grave.

INT. MASTHEAD OFFICE - DAY

Nan looks miserable as she empties the rat traps at work.

INT. PICKLING TENT - DAY

Uly "moves into" the pickling tent. Placing a mug and toothbrush on his desk, then setting up a pillow and blanket on the ground.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nan sits on the little sofa, exhausted, going over the files for the house yet again. And studying the sepia photo.

Her eyelids get heavy, then shut. Her head dips.

After a moment, we hear...

PICKLE IT.

PICCKLLE ITTTTT!

Nan's eyes flutter awake. And she sees ULYSSES STANDING OVER HER. Eyes crazed.

She looks down and sees that Uly has placed her LEFT HAND IN A JAR of warm brine.

We recognize his whisper as his MUSE VOICE.

 ULYSSES
 Picckle itttttt!!!

Nan SCREAMS, yanking her hand free.

Uly, startled, scrambles out the door like a rabid animal and runs off into the woods.

Nan just sits there, gasping and clutching at her chest.

EXT. CRANBERRY COVE - DAY

It's a cloudy day. Nan wears a dark expression as she walks down Main Street, finally entering a SEAFOOD RESTAURANT.

INT. THE SAUCY PRAWN - DAY

With a grim face, Nan approaches the CASHIER, opening up her attache and pulling out some artwork.

NAN
Frank ordered an ad in the
Masthead. I just wanted to get his
approval on the layout.

The Cashier takes the artwork, but looks intently at Nan.

CASHIER
You okay, Sweetie? You look like
forty pounds of last week's clams.

NAN
(not fine)
I'm fine.

CASHIER
Have a seat and a cup of coffee
while I show this to Frank.

NAN
If I sit down, I'm afraid I won't
get back up.

The Cashier gives her a sympathetic smile before walking off.

Nan just stands there, bleary-eyed, looking at the MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED OLD PHOTOS on the wall of the restaurant.

She absently scans the pictures that seem to span decades. Diners, the owners, celebrities. (Carl Yastrzemski wearing a lobster bib.)

In a moment, the Cashier returns.

CASHIER
Frank says it looks beautiful.
(re: Nan looking)
Lotta history on that wall. And a
lotta gluttony.

She points to a framed photo of A MAN slurping from a huge oyster shell, that blocks most of his face. Empty shells are piled all around the table.

CASHIER (CONT'D)
That crazy shmuck ate his weight in
Pemaquids.

Out of politeness, Nan looks at the photo. She's about to turn away when she does a double-take on the NAMEPLATE below.

1996 OYSTER CHAMPION: VINCENT CUSAMANO

Nan's eyes lock on the name. There's something about it, that gets her wheels spinning.

VINCENT CUSAMANO..... VINCENT CUSAMANO.

NAN
Vincent Cusamano!

She rifles through her attache and pulls out the Chain of Title to her house.

Scanning the names of the owners, she finds it ON THE VERY TOP OF THE LIST. The oldest listed owner. VINCENT CUSAMANO.

NAN (CONT'D)
Do you know this man?

CASHIER
Sure. I mean... Knew him, would be more accurate.

NAN
Why?! Is he dead?

CASHIER
... No.

NAN
Can you tell me where to find him?

EXT. CONCORD STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL - DAY

The sign on the gate of an unremarkable yet ominous-looking building reads.... **CONCORD STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL.**

INT. CONCORD STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL - DAY

In A SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS...

Nan slams her ID up to receptionist window.

The Receptionist takes long sip of coffee.

Nan clips on a VISITOR BADGE.

Double doors open with a LOUD BUZZING.

Nan takes a breath and walks through.

KER-SLAM. The doors slam close behind her.

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

The hallway is long and full of DOORS WITH PORTHOLE WINDOWS AND FOOD SLOTS. This is isolation. Real Hannibal Lecter shit.

Nan plods ahead, nervous, until she reaches Vincent's room.

She looks inside the porthole. There's no furniture but the PADDED WALLS have been painted with GORGEOUS OPEN LANDSCAPES.

Nan peers in deeper when SUDDENLY, VINCENT POPS from below the porthole. They both GASP!

When they calm down, Nan takes a good look at Vincent. He's in hospital garb. He seems to be in his 50's but it's hard to tell because his LONG HAIR falls in front of his face.

VINCENT CUSAMANO

You scared me. I was just painting the door.

NAN

It's okay. I apologize for interrupting your flow. I was just appreciating your work.

He turns and shows off the EXPANSIVE WALL MURALS.

VINCENT CUSAMANO

There's nothing like the great outdoors. So much better than confined, claustrophobic spaces.

NAN

It's great that they give you paint. I wrote a paper in school about how art therapy would be far more beneficial for incarceration..

VINCENT CUSAMANO

It's not paint.

NAN

Oh, so how do you...?

VINCENT CUSAMANO
Mashed up food. Broccoli, beans,
ketchup, mustard...

Nan smiles and leans in, genuinely impressed.

VINCENT CUSAMANO (CONT'D)
And of course, feces.

Nan scrunches up her face and leans back.

NAN
Wonderful that you've found a
sustainable resource.
(dry heave)
Excuse my involuntary bio-reaction.
(big dry heave)
Do you mind if I ask you a few
questions about the house on
Snapping Turtle Lane?

