

mother!

FIRE

Everywhere.

We see just a WOMAN'S EYES: defiant... sad... defeated...  
but free...

Her eyes close as everything becomes

WHITE

And from the light a

CHARRED BOOKCASE

Hands place a CRYSTAL FORMATION on a burnt shelf.

They belong to HIM. His eyes torn with misery and sadness.  
He calms down. Closes his eyes. Wishes.

Slowly color repairs the shelf, returning it to an un-burnt  
state.

Now, dawn light reveals glimpses inside a

HOME

Repairing itself from a fire: the front door, a hand rail, a  
window onto the porch, the plaster work along the ceiling,  
the ruffled sheets on a comfortable bed in the

MASTER BEDROOM

They come back to life. A body emerges before us. A young  
woman in that comfortable bed reaching for her man. Empty.  
She turns into camera. This is MOTHER alone, her partner now  
gone.

She sits up and looks around.

MOTHER

Baby?

A moment of concern. She slips on her robe and heads down  
the stairs past a

## STUDY

The door is open but the room is empty. She closes the door and continues down the open

## STAIRWELL

The front door is closed. The dining room is empty. So is the drawing room.

She rushes through the

## HALLWAY

Peeks into an empty bedroom and marches into the

## KITCHEN

She looks out the window. Dawn reveals the rolling hills. No one is out there.

She rushes past the pantry and the dining room and into the

## FOYER

She opens the door, steps out onto the porch, and stares into the blinding morning sun.

She doesn't see anyone. It is chilly, so she quickly turns to head inside and bumps into HIM.

MOTHER

You scared me.

HIM

Sorry. Didn't mean to.

He kisses her. She melts into it. Happy. Nowhere she'd rather be. She sees the dirt on his shirt.

MOTHER

You were outside?

He nods.

MOTHER

Why didn't you wake me?

HIM

I wanted to be alone.

That stings a little. He keeps going.

HIM

I mean, I needed to clear my head,  
get the ideas flowing.

MOTHER

And did they?

His face says it all:

HIM

No.

MOTHER

They will. Don't worry, it'll  
come.

He starts to pull away, doesn't like this kind of talk. She  
grabs him and hugs him hard. Tries for another kiss.

But he pulls away.

HIM

I must stink.

She smiles at him, inviting.

MOTHER

I like it...

HIM

I'd better shower.

He smiles, turns, and leaves. She watches him go to the  
stairs. Something creeps into her bliss. She steps inside  
and closes the front door.

Later in the

DRAWING ROOM

She mixes plaster. A perfectionist when it comes to details,  
she carefully makes sure the tone is the perfect off-yellow.  
But she can't seem to get it quite right.

None of this is a chore. She enjoys every moment. But still  
she is frustrated a bit.

She walks to the blank wall. She puts her hands against it.  
She breathes the scratch coat as she closes her eyes to the



## DARKNESS OF HER IMAGINATION

She hears air breathe between the home's walls, the deep rhythmic beat of its mechanical systems, the fluids flowing through its pipes. We see the house, we see her, we see them. Back in the

## DRAWING ROOM

She looks back at her mixture. She knows exactly what is wrong. She opens a small old wooden box filled with vials of colored powders. She adds some from one filled with a yellowish tint.

As she mixes it a smile creeps in. The color is right. She starts to plaster. Later in the

## KITCHEN

Mother finishes cleaning dishes at the sink. She has just prepared two beautiful plates of food but the kitchen is spotless, there's no mess. HIM enters and reaches for a pair of drinking glasses.

HIM

Can I grab these?

MOTHER

I got it.

He carries the glasses to the table by the windows. He sits down and opens up his napkin. She serves him.

HIM

Perfect. You didn't need to do all of this.

MOTHER

I wanted to. You've been working so hard.

HIM

(sarcastic)  
Yeah, right.

He digs in, barely looking at her. Later, in the

## STUDY

The room is mostly finished. The shelves are filled with autobiographies of all shapes and sizes. One shelf is filled with citations and BRASS awards.

She adds a log to the fire then settles into a comfy chair with a thick book.

HIM stares out the window. An idea comes to him. He goes to his desk and sits down.

She sneaks a peek, hopeful.

He looks at a blank page. Nothing comes to him. He fiddles with his pen and looks at his awards. Then he looks out the window.

She starts to read again.

There's a KNOCK at the front door.

They look at each other. That's strange. She starts to rise but he gets up quicker.

HIM  
(slight concern)  
Wait here.

He heads out of the room. She waits a few moments.

She looks at the papers on his desk. BLANK.

All the pages are BLANK. She heads towards the

## FRONT DOOR

She can't see who it is because the front door blocks her view, but HIM stands listening to whoever is there.

HIM  
Please, come in.

He opens the door wider and MAN enters, sees Mother, and removes his cap.

MAN  
Oh, hello.

MOTHER  
Hello.

HIM

So this gentleman here just started working at the hospital and he thought we were...

(curious, to Man)

What do you do there?

MAN

I'm an orthopedic surgeon.

HIM

Really?

MAN

But mostly now I do research. And teach.

HIM

Research?

MAN

Yes I know, it's bit boring...

HIM

(laughing)

Not boring at all. Sit for a second. Can we get you anything to drink?

MAN

No, that's fine...

MOTHER

Some tea?

MAN

No, I don't want to be a bother.

HIM

You must. A guest, and a doctor, who knows I might trip down the stairs one day.

MAN

Let's hope not.

MOTHER

(smiles)

I'll go make some.

MAN

Thank you.

HIM  
 This way please. Sorry for the  
 mess, we are moving in after months  
 of construction.

Mother heads out of the room.

MAN  
 It's an incredible place.

HIM  
 My wife loves having company.

MAN  
 Your wife? I thought it was your  
 daughter.

She looks back aghast. Buries it, and heads into the

KITCHEN

Behind her, HIM invites Man to sit in the partially finished  
 drawing room.

She turns on the kettle and prepares three cups. One slips  
 and shatters on the floor.

HIM (O.S.)  
 You all right?

MOTHER  
 (barely squeaks)  
 Fine.

But she's not. Her chest tightens -- the space right beneath  
 her STERNUM. Her breaths get shallow. She feels real  
 discomfort.

The house shifts slightly, her reality on fire. She fights  
 to re-find her breath. Some sweat on her brow.

After a moment the pain passes. She cleans up the broken tea  
 cup. She replaces it as the kettle whistles.

Then, she carries everything back to the

DRAWING ROOM

Where Man and HIM sip whiskey.

MAN

...There was this one case, it was an opera singer, late twenties. Her femurs were rotated so far inward that she couldn't spread her knees more than a foot apart.

HIM

Really?

MAN

(to Mother)  
Why, thank you.

Mother lays down the tray.

MOTHER

(re: whiskey)  
You upgraded. Where'd that come from?

MAN

I always carry a supply.

HIM

I've never tasted something like this.

Mother notices the man beam at the compliment.

MAN

(to Mother)  
It's hard to come by. I had to share. Won't you join?

HIM

She's not much of a drinker.

MOTHER

I drink.

MAN

Well here, let me put a little in your tea.

HIM hopes she will. But she decides against it.

MOTHER

(blush)  
I'm fine with tea. Thank you.

HIM laughs and stands up, moving to sit next to Mother, kissing her hand.

HIM

The good doctor here is about to publish a major paper--

MAN

"About" is generous. I still have reams of research to write up.

HIM

And he's moved here to finish it.

There's an awkward silence. Mother fills in the silence.

MOTHER

And what brings you to us?

MAN

Well they told me I could find a room here.

HIM

He thought we were a bed and breakfast.

Mother laughs. A half laugh. After another beat he continues.

HIM

We always talk about how this place is too big for the two of us.

Mother looks at HIM. A pause.

MAN

Well I really should be going, if I'm going to find--

HIM

Nonsense. It's late, stay the night.

MAN

No, I couldn't.

HIM

Please, we'd enjoy the company.  
(turns to Mother)  
Right?

Mother stutters, but covers.

MOTHER

Yes, of course.

MAN  
Are you sure?

HIM  
Positive.

MAN  
Well then, I'll just grab the rest  
of my stuff. That's incredibly  
kind and generous. I just left it--

Man starts to cough as he heads out the door.

HIM  
You all right?

MAN  
I'm fine, just went down the wrong  
tube...

They follow him into the

FOYER

As he exits. Once they're alone, she turns to HIM.

MOTHER  
We don't know him.

HIM  
He's a doctor.

MOTHER  
He's a stranger. We're just going  
to let him sleep in our house?

HIM  
You want me to ask him to leave?

He looks at Mother. She subtly shrugs.

But then, Man returns with a TOTE BAG.

HIM  
Is that all?

MAN  
That's everything.

HIM helps the man and takes the bag.

Man pops a cigarette in his mouth and lights it with a METAL  
LIGHTER.

MOTHER  
Um, we don't smoke.

MAN  
That's smart...

MOTHER  
In the house, I mean.

MAN  
Sorry.

Man flicks the cigarette out the door.

MOTHER  
I'll go get you some linens.

HIM  
I'll show you to your room.

As HIM leads Man to the guest bedroom, Mother heads down into the

#### BASEMENT

Next to the boiler are stacks of moving boxes. She starts to rifle through them to find some sheets and towels.

Then, she hears a RUMBLE from the wall behind the boiler. A strange noise.

She nears the back WALL behind the boiler. She hears the RUMBLE again. She turns on a light and inches closer to the wall.

Then something BANGS against the wall. Mortar dust in the air. She YELPS and stumbles back.

The nearby boiler turns on. This calms her. Must be connected.

Upstairs, she enters the

#### GUEST BEDROOM

The man's bag is there, but they are not. She starts to make the bed when she hears them down the hall.

She follows the voices to the stairwell just beneath the

STUDY

And stops to listen.

MAN (O.S.)  
Oh and this, I love this. How come  
you have so many copies?

A brief pause.

HIM  
Well I wrote it.

MAN  
Oh my. That's you? I'm a huge  
fan.

HIM  
You've read it?

She smiles to herself glowing in HIM's success. She moves

INSIDE

HIM and Man stand before the book case. They notice her.

MAN  
I've read it many, many times.  
Your words changed my life.

HIM smiles with false modesty.

MAN  
I'm sorry, you must hear that all  
the time.

HIM  
Not really, no.

Man spies something else on the shelf.

MAN  
(notices something)  
And that?

He points at the beautiful CRYSTAL FORMATION resting on a  
stand. The same from the opening of the film. It's framed  
boldly in the center of the bookshelf.

MAN  
What is it?

He reaches for it. But HIM reaches quickly to stop him. Then, he carefully takes it down from the shelf himself.

HIM  
Careful, this is very, very delicate. It was a gift.

MAN  
A very special gift. Is it from you?

He looks at Mother.

MOTHER  
No.

HIM doesn't let it out of his hands. He shows it to Man as he cradles it.

HIM  
When I was younger, I lost everything in a fire.

MAN  
I'm sorry.

HIM  
It's hard to imagine what that means. Losing everything. Your memories, your work, even your dirty toothbrush. I didn't even know if I could ever create again. Until, I found this in the ashes. Isn't that remarkable? It gave me the strength to start again.

He holds the crystal. Man holds his breath.

HIM  
And then, I met her.  
(to Mother)  
You...  
(back to Man)  
And she breathed life back into every room.

He carefully sets the crystal back on the shelf. It takes a moment for Man to remember where he is.

HIM  
She re-did all of it.

Man is still thinking about the crystal.

HIM  
Every last detail.

MAN  
(waking up)  
By yourself?

MOTHER  
Mmhm.

MAN  
So you're not just a pretty face.

That's a bit rude. Mother darkens.

MOTHER  
I just came up to say I'm going to  
get ready for bed.

MAN  
I'm sorry, I didn't mean--

Man coughs. The cough gets worse and doesn't let up.

HIM  
You okay? Want some water?

MOTHER  
Are you all right?

Man waves it off and points at his empty whiskey glass.

HIM starts pouring, turns to Mother.

HIM  
I'll be up soon.  
(now to Man)  
You're sure you don't want some  
water?

She retreats.

LATER

In the middle of the night, Mother sleeps. She reaches for HIM, but the bed is empty.

She sits up concerned. The

## STUDY

Is empty. She continues downstairs and smells cigarette smoke. In the

## GUEST BEDROOM

She peeks into the empty room. A glass bowl filled with cigarette butts sits next to his METAL LIGHTER.

She frowns. Then, she hears coughing from the

## GUEST BATHROOM

Standing with his back to her is HIM. He gently strokes the naked back of Man who violently coughs into the toilet.

Mother can't believe it.

MOTHER

Is everything all right?

HIM spins around.

HIM

He drank too much. He'll be fine.

She tries to get a better glimpse of Man. There's something on his back. An open wound maybe?

MOTHER

What is--

HIM

(strong whisper)

Give him some privacy.

The force of the words startle her. Suspiciously, she retreats back into the

## GUEST BEDROOM

Her chest gets tight as she loses her breath. She spots the METAL LIGHTER again.