Vincent turns his back, assessing his work and DOING TOUCH-UPS WITH THE POOP PAINT as he speaks.

VINCENT CUSAMANO
I thought I answered everything
before but I'm always glad to help.

NAN
What happened in that house?

VINCENT CUSAMANO
Jeez, that's a toughie. I mean,
what can I say? We were just a
couple of young, stupid hipsters.
Trying to find a quiet little spot,
where we could turn back the
clock...

Nan leans in, riveted.

VINCENT CUSAMANO (CONT'D)
But everywhere I turned, there she
was. Just four walls and her. She
would bump into me twenty-seven
times a day. Twenty-seven times! I
counted! After a point, you're
like, "The bumping is on purpose,
right?" But she'd say, "Noooo, it's
just this place." But the bumping
kept happening. Mostly her elbows.
Her sharp, stupid elbows. Always
jabbing and poking.
(MORE)

VINCENT CUSAMANO (CONT'D)
 After a few months, the voices
 started. *Bump her.. BUMP HER!*

Nan notices something in the mural that she hadn't seen before. A rendering of a small house. Their house.

And when she looks closer, she sees A COFFIN drawn underneath the house. And inside the coffin. A WOMAN'S BODY.

VINCENT CUSAMANO (CONT'D)
 So I did. I bumped her on the head.
 And I kept bumping and bumping and
 bumping and bumping. Until it
 turned into.... squishing.

NAN
 You killed her?

VINCENT CUSAMANO
 After that, I was finally free.
 Free of that awful tiny house. I
 CURSE THE DAY IN 1996 THAT I BUILT
 THAT GODFORSAKEN TINY HOUSE!

He races toward the porthole as he says this, and as he moves, his long hair blows back out of his face. And now that Nan can get a good look at his features, she recognizes him as THE MAN FROM THE SEPIA PHOTOGRAPH.

She gasps and pulls the picture out of her attache. She holds it up next to the porthole. Same guy!

NAN
 YOU built the house! In 1996? But
 from this picture, I thought it was
 over a hundred years old!

Vincent looks through at the photo.

VINCENT
 Really? That's funny. I mean
 there's bottle of Crystal Pepsi
 sitting on the porch.

Nan squints at the photo. He's right.

NAN
 How did I miss that?

A VOICE ACROSS THE HALL causes Nan to turn...

PATIENT 2

I don't mean to eavesdrop, but are you guys talking about the tiny house on Snapping Turtle Lane? I use to live there! That's where I ate my kids.

(shakes his head, wistful)

Ah, memories.

A FEMALE PRISONER pipes up from down the hall.

PATIENT 3

Hey, I also bought that tiny house on Snapping Turtle! My second husband filled it with farts... so I filled him with knives!

YET ANOTHER PATIENT chimes in...

PATIENT 4

Son of a gun! Me too! Wow, been here seven years and had no idea we all owned the same house. Can you believe that, honey?

Patient 4 looks over to a pillow with a CRUDELY DRAWN FACE.

PATIENT 4 (CONT'D)

Will you stop that goddamn nose whistling?! You're driving me nuts!

Patient 4 lurches at his pillow, but it quickly gets the upper hand and STARTS SUFFOCATING HIM.

Nan is reeling from the realization that everyone here lived in (and killed their partner in) that house... her house.

NAN

I have to go. My husband is there.

VINCENT

Soon he'll be here with us!
Painting with shit! PAINTING WITH SHIT!

Nan turns and runs frantically back toward the lobby as all the inmates chant maniacally...

PAINTING WITH SHIT! PAINTING WITH SHIT! PAINTING WITH SHIT!

EXT. CONCORD STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Nan has just mounted her Vespa and is on her phone.

NAN
(not getting a response)
Pick up, Uly!

Nan hangs up, then slams her helmet on before kicking up the kickstand. She turns on her blinker... waits for a car. Once it passes... She's off.

INT. PICKLING TENT - DAY

Uly stumbling around in a filthy bathrobe. Unshaven and muttering. After pacing a bit, he curls up on his blanket on the ground. Closes his eyes.

He falls asleep quickly, but starts tossing and turning.

We move close on his eyes. Darting about under their lids.

Uly's face becomes twisted and distorts as he is tortured by whatever nightmare he's having.

And then Uly wakes up, screaming. And LURCHES FORWARD, smashing his head ON THE CEILING again.

Because somehow, he's back in the SLEEPING LOFT.

INT. SLEEPING LOFT - DAY

He looks around, baffled. Then amused. He starts to laugh. And then he deliberately SMASHES HIS HEAD against the ceiling again. And again.

BLOOD DRIPS from his newly reopened HEAD WOUND. But he does it again. And again. And again.

EXT. CRANBERRY COVE - DAY

Nan drives through the dark, cloudy afternoon. Going top speed on her Vespa.

She looks across the street and... holy shit. There's Thad Spurlock. Shaking hands with a happy YOUNG WIFE and her HUSBAND as he takes down a FOR SALE SIGN.

THAD SPURLOCK
Like I always say, if you sleep on
it, you might not sleep in it.

Nan yanks the handles on her bike, rides ONTO THE LAWN and HOPS OFF THE VESPA WITHOUT STOPPING, TACKLING THAD TO THE GROUND.