HIM (O.S.)

Get it out. Let's get it all out.

Passive aggressively, she SLIDES the METAL LIGHTER off the bureau into the gap behind the furniture.

When she gets to the

MASTER BATHROOM

She tries to take a full breath but she can't fill her lungs.

She opens the medicine cabinet. There's a few empty amber bottles. She finds one with yellow powder. She adds it to a glass of water. She drinks the tincture.

Slowly her breath settles. She feels a lot better.

Later in the

MASTER BEDROOM

She crawls back into the empty bed. The next morning in the

KITCHEN

Mother preps breakfast. HIM wanders in, rubbing sleep from his eyes. He kisses her forehead.

HIM  
Good morning.

MOTHER  
Morning.

HIM  
Smells great.

This makes her grin slightly. He peeks out the window.

MOTHER  
What happened last night?

HIM  
I couldn't sleep. I got so excited.

MOTHER  
From what?

HIM  
His stories. I love the man's mind. It is so inspiring speaking with someone who really appreciates the work.

MOTHER  
I love your work.

HIM  
Of course you do, I know that.

He wanders to the bathroom to relieve himself.

MOTHER  
So is he better?

HIM (O.S.)  
Pardon?

MOTHER  
(louder)  
Is he feeling better?

But there's no answer.

MOTHER  
(louder still)  
Is he all right!?

HIM (O.S.)  
Fine, fine one sec...

She returns to her cooking. She adds some pepper and salt.

She turns to the fridge and nearly SLAMS into Man. She JUMPS.

MAN  
Oh sorry. Just need a light.

Man motions to the stove. She recovers and steps back.

MAN  
Don't worry about it, I'll take it  
outside. Morning.

MOTHER  
Morning. How are you feeling?

MAN  
Wonderful.

Man heads out the back door.

MOTHER  
You're all better?

MAN  
Better?

HIM returns from his piss.

HIM  
Morning!

MAN  
Morning!

HIM  
How did you sleep?

MAN  
Like a baby. Really vivid dreams.  
Must be the air.

MOTHER  
Wait. I'm confused--

The door bell RINGS. Mother looks surprised at HIM.

MOTHER  
Who's that?

HIM  
I'll get it.

MOTHER  
No, don't. I'll get it...

She's already moving to the

FRONT DOOR

On the porch is WOMAN. Suitcase by her side.

MOTHER  
Hello.

WOMAN  
Hello.

There's an awkward pause.

MOTHER  
Can I help you?

Man rushes forward, cigarette still in hand, and hugs Woman.

MAN  
Ah, you made it.

Mother looks to HIM who's just arrived. He raises his eyebrows unsure what to make of it.



MAN  
My better half.

WOMAN  
(re: cigarette)  
Get rid of that thing won't you.

MAN  
I'm not inhaling.

Woman snatches the cigarette from Man and tosses it. They kiss. It lasts a beat too long.

HIM  
Nice to meet you.

WOMAN  
The pleasure is mine.

HIM  
Well, come in...

And they do.

MOTHER  
I didn't realize you were married.

MAN  
Really?

It hangs there. The smoke alarm RINGS.

MOTHER  
Breakfast!

HIM  
I'll grab her suitcase.

Mother rushes back to the

KITCHEN

Where the pan is burnt and smoking. She grabs it. Too hot to touch. She cries out.

Everyone rushes in. Woman sees the smoking pan.

WOMAN  
Oh it's burning.

She grabs the pan as well.

MOTHER

No, don't!

Too late. The woman drops the pan to the floor as she screams. Oil and food splatter across the floor.

WOMAN

Oh sorry.

MOTHER

I got it.

HIM

I'll get the window.

Mother grabs a dishrag and takes the pan. HIM throws open the windows to air out the smoke.

Woman is in pain. Man examines her hand.

MAN

(to woman)

Let me take a look at it.

MOTHER

Are you all right?

WOMAN

I think so.

HIM fans the fire alarm.

MAN

You're okay.

(to Mother)

Ice.

MOTHER

Ice.

Mother grabs some and wraps it in a dishrag.

WOMAN

So stupid.

MAN

It's not bad. It's fine, you're fine.

MAN

(to Mother)

Thank you.

MOTHER

I'm really so sorry.

WOMAN

Oh, don't worry about it. It's very nice to meet you.

MOTHER

Very nice to meet you.

The alarm finally snaps off. Later in the

DINING ROOM

HIM, Man, and Woman all eat. Mother is still bringing some things to the table. Woman plucks a few things off the plates even before Mother puts them down.

MAN

I had given up on romance. I was getting used to being alone.

(to Mother)

Oh thank you.

(Back to group)

But then, it just happened for us. I saw her, and I knew she was the woman I wanted to spend the rest of my life with.

Mother smiles. Man sees it.

MAN

Love at first sight.

WOMAN

Same here.

MAN

(not believing)

Yeah, right.

WOMAN

What? How could I resist this face?

(turns to Mother)

You believe me right?

Mother doesn't know how to answer. She just shrugs and continues to serve breakfast.

HIM

(to Mother)

Sit already.

(MORE)

HIM (CONT'D)  
(jokey to Man)  
So you never had a doubt?

Man shakes his head as Mother sits.

WOMAN  
That's true.

MAN  
(to Woman)  
Did you have any doubts?

WOMAN  
(cheeky)  
No, not a one.

That makes Man chuckle. He smiles.

WOMAN  
You guys understand that kind of  
connection, right? You must. I  
mean you're both so different, must  
have been what pulled you together.

MAN  
You're so beautiful. Come here.

Man pulls Woman's chin. They lock lips. The kiss slips into  
slightly inappropriate tongue.

Mother feels weird. She looks at HIM. He stares at the  
couple.

The woman finally pulls away.

WOMAN  
And then the kids came and screwed  
it all up.

Man laughs.

HIM  
You have kids?

MAN  
Two. Boys.

He pulls out his phone and shares some images.

HIM  
Beautiful.

MAN  
Here, this is my eldest.

HIM  
Let me see.

Man changes the picture and motions to the woman.

MAN  
And then her baby.

WOMAN  
Oh, shut up.

HIM  
Amazing eyes.

Mother smiles. HIM hands the phone back to Woman.

WOMAN  
And you two?

There's an awkward beat.

WOMAN  
You have kids?

HIM  
Not yet. But we want them.

Mother looks at HIM. Really?

WOMAN  
Well what are you waiting for? Why  
not finish breakfast and get to  
it...

HIM eats, doesn't say anything. After an awkward beat,  
Mother jumps in.

MOTHER  
Well, I want to finish the house.  
And he's working on a new piece--

MAN  
So you are writing again. That's  
wonderful.

WOMAN  
Finally, right?

HIM  
Yes.

MAN  
(realizing)  
Oh no. We're in the way? That's  
the last thing in the world--

HIM  
No, no, not at all. You're more  
than welcome to stay here as long  
as you want.

Mother is startled to hear that.

MAN  
That's very kind of you.

WOMAN  
No, we couldn't impose.

MAN  
(to Woman)  
Honey, they've got plenty of room.

The woman looks at her cell phone.

WOMAN  
Speaking of kids do you have a  
phone? I can't get a signal.

HIM  
That's how we like it.

MAN  
You don't need to call him every  
day--

MOTHER  
There's one in the kitchen. I can  
show you.

WOMAN  
No, that's all right.

Woman leads Man out of the room.

MAN  
Can we just relax for the weekend--

WOMAN  
No, honey I just want to let him  
know we're okay...

Alone now, HIM senses Mother's distance.

HIM  
What's wrong?

MOTHER  
Why would you do that without  
asking me?

HIM  
Do what?

MOTHER  
Invite them to stay.

HIM  
I didn't think it was a big deal.

MOTHER  
It's strange.

HIM  
What?

MOTHER  
Did you know he had a wife?

He shakes his head.

MOTHER  
What about your writing?

He sighs.

HIM  
I was actually enjoying not  
thinking about it. But now that I  
am thinking about it, I should go  
and do something about it.

He gets up and heads to work.

She grabs him.

MOTHER  
(getting serious)  
Hey.

He lowers his eyes. Forgiving. She gives him a look. He  
looks back. All forgiven. A simple kiss.

HIM  
I really should work.

He leaves. She's alone. Later in the

## DRAWING ROOM

Mother stands on a bench, plastering the wall above the mantle. She's working her way through the room.

WOMAN (O.S.)  
Lemonade.

Woman enters carrying two glasses of lemonade. They're filled very much to the brim and spilling a bit.

MOTHER  
(playfully)  
Whoops, careful.

The guest puts one glass down but it spills a bit on an uncovered end table.

WOMAN  
Thought you might like some.

MOTHER  
Yes, thank you.

WOMAN  
Secret family recipe.

MOTHER  
Which part? The lemons?

Woman doesn't really get it. She just stares at Mother. Mother goes back to work.

MOTHER  
How's your hand?

WOMAN  
Still stinging.

Mother turns back.

MOTHER  
I'm sorry.

WOMAN  
It's not like it was your fault.  
(a thought)  
You don't have any painkillers do you?

Mother pauses for a moment. Then shakes her head no.

WOMAN  
Are you telling me the truth?

MOTHER  
I really don't have any, I'm sorry.

WOMAN  
Okay.

An awkward pause.

WOMAN  
You're not thirsty?  
She nods towards the lemonade.

MOTHER  
Right.  
Mother steps down, picks up her glass, and takes a sip.

MOTHER  
Now I get it. Strong.

WOMAN  
I'm on my second. I can't believe  
you did all this work yourself.

MOTHER  
Why not?

WOMAN  
It's a lot.

MOTHER  
Well, we spend all our time here.  
I want to make it paradise. And I  
love the work.

WOMAN  
And it's exquisite.

MOTHER  
Thank you.

WOMAN  
Would you take me on a tour?

MOTHER  
Sure.

Mother starts to lead her away, but the woman grabs her  
shoulder.

WOMAN

I want to thank you for your hospitality. Your husband has been so generous.

MOTHER

(after a pause)

You're welcome.

After another awkward pause.

WOMAN

Well, where to begin?

Mother follows her into the

STAIRWELL

And points up towards the skylight.

MOTHER

Well this was probably the hardest part. There was so much damage. The treads were gone, the railing, even the skylight. So I had to get a lot of new material but I tried to save as much--

WOMAN

Isn't that a lot harder than just starting fresh?

MOTHER

How do you mean?

WOMAN

Well, why didn't you just build a new house?

MOTHER

It's his home.

WOMAN

You really love him.

Mother blushes.

WOMAN

Can I ask you a question?

Mother doesn't trust what's coming.

WOMAN  
 (fishing)  
 Why don't you want kids?

MOTHER  
 Excuse me?

WOMAN  
 I saw how you reacted earlier. I know what's it's like when you're just starting out and you think you have all the time in the world. But you know, you're not going to be so young forever. Have kids. Then you'll be creating something together, that's what keeps a marriage going.  
 (motions to house)  
 This is all just setting.

Mother's guard slips. She chokes up a little.

WOMAN  
 (almost to herself)  
 Oh, you do want them. Is it him?

MOTHER  
 I need to get back to work.

WOMAN  
 Then why did he say... I'm sorry. Was I too forward? I do that sometimes.  
 (trying apologetic)  
 Every relationship has its issues, and when there's a full generation between you, I can only imagine.

Mother doesn't know what to say. The tipsy woman gets distracted by a glimpse of the study up the stairs.

WOMAN  
 Is that where he works?

MOTHER  
 That's private.

WOMAN  
 (mischievous)  
 Oh, can't you just give me a peek?

Woman doesn't pay her any mind and keeps heading for the study. Mother grabs her arm.

MOTHER  
 (too strong)  
 He doesn't like anyone being in  
 there without him.

Woman looks at the tight grip.

WOMAN  
 Wow, you really do love him. God  
 help you.

They are interrupted by laughing. HIM and Man emerge from  
 the guest bedroom.

MOTHER  
 Where are you going?

HIM  
 I'm going to take him outside.

MAN  
 Going on a hike.

MOTHER  
 A hike?

MAN  
 (smiles at Woman)  
 Me, on a hike?

HIM  
 Just a quick one.

WOMAN  
 Go slow.

MAN  
 Slow enough so my smoke doesn't  
 burn too quickly.  
 (encourages against it)  
 You don't want to come?

Still, Mother lights up, but:

WOMAN  
 No, we have laundry to do.  
 (to Mother)  
 You'll show me where right?

There's an awkward pause. In the

## BASEMENT

Mother and Woman walk down the stairs.

WOMAN

The boys have bonded don't you think? Mine's not usually such a nature boy.

(sees the unfinished room)

Wow, guess you haven't quite gotten to this part yet.

She carries a bag of dirty clothes. It's heavy and she drops it.

WOMAN

So heavy.

(noticing)

That's a lot of tools.

MOTHER

I'll get it...

Mother lifts the bag up and carries it to the washer and dryer. The woman follows.

WOMAN

Which is which?

MOTHER

On the left.

Woman opens the loaded washing machine and dumps out Mother's wet clothes onto the floor.

MOTHER

Wait, let me. I'll help you.

Mother starts to load the wet clothes into the dryer. Woman stops aghast.

WOMAN

Oh no. So that's the problem.

MOTHER

What?

Woman holds up a pair of Mother's very boring panties.

WOMAN

You're going to have to try harder than this.

Mother yanks them away.

WOMAN

Believe me, when they get older,  
you gotta keep it interesting.

She laughs as she shows her own panties in the dirty pile.  
Very sexy.

MOTHER

He's not that old.

WOMAN

How's it going in that department?

MOTHER

I don't feel comfortable talking  
about that stuff.

WOMAN

I'm just trying to help. I mean,  
look at you. If he's not all over  
you, it's either because of his  
age, or...

She drifts off.

MOTHER

Or what?

WOMAN

(switches course)  
You know what, forget it. It's  
none of my business. I think this  
has gone to my head.

She motions to the lemonade.

MOTHER

No. It's okay. Say what you were  
going to say.

WOMAN

No, seriously. Obviously he still  
loves you.

She gulps down the rest of her lemonade. She grabs Mother's  
mostly untouched glass.

WOMAN

I'm going to freshen these up.

Woman leaves. She never started the wash.

Mother sees the woman's panties hanging half out of the washer. She tosses them behind the machines and starts the wash.

She looks at her dirty hands. Goes and washes them in the slop sink.

She looks at the wall that scared her earlier. In the

#### KITCHEN

The woman is not there. But she's made a huge mess making the lemonade. Mother sighs. She walks towards the

#### GUEST BEDROOM

But it's empty.

#### MOTHER

Hello?

No answer. She hears water running in the bathroom. She moves to turn it off.

But trips on something. She looks down and finds the man's open tote bag in the middle of the floor.

She flips the light on in the

#### GUEST BATHROOM

And turns off the water. There are tissues sprayed with blood on the sink.

She picks them up with her fingertips and drops them in the toilet.

She flushes the toilet. She washes her hands and notices the toilet is clogged. The toilet water rises towards the rim.

Quickly she grabs the plunger.

She jabs it into the bowl. Just in time, the water starts to recede.

But, she notices something poking out from the bottom of the bowl. Something she's never seen before. It is a fleshy, bony mass.

She uses the wooden end of the plunger to prod it. It opens up revealing blood, pus and ribs. Before she gets a clear look, it is sucked down the drain.

She stumbles away and drops the plunger.

Her breath starts to tighten. Her chest hurts. She stumbles back into the

#### GUEST BEDROOM

And trips on the tote bag again. The bump causes something to shift. Under a sweater is a CEREMONIAL PHOTO of HIM with a decorative frame.

Disturbed she stumbles out into the

#### FOYER

Just in time to see Woman walking up the stairs.

MOTHER

Hey!

Woman enters the

#### STUDY

Where she stares at the crystal.

MOTHER

I told you, he doesn't like anyone being in here without him.

WOMAN

It's amazing. What is it?

Mother gets between the woman and the crystal. Woman pushes towards it. Mother has to hold her back.

MOTHER

(getting anxious)

We really need to leave. Please.

Mother guides her out of the study.

WOMAN

I just want to look at it.

MOTHER

You have to go.

WOMAN

I don't know why you have to make  
such a big deal out of it.

Mother pulls the study door shut as the front door opens.

Man enters, in the midst of a coughing fit.

WOMAN

Oh, they're back.

HIM

This way, I'll get you some water.

Woman, concerned, rushes down to intervene.

WOMAN

Honey? Are you all right? Your  
damn smoking.

In the

PANTRY

HIM offers Man a glass of water.

HIM

Here.

Man nods.

WOMAN

You all right?

HIM

(re: cough)  
Just started.

WOMAN

Come on, let's go get you your  
pills. Look, if I wanted a third  
child...

She pulls her husband through the kitchen into their bedroom.  
Mother is not happy.

HIM

(to Mother)  
That was intense. You're not going  
to believe what he just told me--

Mother ignores him. She sees him leaning on the sink.

MOTHER

That sink's not braced yet.

HIM

What? Is something...

She doesn't stay to listen. Rudely, she turns and walks into the

STAIRWELL

He chases her down.

HIM

Hey wait, something happened?  
What? What is it?

She pulls him to a more private spot in the

DINING ROOM

Whispering she says:

MOTHER

He has one of those pictures of you  
in his luggage.

HIM

What were you doing in their  
luggage?

MOTHER

That's not the point. He didn't  
just "stumble" on us. He's a crazy  
fan.

HIM

I know.

MOTHER

Excuse me?

HIM

That's what he told me on our walk.  
He's dying. That's why he came  
here. He wanted to meet me before  
he's gone.

That gives her pause.

MOTHER  
 Why didn't he tell us that? Why  
 lie?

HIM  
 I don't know. He's a proud man. I  
 admire that.

Just then, right above them, they hear a crash. HIM's face  
 goes slack. He runs up to the

STUDY

Mother on his heels. Woman is in the corner guilty. Man  
 stands in front of her scared.

HIM  
 What have you done?

MAN  
 I'm so sorry. We're both sorry.

HIM falls to his knees looking at the remains of his special  
 crystal formation. Mother can tell he's devastated.

MAN  
 I was telling her the story when--

WOMAN  
 It just fell out of my hands,  
 and...

HIM holds up his hand telling them to stop. They don't.

MAN  
 We'll search and find another--

WOMAN  
 We can pay for a new one--

HIM  
 (explodes)  
 QUIET!

His outburst startles them. It startles Mother as well.

They quiet down immediately. HIM points to the door.

Man leads Woman out. Heads bowed they file past Mother.

HIM carefully picks up all the different shards. He collects  
 them into a small delicate bowl.

He looks over at Mother.

HIM  
I'm sorry I screamed. I just need  
a moment.

She nods ever so slightly, and heads out to the

HALF LANDING

The couple watches from the bottom of the stairs.

MAN  
It was an accident.

MOTHER  
I think it's best if you leave.

WOMAN  
We said we were sorry.

MAN  
(whispering)  
Honey, don't antagonize--

WOMAN  
(under her breath)  
What more do you want?

Mother stares at them. The man gets it and they retreat towards the guest bedroom.

In the study, HIM finishes collecting the shards. Then, he sticks his hands into the bowl, into the glass. Slowly, he makes two tight fists.

Glass cuts into his hands. Mother GASPS. He turns and sees her.

HIM  
Please. Please!

She shuts the door. Her breath tightens. Her sternum hurts. She tears up. She fights to take a breath. She marches down to the

GUEST BEDROOM

The door is open a crack. She peeks in. Man and Woman are making out hard.

Things are heated. Mother stares. Man has his hands down Woman's panties and fingers her. She catches Mother's eyes and maybe grins. Naughty.

Mother spins away. Her chest tightens more. The house shifts slightly, her reality on fire. She charges up to the

#### MASTER BATHROOM

And drinks some yellow powdered tincture. Its glow calms her. She heads down to the

#### HALF LANDING

She knocks. No answer. Then, she hears footsteps approach. HIM slips out of the study and shuts the door.

With his bloody fist, he SMASHES the door knob off.

Frightened, she watches him walk upstairs. The knob rolls through the spindles and slams into the ground floor. She follows it down to the

#### STAIRWELL

She picks it up and places it onto the hallway bureau. She stands there confused. Then, she makes a decision. She heads down into the

#### BASEMENT

She grabs the laundry bag and throws the unwelcome guests' wet clothes into it. She takes the garbage bag of clothes back upstairs to the

#### STAIRWELL

She hears it first, then sees HIM in front of his study nailing plywood over the study door.

MOTHER

What are you doing?

He keeps hammering nails into the wall.

MOTHER

What are you doing!?

He turns and looks down on her.



HIM  
They will never get in here again.

MOTHER  
Well don't worry, I'm kicking them  
out.

He grins, a slight ambiguous grin.

HIM  
Where will they go?

Odd comment. She doesn't understand it. He turns and  
continues nailing the new wall.

Frustrated, she bangs on the door to the

GUEST BEDROOM

Wearing just a bra, Woman stands in the doorway.

WOMAN  
Need something?

Man is in the bathroom having a coughing fit.

Beat.

MOTHER  
Are you ready?

WOMAN  
What do you mean?

MOTHER  
We want you out.

WOMAN  
We? Or you?

MOTHER  
I've tried very hard--

WOMAN  
(interrupting)  
Yeah, well look, I have to check on  
my husband.

Woman shuts the door in her face. Mother knocks on the door.  
She tries the knob. It's locked. Pissed and confused.  
Then, someone is in the foyer.

YOUNGER BROTHER (O.S.)  
Hello? Hello, where is everybody?

Mother startles, turns. A silver-tongued ne'er-do-well, Man and Woman's second child, the YOUNGER BROTHER pushes into the

FOYER

Mother approaches him. She looks for HIM but he is no longer on the half landing.

YOUNGER BROTHER  
(taken with Mother's  
beauty)  
Oh, hey. Hey, who're you?

MOTHER  
Who are you? What are you doing  
here?

The stranger gets a little too close.

YOUNGER BROTHER  
(hides a smile)  
What are any of us doing here,  
right?  
(she doesn't bite)  
Where's my mother?

She realizes who he is.

MOTHER  
Oh. Wait here.

Mother heads towards the guest bedroom. He follows behind. Checks out her rear.

YOUNGER BROTHER  
Hey. Nice view.

Mother doesn't appreciate it. Just then, Woman emerges.

MOTHER  
Did you invite your son--

But before Mother can finish, the son rushes into the woman's arms.

WOMAN  
What are you doing here?

YOUNGER BROTHER  
 Mom. I tried calling, but I  
 couldn't get through. There's no--

WOMAN  
 What's wrong?

YOUNGER BROTHER  
 He came to the house and found the  
 will.

WOMAN  
 (shocked)  
 What?

YOUNGER BROTHER  
 Yeah, he's out of control.

Mother is frustrated. Still trying to get them out.

MOTHER  
 I'm sorry, but whatever this is,  
 you're going to have to finish  
 outside.

But they ignore her. A new voice pulls her back.

OLDEST SON (O.S.)  
 (interrupting, screams)  
 Daaad-- DAAAAAAAAAAAAAD--

WOMAN  
 He's here?

YOUNGER BROTHER  
 Oh no.

WOMAN  
 He's here?

Mother sees fear flash across the younger brother and the  
 woman's faces.

MOTHER  
 Who's that?

The OLDEST SON rushes toward his family. Ragged and  
 disturbed, he sees his mom and brother conspiring together.

OLDEST SON  
 (can barely contain his  
 resentment)  
 Ran straight to mommy.

YOUNGER BROTHER

(retreats)

You followed me? What's wrong with you?

WOMAN

You shouldn't be here!

OLDEST SON

Where's dad? Where is he?

(sees Mother)

Who's she? Who are you?

YOUNGER BROTHER

He doesn't want to see you.

OLDEST SON

That's not true. Is he here?  
Daaaad!?

WOMAN

Stop it. You're going to upset him.

The younger brother physically blocks his brother. Their dad arrives from the bedroom.

MAN

Boys, boys, why are you--

Woman rushes to her husband's side. The oldest son whips a thick will out of his pocket and waves it.

OLDEST SON

(to Man)

What is this? Do you know what you signed?

MAN

Of course I do.

As the brothers jostle, Man and Woman start to bicker.

WOMAN

Go lie back down. I'll handle it.

MAN

You said that you told him!

WOMAN

No, honey I didn't say that.

Mother is stuck in the middle of the madness. Fear creeps into her heart as she tries but can't get away.

OLDEST SON  
 (devastated, to his  
 father)  
 You wanted this! How could you?

MAN  
 It's for a good reason son.

YOUNGER BROTHER  
 It's you. It's not him.

Man tries to ease away from his wife, who is trying to dissuade him.

WOMAN  
 Let me talk to him.

MAN  
 No, I'll talk to him.

And Man pushes through to his eldest and holds him.

MAN  
 You're right. I should have told  
 you myself. Okay? And I'm sorry.  
 I was thinking about you. About  
 what's best for all of you.

He leads his older son into the drawing room, the others follow. Mother can finally get past, hurries to the

STAIRWELL

She looks up for HIM but he's nowhere to be seen. Behind her, in the drawing room the family continues to fight.

MAN  
 It's a trust. You have to make a  
 decision as a group before anything  
 can be spent.

OLDEST SON  
 It won't work! I have to get  
 permission from them every time I  
 take a piss?

MAN  
 It will force you to talk. To get  
 along. That's the most important  
 thing.

OLDEST SON  
 She will side with him every time!

MAN

You're not even listening to me!

WOMAN

I just want to support you both.

OLDEST SON

Support me? You just want to tell me what I can and can't do.

WOMAN

That is not fair!

A door SLAMS above. Mother looks up once more and sees HIM watching from three flights up. Mother runs up the

STAIRS

As the family continues to argue downstairs.

OLDEST SON

You never believe in me, or anything I'm trying to do.