The Vespa continues off into the background, hitting a bush and launching UP OUT OF FRAME.

NAN
(on top of Thad)
You sold us a murder house!

THAD SPURLOCK
Did you just tackle me from a
moving scooter? I mean... Wow.

NAN
How many people died in my house?
HOW MANY?!?

THAD SPURLOCK
Okay, okay.
(thinking)
Twenty.... six.

NAN
What? I honestly expected like
seven, maybe twelve. But twenty
six?

THAD SPURLOCK
I'd have to go and check the files.
I could be off by a few...

NAN
How could you not tell me? After
twenty years of murder and
bloodshed, how could you sell us
that evil house?

In the middle of this, the Young Wife and Husband share a
look, then look over at Thad.

YOUNG WIFE
Just out of curiosity, are there
other realtors in town?

Thad grimaces at losing a commission, then looks up at Nan.

THAD SPURLOCK
Evil? No. It's TINY. It's a tiny
fucking house, Nan. Let's break
this down: New home ownership is
one of the most stressful scenarios
in life. And you compound that
tension by co-habiting a
glorified CLOSET. No privacy. No
personal bubbles. Just stewing in
each other's B.O.
(MORE)

THAD SPURLOCK (CONT'D)
Plus you two sit around drinking
hemp tea and chewing Cava Root like
Haight-Ashbury cult members, and of
course shit's gonna get weird!

NAN
Twenty-six murders!!! You have to
disclose something like that! I'll
have you dis-realtored!

THAD SPURLOCK
Sorry, Nan. But for any domicile
under 400 square feet, that
disclosure is waived. Little known
loophole. Technically I had no
obligation to tell you.

NAN
How about the obligation.. to be a
decent human being?

Nan climbs off Thad. But then stops and looks around.

NAN (CONT'D)
Where is my Vespa? I swear I can
hear it...

Thad POINTS UP TO THE TREE. Nan looks up and we see her
Vespa, STILL RUNNING, but STUCK UP IN THE TREE.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE ON MAIN STREET - LATER

FIREMAN brings the Vespa down like it's a cat.

Nan gets on the bike, slamming on her helmet. The Fireman
opens his mouth to make a joke. He's been working up to this.

FIREMAN
I gotta say this is the biggest cat
I've ever had to pull down from...

NAN
Put a sock in it.

Nan revs the engine and takes off before he can finish.

EXT. HILLS ABOVE CRANBERRY COVE - LATER

THUNDER and RAIN DROPS as Nan drives toward STORM CLOUDS. She's trying to drive while talking into her phone at the same time...

NAN
Goddamnit, Uly! Why won't you
answer the phone?!? You have to
get out of the house right now!!

EXT. TINY HOUSE - DUSK THUNDERSTORM

It's pouring as Nan arrives home. She goes to kick out the kickstand on her Vespa but it's gone. She lets it fall over.

NAN
Uly! Uly! We have to leave!

INT. TINY HOUSE - DUSK THUNDERSTORM

Nan bursts through the open door, looking around.

NAN
Uly! We have to get out of the
house! It's doing something to you!

No response. She looks through a window at the pickling tent.

INT. PICKLING TENT - DUSK THUNDERSTORM

Nan flings the flap open and heads inside. Empty.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - DUSK THUNDERSTORM

Nan bursts out of the tent and grabs her phone, quickly redialing Uly's number.

Still no pick up, but when she lowers the phone from her ear, she can barely make out the sound of Uly's phone ringing.

The classic BRRING-BRRING of an old rotary phone.

BRRING-BRRING. Coming from... the house?

INT. TINY HOUSE - DUSK THUNDERSTORM

Nan creeps back inside. Following the sound.

BRRING-BRRING. Nan looks around. *Where did that come from?!?*

BRRING-BRRING. Nan looks up. At THE ATTIC. Fuck.

INT. TINY HOUSE ATTIC - DUSK THUNDERSTORM

The attic door slides open, letting a shaft of light into the inky blackness.

Nan pulls herself up so that ONLY HER UPPER BODY is in the attic. Her LEGS DANGLE AWKWARDLY IN THE LIVING ROOM.

Nan squints into the darkness....

BRRING-BRRING.

She pulls out her phone, turns on the LIGHT and shines it around the attic.

In the corner, we see Ulysses' phone light up. BRRING-BRRING.

She points the light at it. No Ulysses.

INT. TINY HOUSE - NIGHT THUNDERSTORM

Nan lowers herself slowly down into the living room...

Where ULYSSES IS WAITING. Filthy and crazy. Head bleeding.

He's drinking from the jar that contains MISTER NUTSO.

Unaware of his presence, she lowers herself right next to him, then SCREAMS when she sees him.

NAN

Uly! We have to get out!

ULYSSES

My work here isn't finished... yet.

He raises his hand. In it is one of the TINY CHEESE KNIVES.

Before she can react, he SLASHES her on the arm. The cut splits her shirt and skin but there's no blood.

Then the BLOOD STARTS.

He slashes at her again, but this time she dodges out of the way and sprints for the front door.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - NIGHT THUNDERSTORM

She runs outside and heads for the pickling tent.