YOUNGER BROTHER

Stop whining.

OLDEST SON

See? Don't do this. Dad they hate me.

MAN

Come on. They don't hate you.

WOMAN

We love you. You're our son.

OLDEST SON

Well then treat me like one.

YOUNGER BROTHER

First act like one.

Mother glances down at the family as HIM meets her at the

HALF LANDING

With two buckets of paint. He puts them down.

MOTHER

The sons are here. They just barged in, I couldn't stop them.

HIM

I know.

She follows HIM down the stairs.

MAN

There's more than enough for  
everyone to share.

YOUNGER BROTHER

If you don't waste it all.

OLDEST SON

Shut up!

YOUNGER BROTHER

Here we go again. Losing your  
temper when you don't get your way.

Now, Man sees his hosts arrive at the

BOTTOM OF THE STEPS

And he lowers his voice embarrassed.

MAN

Let's discuss this outside.

OLDEST SON

No, I want to talk about it now!

MAN

Our hosts--

SON

Shut up!

MAN

(trying to quiet him)  
If you need money, I'll give you  
money.

Man pulls out his wallet.

OLDEST SON

I don't want your chump change.

The older son slaps the wallet onto the ground. Woman tries  
to calm him down.

WOMAN

Sweetie...

OLDEST SON  
Don't touch me!

The older son roughly shoves his mom aside. At that, HIM lunges forward and pins the oldest son against the wall.

HIM  
Calm down.

OLDEST SON  
(recognizes him)  
You're the poet? The great writer?  
(serious now)  
You don't know anything!

HIM  
Maybe so.

OLDEST SON  
They lied to me. They're robbing  
me.

HIM  
I don't know the story. Will you  
calm down?

The older son hears the words.

HIM  
Will you?

The older son nods and HIM lets go.

MAN  
Thank you.

HIM motions towards the drawing room.

HIM  
You can sit in there.

Mother looks at HIM alarmed.

MAN  
Good. Now, let's go sit down and  
discuss this.

YOUNGER BROTHER  
No! Mom! Dad's dying and all he  
cares about is his damn money!

The older son leaps on his brother. It explodes quickly.

WOMAN

Stop it!

MAN

Boys stop it!

Man tries to pull his sons apart. The oldest elbows him in the guts.

He goes down coughing up blood, struggling to breathe. HIM rushes to his new friend's side.

YOUNGER BROTHER

Look at Dad, look what you did!

The younger rushes the older and shoves him into the wall. Murder in his eyes he tosses his younger brother onto the floor.

MOTHER

Stop!

WOMAN

Boys! Stop it!

Man coughs uncontrollably. He can't catch his breath. The younger brother spits on his brother and flees. The oldest son throws a chair at him but misses. It smashes into the wall.

MOTHER

Please! NO!

HIM

Can you breathe? Breathe.

The older son lunges after his baby brother who flees past Mother. She pursues them through the

STAIRWELL

The pursuing oldest son grabs the door knob Mother left on the bureau.

MOTHER

Stop!

She follows them into the

## GUEST BEDROOM

The oldest son raises the door knob above his head and bashes the younger brother's head in.

MOTHER

Wait! Stop! Stop it!

Mother SCREAMS. She tries to break it up. She gets shoved and crashes onto her back against a bureau.

The young boy has collapsed on the ground, blood rushes out from his head.

OLDEST SON

Get up. Get up! Get up! Stop faking. Look at me!

Mother gasps. The oldest son looks at her. She tries to back away. He grabs her ankle and pins her against the bureau.

OLDEST SON

It's not my fault. They never really loved me. They always loved him more. They were leaving me behind.

Mother tries to get away.

OLDEST SON

Just tell me you understand! You have to understand.

Mother does understand. The oldest son relaxes, when, from nowhere, HIM lifts the oldest son off the ground and SLAMS his head into a glass vase on the mantle.

The eldest son barely stays on his feet, bleeding from a GASH in his forehead.

HIM

What have you done to your brother!?

Woman rushes in.

WOMAN

What did you do? What did you do?

The oldest son stumbles out of the room nearly knocking into his mom.

OLDEST SON  
 (as he leaves)  
 You did this.

Woman sees her bleeding younger son and screams.

WOMAN  
 Wake up!  
 (to HIM)  
 Do something, help him!

She rushes to her son. HIM kneels next to the boy.

HIM  
 (to Mother)  
 Towels! Towels!

Mother goes for the towels in the

GUEST BATHROOM

The back door slams open. She sees the oldest son stumble out onto the porch and head towards the east.

Mother grabs towels and rushes back into the

GUEST BEDROOM

The younger brother is losing blood fast. His eyes stare off into the darkness.

YOUNGER BROTHER  
 Father? Father,--

HIM  
 (interrupts)  
 The doctor, go get him.

Mother rushes to the

FOYER

Man is just getting to his feet.

MOTHER  
 Come quick. He's bleeding!

MAN  
 What? What's happening?

MOTHER  
He's bleeding!

HIM enters the room carrying the bleeding boy.

WOMAN  
It's bad. Really bad.

MAN  
What happened?

HIM  
He's not waking up.

Man examines his son on the move.

WOMAN  
Careful, don't drop him.

MAN  
Keep his head up.

HIM looks at Mother as he moves.

HIM  
I'll call you from the hospital.

MOTHER  
No, no please stay with me.

MAN  
Please, we need him.

HIM  
Lock the doors, I'll be back as  
soon as I can.

MOTHER  
Please don't leave me.

HIM just looks at Mother, doesn't say anything and leaves the house, leaving her alone.

The sun hangs low in the sky

OUTSIDE

We see the entire home. Mother alone on the porch. It's the first time we've seen the exterior. Back at the



## FOYER

Mother shuts the door. She locks it. There's blood on the handle.

Mother goes to the

## BACK DOOR

And locks it. She looks at her hand. It's bloody. She looks at the empty house. As night sets in the

## KITCHEN

Mother stares at the disappearing woods. An INSECT knocks against the window trying to get out. It dies on the ledge just an inch from freedom. Now in the

## GUEST BEDROOM

She ties back her hair as she stares at the bloody floor.

Later, wearing dish gloves she mops up the blood with rags. There's still a stain. She'll need clean water. She dumps the rags into a bucket. She carries the bucket into the

## GUEST BATHROOM

Where she empties the bucket in the tub and starts refilling it with hot water. She pulls off a glove, wipes her brow. She touches the wall, closes her eyes, slips into the

## DARKNESS OF HER IMAGINATION

She feels the house, her hands, her feet. The sound of the running faucet fades away. She feels the house, the house feels her. She is all of it and she feels it shrinking away. This alarms her. She opens her eyes back in the

## GUEST BATHROOM

Mother turns off the tap. She moves deliberately into the

## GUEST BEDROOM

Goes to the bloody floor. She touches it. The wood is rotten, crumples apart. She grabs a lamp and shines it into the hole.

She sees something. She opens the hole a bit bigger and sees blood pooled on the back of the basement ceiling.

She heads down into the

## BASEMENT

She flips on the light. Blood fills up the bare bulb and it bursts. Total darkness.

She's prepared. There's a flashlight on a nearby ledge.

She flips it on. Blood drips from the ceiling.

A blood stain stretches out from the hole and travels down the wall behind the boiler. The same wall she heard noises from.

The blood forms the outline of a rounded portal, the mysterious wall.

She grabs a WRENCH and moves to the blood stain.

She uses the wrench to test the edges of the door-shape formed by the stain. They are rotten. She pushes on it. It starts to move. The whole stone piece, the shape of a tombstone, opens to reveal a

## HIDDEN CELLAR

A gust of wind blows out. Some dust comes with it.

She peers into the dark room.

Inside is the huge oil tank for the house.

And then, a lone TOAD hops out from the darkness. It hops towards her. She slides out of the way as it hops into the basement and under the boiler.

She looks under the boiler. It's gone. Strange.

Then, she hears GLASS BREAK upstairs. Scared, she listens in silence. There are footsteps.

Clutching the wrench, she heads upstairs to the

HALLWAY

Nothing moves. She peers into the

KITCHEN

Still nothing. Then she notices the

BACK DOOR

Is open. She sneaks towards the pantry to get a better view. Broken glass from a broken pane on the floor. The ceremonial photo of HIM's face, ripped into pieces.

Footsteps CREAK behind her. She turns to the

FOYER

And reveal the oldest son watching her. She YELPS. He looks at her.

OLDEST SON

They left you all alone? You do understand.

He picks up his dad's wallet, walks out the front door and disappears into darkness.

OLDEST SON

Good luck.

After a beat she runs to the

KITCHEN

To call the police.

911 (ON PHONE)

911, what's your emergency? What's your emergency?

The back door is open. She spins. It's HIM out of breath. She runs into his arms in the

PANTRY

He looks at her.

HIM  
Are you all right?

MOTHER  
He was here.

HIM  
I know. The police brought me  
home. They'll find him don't  
worry. Did he hurt you?

He hugs her. They take a few breaths.

MOTHER  
No.

HIM  
No? Okay, sit. Let me get you  
some water.

He goes into the

KITCHEN

Brings back the water.

HIM  
Here. It's okay. It's all right.

MOTHER  
What happened at the hospital?

HIM  
I was holding the boy's hand when  
he died.

MOTHER  
That's awful. Are you all right?

HIM  
I'm exhausted.

He looks at his bloody shirt.

HIM  
I need a hot shower. Will you  
come?

She follows him down the

HALLWAY

But when she passes the

GUEST BEDROOM

She pauses.

HIM

What is it?

MOTHER

I'll be up in a minute.

HIM

You sure?

MOTHER

Yeah.

Mother goes to the bloody hole in the floor. She pulls a carpet over it, covering the bloody stain.

By the time she gets up to the

MASTER BEDROOM

HIM, wrapped in a wet towel, is out cold on the bed.

LATER

She sleeps. A distant door SLAMS. It wakes her and she sits up. What was that? HIM is fast asleep next to her.

She hears VOICES downstairs. From the

SECOND FLOOR LANDING

Three STRANGERS in black pass under her. Two females and one male.

Nervous, she starts to head back for help when she spots Man and Woman enter. He is distraught and leans heavily on the MOURNER.

MOURNER

In here?

WOMAN

Yeah, straight ahead in the kitchen.

Mother rushes back to the

MASTER BEDROOM

But the bed is empty.

She turns. HIM emerges from the bathroom, belt open, shirt just being put on.

HIM

They came back quick.

MOTHER

What are they doing here?

HIM

They had nowhere to go, so I told them it would be all right to invite some friends and family. I'll go deal with them.

As he leaves, tucking in his shirt, her breath starts to thin. She feels a pain in her chest. She swallows the pain and follows him down the stairs into the

DINING ROOM

HIM holds Woman. She's stoic and numb.

HIM

I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry for your loss.

Meanwhile, Man is hysterical. The Mourner helps him to a chair.

Woman glances at Mother.

MOTHER

I'm so sorry.

Woman turns and goes to her husband. HIM puts his hands on the man's shoulder.

A friend, the CUPBEARER, starts pouring shots.

CUPBEARER

Shall we have a toast?

Man just cries.

WOMAN

(whispers to HIM)  
Would you say something? He so respects you.

HIM

Of course.

HIM nods as the Cupbearer distributes glasses. He hands one to Mother.

HIM

How can one begin to understand your pain? The sacrifice of a parent? All those years of worry. Years in days. Days in hours. Hours in seconds. But in each second, an infinite amount of love.

Woman rubs her husband's shoulders.

HIM

And now, suddenly it seems there is nothing to love. Just a vast and silent darkness. But fear not, from inside it, there's a voice crying out to be heard, loud and strong. Just listen...

And for a moment everyone is silent. Then Man starts to cry. So do the mourners. In a moment, everyone is crying.

HIM

Do you hear that? Do you hear that? That is the sound of life, that is the sound of humanity. That is your son's voice. His cry of love. His love for you.

Woman takes HIM's arm.

WOMAN

Thank you.

HIM

My pleasure.

CUPBEARER

Here! Here!

EVERYONE

HERE! HERE!

Everyone shoots. The Cupbearer looks at Mother who still holds her drink. She follows through and downs the drink.

WOMAN

Thank you all for coming here and being with us tonight. My husband and I are so touched. We lost our baby today. I can't believe that just a few hours ago he was standing there and I was holding him in my arms. He was so full of life. He always was...

There's a knock at the door. Mother looks at HIM. He nods to her. She goes to the

FRONT DOOR

SIX GRIEVERS file in. They say hello and Mother welcomes them. They shed jackets and Mother hangs them before joining everyone in the

DINING ROOM

Woman continues her toast. She glances through Mother with empty eyes.

WOMAN

It means so much. I don't know what else to say. I just want to thank our dear host for his hospitality in our time of need.

HIM

Of course.

WOMAN

(to HIM)

So please, I'd like to drink to your kindness.

Everyone raises glasses and drinks. Man stands up.

WOMAN

Sweetheart, you don't have to do this.

MAN

No, I want to.

He collects himself.