INT. PICKLING TENT - NIGHT THUNDERSTORM

Nan races in and hides behind the shelves. Her back against the far flap of the tent. And there she waits, in the dark. Trying to hold her breath.

Keeping her eyes on the front flap, Nan doesn't notice that behind her, just inches from her head, a tiny cheese knife QUIETLY PIERCES THE TENT.

It descends slowly, cutting a slit just behind Nan that Ulysses peers through. Smiling madly.

He reaches through and GRABS NAN, pulling her back into the slit in the tent.

Screaming, Nan reaches out with her free hand, trying to pull a jar off the shelf. Finally she gets her hand around the jar with the PICKLED CENTIPEDE inside.

She swings back and SMASHES THE JAR against Uly's head.

As Nan runs back out of the tent, Uly falls down, dazed.

ULYSSES
(re: the smashed jar)
Damn it. That one got so many likes.

EXT. PICKLING TENT - MOMENTS LATER

Uly, looking berserk, comes around the corner of the pickling tent. Brandishing the tiny knife and searching for Nan.

INT. TINY HOUSE - NIGHT THUNDERSTORM

Ulysses steps through the front door. Then starts searching the premises for Nan.

ULYSSES
I know you're in here, Nan.

Switching to TRAILER V.O. GUY VOICE...

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
In a house this tiny, there's no place to hide.

He chuckles and keeps looking around. When he crosses the living room, camera pans up. Revealing NAN'S LEGS curled up, but still sticking out of the attic opening.

UP IN THE ATTIC... Sweating and shaking, Nan tries with all her might to prop herself up in the attic opening, and keep her legs tucked as high as possible.

DOWN BELOW... Ulysses keeps looking at ground level. He peers under the tiny table and into the bathroom.

UP IN THE ATTIC... Nan struggles, sweat covering her face. She can't keep her legs up any longer. She lets them drop.

DOWN BELOW... Ulysses continues his search. Behind him, we see Nan lower her legs to rest them.

Ulysses senses something and turns, but just too late, as Nan RAISES HER LEGS back up!

UP IN THE ATTIC... Nan CAN HEAR ULYSSES STOMP OFF and the front door slam shut. She takes a couple deep breaths and starts to lower herself.

DOWN BELOW in the living room, we see Nan's legs lower.

Suddenly, A HAND GRABS HER LEG! Nan screams as she's pulled downward.

Nan starts kicking violently, pulling herself up as much as she can. But Ulysses is using the tiny cheese knife to slash at Nan's kicking feet.

UP IN THE ATTIC... Nan screams and desperately reaches for something. Anything. And there it is, the HARPOON! She reaches out but it's JUST OUT OF REACH!

DOWN BELOW... Ulysses keeps slashing at her feet. He's getting closer to wrangling them.

UP IN THE ATTIC... Nan stretches and stretches. Trying to reach the harpoon. Her hand gets closer and closer... Until finally she gets her hand around it!

But when she tries to pull it free, she finds that the attic is too small and the long weapon keeps snagging and catching on things.

NAN

Son of a...

Nan spins the harpoon around, trying every which way. Almost getting it through the attic hatch.

Now Uly has both of her legs, and reaches to grab her BY THE WAISTBAND. He yanks hard, pulling Nan down in a commotion. She lands on top of him and they both go sprawling.

The harpoon falls nearby.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT THUNDERSTORM

Scrambling to her feet, Nan grabs the harpoon and is using it as a barrier to keep Ulysses at bay. But the harpoon keeps getting jammed between doors and walls and everything.

Husband and wife bob and weave. Uly attacking with a weapon too small, and Nan defending herself with a weapon too big.

Then Nan sees her window. Literally. Nan backs the harpoon into the bathroom giving her the room to swivel it and point it at Ulysses.

Past the point of caring, he lunges. And so she rushes right back at him, plunging the harpoon squarely at him.

The harpoon goes through Ulysses's shoulder, PINNING HIM TO THE WALL!

Uly squirms in agony, stuck to the wall. Nan lets go of the weapon. Shocked and mortified.

The pain seems to have RESTORED SOME OF HIS SENSES.

ULYSSES
(looks at his shoulder)
Owww!

Recognizing her husband and seizing the opportunity...

NAN
Uly! Please! Listen to me! This
isn't you! The house is doing this!

Uly looks at Nan. Still crazed.

In an effort to revive Uly, Nan grabs a jar of PICKLED GORGONZOLA. She opens it and waves the pungent fumes under his nose.

ULYSSES
Gyahhhuhh!

But then he goes back to his crazy look.

Desperate, Nan pleads with him...

NAN
 It's me! It's your wife! You need
 to remember! The life we've had
 together!

Uly twists and groans, locked in a battle for his mind.

NAN (CONT'D)
 We've had eight wonderful years
 together! Do you remember?!?

He looks at her, trying to come out of the daze.

NAN (CONT'D)
 Remember how our first date was
 volunteering at that old folks'
 community. We did acid and tried to
 see their souls leave their bodies?

Uly grasps his head in his hands, moaning.

NAN (CONT'D)
 (crying)
 Our honeymoon! That bistro in
 Paris, where we convinced the owner
 to stop selling baguettes because
 they weren't gender-neutral.

ULYSSES
 They looked like... bread....dicks.

NAN
 That's right, Uly! Remember how we
 were going to start an ironic ABBA
 cover band?

ULYSSES
 We were gonna call ourselves BAAB.

NAN
 Yes! Uly! Yes!

Ulysses looks around. His crazy look is gone.

ULYSSES
 I remember! I remember everything!
 (realization)
 We've kinda wasted our lives doing
 a lot of stupid shit.

NAN

We have to get out of here, Uly.
The house is built on the grave of
Teresa Cusamano! She's the cause
of all this!

ULYSSES

Of course! It all makes sense!
(after a beat)
But who the hell is Teresa
Cusamano?

NAN

I'll explain it later.

She takes his hand and starts to lead him toward the door.

ULYSSES

Ahem?

He looks down at the harpoon pinning him to the wall. Nan shrugs *oops* then grasps the harpoon with both hands, tugging it out of the wall, and her husband, who lets out a blood-curdling SHRIEK.

Nan and Uly are headed for the exit when A LOUD, DEEP GROAN fills the house. They look around and observe the walls FLEX, CREAK, AND SHAKE, as if the house was taking a deep breath.

Then DRIP, DRIP... the beam starts dripping, faster than ever. But not water. BLOOD. Nan and Ulysses look at each other as the drip turns into a steady pour.

Suddenly, BLOOD shoots out of the kitchen sink and toilet, as SHARTING NOISES erupt!

BLOOD starts shooting not just out of the beam, but flooding in from EVERY SEAM AND CRACK of the house!

BLOOD is beginning to pool on the floor, deep enough to cover their feet. Nan runs for the door but slips and blood begins to flood over her!

Ulysses rushes to help Nan, but THE HOUSE IS FIGHTING HIM.

DISHES ARE FLYING out of cabinets, DRAWERS ARE FLINGING themselves open, hanging chairs are SWINGING VIOLENTLY.

Meanwhile, the blood is rising fast. Now up to their waists.

Everywhere they go, the house stops them. The front door LOCKS ITSELF won't budge. The loft ladder falls and BLOCKS THEM from exiting out a window.

The blood is flooding the house, rising up to their necks.

Nan points up. They float with the rising tide and make a grab for the opening of the attic.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - NIGHT THUNDERSTORM

We hear a LOUD BANG. Then ANOTHER. And ANOTHER. Then CRASH!

We see Nan and Uly's legs KICK OUT A PIECE OF THE ATTIC ROOF.

They emerge from the hole, scramble to the edge of the roof, and then, holding hands, dramatically jump to safety.

They easily land on their feet on the muddy ground, a bit surprised almost. They look at the house.

Lights flicker. Blood covers the windows. And the deep, unearthly SHART SOUNDS seem even more sinister.

NAN

Come on. Let's go.

ULYSSES

No.

(off her stunned look)

Yes, this place is claustrophobic.
Yes, it makes ungodly sharting noises, along with actual blood sharts. And yes, it tried to make me kill you. But this is OUR HOUSE, damnit! We signed the papers. And I refuse to walk away and let this motherfucker ruin our credit score! If this house is resting on top of a grave, all we have to do it move it over a few feet, right?!?

Nan looks at Ulysses with admiration. He's become a real man.

SERIES OF SHOTS in the RAIN.

Nan gets her Vespa off its side.

Ulysses tears down his pickling tent and pulls the ROPE SUPPORTS off.

Nan tries to start the Vespa up. It won't turn over.

Ulysses takes the rope and ties one end to the house.

Nan pleads with her Vespa, and it starts!

Ulysses ties the other end of the rope to the Vespa.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Go go go!

Nan revs full throttle. Mud flies.

The rope goes taut. And HOUSE BUDGES just a tiny bit.

Uly races to the far end of the house and shoves with all his might. It budes a little bit more.

But then the ROPE SNAPS, and the Vespa (with Nan aboard) lunges forward, crashing into a bush.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Nan!!!

Uly goes to pull Nan out of the bush, but turns when he sees that the house is STARTING TO SLIDE thanks to the mud.

He resumes pushing. Shoving against the house inch by inch.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

We just... gotta... move it off...
the grave!

Nan, extricating herself from the bush, sees this and runs over. She STARTS PUSHING alongside her husband. The HOUSE keeps moving!

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Yes! Yes!

The house BEGINS TO SLIDE GENTLY downhill.

NAN

Yes! Yes!

The house picks up momentum and starts CAREENING DOWN THE MUDDY SLOPE! Heading right for a HUGE TREE!

ULYSSES

No! No!

Nan and Ulysses almost can't look. But the house miraculously comes to a GENTLE STOP AGAINST THE TREE. As if that was where it was meant to be all along.

And with that, the groaning, the blood, EVERYTHING STOPS.

The house sits there. Peaceful and quiet.

Nan and Ulysses high five. And then embrace in the rain.
Muddy, sweaty, bloody. But ALIVE!

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
And we didn't even have to call a
moving company!

The camera booms up. We hear one last playful quip.

NAN
I am not looking forward to spring
cleaning.

The two laugh as the music swells. What an ending!

EXT. TINY HOUSE - MORNING

The house is a little busted up, but in its new location, it
looks peaceful in the SOFT MORNING LIGHT.

INT. TINY HOUSE - MORNING

Nan and Ulysses are just finishing up cleaning their home. It
looks not bad considering what it's been through.