MAN

I loved my son. I loved him. I  
can't believe this. I shouldn't be  
eulogizing him, he should--

And he breaks down unable to continue. Everyone quietly  
drinks. Mother sips.

MAN

I'm sorry, I can't. Would someone  
please...  
(to Mother)  
Would you say something?

Everyone turns to look at Mother. Mother doesn't know what  
to say. After a long awkward beat.

MOTHER

(meek)  
For your child...

HIM helps out.

HIM

For both your children. Let's not  
forget the one still in the  
wilderness. Wherever he goes,  
wherever he is may he find  
kindness, compassion, and one day,  
even forgiveness.

The front door opens. Mother looks. Another five people  
enter, including the PHILANDERER.

HIM

Welcome, please join us.

PHILANDERER

I'm just gonna put this in the  
kitchen.

HIM

Yes, through there.

Mother looks on in disbelief. Concerned, she follows the  
Philanderer into the

PANTRY

The room is half full with people drinking and talking. The  
Philanderer joins the CONSOLER who is sitting on the counter  
next to the sink.

PHILANDERER  
Hey, how you doing?

CONSOLER  
Good, considering.

MOTHER  
Excuse me. Could you get down from there? That sink's not braced yet.

They nod and get down, apologizing.

Someone steps on the glass pane from the broken back door. Mother quickly sweeps it up.

The Cupbearer enters.

CUPBEARER  
That was so beautiful, no?

He hugs her. Mother is taken aback.

CUPBEARER  
It's all right. Can I use your phone?

MOTHER  
Sure it's in the kitchen.

She sees him head the wrong way.

MOTHER  
No, it's just there. Excuse me!

But he's not listening. She follows after him into the

DINING ROOM

Woman pops up right next to Mother. She's smoking.

WOMAN  
Where did you go?

MOTHER  
I was just in the... I'm really sorry again.

WOMAN  
I know you are.

It's loaded. Mother tries to change the subject.

MOTHER

I can't imagine how--

WOMAN

No. You can't imagine what it feels like if you don't have a child. You give and you give and you give and it's just never enough.

MOTHER

I understand.

WOMAN

Do you?  
(lashes out)  
Why don't you at least put on something decent?

Mother realizes she's wearing a night gown. Embarrassed, she exits to the foyer, where the pain in her chest starts again. She sees more guests arriving, rushes up the

STAIRS

And sees the Cupbearer grab the DAMSEL and duck into the

MASTER BEDROOM

MOTHER

Hey!

Mother pushes inside. And finds them sitting on her bed.

MOTHER

You can't be in here.

CUPBEARER

I'm sorry?

MOTHER

You need to leave.

CUPBEARER

We'll just be a minute.

MOTHER

This is our room.

That makes him smile. But he backs away and exits.

CUPBEARER

It's your room.

(to Damsel)

Come on, let's find another spot.

Mother shuts the door.

Her chest tightens more. She fights for breath. She goes into the

MASTER BATHROOM

At the medicine cabinet she drinks some yellow powder. In a moment, she feels better.

She starts to change her clothes. The WANDERER pushes open the door.

WANDERER

Oh.

MOTHER

(embarrassed)

Excuse me!

WANDERER

Just exploring.

He ducks out but doesn't shut the door. She gets up and shuts it. Later, in the

MASTER BEDROOM

She's finished getting dressed and exits into the

HALLWAY

Where the IDLER and the STRAGGLER talk on the stairs.

MOTHER

Excuse me, could you please go downstairs?

STRAGGLER

This way?

MOTHER

Yes.

IDLER

Sure.

She follows them down past the

#### HALF LANDING

The boards that HIM used to seal the office are now painted white.

Curious, Mother touches the wood. It's still wet. She gets paint on her hand. Quickly now she rushes down the

#### STAIRWELL

Where the Cupbearer uses a roller on a stick to paint the bottom side of the stairs.

MOTHER

What are you doing?

CUPBEARER

Oh it's no big deal. I worked my way through college doing this.

MOTHER

But why are you painting my house?

The comment makes him smile.

CUPBEARER

Well, he's been so kind to everyone, it's the least we could do.

We? She turns around and sees the Damsel painting in the drawing room.

MOTHER

Stop! Both of you! Stop.

They look at her strangely.

CUPBEARER

No problem.

They put down their brushes. Frustrated, she moves quickly into the

#### DINING ROOM

Where HIM holds court. He's with a room full of people smoking and drinking. He bangs on the table, animated and filled with excitement.

HIM  
 Of course, what's mine is yours!  
 (spots her)  
 There you are! My goddess! Come  
 here, sit. You've got to hear  
 these stories. They are--

She pushes through the crowd to HIM.

MOTHER  
 All these people.

HIM  
 I know. They're just letting off  
 steam.

MOTHER  
 They're painting our house.

The drunk ATTENDANT laughs HYSTERICALLY. He falls back in  
 his chair and knocks over a glass, spilling wine everywhere.

MOTHER  
 I got it.

Mother grabs napkins, mops up the spill. She weaves between  
 guests with the sopping towel into the

PANTRY

Where the PHILANDERER and the FOOL sit on the sink.

MOTHER  
 Please get down from there.

FOOL  
 Sorry. Excuse me.

And they do. Then whisper quietly about Mother.

PHILANDERER  
 What's her problem?

FOOL  
 I don't know.

Mother tosses the napkins into the sink. She grabs the  
 overflowing trash towards the kitchen. But, she's cut-off by  
 the suave ADULTERER.

ADULTERER  
 Hey we haven't met. I've known the  
 family for years. And you?

MOTHER  
This is my house.

That gets a smile out of the Adulterer. He looks at Mother in a strange way, like she's insane.

ADULTERER  
Well, it's a beautiful home. You want to take a walk?

MOTHER  
What?

ADULTERER  
A walk. With me.

MOTHER  
No. No.

She spots the Philanderer and Fool, back up on the sink.

MOTHER  
Please--

ADULTERER  
You know what take my number.

Mother turns back towards the Adulterer.

MOTHER  
No, I don't want your number.

ADULTERER  
Now why would you say that? You don't even know me.  
(takes out his phone)  
Let me give me your number.

She presses for the kitchen. The Adulterer grabs her arm.

MOTHER  
Let go of me.

ADULTERER  
Why?

MOTHER  
Because I don't know you.  
(to the people on the sink)  
Get down from there.

PHILANDERER  
From where?

ADULTERER

But you see you should, because you don't know what I can do for you.

MOTHER

I don't want anything from you.

ADULTERER

Sassy.

MOTHER

Leave me alone.

ADULTERER

You know what get out of my face.  
You're an arrogant cunt.

She's stunned by his words and shoots him an angry look. Mother turns back towards the sink, where the sink-sitters have started to bounce on the counter. It holds.

FOOL

See, there's nothing wrong with it.

PHILANDERER

It's really okay.

They keep bouncing.

MOTHER

No, stop doing that! Don't do that!  
Stop!

Then, there's a loud CRACK, and the sink fully collapses.

The pipes in the wall behind the sink rip through the wall. Bigger mains in the ceiling collapse through.

Water sprays down on everyone. The crowd screams. Mother snaps.

MOTHER

Get OUT! GET OUT! All of you.

People start to head towards the door.

HIM, soaked, rushes in against traffic.

HIM

What happened?

Mother can barely answer.

MOTHER  
They won't listen!

HIM  
It's all right we'll fix it, it can  
be fixed.

He turns from her to try and stop everybody from leaving--

HIM  
(finds Man, grabs his  
shoulder)  
Please, don't go. Don't go. We'll  
turn it off.

MAN  
It's been an honor. And we'll  
never forget all you've done for  
us.

HIM  
Where will you go?

Man pulls away from HIM. Woman gives Mother one last look  
before leaving her home. Mother shakes her head as she gets  
soaked by the spraying water. She rushes down to the

#### BASEMENT

Mother finds the water main. Turns it off.

In the dark quiet she hears footsteps of the crowd leaving.  
The front door slams shut. Quiet at last.

Then she heads back upstairs to the

#### STAIRWELL

The front door is closed. The dining room and kitchen are  
trashed.

No sign of HIM. She heads into the

#### KITCHEN

She starts to clean. HIM enters, shoulders sunk.

HIM  
They're gone.

She ignores him.

HIM  
Come, let's go to bed.

She continues to clean.

HIM  
You don't need to--

MOTHER  
Do what? Clean up their mess?

HIM  
We did a good thing. They needed a place to celebrate life. They needed tonight.

MOTHER  
What about what I needed? A boy died here today! I mopped up his blood. And you abandoned me.

She storms away into the

STAIRWELL

He follows her.

HIM  
No. I didn't abandon you. They just lost a son, they lost two sons. I was helping them. This is not about us, it's about them.

She spins.

MOTHER  
No, it's not about them, it's about you. It's always about you and your work. You think that's gonna help you write? Nothing does. I re-built this entire house, wall to wall, you haven't written a word.

HIM  
(snaps; bellowing)  
I know! I know! I'm sorry. I can't. I can't write. I can't think. All I'm trying to do is bring life into this house.

He charges to the front door and flings it open.

HIM

Open the door to new people. New ideas. You think you can't breathe? I'm the one who's suffocating here. While you pretend that nothing is wrong.

(mocking)

"Everything will be all right."  
 "Everything will be good." "You'll be fine." You know what? Life doesn't always work out the way you want it to.

MOTHER

You're right. Mine certainly didn't.

HIM

Excuse me?

MOTHER

You talk about wanting kids, but you can't even fuck me.

She rushes away from him up the

STAIRS

A flash of anger bursts through HIM. He grabs her hard and tries to kiss her. She fights him off. He keeps at it. Slowly, she stops fighting. Instead she grabs him.

They kiss hard. Real fucking hard. She devours him. He devours her.

He lifts her off of her feet and carries her up the stairs. Raindrops splatter on the skylight. And everything dissolves into

WHITE

In the morning, she wakes. Blissful. He lies next to her, holding her side.

She is content. Fully present.

She takes a deep breath. That makes her curious. She feels something. No actually she feels the ABSENCE of something.

She takes a DEEP breath. She smiles. Touches her chest. Takes another breath. She realizes something. Happiness floods her.

MOTHER  
I'm pregnant.

She turns to HIM.

MOTHER  
I'm pregnant.

HIM  
Huh?

MOTHER  
We're going to have a baby.

He chuckles.

MOTHER  
I'm serious.

HIM  
(sobering)  
How could you know?

MOTHER  
Because I know.

She looks deep into his eyes. He looks back.

MOTHER  
I'm pregnant.

She starts to cry. Tears of happiness. He believes her.  
Tears well up in his eyes and he hugs her.

HIM  
A baby?

MOTHER  
Are you happy?

HIM  
Happy? The most beautiful gift...

And then, he is lost in a thought.

MOTHER  
What?

He flies out of bed naked and rushes for the desk. He ransacks it for a piece of paper. Finally finds a scrap. But there's no pen, he dumps the drawer.

HIM  
Pen... Pen... Pen...

Then, he practically rolls down the stairs. Mother, confused, follows after him. She finds him in the

DRAWING ROOM

On his ass, leaning over the coffee table, scribbling away.

MOTHER  
What are you doing?

He looks up, as if from a dream.

HIM  
(obviously)  
I'm writing.

MOTHER  
What?

HIM  
Writing. Last night. Those people, their pain. Their love behind the pain. And then, you. Us. And now, that...  
(he points at her belly)  
Life.  
(nods to himself)  
It's come to me. I know what to say, I have to find the words. That's all.

She smiles. Happy to see him inspired.

MOTHER  
Amazing. I don't want to interrupt, I'll just get started on the apocalypse.

She turns to leave. HIM looks up.

HIM  
Hey. I love you.

She smiles. Turns to look at the mess and sighs. Later in the

MASTER BATHROOM

Mother stands before the toilet. She holds the yellow tincture in her hand. She dumps it all into the bowl and flushes it.



She exits the frame for the first time because now it is

#### FIVE MONTHS LATER

Mother, five months pregnant and showing, steps into the guest bedroom, which has been converted into a

#### NURSERY

She moves through the room, putting away diaper cloths and other baby paraphernalia.

Her eyes are drawn to the floor where the rotten wood has been replaced with a patch of new unstained boards. After a beat, she covers it with the carpet.

She sneaks a peak into the drawing room, where HIM writes at a makeshift desk, deep in concentration. The walls around him are covered with calligraphy sketches and ideas. The doorknob is on his desk. She retreats through the

#### GUEST BATHROOM

Which has been painted and converted into a baby's bathroom. Then she enters the

#### KITCHEN

She opens the fridge to make a sandwich when she feels the baby kick. She yelps with surprise.

She pulls up her shirt. The baby elbows the inside of her FIVE MONTH belly. Her eyes go wide.

MOTHER

(to herself)

It moved...

(to HIM)

It moved!

She rushes to the

#### STAIRWELL

To tell HIM but the drawing room is empty. Then, she spots him standing in the

OPEN DOORWAY

Staring into the wilderness outside.

MOTHER

What is it?