Uly puts down his mop and wipes his brow. Manly and proud.

Nan's gaze lingers on him. He's UNKEMPT, SWEATY, and COVERED
IN GRIME. But he's SEXIER than we've ever seen him.

NAN
I've never seen this side of you.

ULYSSES
How about this side?

Ulysses turns to give her a profile. Nan laughs. She grabs
him and kisses him.

The kiss becomes incredibly passionate. The culmination of
weeks of RAW EMOTION, FEAR, and SEXUAL FRUSTRATION.

Nan CHUCKS HER FEATHER DUSTER.

Ulysses KICKS A SWIFFER OUT OF THE WAY.

IT'S ON.

They kiss like Ulysses just got out of prison. Undressing
each other as they slam into walls and cabinets.

Nan SLAMS ULYSSES against a wall. Uly PUSHES NAN down on to the little sofa-thingy and flops on top of her. Hot stuff!

The impact knocks the BEAVER HEAD sideways, where it dangles away from the wall. And just as the couple begins consummating their new romance, Nan looks up and notices...

That the letters **S ATROCI** are BURNED INTO THE WOOD where the beaver had been. Nan stares, distracted and puzzled.

NAN

Uly. Look... look. The beaver...

In the throes of whoopie...

ULYSSES

Yeah, I'm looking baby! I like it!

NAN

No. The beaver, it's down...

ULYSSES

Yeah, baby! It's so down! Downtown to Chinatown!

Nan squirms out from under Uly, who can't believe this.

NAN

(pointing up)

No, look!

Uly, head in hands, casts his gaze begrudgingly.

NAN (CONT'D)

Those burned letters match the HM and TY!

She points to how the letters look the same as the **HM** and **TY** that she took to be lovers' initials.

ULYSSES

So we're playing Scrabble now?

Nan looks at the beam. And then at the wall.

NAN

That piece of wood fits in between those other pieces of wood.

While Nan works it out in her head, Uly slips off, pissed.

ULYSSES

I'll be in the bathroom. Don't be alarmed by what you hear.

Clad only in a long PEASANT SHIRT that just covers his bare ass, Uly goes into the bathroom and slams the door shut.

NAN
HM...S. HMS ATROCI..TY. HMS
Atrocity? HMS Atrocity!

Nan grabs her laptop and Wikipedias it.

NAN (CONT'D)
Oh my god.

She starts reading out loud to Ulysses.

NAN (CONT'D)
Uly! Listen to this! *The H.M.S. Atrocity was a notorious whaling vessel that operated off the coast of Massachusetts in the late 1800s.*

Ulysses doesn't respond from the bathroom.

NAN (CONT'D)
The Atrocity was regarded as the most inhumane of the whale trade. Known for killing entire schools of whales, singling out the most adorable baby whales for especially brutal slaughter.... (citation needed.)

Nan looks all around at the building materials of the house.

NAN (CONT'D)
The wood? The reclaimed wood. Oh my god. Our house is made from the ship! From the H.M.S. Atrocity! It wasn't about the grave of Teresa Cusamano at all!

Nan looks over in alarm as she hears A FAMILIAR SOUND from the bathroom. The inhuman SHART GURGLES.

NAN (CONT'D)
Uly?

Nan slowly approaches. Her face a mask of DREAD.

Then, reluctantly, she pushes the bathroom door open.

No Ulysses. The shart gurgles are worsening, and the toilet itself is VIBRATING, like it will tear itself loose.

Then she hears ULYSSES SCREAMING. But from where?

NAN (CONT'D)
Ulysses! Where are you?

She looks around the house, trying to follow the screams.
They're coming from EVERYWHERE AND NOWHERE.

The toilet starts SHAKING MORE and GETTING LOUDER.

She goes back to the bathroom and leans closer to the toilet.

ULYSSES (O.S.)
Help me!

She lurches back. *Is Uly in the fucking toilet?*

No time to think. She puts one foot in the toilet. It begins vibrating more violently as a BOLT SHOOTS OFF and SHATTERS THE MIRROR.

She puts another foot in, holds her nose, and braces herself.

And then she gets SUCKED DOWN.

The toilet slams closed. The bathroom is quiet and empty.

INT. HAUNTED DIMENSION/ H.M.S. ATROCITY - NIGHT

Nan lands in a pile of BLOODY GOO. (It's just like the gore that was shooting from the toilet earlier.)

Just as she realizes this, a HUGE BUCKET OF BLOODY BLUBBER is tossed on her from off screen.

She wipes her eyes off and staggers to her feet, reeling.

She looks around and realizes that she's in the bowels of a horrible GHOST SHIP. Being tossed about in a fierce STORM.

A CREW OF TRANSPARENT SEAMEN are working near Nan, hauling buckets of WHALE GUTS. Dumping them into grates in the floor.

NAN
Oh my god.

When she speaks, the GHOSTLY CREW finally seem to notice her. They look at her with MALEVOLENT, HUNGRY GRINS.

She staggers backwards, petrified, as the crew begins to ADVANCE ON HER.

She stumbles backward, finally hitting her back on a door.

THE DOOR OPENS AND A HAND DRAGS HER INTO THE DARKNESS.

As she's pulled in, we hear one of the ghost crew...

GHOST CREWMEMBER (OFFSCREEN)
You can't go in there!

INT. A DARK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Reveal that Ulysses has grabbed Nan and pulled her into ANOTHER ROOM. (He's still wearing a shirt, no bottoms.)

Once inside, he uses a PIECE OF WOOD to bolt the door.

NAN
 Where are we?

ULYSSES
 Shhh.

Uly LIGHTS A MATCH, which offers just enough illumination to show Nan what's inside the HUGE ROOM with them.

The HALF-DECOMPOSED CARCASSES of FOUR WHALES. Shoved on one side of the room.

NAN
 Oh god. Dead whales.

In response, the NEAREST WHALE OPENS ITS EYES and looks at them. Prompting them to GASP.

Its eyes are big and beautiful. But so sad.

Nan touches the whale. Her hand SMOOSHES INTO the loose, necrotic skin. Ulysses gags.

Suddenly Nan's EYES GO WHITE! She stiffens up.

ULYSSES
 Nan?!?

But she can't hear him, she's having some sort of telepathic conversation.

She speaks, but in a voice NOT HER OWN...

NAN
*They took us, hundreds of us.
 Pulled us from the brine with pokey
 metals.*

Uly, mind racing, puts it all together...

ULYSSES

All this time we thought it was a
human spirit occupying the house.

(ashamed)

How could I have been so
homocentric?

NAN

*Whole generations, butchered inside
this wooden terror... This...
Atrocity!*

Nan is SNAPPED OUT OF HER TRANCE when The Ghost Crew start
banging on the door. She and Uly look over to the door.

ULYSSES

Oh shit.

AXES and SWORDS start SMASHING through the wood.

NAN

What do we do now?!?

Nan and Ulysses have nowhere to go.

Then the still-alive Whale opens its GIANT MOUTH.

Nan and Ulysses look at the Ghost Crew, coming through the
broken door. Then each other.

Nan holds her hand out. Ulysses grabs it. And together they
CLIMB into the Whale's mouth.

The Whale closes its mouth just as the Crew rush in the room.

INT. ROTTING WHALE MOUTH - MOMENTS LATER

Uly lights another match, illuminating the inside of the
Whale's cavernous BELLY.

NAN

Um. Okay. Now what?

Uly shrugs and waves the match around the STOMACH-CHAMBER.

They see a SMALL WOODEN SKELETON with a LONG NOSE.

ULYSSES

Hunh. Son of a gun.

But then Nan points upward to a TINY PINHOLE of light.

NAN
The blowhole!

They feel a glimmer of hope, but don't know how to reach the opening. Uly speaks all around him, to the Whale's stomach.

ULYSSES
Alright, big fella. Here's the deal! You blow us outta here and we promise to smash this motherfucking house to smithereens!

In response, the STOMACH RUMBLES.

Uly and Nan hear, from all around them, a mighty WHALE GROAN, just before being LAUNCHED UPWARD.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

AN UNHOLY EXPLODING SOUND from the bathroom.

Camera pans over to the bathroom door just in time to see Nan and Uly flop down onto the bathroom floor.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Uly helps Nan to her feet. And immediately the HOUSE ITSELF starts to SCREAM AND SHAKE!

NAN
We have to hurry! Now the house knows we're gonna destroy it!

Just then, the bathroom begins to CLOSE IN ON Nan and Uly.

They LEAP out of the bathroom and into the living room just in time to avoid being crushed.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The rest of the house starts to CREAK AND SHUDDER.

The walls rapidly CONSTRICT!

The living room SHRINKS all around them, knocking them off their feet!

The living room becomes A TUNNEL, forcing Nan and Uly to crawl toward the tiny front door on their hands and knees.

The room becomes COFFIN-LIKE! Closing in all around them.

Nan screams as Uly WIGGLES AND WORMS his way forward.

He reaches the miniature front door, PUNCHING AT IT with his fists! But it won't budge!

NAN

Push, baby, push! I know you can
do it!!!

Uly SCREAMS with complete physical and spiritual exertion...

POP!

The little front door opens, and Uly (followed by Nan) lunge toward the tiny square of DAYLIGHT.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - DAY

Uly and Nan SQUIRT out of the house. Flailing on the ground, scrambling to get as far away from the house as possible.

Panting and heaving, Uly looks up and sees a PAIR OF HEAVY WORK-BOOTS inches from his face.

Pan up to reveal MASSHOLE TOMMY standing there. His PICKUP TRUCK parked behind him.

He's looking down on Uly and Nan, confused.

ALPHA MASSHOLE TOMMY

Um. Hey. I just came over because I
was starting to feel pretty rotten
about the way I treated you.

Uly looks up at him. Sees that he's holding a fruit basket.

ALPHA MASSHOLE TOMMY (CONT'D)

I think maybe I was just projecting
all my frustrations onto you. For
years, I've wanted to be a
homeowner, but in this economy it's
just...

Uly springs to his feet, grabs the truck keys out of The Masshole's hand, and SHOVES HIM ASIDE.

Nan joins Uly, and the two of them hop into The Masshole's pickup truck.

Uly settles into the DRIVERS SEAT and revs the engine.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - DAY

We see the house for a brief moment before the pickup truck plows straight THROUGH THE FRONT WINDOW.