He turns and sees her. A look she's never seen before is on his face. Her happiness turns into concern.

Slowly he looks down at his hands. She follows his eyes. In his hand is a page with words: the poem.

MOTHER

(she knows)

Is that it?

She steps towards him in the

FOYER

He barely believes it himself.

HIM

I finished it.

MOTHER

May I?

He hands the poem to Mother. A single sheet of paper.

She sits on the

STAIRS

She gives him one last look and reads. Slowly, as the words enter her we see images from

OUTSIDE

HIM alone. He stands in a desolated field with the remnants of his burnt home.

He reaches for someone. Mother emerges and takes his hand. They are younger and newly in love.

She is smitten with him. And he with her.

As they clasp hands, the charred ground and the burnt house begin to rejuvenate with new life.



Back to Mother on the

STAIRS

She starts to cry.

MOTHER  
It's beautiful.

He holds her.

HIM  
Really? Why are you crying?

MOTHER  
It's just a lot.

HIM  
You think it's good?

MOTHER  
It's perfect.

HIM  
Then? What's going on?

She can barely ask:

MOTHER  
Am I going to lose you?

HIM  
(very serious)  
Never--

And then the phone RINGS. The phone.

He goes to answer it. She's left alone with the poem.

HIM  
Hello? Hi.

She wipes her tears and follows him into the

KITCHEN

He is excited and on the phone.

HIM (ON PHONE)  
Yes. Really? Really?

MOTHER  
Who is that?

HIM (INTO PHONE)  
Wait one moment, give me a  
second...  
(to Mother)  
They loved it!

MOTHER  
Who did?

HIM (INTO PHONE)  
Yeah I'll be here. Standing by...  
Are you there? Hello?

He lowers the phone, thinking a lot.

MOTHER  
Who was that?

HIM  
My publisher.

MOTHER  
She's read it?

HIM  
Yes, of course. Why?

Mother is hurt.

The phone RINGS again. He takes the poem and answers the phone.

HIM  
Yes? Hi again. Press? Well you  
know how I feel about it... I'll be  
here, waiting.  
(a beat)  
The house is great...

Mother, alone again, wanders off. She walks into the

NURSERY

And stares at the room.

She notices the traces of a blood stain on the carpet. She feels it. Dry. Lifts the carpet. There's nothing there but the patched wood floor.

She exits the frame once again because when she returns it is

THREE AND A HALF MONTHS LATER

Mother is extremely pregnant in the

MASTER BATHROOM

Taking a shower. The hot water massages her baby bump. It feels good.

Later, she throws on a robe and uses the hairbrush from her hospital bag. At dusk, in the

KITCHEN

Dressed in an evening gown, she takes a CAKE out of the oven and sets it on the cooling rack. She pokes the cake with a toothpick. It's done.

Outside the window, from the corner of her eye, something rushes by.

She looks. Nothing there. She stares for a moment, just to be sure.

The sun dips behind the distant trees. Night approaches. She heads to the

DINING ROOM

The table has been set for a beautiful meal. She fills the glasses. HIM rounds down the stairs wearing a sports jacket.

HIM

Amazing.

MOTHER

Well, we're celebrating. One day, every copy sold.

He smiles and kisses her.

HIM

You're so beautiful.

She glows in his compliment.

MOTHER

Make yourself comfortable. I'll go get everything.

HIM

Looks delicious. Let me help you.

MOTHER

No. *Sit.*

HIM

No, I'm helping.

MOTHER

Ok, will you bring the bread in?

HIM

All right.

Mother goes into the

PANTRY

As the door closes, the room goes dark and she senses something again.

She flips on the back porch light and JUMPS:

The ZEALOT stands right by the window. Ragged and disheveled he waves at her. He holds a BOUND COPY of the poem HIM wrote.

ZEALOT

No, please, can I see him?

She yelps and runs into the

DINING ROOM

HIM isn't there. She sees him out on the porch. A small populace forms around him. From the

FOYER

She listens as questions rain down on HIM from the crowd.

ZEALOT

Excuse me, I have a question.

MOTHER

What are you doing?

HIM turns, a big look of amazement on his face.

MOTHER

Who are they?

HIM  
(thrilled)  
I don't know.

He doesn't but he's excited to find out. This confuses her more.

HIM  
(to crowd)  
Please, wait.

MOTHER  
What do they want?

He comes up to her.

HIM  
I don't know. They've come here to see me.

Her face barely reacts.

HIM  
Just keep everything warm. I'll be right in.

She has little response.

He turns back to them and nods. The crowd rustles.

HIM  
(gesturing to Zealot)  
You had a question, what is it?

The Zealot steps forward eagerly.

ZEALOT  
As I was saying, we've all traveled a great distance and I feel that these words, I feel like they were written for me.

HIM  
Of course they were.

Mother slowly walks back into the

NURSERY

She paces the room, not sure what to do. Blood soaks up into the carpet. She lifts it up. The blood stain is back.

Disturbed, she returns to the

FOYER

The crowd SOUNDS are much louder. She glimpses out the window. There are scores of people out there.

The Zealot now seems to be in a position of authority protecting HIM, who is the center of attention.

The big crowd surrounds HIM. They clamor for his autograph. They reach to shake his hand. They swoon from his touch. Many snap pictures with their cellphones.

Stunned, she pushes into the doorway. HIM notices her.

HIM

My goddess. Come here.

She shakes her head no. The Zealot rushes over to grab her.

ZEALOT

Come!

MOTHER

No, stay away from me!

HIM

No, please leave her. Thank you.

The Zealot does immediately. HIM comes to Mother.

HIM

They love it. They understand all of it, but it effects every one in a different way. It is remarkable. Come, they want to meet you. Come.

MOTHER

No. I don't want to. I don't want to. Come inside.

HIM

But they've come from so far--

MOTHER

Look at me! I'm about to have our baby. Why is that not enough for you?

HIM

Of course it's enough. I'm not going anywhere. I'm here with you.

MOTHER

I want to be alone with you.



HIM  
I'm with you. Give me a second.

She tears up. He turns back to the crowd. They CHEER again.

She closes the door. Then, after a beat, she locks it. She marches towards the

STAIRS

And sees the SUPPLICANT and her SON in the

DINING ROOM

Rushing into the pantry.

SUPPLICANT  
Come, quick. Just hang in there,  
hold it in.

MOTHER  
Hey!

She cuts them off in the

PANTRY

The uninvited guests stop short.

MOTHER  
Excuse me--

SUPPLICANT  
Do you know where the bathroom is?

MOTHER  
You need to leave.

SUPPLICANT  
Where should I go?

MOTHER  
I don't know, but you can't be in  
here.

SUPPLICANT  
But my son... He...

The Suppliant looks down at her child. He's peeing himself.

MOTHER

Oh. Okay. Come with me.

SUPPLICANT

Thank you so much. I'll come back  
and clean up.

Mother notices the back door is open.

MOTHER

Did you open this?

She closes the back door and locks it.

SUPPLICANT

(to Son)

Okay here we go. Just a little bit  
longer. It's okay, we'll get you  
all dried off.

MOTHER

After you're finished, I really  
need you to go back outside.

She leads them into the

NURSERY

Where the PISSER is just finishing using the toilet.

MOTHER

What are you doing?

PISSER

How about a little privacy?  
Please!

He rushes out the other door where a LINE, a dozen people  
deep behind the LINGERER, snakes into the nursery. She  
follows.

MOTHER

Sir!

LINGERER

I've been waiting a long time.  
Excuse me.

The Lingerer pushes past her and shuts the door. She looks  
at the line and the LOITERER.

LOITERER

Hey wait your turn lady.

Mother turns to the nursery, where the AESTHETE and the EPICURE are taking photos of the blood stain on the floor. It's wetter and bloodier than before.

MOTHER

How did you get in here?

The Aesthete holds a camera up to her.

AESTHETE

Could you get the two of us please?

MOTHER

What?

The Pisser takes the camera.

PISSER

I got it, I got it. Get down right in front of it.

The Aesthete and Epicure pose for a photo next to the bloody hole.

EPICURE

It's beautiful

MOTHER

Don't touch that!

AESTHETE

It's so organic.

MOTHER

All of you need to go outside.

She notices someone lay out a bed roll in the

DRAWING ROOM

Where the acne-scarred DRUNKARD is settling in for the night.

MOTHER

Hey! Sir!

He starts to take off his shoes.

DRUNKARD

I'm just going to lay down for a bit. I don't feel so good.

MOTHER

No, no. You cannot lie down here.

DRUNKARD

Why? Are you staying in here?

MOTHER

I live here. This is my house.

He starts laughing at her as if she's telling a joke.

DRUNKARD

(giggles to himself)

My house. My house. The poet says  
it's everyone's house!

He lays down and closes his eyes. And he's snoring. The front door opens. The Zealot, using HIM's keys, unlocks it. He leads a CONTINGENT OF DISCIPLES into the

KITCHEN

The disciples grab the meal she's made for HIM. They rush the sink and fill water jugs. Mother on their heels.

ZEALOT

Food and drink, my friends.

MOTHER

Hey!

ZEALOT

Oh, this is nice. We've got  
vegetables...

MOTHER

Stop! All of you!

ZEALOT

Check the cabinets. And the  
fridge.

MOTHER

What are you doing?

The Zealot grabs Mother's cake.

ZEALOT

Oh, beautiful!

MOTHER

No, no, that's not for you!

ZEALOT

He said to share.

MOTHER  
But it's not yours!

ZEALOT  
They're hungry and thirsty.

The Zealot hands the cake off to a disciple.

ZEALOT  
Here you go. Now, take the fruit,  
and the cheese and the pickles. Oh  
and get those prickly pears.

Mother closes the fridge and moves into the

DINING ROOM

Where disciples are moving furniture and setting up for a meal. One disciple cuts the cake and hands out pieces.

She sees HIM taking a seat at the table where the DEVOTEE stands with a copy of his book.

DEVOTEE  
Your writing is so beautiful.

MOTHER  
What is this? What are you doing?

He looks at her. Smiles and focuses back on the book in front of him. He signs it for the Devotee.

HIM  
I'm showing them my appreciation.

More people are lining up for autographs and photos. Disciples hang LARGE CEREMONIAL PHOTOS of HIM.

Some FOLLOWERS lounge on the ground staring at him.

Then the HERALD, HIM's publisher, as blingy as she is loud, enters.

She's tailed by two excited ABETTORS carrying stacks of books.

HERALD  
My genius! Look at you. The  
second printing is here! I wish  
you would have told me about this  
turn out.

HIM  
Have you met my--

The Herald spots Mother.

HERALD  
There she is!

She kisses Mother.

HERALD  
The inspiration! All right I have  
to be honest, I was a little  
worried about him being holed up  
here with you.  
(turns towards HIM)  
I was nervous you'd never write  
again.

HIM  
Of course not!

The Herald turns back towards Mother.

HERALD  
But whatever you did it was worth  
it. And look at you. You're ready  
to pop. How are you feeling? Are  
you hot?

Mother is about to answer.

HERALD  
It's hot in here, is it me? It's  
boiling maybe someone could turn-

Just then one of the Abettors holds up an ORNATE EMPTY FRAME.

ABETTOR  
I've got it right here.

HERALD  
(to Mother)  
Will you excuse me?

She inspects the frame.

HERALD  
Let me see it. Oh yes, that's  
exactly what I wanted.

She turns back to HIM.

HERALD  
The original, where is it?

HIM  
(nod to drawing room)  
It's right there, by the desk.

Just then, the Zealot enters from the drawing room, carrying the original poem. A crowd fills in around him.

ZEALOT  
I've got it.

HERALD  
Pardon me.

ZEALOT  
I've got it.

The Herald reaches for the poem.

HERALD  
I'll take that. Thank you.

ZEALOT  
No!

HERALD  
No, it's okay.

ZEALOT  
No, don't touch it!

The Herald grabs his arm. He pushes her away.

HERALD  
It's fine.

ZEALOT  
Don't touch it!

HIM rushes over.

HIM  
What happened? Hey! Hey! Easy, easy.

HERALD  
I'm just trying to put it in this frame.

HIM  
OK, I'll do it. It's all good.  
Let me see the frame.

HIM takes the frame. The Zealot hands him the poem. HIM slips it into the frame.

Mother watches the THIEF grab HIM's pen and a book from the table and slip into the

PANTRY

She grabs a vase sitting on the sink. She slips into the

KITCHEN

Mother chases after her.

MOTHER

Hey! Stop! Give that back.

THIEF

No, I have to have something of his.

Mother snatches the vase away.

THIEF

No!

The Thief lunges for it. They drop it and it SHATTERS.

THIEF

You did it. Now I gotta find something else!

The tone of the room changes. Other DEVOTEES become RANSACKERS. When all of the fragments are gone the ransackers grab whatever they can. Things of value, things that are worthless.

MOTHER

Get out! All of you! Stop! This doesn't belong to you.

Mother picks up the phone and dials 911.

911 (ON PHONE)

911. What is your emergency?

MOTHER

Can you help me?