Then the truck backs up. And takes another crack.

SMASH! The front of the house CAVES IN.

Tommy Masshole can only stand there with his mouth open.

The pickup truck backs up. And does the same thing again.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Ulysses and Nan (with the Masshole wedged between them) drive the truck down the highway.

THE BUSTED UP RUBBLE OF THE TINY HOUSE is piled up behind them, in the bed of the truck.

ULYSSES

(to Nan)

You know, with a standard-sized
haunted house, a solution like this
just isn't logistically viable.

NAN

That's so true.

We hear sounds from the back. The fragments of the house are STILL MAKING NOISES AND PIECES ARE OOZING BLOOD.

ALPHA MASSHOLE TOMMY

(nervous)

Can you maybe go a little faster
there, buddy?

Ulysses pushes the pedal down and the old pick-up goes faster than it ever has.

EXT. SEASIDE - DAY

Uly, Nan, and The Masshole are dumping all the rubble out of the back of the truck and INTO THE OCEAN.

The bits of reclaimed wood hit the rocky surf and quickly begin to disperse and submerge.

Triumphantly, they kick the last remnants of the house into the water. Then stand back, relieved.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

We see The Masshole's truck drive off back toward town.

Nan and Uly sit on the beach. Exhausted. They watch as the last few bits of the house dissipate into the surf, and the ocean takes the Atrocity back to its home.

As the bits of wood float off, Nan and Uly are surprised to hear what sounds like THE CALL OF A WHALE (though no whale is visible)....

THAAAAANK YOUUUUUUUUUU!

And at the same moment, Nan and Uly look up to see a BIRD FLYING OVERHEAD, flying out to sea.

It's hard to tell for sure, but the bird seems to have plumage of a familiar RED and GREEN. *Fillmore?*

With tears in their eyes, Nan and Ulysses watch the beautiful bird soar away.

ULYSSES

You know, there was a moment back there a few days ago when I was like... MAYBE it has something to do with whales. But I just felt stupid saying anything.

Nan gives him a look. *Really?* Then she takes his hand and they get to their feet and start to walk away.

The first thing when they turn is a CUTESY LITTLE VAN parked on the beach.

A MARRIED COUPLE are having a picnic and the side of the van is open, revealing A CRAMPED LITTLE LIVING SPACE.

Nan and Uly watch as the couple try to repack their picnic lunch remains back into the van. They adorably smack into each other and get in each other's way multiple times.

From a distance, we hear their conversation.

VAN WIFE

After you, Sweetheart.

VAN HUSBAND

No, no. After you, Honey.

After they do-si-do several times, the Van Wife finally scrambles inside their vehicular home.

And before scrambling in after her, the husband looks back and notices Nan and Uly watching them.

He rolls his eyes and gives them a *God help me, I'm gonna kill this broad* look.

Nan and Uly just look at each other, smiling and shrugging, then stroll off hand-in-hand along the beach.

EXT. CRANBERRY COVE MAIN STREET - DAWN

At dawn, a FLATBED TRUCK putters along Main Street.

A KID riding in the back hoists bails of NEWSPAPERS out of the truck. The bundles plop down in front of the storefronts.

EXT. CRANBERRY COVE MAIN STREET - DAWN

Residents pick up these copies of The Masthead, eager to get their weekly issue.

ANGLE ON the FRONT PAGE OF THE MASTHEAD.

The headline reads **CRANBERRY COVE'S TINY HOUSE OF TERRORS.**

And smaller, underneath... **26 CASES OF DOMESTIC MURDER UNDER ONE ROOF.**

And underneath that, the byline... **NAN BRANDYWINE, STAFF WRITER.**

We see GROUPS OF RESIDENTS starting to gather, showing each other the newspaper. Talking excitedly amongst themselves.

But when we come in close and see exactly what all the hubbub is about, we realize that the residents of Cranberry Cove AREN'T buzzing about Nan's expose.

They're pointing excitedly at the QUARTER PAGE ADVERTISEMENT below Nan's article.

GRAND OPENING! THE BRINY DEEP - PICKLE EMPORIUM!

BUY 3 JARS OF VINEGARED GINGER ROOT, GET THE 4TH JAR FREE!

COURTESY OF OWNER/PROPRIETOR ULYSSES BRANDYWINE.

The locals look at each other with the kind of excitement that only comes from the grand opening of a new tourist trap.

END.

POST-CREDITS SCENE:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

We see an OLD JAPANESE COUPLE walking on a beach.

Suddenly, a WOODEN BEAM washes up next to them.

They pick it up, and we see the familiar letters - **S ATROCI.**

JAPANESE WOMAN
(subtitled)
What is this?

JAPANESE MAN
(subtitled)
IDK. Some shitty wood.

But then the beam is snatched from them by a SURFER DUDE.

SURFER DUDE
Not so fast, touristas!

His LA SHIRT and the background tells us we're not in Japan.
We're in California.

The Japanese Couple walk off, muttering.

Surfer Dude watches them, and then looks down at the wood.

SURFER DUDE (CONT'D)
I'm going to carve you into a sweet
hash pipe, my dude.

A GROANING SOUND comes out of the wood.

SURFER DUDE (CONT'D)
Whoaaa.

THE END?!?!?!?