911 (ON PHONE)

What is your emergency ma'am?

MOTHER  
They're stealing everything.

911 (ON PHONE)  
What is--

The PILFERER snatches the phone from her hand.

PILFERER  
Thank you.

MOTHER  
I was using that...

PILFERER  
(teaching)  
It's all right. Share. Like the  
poet says.

The PLUNDERER grabs the phone. Pulls it out of the wall.

PLUNDERER  
(laughing)  
Yeah, SHARE!

PILFERER  
That's not right.

Several people with various souvenirs rush past her through the hallway as Mother returns to the

#### DINING ROOM

Where HIM is now on his feet in a small circle of autograph seekers - they hug him, have him sign books, and take selfies with him. It's a mix of cheering and crying and shouting. All circling around HIM. A release of love and joy.

MOTHER  
Stop!

The NOVITIATE buries her head into HIM, weeps and won't let go. With gentle hands to her forehead and arm, he pushes her back. But his hands are stained with ink and they leave an INK SMUDGE on her forehead.

Mother pushes through the madness. Someone tries to grab her. She pushes them away, careful to protect her very pregnant stomach.

MOTHER  
Stop! Stop touching him!

Other autograph seekers see the smudge and covet it.

MOTHER  
They're ruining everything.

HIM  
Those are just things. They can be replaced. Don't worry.

The Herald appears with the CHRONICLER and his camera.

HERALD  
Coming through please. Forgive me, just a few shots.

HIM  
Of course.

MOTHER  
No... No...

HERALD  
(to Chronicler)  
Make sure you're getting him.

Flashes start flashing. Mother starts to pull away.

HERALD  
No, don't go.

But Mother pulls away. She sees the Zealot lead a dancing crowd in some type of formation dance. He jumps and slides while holding the framed original poem on a stick. She marches up the stairs to the

#### MASTER BEDROOM

Mother shuts the door and goes to the window. In the darkness outside, she sees more people approach.

She's unsure what to do. She presses her hands against the wall and closes her eyes into the

#### DARKNESS OF HER IMAGINATION

The house breathes hard. The pipes creak and cry. The wires throb. The house is scared. We see the soul of the house retreating, twisting away. Back in the

## MASTER BEDROOM

She makes up her mind. She zips up her hospital bag, grabs it, and marches down the stairs. She pauses at the

## HALF LANDING

The wall covering the door to the study is now plastered with ceremonial photos of HIM. In front of it, the Zealot applies ink smudges to devotees' foreheads one by one. Disciples keep the long line of waiting devotees orderly.

DISCIPLE

Step forward.

A female devotee steps forward.

ZEALOT

His words are yours. If you please, pin your thoughts on the wall.

She pins a photo to the wall and receives an ink smudge. Now it's the next devotee's turn.

DISCIPLE

Step forward.

ZEALOT

His words are yours, dear.

Mother walks down the stairs, pushing past the long line of devotees towards the

## FOYER

Where a THRONG parties. Popping Champagne. Making out. Laughing. More revelers pour in the front door, knocking each other over. Friends greet and hug each other. The party spills towards Mother.

She looks for the back door. The dining room has evolved into a full on dance party. So has the kitchen.

The Herald spots her.

HERALD

There you are! Where have you been hiding?

As flashbulbs fire, Mother spins the other way into the

## HALLWAY

Where the HEWER saws an archway in half. Mother, shocked, charges him. He slices off the jamb on the basement door and yanks it away.

MOTHER

Why are you doing this?!

HEWER

Proof we were here.

Mother pushes into the

## NURSERY

Where disciples carry off the crib.

MOTHER

No... Don't...

Mother accidentally steps on the bloody stain. Her foot plunges through the moist and rotten wood. Disgusted, she pulls her foot out and slips into the

## BATHROOM

Where LOOTERS strip the fixtures off the walls.

She hurries into the

## KITCHEN

Where the looting has escalated. A group of SWEATY LOOTERS pry the stove off the wall. Others stand on the island, trying to get to the ceiling lights. Someone knocks over the island crashing everyone to the ground. Mother hurries into the

## PANTRY

FANS flood in through the back door. She fights to get past them and their shrieks to freedom but the Zealot grabs her.

ZEALOT

Hey!

MOTHER

No! Let go.

ZEALOT

No you can't leave, he loves you.

She pulls away. She pushes harder towards the back door.

HIM rushes in. The crowd surges towards him. Disciples push them back and clear the room. Devotees screech for the poet.

HIM sees her hospital bag.

HIM

Where are you going? Don't go.

MOTHER

You don't want me here.

HIM

Come here.

MOTHER

I can't.

HIM

Please. I have to tell you something.

Just then, she SHAKES with a contraction.

HIM

What?

She can't answer. He understands and shifts.

HIM

The baby? The baby?

Mother nods. He scans the looming crowd.

HIM

(to Mother)

Okay, come here. Come, come.

(to disciples)

We need space! We need space!

A disciple locks the back door. Others try to help HIM find a path through the crowds.

HIM

(to Mother)

Hold on here, I'll be right back.

He tries to find a path into the

## HALLWAY

Where the people continue to beg for his attention, his signature, his image.

HIM  
Give us some room!

He shoves the masses back. The populace resists. They start to boo.

HIM  
Give us some room, give us some room.

Behind Mother, OFFICERS OF THE LAW burst through the back door, glass smashes, the door frame cracks. They arrest disciples.

Mother grabs the passing DEPUTY.

MOTHER  
Help me. Help me--

DEPUTY  
Hands off!

He spins her around to cuff her.

MOTHER  
No! Please don't! Please don't!  
My baby!

HIM yanks the cop away.

HIM  
Get off her!

The Deputy sprays HIM with pepper spray. Part of the blast hits Mother's face. She screams.

She spins away as a line of OFFICERS tackle HIM to the ground.

Mother's eyes burn as she pushes into the

## KITCHEN

Where MINING-LOOTERS attack the floor, tear into the house's foundation. The sink is ripped out. No water. So she stumbles into the

## GUEST BATHROOM

Mother, eyes watering, heads for the tub, water. The FORNICATOR sobs on the lip. He laments the requiem.

The GLEANER yanks the faucet and loots it.

GLEANER

I called dibs...

Water sprays. Mother rinses her burning eyes.

The sound of three gun SHOTS blast from the kitchen. It's followed by a mad STAMPEDE of ransackers.

They swarm around Mother, pushing her in front of them as they scramble for the

## NURSERY

Mother trips and falls on the steps as the panicking crowd surges over her. She spots Man's long lost METAL LIGHTER glinting from a grate on the floor.

Mother crawls to her feet. The blood stained floor is now a gaping WOUND. Maggots infest it.

In the crib nook, there's a newly constructed holding pen. Imprisoned are YOUNG SLAVES, clothes ripped and torn, arms bound. They beg for help.

Mother tries to find an exit from the chicken wire pen but the WHOREMONGER pins her against the wall. The SLAVEDRIVER tosses another young girl into the holding pen.

The Whoremonger pries open Mother's mouth examining her gums and teeth. He squeezes her bosom, her pregnant belly.

SLAVEDRIVER

How is she?

WHOREMONGER

Tainted.

The power flips off as RIOT POLICE in full armor burst out from the bathroom. They attack the sex traffickers as they rush towards Mother pushing her into the

## DRAWING ROOM

Mother ducks into the corner as the riot police storm into a standoff between cops and PROTESTORS. Copies of the poem burn in barrels between the two sides.

Someone tosses a Molotov cocktail and two OFFICERS explode in flames.

Mayhem as it turns into a full on riot. Another contraction SLAMS Mother as she slips into the

## STAIRWELL

Where a BAND OF INSTIGATORS stand on a pile of debris and broken furniture shouting slogans. Workers are reinforcing the pile and turning it into a new structure - into some type of tower.

A CHANTING CROWD bursts through the front door with signs and banners.

Another STREAM OF MARCHERS pours down the stairs. Mother is caught in the middle and pulled with them into the

## DINING ROOM

A BAND OF REVOLUTIONARIES stand over two lines of prone PRISONERS whose hands are bound behind them. Their heads are covered with cheap plastic bags.

The swinging pantry door is gone. It is replaced by a chicken wire gate, behind which more prisoners are being held.

As Mother cowers by the mantel, she sees an executioner walking down the lines of prisoners, shooting each one in the head. Mother screams.

The executioner turns to Mother. We see her face for the first time. It is the Herald.

## HERALD

The inspiration! Where have you  
been hiding?

(to revolutionaries)

Finish her.

Two revolutionaries grab Mother and push her to her knees and prepare to handcuff her wrists.

REVOLUTIONARY GUARD  
On your knees!

The Herald moves to the wire holding pen and starts to select a few more prisoners.

HERALD  
All right six more.

An EXPLOSION tears out a window, killing the Herald instantly.

Armed MILITARY FORCES burst into the home. They rush through doorways and smash through windows.

Mother is overwhelmed by a contraction. Still she flees, stepping over the Herald's mutilated body, back into the

HALLWAY

Everything is covered in grey ash. The SOLDIER COCKS his gun.

SOLDIER  
Freeze!  
(sees she is no threat)  
Oh no... Come on.

The Soldier leads Mother through the

STAIRWELL

More troops burst through the front door. Guns are fired. REFUGEES flee. Tear gas and explosions. The Soldier leads her from the newly built tower to a corner in the

DRAWING ROOM

Where they find a sheltered spot to rest.

SOLDIER  
Are you hurt?

MOTHER  
The baby...

A grenade goes off nearby tearing away the wall to the basement. He shields her with his body.

A contraction hits again. The Soldier notices her condition.

SOLDIER

Medic!

He looks up and around. Someone SHOOTs him through the jaw. He crumples in front of her.

Mother screams in terror and falls forward into the

NURSERY

Which has become a killing field. CORPSES are everywhere. SICK PLAGUE VICTIMS moan in agony. Mother sees the open window by the bathroom.

Some refugees rush to exit the home.

REFUGEE

This way. Hurry! Hurry!

She claws to it. She pulls herself up and over body after body. Even when a contraction ROCKS her she keeps crawling.

Almost out when two hands GRAB HER. The man tears off his gas mask, it's HIM cloaked and hidden. He is crazed and wild-eyed.

HIM

(relieved)

It's me. It's me.

MOTHER

What's happening?

HIM

I don't know. I have to take you somewhere safe.

MOTHER

There! OUT!

HIM

No, it's too dangerous. Come with me, quietly.

He takes her hand, starts dragging her towards the

GUEST BATHROOM

Which is full of shanties, tents, and lean-tos. Refugees have made small cooking fires. Grey ash covers all. She follows as he pulls her through the

## KITCHEN

Still more survivors. Ladders poke up through holes in the floor. Pieces of field stone and beams from the foundation have been used to make slightly more permanent encampments.

She spots the back door and the forest beyond:

MOTHER

The door! The door!

HIM

No, this way.

The filthy PENITENT notices HIM.

PENITENT

It's him, the poet! He hasn't forsaken us after all!

HIM

Come, we need to hurry. Stay close!

BEGGARS, THE SICK, AMPUTEES surge them. Mother and HIM run through the

## HALLWAY

Around the growing tower of debris. Still they are swarmed.

HIM

Get back!

PENITENTS

Help us! / We're hungry. / We're lost. / Fuck him! / He abandoned us.

In the

## STAIRWELL

The bottom steps are gone. The front door is boarded up.

Penitents follow and swarm in from all sides. They fight to grab HIM.

HIM

I'm sorry. I can't.

Mother panics. Her contractions are quick and FURIOUS.



HIM

I'm sorry! I will not forget you.

He pushes and pulls against the swarm.

ZEALOT (O.S.)

Up here!

She looks up. The Zealot stands above them on the new tower. It stretches up to the half landing.

HIM

They will protect us.

Disciples swarm down to help the couple up the tower.

The mass of humanity follows them, others clambering up onto the broken stairs.

ZEALOT

Give me your hand!

Mother is pulled up with HIM to the

HALF LANDING

HIM and the Zealot fight to keep the crowds back.

HIM

Get back! I will return!

Mother leans against a wall just as another contraction hits. She is delirious with pain.

HIM

Sit here. Rest.

The HEALER emerges from the crowd.

HEALER

I'm a doctor! I'm a doctor.

HIM

A doctor! Help her please. I'll be right back.

The Healer takes a knee and feels Mother's belly. Mother doesn't want any help. She wants nothing to do with these strangers.

The study remains sealed shut. HIM starts kicking the planks that seal the door with the heel of his boot.

HEALER

Look at me. Listen to my voice.  
The baby's almost here.

Mother SCREAMS in agony.

Humanity stretches, reaches, pleads for mercy: "Help us!  
Help! Help us!" The disciples fight to keep them back.

Some break through. HIM stops kicking, grabs them and tosses  
them back off the landing. He returns to smashing the door.

The labor grows more intense. The Healer pries Mother's legs  
open.

HEALER

Now just push! Yes, yes, you have  
to push.

Finally, HIM gets past the planks and kicks the STUDY door  
open. The crowd overwhelms the disciples.

HEALER

Yes, you're doing very good. I can  
feel the head--

HIM rushes over pushes the doctor away.

HIM

Please move, I've got her. Come.  
I've got you now.

He lifts Mother up.

ZEALOT

Wait, I can help!

HIM

I'm delivering my baby. Shut the  
door! Shut the door! Shut it!

He drags Mother into the

STUDY

And lays her against his desk.

HIM

We're safe. We're safe. It's  
okay. Our baby's coming.

Mother tries to catch her breath. The fighting outside  
blasts the study door back open.



He gets to his feet and shoves everyone back. He closes the door. Then, he drags a heavy secretary to block the door from opening again. People bang on the door as the riot outside continues.

He rushes back to Mother. He reaches between her legs.

HIM  
Okay, it's almost here.

Mother SCREAMS.

HIM  
It's here. It's coming.

She continues to scream. Shaking herself, shaking the world.

And she screams as the baby releases into

WHITE

Vibrating energy. And after a beat.

HIM (V.O.)  
It's a boy.

Return slowly to the

STUDY

HIM holds the baby as Mother opens her eyes.

He lifts the child onto her chest. Her SON. She holds him.

He is perfect. Mother starts to cry. Tears of joy.

The sounds of war are still outside the door.

HIM touches the baby's feet a look of wonder on his face. He grabs a cotton cloth that drapes the lazy chair. He uses it to wrap the child in her arms.

HIM  
Cover him.

The baby CRIES its first cry. The noise echoes through the house.

Suddenly, the sounds of violence drop out. It gets quiet. Real quiet. Outside the study there is now no more noise.

They are confused. Mother looks at the door.

MOTHER  
What's happening? Why are they so  
quiet?

HIM  
I don't know.

He heads to the door.

MOTHER  
Don't!

He listens to the door. He hears nothing. He slides back  
the secretary.

MOTHER  
Don't do that!

He cracks open the door and peeks. He spots something. He  
bends down and picks up a basket filled with fruit and a  
pitcher of water.

MOTHER  
Shut the door! Seal it!

He does it and uses the secretary to block the door. He  
carries the goods back to her.

HIM  
They brought us gifts.

He pours her a glass of water. She watches him suspiciously.

MOTHER  
What are they doing?

HIM  
They're just waiting.

MOTHER  
Waiting for what?

HIM  
I don't know.

MOTHER  
Make them go. Please. Please make  
them.

He thinks. Then he nods.

HIM  
Okay, okay.

He returns to the door. He pauses to look at her, then he slips outside. He seals the door behind him.

Mother is alone with her child. They look into one another. She lifts him up and wraps him properly in the cloth.

LATER

The door opens. HIM returns in new clothes. He carries a shirt and sweat pants.

HIM  
More gifts. Look here. For you.  
Clean clothes.

He lays them next to her.

MOTHER  
Are they leaving?

An awkward pause.

HIM  
What? No, they just want to see  
him.

MOTHER  
No. Make them go!

HIM  
I can't.

MOTHER  
(pleads)  
Yes you can. They adore you. They  
would listen to you.

He doesn't respond to that.

MOTHER  
Why won't you!?

HIM  
(snaps, honestly:)  
I don't want them to go.

Mother stunned. He comes to her. She tries to back away. Scared.

HIM  
 He's beautiful.  
 (then)  
 Let me hold him.

MOTHER  
 No.

HIM  
 Let me hold him.

Mother shakes her head.

HIM  
 Let me hold my baby.

MOTHER  
 No.

HIM  
 Let me hold him.

MOTHER  
 NO!

HIM  
 I'm his father.

MOTHER  
 I'm his MOTHER!

That stops him. For the moment. He sighs.

On his feet he gets behind the big chair.

He sighs again and pushes it forward so that it is inches from her.

He takes a seat and he just sits. He sits and he stares at her.

Time is on his side. So he waits.

She stares at him. He stares at her.

HOURS GO BY

At dawn, he sits wide eyed staring at her, barely blinking. The baby is fussing and she calms it. She reaches for the new shirt, starts to put it on. He tries to help.

HIM  
 Here, let me-



MOTHER

No.

Keeping her eyes on him, she slips the shirt on.

LATE IN THE DAY

The baby feeds on his mother's breast. Her eyelids grow heavy. HIM stares straight at her, barely blinking. She looks at the fruit bowl which is almost empty.

MOTHER

(pleads)

Please! PLEASE! Make them go...

He doesn't respond.

AT NIGHT

She fights with all her will, but sleep descends on her. Her eyelids are so heavy. She can't help but pass out to

SILENCE

She fights to wake up. Her eyes fling open in the

STUDY

HIM carries the baby to the open door lifting the boy into the air, the crowd screams in delight.

Adrenaline floods her heart, she lunges after them, panic ripping through her soul. Through the doorway she descends the

TOWER

The crowd applauds and cheer the baby. The doorway has been turned into the entrance of a shrine, it's covered with offerings and burning incense.

MOTHER

No! No! Give me back my baby.

She fights to get through the throngs. She spins HIM around, looks at his arms. They are empty. His face is a mix of shock, horror, and awe.



MOTHER

Where is he?

She looks past him. The baby moves from hand to hand.  
Carried like a rock star surfing a mosh pit deep into the

DRAWING ROOM

The crippled, the ill, the healthy, the happy, the sad,  
everyone surges towards the baby. Mother dives in after him.

MOTHER

No, no, that's my baby, I'm his  
Mother!

Hands reach. Hands pull. Hands grab. They all want to  
touch him.

MOTHER

No, no, please, you're going to  
hurt him, you're hurting him!

The baby SHRIEKS! Then something SNAPS!

And the baby stops crying. There are gasps.

MOTHER

Where is he? Where's my baby?

She fights her way through the crowd, looking for her son,  
his body in the

DINING ROOM

The Zealot spins and appears before her. He is bald now and  
an ink smudge is on his brow.

MOTHER

(hysterical)  
Where's my baby?

ZEALOT

He's not dead.

What? She doesn't understand.

ZEALOT

A voice still cries out to be  
heard, loud and strong. Listen...  
Can you hear that?

A strange answer. She hears the crowd crying, sobbing. They are hysterical. She realizes what the Zealot means.

She pushes past the bald man.

On the ALTAR, lies the remnants of her child. Meat has been picked from the child's bones.

She looks around. People eat pieces of flesh. When they take a bite they are filled with peace.

ZEALOT (O.S.)

Do you hear that? That's the sound  
of life, the sound of humanity.  
His cry of love. His love for you.

Mother grabs for the pieces of meat. For her son. The people fight her off. Someone drags her to the ground.

There's a shard of GLASS on the floor. From a broken window. She takes it. She turns on the MASSES around her. She stabs and attacks.

People fall one by one. Others retreat terrified of her. Of her weapon.

She keeps killing more and more people.

People panic as she chases men, women and children. She stabs them all in the back, in the throat, in the eyes, wherever she can.

She screams with the agony deep in her soul.

She drives the shard deep into the belly of the Zealot. He grabs her wrist. She looks him in the face. He holds the doorknob that first killed brother on brother.

The Zealot smashes her with it.

She collapses to the ground. The mob descends. They beat her, they kick her, they scratch her, they tear off her clothes, and they spit on her. They defile her.

HIM emerges, smashing through the masses, trying to save her.

HIM

Please stop. Stop. STOP!

And ALL do. The people back away chins down.



HIM  
(to the crowd)  
Go away! Leave her alone! What  
are you doing?

She's bloodied. Her nose is broken. One eye starts to  
swell.

HIM  
Look what they've done to you.

HIM  
(to the crowd)  
What are you doing?! WHAT ARE YOU  
DOING?

MOTHER  
They killed my baby. You killed  
him. You killed him.

HIM  
I am so sorry. They just wanted to  
see him, they just wanted to touch  
him, and then they... It's  
horrible. I'm sorry. I'm so  
sorry.

They are overwhelmed by grief. They sob. He holds her  
tight. Blood drips from her face.

HIM  
But we can't let him die for  
nothing. We can't. Maybe what  
happened can change everything,  
everyone.

MOTHER  
What are you talking about?

HIM  
We have to find a way to forgive  
them.

MOTHER  
They butchered our son.

HIM  
I know.

She pushes him away. She crawls away backwards.

MOTHER  
You're insane.



HIM

They are so sorry. They are truly  
sorry. Please have faith in me.  
We need to forgive them.

She drops her hands to the ground closes her eyes and we slip  
into the

DARKNESS OF HER IMAGINATION

And the house is barely alive. Shrinking and dying.  
Everything almost completely still. Back in the

DINING ROOM

She can hold it in no longer.

MOTHER

NOOOOO!

The ground SHAKES violently. The floor RIPS apart.

The crowd shrieks, panicking. She rises up.

MOTHER

(at everyone)

Murderers!

(at HIM)

Murderer.

Her eyes wild, she scratches his face.

MOTHER

It's time to get the fuck out of my  
house!

Long gashes are left behind. Skin is under her nails.

She races off, fighting through the crowd.

HIM (O.S.)

No. Don't! Please, come back!

Don't leave me.

She bursts through the masses praying into the

NURSERY

In the radiator grate is Man's METAL LIGHTER. She grabs it.

She rushes through the

HALLWAY

And trips. She tumbles face first down the stairs to the

BASEMENT

She lands hard on the concrete floor. She picks up the wrench she used earlier and drags her broken body into the

HIDDEN CELLAR

People chase after her led by HIM.

HIM  
(to crowd)  
Stop! Please! Hold on!

They do. Mother swings the wrench and punctures the bottom of the oil tank. Thick oil rolls out onto the basement floor. She pulls out the METAL LIGHTER and lights it.

HIM  
(to Mother)  
Don't. Please don't. I love you.

MOTHER  
You never loved me. You just loved how much I loved you. I gave you everything...

The flame on the lighter flicks and leaps.

MOTHER  
And you gave it all away.

HIM  
No! No! NO!

And she drops the lighter. The

OIL IGNITES

Fire rushes into the tank and

EXPLODES

He drops his head, defeated. The flames rip through him and his followers and every living thing in the



## BASEMENT

Flames smash through the

## HALLWAY

Fire engulfs one and all. SCREAMS of misery and agony as the masses rush the front door in the

## FOYER

A huge fireball rushes up through the

## STAIRWELL

And torches the

## STUDY

Everything is ruined and destroyed. Now

## OUTSIDE

The world EXPLODES. Everything burns. Everything is on fire. And down in the

## HIDDEN CELLAR FILLED WITH FLAMES

Mother is calm. Even as her skin burns, she is calm.

Just HER eyes: defiant... sad... defeated... but free...

She closes her eyes as all goes to

## WHITE

A long moment until we return to the charred remains of Mother being carried through the

## BURNT HOUSE

In his arms. He carries her with little emotion and less effort. He's trying to be strong. He is not burnt. The scars on his face are healing.

She is charred and near death. She watches the house smoldering around him.

MOTHER  
(whisper)  
What are you?

He notices her for the first time.

HIM  
Me? I, am I. You? You were home.

MOTHER  
Where are you taking me?

HIM  
The beginning.

He lowers her down on the desk of his

BURNT STUDY

She cringes in pain.

HIM  
It won't hurt much longer.

MOTHER  
What hurts me the most is that I  
wasn't enough.

This chokes him up.

HIM  
It's not your fault. Nothing is  
ever enough. I couldn't create if  
it was. And I have to. That's  
what I do. That's what I am. And  
now I must try it all again.

MOTHER  
(understands)  
No.  
(asks)  
Just let me go.

HIM  
I need one last thing.

MOTHER  
I have nothing left to give.

He disagrees.



HIM

Your love.  
(he points at her chest)  
It's still there isn't it?

She starts to cry. She nods. He's right. What choice does she have?

MOTHER

Go ahead. Take it.

She lets it all go. No more emotion. No more ever again.

He knows what he must do. He plunges his hands into the remnants of her chest.

She gasps. He pulls out a MASS of beating ash.

The last drop of life fades from her body leaving only an ashen HUSK.

Alone now, he squeezes the mass in his hands. He squeezes hard until it solidifies. Then, with more force, it breaks apart leaving a NEW CRYSTAL FORMATION.

Just like the one at the beginning. But this one is different. Beautiful and amazing, but different.

He places the crystal on a burnt shelf in the

CHARRED BOOKCASE

He closes his eyes. Wishes.

Slowly color repairs the shelf returning it to an un-burnt state.

Now, dawn light reveal glimpses inside a slightly different

HOME

A burnt front door comes back to life. It fades into a burnt hand rail which comes back to life. The hand rail fades into a burnt wall which comes back to life. The wall becomes the burnt sheets on a bed in a

MASTER BEDROOM

They come back to life. A BODY emerges before us. A young, NEW WOMAN emerges in a comfortable bed, hugged by white sheets.

She is different. Beautiful and amazing, but different.

She spots his pillow. He's not there. She asks:

NEW WOMAN

Baby?

There's no answer...

HARD TO BLACK

by: darren aronofsky